

“Country Life School”

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P.O. Box 3161  
Alpharetta GA, 30023  
401-441-8141/678-691-3886  
Saye Taryor

FADE IN:

Sunny skyline of downtown Atlanta. Automobiles and pedestrians are on the move. A sign on a building reads: "WELCOME TO WEST ATLANTA HIGH SCHOOL."

EXT. WEST ATLANTA HIGH SCHOOL, 1992 - PARKING LOT - DAY

A black 1991 Oldsmobile Cutlass CL turns the corner.

STACY EVERSON, 17, modest but hip African American sits in the passenger seat. SEAN MILLS, 18, confident but laid back African American parks the car.

Stacy snatches his back pack from the back seat while Sean parks the car.

STACY

Thanks for the ride.

SEAN

No problem. As long as you kick in for gas, I'm good.

STACY

As much as I pay for gas you should put a taxi meter up in here. It'll probably be cheaper.

SEAN

(laughs)

Very funny. I see you've got jokes.

Sean and Stacy exit the car. Sean locks the door and the two men walk towards the building.

SEAN

I got a couple of packages I need to drop off, so don't be late.

STACY

(frowns)

Packages? I thought we agreed to lay low and focus on school this year.

SEAN

I said I was gonna focus on graduating. I didn't say nothing about not selling weed.

Stacy shakes his head and grins.

STACY

Just saying, you can't graduate if you don't participate folk.

A red Cadillac Seville drives up. Hip-hop music BLAST from the vehicle. Stacy and Sean turn around to see who is driving the vehicle.

MILO, 21, arrogant drug dealer sits in the car.

STACY

Who is that?

SEAN

That's my boy MILO. Remember when I came up last summer?

STACY

Yeah.

SEAN

Well, he was my connect for the weed. Yo, I need to go talk to him about some business. I'll get at you later.

As Sean turns away, Stacy grabs Sean by the shoulder. Sean turns around and looks at Stacy.

STACY

Sean, you going to class right?

SEAN

Relax Stacy. I told you I'm focused this year dog.

Sean turns around to walk towards MILO when he bumps into LUKE JACKSON, a 16 year old athletic Caucasian.

Three or four books fall out of LUKE'S hand onto the ground.

LUKE

Watch where the hell you're going man!

SEAN

My fault homey.

Sean reaches to pick up the books but Luke kicks his arm. Sean Grabs Luke and the two scuffle to the ground.

STUDENT 1  
(points at Sean and Luke)  
Fight!

Stacy turns around and runs towards Sean and Luke.

Stacy grabs Luke and puts him in a headlock while Sean punches Luke in the stomach.

A large crowd of 15 STUDENTS gather around and CHANT.

Milo walks by and lifts his shirt. A 38 caliber hangs on his waistline.  
Sean Looks at Milo and shakes his head. Milo drops his shirt over the gun and walks away.

SCHOOL SECURITY OFFICER 1  
Hey, break it up here people!

SCHOOL SECURITY OFFICERS 1 2 and 3 rush towards the scene and drag Stacy, Luke and Sean inside the school while SCHOOL SECURITY OFFICERS 4 and 5 break up the mob and redirect the students to the building.

SCHOOL SECURITY OFFICER 4  
Party's over! Lets head to class!

SCHOOL SECURITY OFFICER 5  
Lets go! Lets go! Move it!

INT. WEST ATLANTA HIGH SCHOOL - PRINCIPAL DAVIS OFFICE - DAY -  
SAME

PRINCIPAL DAVIS, a 45 year old Caucasian stands over Luke, Sean and Stacy.

PRINCIPAL DAVIS  
(points at Luke)  
Luke, you're out for a week. Go to MRS. DANIELS so she can contact your parents. I don't know what has got into you kids. School just started and you all are already driving me nuts.

Luke glares at Stacy and Sean as he walks out of the room.

PRINCIPAL DAVIS

(looks at file folder)

You two have caused a lot of trouble over the years. Lets see, tardiness, class disruption, marijuana possession. You know what? I've had enough. I'm expelling both of you.

SEAN

Principal Davis, don't you want to know what actually happened?

PRINCIPAL DAVIS

(looks at Sean)

No. We don't need thugs like you at this school.

STACY

(stands)

But Principal Davis, it's our senior year and we worked hard this summer to get our grades up.

PRINCIPAL DAVIS

You two should have thought about that before you decided to act a fool today.

SEAN

(looks at Stacy)

Forget this clown. Stacy, meet me at the car when you get through.

PRINCIPAL DAVIS

(points at Sean)

Get the hell out of my office right now.

Sean walks out the office.

STACY

Could we at least get our transcripts today so we can try to transfer?

PRINCIPAL DAVIS

Mrs. Daniels should have those transcripts ready by tomorrow. What happened to you Everson? You were such a great athlete and bright student. Keep hanging around that friend of yours and you're going to find yourself locked up in prison some day.

Stacy looks at Principal Davis and smirks as he walks out the room.

INT. WEST ATLANTA HIGH SCHOOL - ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE - DAY -  
SAME

Stacy walks towards MRS. DANIELS, a 32 year old African American secretary.

MRS. DANIELS

How many days you get?

STACY

I got expelled. I'll be back tomorrow for my transcripts. Oh, I'll pick up my friends also. His name is Sean Mills and I'm Stacy Everson.

MRS. DANIELS

I know who you are. You should be ashamed of yourself.

Stacy and Luke glare at each other as Stacy exits the room. Luke sits on the opposite side of the room.

INT. WEST ATLANTA HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY - SAME

Stacy bumps into EARL WILSON, a friendly 44 year old janitor. EARL WILSON picks a fallen trash bag from the floor as he examines Stacy from head to toe.

EARL WILSON

Excuse me young blood. Aren't you CLARA HARRISON'S grandson?

STACY

Yeah, who want's to know?

EARL WILSON

Don't you remember me from Mount Zion Baptist? I'm Deacon Wilson.

STACY

Oh yeah, I haven't been to that church in years. Listen, I just got expelled and my ride is waiting outside.

EARL WILSON

Son, don't tell me you were part of all that malay

this morning. You know it's gonna be tough to transfer to another school in this district right?

STACY

I don't mean to be disrespectful but my ride is waiting outside.

Stacy walks away from Earl towards the exit.

EARL WILSON

Hey wait, how's CLARA doing?

Earl walks towards Stacy and places his right hand on his left shoulder. Stacy turns around and Earls hands drop to his side.

STACY

(annoyed)  
She's straight.

EARL WILSON

Listen, if you really are interested in getting back in school, there is a great school in Mississippi called Country Life. Fall semester starts next month and 95% of their students go on to college.

STACY

Are you serious? A boarding school in Mississippi? Don't you know the KKK are still lynching black folks out there?

Stacy turns around and opens the door as he and Earl Wilson exit the building.

EXT. WEST ATLANTA HIGH SCHOOL - PARKING LOT - DAY - SAME

Earl Wilson pulls a card from his front shirt pocket and hands it to Stacy.

EARL WILSON

Call this number if you are interested. Just make sure to use me as a reference. Anyway, I need to get back to work. Tell CLARA I said hello.

While Stacy puts the card in his back pocket, Sean BLOWS the horn as he drives his Oldsmobile towards Stacy. Earl turns around and enters the building.

SEAN

Let's go. What took you so damn long homey?

STACY

That fool knows my grandmother from church. He was telling me about some boarding school in Mississippi. He said something about how 95% of the students who graduate from there go on to college.

SEAN

(grins)

Mississippi? Aint shit to do in Mississippi. If I lived in Mississippi I'd graduate with honors.

Sean and Stacy laugh as Sean drives away.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - DAY - SAME

SEAN

You know what Stacy, going to that school may be a good move for you. Aint nothing but trouble in these streets. You need to focus on graduating and going to college.

STACY

I'm not trying to go all the way to Mississippi just to get a high School Diploma. It probably cost a grip too.

SEAN

If money is the problem, I've got you covered.

Sean slows down and stops the car as the street light turns red. Four PEDESTRIANS cross the street.

STACY

Whatever. If you really want to help me, front me 20 pounds of weed. I need some bread so I can get some wheels.

SEAN

Wasn't you just on my case about that? Talk about a complete one - eighty.

STACY

Every things changed now. We just got kicked out of

school folk.

SEAN

So what! You giving up on all your dreams now? And they say you're the smart one.

The street light turns green and Sean proceeds to drive.

STACY

(looks down)

You're right. I'm just a little upset right now.

SEAN

On another note, why the hell did you ever stop playing basketball? You was nice with the rock.

STACY

I got kicked off the team hanging around you remember?

SEAN

(laughs)

Now it's my fault? You need to find out if that boarding school has a basketball team. Maybe you can still get a scholarship to college and shit.

STACY

(laughs)

What?

SEAN

No joke homey. Your grandmother's gonna be disappointed about us getting expelled so both of us can't let her down.

STACY

I hear you, but I'm not feeling Mississippi right now.

SEAN

Hey, one of us has to graduate and go to college and it's too late to transfer to another school in our district.

Sean stops the car in front of a 70's style brick house. Cars are parked along the street.

Stacy steps out the car and looks down at Sean from the passenger side.

SEAN

Dog, think about calling that school. If not for you, do it for your grandmother.

Sean looks down at the watch on his left wrist.

SEAN

I need to split. Gotta get these sacks off me. Oh, and get my transcripts when you pick up yours.

STACY

Don't worry. I already told Mrs Daniels.

Sean and Stacy bump knuckles. Sean drives off while Stacy walks up the stairs and unlocks the door.

INT. STACY'S HOME - NOON - SAME

Stacy enters and locks the door. He lays his books on the couch and looks at the family portraits hanging on the wall. Stacy stares at an older picture of a young boy being held by a beautiful woman sporting an afro. He grabs one of eight basketball trophies sitting on the dresser and smiles.

CLARA HARRISON, Stacy's 62 year old grandmother open's the door. CLARA holds a bag of groceries in her left hand.

MRS. HARRISON

Stacy, why aren't you at school?

STACY

You need some help with that?

MRS. HARRISON

Don't play with me Stacy. I just asked you a question. Why didn't you go to school today?

Mrs. Harrison walks in the kitchen and places the bag of groceries on the table. Stacy follows her and grabs an apple out of the bag. Stacy tosses the apple in the air and catches it with his right hand.

Mrs. Harrison places a carton of milk in the fridge while Stacy bites into the apple.

Mrs. Harrison turns and angrily stares at Stacy.

STACY

I got kicked out.

MRS. HARRISON

Kicked out? Are you telling me you were expelled

STACY

Sean got in a fight and I got caught up in the middle of it.

MRS. HARRISON

Don't blame it on Sean. If he jumps off a cliff are you going to do the same thing?

STACY

It's not that serious.

MRS. HARRISON

So now your education is not that serious?

Stacy takes another bite into the apple.

Mrs Harrison walks into the living room. She shakes her head as Stacy follows.

STACY

Hey, guess who I bumped into today?

MRS. HARRISON

(looks at Stacy)

Don't try to change the conversation. You promised me you would stay out of trouble and make your graduation date. Your mother would be disappointed at you if she was still alive.

Mrs. Harrison looks at the picture of the beautiful woman holding the young boy.

Stacy walks next to Mrs. Harrison and puts his left arm around her waistline. He kisses her on the cheek as the two look at the picture on the wall.

STACY

I'll just get a job and go to school next semester.

We can use the extra money around here.

MRS. HARRISON

(looks at Stacy)

Stacy, I'm too old for this. If you really want to help me, graduate and go to college. You're too bright to be throwing your life away. The same goes for Sean.

STACY

In case you care to know, Deacon Wilson said hello.

MRS. HARRISON

Earl Wilson from Mount Zion?

STACY

Yeah.

MRS. HARRISON

Stacy, we'll finish this conversation after I get some rest. You worked so hard this summer to get your grades up. How could you throw everything down the drain?

Clara walks into a room and closes the door.

Stacy walks into a small bedroom and tosses the half eaten apple into a trash basket. He pulls a card from his back pocket. He sits down on a bed and looks across the room at the phone on the dresser.

INT. MISSISSIPPI - COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL/DR. TAYLOR'S OFFICE - LATE NOON

DR. TAYLOR, a 44 year old African American sits at a desk. He sports a beard, wears eye glasses and is neatly dressed wearing a suit and tie. A plaque on the desk reads: "PRINCIPAL TAYLOR."

The phone on the desk RINGS.

Dr. Taylor picks up the phone.

DR. TAYLOR

Country Life School, Dr. Taylor, how may I help you?

INTERCUT TELEPHONE CONVERSATION - DR TAYLOR AND STACY

STACY

Hello. My name is Stacy Everson and I would like to enroll for fall semester.

DR. TAYLOR

I usually get calls from parents, not students. So how did you hear about Country Life?

STACY

Earl Wilson told me about the school and said I could use him as a reference.

Dr. Taylor frowns and leans back in his chair.

DR. TAYLOR

Huh. Did you say Earl Wilson?

STACY

Yeah. I got expelled for fighting and he told me to call this number.

Dr. Taylor sits up and drags the chair back to the center of the desk.

DR. TAYLOR

Fighting? Son, this school is not for thugs and insubordinate's. Why should I allow a troublemaker in my school?

STACY

I'm no trouble maker sir. My friend and I would be honored if we were accepted. Our grades are good and we won't cause any problems.

DR. TAYLOR

(raises eye brows)

We? just a second ago this conversation was about you.

STACY

It is, but I have a friend who is also interested. We both attended West Atlanta High School.

DR. TAYLOR

West Atlanta?

(smiles)

Hey, do you know Mrs. Daniels?

Stacy looks surprised. He pulls the phone away from his ear and looks at it. He quickly puts the phone back to his ear.

STACY

Yeah.

DR. TAYLOR

I'll contact her to get those transcripts in the morning. By the way, what's your friend's name?

STACY

Oh, It's Sean Mills.

Dr. Taylor picks up a pen and writes on a sheet of paper.

DR. TAYLOR

I'll contact you tomorrow after I look at those transcripts.

STACY

Thanks. I look forward to hearing back from you soon.

Dr. Taylor hangs up the phone and takes off his glasses. He places the glasses on the desk as he shakes his head and smiles.

Stacy hangs up the phone and looks at the card.

He places the card in his back pocket.

EXT. CORNER STREET - DAY

Stacy stands as the city bus stops beside him.

Stacy walks on the bus and puts money in the meter. He walks by an OLD WOMAN to his left and a TEENAGE GIRL holding a SMALL INFANT to his right.

The bus drives away.

Stacy sits down at the back of the bus and stares out the window. The bus passes neighborhood homes, liquor stores, a HOMELESS MAN and other PEDESTRIANS. Stacy RINGS the bell as the bus stops near West Atlanta High School.

Stacy walks off the bus and crosses the street.

INT. WEST ATLANTA HIGH SCHOOL - ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE - DAY -  
SAME

Stacy enters. Mrs. Daniels turns around from the file cabinet and smiles at Stacy.

MRS. DANIELS

My brother in-law called about you and your friend Sean today.

Stacy raises his eye brows as he walks towards Mrs. Daniels.

STACY

Your brother in law? Are you talking about Dr. Taylor?

MRS. DANIELS

Yes. He wanted me to fax him copies of your transcripts. He also wanted to know a little bit about the two of you.

STACY

So what did you tell him?

MRS. DANIELS

I told him Country Life was just what the two of you needed. I remember how dedicated you and Sean were this summer. Speaking of Sean, where is he?

STACY

He couldn't make it this morning, so you can give his transcripts to me.

MRS. DANIELS

Well, I hope you both get accepted and I wish you the best.

STACY

Thanks. Have you seen Mr. Wilson?

MRS. DANIELS

The janitor? No, he's out today. Is he the one who told you about Country Life?

STACY

Yeah, why?

MRS. DANIELS

My brother in-law told me that they were best friends back in high school.

STACY

You're just full of surprises this morning.

MRS. DANIELS

(hands over transcripts)  
I was just as surprised as you.

STACY

Thanks. Could you tell Mr. Wilson thanks for everything next time you see him?

MRS DANIELS

Sure. You just stay out of trouble.

Stacy puts the transcripts in his bag and walks out the door.

EXT. STREET CORNER - NOON

The city bus stops and the door opens.

Stacey steps off the bus and walks towards his house when Sean drives his black 1991 Oldsmobile Cutlass CL next to him.

SEAN

What's up?

Stacy turns around.

STACY

I can't call it folk.

SEAN

You get those transcripts?

Stacy walks towards the passenger side and bends over.

STACY

Yeah. By the way, I called that school yesterday.

SEAN

(smiles)

That's what I'm talking about. So what they say?

STACY

Check this out. The cat I spoke with is Mrs. Daniels brother in-law and he and the janitor were best friends in high school.

SEAN

Get the hell out of here!

STACY

Word up. Mrs. Daniels put the word in for both of us. If I go to Mississippi, you got to roll with me folk.

SEAN

I was wondering what the hell moms was talking about this morning. I think they called the house.

STACY

Man, are you down or what?

Sean takes a sip of his 40 ounce beer, which is wrapped in a brown paper bag.

SEAN

I know you'll get accepted, but if they accept me, I'm down.

STACY

(smiles)

That's what I'm talking about.

Stacy removes a sheet of paper from his bag and hands it to Sean.

Sean looks at the document and places it on the passenger seat.

SEAN

Hey, I'm hooking up with Milo today to meet the new connect. Did you really want that weed?

STACY

(shakes head)

Listen up man, be careful hanging around Milo. I saw what happened during the fight yesterday.

SEAN

He can get a little rowdy but he's cool. I'll get at you later.

STACY

(raises two fingers)  
Peace out.

Sean turns on LOUD MUSIC and drives away while Stacy walks up the stairs of his house.

EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Milo and Sean sit in Milo's red Cadillac Seville. They are Downtown Atlanta and the city skyline is visible. Sean looks uncomfortable.

MILO

You know I would've popped that kid if it wasn't for all them damn spectator's yesterday.

SEAN

I know. I had it under control though.

MILO

You still got that 38 I sold you?

Sean reaches into the pocket of his jacket and shows Milo the gun. He pretends to pull the trigger, then he places the weapon back into his pocket.

MILO

It aint no good if you not using it. Think about that shit.

SEAN

I'll wait here and you can introduce me after the two of you get acquainted.

MILO

What the fuck! You scared homes?

SEAN

No, I just don't like being sociable with strangers.

MILO

I tell you what. I'll go in and check out what he's working with. Keep a look out for me. If I'm in longer than ten minutes, come through ready to use your heat.

SEAN

I got your back, but you should have picked someplace else to do this.

MILO

Hey, stop acting like a girl and let's do this.

Milo walks toward the hotel room and knocks on the door. A 35-year-old Caucasian/UNDERCOVER COP, opens the door.

UNDERCOVER COP

(looks around)

You got the money?

MILO

I'm good on my end. Just show me the merchandise.

UNDERCOVER COP

Ok, come in.

Milo enters the room and the UNDERCOVER COP closes the door.

Sean blows smoke out of the car while smoking a blunt.

Sean steps out the car and throws the blunt on the ground.

As Sean steps on the blunt, he hears a gun COCK back. He is forced head first to the hood of Milo's car and his hands are forced behind his back. A POLICE OFFICER places handcuffs around Sean's wrist.

POLICE OFFICER 1

You have a Constitutional right to remain silent. Anything you say can be held against you. You have the right to legal counsel and if you cannot afford a lawyer, one will be appointed for you.

Gunshots RING from the hotel room while four police cars swarm the parking lot.

Milo opens the door and a shot is fired at him from POLICE OFFICER 2.

Milo fires a shot at POLICE OFFICER 2 and closes the door.

POLICE OFFICER 2 waves at POLICE OFFICER 3 and the two rush towards the hotel door.

INT. HOTEL - NIGHT - SAME

The door is kick open by POLICE OFFICER 2.

UNDERCOVER COP lays on the floor bleeding.

The back window is open and Milo is no longer in the room.

POLICE OFFICER 2 reaches for his radio on his waistline.

POLICE OFFICER 2

Officer Down! Get an ambulance over here asap! The prime suspect fled on foot but we have an acquaintance in custody.

POLICE OFFICER 3 (O.S)

Get the choppers out here. The suspect fled on foot!

EXT. HOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT - SAME

Sean is shoved in the back of a police car by POLICE OFFICER 1. Sean frowns and looks down.

CUT TO:

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - MALE DORMITORY - EARLY MORNING, FOUR WEEKS LATER

Lights flicker on in the the hallway. PHILLIP SANDERS, 30-year-old obnoxious dormitory director, walks the hallway.

MR. SANDERS

(bangs on a door)

Rise and shine people. Lets go! Lets go!

Mr. Sanders walks toward room 121 and knocks on the door.

MR. SANDERS

(opens door)

Rise and Shine. I need this room clean and everyone in the cafeteria in an hour. Lets go! Lets go!

Mr. Sanders leaves the room. VASHON, 18, gets up from the bottom bunk. Stacy sits up on the top bunk. On the opposite side of the room, ANTONIO, 18, stands making up the bottom bunk while TOVARIS, 16, remains sleep on the top bunk.

MR.SANDERS (O.S)

Wake up people! I need you all out by 7!

STACY

(jumps off his bed)

Who was that folk?

VASHON

That was Mr. Sanders but we call him GI JOE.

STACY

Why?

ANTONIO

That fool hides behind trees trying to catch students sneaking out the dorm.

STACY

That's wild.

STACY

(points)

Let's see. You're Vashon, you're Antonio and both of you are from Chicago right?

VASHON (O.S)

Yep. Straight from the south side Joe.

STACY

It's Stacy, not Joe.

Vashon and Antonio look at each other and laugh.

ANTONIO

Joe is just a Chicago slang, sorda like folk is in Atlanta.

STACY

(grins)

Ok, but somebody needs to wake buddy up over there.

TOVARIS

(opens his eyes)

The name is Tovariss and it's way too early for all this male bonding.

VASHON

(puts on oxford)

Make sure to make up those beds or we will have to spend Saturday with GI JOE.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - DAY

Males and females sit on the opposite side. There are two separate lines. The left side for males and right side for females. 5 WORKERS serve food in each line. Stacy, Vashon, Tovariss and Antonio sit at a table.

STACY

This is kind of wack having to sit with nothing but hard legs.

ANTONIO

I know right? We all sat on the same side until Mr. Jones changed the rules last year.

TOVARIS

Who is Mr. Jones?

Mr. Jones, 52, assistant principal, sits in the front. A hand bell and a fruit basket are at the center of his table.

ANTONIO

(points)

That's Mr. Jones. He's the assistant principal.

TOVARIS

Damn! How long ya'll been at this school?

VASHON

Antonio and I have been here for four years.

ANTONIO

Just stick with us and we'll show you two rookies the ropes.

TOVARIS

Whatever.

Mr. Jones RINGS the hand bell and the cafeteria is silent.

MR. JONES

(stands up)

I would like to welcome all of you back for a new semester. All of you will be assigned new jobs and class schedules in the auditorium. Have a good year students.

As Mr. Jones sits, the student body sounds off in uniformity.

STUDENTS (O.S)

Whooooop!

Mr. Jones looks up and the students all turn away from him. He proceeds to eat his breakfast.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAMPUS - DAY

Males and females walk the yard wearing white oxfords and khaki bottoms.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM - DAY - SAME

Stacy, Vashon, Tovarish and Antonio enter. Students stand in several lines.

STACY

Hey, what was that about this morning? Why did everyone sound off?

VASHON

You talking about Mr. Jones? Some clown started that when I first got here.

STACY

What was he talking about assigning jobs? We get paid for that?

VASHON

(laughs)

Didn't you read your student manual? The jobs help us pay off our tuition.

ANTONIO

Listen Joe. Just sign up for the garbage patrol and

stop rushing us with all these questions.

Stacy looks at Antonio with his hands in the air while Tovariss smirks.

Tovariss shakes his head and walks away.

ANTONIO

(looks at Stacy)

Anyway, on garbage patrol, we get to stroll through the girl's.

STACY

That doesn't sound too bad.

VASHON

Ain't nothing bad about it. I know every broad on this campus.

STACY

(smiles)

Hey, I'll be back in a minute. I gotta get my schedule.

Stacy walks in a line. ANITA, 17 and sexy, stands in the line across from him. The two share eye contact but the moment is interrupted. TERRY DAVIS, 17, ANITA'S boyfriend, and captain of the basketball team, walks behind ANITA and puts his arm around her.

TERRY

Anita, What's up?

ANITA

(smiles)

Hey Terry.

TERRY

Did you miss the kid this summer?

ANITA

(looks at Terry)

You know I did baby.

Terry glares at Stacy as he kisses Anita on the forehead. Stacy smirks and turns away from the couple. Stacy walks up as the line progresses.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - FRONT OF AUDITORIUM -DAY

Students walk the campus. Vashon and Antonio lean on a rail. A FEMALE STUDENT waves to Vashon. Vashon waves back and blows a kiss.

ANTONIO

So what do you think about our new roommates?

VASHON

Stacy and Tovariss? They seem cool.

ANTONIO

Where did Tovariss say he was from?

VASHON

I think he's from Mississippi.

ANTONIO

I don't think he'll make it through the entire year.

KEMO, 18-year-old basketball player from the US Virgin Island and Reggie, 18-year-old basketball player from Detroit, walk towards Antonio and Vashon and interrupt the conversation.

REGGIE

What's up with ya'll?

ANTONIO

Just chilling Joe.

Stacy walks out the auditorium and walks towards the group.

KEMO

Vashon, come on the court tonight so I can dunk on your ras.

Everyone laughs except Stacy.

VASHON

Whatever Joe. Aint nobody dunking on me. I'll see you tonight.

REGGIE

(looks at Stacy)

What's up dude. I'm Reggie and this is Kemo.

STACY

I'm Stacy

Stacy shakes hands with Reggie and Kemo.

REGGIE

You brothers stay up. We gotta head out.

Reggie and Kemo enter the auditorium.

ANTONIO

(looks at Stacy)

Did you sign up for garbage patrol?

STACY

Yeah. I think they made a mistake on my class schedule though. They got me in two hour classes.

VASHON

(grins)

You didn't read your student manual before you got here did you?

STACY

No, not really. Do you know how to get to Dr. Taylor's office?

VASHON

(points to building)

Go to the building across the street and make the 3rd left after the entrance. You'll see his name on the door.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE - DAY - SAME

Stacy walks in the building and mistakenly bumps into NATASHA HOUSTON, 17, beautiful African American female with a great smile.

STACY

Sorry about that.

NATASHA

(smiles)

It's ok. I don't think we've met. Are you new?

STACY

Yeah.

NATASHA

Well, I need to get to class before I'm late. It was nice meeting you.

STACY

I didn't get your name.

NATASHA

Oh, I'm sorry, it's Natasha. Listen, I'll see you around. I really gotta run.

Natasha walks out the door as Stacy eyeballs Natasha from behind.

Stacy turns and walks to Dr. Taylor's office. Stacy knocks on a halfway open door.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - DR. TAYLOR'S OFFICE - DAY - SAME

DR. TAYLOR

(looks up)

Come in. How may I help you?

STACY

Hello Dr. Taylor. I just wanted to thank you for allowing me in at the last minute.

DR. TAYLOR

Let me guess. You're Mr. Everson. Your grandmother told me about your friend Sean. Just make sure you don't squander this opportunity like he did. You can thank me by graduating.

STACY

Yeah, my grandmother took the news just as hard as I did. Sean actually is a good guy.

DR. TAYLOR

I'm going to be frank with you Mr. Everson. Country Life School is not for everyone. Your friend Sean made a few bad decisions and now he will be spending the next 10 years of his life in prison. Just abide by the rules, study hard, and remember, ignorance is never an excuse, so learn all the rules in your student manual.

STACY

I promise you wont regret accepting me sir.

DR. TAYLOR

Hey, we're in the business of training future leaders. It's up to you to take advantage of the learning opportunities that have been granted to you. Just put forth your best effort and work with your head, hands and heart.

STACY

You got it.

Stacy shakes Dr. Taylor hand and walks out the office.

Dr. Taylor opens his desk draw and looks at a picture of he and Earl Wilson holding a trophy when they were teenagers.

He smiles as he closes the desk draw.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - BASKETBALL COURT - EVENING

Stacy, Antonio and Vashon walk towards the crowd. The all male crowd of 20 STUDENTS CHEER as they watch the game.

Terry stops at the top of the key in the middle of a fast break and shoots a three. The crowd CHEERS.

STACY

Who's the kid that just shot the ball?

ANTONIO (O.S)

That's Terry. He's one of the best guards in the state. He's from New York.

VASHON

Most of the guys on the court played for the last years team that won state.

Reggie steals the ball from BALLER 1 and passes it to Terry. Terry throws a lob to Kemo and he dunks on BALLER 2. BALLER 2 falls to the ground while BALLER'S 3,4 and 5 shake their heads. The crowd jumps in a frenzy.

KEMO

Get your bum clot off the court no da man!

STACY  
(looks at Antonio)  
What the hell did he just say?

ANTONIO  
He told him to get off the court. We have a few  
students here from the Virgin Island.

D, 18, comical student from Ohio, runs on the court and points his finger  
in the face of BALLER 2.

D  
Get off the court you bum!  
(looks at the crowd)  
Don't let this cat back on the court.

The crowd laughs as BALLER 2 swings a punch at D. D dodges the punch and  
runs back into the crowd.

Terry looks at the crowd as he rotates the basketball around his waist.

TERRY  
Who's next?

MATT POTTS, 18, confident Caucasian from Los Angeles, steps on the court.

MATT  
I'm next.

D (O.S)  
Check out Larry Birds little brother! Who let the  
white boy on the court?

The crowd laughs.

Matt smiles as he selects his team. He points at BALLER 3, Vashon, Stacy  
and MALIK WILSON, 17 from DC.

The four students walk towards Matt.

They all stretch as Terry glares at Stacy. Terry walks towards Stacy.

TERRY  
What do we have here? Baller's against busters.  
Check up son.

Terry tosses the ball towards Stacy. The ball hits Stacy in the chest and falls to the ground.

VASHON  
(looks at Stacy)  
Do you know how to play?

STACY  
(looks at Terry)  
Let's find out.

Stacy walks toward Terry and hands him the ball. The two glare at each other. Vashon walks toward PEDRO, 16 year old basketball player. Malik walks toward Kemo, Baller 3 walks toward Reggie and Matt walks towards MONTEZ, 18.

Terry dribbles the ball and throws it down to the post to Kemo.

Kemo does a drop step dunk on Vashon.

Vashon falls but quickly stands up.

The crowd goes wild.

D (O.S)  
Get these clowns off the court!

KEMO  
I told you I was going to dunk on your ras.

Stacy looks at Vashon and laughs. Vashon shakes his head and grins.

STACY  
He's the truth.

BALLER 3 brings the ball down the court and passes to Matt.

Matt Shoots and makes a deep 3 point shot.

The crowd APPLAUDS.

As Terry dribbles the ball, Stacy steals it from him at half court and goes in for a lay-up. The crowd is now in an UP ROAR.

D  
We got a Piston Celtic classic in the making. These

cats got a little game.

Terry frowns as Montez passes him the ball.

TERRY

Clear out.

D (O.S)

This fool is out here running varsity plays.

Terry's teammates move aside so that he and Stacy are isolated on the court.

Terry does a cross over dribble but Stacy steals the ball.

Stacy does a behind the back pass to Matt. Matt makes a 3 pointer from the time line.

Half of the crowd runs on the court in frenzy.

The lights go out and the crowd SIGHS.

Mr. Sanders stands from the Male Dorm looking across at the basketball court.

MR. SANDERS

It's time for Study hall people. Lets go! Lets go!  
Time to hit the books.

Students HISS as they walk towards the dorm.

Terry glares at Stacy as he walks by.

Reggie walks toward, Vashon, Antonio, Stacy and Matt.

REGGIE

Good game white boy. You and Stacy should try out  
for the team.

MATT

(smiles)  
Thanks. By the way, the name is Matt.

A car drives up the hill and stops several feet away from the court. The car is far enough from the dorm that Mr. Sanders can not see the vehicle. The five students stare at the car as a man steps out the vehicle. As the

man walks closer towards the students, they recognize it is Tovariss.

VASHON

This kid just got here and he is already sneaking off campus.

TOVARIS

What's up peoples?

MR. SANDERS

Hey, you guys need to pick it up before I have you on the farm this weekend!

VASHON

(looks at Tovariss)

You might not want to make that a habit. You must want a ticket out of here.

MATT

You smell like you've been smoking weed.

TOVARIS

(sniffs shirt)

For real?

The group walks towards the dorm. As they enter the dorm, Mr. Sanders gives Tovariss direct eye-to-eye contact.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAMPUS - DAY

Morning Sunset. School yard bell RINGS while STUDENTS walk in all directions wearing khaki bottoms and white oxfords.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - MRS. FRYE'S CLASSROOM - DAY

STUDENTS walk the hallways. Stacy, Matt, D, SALANDRA ANDERSON, 18 and ALICIA MADISON, 18 sit in class along with 8 STUDENTS, when MRS. FRYE, 32, enters the room.

MRS. FRYE

(closes the door)

Good morning students. My name is Mrs. Frye and I'll be teaching you social studies this year. As you can see, this is one of the few coed classes on your schedule. I pretty much will hold open lectures and our first topic for today is civil rights.

MRS. FRYE

(looks at D)

Glad to see you made it back D. Would you like to define civil rights for the class?

D

(smiles)

It's like James Brown getting out of prison.

D stands up and dances like James Brown.

Class laughs.

Mrs. Frye smiles as she points D to his seat. D sits down.

MRS. FRYE

Civil rights are the privileges and protections of personal liberty given to all citizens by law. These rights are bestowed by nations on those within their territorial boundaries.

ALICIA

What's the difference between women's rights and civil rights?

MRS. FRYE

Women's rights usually refer to human rights that have been granted to men and not women.

SALANDRA

Where does affirmative action come into play for civil rights?

MATT

It doesn't. It's just reverse discrimination.

Salandra stands up and angrily looks at Matt.

Matt puts his hands behind his head and slouches in his seat.

SALANDRA

Why do white people always say reverse discrimination? First off, a lot of whites benefit from affirmative action?

MATT

(sits up)

Why should people get special treatment? Everyone has the opportunity to advance in this country. They just need to take initiative.

SALANDRA

How many qualified women and minorities could not attend colleges and get good jobs before affirmative action?

D stands and walks towards Salandra.

D

Hey, why don't you two get in a ring and resolve this?

Class laughs.

MRS. FRYE

Ok class, settle down. Let's stay on the topic.

Salandra and D sit down.

STACY

(raises his hand)

I was thinking more about the equality and justice Martin Luther King stood for.

Mrs. Frye nods her head and walks to the front of the class.

She writes equality on the chalk board then turns around and looks at Stacy.

MRS. FRYE

Would you like to elaborate on that?

STACY

(looks at Alicia)

It's gonna to be a long two hours shawty.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAMPUS - DAY

Vashon and Antonio stand next to the garbage truck wearing black jump suits, working boots and gloves.

VASHON

What's taking those two so long?

ANTONIO

I saw Matt on the phone and Stacy was changing clothes when I left the dorm.

VASHON

They need to hurry up.

Matt and Stacy run towards the truck and grab the back rails on opposite sides of the vehicle.

MATT

Sorry we're late guys.

VASHON

It's about time. Lets role out.

Vashon drives the truck around campus as Antonio, Matt and Stacy dump trash into the truck.

MATT

(looks at Stacy)

Are you going out for the team?

STACY

I'm thinking about it. How about you?

MATT

You're looking at Country Life's new shooting guard.

STACY

(picks up trash can)

The way you shot the ball last night, you might just be the next shooting guard.

VASHON

Stacy, go ahead and dump that. We need to stop by the cafeteria before we head to the girls dorm.

Stacy dumps the trash can and puts it back on the ground. Matt and Stacy jump back on the truck as Vashon drives off.

STACY

What made you decide to attend a black boarding

school?

MATT

The high school I went to had a horrible basketball coach and the academics was horrible.

STACY

So it was for basketball?

MATT

No. It's mainly about the academics and the social experience.

Garbage truck stops by the cafeteria.

VASHON

(steps out the truck)

Ok people. Let's get to work.

ANTONIO

(steps out)

Matt, come with me. You can help me get the garbage from the cafeteria.

VASHON

Stacy, I need for you to help me dump the cans around the building and let's hurry up so we can get to the girls dorm.

Stacy walks behind the building and spots Tovariss smoking in the woods.

STACY

Tovariss, what the hell are you doing back here?

TOVARIS

(tosses blunt)

Man, you scared the hell out me. What the hell you doing back here?

STACY

I'm working. You out here smoking weed aint you? What's wrong with you folk?

TOVARIS

What you mean what's wrong with me? I'm just smoking a little weed. Don't tell me you aint never done

that before.

Stacy walks towards Tovariss.

STACY

I guess you think that makes you cool or something. I've smoked and sold it and it almost destroyed my life.

TOVARIS

Well that's you. I don't see how smoking a little weed is going to destroy my life.

STACY

Why are you at this school if you don't want to be here?

TOVARIS

My mother sent me to this wack school. This school is for lames. We can't drive our cars, wear our clothes during the week and we can't even sit next to girls in the cafeteria.

STACY

If smoking drugs and breaking school rules makes me cool, then I'd rather be lame.

Tovariss looks at Stacy and smirks. He pulls another blunt out of his pocket and lights it up.

TOVARIS

So you're my father now? I don't need no lecture. I just hope you aint no snitch.

Tovariss puts the blunt in his mouth and begins to smoke.

STACY

I aint no snitch. Just make sure you don't start smoking that shit in our room. I'll be a snitch before I allow your foolishness to get me expelled.

VASHON (O.S)

Stacy, where the hell are you? Let's go!

STACY

(looks at Tovariss)

Be easy man. I just think you're making a big mistake.

Stacy turns away from Tovariss and walks towards the building.

Tovariss shakes his head as he continues to smoke.

Stacy walks around the building towards Vashon.

VASHON

Where you been Joe? You had me doing all the damn work.

STACY

I had to use the bathroom.

VASHON

(laughs)

What was you doing? Getting to know yourself better?

STACY

(grins)

Everybody wants to be a comedian.

Matt and Antonio join the group and the 4 gentlemen position themselves on the vehicle.

Vashon and Antonio head to the front while Matt and Stacy head to the back.

STACY

Since you did all the work at the last stop, I'll work the girls dorm while you chill in the truck.

Vashon shakes his head and smiles as he starts the truck and drives off.

Vashon pulls up near the girls dorm.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - GIRLS DORM - DAY - SAME

THREE GIRLS walk out the girls dorm.

Natasha walks around the corner, heading towards the dorm, when Stacy recognizes her.

Stacy jumps off the truck and jogs towards her.

Matt, Antonio and Vashon pay close attention.

Stacy stands directly in front of Natasha.

STACY

Hey. It's good to see a pretty face again.

NATASHA

(smiles)

Is that so?

STACY

I know you're a very busy person so let me get straight to the point. I think you're very attractive and I would like to get to know you better.

NATASHA

You don't look too bad yourself.

(nods head)

Ok, I'm fine with that, but lets start with your name first.

STACY

You know what, let me borrow a pen and a sheet of paper?

Natasha opens her back pack and hands Stacy a pen and a sheet of paper.

Stacy places the paper on his left hand as he writes with his right hand. Stacy hands the paper to Natasha. Natasha looks at the paper and smiles.

Natasha folds the paper and takes the pen from Stacy. She places, both the paper and the pen, into her back pack.

Anita walks by and smiles as she eyeballs Stacy. She rolls her eyes at Natasha as she walks towards the dorm.

Matt, Vashon and Antonio laugh and point as they look on.

STACY

What was that about?

NATASHA

Beats me. Anyway, I better head to my room. I look forward to getting to know you.

Natasha turns around and smiles as she walks towards the dorm.

Stacy stares at Natasha from behind. He jogs back towards Antonio, Matt and Vashon.

ANTONIO (O.S)

Peep this stud.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - STACY'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Rainy night as Tovarish is on the top bunk asleep. Antonio sits on the bottom bunk as Stacy and Vashon watch television.

Someone KNOCKS on the door.

Stacy walks to the door and opens it. Matt walks in.

STACY

What's up Matt?

MATT

What's up guys? Vashon, did you find out when the team will be holding tryouts?

VASHON

Yep. Two weeks from now.

ANTONIO

Forget about that. Did you all see the love connection between Natasha and Stacy?

Vashon and Matt laugh.

VASHON

That fool spent more time talking to her than he spent working.

STACY

Don't hate the player shawty. Hate the game.

MATT

I don't mean to get off topic here Stacy, but how did you end up here?

STACY

I got in an altercation at my old school and I was

expelled. I called Dr. Taylor and he got me in. My best friend was supposed to come with me but he got arrested.

Matt sits down as Vashon stands up and turns off the television. Vashon turns around and looks at Stacy.

VASHON

You wanted to come here? Man, I was mad as hell when I found out my mother was sending me here.

STACY

How do you feel about being here now?

VASHON

It took some time to adjust but now that I'm about to graduate, it was the best thing she could've done for me.

MATT

How about your dad?

VASHON

He's in jail. I really never knew him.

Stacy climbs to the top bunk and sits on his bed.

STACY

I don't know much about my father either. My mother died of lupus when I was ten, and I've been living with my grandmother ever since.

ANTONIO

Sorry to hear that man. I can't imagine what my life would be like without both of my parents.

MATT

Both of my parents were murdered when I was eight. I've moved around foster homes ever since. My AAU basketball coach told me about this school.

Antonio, Stacy and Vashon look at each other stunned.

ANTONIO

Are you serious? I'm sorry to hear that Joe.

MATT

They say never judge a book by its covers right?  
Anyway, life goes on.

VASHON

Man, all this time I was thinking you were just a  
rich preppie white boy.

STACY

Did we just have a damn Oprah moment?

Matt, Vashon, Stacy and Antonio all laugh.

MR. SANDERS (O.S)

Social time is over people. Everyone to your rooms!  
Time to hit the sack. Lights out! Lights out!

MATT

Does this guy ever shut up? I better head out guys.  
I'll see you all tomorrow.

Matt stands up and walk to the door. He opens the door walks out the room.  
Vashon closes the door behind him.

#### SERIES OF SHOTS

- 1) MRS. FRYE LECTURES CLASS AS STACY, D, MATT, ALICIA, SALANDRA AND 8 OTHER STUDENTS TAKE NOTES.
- 2) STACY AND NATASHA WALK TOGETHER AROUND A LAKE.
- 3) STACY AND MATT DUMP TRASH INTO THE GARBAGE TRUCK.
- 4) TOVARIS SMOKES IN THE WOODS.
- 5) COACH, 36, LOOKS ON AS STACY STEALS THE BALL FROM MONTEZ AND PASSES IT TO MATT. MATT SHOOTS A THREE-POINTER.
- 6) D DOES THE MOON WALK WHILE MRS. FRYE AND THE CLASS LAUGH.
- 7) VASHON DIRECTS STUDENTS IN THE CAFETERIA TO SOUND OFF AS MR. JONES SITS.

8) NATASHA AND THE SCHOOL CHOIR STAND IN FRONT OF THE ENTIRE STUDENT BODY. NATASHA LOOKS AT STACY AND SMILES WHILE HE GRINS BACK AT HER FROM THE AUDIENCE.

9) STACY, KEMO, MATT, VASHON AND REGGIE SIT IN THE LIBRARY AS THEY STUDY.

10) MATT AND STACY SHOW VASHON AND ANTONIO THEIR BASKETBALL JERSEYS. MATT NUMBER 7 AND STACY NUMBER 9.

11) TOVARIS EXITS A CAR FILLED WITH SMOKE.

12) PROFESSOR PEADY, 63, CAUCASIAN GEOLOGY TEACHER, SLAPS A PAIR OF CHALK ERASERS NEAR TERRY'S FACE WHILE HE SLEEPS IN THE CLASS. TERRY WAKES UP MAD WHILE THE ENTIRE CLASS LAUGHS.

13) NEWSPAPER CLIP READS, "COUNTRY LIFE WINS TENTH STRAIGHT" WITH A PICTURE OF KEMO DUNKING THE BALL.

14) NEWSPAPER CLIP READS, "COUNTRY LIFE WINS DISTRICT" WITH A PICTURE OF TERRY SHOOTING THE BALL.

15) NEWSPAPER CLIP READS, "COUNTRY LIFE TO DEFEND STATE TITLE." THERE IS A PICTURE OF MATT AND STACY STANDING BACK TO BACK HOLDING BASKETBALLS.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL, SIX MONTHS LATER - CAMPUS - ROCK GARDEN EAST - DAY

Stacy and Natasha enter. Students sit scattered throughout. Stacy and Natasha walk towards Reggie and Salandra whom are seated. Natasha walks in front of Salandra. Salandra and Reggie look up.

NATASHA  
What's up girl?

SALANDRA

Hey Natasha. What's up Stacy? Reggie was just telling me the two of you might attend the same college next year.

STACY

Yeah. You need to follow us down to Georgia State. Natasha's going to be chilling with me. She got accepted last week.

REGGIE

Word?

SALANDRA

Congratulations girl. I'll be in Atlanta right with you because I'm going to Clark Atlanta. You two need to support our black institutions.

NATASHA

Make sure I get all your information before graduation so we can keep in touch girl. We're going to have a blast in Hotlanta.

STACY

We'll get at ya'll later. Salandra, keep him out of trouble. We still got a game to play.

REGGIE

Keep who out of trouble? You need to be worried about sister souljah.

Everyone laughs as Salandra hits Reggie on the arm. Natasha and Stacy walk away.

Natasha and Stacy find an empty area and sit down. Stacy looks at Natasha and kisses her on the cheek. Natasha smiles and puts both of her arms around Stacy's waist.

NATASHA

How's your grandmother doing?

STACY

She's ok. She told me Mr. Wilson is going to drive her down for our graduation.

NATASHA

Is that the janitor you were telling me about from

your last school?

STACY

Yeah, he's been keeping an eye on her since I left. I still can't get him to talk about his friendship with Dr. Taylor though.

NATASHA

Maybe they aren't friends any more.

STACY

All I know is he's the reason why I'm here with you right now. I owe him and Dr. Taylor everything.

Stacy kisses Natasha on the forehead. Natasha removes her arms from Stacy's waist and turns towards him.

NATASHA

I love being around you. You're always thinking of others.

STACY

Speaking of others, how's your mother doing shawty? It must be really hard knowing she's fighting cancer.

Natasha looks at the ground and frowns.

NATASHA

What can I do? I just pray for her every day. It's amazing how strong she's been during the whole ordeal.

STACY

I'm looking forward to meeting her before we head off to college.

Natasha looks up and see's Anita with TWO FEMALE STUDENTS on the opposite side.

Natasha and Anita glare at each other and roll eyes.

Natasha looks at Stacy.

NATASHA

I see your groupie friend can't keep her eyes off

you.

Stacy looks across and Anita smiles at him. Stacy looks back at Natasha and grins.

STACY

What?

NATASHA

Anita and her hood rat friend's keep looking over here.

Anita and the TWO FEMALE STUDENTS stare at Stacy.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAMPUS - ROCK GARDEN WEST - DAY -  
SAME

ANITA

She better keep an eye on her man before I pull a creep move on that.

The TWO FEMALE STUDENTS laugh and high five Anita.

Anita nods her head and looks at Stacy.

ANITA

You know what they say. What Terry doesn't know won't hurt him.

TWO FEMALE STUDENTS (O.S)

I heard that girl.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAMPUS - ROCK GARDEN EAST - DAY -  
SAME

Stacy looks at Natasha and puts his right arm around her shoulders.

STACY

Pay her no attention. You're the one standing next to me, plus she's with Terry.

NATASHA

Terry and who else?

STACY

(laughs)

It aint me.

Stacy puts his arms around Natasha and kisses her on the forehead.

NATASHA

I don't like her.

Vashon approaches Stacy and Natasha breathing heavy.

VASHON

Hey man. Tovaris just got kicked out of school.

Stacy removes his arms from around Natasha and stands.

STACY

What happened?

VASHON

(hands on hips)

GI JOE caught him smoking weed outside the dorm.

STACY

For real?

(looks at Natasha)

Hey, I'll call you later. I need to see what's up.

Vashon and Stacy exit the rock garden and head towards the Male Dorm.

Natasha looks over at Anita and rolls her eyes. She stands up and walks towards Salandra and Reggie.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - MALE DORMITORY - DAY - SAME

MONTEZ

How did that fool get caught?

KEMO

GI JOE da catch he in the bush smoking weed.

TERRY

I bet you Stacy probably ratted him out.

Stacy and Vashon join Montez, Terry and Kemo.

VASHON

What's the business?

MONTEZ

I heard Matt's going to be moving in with you two.

TERRY

Yeah, thanks to Stacy.

STACY

(points at Terry)

What the hell is this clown talking about?

TERRY

You should know. You know about everything else you snitch.

Stacy approaches Terry but Vashon grabs Terry.

Kemo grabs Stacy and the confrontation is avoided.

MONTEZ

What the hell is wrong with the two of you? We got a state championship to win and ya'll bickering like some females. Let those two clowns fight.

Vashon and Kemo let go of Stacy and Terry.

Stacy points at Terry.

STACY

I aint never been a snitch!

The group looks at Stacy as he walks away and enters the dorm.

KEMO

(shadow boxing)

Ali, boom bi ya your mother skunt.

Kemo, Montez and Vashon look at Kemo and laugh.

Terry stands looking vex as Vashon and Kemo pretend to box each other.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - STACY'S DORM ROOM - DAY - SAME

Stacy enters and is alone. He picks up an envelope from the desk with his name on it. The top left hand corner reads: "SEAN, FULTON COUNTY PRISON."

He climbs to the top bunk and sits on his bed.

Sean opens the envelope and unfolds the letter within.

INSERT - THE LETTER

SEAN (V.O)

"What's up Homey? Your grandmother told moms about how well you were doing in Mississippi. I'm proud of you. She also told her you're playing basketball again. I'm sure you still locking them down with that killer D. Man, I thought it was all about that fast money but this here is for the birds. Prison Life is no life for a human being. I should have stayed over your crib that day instead of rolling out with that fool Milo. Word has it he's been leaving cats dead in the streets and the police can't figure out his moves. Anyway, stay up homey and don't go back to that dope game no matter how hard it gets."

BACK TO SCENE

Stacy puts the letter back in the envelope and puts his head on his pillow. He stares at the ceiling.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAFETERIA - DAY

Female and male students sit on opposite sides. Mr. Jones RINGS the table bell and the cafeteria is silent.

MR. JONES

(places bell on table)

As you all know, our basketball team will be playing for a state title this weekend. I would like to congratulate them for another great year. Go ahead fellas, stand up.

Montez, Kemo, Terry, Reggie, Stacy, Matt and the rest of the team stands while the student body CLAPS and CHEER. D stands up as if he's part of the team. The students laugh.

KEMO

Sit your bum clot down.

Mr. Jones looks at D and shakes his head while Mr. Taylor enters the

cafeteria.

MR. JONES

We're proud of all of you young men and we have no doubt that we will be celebrating a second state championship this weekend.

Students clap

MR. JONES

On a more serious matter, DR. Taylor is here to talk to everyone this morning.

Dr. Taylor walks towards Mr. Jones. Mr. Sanders leans on the wall as he crosses his arms.

DR. TAYLOR

Good morning everyone. Some of you are aware by now that a fellow student was recently expelled due to drug possession. I want all of you to understand that this institution is for learning and we will not tolerate thug behavior. If you break school rules, you will face harsh consequences.

Mr. Sanders smirks as he looks in the direction of the basketball team.

DR. TAYLOR

On a better note, I would also like to congratulate our men's basketball team and I look forward to watching a great game this weekend.

Dr. Taylor sits down and the students go back to conversing among themselves.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM/COACHES OFFICE -DAY

Coach sits at his desk while the basketball team practices on the opposite side of the room. Players BOUNCE basketballs.

TERRY

(knocks on door)

Hey coach. You wanted to see me?

COACH

Yes. Come in and close the door.

Terry enters the room and closes the door. He sits down in front of Coaches desk.

TERRY

So what's up?

COACH

I spoke with PROFESSOR PEADY and it looks like you're not doing well in his Geology class. If you don't pass this weeks exam, I wont be able to let you play on Saturday.

TERRY

Can't you talk him into having the exam next week?

COACH

You've known me for three years now. You of all players should know how I feel about following school policy. Academics should always come first and it will, as long as I'm the coach here.

TERRY

I hear you Coach, but I don't know if I'll be able to pass that exam by Friday.

COACH

Why don't you ask Stacy to help you out? The professor claims Stacy is the brightest student in his class.

TERRY

I was hoping you could get one of the girls to tutor me.

COACH

The girls can't help you in the dorm at night. I've never seen two teammates who play so well on the court but refuse to associate off the court the way you guys do.

TERRY

Is that it?

COACH

The ball is on your court. You know what you need to do to play on Saturday. It's up to you to get it

done.

Coach opens his door and walks to the basketball court as Terry follows him.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM - DAY - SAME

COACH

(blows whistle)

Ok, that's enough for today. Hit the showers.

As the team scrambles off the court, Stacy shoots and makes a three-pointer from the top of the key.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - D'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Vashon, Antonio, Matt, Montez, Reggie, Kemo and Stacy all gather around as D speaks.

D

Vashon, you remember that student who got expelled two years ago?

VASHON

Here we go. You know he's about to tell us one of his exaggerated adventures right?

Everyone laughs.

D

No man for real. Remember that cat that poured piss over GI JOE?

VASHON (O.S)

Oh yeah. Joe was wild.

STACY

Somebody poured piss on GI JOE? What the hell was that about?

D

Every year a few of us go out on these ninja runs.

STACY

What's that?

VASHON

We dress in all black and sneak up to the girl's dorm.

STACY

With GI JOE on patrol, if anyone got caught, their days at Country Life would be over.

VASHON

The funny thing is nobody has ever gotten caught.

D

Can I finish telling my story? Damn!

MONTEZ

My fault. Go ahead Eddie Murphy.

D

As I was saying, we all decided to go on a Ninja run.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAMPUS - FEMALE DORM - NIGHT, 2 YEARS EARLIER  
(FLASHBACK)

D (V.O)

We were all dressed in black that night but I was the only smart one wearing a face mask. About ten of us ran up the hill after campus security passed. We could see one of the girls undressing through the window.

EX STUDENT

Vashon, go knock on her window.

VASHON

Hell No. D, won't you go since you're the only clown out here with a face mask on.

D

Both of ya'll some chumps. I got this.

D (V.O)

I was headed towards the window, and out of nowhere, GI Joe snatched the shit out my arm. Everyone else hauled ass down hill. Lucky for me, one of the girls

yelled out the window. When GI Joe turned his head, I pulled my arm from under him and ran as fast as I could. I'm just glad he fell while chasing me back to the dorm.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - D'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

VASHON

I just knew GI JOE had you that night. You just brought back some good old memories dog.

STACY

So what does that have to do with GI Joe getting piss thrown over him shawty?

D

Slow your row. I was just about to get to that.

KEMO

Hurry up your bum clot.

D

Anyway, once we had all reached the dorm safely, we all changed clothes and posted up in Vashon's room.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - VASHONS DORM ROOM - NIGHT, 2 YEARS EARLIER  
(FLASHBACK)

D (V.O)

We all got pretty scared when we heard a KNOCK on Vashon's door. I just knew it was going to be GI Joe. When Vashon opened the door, we all SIGHED in relief.

EX STUDENT

(holding a bucket)  
I got a little surprise for Mr. Sanders.

VASHON

What the hell is that smell? What's in the bucket?

EX STUDENT

Lets just say Mr. Sanders will be taking a gold shower today.

D  
Are you crazy?

D (V.O)  
We heard some noise outside of the window. Before I could say another word, this fool dumps the bucket outside of the window. GI Joe is standing outside soaking wet.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - D'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

Everyone laughs.

STACY  
So what happened after that?

ANTONIO  
GI Joe sent that kid home the same night.

REGGIE  
Yeah, I heard he even paid for the plane ticket Joe.

Matt opens the door and walks in the room.

MATT  
I was wondering where every body was. Don't stop the party because of me.

VASHON  
I say we have another ninja run on Friday night. The entire faculty will be too busy preparing for the big game on Saturday.

D (O.S)  
That's a good idea.

MATT  
What's a ninja run?

STACY  
It's a long story. I'll tell you about it later.

Stacy opens the door and walks out the room.

Matt closes the door.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - STACY'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Vashon enters wearing his bathrobe. He holds a toothbrush in his left hand and a towel is draped over his left shoulder. Antonio, Matt and Stacy are in bed asleep.

VASHON

You fools better wake up.

STACY

(yawns)

What time is it?

VASHON

It's time to wake yo ass up. That's what time it is.

Stacy, Matt and Antonio slowly crawl out of bed.

Stacy walks toward the TV and turns it on.

STACY

Vashon, don't forget I'm suppose to be driving the truck today.

VASHON

I told you that?

STACY

Remember, we're suppose to start rotating.

MATT

Turn up the TV, I think they're talking about your home town.

Stacy turns up the VOLUME on the television.

NEWS REPORTER (ON TV)

Breaking reports out of Atlanta has confirmed that the gunman killed by police gunfire earlier this morning was eighteen-year-old Milo Cunningham.

A mug shot of Milo is on the TV screen.

STACY

That's Milo, I knew that fool. He was my partners

connect at the crib.

NEWS REPORTER (ON TV)

Cunningham was listed as one of Atlanta's most sought after fugitives after he murdered an undercover Fulton County officer. Officers suspect he may also be responsible for several other brutal drug related deaths in Mississippi and Alabama.

VASHON

You sold dope? I never would have guessed that.

STACY

(shakes his head)

My best friend is in jail, this fool Milo just got killed and Tovariss got sent home for smoking weed. Damn.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAMPUS - DAY

Stacy parks the garbage truck near the rock garden. Students are on the move. Stacy, Matt, Vashon and Antonio step from the vehicle.

STACY

(holds trash bags)

You guys can work from the top; I'll start from the bottom.

Vashon, Matt, and Antonio take a trash bag from Stacy and walk in separate directions. Stacy walks down to the bottom of the rock garden and begins picking up trash from the ground. Anita walks towards Stacy.

ANITA

Hey handsome.

STACY

Oh, what's up shawty? I thought you were someone else.

ANITA

Is that someone else as fine as this?

Anita perks her chest out while Stacy stares.

ANITA

I see how you stare at me around campus. Do you like

what you see?

STACY

(smiles)

What's up with you and Terry?

Anita walks closer to Stacy.

ANITA

Nothing if you don't want it to be.

Stacy steps back.

STACY

No disrespect but Natasha's the only female I'm interested in right now.

Natasha, Kemo, Reggie, Salandra and Terry walk from around the corner.

NATASHA

You heard him skeezer. Beat it!

Anita rolls her eyes at Natasha and looks at Terry.

She turns around and quickly walks away from the group.

KEMO

Scatter your ras you bum clot!

SALANDRA

(looks at Terry)

You ok?

TERRY

I'm straight.

NATASHA

You're too good for that skeezer anyway.

STACY

How long y'all been out here?

REGGIE

We heard it all from around the corner.

KEMO

We heard everything. Natasha be the only woman for I.

Everyone laughs.

Terry walks up to Stacy and extends his hand.

Stacy shakes Terry hand.

TERRY

I appreciate the way you handled that kid.

STACY

(extends hand)

Word?

TERRY

I read you wrong son. Good looking out.

STACY

You know coach told me you needed some help in Geology right? Get at me tonight folk.

TERRY

(nods head)

No doubt son.

Stacy and Natasha walk away from the group.

NATASHA

So am I really the only female you are interested in?

STACY

Nope. I got a thing for Janet Jackson.

Stacy grins while Natasha hits him on the arm.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - LIBRARY - NIGHT

Terry and Stacy sit. Students are scattered all over.

STACY

What was our beef about in the first place?

TERRY

When I first met you, I thought you were trying to get at Anita. In New York, it's disrespectful to get at somebody's girl while their on the spot.

STACY

That's disrespectful worldwide. Anyway, I looked at her and she looked at me. It was as simple as that.

TERRY

And now I know. I feel like a sucker for holding that against you this entire time kid.

STACY

That's cool. Let's focus on this Geology so we can get you on the court Saturday. I need one of those championship rings y'all won last year.

Terry and Stacy look at the books on the table.

STACY

Can you name four minerals that contain non-metallic luster?

TERRY

Nope.

STACY

Well, you better memorize this because it'll be on the test Friday. They are garnet, apatite, quartz and native sulfur.

INT. ATLANTA, GEORGIA - CLARA'S HOME - DAY

Earl Wilson and Clara Harrison sit around the Kitchen table.

EARL WILSON

How's Stacy doing in school?

MRS. HARRISON

He's doing well. Lord knows that school was the best thing that ever happened to that boy.

EARL WILSON

I'm a little nervous about going back out there for graduation.

MRS. HARRISON

Back out there? I didn't know you were ever out there. Did you graduate from Country Life?

EARL WILSON

I actually was a student there before I dropped out. I ran track with Dr. Taylor back in sixty four.

Mrs. Harrison sips on a glass of orange juice.

MRS. HARRISON

What happened?

EARL WILSON

During one of our track meets, I got in an argument with our track coach and quit the team. They tried to discipline me for yelling at him so I dropped out of school. It was the dumbest thing I've ever done.

MRS. HARRISON

Why does that make you nervous?

EARL WILSON

You see, Dr. Taylor tried to convince me to stay at the school and I didn't listen. Now he's a role model and I'm just a janitor.

MRS. HARRISON

Please Earl, that's old news. You two are grown men now. I'm sure he will be excited to see you. There's nothing wrong with being a janitor. Those students know you care about them and that's more than I can say about half of those teachers.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - MALE DORMITORY/BATHROOM - DAY

Stacy stands in front of the mirror wearing a red towel around his waist. He holds a toothbrush and a tube of toothpaste in his left hand. Stacy looks in the mirror and brushes his teeth. As he rinses his mouth, Vashon and Matt enter wearing white robes with white towels around their necks.

VASHON

What up Joe? How did the study session go with Terry?

STACY

I went over everything that was on the test.

MATT

Yeah, but you know Peady never gives the same exam twice.

STACY

I know, but as long as he gets the basic concept, he should be straight.

MATT

Well, I hope he passes so he can feed me the rock on Saturday.

STACY

(smiles)

Feed you the rock?

MATT

You know I'm good for thirty plus. I'm automatic baby.

VASHON

Listen Joe, all I know is you better cash in on all this wolfing. I would hate for you to be bouncing checks on game-day.

STACY

(looks at Vashon)

He might have a point dog. They double me and Kemo so much, he's always open.

Vashon laughs.

MATT

Word? Just make sure you rebound and D up fool.

STACY

That goes without saying.

MATT

Cause without that, you're a liability on the floor.

Matt and Vashon laugh while Stacy shakes his head left to right.

STACY

Whatever. Ya'll need to hit the showers for real.  
Somebody's smelling like ass and feet. What the hell  
ya'll two been doing?

VASHON

What? Don't even play like that. That's your top lip  
you smelling fool.

STACY

(smiles)  
I'll get at you cats later.

Stacy exits while Matt and Vashon walks towards the showers.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - PEADY'S CLASSROOM - DAY

STUDENTS walk the hallway. Baller 1, Baller 2, Baller 3 and Montez stand  
around Malik. 4 STUDENTS enter and gather around the group as Baller 3  
proceeds to beat box.

MALIK

(stands up)  
I'M A FRESH MC, I KICK DOPE RYMES, I'M FLY AND I'M  
DOPE, LIKE KNICKS AND DIMES. DROPPING SCUDS LIKE  
SADAAM, I GRINDS FO MINE, IF YOU AINT BOUT CASH,  
STOP WASTING MY TIME. I'M FRESH AND I'M FLY, MY  
NAMES MALIK, AND I'M A UNDERCOVER LOVER, WHEN I'M  
UNDER THE SHEETS.

STUDENTS APPLAUD Malik as Terry, Antonio, BALLER 4, BALLER 5 and Kemo  
enter.

MONTEZ

Terry, come get this fool. He thinks he can rhyme.

TERRY

Gotta focus on this test kid. I'll get at him later.

MALIK

I'll battle anybody any time and place.

The bell RINGS and everyone sits. Professor Peady enters the class and  
closes the door.

PROFESSOR PEADY

I see I didn't have to tell you all to settle down

today. I'm sure all of you studied hard so go ahead and put your study materials away. Since this is a multiple question test, all of you will need number two pencils. Good luck.

Professor Peady walks towards Terry.

PROFESSOR PEADY  
Are you ready superstar?

TERRY  
Yes Professor Peady.

PROFESSOR PEADY  
(walks to the front)  
Good Luck to all of you.

Professor Peady passes the test papers around. Terry receives the test and puts the eraser end of the pencil near the side of his mouth. He looks at Professor Peady.

PROFESSOR PEADY  
You may begin.

MONTAGE

-- TERRY LOOKS AT THE CLOCK AND THE CLOCK SHOWS 1:00 PM. TERRY LOOKS AROUND AND NOTICES ALL THE STUDENTS ARE CIRCLING ANSWERS ON THEIR TEST.

-- THE CLOCK SHOWS 1:20 PM. TERRY WIPES HIS RIGHT EYEBROW AND LOOKS AROUND THE ROOM. TERRY PROCEEDS TO CIRCLE ANSWERS ON THE TEST.

-- THE CLOCK SHOWS 1:45 PM. MALIK, BALLER 1 AND BALLER 2 PLACE THEIR TEST ON PROFESSOR PEADY'S DESK AND EXIT THE CLASS WHILE TERRY FLIPS THE TEST TO THE NEXT PAGE.

-- THE CLOCK MOVES TO 2:00 PM. TERRY, ANTONIO AND BALLER 3 ARE THE ONLY THREE INDIVIDUALS WHO REMAIN IN THE CLASS. THE THREE MEN STAND UP AND WALK

TOWARDS PROFESSOR PEADY AS HE COLLECTS THE TEST FROM THEM.  
THE THREE EXIT.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - RECREATION CENTER - DAY

MUSIC PLAYS while students are scattered in groups. Stacy, Vashon, Reggie, Matt, Salandra and Alicia sit together while D stands between Kemo and Pedro near a fuzz ball table. A goal has just taken place on the fuzz ball table.

D  
(pumps fist)  
That's game. I got next.

PEDRO  
Give your boy a rematch?

D  
Slide over Pedro.

KEMO  
Me aint care who next. D, bring yo mother skunt,  
lets play.

D  
Slow your row Kemo.

D pops his knuckles and grips the handles on the fuzz ball table. Kemo puts the ball into play and scores on the first play.

KEMO  
One zip

D  
(hands in the air)  
Hold up man, I wasn't ready.

While Pedro laughs, Vashon, Reggie, Matt, Salandra, Alicia and Stacy sit nearby.

SALANDRA  
Matt, I can just look at you and tell you're a republican.

MATT  
Why, because I'm white?

SALANDRA  
Basically.

Everyone at the table laughs.

MATT  
So let me get this right Harriet Tubman. Are you saying there are no black Republicans and no white Democrats?

SALANDRA  
You know what I mean. I'm talking about the majority.

VASHON  
Majority of registered Democrats are white. Looks like he got your ass this time Salandra.

STACY  
If you ask me, none of that shit matters. Democrats want us dependent on welfare and republicans don't care if we roll over and die.

REGGIE  
Word. Now that's real talk.

ALICIA  
Why we over here talking about politics anyway?

Everyone turns and looks at Salandra.

SALANDRA  
What the hell ya'll looking at me for? Ya'll need to sponge all this knowledge I'm giving ya'll.

Terry, Antonio, Montez and Baller 3 walk towards the group.

TERRY  
What's up peoples?

Stacy, Vashon, Reggie, Matt, Salandra, and Alicia acknowledge their presence and hand shakes exchange between both groups.

MONTEZ  
What's the business?

VASHON

Nothing. Salandra and Matt over here going at it again.

STACY

Enough of that madness. How was the test? Kemo said it was easy.

TERRY

I don't know son. It's fifty fifty right now. I think I passed though.

ANTONIO

Yeah, I think I passed too but some of them answers could have gone either way.

ALICIA

(looks at Terry)

All I know is you better be on that court tomorrow.

BALLER 3

Don't worry. If he can't play I'll have everything under control.

Baller 3 pretends to shoot a jumper.

VASHON

(smirks)

Man please. The only reason you on the squad is because I didn't try out.

ALICIA

(stands up)

Leave my baby alone.

Alicia hugs Baller 3 and kisses him on the lips. The two turn around and wave to the rest of the group.

BALLER 3

Holla.

As Baller 3 and Alicia leave, Natasha and Malik enter. Malik walks towards Terry while Natasha walks towards Stacy.

MALIK

What up Terry. Test time is over. No more excuses.

Natasha places her right hand on Stacy left shoulder while the group looks on. Malik shakes Terry hands.

NATASHA

Hi everyone.

The group says hello to Natasha and Malik.

Stacy stands and kisses Natasha on the forehead while Malik sits in his seat. Stacy shakes Malik's hand.

TERRY

(looks at Malik)

You aint ready son. Go back to the lab and write some more rhymes.

STACY

I'll catch ya'll later.

The group sighs.

VASHON

You out Joe? We about to have a session.

Stacy puts his arms around Natasha.

STACY

We'll have to catch the next one.

SALANDRA

(looks at Natasha)

Damn girl, you got a leash on him.

Stacy raises his eyebrows and laughs. He points to Reggie.

STACY

You slipping on your game pimp. Control her.

SALANDRA

Negro please. Aint no pimping going on here.

Reggie smiles as Stacy and Natasha exit the room.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAMPUS/LAKE AREA - EARLY EVENING

Stacy and Natasha hold hands as they walk.

NATASHA

Are you excited about tomorrow's game?

STACY

A little bit. As long as I got my good luck charm with me, I'm good.

NATASHA

And what's that?

Stacy and Natasha stop as Stacy kisses Natasha on the forehead.

STACY

You're my good luck charm.

NATASHA

What makes me so special?

STACY

I've never been with anyone who has a heart like you. You don't have any hidden agendas.

NATASHA

(smiles)

We're at a boarding school. How do you know I'm not gonna want you for your money after we graduate?

STACY

(grins)

I'm broke so you can play me all you want.

NATASHA

I'm just kidding. You know I love you.

Natasha kisses Stacy on the lips and the two continue to hold hands and walk.

NATASHA

The first time we met I couldn't stop thinking about you.

STACY

(smiles)

Is that so?

Natasha puts both of her hands around Stacy's neck and the two French kiss. Mr. Sanders walks next to the two and places his hand on Stacy shoulder.

MR. SANDERS

Hey, what do you two think you're doing?

Natasha and Stacy are startled and jump apart from each other. Mr. Sanders points towards the girls dormitory as he looks Natasha.

MR. SANDERS

You need to be headed back that way young lady.

Natasha waves to Stacy. She quickly turns around and walks away.

MR. SANDERS

(looks at Stacy)

Guess who has bathroom duty tonight?

STACY

You?

MR. SANDERS

This is not a game. I'm actually letting you off easy. Would you prefer not to be able to play tomorrow?

STACY

Sorry sir. Bathroom duty it is.

Stacy turns around and walks away with a smirk look on his face.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - STACY'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

Stacy sits on the bed as he looks at the ceiling. He tosses a basketball in the air. Someone KNOCKS on the door. Stacy looks towards the door.

STACY

Come in, it's open.

Terry walks in and closes the door. He walks towards Stacy while Stacy jumps off the top bunk.

TERRY

What's up kid? Where's everybody at?

STACY

I don't know. I can't stop thinking about tomorrow's game.

TERRY

I wanted to tell you earlier that I made a B on Peady's test but you were busy cleaning the bathrooms.

STACY

Congratulations folk.

Stacy and Terry bump fist. The two turn around as the door opens.

Vashon, Matt, Antonio, Kemo, Montez, Reggie and D enter the room dressed in all black.

STACY

Hey, Terry made a B on Professors Peady's test.

Kudos and fist bumping from the group towards Terry.

TERRY

What are you fools dressed in all black for?

STACY

Yeah, did ya'll just come from a ninja run?

D

We actually just got through planning it. You two can tag along if you want.

TERRY

I would but I have to call my pops to let him know I'll be able to play tomorrow. You all better not let GI Joe break the streak.

Terry exits.

STACY

I don't know man. What if I get caught. I can't afford to get kicked out of school.

MONTEZ

Man please, aint nobody ever got caught before. What

makes you think this year will be any different?

D

Yeah Stacy. Just stay with us and out run Matt's slow ass, and you'll be straight.

Everyone laughs.

MATT

Whatever, if I got caught, I'd just say I was preparing for the big game.

STACY

You fools are crazy, I'm in.

D

That's what I'm talking about boy.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAMPUS - NIGHT

Security car passes by the boys dorm.

Antonio, D, Montez, Reggie, Stacy, and Kemo jump from behind a tree. They crouch down low and run up the hill towards the girls' dorm. Vashon spots a flashlight on the ground and picks up.

VASHON

Whose flashlight is this?

ANTONIO

I don't know but keep it down.

STACY

I think somebody's out here. I'm about to head back to the dorm before we get caught.

VASHON

What? Well take the flashlight with you.

The rest of the group runs across the campus as Stacy walks down hill towards the boys dormitory. Two bright head lights approach.

A security car heads towards Stacy.

Stacy quickly hides behind a tree. Mr. Sanders jumps from the top of the tree and tackles Stacy to the ground. Mr. Sanders holds Stacy by the arm as

the two stand.

MR. SANDERS

(smiles)

What do we have here? Looks like tonight's my lucky night. You just can't seem to stay out of trouble can you?

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE - DAY

Mr. Jones, Dr. Taylor, Mr. Sanders, Mrs. Frye, Coach and Stacy sit around a table.

DR. TAYLOR

I called everyone here this morning because Mr. Sanders has informed me that Mr. Everson decided to violate school rules last night by sneaking out the dorm after hours. Coach, I'm sure you understand how this affects today's game.

Coach nods his head.

MR. SANDERS

He refused to tell me who else snuck out the dorm with him, but his expulsion should send a clear message to the rest of the student body.

STACY

What makes you think anybody else was with me?

COACH

I'm very disappointed in you Stacy. You, out of all people, should have known better.

STACY

(hands in the air)

I snuck out the dorm, I realized I made a mistake, and I was headed back to the dorm when this fool tackled me.

MR. JONES

Watch your mouth young man. No need to be disrespectful here.

Mr. Sanders glares at Stacy. Stacy looks at the ceiling and shakes his head.

MR. SANDERS

Who's really a fool? You should always think before you act.

Dr. Taylor stands up and walks towards Stacy. Stacy turns his chair around and looks at Dr. Taylor.

DR. TAYLOR

Stacy, you're one of the best students, if not the best in your class, but you broke a school rule and you will have to face consequences for your behavior.

MRS. FRYE

Since he has been a model student and has never been in any trouble, I would like to suggest that he's placed on probation for the remainder of the year, instead of being expelled.

DR. TAYLOR

Tell me the other students that were with you and you can avoid being expelled. You would only have to miss tonight's game and do weekend work detail, for the remainder of the year.

Stacy looks turns away from Dr. Taylor and places his right hand on his chin. He places both hands behind his head as he turns towards Dr. Taylor.

STACY

I'm sorry Dr. Taylor, but I can't snitch. I was the one who got caught.

Everyone in the room SIGHS.

Mr. Sanders smiles as he leans back in his chair.

COACH

I can't believe what I'm hearing. You would rather get kicked out of school and miss out on being the valedictorian of your class then to have a few friends do work detail with you on Saturdays. Wow!

MR. SANDERS

Those so-called friends are not going to care when you're on your way out of here, but whose fault is

that?

DR. TAYLOR

I've heard enough. I'll have a bus ticket for you by this evening. I think you're making a big mistake today son, but it's your decision.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM - DAY

Terry is drenched in sweat as he stands alone. He shoots a basketball three consecutive times into the net.

Stacy enters.

TERRY

(turns around)

What's up kid? Are they going to let you play?

STACY

I got kicked out.

TERRY

Kicked off the team?

STACY

Worse. Kicked out of school folk.

Terry drops the basketball and walks toward Stacy.

TERRY

What happened?

STACY

They wanted to know who else was out on the ninja run. I told them that I wasn't no rat, so I got expelled.

TERRY

Damn, that's jacked up.

Natasha enters and walks toward Stacy and Terry. She stands next to Stacy and kisses his cheeks.

NATASHA

Hey Terry.

TERRY  
What's up yo?

NATASHA  
(looks at Stacy)  
Where you been? I've been looking all over for you.  
So what happened?

Terry turns around and walks towards the basketball.

Stacy looks at Natasha with a frown.

STACY  
I don't feel like talking about it right now.

NATASHA  
Stacy, what the hell happened?

Stacy turns away from Natasha and looks on as Terry shoots the basketball.

STACY  
Hey Terry, give em hell tonight.

Terry turns around and nods his head while Natasha stands angrily by Stacy's side.

TERRY  
No doubt son.

Stacy turns toward Natasha and takes her hand. He leads her towards the exit.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAMPUS - DAY - SAME

NATASHA  
How long are you going to keep ignoring me?

Stacy turns to Natasha and looks her in the eyes.

STACY  
I got kicked out of school.

NATASHA  
What? But you haven't been in trouble since you got here. You mean to tell me they couldn't find some form of work detail for you.

Stacy places his hand on Natasha's chin.

STACY

Calm down. They told me I could stay if I snitched on my boys, but you know I don't get down like that.

NATASHA

(steps back)

What the hell are you talking about? What good is it to have all the book sense in the world without any common sense?

STACY

I'm the one who got caught. Why should everyone else have to go down?

NATASHA

What's the worse that could happen if you told Dr. Taylor? It wouldn't be as bad as this.

Stacy puts his hands in the air as he looks frustrated.

STACY

You don't understand. I was out with half the team last night, if I snitch, Terry's gonna be the only starter playing tonight.

NATASHA

(rolls eyes)

Looks like he's the only one with some sense.

Stacy crosses his arms as looks at Natasha.

STACY

(raises eyebrows)

Now's not the time for this Natasha.

Natasha steps towards Stacy with anger. She has one hand on her waist and the other pointed at Stacy.

NATASHA

You are set to be the valedictorian of our class, and after you graduate, you have a academic scholarship waiting for you at Georgia State. If you're worried about a basketball game and gaining

cool points from your friends, then you have some serious issues.

Terry stands on the side as he looks on and listens to Stacy and Natasha argue. He frowns and walks away holding a basketball.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - STACY'S DORM ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Stacy sits alone surrounded by two suitcases and a footlocker. Mr. Sanders enters.

MR. SANDERS

Grab your bags and come up front. Security is on the way to take you to the bus station.

Mr. Sanders grins as Stacy picks up his luggage and walks out into the hallway.

Stacy follows Mr. Sanders as students sadly stare out their doors nodding and giving farewells.

DORM STUDENT (O.S)

Stay up man.

DORM STUDENT 2 (O.S)

It wont be the same without you dog.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - MALE DORMITORY - SAME

Stacy opens the glass door as Dr. Taylor awaits him. Dr. Taylor holds the door to assist Stacy as he drags his luggage. Mr. Sanders walks away.

DR. TAYLOR

So what are you going to do when you get home?

STACY

What do you care?

DR. TAYLOR

I care about every student that steps foot on this campus.

STACY

Then why you sending me home? I thought this school was supposed to help students.

DR. TAYLOR

When are you going to start taking responsibility for your own actions? You're the one who broke school policy. You're the one who decided being silent was more important than being honest.

STACY

I never lied. What are you talking about?

DR. TAYLOR

You only told us partial information. If COACH told college recruits you couldn't rebound and left out the fact that you were a good defender and good mid range shooter, would you like that?

STACY

That's different.

DR. TAYLOR

It's no different for me. My job is to educate, discipline and to make sure all my students are safe.

STACY

How am I keeping you from doing that?

DR. TAYLOR

I can't educate and discipline students who break school policy when students behave like you and keep silent.

Security van arrives.

DR. TAYLOR

(reaches out)  
Here's your ticket.

Stacy takes the ticket and puts it in his back pocket.

DR. TAYLOR

You still have time Stacy. For God sake, you're the valedictorian of your class.

STACY

Thanks for all you've done Dr. Taylor. My experience here has been one I'll never forget.

Stacy picks up his luggage and walks towards the van. Dr. Taylor opens the door. As Stacy loads the van, a school bus parks behind the security van. Coach walks off the bus toward Dr. Taylor.

DR. TAYLOR

Are you guys ready for the big game coach?

COACH

The kids wanted to talk to you before we headed out.

DR. TAYLOR

If it's about Stacy, it's too late. He's made his decision not to talk.

COACH

Just hear them out.

Coach waves the team off the bus. As Terry walks toward Dr. Taylor, Mr. Sanders steps from the dormitory.

Stacy look on.

TERRY

The entire team would like to admit that we violated school policy along with Stacy, and Coach has decided to forfeit tonight's game.

MR. SANDERS

What? You all must be crazy!

Dr. Taylor and Coach angrily look at Mr. Sanders.

Mr. Sanders turns around and walks away.

Stacy looks on with a smile as Dr. Taylor turns to Terry.

DR. TAYLOR

Is this true?

TERRY

Yes Sir.

DR. TAYLOR

I'm personally not happy that you all violated school policy but I'm very impressed that you all

would sacrifice playing for a championship to protect a fellow student and teammate.

COACH

I agree. It shows a lot of character.

STACY

So are you saying I can stay?

DR. TAYLOR

Yes, but all of you are on probation and weekend work detail for the remainder of the school year.

The players walk towards Stacy as he bumps fist with each of them. Baller 1-5, Terry, Kemo, Matt, Reggie, and Montez.

COACH

You all aren't getting off that easy.

DR. TAYLOR

Coach is right. No one's getting off easy here. School rules were broken and I have a lot of work waiting for all of you.

Stacy walks up to Terry.

STACY

That was big man. You weren't even with us last night. Who was behind this?

TERRY

(smiles)

Let's just say Natasha had a lot to do with this. She's a winner kid. You need to keep her on your team.

The players enter the dorm while Coach and Dr. Taylor step into the bus behind the security van. Terry and Stacy stand alone as Terry helps Stacy unload the van. Stacy closes the door and the van drives off.

Terry and Stacy pick up the luggage and enter the dorm as Dr. Taylor looks on from inside the bus with a smile.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAMPUS - EARLY MORNING

Historical school bell RINGS. A large white pickup stops in front of the

males' dorm. Dr. Taylor BLOWS the horn while Natasha and Salandra are seated in the passenger seat. D, Stacy, Baller 1-5, Terry, Kemo, Matt, Reggie, Montez, Vashon and Antonio, exit the dorm.

DR. TAYLOR

I see we have a few volunteers this morning?

Stacy walks towards the truck. Natasha rolls down the window.

STACY

(looks down)

What are you two doing here?

DR. TAYLOR

For some strange reason they were in a volunteering mood this morning.

Natasha and Salandra smile at Stacy.

Dr. Taylor steps out the truck and faces the group.

DR. TAYLOR

Everyone who's riding on the truck needs to hop on. We'll be waiting for the remainder of you at the baseball field.

D runs towards the truck and looks at Natasha.

D

Can I sit on your lap?

Stacy laughs while Natasha and Salandra roll their eyes.

SALANDRA

Don't get me started this morning fool.

D, Montez, Kemo, Reggie and Baller 1-5 jump on the back of the pickup truck. Matt, Antonio, Vashon, Terry and Stacy follow the white truck on foot.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - BASEBALL FIELD - EARLY MORNING

DR. TAYLOR

(parks truck)

Ok everybody. There's a lot of work to be done.

All the students jump off the truck and stand in a group.

DR. TAYLOR

Montez, I'm leaving you in charge here. I need for you to break everyone into groups.

Matt, Antonio, Vashon, Terry and Stacy join the group.

VASHON

I'm in charge right Dr. Taylor?

DR. TAYLOR

Actually, I'm leaving both you and Montez as supervisors. I need for you all to manage the baseball field. I also need the farm animals fed and the entrance fence painted.

D

The fence painted? You may need to stick around and give us a hand with all this work.

DR. TAYLOR

(smiles)

I'm not the one who volunteered.

D

Let's go back to the dorm and go back to sleep after he leaves.

Everyone laughs

DR. TAYLOR

You all can try that if you want to but if these duties are not completed, I won't hesitate bringing all of you back out here to finish, even if it takes you until midnight.

VASHON

Don't worry Dr. Taylor, I'll make sure all the work gets done.

BALLER 1

Yeah, we need to hurry up. I can't miss that Pistons and Bulls tonight.

DR. TAYLOR

Well, I'm about to get some rest. I'll see you guys later.

Dr. Taylor gets in the truck and drives away. Vashon walks over to Montez.

VASHON

I'll grab a crew and well knock out the baseball field. You can have the rest of the group feed the farm animals.

MONTEZ

That's cool. We can all meet up at the fence when we're done. I'll have the girls to gather the paint and brushes.

Vashon turns around and looks at the entire group.

VASHON

Matt, Stacy, Antonio, Kemo and Terry, stay with me. Everyone else needs to report to Montez.

MONTEZ

Natasha, I need for you and Salandra to go to the supply shed and load up all the paint and brushes you can find. Everyone else needs to follow me.

Montez and the rest of the group walk towards the farm.

D

Salandra, make sure to load white paint. Leave it to her and we're likely to be painting that fence orange or pink.

NATASHA

Shut up D.

SALANDRA

Would you prefer if I feed your family and you loaded the paint?

Everyone laughs while D waves off Salandra.

Montez grins and shakes his head.

MONTEZ

Ok everybody. Lets move it.

## SERIES OF SHOTS

- 1) STACY AND TERRY DRIVE LAWN MOWERS ACROSS THE BASEBALL FIELD.
- 2) REGGIE AND D FEED PIGS.
- 3) KEMO AND VASHON RAKE THE DIRT ON THE BASEBALL FIELD.
- 4) SALANDRA AND NATASHA STACK PAINT CANS.
- 5) MATT AND ANTONIO WATER THE GRASS ON THE BASEBALL FIELD.
- 6) MONTEZ FEEDS A GROUP OF CHICKENS.
- 7) D RUNS FROM A GOAT AND JUMPS THE FENCE.
- 8) VASHON ADMIRES THE WHITE LINES ON THE BASEBALL FIELD.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAMPUS ENTRANCE - NOON

Each student has paint over their clothes.

They all sit on the ground near a white fence.

The students look tired.

STACY

Hey, I just want to thank all of you for having my back. I've never had a group of friends like ya'll.

KEMO

After all this work. I think we made a mistake you bum clot.

NATASHA

Don't mind him Kemo. We all got love for you baby.

Natasha places her arms around Stacy's waist.

BALLER 4

It's no way we could have played that game knowing you were about to get expelled. I don't know too many cats that would have done what you did kid.

BALLER 5

Yeah, I'm just disappointed you let GI Joe end the streak.

Baller 2 stands.

BALLER 2

I just wish we could have seen you and Mr. Sanders when he tackled yo ass.

Baller 2 pretends to tackle someone to the ground as everyone laughs.

MATT

And you all thought I was going to be the one to get caught.

D

If it was me, I would have ratted out all you bastards.

SALANDRA

(hugging Reggie)

Don't make me bring that goat back out here D.

STACY

Seriously, I owe you all everything. I don't know how to repay ya'll.

TERRY

Just keep that valedictorian speech short. We all know how you like to go on and on.

D

I second that.

Everyone looks at D with a smirk.

SALANDRA

What makes you think you're going to graduate D?

Students laugh as Natasha kisses Stacy on the jaw.

NATASHA

(embraces Stacy)

Baby, let's try to make it to graduation without any more speed bumps ok?

D (O.C)

You two need to get a room. Hey Stacy, I got next.

Natasha smiles at D and flips him a bird.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - OUTSIDE BASKETBALL COURT - EVENING

Terry is alone on the basketball court as he dribbles the basketball from the half court line to the top of the three-point line. Terry shoots the ball through the net. Terry jogs for the ball and dribbles to the free throw line. Terry rotates the ball around his waist and shoots the ball through the net.

Stacy walks on the court.

STACY

You feel like playing a game of one on one?

TERRY

Sure. I've been waiting to do this for a while now.

Terry tosses the ball to Stacy.

TERRY

Check up son.

Stacy catches the ball and tosses the ball back to Terry.

Stacy walks towards Terry.

Terry dribbles the ball with his left hand and does a stop and go speed dribble that leaves Stacy standing still as Terry makes an open lay-up.

STACY

(nods head)

Somebody's been working on their game.

TERRY

You know I had to take it another level to protect my rep.

Stacy picks the ball from the ground and passes it to Terry. Terry swings the ball towards Stacy and Stacy takes a step back.

STACY

No sir. I'm not letting you pass me this time folk.

TERRY

Sounds good to me.

Terry shoots the ball through the net.

STACY

(smiles)

Ok, it looks like Pitt got themselves a stud.

TERRY

What's up with Georgia State?

STACY

I spoke with the coach and he's gonna allow me to try to walk on the team in the fall.

TERRY

Why don't you go to another school?

STACY

They gave me full academic scholarship and I want to be close to my grandmother.

Stacy tosses the ball to Terry as he walks toward him. Terry dribbles the ball between his leg and he tries to shake pass Stacy but Stacy reaches towards the ball and steals it from Terry.

STACY

I'm sure I'll make the team though.

Stacy shoots the ball through the net as Terry leaps towards him.

TERRY

Not bad son. It's jacked up we didn't get to play for the title this year. It would have been the schools first back-to-back championship season.

Terry picks up the ball and tosses it to Stacy.

STACY

Hey man, I really don't know how to thank you and the rest of the guys for making that sacrifice.

TERRY

Don't worry about it. We all knew you had our backs when you were willing to go home instead of snitch.

STACY

You forgot how to play defense?

TERRY

No need. Your jumper is suspect.

STACY

Ok.

Stacy shoots the ball and it hits the side of the rim.

Terry grabs the rebound and dribbles the ball to the top of the key.

TERRY

I bet you won't leave me open!

Stacy rushes towards Terry.

STACY

I see it's time for me to get serious.

Terry dribbles the ball.

Stacy hits his arm.

The ball hits Terry's foot and rolls off the court.

TERRY

I said play D, not rough me up.

STACY

(laughs)

I'm just getting you ready for Big East basketball folk.

Terry picks the ball from the ground and dribbles towards Stacy.

Terry dribbles past Stacy and makes a lay-up.

Stacy tosses Terry the ball while rushing towards him. Terry gives Stacy a head fake and dribbles past him. Terry goes up for a lay up but Stacy blocks the shot from behind.

Stacy runs for the ball while Terry shakes his head with his hands on his hips.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - CAMPUS - DAY, 3 MONTHS LATER

Historical bell RINGS. Skyline of campus shows the administration buildings, the cafeteria, the dorms and the gymnasium. Cars are parked all around the campus and relatives of the students are currently walk the campus.

INT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY - SAME

Dr. Taylor walks into the administration building and bends over to drink from the water fountain. He walks by Earl Wilson who is seated in a gray suit.

EARL WILSON

(stands)

Who's the fastest man on the planet?

Dr. Taylor pulls away from the fountain and turns around.

DR. TAYLOR

(smiles)

Earl Wilson, my main man. It's been a long time!

Dr. Taylor and Earl Wilson embrace.

EARL WILSON

I know. How are you and the rest of the family?

DR. WILSON

I can't complain. Everyone's doing well.

DR. TAYLOR

How about yourself?

EARL WILSON

I'm doing well myself. I drove Stacy's grandmother down so we could watch him get his diploma.

DR. TAYLOR

Stacy's a good kid. When he first mentioned your name, it brought back a lot of good memories.

EARL WILSON

I'm just glad Stacy isn't as hard headed as I was.

DR. TAYLOR

Hey, I'm glad to see things worked out well for you.  
If you ever need anything, feel free to give me a  
ring.

EARL WILSON

Thanks a lot brother. That means a lot to me.

Dr. Taylor and Earl Wilson embrace as they exit the building.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM - DAY

The gym is packed and everyone is seated. All the graduates including, Stacy, Natasha, Matt, Terry, D, Salandra, Antonio, Kemo, Vashon, Montez and Reggie are seated in black robes. Mrs. Frye stands at the podium while Mrs. Harrison and Earl Wilson sit in the front row.

MRS. FRYE

Everyone please give a round of applause for the  
valedictorian for the class of ninety two.

The crowd APPLAUDS as Stacy walks to the podium.

Stacy hugs Mrs. Frye.

Mrs. Frye slides over as Stacy steps in front of the microphone.

STACY

Today I would like to thank a few people for making  
this day possible. My grandmother, Mr. Wilson, DR.  
Taylor and the entire Country Life family gathered  
in this gym.

Mrs. Harrison looks on as she sheds tears.

Dr. Taylor and Earl Wilson smile as they look on.

STACY

Since I arrived at Country Life School, I've learned  
just as much in the classroom as out of it. I  
arrived as boy and I assure you that I'm leaving as  
a man. Thanks to this institution and its wonderful  
faculty and students, I've learned about friendship,  
discipline, loyalty and hard work.

Kudos and cheers from the crowd.

STACY

As we move on to the next phases of our lives, we must all remember to follow Country Life's philosophy. If we tackle life with our head, hands and hearts, we will always have a chance to succeed. Thank you.

Stacy walks back to his seat as the crowd and the graduates stand and APPLAUD.

EXT. COUNTRY LIFE SCHOOL - FRONT OF GYMNASIUM - DAY

Stacy hugs Mrs. Harrison and Earl Wilson while holding his diploma. Stacy looks at Earl Wilson.

STACY

Thanks for everything.

EARL WILSON

No problem young blood. If your mother was alive, she would be proud of you.

Natasha walks towards Stacy as Stacy places his arms around her waist.

MRS. HARRISON

(smiles)

Oh, so you're the young lady who won over my grandson's heart. You are beautiful. Let me take a picture of the two of you.

Mrs. Harrison snaps a picture. Kemo, Terry, Montez, Reggie, Vashon, Antonio, Salandra, Matt and D join the group.

D sneaks behind Mrs. Harrison and hugs her.

D

If only I were a little bit older.

MRS. HARRISON

(grins)

Hello to you young man.

STACY (O.S)

Don't mind that fool grandma. These are all my friends. Kemo is going to Howard University, Terry is going to Pittsburgh University, Montez is going to Southern in Baton Rouge, Reggie will be at Georgia State with Natasha and I, Vashon and Antonio are going to Chicago State, Salandra is going to Clark Atlanta so you'll see her when we get home. Matt is going to Duke to play with coach K and you already met D.

MRS. HARRISON

Let me get a picture of all of you.

The students gather around Stacy.

STACY

So D, you decided which college you're going to?

D

I don't know. Is there a Country Life College in Atlanta?

A bright light flashes as Mrs. Harrison snaps a photo of the group with her camera.

FADE OUT.

The End