

HOME COMING

Written by

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A black screen is filled in by a MONTAGE of Howard Student Homecoming photos from the 1920s to the 2020s. We see famous Alumni from Thurgood and Kamala to Diddy and Chadwick. Frats and Sororities enjoy the Yard and Homecoming Game.

We PUSH IN on a photo of Howard's "Showtime" Marching Band in the tunnel at GREENE STADIUM and the photo morphs into...

EXT. HOWARD UNIVERSITY - GREENE STADIUM - DAY

...LIVE ACTION as the horn players, dancers and drummers high step out of the tunnel onto the field performing "NECK!" It feels like we're at a modern day coliseum as the frenzied and packed stands sway side to side in unison with the band and sing, "HEYYYYYYYYYY... YA TALKING OUT THE SIDE OF YA NECK!"

CAMERA PULLS OUT TO REVEAL:

INT. GOLDMAN SACHS - TRADING FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

SUPER: THURSDAY

THAD, 32, the Fresh Prince of Wall Street, whip smart and swaggy AF in his tailored suit. He's showing the video of Howard's Homecoming on his computer to his unimpressed white co-workers, BLAIRE and CASEY, late 20s.

BLAIRE

So, it's like Beyoncé but not as good.

THAD

You do realize Beyoncé got the idea for Homecoming from Howard?

BLAIRE

Well, she *Upgraded* it.

Thad shakes his head disapprovingly.

CASEY

You're thirty-two. I think. You could be fifty, you know how y'all age. Why are you going back to your college to party? I don't get it.

Thad's phone rings and we see it's from "JB 3000."

THAD

And you probably never will. I gotta take this.

He spins his chair away from them.

THAD (INTO PHONE) (CONT'D)
Three stacks! Are you ready for the
greatest weekend of your liiiiife?

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. JB'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

JB, 32, African American, the guy that puts a napkin in his collar before eating fast food. But today, he's disheveled and frumpy in sad grey sweats. He sits in a half empty apartment surrounded by packing boxes with "STEPHIE'S SHIT - DON'T TOUCH!" written on them. His eyes are still puffy and swollen from his most recent cry. He talks to Thad on speaker.

JB (INTO PHONE)
I can't go.

THAD (THROUGH PHONE)
What?! You were amped last night.
What happened?

FLASHBACK - INT. TURNING POINT SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

JB stands proudly on stage addressing the student body.

JB
Many of you have asked how long
before we have our own Turning Point
Instagram page. Well, wait no more!

Not realizing he's still signed in, JB accidentally projects his IG account. Instead of the TURNING POINT page we see a picture of STEPHIE, 30s, a beautiful woman in a bikini with her well hung lover, DIETRICH, 25, in a Speedo. The caption reads "Finally Happy."

KID #1
Isn't that your wife?!

KID #2
Not anymore.

KID #1
She went and got a snack.

The kids erupt in laughter. JB swipes furiously on his phone to change the photo but accidentally magnifies the groin shot.

KID #2

Shit. That's a whole meal.

JB taps the photo to get rid of it but ends up liking it. Shit! As the laughter grows, his eyes well with tears. He runs off stage before they see him weep.

INT. JB'S APARTMENT - (BACK TO PRESENT)

We're back in JB and Thad's INTERCUT phone conversation.

THAD

Fuck those kids.

JB

I'm not in a place to party. I thought I could go, but it's just too recent.

THAD

No cap. It's more than just a party. Howard is that rare space that fills your cup while the rest of the world drains it. Three hundred and sixty days of the year I'm surrounded by people that don't get me. Why do you think I go back every year? To be surrounded by love and black excellence. That shit is powerful, Bruh. You need this.

JB

Did you have this speech prepared?

THAD

Maybe. But the point is I've been where you are.

JB

(scoffs)

You've never been in a relationship longer than a year.

THAD

Yeah, but heartbreak is heartbreak. When my mom passed Howard reminded me that I still had family.

JB

That's real.

(then)

But what happens if Steph comes home and I'm not here?

THAD

She'll still be fucking the doorman.

JB

Just kick me when I'm down.

THAD

Look, you have a ticket and you're on a Homecoming panel with freaking Ta-Nehisi Coates.

JB

Only because the Jews cancelled Nick Cannon.

THAD

Still, they asked you.

(then)

Look, Dana's moving to London. It'll probably be the last time the whole crew is together *and* it's our ten year. This is gonna be the Homecoming we always dreamed of.

JB

Well... if I do come, I'm not leaving without seeing the MLK monument.

THAD

I'm sure we can squeeze that in. Just get on the damn plane.

JB looks over at his packed suitcase by the door.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. LAX AIRPORT - TARMAC - THAT NIGHT

That same suitcase being thrown on the conveyor belt.

INT. 747 AIRPLANE - NIGHT

On the packed red-eye, JB is stuffed between two older Black WOMEN in Howard gear. They look over his shoulder as he doom scrolls through Stephie's Instagram feed. WOMAN #1 notices the picture of Dietrich in his jam-packed Speedo.

WOMAN #1

Is that your boyfriend?

WOMAN #2

Good for you. Or should I say,
ouch?

They toast to his good fortune.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

Are you JB Bland?

JB

Yes.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

You've been upgraded to first
class. Compliments of your friend
Thaddeus. He also said...

(reads from note)

"get off your ex's Instagram. It's
a waste of time"...not going to
read that part, or that, oh this
part is nice... "it was her loss.
Any woman would be lucky to have
you."

WOMAN #1

If he doesn't want that seat, I'll
take it.

INT. 747 AIRPLANE - FIRST CLASS - A SHORT WHILE LATER

JB reads Martin Luther King Jr.'s "The Measure of a Man." The
Flight Attendant brings his drink. He smells it and recoils.

JB

Sorry. I'm not allowed to drink
Hennessy.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT

He said this was your favorite.

JB

Not unless you want me to turn this
whole plane out.

(off Flight Attendant's look)

I'll just have a Riesling.

EXT. REAGAN NATIONAL AIRPORT - ESTABLISHING - MORNING

SUPER: FRIDAY

As the sun rises, a plane touches down on the runway.

FLIGHT ATTENDANT (V.O.)
 We have reached our destination. To
 all the Howard Alum, Happy
 Homecoming.

INT. REAGAN NATIONAL AIRPORT - MORNING

Half the airport is decked out in Howard gear. Ad-libs of "HU! You *know!*" ring out and mini-reunions erupt everywhere as old friends reunite for the first time in years.

JB descends a crowded escalator to the BAGGAGE CLAIM. He notices an Ethiopian-flag themed sign with "BLAND" printed on it. He approaches the man holding it, ABDI, early 20s, Ethiopian-American in a chauffeur's uniform.

ABDI
 Are you Bland?

JB
 According to my ex.

ABDI
 Then, Habesha, I am your man! Abdul
 Iman Selasie but you can call me
 Abdi. Right this way.

Abdi takes JB's bags and leads him through the crowd.

EXT. REAGAN NATIONAL AIRPORT - CONTINUOUS

Abdi approaches a Rolls Royce SUV with diplomatic plates. JB looks around curiously before he gets in.

INT. ROLLS ROYCE SUV - DAY (MOVING)

While Abdi navigates through Washington, D.C., JB looks at his unanswered texts to Thad.

CLOSE UP ON TEXTS:

JB: Am I in the right car?

JB: Who is this driver?

JB: Hello???

JB
 Can I ask you something?

ABDI

You can ask me anything, Brother. What do you need? Anything you need, I can get you. Women, drugs, a sex monkey. I don't judge my friend. My family is everywhere. We can get you anything you desire. That's how I got this job. My family owns all the car services in town. So, my cousin called my cousin's cousin and boom, I'm driving a Rolls. America.

JB

How exactly do you know Thad?

ABDI

Who's Thad?

JB

Thad Savage.
(off Abdi's blank look)
Wait? Who are you? Where are you taking me?

ABDI

Here. We've arrived.

JB looks out the window as the SUV pulls into the driveway of the palatial Ethiopian Embassy-- a multi-million dollar mansion marked by Ethiopian and US flags. JB peers at the armed guards and twenty-foot-high iron rod gates that bear the Seal of Solomon.

EXT. ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY - CONTINUOUS

JB exits and sees Thad with his arms stretched wide. JB's in no mood for a hug.

JB

I called you a million times!

THAD

Good to see you, too.

JB

I thought this dude was gonna traffic me. And why are we at an Embassy?

SWEET MILK (O.C.)

BJ!

SWEET MILK, 30s, an eccentric brother in harem pants, matching tunic, Yeezy boots and a flat brimmed women's fedora that only he could pull off, emerges from the Embassy.

JB

Oh, helllll no!

We ANGLE on Sweet Milk as he stops to pay his respects to the AMBASSADOR, a well heeled older gentleman.

SWEET MILK

Thank you so much for your hospitality. Please extend my apologies to the Prince.

AMBASSADOR

He will be terribly sore that he missed you.

They hear yelling and turn to see JB and Thad mid-argument.

JB

Did I stutter when I said I never want to see Sweet Milk again? Some things cannot be forgiven?!

AMBASSADOR

He seems very angry.

SWEET MILK

You see anger. I see passion.

AMBASSADOR

I will leave you with your friends. You are in good hands with Abdi. When spiderwebs unite, they can tie up a lion.

SWEET MILK

Or a gazelle.

They both laugh at the inside joke.

AMBASSADOR

Good times.

Sweet Milk approaches JB and goes in for a hug.

JB

Don't you touch me with those filthy hands.

SWEET MILK

I just wanted to share my love.

JB

I can't believe you invited him.

THAD

Sweet Milk's the reason we have our own driver and a free hotel room. I'm sorry I lied but come on, Bruh. You wouldn't have come if you knew.

JB

Damn right.

THAD

Can we call a truce? It's been ten years. Plus, we put in a lot of effort to make this weekend happen.

After a beat, JB relents.

JB

Fine. But if we wake up without kidneys it's on you.

Sweet Milk makes prayer hands and bows.

INT. ROLLS ROYCE SUV - A SHORT WHILE LATER (MOVING)

Our trio settles into the truck.

JB

How do you even know the Ambassador of Ethiopia?

SWEET MILK

It's quite a story, actually.

JB

Never mind. I just remembered I don't care.

ABDI

Brothers, where are we headed first? The hotel?

THAD

No, Sir. Take us straight to The Yard. And can I get that bluetooth?

Abdi weaves through Homecoming traffic as "Kick in the Door" by Notorious B.I.G. blasts through the speakers.

GUYS

(rapping along)

*"Ain't no telling where I may be,
May see me in D.C., at Howard
Homecoming with Sweet Milk and JB!"*

They pour fifty-year-old scotch into crystal high-balls and wave at people out the windows like they're in a music video. They arrive at the historic campus-- thirteen buildings on a hilltop all connected by a grassy expanse known as "The Yard." This is a huge event and the GATES are cordoned off with police barricades and several security guards.

SWEET MILK

Pull up to the gate, Señor.

JB

I don't want any problems.

THAD

What do you think's gonna happen?
Officer Smith's gonna throw us in
campus jail?

SWEET MILK

Officer Smith? Damn, I forgot all
about that dude.

JB

(to Abdi)

We can just walk.

SWEET MILK

Naw, I got this.

Sweet Milk leans forward and whispers in Abdi's ear as a security guard approaches his driver's side window.

ABDI

We have Anderson Paak. He's late
for his performance.

Sweet Milk rolls down his back window.

SWEET MILK

(a la Anderson Paak)

Yes lawwwd.

JB

(sotto; panicked)

What is he doing?

THAD

The HU-hustle.

As the security guards step away to huddle--

SWEET MILK

Relax. No one knows what Anderson Paak looks like, anyway.

After a beat, security waves them through and Sweet Milk tips his lady Fedora in appreciation. They make their way to BLACKBURN STUDENT CENTER where the other VIP's are parked.

THAD

Let's go!

EXT. HOWARD UNIVERSITY - THE YARD - CONTINUOUS

The guys exit the car and take a moment to breathe in The Yard. It's a cornucopia of beautiful black people from Caribbean rude boys and West Coast hippies to foul mouthed New Yorkers and Nigerian nerds. Students, Alumni, doctors, lawyers, educators, engineers, celebrities-- all basking in the sacred ground that is "The Mecca." Food booths dot the campus and LIL BABY performs on a huge stage in front of FOUNDER'S LIBRARY.

THAD

We're home. You gotta admit this is dope.

JB

I'd have to be a special kind of a-hole not to admit pulling up to Homecoming in a Rolls is pretty, pretty, pretty nice.

SWEET MILK

I was in Amsterdam smoking hashish with a Tunisian princess when I had a vision of this very moment.

Sweet Milk howls like a wolf as they head off into the crowd. They make their way through the thousands of people, dapping up old friends along the way.

JB

I was thinking we have two goals here. Figure out where to go tonight, and get some food.

SWEET MILK

And to have fun.

JB

Good point. I need to post some photos so Stephie thinks I'm having a good time without her.

Thad spots JAZ, 20, model good looks, passing out flyers.

THAD

Yo! Yo!

Jaz skips right over our guys.

THAD (CONT'D)

What was that about?

JB

(re: Sweet Milk)

Probably his outfit. I wouldn't give us a flyer, either.

(then)

Can we find some food?

THAD

You don't wanna see Lil Baby?

JB

Never heard of him. But I have heard of Fried Catfish.

SWEET MILK

I'm with heartbreak. This temple could use some nourishment.

THAD

Eh, the lines are like a mile long.

Without warning, Sweet Milk leaps onto the flag pole, climbs above the crowd and surveys the scene. Down below, a RANDOM GUY turns to his friend.

RANDOM GUY

Yo, look at this nigga Davey Crockett.

An OFFICER nearby, late 40s, chip firmly planted on his shoulder, overhears them. He follows their gaze and sees Sweet Milk on the pole.

OFFICER

Fuck. A. Duck.

We PUSH IN on his name tag. It reads, OFFICER SMITH. He makes a bee line for Sweet Milk, rudely pushing people out of the way.

ANGLE ON Sweet Milk, still on the pole.

SWEET MILK
(calling down)
Dana's a Delta right?

THAD
Yeah.

SWEET MILK
I see her tribe. We're in.

Sweet Milk jumps down.

JB
Let's cut through Douglass.

They disappear into the crowd just as Officer Smith arrives, winded. He frantically looks for Sweet Milk.

OFFICER SMITH
Where did he go? The guy on the pole? No one saw that guy dressed like Aladdin?

EXT. DOUGLASS HALL - A SHORT WHILE LATER

A Howard DAD walks out with his SON on his shoulders. They look out over the festivities.

SON
Is it always like this, Dad?

DAD
No, just during Homecoming. It's a special time of year.

Our guys approach and cross paths with the Dad.

THAD
This is way faster than trying to walk through all those people.

The Dad overhears them and chimes in.

DAD
Always works.
(then)
Good to see you, Thad.

THAD
You, too! Man, your son's getting so big.

Thad gives a head nod to the kid as they pass.

JB
I always liked that guy. What's his name?

THAD
No idea.

INT. DOUGLASS HALL - CONTINUOUS

Our guys walk the halls reminiscing.

THAD
I used to put party flyers up all over this building.

Sweet Milk looks around curiously.

SWEET MILK
I don't think I've ever been in here.

THAD
Literally all the English and math classes are in here.

SWEET MILK
Yeah, I didn't take those.

THAD
JB, did you hear this fool?

He turns and sees JB standing frozen in front of a classroom.

THAD (CONT'D)
What's wrong?

JB
This was Professor Winters' class.

MUSIC CUE: "THE BEST I EVER HAD" BY DRAKE

FLASHBACK - INT. DOUGLASS HALL - CLASSROOM

A college aged JB with cornrows sits in the front row taking copious notes. A breathtakingly beautiful woman, PROFESSOR WINTERS, late 30s, lectures. She smiles warmly then approaches JB's desk. She starts to speak but instead of her voice, we hear Thad's voice as she mouths "Man, I can't believe you fucked that up."

INT. DOUGLASS HALL - (BACK TO PRESENT)

JB snaps out of his daze.

JB

There was nothing to mess up. I was a student. She was my teacher.

THAD

Who wanted to teach the fuck out of you.

SWEET MILK

I think you let your schooling interfere with your education, there, Son.

THAD

The most beautiful professor in Howard History invited you up to her apartment for "extra help" at two in the morning and you chickened out.

JB

For your information, Professor Winters happened to be gorgeous on the inside, too. There was a time I didn't think I could hack it here and almost went home. But she saw my potential and convinced me that I belonged. That's what I remember about her. Not some missed golden opportunity you guys probably read way too much into.

SWEET MILK

Whatever helps you sleep alone at night.

Thad gives him a reassuring pat on the shoulder.

EXT. HOWARD UNIVERSITY - THE YARD - A SHORT WHILE LATER

DANA, 30s, a witty around the way girl who's as beautiful as she is stylish, waits in the catfish line with a large group of her Delta sorors. They range in age from 18-80 and include BIG DEB, 30s, tall AF. The "Black Brienne of Tarth" eyes Thad conspicuously as he creeps up.

BIG DEB

Uh, Dana, you know this little nigga?

THAD
 (taps Dana on shoulder)
 Excuse me, Miss.

Dana turns and catches the holy ghost upon seeing Thad, JB and Sweet Milk! They all give huge hugs and ad-lib hellos.

DANA
 I knew I'd see your ass here, but
 you got JB out of the house?

She hugs JB again.

DANA (CONT'D)
 I was sorry to hear about Stephie.
 I'm not above jumpin' on a red eye to
 whoop a bitch's ass.

JB
 Thanks, but that won't be necessary.
 (then)
 Mind if we jump in line with you?

DANA
 Boy, of course.

OLD MAN (O.C.)
 Un un. I let your girls in but now
 these negroes, too?

Sweet Milk turns around and is surprised to see...

SWEET MILK
 Danny?

It's DANNY GLOVER. He softens when he sees Sweet Milk.

DANNY GLOVER
 Oga! Why am I not surprised?

They hug warmly.

SWEET MILK
 Domo Sa, you shouldn't be in this
 line. Let me get your food.

DANNY GLOVER
 At least someone knows how to treat
 an OG. I'm too old for this shit.

Danny heads out.

BIG DEB

That was Mister? He shoulda told Big Deb. His old ass could've got some.

Big Deb notices Sweet Milk eyeing her like Tormund.

BIG DEB (CONT'D)

You better stick with them little girls. You won't like what I'm into.

SWEET MILK

Woman, you could fill a book with what I'm into.

Dana laughs then holds out her vintage Louis Vuitton flask.

THAD

Okay, Baller.

DANA

Little gift I bought after selling out my first building. Gotta sell twice as much as these crackers so I can stop working for them.

THAD

Gonna be kinda hard to do that in London. You do realize they're the OG colonizers?

DANA

You know, if you don't want me to go you could just say so. I mean, I won't listen, but--

JB

Congrats on the London gig. You gonna miss D.C.?

DANA

Kinda, but I'm excited, too. Can't believe I leave Monday.

JB

(bad English accent)
Well, then. Safe travels, Gov'nuh.

Dana shakes her head as Thad takes a shot. He passes the flask to JB who sniffs it.

THAD

So, what's the best party tonight?

DANA

There's a lot of shit going on, but everybody's gonna be at Park.

SWEET MILK

Then, so shall we.

Dana notices DELTAS party-walking by. It's a long train of her sorority sisters dancing in unison as they snake through the crowd. She can't miss out and jumps in.

DANA

(to younger sorors)

Y'all stay and grab my food.

(then; to Thad)

I'll see y'all at Park?

THAD

Bet.

Sweet Milk watches Big Deb party-walk off with Dana.

SWEET MILK

Good bye, destiny.

OFFICER SMITH (O.S.)

Hello, Sweet Milk.

Sweet Milk turns and sees Officer Smith.

SWEET MILK

Smitty! You still work here? Why?

(then)

No matter. Bring it in.

Sweet Milk goes for a hug but Officer Smith pushes him away.

OFFICER SMITH (O.S.)

There's been reports of people cutting in line. Let's go.

Just then, Officer Smith's WALKIE goes off.

VOICE (THROUGH WALKIE)

Good Times, we have another man claiming to be Anderson Paak and his bodyguards seem pretty pissed. Please report to the stage.

OFFICER SMITH (INTO WALKIE)

Ten four, I'm on my way.

(then; to Sweet Milk)

I've got my eye on you.

SWEET MILK
Wouldn't have it any other way.

As Officer Smith knifes through the crowd, the camera RISES above it and gives us a birds eye view of THE YARD. The real Anderson Paak goes on stage and the crowd goes wild.

ANDERSON PAAK (O.S.)
Howard University! Yes Laawd!

Our guys, catfish in hand, join the crowd and enjoy.

EXT. GRAND HYATT HOTEL - ESTABLISHING - EVENING

The epic hotel is swarming with people there for Homecoming.

INT. GRAND HYATT HOTEL - LOBBY - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Thad and an impatient JB wait next to a fountain.

JB
What's taking so long? We never should have trusted a guy dressed like Peter Pan.

THAD
I promised you this was going to be the best Homecoming. Have I ever lied to you?

JB
Yes. Just this morning.

THAD
That was an omission.

JB rolls his eyes then opens his phone to check Stephanie's IG.

THAD (CONT'D)
Don't do it.

JB
I have to. It's harder not knowing.

A hand enters frame and slaps the phone, causing it to fly into the fountain. JB looks up to see Sweet Milk, who is now slurping on a Piña Colada.

SWEET MILK
Be present.

JB rushes to the fountain to rescue his drowning phone. Sweet Milk shakes his head disapprovingly.

SWEET MILK (CONT'D)

This is why I don't have one of those things.

(then)

Come on, our room is ready.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Our crew enters the insane suite.

THAD

Holy Shit.

JB opens a fridge stocked with Ace of Spades.

JB

(suspicious)

Did you use my card for incidentals?

SWEET MILK

Nope. It's all taken care of.

POP! Thad sips from a bottle of Ace.

JB

You still owe me a new phone but I'll admit. You came through on the room.

SWEET MILK

It's my pleasure. Wanted to take your mind off all the terrible things that guy's doing to your wife this weekend.

INT. PRESIDENTIAL SUITE - BEDROOM - LATER

JB separates his sensible outfits on the bed with labels like "Church," "Boat Ride," "Panel," "Martin Luther King Monument." Thad walks in dressed like Ghost from Power. He's texting and drinking a glass of Champagne.

THAD

Why'd you pack for a middle school field trip?

JB

What do you mean?

THAD
Boat ride?

JB
You never know.
(then)
So, you don't want Dana to move to
London, huh?

THAD
I was just playing.

JB
Well, there's truth in jest. I
always thought you guys would date.

THAD
I'm not thinking about dating
anyone. Do you know how fun it is to
be single with bread in New York?

JB
Yeah, but doesn't that get old?

THAD
Not yet.
(then)
Plus, Dana and I tried that,
remember?

JB
Ah yes, the infamous Bad Dick Report.

THAD
You mean the only one.

Sweet Milk enters rocking an all black suit and no shirt.

SWEET MILK
We ready?

JB
Are you ready? You wearing a shirt?
You want to borrow a shirt? No?
Okay.

THAD
Time to get ignorant!

EXT. PARK NIGHT CLUB - THAT NIGHT

The SUV pulls up to the front door. The line is wrapped
around the block.

ABDI
Does this work for you, Brothers?

SWEET MILK
It's perfect, Abdi. Thank you.

Abdi opens the doors for our crew and they walk straight to the velvet rope where Jaz and his clipboard lord over the party. It's chaos. Hundreds of people wait in line.

THAD
(to Jaz)
Hey! Yo! YO!

JB
Great, he's still ignoring us.

The guys don't notice Sweet Milk slip away. A beat later, Jaz finally comes over.

THAD
I used to throw parties here, Fam.

Thad palms a hundred dollar bill and Jaz scoffs at it.

JAZ
Then you should know that the line starts back there, *Fam.*

The rest of the crowd swarms Jaz. JB and Thad find themselves squeezed to the back of the pack.

THAD
What an asshole.

JB
He's never gonna let us in.
(then; looking around)
And where the hell is Sweet Milk?

He reappears out of nowhere.

SWEET MILK
Getting the hook up. Follow me.

They follow Sweet Milk to the BACK ALLEY of Park expecting the "Goodfellas" entrance. But the only thing they see are rats and workers grabbing bags of ice from a white van and carrying them inside. Sweet Milk hoists a bag of ice on his shoulder.

THAD
Nigga, are you serious?

JB
I thought you had the hook up?

SWEET MILK
We're our own hook up. Just look
confident and don't stop.

JB shakes his head "No" but Thad follows Sweet Milk. After a deep breath, JB grabs a bag and hurries behind them.

INT. PARK NIGHT CLUB - CONTINUOUS

They drop the bags of ice in the kitchen and keep going straight into the packed club. The music gets louder, the people get prettier and JB realizes, IT WORKED! HOLY SHIT, IT WORKED! I CAN'T BELIEVE WE PULLED THIS--

YANK! A huge hand grabs JB's shoulder and stops him in his tracks. The BOUNCER lifts him up.

JB
I didn't do anything.

BOUNCER
Shut the fuck up.

Thad and Sweet Milk look on in shock as JB is carried out.

JB
Help!

The Bouncer pushes JB out into the--

EXT. PARK NIGHT CLUB - BACK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

JB
What am I supposed to do? I don't
even have a phone to call my friends.

BOUNCER
My bad, Bruh. You wanna borrow mine?

JB
Really?

BOUNCER
No! Get the fuck out of here.

A hopeless JB comes around the corner to the FRONT ENTRANCE and scans the line of chauffeured cars for Abdi. No dice. He shakes his head muttering to himself.

JB
Homecoming.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
James?

He turns and can't believe it.

JB
Professor Winters?

MUSIC CUE: "THE BEST I EVER HAD" BY DRAKE

Professor Winters, now in her late 40s, looks even more stunning than he remembered. She embraces him in a warm hug and the MUSIC ENDS.

PROFESSOR WINTERS
It's so great to see you. You look fantastic.

JB
(nervous)
Th-thank you. You do, too.
Beautiful as always.

PROFESSOR WINTERS
Are you going in?

JB
(covering)
Meh, I don't know. I was already inside. It was just okay.

JB can't believe he's about to miss another opportunity with Professor Winters. But the Homecoming Gods have his back.

JAZ (O.C.)
JB!

He notices the clipboard God, aka Jaz, staring at him. The Bouncer that kicked JB out stands next to Jaz nodding.

JB
Me?

JAZ
Are you JB?

He nods.

JAZ (CONT'D)
You're in. Y'all together?

JB

Yes?

Professor Winters grabs JB's hand and the seas part. As they pass the crowd of unchosen, the Bouncer leans in to JB.

BOUNCER

(sotto)

Really sorry about the misunderstanding.

JB

Don't let it happen again.

INT. PARK NIGHT CLUB - CONTINUOUS

DJ D-NICE drops a BANGER and from his elevated viewpoint we can see the rocking crowd below. He shoots a confetti bomb just as JB and Professor Winters are escorted inside.

SLOW MOTION: JB feels like the Great Gatsby as they're led through falling confetti to a VIP section. Thad welcomes them with open arms. END SLOW MOTION.

PROFESSOR WINTERS

I have to run to the ladies room.
Will you wait here for me?

JB

(sotto)

Forever.

PROFESSOR WINTERS

What?

JB

Sure.

Professor Winters makes her way through the crowd.

THAD

How did that happen?

JB

(shrugs)

Homecoming.

(then)

How the hell did you get me in?

Thad nods to Sweet Milk, who's in the DEEJAY booth with D-Nice.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. PARK NIGHT CLUB - REAR ENTRANCE

Sweet Milk and Thad watch as JB is dragged out by the Bouncer. Sweet Milk scans the room for a solution and finds it... Danny Glover. He makes a bee line toward him.

DANNY GLOVER

Baby Boy, I was just thinking about that time we almost got kidnapped in Nigeria. You never did tell me how you convinced them not to take us.

SWEET MILK

Danny! Story for another time. Right now, I need you to listen to me. I'm gonna go over and talk to those guys. When I point to you, just nod your head. Got it?

Danny doesn't look like he got it, but nonetheless, Sweet Milk confidently walks up to the Bouncer who threw out JB.

SWEET MILK (CONT'D)

You know you fucked up right? That guy you just threw out was Danny Glover's grandson.

BOUNCER

You bullshitting.

SWEET MILK

Ask him.
(then)
Danny!

They look over. Danny Glover nods his head yes.

SWEET MILK (CONT'D)

You're done, Pal.

INT. PARK NIGHT CLUB - VIP TABLE - (BACK TO PRESENT)

JB listens to Thad in awe.

JB

I guess sometimes it helps to have a crazy friend.

JB and Thad raise a glass to Sweet Milk, who's now deejaying as D-Nice looks on.

SWEET MILK (INTO MIC)

I see you, Kamala!

Professor Winters returns to the VIP SECTION and Thad, the consummate wingman, immediately excuses himself.

THAD

I'm gonna grab some more ice.

INT. PARK NIGHT CLUB - BAR - LATER

Thad squeezes in but can't get the BARTENDER's attention. SHEILA, 30s, beautiful, in an outfit that costs more than your mortgage, appears next to him.

SHEILA

Need some help?

THAD

Sheila, hey.

She waves the bartender down.

BARTENDER

Be right there.

THAD

Thank you. God, I haven't seen you since our long weekend--

SHEILA

--At the Doubletree. I can't believe that was ten years ago.

THAD

Remember it like it was yesterday. We should link up. I'm not staying at the Doubletree anymore.

SHEILA

Tempting, but I don't think my husband would appreciate that.

THAD

Oh. You're married?

SHEILA

Yeah. With a kid and everything.

THAD

That's great. Lucky guy.

SHEILA

He is.

The bartender arrives.

SHEILA (CONT'D)
 Brock will take care of you.

Sheila makes her exit. Thad enjoys watching her walk away.

INT. PARK NIGHT CLUB - VIP TABLE - SAME TIME

JB and Professor Winters look cozy sipping cocktails.

PROFESSOR WINTERS
 Since then, I've been back home
 teaching at University of Trinidad.

JB
 That's so far.

PROFESSOR WINTERS
 It is. But I'm here now.

JB takes a deep breath.

JB	PROFESSOR WINTERS (CONT'D)
Can I tell you something?	I wanted to say--

JB
 You first.

PROFESSOR WINTERS
 I just wanted to thank you.

JB
 For what?

PROFESSOR WINTERS
 You know, when you took my class it
 was around the same time I was
 questioning if I was making a
 difference as a teacher. I was
 thinking of quitting.

JB
 Really?

PROFESSOR WINTERS
 Yeah, then I had this one really
 special student who was so bright
 and inquisitive--

JB
 Mike Moss? He was great.

PROFESSOR WINTERS

No. It was you, James. You reminded me of why I got into teaching in the first place. And I appreciated that you were the only student who didn't hit on me.

JB

(covering)

Wow, the nerve of some people.

PROFESSOR WINTERS

Right. But anyway, you were about to say something?

JB

Well, no. Not sure I should now.

JB stares at his dream woman sitting before him. He can't miss another golden opportunity. Fuck it.

JB (CONT'D)

What if I told you I had a crush on you in school?

Professor Winters puts her hand on JB's knee.

PROFESSOR WINTERS

What if I told you I had a crush on you now?

JB

Uhhh. Wow. What was the question? Was it a question?

She spots her friends waving from across the room.

PROFESSOR WINTERS

Sorry, I have to catch up with my girlfriends. But I'm going to the House of Secrets tomorrow, you should come as my plus one.

JB

Yes, absolutely.

JB pads his pockets for his phone and realizes.

JB (CONT'D)

I'll have to write down your info. I don't have a phone.

PROFESSOR WINTERS

So you can be more present?

JB
Yes. That's exactly why I do it.

PROFESSOR WINTERS
I love that.

She writes her number down on a napkin and hands it to him.

PROFESSOR WINTERS (CONT'D)
I'll see you tomorrow.

Professor Winters kisses JB on the cheek then floats off. Thad arrives with a bucket of ice and JB holds up the napkin like, "can you believe this?" Just then, Thad is tapped on the shoulder by a BOTTLE GIRL.

BOTTLE GIRL
The owner would like you to join him upstairs.

THAD
Really? Okay.

JB
What's up?

THAD
I'm guessing he wants to meet Danny Glover's grandson and offer us more VIP shit. We can't lose!

As Thad and JB follow the Bottle Girl through the club, Thad notices Big Deb doing some mean body rolls as she towers over the crowd. Dana dances next to her, looking even cuter than normal. Thad smiles and they keep it moving.

INT. PARK NIGHT CLUB - HALLWAY - A SHORT WHILE LATER

JB and Thad wait in the hallway. Through a crack in the door they watch MIKE BURNS, late 40s, think Daymond John but dangerous. He's the Godfather of D.C. with the Mayor and Police Chief in his pocket. He berates a three-hundred-pound PROMOTER.

MIKE BURNS
I told you to cut the guest list off at ten PM.

PROMOTER
But the doors didn't even open til ten.

SMACK! Mike slaps the shit out of him. JB and Thad wince.

MIKE BURNS

That was the point, Dummy. Get the fuck out of my sight.

The Promoter sulks past Thad and JB like a kicked dog.

JB

Hate to be on *his* bad side.

MIKE BURNS

Send them other muthafuckas in.

Gulp. A suited PRETTY BOY who looks like a poor man's secret service, motions for them to enter.

INT. PARK NIGHT CLUB - MIKE BURNS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A floor to ceiling wall of video screens shows every angle of the club. Mike sits behind his desk staring a hole into Thad.

MIKE BURNS

You got some real balls, Thad.

THAD

What did I do?

Thad looks around confused... until he notices Sheila in a wedding photo with Mike.

THAD (CONT'D)

Ohhhh. Whatever you're thinking, it was in the past. Long time ago.

MIKE BURNS

Shut up. I'm gonna keep this shit short. Your Homecoming is officially over. Every club, every hot party, you and your friends are persona non fucking grata. Your ass will be lucky if you can get a half-smoke.

THAD

Is it that serious?

Mike stands.

THAD (CONT'D)

Okay, point taken. Good talk. This was a great party.

MIKE BURNS

Get the fuck outta my club.

As they hurry out of the office, we see Sweet Milk on a monitor. He's dancing on stage with Big Deb on his shoulders.

EXT. PARK NIGHT CLUB - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Thad and JB stand at the front of the club.

JB
What just happened?

THAD
I may have been talking with his wife at the bar.

JB
I can't imagine he's that petty.

THAD
I can. He once threw a caterer down the stairs for correcting his pronunciation of Salmon.

JB
Well, should we head back to the hotel?

INT. UBER - A SHORT WHILE LATER (MOVING)

JB and Thad sit in the backseat. JB tries to roll up his half open window and calls up to their UBER DRIVER.

JB
Sir, can you roll this up all the way?

UBER DRIVER
Sorry, Man. It's broken.

Thad hangs up his phone.

THAD
Jesus. Since we don't have keys, and Sweet Milk is the only name on the reservation, they won't let us in.

JB
Dude, it's cool. Why don't we just get something to eat at Ben's? My treat. By the time we're done, Sweet Milk will have reappeared like he always does.

THAD

Fine.

(then; to Driver)

Sir, I'm gonna change the destination.

Suddenly, their UBER whips over to the side of the road.

JB

Not to here. What are you doing?

UBER DRIVER

I'm picking up the other riders.
You selected a Pool.

THAD

Naw man, that was an accident.

UBER DRIVER

Too late.

The back door opens and ANGELA, one of the older black women from the plane, spills into the car. She's now in club gear.

ANGELA

(to Thad)

Slide over, Young Meat! You're sitting bitch.

THAD

Perfect.

Her friend, SHARON, also from the plane, plops in the front seat. She turns back and immediately recognizes JB.

SHARON

Heyyyy! Cutie from the plane! I see you got a new maaaaan!

Angela does a line of coke and offers some to the boys.

ANGELA

Y'all want some?

JB

I don't do drugs.

ANGELA

(mocking)

I don't do drugs.

SHARON

Stop being a little bitch.

JB

You guys seemed so much nicer on the plane.

"Da Butt" by Chuck Brown comes on the radio. Angela puts her butt all up in Thad's face and smacks it as she and Sharon sing along with Chuck Brown.

SHARON

Doing the butt!

ANGELA

Na na na na! You know Chuck wrote this shit about me. We used to date when I was at Howard.

Angela faces Thad and dances how a drunk person would think is sexy. Thad's drunk ass is actually into it.

THAD

Sexy, sexxxxxxy.

Suddenly, an awful retching sound comes from the front passenger seat. They look up and see Sharon choking back bile.

JB

Pull the car over.

ANGELA

Oh man, if she pukes I'm definitely gonna puke.

THAD

Pull the fucking car over!

Sharon rolls down her window and blows chunks. Her vomit flies out and back through JB's broken window, splatting all over his face.

JB

Oh, God!

JB frantically grabs for anything. He finds a napkin in his pocket and wipes his face. After a beat, he looks down at the napkin and is horrified.

THAD

You okay, Man?

Thad sees that JB has used the napkin with Professor Winters' number to clean the vomit off his face. It's now completely illegible and JB's catatonic. The Uber finally pulls over.

THAD (CONT'D)
We'll just walk from here.

EXT. D.C. STREETS - A SHORT WHILE LATER

JB sulks as they walk down the street.

THAD
(in medias)
Aren't you being a little
melodramatic? It's twenty-twenty-
one. You can find her on social
media.

JB
No, I can't. She deleted all her pages
after Dean Archer slid in her DMs.

Thad shakes his head. Suddenly, they see a raucous PEDAL PUB
of drunk, randy bachelorettes approaching.

JB (CONT'D)
At least someone's having fun.

As the multi-passenger bicycle trolley passes by, Thad and JB
don't notice that the shirtless bartender in the Viking
helmet is none other than Sweet Milk.

INT. BEN'S CHILI BOWL - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The line outside the iconic diner snakes around the corner.
It's filled with inebriated party goers waiting for their
chance to place an order with the line cooks who shout orders
over hip-hop and sizzling 'half smokes,' a half pork half
beef Washington D.C. delicacy.

JB exits the bathroom, wiping down his face. He passes by a
wall of famous photos that range from Barack to Bono, and
lands at a small booth where Thad is looking on his phone.

THAD
Hold up! Ya boy might be making a
comeback. Shorty I met on the Yard
is tryna come through.

JB
Where exactly is she gonna come
through to?

THAD
One step at a time.

A WAITER arrives with their tray of food.

JB

I might have come to homecoming
just for this chili dog.

The waiter is about to hand them their food and a MANAGER stops him.

MANAGER

Sorry, guys. No food for you.

THAD

What?

JB

Why?

MANAGER

You'd have to ask that gentleman.

They turn and see the Bouncer and suited Pretty Boy from Park sitting in the back. The Bouncer wags his finger "no."

JB

I guess Burns *is* that petty.

THAD

This is such bullshit.

Just then, Dana and Big Deb happen by with their to-go order.

DANA

Yo! What happened to y'all at the club?

BIG DEB

Yeah, where's Sugar-Dairy?

THAD

Sweet Milk? Still MIA. We can't even get into our hotel room.

JB

We're basically homeless.

Dana and Big Deb share a "Is it cool?" Look.

BIG DEB

One of our line sisters came out as Republican, so we have an extra room at our AirBnB if you wanna crash.

DANA

For the night.

THAD

Nice. Can my friend slide through?
She just wants to say hello.

DANA

At four AM? Absolutely not.

THAD

Fiiiiine. Night's ruined anyway.
Couldn't get much worse.

INT. DANA'S AIRBNB - KIDS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dana turns on a light and there's a collective "Whoa!" The room is plastered wall-to-wall with clowns. Clown artwork, clown figurines, clown lava lamps, clown bedding on the bunk beds. You get the picture.

THAD

Spoke too soon.

JB

You want the top or bottom?

THAD

Sheeit. Neither. I don't fuck with clowns.

(then)

Let me bunk with you. You know this room is trash.

DANA

I'm sorry. I'm a little tipsy...
pretty sure what you meant to say
was "thank you for rescuing us from
sleeping on Georgia Avenue tonight,
Dana."

JB

Of course. Thank you.

An exhausted JB crawls into the bottom bunk and pulls the 'Bozo The Clown' sheets over him. Thad's not giving up.

THAD

C'mon, Dane. I'll be a perfect gentleman.

DANA

Like you know how.

She tosses a pillow at him. Defeated, he gets ready for bed and takes off his shirt.

Dana sneaks a peak before exiting and turning off the light. The clown wall paper begins to glow in the dark.

THAD

Jesus! Can a brotha at least get a sleeping mask?

INT. DANA'S AIRBNB - KID'S BEDROOM - MORNING

SUPER: SATURDAY

A snoring Thad is cuddled up with a Pennywise doll. He slowly stirs awake. Startled, he throws the doll across the room.

THAD

JB?
(then; off silence)
Bizzle?

Thad leans over the edge and sees JB's bed is empty. He hears "WAP" by Cardi B feat. Meg Thee Stallion from the hallway.

INT. DANA'S AIRBNB - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The song grows louder as a bashful Thad passes DELTAS of all ages, looking at him like a piece of meat. They're coming in and out of bathrooms in towels, doing their hair and dancing while getting ready. Thad sees Jaz doing the walk of shame.

BIG DEB (O.C.)

MAN ON THE FLOOR!

He turns and sees Big Deb in a Kimono.

THAD

Hey, Deb. You seen JB?

BIG DEB

(smiles; pointing)
Oh, he's in there with Dana. Might wanna knock first.

THAD

What?

He hurries to the door and hears loud, passionate sex noises. "Ohhhh. Fuck me!" He throws it open and sees-- a NAKED COUPLE that is neither Dana nor JB.

NAKED COUPLE

CLOSE THE DOOR!!

THAD

My bad!

He quickly shuts it and looks back at Deb, who's cracking up.

BIG DEB

I knew you liked her ass.

(then; calling out)

DANA!

DANA (PRELAP)

You really thought I was fucking

JB?

INT. DANA'S AIRBNB - KITCHEN - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The kitchen/dining area is bustling. In the background, there's a live broadcast of the Howard Parade on a TV. Dana, Big Deb and their sorors drink mimosas while a YOUNG DELTA finishes setting out a feast that looks like Sunday breakfast at Big Mama's-- Bacon, eggs, shrimp n grits, etc.

THAD

I don't know what I thought.

He takes a sip of his orange juice.

BIG DEB

You ever noticed you raised your pinky when you drink?

THAD

Would you leave me alone?

JB

(to Dana)

Isaiah just texted you.

Thad raises an eyebrow at the mention of her ex as JB hands Dana her phone.

JB (CONT'D)

Welp. Flight is booked. I leave at noon.

THAD

What? You can't leave.

JB

Yes I can. I had trip insurance. With any luck I can make it back before Stephie picks up her boxes.

DANA

Look, as your girl, I'm gonna keep it a stack with you. Dating sucks. All the dudes trying to holla at me are either hoes, have kids or no job. Sometimes all three. You're too good a dude to race back to a woman who does't want you.

BIG DEB

Facts. Let me tell you about a guy who cheated that I took back.

Long silence.

JB

You're not saying anything.

BIG DEB

Exactly. Cuz, that shit wouldn't happen. Take a motherfucker back that cheated? Never. I have way too much respect for this mind and body.

Deb takes a bottle of Fireball to the head.

THAD

Not to mention, your dream woman is here.

JB

Doesn't matter since I have no way to find her.

THAD

Yes you do. We know she's gonna be at the House of Secrets.

DANA

Someone on The Yard has to know where it is.

YOUNG DELTA

Doubt it, Spesh. They change it up. I heard you get a text with a location to be at an hour before the party. Then, they blindfold and shuttle you to the party.

BIG DEB

(scowls at Young Delta)
Why's there no bacon on my plate?

THAD

It's worth a shot. Don't let the
one that got away, get away again.

DANA

You deserve a win.

Everybody ad-libs their agreement and gases him up.

ALL

(chanting)

JB! JB! JB!

JB is starting to come around and lets a smile escape.

JB

Okay, fine. I'll stay!

Ayyyee, turn up!! Big Deb pulls out a bottle of Hennessey
Clear and starts to Drive The Boat. She goes around the room
pouring shots directly into people's mouths.

THAD

That's Hennessey?

BIG DEB

(proud)

That new-new. I came up with the
recipe myself.

THAD

I thought you were a Bio-Chemist?

BIG DEB

I am. But when Hennessey approached
me at St. Judes and said, "Deb, you
can keep using your knowledge of
science to cure childhood cancer or
come craft some fine adult beverages
with us." And I thought, when it's
your time, it's your time. You know?

Good enough for Thad. He takes the shot. JB declines.

JB

(matter of fact)

I'm not allowed to drink Henny...
and I need to be sharp when I meet
Ta-Nehisi.

Big Deb shrugs, then--

YOUNG DELTA

Hey! That's the guy who did the emergency tracheostomy at that hotel party last night! *He's Mr. Howard???*

ANGLE ON the TV where we see none other than Sweet Milk! He's in the middle of the Homecoming Parade, riding in the back of a convertible Corvette, wearing a "Mr. Howard" sash. Sweet Milk is in full Ferris-Bueller-Danke-Scoen mode, as he and MS. HOWARD, 20, proudly wave to the on-lookers. JB and Thad share a look.

THAD

Of course he is.

JB

Okay let's go get him, head to the hotel to change, then we find Professor Winters.

DANA

Catch up with us after the game. We have a booth at the Tailgate. I'll ask around about the party.

THAD

Bet.

They scarf down a few more bites and take off.

EXT. GREENE STADIUM - LATER

SUPER: HOWARD BISON VS. CHEYNEY WOLVES

We're at the big game. This. Is. It. The stands are packed and the crowd is LIT. The whole stadium swag surfs in excitement. A Howard RUNNING BACK breaks a tackle and gets into the red zone.

ANNOUNCER

THAT'LL BE FIRST AND TEEEEENN!

CROWD

BIIIISSONNN!

ANNOUNCER

Eighteen seconds left. Can the Bison tie this up before the half?

The QUARTERBACK takes the snap, dives over his OFFENSIVE LINEMAN and rolls into the end zone!

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
 SCOOOOOORRRRREEE!
 (then)
 All tied up folks. We've got
 ourselves a ball game!

Both teams head back to the locker rooms. The BAND takes formation on the FIELD, accompanied by Howard's all female dance troupe known as the OOH LA LA GIRLS.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
 AND NOW, YOUR SHOWTIME MARCHING
 BAND AND TWENTY-TWENTY-ONE
 HOMECOMING COURT!

JB and Thad are in the STANDS when they spot Sweet Milk on the FIELD. He's on a platform with PRESIDENT WAYNE FREDERICK, FAMOUS ALUMNI, and the HOMECOMING COURT. The band starts to perform their version of "NECK" by Cameo, the same song Thad played for his co-workers.

In the STANDS, Thad futilely tries to get his attention.

THAD
 SWEET MILK!!

The crowd is entirely too loud for Sweet Milk to hear him.

JB
 She's here.

Thad follows JB's sight line. Like a cool drink of water after a trek through the Sahara... it's Professor Winters.

JB (CONT'D)
 Professor Winters!!

She doesn't hear him as she gracefully floats in the direction of the concessions. JB spots the Dad from outside Douglass whose name Thad couldn't recall. He's standing close to Professor Winters.

JB (CONT'D)
 Tell your boy to stop her!

THAD
 I told you, I don't remember that
 nigga's name!

JB
 Try!

THAD
 (guessing)
 Ronnie! Bobby! Ricky! Mike!

JB
 Really?

Thad shrugs. JB takes off after her but trips and eats shit. Love-crazed, he picks himself up and pushes his way through the crowd. Thad tries to keep up.

ANGLE ON the FIELD as the band finishes.

ANNOUNCER (OVER LOUD SPEAKER)
 And now a word from Mr. And Ms.
 Howard!

Sweet Milk steps up to the podium.

SWEET MILK (INTO PODIUM MIC)
 H-UUUUU!!!

STADIUM
 YOOOOOUUUU KNOOOOOOOOOOWWWWWW!!!

Sweet Milk raises his arms victoriously, not noticing Officer Smith and other CAMPUS POLICE are heading toward him.

SWEET MILK (INTO PODIUM MIC)
 Some of you may know me... and some
 of you will have the pleasure,
 soon! I just want to say thank you
 to everyone who voted.

RANDOM GUY (O.S.)
 Who are you?!!

SWEET MILK (INTO PODIUM MIC)
 That's a good question I often ask
 myself. Yesterday, I was but a
 humble servant of the Crown. But
 today, I am your Homecoming King.

Sweet Milk finally spots security.

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. GREENE STADIUM - CONCESSIONS - SAME TIME

JB and Thad are looking through the crowd for Professor Winters. The stadium roars. Little do they realize it's for--

Sweet Milk who is in the middle of the FIELD with Officer Smith and campus police, giving chase. Sweet Milk is having fun eluding them and running patterns like a Wide-Out.

Back at CONCESSIONS, JB and Thad are just about to catch up to Professor Winters when Sweet Milk blows past them in a motorized cart towing a trailer. He screeches to a halt.

SWEET MILK
HOP IN!!

They guys look back and spot Campus Police in hot pursuit. Thad immediately jumps on. JB looks around the crowd and can no longer see Professor Winters.

SWEET MILK (CONT'D)
Hurry up, Fool!

JB is torn. But when he sees Officer Smith barreling at him with a taser in one hand and pepper spray in the other, he hops in with his boys. Sweet Milk peels out!

I/E. CART - CONTINUOUS (MOVING)

They race out of the stadium onto Campus Boulevard, the main thoroughfare through Howard's campus. Sweet Milk is cool as a cucumber as he barely avoids people jumping out of the way.

SWEET MILK
Where you guys been?

JB
Where the hell have YOU been??

SWEET MILK
Having the best Homecoming ever.
(looking back at JB)
I *thought* that's what we were here
for.

THAD
Look out!

Sweet Milk turns back and sees they're about to hit a multi-generational family with a senior in a wheelchair. He yanks the wheel left, avoiding the family.

SWEET MILK
(to Family)
Sorry!

Distracted, he doesn't realize they're about to go full-speed over FOUNDER'S HILL.

ALL

Ahhhh!

They fly through the air, land hard and nearly destroy the cart. Luckily, she's sturdy and keeps on rolling. But the bungee cords securing the tarp behind them have snapped. People stare and point in disbelief.

SWEET MILK

The block might be a little hot.

JB

Ya think?!

SWEET MILK

Hold on.

He hooks a right and heads toward the RESERVOIR.

THAD

We need to ditch this cart.

SWEET MILK

I don't know. I'm thinking about pimping this bad boy for the rest of the weekend.

They're completely oblivious to what is happening behind them. The tarp that had been covering the trailer has slipped off, revealing-- WYATT THE WOLF, aka Cheyney University's mascot.

JB

I truly hate you.

SWEET MILK

Can you step outside of yourself for one second?

JB

Me?! You're literally the most selfish human being I've ever been forced to share oxygen with.

SWEET MILK

If I'm so selfish, why am I working so hard to help you?

JB

Oh, is that what you're doing? Because it seems like you're doing the same old Sweet Milk crap from college. You're reckless.

SWEET MILK

Name one reckless thing I've done.

CLANK. CLANK. They turn and are face to face with Wyatt.

THAD

You stole a fucking wolf!

Wyatt lunges at the cage bars!

ALL

Ahhhh!!

They hit a bump and the cage door busts open.

JB

Whatta we do?! Whatta we do?!

Sweet Milk sees the approaching RESERVOIR, a twenty-five acre pond, and has an idea.

SWEET MILK

I'm taking us in. Hold onto your butts!

Sweet Milk steers them straight into the icy water. SPLASH! After a beat, they resurface gasping and flailing.

THAD

Why did you do that?!

SWEET MILK

Wolves hate water!

JB

Are you, crazy?! Wolves are *great* swimmers!

THAD

Where is it?

They see Wyatt racing toward them like Michael Phelps with fur.

JB

He's coming straight at us!!

JB and Thad try to swim away. Sweet Milk calmly treads water.

SWEET MILK

You're not supposed to run.

JB

I'm not running, I'm swimming!

Looks like he was right. The wolf heads past Sweet Milk and toward the flailing JB and Thad.

JB (CONT'D)
Hurry up.

THAD
It's pointless, I got nothing left!

Thad accepts his fate and closes his eyes but Wyatt swims right past him and crawls up on the shore.

SWEET MILK
Told you they don't like water.

Wyatt stares them down, daring them to come ashore.

JB
What do we do now?

SWEET MILK
We wait.

JB
For what? Until we drown?

THAD
Why are you so calm?

SWEET MILK
I know how I'm gonna die. This isn't it.

GRRRR!! He's not so sure anymore. But then, Wyatt disappears into a grove of trees and howls. With the coast clear, they swim to shore and lay on the ground, soaked and out of breath.

THAD
Should we tell someone?

JB
Maybe we can just call in an anonymous tip?

SWEET MILK
Smart man.

This might be the first time that they're all in agreement.

EXT. HOWARD UNIVERSITY - 5TH STREET - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Dripping wet, they walk back toward campus and finish catching each other up on the last twelve hours.

SWEET MILK

Damn, your night sucked.

THAD

Thanks. You gonna help us find it,
or not?

SWEET MILK

Are you kidding? *I've* never even
been to the House of Secrets.

Thad and JB are surprised.

SWEET MILK (CONT'D)

Prince used to have parties at the
original one all the time. I'd been
hired as a nude model for the final
soiree The Purple One ever had
there. But my Seasonal Affective
Disorder had other plans. I don't
believe in regrets, but if I did...

Sweet Milk stares off to the horizon.

JB

So, is that a yes?

SWEET MILK

To quote you on prom night, I'm in.

JB

(sarcastic)

Great.

(then)

I haven't brushed my teeth in
thirty-six hours. Can we please go
back to the hotel?

SWEET MILK

Yeah, about that. I might have had
a small gathering in our suite last
night. Things got a little messy
and we got kicked out.

THAD

What about our stuff?

SWEET MILK

They said they'd call the authorities
if any of us showed our faces at a
Hyatt property ever again. I sent
Abdi. I'm hoping he has better luck.

JB

What?! I have a panel in an hour.
We don't exactly have time to hit
the mall.

SWEET MILK

What about Up Against The Wall?

THAD

It closed twenty years ago. But we
could hit the bookstore.

SWEET MILK

Solutions. I like the way you
think.

EXT. HOWARD UNIVERSITY - BOOKSTORE - LATER

MUSIC CUE: "PIMPING ALL OVER THE WORLD" BY LUDACRIS FEAT.
BOBBY VALENTINO

JB, Thad, and Sweet Milk exit in SLOW MOTION wearing the most
random of random left over Howard paraphernalia.

Sweet Milk proudly sports a snug-fitting "Howard University
Bowling Team" tracksuit. He starts stretching like he's
warming up. Thad is wearing an oversized "Howard Step-Mom"
sweatshirt. JB dons a School of Divinity long-sleeve that has
a picture of a Nun next to the words "YOU AIN'T GETTIN' NUN."
END SLOW MOTION. MUSIC ENDS.

THAD

We look fucking ridiculous.

SWEET MILK

Speak for yourself.

He does kinda pull it off.

JB

I can't believe I just took a bird
bath in a public restroom like a
Starbucks hobo.

SWEET MILK

We've all been there.

THAD

We still have forty-five minutes.
Let's stop by Dana's booth and see
if she got any leads on the House
of Secrets.

As the Guys make their way, the MUSIC resumes.

LUDACRIS (FROM SONG)
*Jump in the car and just ride for
 hours, making sure I don't miss the
 homecoming at Howard!*

EXT. PARKING LOT TAILGATE - A SHORT WHILE LATER

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE PARKING LOT THAT TAKES UP A CITY BLOCK. TENTS AND A MASSIVE CROWD COVER EVERY INCH OF IT.

A DRONE SHOT hovers down to the tailgate that feels like a fly-ass family reunion with just the cousins. JB, Thad, and Sweet Milk greet old friends as they make their way through the tented areas that function as mini-lounges.

JB
 How are we going to find Dana's booth?

THAD
 She said they were right across from the Ques.

BARK BARK BARK BARK BARK!!!

MUSIC CUE: "ATOMIC DOG" BY GEORGE CLINTON

We see the Ques set up. An elaborate compound of several purple tents complete with a burly GRILL MASTER barbecuing from barrel grills with flames shooting out. They scoop "Oil," their famous boozy purple punch, from huge Rubbermaid trashcans to a waiting line of people. Thad, JB, and Sweet Milk head in that direction.

The Ques start stepping. Amongst the onlookers is Thad's white co-worker, Casey. Thad spots him and does a double-take. Casey's clearly had several cups of oil and is about to jump in the Omega's routine when Thad yanks him back! He's oblivious to the ass-whooping Thad just saved him from.

CASEY
 (all smiles)
 Big Bud!

He gives Thad a bear hug.

THAD
 What the hell are you doing here?

CASEY

You hyped up homecoming so much, I had to come check it out.

THAD

And???

CASEY

It's okay.

SWEET MILK

You gonna introduce us to your friend, Big Bud?

Thad rolls his eyes.

THAD

Casey, these are my boys Sweet Milk and JB. JB, Sweet Milk, this is my co-worker, Casey.

CASEY

Just a co-worker? After all the strip clubs and cigar bars? I'm offended.

JB and Sweet Milk extend their hands but Casey pulls them in for a hug, too.

CASEY (CONT'D)

Nice to meet you.

(re: Omegas)

I'm gonna go dance with my new friends now.

THAD

I think you've had enough Homecoming for the day. Come on.

The now foursome head toward Dana's booth.

CASEY

So, Sweet Milk? How'd you get that nickname?

SWEET MILK

That's a good question.

Sweet Milk walks off.

EXT. PARKING LOT TAILGATE - DANA'S BOOTH - MINUTES LATER

Dana's booth has everything you could want. Food, drinks, beautiful women, recovery IV drips for those who went too hard and alcohol drips for those trying to go harder. The Guys enter and Dana immediately starts laughing.

DANA

What the fuck are y'all wearing?

BIG DEB

You're like the dorks from Pulp Fiction waiting for Harvey Keitel.

SWEET MILK

Funny you should bring up The Wolf.

JB elbows him to shut him up.

DANA

What's your problem?

THAD

It's a long story.

JB

Were you able to dig up anything on the House of Secrets?

DANA

Came up empty. But I reached out to one last friend who might be able to help.

JB

Thanks.

JB's not looking so good.

DANA

You okay?

JB

I think I'm still hung over from last night.

DANA

You should try a recovery drip.

JB

Mmmmm. I have a pretty strict vitamin regimen.

DANA

Just try it. You'll feel like a million bucks. Trust me.

Casey is hooked up to a recovery IV labeled "Turn Down." He gives JB an enthusiastic thumbs up.

JB

Okay.

JB joins Casey and get's hooked up to an IV.

INT. CRAMTON AUDITORIUM - LATER

Gentle ambient music plays. On the STAGE, there are four empty chairs. The giant screen in the background reads "DO HBCUS PREPARE YOU FOR THE REAL WORLD?" It's standing-room only in the fifteen-hundred seat auditorium.

BACKSTAGE, the moderator DR. GREG CARR, looks over his cards. Stagehands finish mic'ing TA-NEHISI COATES, PHYLICIA RASHAD, and JB. JB is feeling *really* great and super excited. Sweet Milk massages his shoulders.

SWEET MILK

You look good, Bro. Really loose.

Phylicia reacts to JB's "You ain't gettin' Nun" shirt.

JB

(to Phylicia)

Such an honor.

(then; whispering)

Don't blame yourself. None of us saw it coming.

PHYLICIA RASHAD

I don't.

She gives a dirty look then walks off. Ta-Nehisi approaches.

TA-NEHISI COATES

Hey, Brother. Let's have a good panel.

Ta-Nehisi extends his hand and JB slaps it and tilts his head back ala Will and Jazzy Jeff from Fresh Prince.

JB

Pssshhh!

Thad raises an eyebrow as the panelists take the stage.

THAD

Oh no.

EXT. PARKING LOT TAILGATE - DANA'S BOOTH - SAME TIME

Dana is swapping out empty IV bags. She looks closer at JB's "Turn Down..." She rotates the bag and the other side boasts "FOR WHAT?!" Her eyes widen.

INT. CRAMTON AUDITORIUM - SAME TIME

BACKSTAGE, Thad's phone rings.

THAD (INTO PHONE)

Hey, what's up?

DANA (THROUGH PHONE)

I think JB got the wrong IV. His was filled with that clear Hennessey.

ON STAGE, JB salsa dances to his chair and dramatically sits.

DR. CARR

Thank you all for being here. We're excited that we were able to put together this amazing group of Alumni. Without further ado, let's meet our panelists.

JB

Whoooo!

DR. CARR

It's only right to begin with the woman we all grew up wishing was our mom.

JB

Motherfuckin' right!

DR. CARR

Born in Houston, Texas...

JB

H-Towwwnnn. *What it dew, it's Paul Wall, I'm the people's champ!*
(then; to Phylicia)
Where Debbie at?

Dr. Carr gives him the side-eye but continues.

DR. CARR

She's an American singer, stage director and the first black actress to win the Tony Award for her role in the revival of *A Raisin in the Sun*. A few of her Broadway credits include *Into The Woods*, *Jelly's Last Jam*, and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*.

JB

Jelly's Last Jam was my shit.

DR. CARR

Her film credits are too numerous to list, but she's most known for her role on the game-changing hit sitcom, *The Cosby Show*. Howard University... please give it up for your fellow Bison... the icon, Phylicia Rashad!!

The crowd applauds and JB hops out of his seat, genuflecting at her feet.

JB

We're not worthy! We're not worthy!

DR. CARR

(forceful; to JB)
Please take your chair.

JB complies.

DR. CARR (CONT'D)

Next, I'd like to introduce an *NEA Foundation's Horace Mann Awardee for Teaching Excellence*. The leader behind Turning Point School's *Gold Ribbon Program*, and two-time *California Teacher of the Year*... He seems *really* excited to be here... esteemed Principal, James Banks Bland the Third!

JB

Yeaaaah. Give it up for me! JB-three stacks! Woof, woof, woof!!

The crowd applauds. They like him.

DR. CARR

And last but certainly not least, our final panelist.

(MORE)

DR. CARR (CONT'D)

He gained a wide readership during his time as national correspondent at *The Atlantic*. He's worked for *The Village Voice*, *TIME*, *The Washington Post*, *The New York Times Magazine* where he's written extensively on cultural, social, and political issues regarding African Americans and white supremacy. Toni Morrison said his twenty-fifteen, number-one New York Times Best Seller, *Between the World and Me* was "required reading."

JB

(coughs)
Overrated.

Dr. Carr glares at JB.

DR. CARR

Ladies and gentleman... *Pulitzer Prize Finalist*... *MacArthur Foundation "Genius Grant"* recipient... and most importantly, son of Howard University... Ta-Nehisi Coates!!

The crowd cheers enthusiastically then settles.

DR. CARR (CONT'D)

I'll start with you, Mr. Coates. How do black intellectuals carve out space where their voices are affirmed?

TA-NEHISI COATES

Well--

JB

Let me take this one, Ta.

TA-NEHISI COATES

I believe the question was addressed to me.

JB

Man, nobody understands all those bougie-ass words you use. No offense.

(to audience)

Y'all feel me, right?

There is mostly shock and awe from the AUDIENCE. Although a couple of people nod in agreement.

JB (CONT'D)

That was a great question. But can we talk about the real problem? Punk-ass, toxic-ass, toxic masculinity.

BACKSTAGE, Thad has seen enough. He goes to rescue his boy from further embarrassment but Sweet Milk stops him.

SWEET MILK

He's speaking his truth.

JB walks around the STAGE like he's giving a TED Talk.

JB

Too many brothas are afraid to show their emotions. BLACK MEN! We need to lead with our hearts. Let's get honest. Let's get vulnerable.

(beat)

Some of y'all are show-ers and some of us are grow-ers. And some of us need to accept that our wives left us for our big dick doormen--- wait, not that.

JB is all the way in his feelings. We INTERCUT between the audience, panel, and his friends' reactions backstage as we jump to several moments of his impassioned speaking.

JB (CONT'D)

...teach them well. And as I always say, let *THEM* lead the way.

JUMP CUT TO:

JB (CONT'D)

Shipleys is shittin' on Krispy Kreme.

(to Phylicia)

Tell em.

JUMP CUT TO:

JB (CONT'D)

Everybody knows Urkel was a figment of Carl's imagination...

JUMP CUT TO:

JB (CONT'D)
 Duuuuuuhh... collective economics,
 people.

JUMP CUT TO:

JB (CONT'D)
 If you don't use two wash rags, I
 don't know what to tell you. You're
 just nasty.

JUMP CUT TO:

JB (CONT'D)
 Hoteps need love too!

JUMP CUT TO:

JB (CONT'D)
 Keanu is Jordan Peele's best
 movie... change my mind!

JUMP CUT TO:

JB (CONT'D)
 (incensed)
 Don't you ever let me catch you
 putting sugar in your grits!

JUMP CUT TO:

JB (CONT'D)
 And *that* my friends, is how we
 teach the Kodak Blacks and City
 Girls of today, to be the Baracks
 and Michelles of tomorrow.

JB "drops the mic." There is a painfully long pause. Even
 Sweet Milk looks worried. Until...

A slow clap, shockingly lead by Ta-Nehisi, builds. Phylisia,
 the audience and even Dr. Carr join in as it erupts into a
 raucous applause!

EXT. PARKING LOT TAILGATE - DANA'S BOOTH - LATER

JB is still pretty drunk. Dana hands him a bottle of water.

DANA
 Sorry. I'd give you a recovery
 drip, but he got the last one.

She gestures to the corner where Danny Glover is passed out with an IV in his arm.

JB

Be honest. The panel. How was I?

THAD

Class act. Very understated.

Just as JB lets out a sigh of relief--

GUY #1

Yo, keep your heart, Three Stacks!

GUY #2

You were right, Bruh. We are *all* H-B-C-Unicorns.

As the Guys pass, they give prayer hands. The Young Delta carries three outfits over to Thad, Sweet Milk and JB.

YOUNG DELTA

Some guy named Abdi dropped these off for you.

JB

Oh, thank God.

JB excitedly grabs his salmon, short sleeved button down while Sweet Milk grabs his overalls.

BIG DEB

Your luggage should have stayed lost.

DANA

(getting text)

Yo! My plug for the House of Secrets is at Ozio's.

JB

Did you forget that we're blacklisted?

DANA

It's a Delta party. I have my own list.

BIG DEB

Y'all go ahead. I'm gonna stay and shoot my shot with Danny. If you see me at Ozio's, you'll know I missed.

DANA
Okay. Metro?

THAD
What are we, Freshmen?

DANA
It's either that or sit in
Homecoming traffic for four hours.

YOUNG DELTA
And the Cowboys are in town.

THAD
Metro it is.

INT. D.C. METRO TRAIN - A SHORT WHILE LATER

The train is packed with Homecomers, tourists, Youngins in Washington Football jerseys, and politicians-- you know, the D.C. crowd. Thad and Dana sit next to a STUDENT in a Howard hoodie holding a copy of "Why Should White Guys Have All the Fun?" Thad hands him a business card.

THAD
(in medias)
If you're serious about the
internship, hit me up.

STUDENT
Fa sho, thanks.

THAD
HU love. I wish I had a brother
mentor me when I was coming up.

The Student daps him then exits the train.

DANA
Oh, look at you. So sweet. Almost
makes up for you trying to put your
nose between my sheets this morning.

THAD
Please. I was trying to save you.

DANA
From what, a good time? For the
record, you would've been about an
hour too late for that.

THAD
Wait. What?

DANA

You think you're the only one with contingencies lined up?

Thad shakes his head.

THAD

And to think. You made me sleep with a clown.

DANA

If it makes you feel better, so did I.

THAD

It does. Thank you.

Dana laughs and coyly hits him on the arm.

THAD (CONT'D)

So, Isaiah? Haven't heard that name in a while. Didn't y'all break up like two years ago?

DANA

Yeah, but he's been recording in London so he's helping me look for a place. It'll be nice to have a familiar face there.

THAD

Yeah. Definitely. Sounds great.

His face says otherwise. We PAN to Sweet Milk who is talking to a WOMAN.

SWEET MILK

And that, my friend, is the difference between a dorcas gazelle and a reedbuck. I'm really glad you asked.

WOMAN

I didn't.

And finally, we check in with JB 1500, no longer wasted but tipsy. He's made fast friends with a couple of D.C. locals, aka YOUNGINS, in Washington Football apparel.

JB

So, you really think I should just show up to Stephanie's job?

YOUNGIN #1

You lunchin'. I would.

YOUNGIN #2

(scoffs)

Dat Bama's turrible with with women. Don't let him sice you, Moe.

JB

I don't wanna lunch. But on the other hand, I do *not* wanna be siced.

(then)

I just wanna say, y'all are really filling up my cup.

YOUNGIN #. 2

Fuck you say to me, Young?

JB

Just that I appreciate you. Thad was right, I just needed some positive energy around me. Y'all are my brothers now.

COWBOY FAN (O.S.)

Fuck, D.C.! Joe Gibbs can suck this long snapper!

Two drunk COWBOY FANS stumble onto the train, talking shit. COWBOY FAN #1 is big, hairy, and wearing nothing but body paint above the waist. COWBOY FAN #2 has on a Romo jersey. The incensed Youngins stand up, ready to brawl.

YOUNG #2

Come on, JB. Let's get 'em.

YOUNGIN #1

Yeah, pass the strap.

DING!

JB

This is actually my stop.

JB quickly rejoins his friends as they exit the train.

EXT. OZIO'S CIGAR BAR - ENTRANCE - A SHORT WHILE LATER

Our crew rendezvous with a bunch of Dana's beautiful sorority sisters. The bouncer gives our guys a hard stare and they tense up. After a beat, he nods for them to go in.

DANA

See? Told ya.

INT. OZIO'S CIGAR BAR - CONTINUOUS

They enter on a high which is elevated by the soulful stylings of Frankie Beverly and Maze. "Before I Let Go" flows from the sound system.

DANA

Oh, shit!

They join in with the rest of the club, dancing and singing--

EVERYONE

Before I let you goooooo!

It's about to be a good time. They make their way through the crowd, saying what up to familiar faces.

THAD

Yo, there's White Boy Troy. And Ox.
Oh shit, Lenny with the lisp!

LENNY WITH THE LISP

Have a thuper Homecoming, Guyth!

They make their way upstairs to the ROOFTOP where people order and smoke Montecristos and Cohibas. From across the table, Dana, JB and Thad observe Sweet Milk chatting up Big Deb.

SWEET MILK

Sorry, not sorry, you bricked with
Danny.

Sweet Milk pulls out a long, ornate, hand carved pipe and lights it.

THAD

Where the fuck was he keeping that?

He finishes a long pull then hands the pipe to Big Deb. Dana takes a puff of her cigar and expertly blows a smoke ring. JB takes a puff and immediately coughs up a lung. Dana and Thad laugh. A WAITRESS arrives. As she delivers a round of shots of Ciroc--

DANA

Yo, did you hear they sold
Meridian?

JB

No! I lost my virginity there.

THAD

Senior year. We remember. You called
your mom right after to tell her.

BIG DEB
What is wrong with you?

JB
I'm an only child. We're close.

SWEET MILK
I think that's beautiful.

All the shots delivered, Thad raises his glass to toast.

THAD
You can't put a price on memories--

DANA
Howard did. Twenty-two million land
lease over ninety-nine years.

BIG DEB
We got hosed.

SWEET MILK
Man, we could've raised that money
ourselves.

JB
I'da pitched in to save the Ebony
Sex Palace.

Annoyed, Thad clears his throat, then continues his toast.

THAD
As I was saying, you can't put a
price on memories. But you can
create new ones. So here's to new
beginnings... And to Homecoming!

EVERYONE
To Homecoming!

They all slam their shots and signal for another round.

INT. OZIO'S - DANCE FLOOR - LATER

Dana and Thad watch JB and Sweet Milk laughing at the bar.

THAD
It's nice to see my boys getting
along again.

DANA
Yeah, didn't think that was
possible after the... incident.

THAD
Shit, me either.

Just then, the song ends and "Really Love" by D'Angelo begins. They stand awkwardly for a beat. Thad smiles.

THAD (CONT'D)
Wanna dance?

Dana places her arms around him and they start to sway.

THAD (CONT'D)
You ever wonder why we never dated?

DANA
You mean other than the BDR?

THAD
Hey, that was not my fault! I was nervous. You weren't just another chick. I mean, you're Dana.

DANA
Aww.
(then)
To be honest, I did think about us dating but then you slept with like half the Quad.

THAD
Hey, you were no saint yourself.

DANA
Where's the fun in that?
(then)
But, for real. I don't know. Either I was in a relationship, or you were sabotaging one.

They laugh. Beat.

THAD
Guess the timing just never worked out.

DANA
Well, we still have this weekend.

Thad leans in to kiss her. She closes her eyes and--

MAN (O.C.)
Yo, Dana!

Her eyes fly open as if awoken from a spell.

DANA
Oh, there's the plug!

She leaves his embrace. Thad turns around and his disappointment gives way to aggravation. Dana's plug is Jaz.

DANA (CONT'D)
Thad, this is Jaz.

THAD
Yeah, we've met.

JAZ
Have we?
(then)
Oh, yeah. Old dude from Park.

Dana sees JB and Sweet Milk approaching.

DANA
Guys! This is uh... my friend, Jaz.
He knows about the House of
Secrets.

JB
Perfect. Where is it?

Jaz scoffs.

JAZ
What difference does it make?
(gesturing to Thad)
No way Burns is letting *him* in.

JB
Burns is throwing the party? You
got to be kidding me.

THAD
This guy's full of shit.

JAZ
Yo, got a problem?

THAD
Yeah, I do.

DANA
Would you guys cool out?

Dana puts a calming hand on Thad's chest. Jaz takes notice.

JAZ
Oh, I get it. Don't worry, Man. It
was just a one night thing.

Thad's face drops. Jaz smiles smugly as we--

MATCH CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - INT. DANA'S AIR BNB - MORNING

That same smug smile as Thad passes Jaz in the hallway.

INT. OZIO'S - (BACK TO PRESENT)

Thad looks incredulously at Dana.

THAD
Him?! Come on, Dana.

DANA
That is none of your business!

JAZ
Dude, don't hate just 'cause I'm
you thirty years ago.

THAD
Thirty years?

JB
Why don't we all calm down?

SWEET MILK
Let's all take some Ujjayi breaths.
Mother Newte would not approve.

JAZ
Yeah, you're old as fuck.

THAD
Maybe when you're my age you'll know
how to actually please a woman.

JAZ
Man, fuck you!

They get all up in each other's faces. Dana rolls her eyes
then turns to leave.

DANA
You two are acting like children.

THAD

Dana, wait.

She doesn't. Thad tries to go after her but Jaz blocks his path.

THAD (CONT'D)

I'm not fighting you. This is stupid.

SWEET MILK

I come into agreement with my brother.

JB

Right. Why don't we squash this and go back to smoking those terrible cigars. Sound good?

JB offers Jaz his hand. He swats it away and shoves JB to the ground. FUCK. THAT. Now, it's on. Thad swings and connects hard with Jaz's face. Jaz's crew springs into action and it quickly devolves to a full on brawl. After some crazy beats of fighting, Thad and JB seek refuge behind the bar.

JB (CONT'D)

Where the hell is Sweet Milk?

They hear chanting, low at first, coming from across the room. Thad and JB peek out and see Sweet Milk doing Capoeira. They watch, confused and impressed, as he takes out three guys.

THAD

Damn.

Just then, JB spots Jaz and his BOY fast approaching.

JB

Watch out!

Thad spins around and is greeted by Jaz's fist. Jaz's Boy grabs JB and slams his head into the bar, causing him to fall out of frame. After a few beats, we see JB from behind as he stands up.

JB (CONT'D)

Damnit. I think I lost my contact.

We PULL OUT and realize everyone has stopped fighting. The whole bar stares at JB with a collective look of terror. The camera SWINGS around and we see why. JB has a broken shot glass jammed around his eye. It's like a macabre monocle that makes his eye look ginormous. It's awful. Totally oblivious, JB reaches up to touch his face--

FEMALE EMT (PRELAP)
We got a screamer!

EXT. OZIO'S - A SHORT WHILE LATER

JB screams as he's wheeled out of the club on a gurney by a hardened looking FEMALE EMT.

WE SWITCH TO JB'S ONE-EYED POV AND SEE THAD AND SWEET MILK PEERING DOWN AT HIM. THEY LOOK WORRIED AS FUCK.

JB
Is it bad?!

The Bouncer sees JB's injury and throws up.

THAD
Not really.

SWEET MILK
It's D.C. I'm sure they've seen worse.

A young MALE EMT enters frame inputting vitals into a tablet.

MALE EMT
Jesus Christ!

Stunned, he drops the tablet, hitting JB square in the eye. JB cries out in pain as they load him into the...

INT. AMBULANCE - CONTINUOUS

Thad and Sweet Milk accompany JB into the bus. The Female EMT hooks JB up to monitors while the Male EMT attends to him.

JB
It hurts! Take it out! Take it out!

The Male EMT obeys and pulls out the shot glass, causing blood to spray everywhere. Thad and Sweet Milk try to swat it away.

FEMALE EMT
Why the fuck did you do that?

MALE EMT
He told me to!

Some blood lands on Thad's mouth and he spits it out.

THAD
Oh God, I can taste JB!

SWEET MILK

You need to stop the bleeding.

The Male EMT starts to put the shot glass back in.

FEMALE EMT

Not like that!

The Female EMT steps in and puts a bandage over JB's eye.

FEMALE EMT (CONT'D)

You're cleaning this shit.

The Male EMT surveys the bloody mess and looks faint.

THAD

You okay, Man?

MALE EMT

I don't do so good with blood.

JB

Why the hell would you take this job, then?

The Male EMT stumbles, disconnecting JB from the monitors. On the screen, all of his vitals start to drop.

MALE EMT

He's coding!

JB

I'm gonna die! Am I gonna die?

THAD

No, you are not gonna die!

The Male EMT grabs the defibrillator.

FEMALE EMT

Derek, don't!

MALE EMT

Clear!

SFX: A FLATLINING HEART MONITOR

INT. HOWARD UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - ER BAY - LATER

Nurses pull a sheet up over a dead body. Thad and Sweet Milk watch, somber. Beat.

JB (O.C.)
 Not gonna lie. I'm feeling pretty
 not bad right now.

Thad and Sweet Milk turn around and we see JB lying in bed,
 talking to the Female EMT. He's sporting a serious eye patch.

FEMALE EMT
 Sorry, that was junior's first and
 last day. I slipped you some extra
 morphine so... if we could not tell
 anyone about the incident in the
 ambulance, that would be great.

JB smiles coyly. The morphine has him high as a kite.

JB
 What incident?
 (then)
 You can't tell, but I'm winking.

She winks back and leaves. JB catches a glimpse in the mirror.

JB (CONT'D)
 I think Professor Winters is gonna
 fuck with the patch.

SWEET MILK
 I did hear Slick Rick was quite the
 cocksman.

THAD
 What is wrong with you?

SWEET MILK
 What? I did! I was in London with
 the dwarf from Game of Thrones and--

THAD
 Please don't finish that story.
 Look, this shit has gotten way out
 of hand. I think we need to cut our
 losses and go home.

JB
 No!

JB takes a morphine induced stand, literally and figuratively.
 Thad and Sweet Milk are taken aback.

JB (CONT'D)
 You dragged me here to get me out
 of my rut and it was working.
 (MORE)

JB (CONT'D)

Now we hit one little bump and it's a wrap?

THAD

You're lying in a hospital next to a dead dude!

JB

But I'm alive! And aren't you the one that told me to not get away from the one who got away again? And now you're just gonna leave without telling Dana how you really feel? That's right! You think I didn't know? You love her.

THAD

You don't know what you're talking about.

JB

(still high off morphine)
I may have only one eye but I am seeing very clearly, Sir. And if you let her run into the strong, muscular, very well defined arms of her ex who writes love songs and looks like the dude from Bridgerton, then you're even dumber than I look.

THAD

First off, your balls are showing.

JB looks down at his open johnny.

JB

Damn right! I'm letting them hang! Swanging and banging. Comin' out hard. Two balls and MJG.

A NURSE walks by.

SWEET MILK

(to nurse)

I'll have what he's having.

She keeps it moving. Thad shakes his head.

THAD

Second, he's not *that* good looking. And third, there's no way Burns is letting us anywhere near that party.

JB
Then you need to convince him to.

THAD
How, Sway?

SWEET MILK
Apologize to him. Man to man.

THAD
So we can end up right back here?

JB
I know it's a long shot but you owe
it to me to at least try.
(then)
What if Professor Winters is the
Love to my Jones?

How can Thad say no to that?

THAD
Fuck!
(then)
Fine, but only 'cause it's you.

SWEET MILK
I know what you're implying.

THAD
Good.

JB gets dressed. Just as they are about to leave, they hear a loud commotion as a new patient is wheeled into the ER.

NURSE (O.S.)
We've got a male, African American,
early twenties, BP is ninety over
sixty. Says here victim of a wolf
attack?

The guys' eyes widen and they get the fuck out of there.

EXT. HOWARD HOSPITAL - MOMENTS LATER

They exit the sliding doors, mid conversation.

SWEET MILK
I'm just saying, I would feel a lot
worse if the dude wasn't wearing a
Hampton sweatshirt.

OFFICER SMITH (O.C.)
Well, well, well. If it isn't the
Animal Liberation Front.

They turn and see two CAMPUS COPS flanking Officer Smith, who has some gnarly claw marks across his face.

OFFICER SMITH (CONT'D)
I don't know if you idiots know this,
but when you emancipated that wolf,
you committed a class D felony.

SWEET MILK
Come on, Smitty. You know I
wouldn't ah stolen that cart if I
knew there was a wolf in the back.

OFFICER SMITH
Sounds like a confession to me.

JB's eye widens as the two Campus Cops pull out their handcuffs. One goes to cuff Sweet Milk and Officer Smith steps in.

OFFICER SMITH (CONT'D)
Oh, no. This one is all me. I've
been waiting a long time for this.

Smith happily handcuffs Sweet Milk.

OFFICER SMITH (CONT'D)
(whispers in his ear)
Finally got yo' ass.

The other Cops cuff Thad and JB then shove them into the back with Sweet Milk. The guys are packed in like sardines.

JB
You're legally only allowed to put two
suspects in the back of a cop car.

OFFICER SMITH
(slamming door)
File a complaint, Nerd.

INT. CAMPUS POLICE CAR - A SHORT WHILE LATER (MOVING)

Officer Smith, happy as a clam, whistles the theme to The Andy Griffith Show. JB stares out the window with his one good eye.

JB
I always tell my students to make
good decisions. Look at me now.
Principal hypocrite.

SWEET MILK
This isn't on you.

OFFICER SMITH
He's right. Only bad decision
you've made is being friends with
Black Morris back there.

JB
Was that a Saved By The Bell
reference? I never got that show.

OFFICER SMITH
Shut up, Screech.

THAD
Too soon.

Sweet Milk leans forward.

SWEET MILK
Yo, for real. What is your beef
with me?

OFFICER SMITH
Are you serious?

Officer Smith glares back at him, displaying his fucked up face.

SWEET MILK
I mean before today.

OFFICER SMITH
Oh, I don't know. You had my name
legally changed to Marion Barry,
stole my squad car, stuck your dick
in my mashed potatoes!

THAD
That was hilarious.

OFFICER SMITH
And let's not forget Dupont Circle.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - EXT. D.C. STREET - TELEPHONE POLE

CU ON: A poster of Officer Smith with the caption "For a good
time, call Officer Good Time 202-512-8617."

INT. CAMPUS POLICE CAR - (BACK TO PRESENT)

SWEET MILK

You were a worthy adversary. It was all in good fun.

OFFICER SMITH

You added me to the sex offender registry.

THAD

Okay, that one was too far.

OFFICER SMITH

I agree. You ruined my fucking life!

Officer Smith gets sincere.

OFFICER SMITH (CONT'D)

I had dreams, Man. I was about to be a real cop, passed all the exams and background checks. But turns out they don't trust you to protect the capital from terrorists if you can't protect your patrol car from a drunk freshman.

(then)

So now I'm stuck in this shitty job where nobody respects me and they call me Officer Good Time.

For the first time, Sweet Milk feels bad.

SWEET MILK

I didn't know. I would never consciously derail a good man's dreams-- something you're about to do.

OFFICER SMITH

Of course you'd find a way to make this about yourself.

SWEET MILK

I'm not talking about me. I'm talking about him.

Sweet Milk nods at the pitiful looking JB.

SWEET MILK (CONT'D)

My friend here has been getting gang banged by life recently. You know how that is.

Officer Smith scowls.

THAD

Not helping.

SWEET MILK

The point is, I promised this man the weekend of his life. So he could forget that no one respects him at work and that he had to schedule sex with his ex-wife--

JB

Okay, that's enough.

SWEET MILK

He needs the full picture. I suppose you want me to leave out that you're balding prematurely?

Panicked, JB feels the back of his head.

SWEET MILK (CONT'D)

But none of that matters because Homecoming gave him his mojo back. And he was *this* close to shooting his shot with the one who got away... Don't Mutombo his dreams.

Sweet Milk has struck a chord with Officer Smith.

OFFICER SMITH

(to JB)

Look, I feel for you, Man. I had to schedule sex with my ex, too. But you have to understand, there is--

(ala Mutombo)

No, no, no-- fucking way I am letting y'all go. Locking him up will be the only silver lining to this shitty job.

They pull up to the police station.

EXT. POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Officer Smith pulls the guys out of the car and escorts them towards two waiting POLICE OFFICERS.

SWEET MILK

Wait. I can help you.

OFFICER SMITH
You've helped enough.

SWEET MILK
I'm serious. What if you didn't
have to have a shitty job anymore?

OFFICER SMITH
What are you talking about?

SWEET MILK
Give me twenty-four hours and I'll
get you on the force.

OFFICER SMITH
You're bullshitting. You ain't got
that kinda juice.

SWEET MILK
You said it yourself, I'm Black
Morris.

As they reach the entrance, the Officers approach.

THAD
Come on, Bruh. You really gonna
hand us over to *them*?

Officer Smith looks at the two white cops and is starting to
have second thoughts.

OFFICER #1
Thanks, Officer Good Time. We'll
take it from here.

That did it.

OFFICER SMITH
Sorry, Fellas. I realized that
these are the wrong guys.

OFFICER #1
That's odd. Their description
sounds a lot like these three.

OFFICER SMITH
Yeah, well. You know how we all
look alike.

The white Officers quietly confer with each other.

OFFICER #2
I mean, he said it. Not us.

OFFICER #1

I don't really wanna do the paperwork, anyway.

The Officers come out of their huddle.

OFFICER #1 (CONT'D)

Okay, you're free to go.

They take the cuffs off of the guys and go inside. They're very relieved, albeit disturbed, at how easy that was.

SWEET MILK

Thank you so much. You're a good man.

OFFICER SMITH

Don't thank me yet, Anderson Paak.
Give me your ID.

Sweet Milk hands his ridiculously thick passport over.

OFFICER SMITH (CONT'D)

If you don't come through, I'll make sure all three of you go to jail.

INT. ROLLS ROYCE SUV - LATER (MOVING)

Thad gets a notification. He checks it and sees it's an iPhone "memory" of today's date. He opens it and sees fun photos of he and Dana at Homecomings through the years. He sends her a text as Abdi pulls up to...

EXT. MIKE BURNS' MANSION - LATE AFTERNOON

It's a beautiful colonial estate in Rock Creek park. A line of luxury vehicles wait to be valeted. A banner welcomes guests to the "Annual Sidwell Friends School Fundraiser."

THAD

Why does a school that costs fifty G's a year need a fundraiser?

JB

Who cares? Now we can slip in undetected.

SWEET MILK

(to Abdi)

We'll give you a call when we leave.

ABDI

Be careful, Boss. I don't trust these colonizers.

SWEET MILK

Nor should you.

They dap. Thad, Sweet Milk and an eye-patched JB then exit the Rolls Royce SUV and join the crowd entering the mansion.

INT. BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

They make their way through the palatial estate. The swanky fundraiser is packed with everyone from basketball players to politicians, anyone who can afford the tuition. Catering staff buzz about with trays of hors d'oeuvres and champagne. It's clear the action is outside and they make their way to the...

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

It's decorated like a fair with popcorn machines, string lights, and an operator taking guests up and down on mini rides in a hot air balloon. Thad spots Mike Burns playing host and chatting casually.

JB

Dude definitely knows how to throw a party.

THAD

Look at him. Pretending not to be a psychopath so he can fit in.

SWEET MILK

Are you kidding? Burns is the least depraved one here.

(pointing)

She's into shooting endangered species... He runs guns for the cartel... And see that senator? That is *not* his daughter.

Just then, an EVENT PLANNER with a clipboard approaches JB.

EVENT PLANNER

Where have you been? And where's your outfit?

(then; into earpiece)

Jenny, I've got the pirate but he forgot his fucking costume. Can you see if the jugglers have anything?

JB starts to protest but Thad pulls him to the side.

JB
I don't want to be a pirate.

SWEET MILK
That patch says otherwise.

THAD
Just play along until I can talk to Burns. We don't want to bring attention to ourselves.

JB
And you think me pretending to be Long John Silver is the best way to do that?

SWEET MILK
You're medium John Silver at best.

EVENT PLANNER
(impatient)
Is there a problem?

JB
Oh, we were just having a little--

Thad shoots JB a sharp look.

JB (CONT'D)
(ala pirate)
Arrggg-ument about why we were late.

EVENT PLANNER
Clearly it wasn't because you were practicing your accent.

As the Event Planner drags JB off, a WAITER approaches with a tray of champagne and hors d'oeuvres.

WAITER
Salmon-- sorry.
(then; pronouncing the "L")
Sal-mon croquette?

Thad rolls his eyes.

THAD
Just the champagne, thanks.

Thad and Sweet Milk each take a flute and a sip.

SWEET MILK

You ever notice you hold your pinky
out when you drink?

THAD

Why does everyone keep saying that?

Thad takes another sip and instinctively raises his pinky.

THAD (CONT'D)

Shit, I do.

SWEET MILK

I'm gonna go rub elbows.

We FOLLOW Sweet Milk as he makes his way through the party. He catches a whiff of something and goes to investigate the familiar scent. The smell leads him to the...

INT. POOL HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

...where he discovers a bunch of twelve-year-old kids who look like they just stepped out of a Ralph Lauren ad. They're smoking weed and destroying a lavish spread of charcuterie they absconded from the party. Sweet Milk grabs a hand full of lobster puffs and pops them in his mouth.

SWEET MILK

Oh, this is where the real party is.

He snatches the joint from a kid and takes a long pull.

SWEET MILK (CONT'D)

But you shouldn't smoke weed.

KID #1

My dad's the House Whip. We can do
whatever the fuck we want.

KID #2

Yeah. Give us back our weed,
Peasant.

Sweet Milk hands him back the joint.

SWEET MILK

You guys are mean.

KID #1

And get us some more lobster puffs
or I'll tell my security you
touched us.

SWEET MILK
You wouldn't.

Kid #1 talks into his Apple watch.

KID #1
Alfonso, I'm gonna need you in the
pool house.

EXT. BACKYARD - SAME TIME

Thad scans the party looking for Burns. Across the lawn, he sees JB wearing a pitiful pirate costume, making a pitiful balloon animal. He hands it to a KID who promptly kicks him in the shin. Thad shakes his head then checks to see if Dana has responded to any of his texts.

CLOSE UP ON TEXTS:

THAD: Hey, sorry about earlier.

THAD: So, you're really not talking to me?

THAD: Look, if I'm being honest, I was a little jealous and I acted like an ass. Hit me back.

SHEILA (O.C.)
Thad?

Thad turns and sees Sheila, aka Mike Burns' wife.

THAD
Oh, hey.

SHEILA
What are you doing here?

THAD
Your man seems to have an issue with me. So, I came to smooth things over with him.

SHEILA
Because he's such a reasonable man?
(then)
You need to leave.

THAD
I appreciate your concern but I can handle myself. I'm gonna go have a chat with your husband.

Thad turns and is face-to-chest with Burns' hulking SECURITY GUARD. Burns steps out from his shadow.

MIKE BURNS
You must have a death wish.

THAD
I was just leaving.

The Security Guard takes a threatening step towards Thad. Sheila notices that party goers are starting to watch.

SHEILA
Honey, why don't you gentlemen go
speak in private?

MIKE BURNS
I was thinking the same thing.

He gestures to the Security Guard, who escorts Thad away.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - MOMENTS LATER

Burns shoves Thad into the room.

MIKE BURNS
I bring performers from my club
here so they can record. Do you
know why I brought you here?

THAD
To make a demo?

MIKE BURNS
Because it's sound proof.

Burns pulls out a gun.

THAD
Whoa, whoa, whoa. I didn't come
here to start shit. I swear.

MIKE BURNS
(cocking the gun)
Then why did you?

THAD
To apologize. I didn't mean any
disrespect. I didn't even know you
guys were talking. Truly, Man. I'm
sorry.

They're locked in a stare. Thad sees Burns' hand move on the gun and thinks it's game over. After a beat, he uncocks the gun.

MIKE BURNS
That's all I wanted.

THAD
Really?

MIKE BURNS
(gesturing with the gun)
Yeah, I don't know why everyone
thinks I'm so unreasonable.

THAD
So, we're good?

MIKE BURNS
Yep.

THAD
Does that mean we can get into the
House of Secrets?

MIKE BURNS
I'll text Jaz right now.

As Burns grabs his phone, his Security Guard appears in the doorway. He's holding JB and Sweet Milk by their collars.

SECURITY GUARD
We've been getting complaints about
these two scaring the kids.

MIKE BURNS
It's okay. They're cool.

The Security Guard lets them go. Thad and Sweet Milk are relieved but confused.

THAD
We're all good. We talked. Mike's
putting us on the list.

JB
Seriously?

Sweet Milk approaches Burns and puts a hand on his shoulder.

SWEET MILK
Wow. That's big of you. I know it
was like ten years ago, but I would
feel certain way about a man who
slept with my wife.

MIKE BURNS
Nigga, you slept with my wife?!

THAD
What did you think I was
apologizing for?

MIKE BURNS
I was pissed you stole Iggy Azalea
from me for your Homecoming party.

SWEET MILK
Oh, he did you a favor.

Burns is about to explode. JB tries to make peace.

JB
Believe me, I get it. But this is
nothing you can't get past. To be
fair, she wasn't even your wife at
the time. And the most important
thing is, it's all out in the open.
No more dirty little secrets.

Just then MIKE BURNS, JR., 10, spitting image of Thad, enters
holding a glass of milk.

MIKE JR.
Dad? Who are these people?

Everyone watches as Mike Jr. takes a sip of his milk, pinky up.

THAD
Oh, shit.

Burns is homicidal. Thad appears ready to accept his fate when
the door flies open, revealing the Kids from the Pool House.

KID #1
(to Sweet Milk)
Yo, we've been looking for you!
Where the fuck are our lobster
puffs?

Just then, a familiar chanting. Sweet Milk capoeiras the shit
out of the Kids and Burns' Security Guard.

SWEET MILK
Run!!!!

They flee the studio and run into...

INT. HALLWAY/BALLROOM - CONTINUOUS

...the Ballroom, pushing people and knocking shit over.

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

The Security Guard, Alfonso and Mike Burns are all in hot pursuit. Sweet Milk sees the HOT AIR BALLOON and knows what they need to do.

SWEET MILK

Follow me if you want to live!

Sweet Milk knocks over the hot air ballon operator, unties the rope and jumps in. JB and Thad are unsure.

SWEET MILK (CONT'D)

I know what I'm doing!

They reluctantly climb in and are off, floating above a pissed off Burns and the rest of the party.

THAD

How the fuck do you know how to drive a hot air balloon?

SWEET MILK

Pure intuition.

JB

You're gonna get us killed!

SWEET MILK

You were about to get killed, anyway.

Just then, the balloon snags on a tree branch and starts to deflate. As they descend, they scrape the top of several roofs and careen toward Rock Creek Park. Thad and JB scream, but Sweet Milk is calm.

SWEET MILK (CONT'D)

Still not how I die.

As the balloon plummets, they hit more trees then luckily make a crash landing. They climb out of the basket, cleaning twigs and leaves from their hair and clothes.

SWEET MILK (CONT'D)

Well, that did not go as planned.

JB

Ya think?!

(then)

We were home free. Why did you have to open your stupid mouth?

SWEET MILK

How was I supposed to know Thad pissed him off in *multiple* ways?

THAD

My bad.

SWEET MILK

Don't trip. I have a plan that will fix everything.

JB

I highly doubt it. You fucked up the House of Secrets, almost got us killed and I'm probably gonna get arrested when Officer Smith realizes you're full of shit.

SWEET MILK

I can fix this.

JB

Fix yourself. There's a reason I stopped fucking with you.

SWEET MILK

You're really still mad about that?

JB

You slept with my uncle!

SWEET MILK

And your aunt. To be fair, it was a threesome.

JB

Everything is a joke to you. Do you have any idea how messed up my family is now?

SWEET MILK

Oh, come on. This is not about me and Uncle Mel--

JB

No! You do not call him that!

THAD
J, calm down, Man.

JB
No. Fuck you, too.

THAD
Why are you mad at me?

JB
Because I never should have let you drag me to Homecoming in the first place.

THAD
Excuse me for wanting to help you get back in the game.

JB
I don't want to be back in the game. I liked being in a relationship. Not all of us need to pound vag every night to feel like man.

THAD
Pound vag? What are you, ten?

JB
No, but your son is.

THAD
There is *no* proof of that.

SWEET MILK
That pinky was all the proof I needed.

JB sees a cab and hails it.

JB
I'm gonna go.

SWEET MILK
You can't give up now.

JB
You know, y'all's pep talks are really starting to bore me.

THAD
Oh, that's rich. The man's whose last name is literally Bland says we're boring him?

(MORE)

THAD (CONT'D)

Bruh, you are the most boring man alive. No one but you was shocked when your wife left.

That hurt and Thad can tell.

JB

Wow.

THAD

Come on, Man. I didn't mean that.

JB

Yeah, you did. It's good to know how you really feel.

THAD

JB--

JB

It's cool. We're not in college anymore. We can stop trying to force this for nostalgia's sake. See you never.

The cab pulls up and JB gets in. Thad watches him drive away then takes a seat on the curb. Sweet Milk joins him.

SWEET MILK

Cut pretty deep there.

(then)

Guess we're both shitty friends, huh?

THAD

Yeah, but only one of us fucked his uncle.

SWEET MILK

True.

(then)

I know I've been the friend that did a bunch of selfish shit. But this is my chance to be the friend that comes through. I just need your help.

Thad sees Sweet Milk is being sincere but is still skeptical.

THAD

I don't know, Man. What did you have in mind?

Sweet Milk smiles.

SWEET MILK
Spiderwebs.

THAD
What?

Sweet Milk stands. He talks as he walks away.

SWEET MILK
Just track down JB and wait for my
call.

THAD
(calling after him)
How? He doesn't have a phone. You
don't have a phone... Sweet Milk?!

No response. Thad turns and looks out over the D.C. Skyline.

MUSIC CUE: "READY OR NOT" BY THE FUGEES

I/E. D.C. LOCATIONS - NIGHT - MONTAGE

-JB looks out the CAB window, pensive as fuck.

-Thad enters a METRO STATION.

-Sweet Milk hitches a ride on the back of a BIRD SCOOTER.

-JB wanders the capitol. He passes a friendly DOORMAN who
tips his hat "hello." JB flips him off.

-Thad hits up CAMPUS, HOWARD CHINA, and CLUB 55. No sign of
JB. Finally, Thad spots him at the WHARF but when he gets
close, realizes it's not him.

-DANA'S AIR BNB is buzzing with the energy of twenty ladies
getting ready for Homecoming Saturday night. Big Deb is
stacking cases of Hennessy at the front door when Dana gets
all of Thad's texts at once and smiles.

-JB comes upon a TRAVEL AGENCY and goes in.

-As Thad walks the STREETS, defeated, he passes a bookstore
with a copy of "First Time Dad" in the window. Thad stops.

INT. DANA'S AIR BNB - ENTRYWAY - LATER

There's a knock on the door. Dana answers it and finds Thad.

THAD
Hey.

DANA
Hey, I got your messages.

THAD
Yeah, can we talk about that later?
I really don't have time right now.

DANA
Rude.

THAD
Sorry. Have you seen JB? We had a
little blow up and he bounced.

DANA
No I haven't.
(then)
What's going on with you? You send
me all these texts like you can't
wait to see me and now you're
acting like you can't be bothered.

THAD
You're moving to London in two
days. What is there to talk about?

DANA
Am I crazy? Because I didn't start
this conversation.

THAD
This is just too much right now.

DANA
Whatever that means.

Dana picks a book up off the entryway table.

DANA (CONT'D)
If you find your boy, you can give
him his book back.

Dana hands it to him and closes the door. Thad looks at the
copy of "The Measure of a Man" and finally knows where JB is.

EXT. MLK MONUMENT - A WHILE LATER

JB sits on a bench, looking at the statue. Thad approaches.

JB
How did you find me?

THAD

You told me you wouldn't leave without seeing it... and I already looked everywhere else.

(then)

I apologize for what I said earlier.

JB

It was really messed up, Man. You hurt my feelings.

THAD

I'm sorry. I was a little on edge from the whole almost dying and possibly having a kid thing.

JB

That is understandable.

THAD

Still, it was selfish to drag you to Homecoming. I said I wanted to cheer you up but mostly I wanted my wing man.

JB

JB three thousand is a dope wing man.

THAD

You are a dope wing man.

JB

I don't know. I think when I left JB three thousand in college, I might've left my confidence with him.

THAD

That's a shame cuz you're the shit. Always have been, always will be. It doesn't matter if Steph or even Professor Winters realizes it. You need to.

JB

You know what's crazy? It's literally my job to build kids' confidence but I can't do it for myself.

THAD

Well, you know what they say... those who can't do, teach.

JB
Annnnnd he's back.

They laugh.

JB (CONT'D)
So what about you? You good?

THAD
I don't know. I was finally wrapping my head around the fact that I have real feelings for Dana. And then I find out I have a ten-year-old.

JB
That shouldn't stop you from telling Dana how you feel.

THAD
What's the point? It's not like I can take the kid to London with me.

JB
London? Hold on. You're thinking about moving for her?

THAD
No. I don't know. I mean, we do have offices there. Not that she invited me. I don't know.
(then)
I guess I just always thought she'd be here.

JB
Well, I'm always here.

THAD
I know.
(then)
Love you, Brother.

JB
Love you, too.

They hug it out. Thad peers up at the statue.

JB (CONT'D)
I gotta say, I'm a little disappointed. It doesn't really look like him.

THAD
No. It does not.

JB

I mean, how did the artist get it so wrong?

THAD

He was white.

JB

That explains the white face. Was bronze not even an option?

They laugh.

THAD

I really wish Homecoming had turned out the way I planned.

JB

Yeah. But for what it's worth, I had a great time. I needed this.

Just then, like the booming voice of God, we hear over a loud speaker--

SWEET MILK (THROUGH PA)

I HEARD YOU HAD A DREAM.

Confused, the guys look around for Sweet Milk. Instead they turn and see a large chartered bus. They look at the bus, unsure.

SWEET MILK (THROUGH PA) (CONT'D)

Do you want to go to the House of Secrets or not?

They approach the bus and enter.

INT. LUXURY CHARTERED BUS - CONTINUOUS

The DRIVER, a fifty year old version of Abdi, moves his phone away from the PA and talks into the phone speaker.

DRIVER (INTO PHONE)

They're on.

SWEET MILK (THROUGH SPEAKERPHONE)

Thank you, Sennai.

The driver hands the guys blindfolds.

INT. LUXURY CHARTERED BUS - A LITTLE WHILE LATER

Thad and JB sit among rows of beautiful blindfolded people.

JB

How in the hell did Sweet Milk
smooth things over with Burns?

Just then, they pull to a stop.

DRIVER

You may now remove your blindfolds.

They do.

THAD

I don't think he did.

EXT. ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY - CONTINUOUS

JB and Thad exit the bus and are greeted by Sweet Milk, who is looking like a black Prince Phillip... RIP. They watch in awe as people pour out of buses and into the dope ass party.

SWEET MILK

We couldn't go to the House of
Secrets so I brought the House of
Secrets to us.

JB

How?

SWEET MILK

The House of Secrets isn't a place,
my friend. It's a state of mind.

THAD

Would you cut the bullshit and
tells us how you pulled this off?

SWEET MILK

Well, I was thinking about what the
Ambassador said--

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK - EXT. ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY

Sweet Milk talks with the Ambassador.

AMBASSADOR

When spiderwebs unite, they can tie
up a lion.

SWEET MILK (V.O.)
And then I remembered what Abdi
told you.

FLASHBACK - INT. ROLLS ROYCE SUV

Abdi talks to JB from the front seat.

ABDI
My family owns all the car services
in town.

FLASHBACK - INT. PARKING GARAGE

Sweet Milk meets with a slew of Abdi's COUSINS in a PARKING GARAGE. He is gesticulating. A lot.

SWEET MILK (V.O.)
Turns out Burns has been fucking
them over for years, so they were
happy to help.

FLASHBACK - EXT. PARKING LOT

Abdi's cousins direct a slew of Party goers onto buses.

SWEET MILK (V.O.)
And since no one knew where the
actual House of Secrets was, I just
pulled an oski woski and had them
bring everyone here.

EXT. ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY (BACK TO PRESENT)

SWEET MILK
Then it was down to booze and
entertainment.

FLASHBACK - EXT. EMBASSY

Multiple workers each carry a case of Hennessy White while Big Deb hauls two.

SWEET MILK (V.O.)
Big Deb came through with the
drank...

FLASHBACK - INT. THE GRAND HYATT - HOTEL ROOM

In the trashed hotel room, we see Sweet Milk doing an emergency tracheotomy.

SWEET MILK (V.O.)
 ...and I ended up saving D-Nice's
 life last night, so he owed me one.

EXT. ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY (BACK TO PRESENT)

Thad and JB are thoroughly impressed.

THAD
 You fucking genius.

SWEET MILK
 I know.
 (then; to JB)
 You should head inside now. There's
 someone waiting for you.

They turn and see Professor Winters waiting in the entrance.
 JB hugs Sweet Milk.

JB
 You are officially forgiven.

JB takes a breath and heads towards Professor Winters.

MUSIC CUE: "DNA" BY KENDRICK LAMAR

INT. ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY - BALLROOM - LATER

Howard alum party like royalty in the palatial ballroom. D-Nice is spinning with a large band-aid on his neck and everyone is gettin' it in-- JB and Professor Winters, Dana's Delta House mates and Danny Glover is sandwiched between Angela and Sharon, the Older Women from the Uber. Abdi is on the dance floor getting down. He's out of his chauffeur uniform and looking fresh. Sweet Milk and Thad spot him.

SWEET MILK
 Yo, Abdi!

ABDI
 Thanks for giving me the night off.

SWEET MILK
 Thanks for helping me pull this off.

ABDI

It was my pleasure, Habesha. I just wish I could see the look on Burns' face right now.

CUT TO:

INT. MIKE BURN'S CLUB - SAME TIME

Burns looks around his empty club. He's furious.

MIKE BURNS

Where the *fuck* is everybody?

He slaps Jaz. Jaz turns away, wiping the tears before Burns can see them.

INT. ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY - BALLROOM - A LITTLE LATER

Thad is with Sweet Milk and spots Dana at the bar.

THAD

Yo, I need to go have a real ass conversation.

SWEET MILK

You need my help?

THAD

No.

Thad approaches Dana.

DANA

What do you want?

THAD

To apologize. I've been out here all weekend acting like I'm still nineteen.

DANA

We all have. It's Homecoming.

THAD

Yeah, but I've been acting like I'm nineteen for the last ten years.

(then)

There's something I need to tell you.

DANA
Jesus, you don't have herpes do
you?

THAD
No, but this doesn't go away
either.

Just then, Thad gets a hard tap on the shoulder.

SHEILA
I'm here to collect.

THAD
(to Dana)
Can you wait one minute? I'll be
right back.

Thad and Sheila step away.

SHEILA
Do you know how much money you owe
me?

THAD
How would I know how much ten years
of child support costs?

SHEILA
What are you talking about? I mean
the deposit for the hot air balloon
you assholes stole.

THAD
We can talk about that but right
now we need to talk about my son.
(off her blank expression)
Mike Junior? Don't try to deny it.
He looks exactly like me. Do the
math.

SHEILA
You're not his father.

THAD
How can you be so sure?

SHEILA
We used a surrogate.

THAD
Oh. Thank God. I was not ready to
take that on.

Sheila gives him the dirtiest of looks.

THAD (CONT'D)

Does Venmo work for you?

SHEILA

Sure.

She walks away and Dana approaches.

DANA

What the hell was that about?

THAD

Long story. Maybe I can tell you over dinner? In London?

DANA

Already making plans to visit?

THAD

Yeah. Unless you already made plans with Isaiah?

DANA

You do realize we broke up because he's gay, right?

THAD

No. No I did not. But he's beside the point. The point is, I realized I don't want to be that far away from you. So, maybe if dinner goes well, I could stay a bit longer? Try out working from our London offices?

DANA

I'm sorry. I thought I was talking to Thad 'I'll never leave New York' Savage.

THAD

Well, almost dying in a hot air balloon has a way of putting things in perspective for you real fast.

DANA

That doesn't sound like a quick story. How 'bout you tell me that over dinner, too.

THAD

So, you're down to give it a try?

DANA

I'd say kiss me and find out.

He pulls her in and they finally kiss.

INT. ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY - BEDROOM - LATER

JB and Professor Winters kiss passionately upon a canopied bed.

PROFESSOR WINTERS

I was worried you wouldn't come,
since you didn't call.

JB

Well, we're here now. Let's just be
present.

He kisses her and they disappear out of frame. After a beat,
JB pops up.

JB (CONT'D)

I gotta be honest. I'm not present.
I'm really worried about messing
this up again.

She smiles at him sweetly.

PROFESSOR WINTERS

JB, there is literally nothing you
can do to mess this up.

CUT TO:

SUPER: ONE MINUTE LATER

They lie naked next to each other. JB's out of breath.

JB

I am so sorry. I can't believe I--

PROFESSOR WINTERS

No, it's okay. I did, too.

She turns toward him, also out of breath, and strokes his face.

PROFESSOR WINTERS (CONT'D)

But that eye patch is getting me
worked up.

JB takes it below deck.

JB
I'm the captain now.

INT. ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY - BALLROOM - SAME TIME

Sweet Milk is talking with a MAN in a black suit when he spots an angry Officer Smith approaching.

SWEET MILK
Smitty, what are you doing here?

OFFICER SMITH
I changed my mind. I wasn't gonna give you twenty-four hours to weasel your way out of town and fuck me over again.

SWEET MILK
That's fair. I couldn't get you on the police force.

Officer Smith pulls out his handcuffs.

SWEET MILK (CONT'D)
But I can do you one better.
(then; to Man)
Agent Forbes, this is the man I wanted you to meet, Officer Smith.
(then; to Officer Smith)
Special Agent Forbes is the head of Vice President Harris' detail.

SPECIAL AGENT FORBES
I read your file. Very impressive.

The Man offers his hand. Officer Smith looks at it, dubious.

OFFICER SMITH
(whispers; to Sweet Milk)
What file?

SWEET MILK
(whispers back)
You want the job or not?

Officer Smith shakes the Agents' hand.

SWEET MILK (CONT'D)
I'll leave you gentlemen to it.
(to Officer Smith)
Passport.

Officer Smith hands the passport to Sweet Milk, who kisses it. All of the sudden, we hear a commotion as people rush the stage.

BEYONCÉ (O.S.)
Howard Homecoming! Are you ready?
Let's go get 'em!

INT. ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY - BEDROOM - A SHORT WHILE LATER

JB's head pops into frame from "below deck."

JB
Is that Beyoncé?

MUSIC CUE: "CRAZY IN LOVE" BY BEYONCÉ

INT. ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY - BALLROOM - SAME TIME

The amazed crowd watches Queen Bey who, unless you think we can get her, we do not actually see performing on stage. JB and Professor Winters, wrinkly clothes hastily thrown on, arrive and join Thad and Dana. Big Deb and Sweet Milk slow dance.

SWEET MILK
What would you say if I invited you
to come live with me in the
mountains?

BIG DEB
How's the Wi-fi?

Thad spots the Dad whose name he never remembers. He's doing a handstand against the wall, booty bouncing like Big Freeda.

THAD
That's it! Keith the Freak!

Just then, Casey arrives and hugs Thad passionately, a tear streaming down his face.

CASEY
I get it now... it's beautiful.

He dances off. After a beat, the guys look at each other.

THAD
He still doesn't get it.

They laugh, then look around at the party. They can't believe what they made happen.

EXT. BUSBOYS AND POETS - THE NEXT MORNING

SUPER: SUNDAY

JB, Sweet Milk, Thad, Dana and Big Deb sit around a table. Thad has his arm around Dana. Sweet Milk watches JB set up his new phone.

SWEET MILK

I still don't get why you got another one. You were better off without it.

THAD

But then he wouldn't be able to call Professor Winters.

JB

Holly. Her name's Holly.

DANA

Okay. You gonna see Holly again?

JB

I think I need to figure out who I am outside of a relationship.

BIG DEB

She didn't want a boyfriend?

JB

No, she did not.

JB's new phone starts to buzz, a backlog of missed calls and texts. The phone rings. JB reacts.

JB (CONT'D)

It's Steph.

THAD

What are you gonna do?

After a long beat, JB throws his phone into his cup of coffee.

SWEET MILK

You know you could've just sent it to voicemail?

The WAITRESS comes and drops off their meals. Everyone digs in. Thad reaches over and takes a bite off Dana's plate.

DANA

Uh-uh. Do not touch my Mekhleme. We are not there yet.

JB turns to Sweet Milk, who is shoveling pancakes in his mouth.

JB

I still don't understand how the hell you got the embassy.

SWEET MILK

Oh, yeah. You guys know how I never knew my dad growing up?

THAD

Yeah...

SWEET MILK

Turns out he's a prominent member of the Ethiopian royal family.

DANA

Wait, so that means--

BIG DEB

(more intrigued)
You're royalty?

THAD

Why didn't you tell us?

SWEET MILK

I just wanted you guys to treat me normal.

JB

There has never been anything normal about you, Adam.

SWEET MILK

That's Prince Adam.

DANA

We are not calling you Prince.

SWEET MILK

Bend the knee.

THAD

I ain't bending shit.

SWEET MILK

Bend the knee!

They continue to playfully argue as we PULL OUT.

THE END