

"LOVE THY NEIGHBOR"

FADE IN:

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - DAY

A bright sunny morning in a wealthy, appealing neighborhood. Shadows engulf a large two story ultra modern house that has a unique luxurious manner like all the other homes, and the shadows make it more so.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (V.O.)
Last week we looked at the first
of two of God's greatest
commandments, loving God above all
else.

A jogger runs past the well manicured sidewalk just as a large moving truck pulls in front, towing a Range Rover that matches two Range Rovers in the other driveways.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Today, we will cover the second of
God's greatest commandments, love
thy neighbor.

A shiny Lexus SUV pulls up behind the moving truck and all the white, middle aged, wealthy neighbors stop what they are doing, having a look.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
(cont'd)
But who exactly is your neighbor?

Stepping out of the SUV drivers side is JAMES ROBINSON, black, early forties, hair a businessman short, wearing jeans and a button up, glasses on. He's over six foot four inches tall and athletically built.

Stepping out of the passenger side is LA'NAYA ROBINSON, black, thirty nine, pretty, thin long braided hair. La'Naya is five foot six and dressed in casual attire but stylish. She too has on sunglasses.

Stepping out of the back doors JADA ROBINSON and LUTHER "LU" ROBINSON. Jada is black, twenty, hair in two balls on top of her head, dressed very nicely, expensive iPhone in hand.

Lu is Seventeen, black, wearing baller shorts, an authentic Michael Jordan North Carolina basketball jersey with new Jordan's on his feet. His hair is braided in corn rows and his black glasses look out of place with his outfit.

Lu is six foot four and Jada is five foot ten. They all gather at the side of the SUV facing the house.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
(cont'd)

Is it the residents in the house
next to you?

James puts an arm around La'Naya, pulling her close as they smile, staring at the house. Neighbors pool together, gawking at them, whispering to each other. Jada is on her phone texting as the WORKERS go about opening the moving truck.

Lu looks around and notices all the Neighbors staring at them. He makes eye contact, they look away. He frowns.

INT. ROBINSON KITCHEN - DAY

Sounds of Workers moving stuff into the house. La' Naya and James lean up against the counters of the empty kitchen, the floor capturing their reflection like a mirror.

LA'NAYA
We did it. We actually did it.

James smiles.

JAMES
We only moved a couple hours away,
La'Naya.

LA'NAYA
But a safer neighborhood, right?
I meant it will be different here,
right?

He gazes at her a moment and then nods. She goes to him and he pulls her into a long hug.

EXT. DOWNTOWN INTERSECTION - DAY

James stands, waiting to cross the street. An OLD BLACK LADY, pushing a walker, is crossing the intersection the other direction.

He watches her slow progress. It's obvious she won't make it in time. At the other end of the crosswalk are TWO WHITE MEN, sharp business suits, watching the Old Black Lady, laughing.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (V.O.)
God calls us to love all people.

The light changes and the Old Black Lady is just three quarters way across. Horns honk, startling her. James walk sign appears as he watches the Two White Men laugh more, walking away from the Old Black Lady, horns still honking.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Paul reminds us as we have
opportunity, let us do good to
everyone.

James rushes to the Old Black Lady, holding up his hand to stop the cars from moving. He gently takes her arm, giving her a reassuring smile, and escorts her across to the sidewalk.

INT. OUTER OFFICE AREA - DAY

James, dressed in a sharp looking grey shirt, makes his way through, waving and smiling at the predominately white co-workers. He arrives at his office, "Junior V.P. of Production", and steps in.

INT. JAMES BEDROOM - NIGHT

James and La'Naya are busy putting their things away. James unpacks his Bible, gazing at it a moment.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (V.O.)
When we love our spiritual
brothers and sisters in faith, our
neighbors, those around us that we
encounter, it stems from God's
perfect love.

James drifts off in thought.

FLASHBACK

INT. ROBINSON'S PERVIOUS CHURCH - DAY

James and La'Naya are kneeling, taking communion. La'Naya takes a sip from the chalice and bows her head. The PASTOR wipes the cup, then offers it to James, who takes a sip and bows his head. The PASTOR'S ASSISTANT lingers behind the Pastor.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (V.O.)
John reminds us anyone who does
not love, does not know God.

The Pastor next offers the chalice to a WHITE WOMAN, who glances at James a moment and shakes her head. The Pastor hesitates, and James looks up. The Pastor takes an individual cup of wine and offers it to the White Woman who takes it.

She drinks the wine and puts the plastic cup back in the tray. James stares at her but she doesn't look back.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Because God is love and if God so
loved us, we also ought to love
each other.

James tempers the hurt and closes his eyes.

END FLASHBACK

James eyes are closed as La'Naya puts her hand on top of his, both on the Bible. He looks at her and she gives him a comforting smile.

INT. ROBINSON KITCHEN - MORNING

It's organized chaos as James, La'Naya, Jada and Lu all jockey for space, making their own breakfast. James is in a suit, La Naya in a sharp blue pants suit, hair in a small afro. Jada has on nice clothes and Lu has on jeans and a nice shirt. He bumps into Jada, almost spilling milk on her. She huffs.

JADA
Little brothers!

LU
Get used to it. I'll be with you
at Stanford in the fall.

JADA
And I'll be sure to embarrass you
as much as possible, little bro.

She playfully pinches his cheek and they laugh.

LA'NAYA
I'll be late. We've got to go over
the plans for Justices speech
ahead of the protest.

JAMES
That woman will be a senator one
day soon.

LA'NAYA
Lord willing.

La' Naya kisses James and is about to exit when she stops suddenly.

LA'NAYA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Is today the day?

All activity stops and all eyes are on James. He shrugs.

JAMES
He could announce the promotion today. We'll see.

La' Naya kisses him.

LA'NAYA
Twenty years at the company, who else could it be?

He shrugs again. Jada and Lu give him a hug.

LU
Good luck, dad.

JADA
You'll get it dad. It's gotta be you this time.

His smile betrays his confidence.

EXT. DOWNTOWN INTERSECTION - MORNING

James arrives at the corner as the Old Black Lady is crossing the street. Half a dozen white people pass by her as if she wasn't there.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (V.O.)
Romans fifteen, verses one through three talks about when we see our fellow Christian, our neighbor, struggle, we are to be a dependable encouragement with love.

James takes off after the Old Black Lady and arrives just as the light changes. He holds up his hand to halt the cars, giving her a reassuring smile as he helps her across.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Gabe is dressed in skateboarder gear as he dribbles the basketball, showing off his handles. The speed with which he dribbles seems other worldly. Stepping onto the court, wolfing down a Philly Cheesesteak is Lucy. He has on N.B.A. sweats and his hair is oddly in corn rows.

LUCY
Taking a page out of my book?

Gabe stops dribbling and turns to face Lucy.

GABE
Don't see that happening, Lucy.
Only one book I read.

Lucy shrugs and downs the last bite and belches.

GABE (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Been a while since we balled,
Lucy.

Lucy smiles.

LUCY
Been busy. World's going to hell.
Literally.

Lucy frowns.

LUCY (CONTID) (cont'd)
And stop calling me Lucy.

GABE
Okay, Lucy.

Gabe passes the ball to Lucy who starts to dribble.

LUCY
I've been thinking, since we're
playing basketball and all...

GABE
Don't. That's racist.

LUCY
...one of my favorite tools in the
tool box.

Gabe considers, arms folded.

GABE
Who'd you have in mind?

Lucy flashes his warped smile.

INT. JAME'S OFFICE - DAY

James is busy typing away at his desktop computer. His desk is immaculate and his office furniture very conservative.

He has earbuds in with an intent look. On his desk are various family pics, some with all of them, others solo.

James pauses typing, glancing through his notes. A cheer rises up outside his office. Addled, he types a couple more lines and then gets up, walking to the door.

INT. OUTER OFFICE AREA - CONTINUOUS

James pokes his head out the door seeing a gathering by an office just down from his. Standing at the door to that office is a WHITE MALE COWORKER. He's in his early thirties and smiles big as he is congratulated over and over again.

James closes his eyes to mask his disappointment. He slips back inside his office.

INT. JAME'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

James leans up against his door and lets out a long sigh. He takes a long look around the office, slowly taking it all in. He spots a metal garbage can at his feet. Anger engulfs his face and he picks it up and is about to throw it across the room.

He catches himself and takes a couple of deep breaths. He closes his eyes, bows his head, still holding the garbage can.

JAMES

Lord, please never let me take for granted all you do for me. Never let me forget there are others out there that have it worse than me.

His eyes remain closed as he slowly calms himself.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Gabe looks at Lucy, ball pinned against his waist by his arm. His "you've got to be kidding" look brandishes his enticing smile.

GABE

His soul is safely in the hands of God, Lucy.

LUCY

Is it Gabe, is it?

GABE

What is in God's hand can never be...

LUCY

Pish posh.

Gabe looks at Lucy, turning his head slightly.

LUCY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

He's on the fence, well within my grasp.

GABE

Pft. Nice try, Lucy. You almost had me with pish posh.

LUCY

Trust me. We're playing for him. This one I can get. Really, won't be any problem at all. I know just what to do.

Gabe surveys Lucy.

GABE

It's your eternal damnation.

Lucy smiles his winning smile.

INT. ROBINSON LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

James, La'Naya, Jada and Lu are gathered around the smart flat screen T.V. The room is well furnished and extremely clean. CNN is on the T.V. and a look of anxiety and dismay is on their faces.

It's a live broadcast and a BLACK REPORTER is center screen as chanting can be heard in the background. Across the bottom of the screen are the words, "Police shoot and kill another unarmed black man." In the upper corner are the words, "Breaking News."

Jada covers her mouth with her hands, near tears. Lu barely can hide his anger. La'Naya sinks into James who pulls her in close. They can't pry their eyes off the T.V. James swallows, emotion dominating his face. La' Naya buries her head deeper into him.

As the reporter hammers away about the senseless killing, James first looks at Jada, who has tears spilling down her cheek, her hand still on her mouth. He then looks at Lu with a helpless protective stare. He swallows again and then curls his lips in anger.

INT. ROBINSON BEDROOM - NIGHT

James sits up against the headboard as La'Naya paces at the foot of the bed. He watches her as she suddenly sits on the bed folding herself into a protective posture.

LA'NAYA
Are we doing the right thing,
James?

JAMES
We're doing the best we can.

LA'NAYA
Is this the right...neighborhood
for the fight?

He sighs.

JAMES
We're keeping our children safe.

She looks at him, conflicted.

LA'NAYA
Are we though? Can we?

He crawls down the bed and takes her into his arms. She lets out a very worried sigh.

JAMES
It's in God's hands.

LA'NAYA
(softly)
I know.

JAMES
Not sure we will ever escape it,
but at least here, they keep it
behind closed doors.

She turns slightly, glancing at him.

LA'NAYA
Is that better or worse?

He stares back a moment then kisses her on the forehead. She closes her eyes and pulls him into her.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Gabe does some fancy dribbling as Lucy is in a defensive stance in front of him. Lucy finally looks up at Gabe who flashes the confident teen smile.

GABE

I don't see this working out for
you, Lucy.

Lucy opens his mouth to answer, off guard a moment, and Gabe dribbles the ball between Lucy's legs and goes to the rack for a uncontested layup. As he takes the ball out of the net, he laughs and passes the ball to Lucy.

LUCY

Just getting warmed up, Gabe. I
like to pace myself, enjoy these
things. Racism is one of my faves.

Lucy starts to dribble and Gabe guards him. He starts to drive and Gabe cuts him off. He starts to drive the other way and Gabe cuts him off again. Gabe is all smiles as Lucy dribbles in front of him.

GABE

You got no where to go with this,
Lucy.

Lucy raises one eyebrow as he dribbles.

LUCY

So many options Gabe. The best
ones, are sometimes the ones we
don't see at first.

Lucy stands upright, still dribbling. He looks past Gabe, unsure of what he sees and then points with his free hand. Gabe relaxes and slightly turns to see what Lucy is looking at. Lucy tosses the ball high in the air towards the basket and is past Gabe before he realizes the ruse.

As the ball reaches it's apex, Lucy skies, grabs the ball, and sends it home with a thunderous dunk. He swings on the rim a moment, as Gabe looks at him, disappointed in himself.

LUCY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

And don't call me Lucy.

He drops to the ground as Gabe stands and shakes his head.

INT. PASTOR REYNOLD'S CHURCH - DAY

The CONGREGATION sits at attention, all eyes on PASTOR REYNOLDS, early fifties, tall with a little extra weight, short salt and pepper hair and black glasses, who stands at the pulpit dressed in a traditional black robe.

Seated in the center pews are the Robinson's, dressed in their Sunday best.

PASTOR REYNOLDS

So as we wind up our look at the
second greatest commandment, love
thy neighbor, let us remember that
Christ lived selflessly.

La' Naya takes James hand in hers and he looks at her and smiles.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (CONT'D) (cont'd)

He lived not to please himself, but
for God. Accept one another, then,
just as Christ accepted you, in
order to bring praise to God. For
as you too are their neighbor, they
are yours. May the God of hope fill
you with all joy and peace as you
trust in Him, so that you may
overflow with hope by the power of
the Holy Spirit. Please stand with
me now, and shake the hand of your
neighbors, as we ponder God's
command to love thy neighbor.

Smiling, Pastor Reynolds steps out from behind the pulpit and goes down the two stairs to the front row and starts shaking hands with the CONGREGATION members. James and La' Naya smile as they shake hands with the BLACK COUPLE in front of them.

Lou and Jada shake hands with TEENS behind them. James turns to his left to shake hand with the smiling BLONDE WOMAN in her forties, seeing his outstretched hand, glances up at him, the smile disappearing, as she turns away to shake hands with the WHITE COUPLE in front of her.

James sits there a moment staring at his hand, then observes the Blonde Woman smiling again, now shaking hands with the White Couple.

EXT. FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

Pastor Reynolds is all smiles as he shakes hands with exiting CHURCH MEMBERS. As the next Member steps away, Jada steps up and smiles, shaking hands with him.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
 You must be the Robinsons.
 Welcome!

Jada steps forward and Lu steps up and shakes hands with Pastor Reynolds. Lu nods at Pastor Reynolds as he shakes his hand and steps forward. La'Naya, smiling big, steps up next and enthusiastically shakes his hand.

LA'NAYA
 Thank you! Wonderful sermon,
 Pastor. Very powerful.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
 Thank you. The Spirit was strong
 within me today.

James stands behind La'Naya, a distant look on his face. La' Naya steps forward and it takes James a moment to step forward and take Pastor Reynolds hand.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 Welcome, Mr. Robinson. So glad you
 chose to worship with us today.

As James looks at the smiling Pastor Reynolds, the Blond Woman exits the church. James glances over at her and they briefly make eye contact before she quickly looks away and hurries to the parking lot. He looks back at Pastor Reynolds who is still smiling and shaking his hand.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 I hope we will be seeing more of
 you.

James look grows reflective and he stops shaking Pastor Reynolds hand but is still holding it. The smile on Pastor Reynolds face turns to confusion as James just stands there. La' Naya looks concerned now too.

LA'NAYA
 I'm sure...

JAMES
 No.

He lets go of Pastor Reynold's hand. James' posture is relaxed and his face shows no emotion. Lu and Jada look at each other confused and Pastor Reynolds isn't sure what's happening.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 I'm done. I won't go to a church
 where there are bigots and
 racists.

La' Naya gasps and Jada looks away, embarrassed. Lu looks at James with eyes full of awe. Pastor Reynolds looks like he's been ambushed.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 How can I believe in a God that
 allows racism and supported
 slavery? How can I believe in a
 Bible that is so accepting of
 slavery?

Pastor Reynolds opens his mouth to respond.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 (matter of factly)
 I can't. I'm sorry, I just can't.

Pastor Reynolds stands there, stunned.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Lucy has his arms up in victory. Gabe dribbles the basket ball shaking his head. Lucy faces the basket, enjoying the triumph.

LUCY
 Game. No way you can come back
 from that. That was too...

The basketball hits Lucy in the back of the head. He slowly turns around as the ball bounces slowly to Gabe.

GABE
 Check.

Lucy stands there, one eyebrow raised, looking at Gabe.

INT. ROBINSON KITCHEN - DAY

James looks out the kitchen window, a tall glass of tea sitting on the counter. La' Naya leans up against the center island, watching him, with a concerned look. James lets out a sigh, hanging his head slightly.

JAMES
 You didn't see the look on her
 face. It was as if...

LA'NAYA
I know, baby.

JAMES
It's...enough.

LA'NAYA
Don't you think you should at
least talk to the Pastor before
turning away from God?

He turns, looking at her.

JAMES
This is bigger than just a white
woman repulsed at my hand. This
goes all the way to the top.

LA' NAYA
Then go as far up as you can,
baby. At least hear what he has to
say.

James turns to looking out the kitchen window again.

EXT. ROBINSON BACKYARD - NIGHT

James stand alone in the center of a well manicured lawn,
wooden fences, freshly stained, enclose him. The moon is high
and bright, eerily lighting his face. He stares at the moon
for a bit, then bows his head, closing his eyes.

JAMES
Lord, I'm angry. I'm sorry, but why
lie? You know my heart. I just wish
I knew... I just want to understand
why, Lord? Why? Why do you let
people despise me because of how
YOU made me? I just...

He sighs.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I need to understand, God or I
don't think... I can't see myself
believing in you anymore. Amen.

He leaves his eyes closed a moment longer and then opens
them. Looking up at the moon once again.

EXT. CHURCH GROUNDS - DAY

James is dressed in jeans and a Clippers T-shirt as he walks with PASTOR REYNOLDS who is also wearing jeans but has on a Lakers T-shirt. James walks with his hands in his pockets, appearing lost and confused.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
I'm sorry that was your first
experience with us.

JAMES
But not my first experience with
IT.

Pastor Reynolds nods, understanding.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
I'm glad you came to talk to me,
James. Can I call you James?

James nods, his face sad as they continue to walk.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Other people don't determine our
value, James. God does.

James stops and looks at Pastor Reynolds and nods.

JAMES
Then why does he allow racism to
exist?

PASTOR REYNOLDS
That's an excellent question,
James, and one we will probably
have to ask God Himself when we
see him.

James face goes over to disappointment.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
But if you want, we can search for
the answer together. I'd like to
hear what you think.

JAMES
Trust me, you don't want to know
what I think.

Pastor Reynolds laughs.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
Is it because I'm a Lakers fan?

James laughs as they continue walking.

INT. ROBINSON LIVING ROOM - LATE DAY

The Robinson's are sitting around the T.V. having a fast food dinner. CNN is on and they vaguely watch the various protesting going on around the country. They all take a moment, watching, letting it sink in.

JADA

So I've accepted the internship
at the California NACCP
Headquarters and from the looks of
it, it's gonna be a busy summer.

They all take a moment, watching, letting it sink in. La'Naya sets her plate down and goes to Jada giving her a hug.

LA'NAYA

Congratulations, baby girl.

JAMES

Taking after your Mom.

LA'NAYA

Speaking of said Mom...I need to
go in.

LU

Oh, can I borrow the car then? I
wanna drive out to see the guys.

JADA

When is your car gonna be fixed?

LU

Who knows. But it's not too far a
drive back to the old neighborhood
and I wanna see them as much as I
can before Stanford.

LA'NAYA

Drop me at the office and you can
use the car.

Lu pumps his fist.

JAMES

Just remember, Lu. Hands in
view...

ALL TOGETHER

...they won't shoot you.

They all smile and La'Naya and Lu get up and head out. James watches them fondly and then turns back to watching the TV, concern growing on his face.

INT. JAMES BEDROOM - NIGHT

James is sitting up against the headboard watching CNN. On the screen, buildings are burning and police lines try to hold protestors back from the chaos. James has a sad, defeated look as he watches.

Casually he looks over to his right, spotting his Bible sitting on the night stand. One last glance at the protestors on the T.V. and then he picks up the Bible. As he sets it up his lap, it falls open to First Corinthians chapter twelve.

Curious, he reads the passage. A calming influence comes over him.

JAMES

For we were all baptized by one
Spirit so as to form one body
whether Jews or Gentiles, Slave or
free, and we're all given the one
Spirit to drink.

He sits in the moment, letting it sink in. He looks up at the T.V. again and sees the small business burning out of control.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Lucy is standing with an ancient looking burning torch in a Statute of Liberty pose.

LUCY

What? Too much?

Gabe shakes his head.

LUCY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Fire. It's what I do.

GABE

You seem worried, Lucy.

LUCY

Piece of cake. Humans always fear
what they don't know or
understand.

GABE

So you just help it along.

LUCY
And I suppose that Bible just
happened to open to that chapter.

GABE
It could happen.

Lucy raises one eyebrow.

LUCY
You're worried.

Gabe hesitates just a moment.

LUCY (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Ha! Knew it!

GABE
He belongs to the Lord, Lucy. He
can't be taken.

LUCY
And yet you're worried. This is
all God's fault.

Gabe plops himself on his throne like chair, one leg up on
the arm, very teenagish.

GABE
Can't wait to hear this one.

Lucy lets out a little laugh.

LUCY
Duh. God set this up from the
beginning. He divided humans into
two races, Jew and Gentile. He made
it so the Gentiles would save the
Jews and the Jews got big heads
thinking they were better than the
Gentiles. Sound familiar?

Gabe laughs and stands up, unmoved.

GABE
Close, Lucy but as usual you
distort the truth. The Jews were
intended to minister to the
Gentiles but yes, they did become
proud and despise the Gentiles.

LUCY
Ha!

GABE

But Jesus put an end to all of
that and destroyed that wall of
hostility.

LUCY

Tomato, Tomoto. Where you find
division, there I'll be.

GABE

We gonna play or what?

Lucy thinks for a moment.

LUCY

If you really think this guy is
one of God's, How 'bout we up the
stakes a bit?

Now it's Gabe who puts up one eyebrow and Lucy smiles ear to
ear.

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE WALKWAY - EARLY MORNING

The sun is just beginning to rise to what promises to be a
glorious day. James is in baller shorts, a Clippers jersey
with a grey muscle shirt on underneath and new looking
Jordan's. He has his earbuds in and his iPhone snug in it's
arm band.

He takes a moment to enjoy the beautiful sunrise, his water
bottle sitting at his feet. He takes a moment to limber up
and then once again, takes in the beauty before him. He
closes his eyes and says a little prayer. Opening his eyes,
he smiles.

One last quick look at the sunrise and he's off on his jog,
starting out through the neighborhood. Still sitting in the
same spot, is his water bottle.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - MORNING

The sun is higher in the sky as an extremely sweaty James
arrives at the empty construction site where yet another too
expensive house is being built. He licks his lips, obviously
thirsty. As he looks over the site, he spots a green garden
hose connected to the onsite water spout.

A trail of water shows him it's working. Smiling, he jogs up
to the hose, picking it up and turning it on. As he lets the
water run a little, in the distance a jacked up red pick-up
truck slowly comes to a stop, two figures in the front.

James drinks quickly from the hose and then turns the water off. He digs into his pocket, taking out a ten dollar bill and setting it next to the spout, putting a rock on it and his business card.

Satisfied, he takes off on his jog. The red truck sits for a moment and then it slowly starts to move as James rounds the corner on his jog.

EXT. OLDER NEIGHBORHOOD - LATER

James is checking out the dramatically different neighborhood, the houses older and in various states of disrepair. He slows, looking from house to house, not seeing anybody around. He wipes the sweat from his brow and hears the sound of an engine gunning.

He looks up as a gray pick-up heads right for him. Panicked, he cuts through one of the lawns to turn the corner away from the truck. He looks back and can see the WHITE DRIVER with his cell phone to his ear. James is clearly frightened.

James is running as fast as he can now, arms pumping as he looks back at the pickup that's keeping it's distance. Off to his left he spies the red pick-up heading his direction, in the back standing, is DEREK, early thirties, John Deere hat on, dirty ripped jeans, shotgun in his hands.

James panics more and cuts the corner again and can hear the whooping of excitement coming from the red pickup.

DEREK

You better stop running Nigger
or Imma kill you!

James looks all around, terrified. Ahead, the gray pickup turns the corner and he's boxed in. He doesn't know what to do. A shotgun cocks. He suddenly slows, eyes closed in terror, and puts his hands high in the air.

DEREK (CONT'D) (cont'd)

On your knees, boy!

Near tears, James slowly sinks to his knees as both trucks come to a stop. He keeps his eyes closed but can hear doors open and close.

DEREK (CONT'D) (cont'd)

We seen you stealin' from the
construction site. I should shoot
you right now.

James keeps his eyes pressed closed. In the distance, sirens sound.

EXT. OLDER NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

James has an angry look on his face as he puts his I.D. back in his pocket, standing with a FEMALE OFFICER. Derek stands with a MALE OFFICER and his TWO BUDDIES, pleading his case. James looks up and sees La' Naya pulling up in the SUV.

It barely stops as she jumps out of the drivers seat and almost crushes James in a hug.

DEREK

You're letting him go? But he
doesn't belong here!

James pulls La' Naya into a bigger hug.

INT. ROBINSON SUV - DAY

A still frantic La'Naya drives as a still stunned James drinks from his water bottle. She is still leaning forward so far she almost leans against the steering wheel.

LA'NAYA

We have to move.

JAMES

We're not moving.

LA'NAYA

You could have been killed.

JAMES

It was a misunderstanding.

La' Naya lets out a hysterical laugh that makes James a little uncomfortable.

LA'NAYA

Oh, they understood. They
understood you're a black man in
a white neighborhood.

She looks manic as she drives and James reaches out and puts his hand on her thigh. She tenses and then relaxes a bit.

JAMES

It's not our neighborhood. If
black people moved every time a
white person didn't want them
around we'd have no place to go.
No, this is worth staying for.

She pulls up to a stop sign and looks over at James.

LA'NAYA
But is it worth dying for?

James can only look at her as she starts to drive again.

EXT. CHURCH GROUNDS - DAY

James and Pastor Reynolds walk slowly in the grass around the church, both have a very somber look on their faces.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
I'm sorry that happened to you,
James. They aren't facing any
charges?

James shakes his head and Pastor Reynolds lets out a little whistle. They walk a few moments in silence.

JAMES
Maybe La' Naya's right. Maybe we
should move.

Pastor Reynolds looks at James as they walk.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
You have to do what you think is
best for your family, but what
kind of change will that bring?

James thinks and has no answer.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Racism is a sin, James. God
doesn't accept it.

JAMES
But he allows it.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
He allows us freewill and we tend
to mess things up a lot with that
freedom.

James nods, understanding.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
God does not show partiality or
favoritism. He brought Jesus into
the world so that ALL could believe
and become saved.

James stops and looks at Pastor Reynolds.

JAMES

No offense Pastor, but it's much easier for a white person to believe that than a black person.

PASTOR REYNOLDS

No offense taken. But I understand better than you think.

James lets out a laugh of disbelief.

JAMES

Oh you do, huh? What could you possible understand about raising a young black man in times like this? I have to worry everyday he walks out that door. When he's not home? My phone rings? I feel a jolt of fear that it's going to be THAT call. When a police car pulls behind me, I have to worry for just a second if this is it, if this is the moment I die.

Pastor Reynolds continues to listen.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)

So sorry, Pastor. But what could you possibly understand...

STEVIE (O.S.)

Dad?

James turns to see STEVIE REYNOLDS, sixteen, black, hair in a small afro, well dressed with older Jordan's. James turns to look at Pastor Reynolds with a shocked look on his face. Pastor Reynolds just looks at him and nods, smiling.

INT. JAMES' BEDROOM - NIGHT

James paces and he talks to La' Naya seated on the bed, watching him and listening, fascinated, a slight smile on her face.

JAMES

So when they found out they couldn't have kids, they adopted Stevie and his sister Hannah from foster care.

LA'NAYA

That's...inspiring.

JAMES

Their mom was killed in a random drive by shooting, their dad was in prison and didn't want them.

She nods, sadness on her face.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)

He understands, La'Naya. He's a white man that understands what we feel every night of our lives that our kids aren't with us.

LA'NAYA

I'm sure he does Baby, but he's just one man. What can he do?

James excitedly sits down on the bed next to La' Naya.

JAMES

I don't know. But, what I do know is I want to be an instrument of God for change. I want to meet all our neighbors. I want to be a part of ending racism, even if it's only on our little block in our little neighborhood.

She looks at him and smiles, then gives him a kiss.

LA' NAYA

Okay, baby. We'll see what tomorrow brings.

He nods and gives her a kiss.

INT. JAMES' BEDROOM - LATER

James is holding La'Naya from behind, sound asleep. The room is dark and quiet, only the sound of their breathing. A crash from downstairs that sounds like broken glass wakes them instantly. James is out of bed quickly, he's done this before.

Clad in his baller shorts and an oversized T-shirt, he heads for the bedroom door. La'Naya is right behind him, a frightened but determined look on her face. She too has done this before.

As James arrives at the door, he reaches behind the door and retrieves a wooden baseball bat, deftly disappearing out the door.

INT. HALLWAY TO KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

James has the bat up and ready as they make their way toward the kitchen. An orange glow appears on the walls at the kitchen entrance., La'Naya gasps.

LA'NAYA
Fire! We're on fire!

James slows and looks at the orange glow. He looks at La' Naya and shakes his head. She takes his arm and they head into the kitchen.

INT. ROBINSON KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

James and La'Naya stand at the broken kitchen window, orange glow lighting them up. The moving flickering orange light shows the anger in James eyes and the fear in La' Naya's. Panning out the window from James's eyes, on the front lawn is a large burning cross.

They both stare at it as the embers continue to illuminate their faces.

EXT. ROBINSON'S FRONT LAWN - CONTINUOUS

James and La'Naya stand there together looking at the burning cross. They are quickly joined by Lu and Jada, Jada letting out a soft cry as she falls into the protection of James arm. They can only stand there and watch as the cross continues to burn, lighting them up.

LA'NAYA
(softly)
We have to go.

James looks at her but she doesn't take her eyes off the burning cross.

LA'NAYA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
We're not safe.

He turns back to the burning cross as sirens can be heard in the distance.

LA' NAYA (CONT'D)
We're not wanted.

For the first time James looks at his NEIGHBORS, out on their lawns or in their driveways. They have on robes or are in nightwear. He scans them. All white. Various ages. He tries to look them in the eyes, but few will meet his gaze.

Some seem sympathetic, some scared. Some look at the cross with contempt, others indifferent. He looks from them, to the burning cross as they fade out of focus into the background.

LA'NAYA (CONT'D)

Please.

He looks at his family, La'Naya and Jada frightened. Lu angry and bitter. He looks at them for along moment, the crackling of the fire in his ears, the sirens growing closer. He looks back to the burning cross.

JAMES

I am a child of God, saved by Jesus Christ. I'm not leaving. I'm going to effect a change so no other black family has to wake up to this hatred. God help me, I will be an instrument of change.

He pulls his family in close as fire trucks arrive.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Close up of Lucy's finger sticking up, a flame coming from the tip. Lucy blows on his finger and makes a motion mimicking a gun fighter holstering his gun. Gabe stands there, arms folded, shaking his head. Lucy flashes him his million dollar smile.

LUCY

Everybody loves a classic.

GABE

You've just made him more resolute.

Lucy shrugs.

LUCY

Maybe. But I'm making the long play. He can't unsee that. And frankly, nothing I love more than a burning cross.

Gabe shakes his head.

GABE

Give it up, Lucy. It won't work anymore. People want a change.

LUCY

Do they? Is that why they don't
go to church anymore.

Gabe looks away, taking the basketball at his feet and
lifting it into the air like a soccer player would.

LUCY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Admit it, Gabe ol' buddy ol' pal,
they just are better at pretending
outrage, at saying they want
change. But what do they actually
do?

Gabe purses his lips and bounce passes the ball to Lucy.

GABE

Let's play.

Gabe turns and heads for the court. Lucy lets out a loud,
devilish laugh and starts to dribble, following him.

INT. ROBINSON LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

James is alone, watching the local news on television. The
house is quiet except for the television. His face is weary. A
RED HEADED REPORTER stands interviewing a RANDOM NEIGHBOR.

RANDOM NEIGHBOR

This is a quiet neighborhood.
Nothing like this has ever happened
before they...

The Random Neighbor looks at the Red Headed Reporter, then
back to the camera.

RANDOM NEIGHBOR (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Well, it's never happened here
before.

James lifts the remote and clicks off the television, sadness
on his face.

INT. ROBINSON BEDROOM - NIGHT

La'Naya is sound asleep next to James who is wide awake. Her
breathing is deep, she is long gone. He looks over at her
protectively, then, careful not to wake her, he gets out of
bed. He drops to his knees and bows his head, his forearms on
the bed.

JAMES

God, I hope you're listening. I know this isn't the world you hoped for but here we are. I'm done ignoring the truth, what's right in front of our faces. I want to be a force for change. Will you use me God for change?

He pauses as if waiting for an answer.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Amen.

He lays his forehead on the bed and sighs.

EXT. CHURCH GROUNDS - DAY

James and Pastor Reynolds walk side by side on a bright and sunny day. They look and see Stevie as he rides on a mower, cutting the grass. They both have a solemn look on their faces.

PASTOR REYNOLDS

I'm sorry that happened to you and your family, James.

James nods his thanks. They continue to walk, the sound of mower in the background.

JAMES

God made all of us in His image. So why are we so many different races?

PASTOR REYNOLDS

That's a very good question. Geography, perhaps?

Maybe as He changed the languages of the people at the Tower of Babel, He changed appearance too for the same reason.

James nods, dissatisfied.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Racism is a sin, and all sin is a temptation of some sort. Treating a person or judging them because they look different doesn't honor God who made them in His image.

JAMES

So how does it stop? Can anything
be done?

The mower shutting down captures their attention. As Stevie gets off the riding mower, he smiles big and waves. They smile and wave back.

PASTOR REYNOLDS

Racism is a tool of Satan to
confuse and divide. When we stop
letting it divide us, racism will
end.

James looks off in the distance, thinking.

EXT. ROBINSON'S FRONT YARD - DAY

Burn marks scar the grass in stark contrast to the green. The sun is so high in the deep blue sky and the neighborhood is with activity. From across the lawn, standing at the doorstep of a neighbor's house, James and La' Naya stand, talking to an OLDER WHITE COUPLE.

They all smile and shake hands and James and La' Naya wave and turn to leave. James takes La' Naya's hand as the OLDER WHITE COUPLE retreat back into their home. They walk close, smiling and talking to each other.

They make their way down the driveway and onto the sidewalk, turning and walking towards the next neighbors house. Still holding hands, they walk up to the front door and knock. All around the neighborhood, kids play, sprinklers water lawns, cars drive down the street.

A SURPRISED WHITE WOMAN answers the door and La' Naya holds out her hand to greet her. With only a slight hesitation, the Surprised White Woman takes her hand and shakes it, smiling. James offers his hand and she gladly takes it.

INT. ROBINSON KITCHEN - DAY

La'Naya smiles as she pours sweet tea from a pitcher into two glasses filled with ice. James looks out the window at the Neighbors going about their business.

LA'NAYA

That was way more fun than I
thought it would be.

She puts away the pitcher into the fridge and picks up the two glasses, walking over to James and handing him one.

JAMES

It was nice to get to meet some
of...

The landline rings and they both look at each other, surprised. James shrugs and walks over to the phone on the wall, answering.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Hello?

He listens and his smile fades just a little. La'Naya watches and sips on her tea, a little concerned. James takes a moment and thinks.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)

No, I don't think so. The media is part of the problem, not the solution. If acts of racism weren't shown every night, people wouldn't do it for attention.

La'Naya looks at James and smiles affectionately.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)

We forgive whoever did it and would prefer there be no coverage of the incident, to prevent a repeat in the future. But thank you for the opportunity.

James smiles as he hangs up the phone and takes a sip of his tea.

INT. ROBINSON LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lu is on his phone as La' Naya and James eat a snack and watch T.V. He ends the call and pumps his fist excitedly.

LU

My car will be ready tomorrow!

LA' NAYA

About time.

LU

For real. Freedom, finally.

James gives Lu a look. Lu smiles.

LU (CONTID) (cont'd)

At least you can start driving to work again, dad.

JAMES

Kinda enjoy the light rail. Think I'll stick with that.

LU

Suit yourself. I like to drive.

LA'NAYA

Well I'm going to need the car anyway, I'm helping the Pastor's wife with Summer Bible School sign ups.

JAMES

Need an extra pair of hands?

LA'NAYA

We're good. It'll give me a chance to get to know the Pastor's wife.

James nods and smiles and gives La'Naya a quick kiss and a hug.

EXT. DOWNTOWN INTERSECTION - DAY

It's a sunny day and it looks as if every person has a smile on their face. James is all smiles as he stands, waiting to cross. The Old Black Lady starts out to cross the intersection.

He watches as a WHITE COUPLE walk up behind her, looking like they might help her but when they arrive, they simply part around her and keep going. James remains hopeful as other white people approach her, but just pass her by.

Still holding onto his smile, James hurries out onto the crosswalk after her just as the sign turns to "Don't Walk." He holds up his hand to the traffic and the Old Black Lady smiles at him as he helps her cross.

EXT. CHURCH SIDEWALK - DAY

La' Naya sits next to SHELLY REYNOLDS, early fifties, glasses and a cute bob. A line of parents with their children, mix of all races, wait patiently wait patiently for their turn.

Behind them is a sign that says, "Bible School Signup." They look at each other and smile as the next two parents step up to sign up.

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY

James has paperwork in his hand as he makes his way past several office doors.

It's all white people, but James is concentrating on the paperwork. He arrives at an open door on his right and stops just before he enters, hearing a voice telling the punchline of a joke.

CO-WORKER (O.S.)
...Because we killed the only
one of them that had a dream.

Laughter. A stunned James steps into the doorway as all the laughter stops. His CO-WORKER, early thirties, white is with other WHITE OFFICE GUYS, all in ties and dress pants. The hurt on James face is obvious.

EXT. CHURCH SIDEWALK - DAY

A few cars pull into the parking lot, but there is no line in front of La' Naya and Shelly. They file the most recent paperwork as PARENTS walk away. Shelly stands up and offers La' Naya her hand.

SHELLY
We haven't formally met. I'm
Shelly Reynolds, Pastor's wife.

La' Naya stands and takes Shelly's hand and shakes it.

LA'NAYA
I'm La'Naya. La'Naya Robinson.

SHELLY
What a beautiful name.

LA'NAYA
Oh, thank you.

They both smile at each other and spot Stevie as he goes about his work taking care of the church landscaping. Shelly looks at La' Naya.

SHELLY
It's okay, you know, to be afraid
for our boys.

La' Naya looks at her and sees the understanding on her face.

LA'NAYA
I've never heard that from a
white woman who actually
understood.

Shelly smiles and takes La'Naya's hands in hers.

SHELLY

There are more of us than you know. We just can't let the fear take over our lives.

LA'NAYA

Just one police officer that is poorly trained or afraid...

SHELLY

Or is simply racist. But God has purpose in everything he does. He watches over us all.

La'Naya nods.

SHELLY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

He'll protect our sons how it will be best for them.

LA'NAYA

Still, every night...

SHELLY

When a text comes in or the cell rings.

La'Naya nods.

SHELLY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

A change is coming. I feel it.

NEW PARENTS arrive and Shelly and La' Naya sit back down, ready.

LA'NAYA

I pray you're right.

They both smile and greet the New Parents.

INT. CO-WORKERS OFFICE - DAY

Everybody is frozen in fear as James slowly makes his way into the Co-Workers office. All eyes are on him as he arrives at the Co-Worker. He looks him straight in the eye and the Co-Worker swallows.

JAMES

You're a good man. I know you didn't mean anything by it.

A stunned look comes to all the faces in the room.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
But just know the damage a joke
like that can do.

CO-WORKER
James, I didn't know you...

JAMES
Not to me.

He points at the others in the room.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
To them.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
But I forgive you. Here's the
report.

The Co-Worker is almost too shocked to take the report, but he finally does. James smiles and nods at the others who can't nod back because of their shock. He turns and exits and the Co-worker lets out his breath.

INT. ROBINSON LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Lu, James and La'Naya are all eating as a very happy Jada enters the room. She smiles as she picks up some food off the table, heading in.

JADA
I'm working on the CHI Taylor
case!

Excitement in the room. One by one they all get up and congratulate Jada.

JADA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I finally get to make a
difference. The more awareness we
can create, the less chance of it
continuing to happen.

LA'NAYA
We're proud of you baby girl.

LU
I'm so happy for you, I'm gonna go
to the old neighborhood and tell
everybody at the party...

JAMES
Party?

Lu gives James a look.

LU
Dad. I don't drink, don't smoke.
I'm not doing anything that will
keep me from Stanford. My car's
here so I just wanna chill with
the boys.

James looks at La'Naya and she shrugs. James sighs.

JAMES
I'll want you back at eleven.

LU
Dad. Midnight.

JAMES
Ten.

LU
Eleven thirty it is.

They all laugh.

LA'NAYA
I'd say ice cream is in order.

JADA
Mom, I'm not ten.

La' Naya just looks at her.

JADA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
But I WILL take ice cream.

EXT. CHURCH SIDEWALK - LATE DAY

La' Naya helps Shelly clean up after the Bible School sign ups. A car starts up in the parking lot and music can be heard coming from the car.

SHELLY
You must be so proud of Jada.

LA'NAYA
She's very much about social
justice. Lu too. They want to make
a change.

SHELLY
What a blessing.

The car starts to leave, the music a little loud.

LA'NAYA

Lu stills a kid though, very into his old friends. In fact, he's in our old neighborhood for a little party tonight.

SHELLY

Sounds like...

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

We have breaking news...

They freeze in place, both looking at the car.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)

A shooting has claimed the life of another young black man...

They both gasp. They immediately grab for each other. The car starts to turn on the road.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Details are sketchy...

The car pulls away and the radio drifts away. Shelly looks at La'Naya.

SHELLY

Pray with me?

La' Naya nods enthusiastically. They hold hands and bow their heads.

SHELLY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Heavenly Father, we pray that our sons are okay and safe and that you will comfort the family that just lost a precious son. We pray that he is in the arms of Jesus and...

STEVIE (O.S.)

Mom?

They both look up instinctively and Shelly spots Stevie walking towards her.

STEVIE (cont'd)

I'm okay, Mom. It wasn't me.

Shelly lets go of La'Naya's hand and goes to Stevie and hugs him, kissing him on the top of his head. La'Naya watches fondly when her cell phone rings. They all freeze. La'Naya can't move for a second as her cell goes off again.

She, digs it out of her pocket, almost dropping it in her haste. She looks at the caller I.D., it's LU. She quickly answers.

LA'NAYA

Lu. Oh thank God it's you.

She listens and lets out a deep sigh of relief. Stevie and Shelly look at each other a moment and then go back to hugging as La'Naya smiles relieved, talking on her phone.

INT. CHURCH SANCTUARY - DAY

James stands alone looking at the large white cross mounted on the back wall. He stands still, hands folded in front of him, rarely even blinking.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (V.O.)

Comforting, isn't it.

James doesn't turn, just nods.

JAMES

I needed... something.

Pastor Reynolds walks up to James and gives him a comforting pat on the shoulder.

PASTOR REYNOLDS

For the Lord your God is God of
Gods and Lord of Lords, the Great
God, mighty and awesome, who shows
no partiality and accepts no
bribes. He defends the cause of the
fatherless and loves the foreigner
residing among you, giving them
food and clothing. And you are to
love those who foreigners. for you
yourself were foreigners in Egypt.

JAMES

Man, I feel like a foreigner in my
own country.

Pastor Reynolds nods.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)

It's not me I'm worried about. I
just don't want Lu to go through
what I've had to. I just want a
better life for him and Jada.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
 A reasonable wish for any parent.
 It's not easy to be persecuted for
 just being. But in God, we have
 hope.

James finally turns to look at Pastor Reynolds.

JAMES
 Pastor, I'm okay turning the other
 cheek. Done it all my life. But
 when they want my back...

Pastor Reynolds nods sympathetically.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
 In times of difficulty, put your
 trust in Jesus. Listen for His
 voice. Ask yourself, how would this
 make Jesus look, before you react.

James goes back to looking at the cross.

JAMES
 I like that Pastor. I'm gonna work
 on that.

Pastor Reynolds smiles and they both look up at the cross.

INT. ROBINSON KITCHEN - DAY

La' Naya talks excitedly as she sorts through the daily mail,
 James watching her as she tosses most of it in the garbage
 can.

LA'NAYA
 Her approval rating is through the
 roof for her handling of the social
 unrest. She could be a senator by
 next year!

James smiles and watches as La' Naya comes to an envelope,
 looking at it.

LA'NAYA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 What's this?

She tears the envelope open as James watches. She gasps and
 quickly drops the sheet of paper as quickly as she opened it.
 It falls face up on the floor and concerned, James looks
 down. In large cutout letters of a newspaper it says "Go Away
 Niggers." James goes quickly to La'Naya and holds her.

INT. ROBINSON LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The front door opens and Jada walks in to loud voices and she stops as she closes the front door. James and La' Naya are going at it.

LA'NAYA

I'm done. I won't stay here.

JAMES

La' Naya, you've been saying that for four hours! We don't have the money...

JADA (O.S.)

Ah... hello?

They turn, noticing Jada for the first time.

JADA (cont'd)

What's going on?

LA'NAYA

We're moving. Period.

La'Naya turns and storms out of the room. Jada is confused.

JAMES

We're not moving.

JADA

Dad?

He hands Jada the paper and she puts her hands up to her mouth in shock. James's cell phone chirps and he digs it out of his pocket, answering it.

JAMES

Lu? Where are you?

James listens intently as Jada sets the paper on the coffee table, still shocked.

LA'NAYA (O.S.)

If that's Lu, tell him to get his butt home, we're moving!

JAMES

Lu, I told you what time to be home. You know I don't like you driving around so late.

La' Naya reappears and stands with her hands on her hips.

LA'NAYA

Tell him...

James holds up a hand and La'Naya huffs and crosses her arms across her chest.

JAMES

Don't speed. Be careful, Lu, you know things are on edge from the shooting.

LA' NAYA

Love you, Lu! Be careful.

James ends the call and looks at La' Naya who still has her arms crossed.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Lucy is spinning the ball on his finger as Gabe stands looking at him in the exact same pose as La'Naya.

GABE

I don't like that word, Lucy.

Lucy shrugs, takes his finger out from under the ball and it continues to spin. He picks his nose, disgusting Gabe.

LUCY

Powerful word.

GABE

Nothing powerful about the N word.

LUCY

Blacks use it as a term of endearment. How bad can it be?

He puts his finger back under the spinning ball directly from picking his nose and Gabe cringes.

GABE

To take back the hatred from that word.

LUCY

I like it. As long as humans keep it alive, I'll be found in that word.

Gabe snatches the ball from Lucy's finger and produces a white handkerchief and wipes down the ball. Lucy shrugs and picks his nose again.

INT. ROBINSON LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jada sits on the couch, texting on her phone, tuning out James and La'Naya as they continue to fight.

LA'NAYA
We'll move to D.C.

JAMES
We're not... what about my job?

LA'NAYA
Your job?

She lets out a little laugh and Jada lifts an eyebrow, sensing trouble.

LA'NAYA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Lets talk about...

His phone goes off. He quickly digs it out.

JAMES
Lu.

LA'NAYA
Put it on speaker.

James answers the phone on speaker.

JAMES
Lu? Where are you?

LU (O.S.)
(nervous)
I'm not far, dad I'm...

JAMES
Lu, you're almost an hour late!
You know...

LU (O.S.)
Dad, the police are behind me. I
didn't do anything.

Jada tosses her phone to the side and rushes to James side along with La' Naya. Fear is on all their faces.

LA'NAYA
Pull over Lu.

LU (O.S.)
I'm scared. Why are they pulling
me over?

JAMES

Son, just do what we've practiced.
Don't...

LU (O.S.)

I'm just around the block. I'm
going to drive home.

LA' NAYA

Lu, don't.

JAMES

Son...

Siren blast over the phone and in the distance. They all
gasp.

LU (O.S.)

I'm almost home. Don't hang up
Dad. Don't leave me.

The police lights start to fill the street outside the window
and the sirens sound close. Still with his phone in his hand,
James rushes for the door.

JAMES

I'm here, Lu.

James arrives at the door followed closely by La'Naya and
Jada.

EXT. ROBINSON FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

As the three step out the front door, Lu's car is just
arriving at the driveway. He's followed by two police cars
while a third cuts him off, forcing him into his own
driveway.

The three watch with total fear as Lu pulls into the
driveway, but only part way, parking askew. The police cars
block him in.

LU (O.S.)

Dad, I'm scared!

JAMES

Just keep your hands in sight
and...

THREE OFFICERS are out of the car, guns drawn, aiming at Lu's
car. La' Naya steps forward quickly.

LA'NAYA

Officer, that's my son, he's...

OFFICER #1
Ma'am Stay back! Do not escalate!

James holds her back.

OFFICER #2
Step out of the vehicle with your
hands where I can see them.

JAMES
Slowly, son, hands in view.

LU (O.S.)
They won't shoot you. I love you,
Dad.

JAMES
Love you son. It'll be okay.
You're home. It'll be okay.

The driver's door opens and Lu's leg is the first out and the Three Police Officers immediately tense up. In the background, neighbors start to make their way out to see what is going on. La'Naya holds on tight to James' arm. In slow motion, Lu starts to exit the car.

Close up on Jada's face, gripped with fear as she stands behind James and La'Naya. Continuing in slow motion, Lu is almost all the way out of the car. Close up on La'Naya's face as she is in tears with fear as she watches the events unfold.

Lu is almost upright out of the car and he looks right at James, gripped with fear. James looks Lu right in the eyes, willing him to stay strong. They lock eyes and hold.

OFFICER #1 (O.S.)
Slowly turn around and interlock
your finger behind your head.

Terrified, Lu looks at James one last time, then still in slow motion, starts to turn. Close up on James face as he watches helplessly, his eyes focused and intent on Lu.

OFFICE #2 (O.S.)
Gun!

Just as James starts to react, gunshots. James' face drops, death in his eyes as he instinctively turns to La'Naya who cries out and crumbles to the ground. James drops down to one knee as Jada cries out, going down to La'Naya as well.

OFFICER #1 (O.S.)
Suspect down! Suspect down! Send
medical support. Male suspect
down!

As James tries to hold back the wailing La'Naya, he looks toward Lu, the red and blue lights flashing on his face. Tears streaking down her face, La'Naya reaches out, trying to crawl towards Lu, as James and Jada hold her back.

OFFICER #2 (O.S.)
No pulse! I can't find a pulse.
Rendering aid. Get the medics here
now!

Blue and red lights flashing, James looks out, loss and pain gripping his face.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Gabe holds the basketball as Lucy stands, looking at his well manicured nails. He finally looks up at Gabe.

LUCY
What? I am who I am.

Gabe looks a little emotional.

GABE
The boy didn't have to die.

LUCY
I like to win, Gabe, and hate and fear are an easy way to cause division. No way he comes back from this.

GABE
Don't be so sure, Lucy. God is strong enough for anybody. He just has to turn to God and he'll be fine.

LUCY
Don't see that happening. God could have stopped me. He didn't.

GABE
I'm disappointed in you, Lucy.

LUCY
I'm okay with that.

Gabe shakes his head. Lucy makes a large soft pretzel appear in his hand, mustard smothered on it.

GABE

When will you learn, Lucy, that
God will always use what you do to
show His glory.

LUCY

I'm guessing about the time people
stop saying N...

GABE

Don't say it!

Lucy laughs like the Devil that he is and turns to walk away, the basketball hits him firmly in the back of his head. Lucy's face slams into the pretzel, mustard now all over his face. The pretzel falls to the ground. He turns around.

GABE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Check. We're not done here.

Lucy licks the mustard off his face then looks down at the pretzel on the ground. He shrugs, picks it up and turns to walk back toward Gabe.

EXT. CHURCH GROUNDS - EARLY MORNING

Eyes red, cheeks dirty from tears, James stands in the church parking lot, watching Stevie as he rides the riding mower.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (O.S.)

James. I don't know what to say.

James turns to look at Pastor Reynolds for just a moment and then turns back to watch Stevie as he mows.

JAMES

I didn't know where to go. I...

James swallows and looks away.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)

...I only feel hate.

Pastor Reynolds puts a comforting hand on his shoulder.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Eye for an eye. I want them dead,
Pastor. I can't even look at my
wife. Her grief is too much for
me to bear.

Pastor Reynolds listens, full attention on James, pain on his face too.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
But there is a part of me, way
down underneath the sound of the
gun that took my boy from me,
under the screams of my wife who
watched the child she carried
inside her for nine...

He can't hold it together anymore and bends over and starts to sob. Pastor Reynolds starts to tear up, putting a hand on James' back as he cries out with sorrow.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
That's Jesus, James. He's calling
to you, reaching out for you.

James continues to sob.

PASTOR REYNOLDS (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Take his hand, James. He will
guide you where you need to go.

James abruptly stands up and falls into Pastor Reynolds' arms and they both hold each other and cry.

INT. JAMES BEDROOM - NIGHT

James stands in the empty bedroom, looking around, lost. He spots his Bible on the night stand and zombie-like walks toward. He looks down at it for a moment, then picks it up. He's conflicted. He wants to open it, but can't.

He struggles to will himself to open it, but he just can't, he hangs his head, drained.

JADA (O.S.)
Dad?

He turns to see a spent Jada, red eyes, standing in the doorway. She has a concerned look on her face.

JADA (cont'd)
You okay?

JAMES
I don't know if I ever will be
again.

She nods, understanding.

JADA
Mom's about to be on.

He nods and she gives a sad look of longing and then turns and leaves. He looks at the Bible and shakes his head.

JAMES
I can't. You let me down. There is nothing left in me, do you understand?

He looks up at the ceiling.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Right. In. Front. Of. Me.

He swallows.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Wasn't it enough that you took him from me? Did you have to make me...?

He chokes up. He takes a moment to gather himself. He lets out a breath.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I can't, believe in you. I...

He starts to lose it again and quickly sets the Bible down, hurrying out of the room.

INT ROBINSON LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jada stands in front of the flat screen, arms folded, vulnerable. James walks up and puts a much needed comforting arm around her. La'Naya is on the T.V. at a press conference. All major news networks are present.

She has anger on her face and tears in her eyes as she holds up Lu's cell phone.

LA'NAYA
A cellphone. Murdered, over a cellphone. Murdered, for being black.

The crowd roars.

LA'NAYA (cont'd)
What has peace accomplished? What has outrage wrought? It's time for action. It's time for our pound of flesh.

James shifts uncomfortably as the crowd roars it's approval.

LA'NAYA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
No justice, no peace isn't enough.
No change, no peace. No equality,
no peace. It's THEIR turn to feel
afraid when their child is out.
It's THEIR turn too wonder if they
will die for the color of their
skin. No equality, no peace!

The crowd roars and Jada rests her head against James as he pulls her in closer.

INT. ROBINSON BEDROOM - LATER

James is sitting on the bed, the Bible sitting on the night stand next to him. La'Naya enters the room, looking spent. He looks up at her.

LA'NAYA
Too much?

He ponders, then shrugs.

JAMES
I don't know anymore.

She walks over to him and puts both hands on his shoulders and kisses him on the top of his head.

LA'NAYA
Our baby won't have died in vain.

He nods, but doesn't look up.

LA'NAYA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
You'll speak at the rally
tomorrow?

He looks up at her, unsure.

LA'NAYA (CONT'D) (cont'd)
We need your voice. They need to
hear what you have to say.

He looks at her a moment and nods. She kisses him again on top of his head and heads for the bathroom.

LA'NAYA (CONT'D)
Let me shower and we'll go to bed.
Tomorrow, everything changes.

He watches her as she disappears into the bathroom and closes the door behind her. He sits there looking at the door a moment and then looks over at the Bible. Conflicted, he picks it up and as if he doesn't want to. He opens it mindlessly, but doesn't look at it, as he hears the shower turn on.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

A cocky looking Lucy wiggles his butt in celebration, a demonic grin as he looks at Gabe, who holds the basketball, shaking his head.

LUCY

Yes, yes, yes! It's amazing what a racist police killing can do for business.

GABE

It ain't over, Lucy.

Lucy lets out a boisterous laugh.

LUCY

Bro, it don't get more over than...

Gabe lifts up his hand and Lucy looks at it worried as Gabe puts his middle finger nail on top of his thumb.

LUCY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

What are you...?

Gabe gives him a half a smile.

LUCY (CONT'D) (cont'd)

No. Don't you...

Lucy dives at Gabe just as he flicks his finger. Lucy gets a snarl on his face as Gabe gives him a bounce pass, the ball bouncing off Lucy's mid section.

GABE

Check.

Lucy appears concerned.

INT. ROBINSON BEDROOM - NIGHT

The shower is running as James sits with the open Bible in his lap. Suddenly the pages flip as if moved by a slight gust of air. It causes James to look down at where the Bible is now open to. First Corinthians chapter thirteen. Without hesitation, he starts to read.

EXT. PARK RALLY POINT - DAY

A massive crowd of mixed race have gathered, signs in hand, anger and frustration on their face. Black dignitaries and ministers gather on the stage, some famous, some soon to be famous.

James stands with La'Naya and Jada, holding their hands as a MILITANT BLACK MAN addresses the crowd.

MILITANT BLACK MAN

Today, we show the police we will
no longer sit passively as they
kill our young black men.

The crowd lets out a bloodletting cheer.

MILITANT BLACK MAN (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Today, we take the humanity they
have owed us for these hundreds of
years. Today, we take the respect
for black lives, they refuse to
give us.

Bigger, angrier cheer. The Militant Black Man steps away and La Naya turns and kisses James on the lips for encouragement.

LA'NAYA

You'll be amazing baby.

A little nervous, James makes his way up to the podium as the now unruly crowd chants against the police. They start to quiet as James takes his place. He looks over the crowd, hesitant. He looks up, searching his memory

PASTOR REYNOLDS (V.O.)

In times of difficulty, put your
trust in Jesus. Listen for his
voice. Ask yourself, how would this
make Jesus look, before you react.

James looks back at the crowd.

JAMES

I'm James Robinson. Lu Robinson
is...was...my son.

The crowd sobers up quickly. La'Naya and Jada hold each other as they watch.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)

I watched my son die needlessly
right in front of me.

The crowd grows angry.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I came here today with the intent
on revenge. Blood for blood.

The crowd is quickly whipping into a frenzy.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I could see nothing else. I could
feel nothing else but hate and
revenge. Somebody had to pay. They
had to pay.

He has them completely stirred up now.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Then I read something that made me
think.

The crowd hangs on his words.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
If I speak in the tongues of men
or of angels, but do not have
love, I am only a resounding gong
or a clanging cymbal.

The crowds ire starts to die down, replaced with uncertainty.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
If I have the gift of prophecy and
can fathom all the mysteries and
all knowledge, and I have a faith
that can move mountains, but do not
have love, I am nothing.

All anger is replaced by confusion, this is not the speech
they came to hear.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
If I give all I possess to the
poor and give over my body to
hardship that I may boast, but do
not have love, I gain nothing.

The crowd looks at each other, the anger no longer prevalent.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Love is patient, love is kind. It
does not envy, it does not boast,
it is not proud. It does not
(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
dishonor others, it is not self
seeking, it is not easily angered,
it keeps no record of wrong doing.

He has the crowds full attention.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
Love does not delight in evil but
rejoices in truth. It always
protects, always trusts, always
hopes, always perseveres.

Many in the crowd have joined hands now.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
For now we see only a reflection
as in a mirror; then we shall see
face to face.

Some tears in the crowd.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
And now these three remain...
faith, hope and love.

He looks over the crowds. Jada and La' Naya smile through
tears, holding each other tighter.

JAMES (CONT'D) (cont'd)
I choose faith. I choose hope. I
choose love.

He turns and heads off stage as the stunned crowd is unsure
what to do. As he smiles at Jada and La' Naya, they envelop
him in a hug and the three hug and cry as the crowd starts to
cheer.

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Gabe raises high in a jumper and buries a three pointer in
Lucy's face. In anger, Lucy kicks the ball away.

GABE
Game.

LUCY
Game. Who cares? I'll still get
mine. They'll still riot and burn
things and you know how much I
LOVE fire.

GABE
God will find them too, Lucy.
It's never too late.

LUCY
Pish posh. Enjoy your win. And
stop calling me Lucy.

GABE
Okay... Lucy.

Gabe laughs as Lucy storms off.

EXT. CHURCH ENTRYWAY - DAY

Pastor Reynolds stands and shakes hands as Parishioners exit.
James steps up, followed by La' Naya and Jada. Pastor
Reynolds shakes James' hand and then pulls him into a hug.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
Welcome back.

JAMES
Guess I never really left.

The hug ends and Pastor Reynolds gives La'Naya and Jada a
quick hug. He looks at James.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
That was some speech.

JAMES
They still marched, still are
occupying the police precinct.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
Yes, but fewer of them went that
route, more went peacefully hand
in hand in a march for peace.

James nods.

JAMES
I just spoke from my heart.

PASTOR REYNOLDS
It's all God asks of us. The rest
he will handle.

James nods.

JAMES
Will it ever end, Pastor? Will
racism ever end?

PASTOR REYNOLDS

All I know for sure my friend is
racism will end, when Jesus comes
to redeem us.

LA'NAYA

Amen.

They all smile.

EXT. DOWNTOWN INTERSECTION - DAY

James is waiting to cross, dressed for work as usual. He watches once again as the Old Black Woman starts to cross the street. He watches still as white people pass her by, oblivious that she won't make it across in time. James lets out a sigh and turns to take a step to go after her.

As he steps, he's bumped from behind by a YOUNG WHITE MALE who hurries in the Old Black Women's direction. He turns to look at James.

YOUNG WHITE MALE

Excuse me, sorry!

He waves at James who waves back and James is just about to continue after the Old Black Woman as the Young White Male arrives at her.

YOUNG WHITE MALE (CONT'D) (cont'd)

Let me help you, ma'am.

James watches with amazement as the Old Black Woman smiles at the Young White Male who gently takes her arm and starts to guide her across the street, holding up his hand to stop traffic and let her cross.

James watches and smiles, then starts across the street in the direction he was going.

FADE OUT.

THE END