

FADE IN:

EXT. HIGH RISE APARTMENT BUILDING (NIGHT) - ROOFTOP

It's a dark night as a few street lights flicker down the street. TANISHA, 31, light skin, long dark hair, walks out of the building wearing a jacket, white heels, and sunglasses. She has a bloodied scar on her face and a bruised lip.

She slowly walks over to the edge of the building and takes a look at the view below from the ledge.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

Sometimes to understand where you
are in life, you have to look back
to the beginning.

She removes her sunglasses to reveal a bruise around her left eye.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

I never thought I'd end up this
way. I mean, after everything I
went through with my mother, I
practically vowed never to live
this way.

After a few moments, Tanisha takes off her jacket to reveal she's wearing a white all on one mini skirt that matches with her heels. The dress has several blood spots on it.

Tanisha climbs onto the ledge and tries to balance herself.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

I've been through it all before,
and yet, I couldn't control it. I
couldn't let Tonya go through what
I went through. My daughter
deserves better.

Tanisha looks as if she's about to jump, but pulls back at the last second. She loses her balance and falls back towards the roof, hitting the ground, and scraping her leg. She sits up and is in tears as she looks at her bloodied leg.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

I chose this place because this is
where it all began. Moss Park
Apartments.

(MORE)

TANISHA (CONT'D)

It's the start of a vicious cycle.
A cycle that will end today, one
way or another.

Tanisha wipes off the blood on her leg with her hands, and is about to get back up when she notices the blood on her hands. Tanisha bursts into tears unexpectedly as she quickly tries to wipe the blood onto the ground.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

So much pain bottled up. I guess it
was only a matter of time before a
break down. It was a pain that
started when I was five years old.

INT. MOSS APARTMENTS (NIGHT) - FLASHBACK, 1983

Tanisha, 5, is sitting on her mother's, TAMERA's, 24, lap watching their television in the living room. The television keeps going in and out as Tamera has finally had enough.

She puts Tanisha on the ground, and walks over to the television to adjust the antenna.

TAMERA

Where is your father girl? He knows
how to get this damn thing working!

Tanisha smiles as she begins playing with her toy doll that is next to her on the floor. Tamera is still adjusting the antenna when THOMAS, 28, walks in with a scowl on his face.

TAMERA (CONT'D)

Thomas, the T.V. is actin' up
again. When are we gonna get the
new set?

THOMAS

Can I at least walk in my house
without you buggin' me for money,
eh!

Tamera is stunned as Thomas makes his way into the kitchen. Tamera quickly follows as Tanisha is still playing with her doll on the floor.

TAMERA

Well excuse me, but you were the
one saying you were going to get a
new T.V. for the house! Don't act
like I'm just here bugging you all
the time.

Thomas ignores Tamera as he looks inside the refrigerator. He becomes upset as he slams the refrigerator door shut.

THOMAS

I thought I told you to pick up a two-four!

TAMERA

I was tired okay! I've been dealing with Tanisha all week by myself, and I just needed a break for me! Besides, I'm tired of you coming home and getting hosed all the time.

THOMAS

I'm the one working all day, putting food on the damn table, paying for your ass! If I want a beer when I get off, I want it!

Tamera doesn't say anything as Thomas continues to look around the kitchen.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Where's dinner?

TAMERA

Where's dinner? I told you I was too tired to make it to the market! I needed a break, eh!

THOMAS

A break from what? Every time I come home you're on the Chesterfield watching the tele! Half the time you're still wearing your housecoat!

TAMERA

Well, that's not your concern what I do when you're not here!

THOMAS

Not my concern? I work all day, every day to make sure you and Nisha are provided for, and---

TAMERA

And we're still in The Moss!

Thomas stops looking for food in the kitchen as he turns his full attention towards Tamera with a frightening look in his eyes.

THOMAS

Watch what you say to me Tam. I'm doing the best I can working my fingers to the bone, and I do not need to come home to this shit!

TAMERA

Oh, so I speak the truth and now you want to intimidate me?

THOMAS

I'm not intimidating you; I'm just warning you not to slap the hand that feeds you!

TAMERA

Feeds me? You spend most of your time getting hosed with your friends at the bar. You make just enough to keep the hydro on, and half the time that's out! Nisha barely knows you cause you're never around! She probably don't even realize that you're her father!

Thomas is starting to grit his teeth as Tamera continues to push his buttons.

TAMERA (CONT'D)

Speaking of Nisha, it's a wonder we even had her in the first place, eh. I mean, you're never around to fuck me anymore, and when you do have time to fuck me, there's always a wee problem, isn't there?

Thomas can no longer sit idly by as he viciously SLAPS Tamera in the face, sending her flying to the ground. He towers over her as she looks up in a state of shock.

THOMAS

You need to learn to shut the fuck up at times! I just had a hard day, and I don't need your fucking bull shit!

Thomas walks out of the kitchen as Tamera is still looking stunned. Anger fills her eyes as she jumps up and chases after him. Thomas is about to walk out of the front door when Tamera ATTACKS him from behind.

TAMERA

You bastard!

Thomas easily subdues Tamera and PINS her on the ground. Tanisha is watching the incident in horror as Thomas begins wailing on his wife.

THOMAS
Fucking ungrateful bitch!

Tanisha runs over sobbing as she catches the eye of Thomas. Thomas watches as his daughter is pulling for her mother. Thomas gets up and notices what he's done to Tamera.

Tamera's lip is quivering as Thomas quickly gets up and runs out of the apartment. Tanisha is hugging her mother as Tamera begins to cry.

TANISHA
(V.O.)
That was the first time I saw dear old dad, or Thomas as I called him, going off on mom. I don't even remember what they were arguing about. Only thing I remember is the evil in his eyes as he hit her.

INT. HIGH RISE APARTMENT BUILDING (NIGHT) - PRESENT TIME

Tanisha is still in tears as the memories of the past gets to her. She gets up and walks over to a nearby stoop. A police siren going off from below startles her for a moment.

TANISHA
(V.O.)
After that incident, we left for several months where we mostly stayed in the homeless shelter. Eventually, she went back to him. He said it wouldn't happen again, but it did. So much in fact that it became almost, normal.

Tanisha sighs as she's startled once again by police sirens wailing from below.

TANISHA (CONT'D)
(V.O.)
This went on for a while, but eventually all abusers take things to another level. Thomas was no different.

INT. MOSS APARTMENTS (DAY) - FLASHBACK, 1994, THOMAS AND TAMERA'S APARTMENT

Tanisha, 16 now, is lying in her bed smiling and talking on the phone when she hears a disturbance in the other room between her parents.

TANISHA

(To Phone)

Hey girl, let me call you back.

Tanisha hangs up the phone and rushes into the living room where her mother and father are having a heated discussion once again.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

This was starting to get irritating, and what's worse is that I didn't appreciate how he treated her. Once again, he was on one of his drunken tirades, but this situation turned out to be the breaking point.

Tanisha makes it into the living room, but stands by idly as she listens to the discussion.

THOMAS

I've already talked enough about this. Your place is at the home, not at some diner!

TAMERA

I'm tired Thomas. I'm really tired. I don't see why you're making this such a big deal! We've been living in this same shitty apartment since before Nisha was born! I can't do this anymore. What's so bad about me going to work, eh?

THOMAS

Because your place is in this fucking home! I don't want to hear another word about this!

TAMERA

Fuck you! If you want to stay in this crime infested dump, fine! Tanisha, pack your stuff, we're getting out of here.

Tanisha is about to walk off when Thomas calls her back.

THOMAS

Tanisha, don't pack shit, you're not going anywhere!

TAMERA

What do you mean?

THOMAS

Come on Tam, you really think I'd let you take my daughter from me? Where are you gonna go? Back to that fuckin' shelter?

TAMERA

We'll manage!

THOMAS

Oh I doubt that. You're too fuckin' stupid to manage. You leave to those shelters all the time, and every time, you come back to me, and you wanna know why?

Tamera doesn't respond as Thomas continues on.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

It's because you can't make it in the real world. You don't know how to make it in the real world. I've been bustin' my ass making it easy for you all this time! Truth is you're fuckin' useless!

Tamera is upset as she approaches Thomas. She's standing directly in his face making Tanisha nervous.

TAMERA

That ain't it! You're scared that with a job, I just might make it without you! I mean, let's put all the cards on the table here; what good are you to me other than a paycheck? You come home drunk half the time, beating on me like it's my fault! You don't fuck me anymore, so there's not anything you do that's useful to me---

Thomas grabs Tamera by her arm and pulls her close in with anger in his eyes.

THOMAS

You better remember who you're talking too!

(MORE)

THOMAS (CONT'D)

This is my fucking house and you
will show me the respect I deserve!

Tamera jerks her arm away from Thomas as she backs down a
bit.

TAMERA

So what are you going to do? You
gonna hit me again? Right in front
of my daughter nonetheless. Does it
make you feel like a man when you
hit me?

THOMAS

Tamera, I'm not in the mood for
this shit. You're not getting a
job, and that's final!

TAMERA

You know what, it's not final!
You're not some fucking judge that
can rule me at will! I'm a person
who is very capable of making my
own decisions!

Tanisha's face is full of concern as she notices Thomas
clenching his fists.

TANISHA

Hey, mom, I need... Can you come
check on something for me?

TAMERA

(To Tanisha)

In a second hon.

(To Thomas)

I'm sorry Thomas, but I can't
really live like this anymore. I'm
going to start work in a couple of
days. If it's too much for you,
than I will leave. Before I leave
though, I wanted to clear something
up. I didn't come back because I
needed you, I came back all those
times because I loved you, and I
really had hoped you'd change.

Thomas backs down a little which relieves Tanisha a bit.
Tamera approaches Thomas and places her hand on his shoulder.

TAMERA (CONT'D)

Thomas, you need help. Living in a different area may be the first step for us, but you have to make that move with me.

Thomas thinks for a moment as Tanisha is anticipating her father's answer.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

What happened next was the thing nightmares are made of.

Thomas mood changes as rage fills his eyes. He PUNCHES Tamera in the face sending her down to the ground hard. Tanisha is horrified as Thomas mounts Tamera. He pulls her head off the ground and PUNCHES her again.

THOMAS

(Yelling)

Who the fuck do you think you are?
You're going to judge me after all
the shit I did for you?

Thomas continues to brutally beat Tamera as Tanisha watches on in a state of shock.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

I'd seen my mother and Thomas fight before, but what I saw that day was worse than any other fight they have ever had. I was only sixteen, but I couldn't let him kill her.

Tanisha is in tears as she runs over and tries to pry Thomas off of Tamera. She finally gets him off as Tamera lies in a bloodied mess. Thomas looks at Tanisha, who is checking on her mother's health, as he quickly approaches her.

THOMAS

I told once before to stay out of this! This shit doesn't have anything to do with you!

TANISHA

(Crying)

It does have something to do with me dad! You were killing her!

THOMAS

You better watch your tone Nisha!
She had it coming to her!

(MORE)

THOMAS (CONT'D)

She knows better than to talk to me
like that.

Tanisha ignores Thomas as she continues to tend to her mother. Thomas jumps up and forcefully pushes Tanisha away from Tamera. Tanisha quickly reacts by SLAPPING Thomas in the face.

Thomas is stunned at Tanisha's attack, and PUNCHES her in the face as well. Tanisha, quickly gets up and runs back to her bed room.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Yeah go ahead! Run! You must be
crazy putting your hands on me!

Thomas turns his attention back towards Tamera, and smiles. He walks over to a nearby table and picks up a beer. He opens it and takes a long sip. He shakes his head as he looks at Tamera, who isn't moving from the ground.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

(To Himself)

Stupid cunt think she's gonna tell
me what I'm gonna do! She must be
out of her damn mind.

Thomas begins drinking his beer again sitting silently.

Tanisha locks her bedroom door and quickly makes her way to her phone.

OPERATOR

(Filtered)

Nine one one emergency. What's the
emergency?

TANISHA

Yeah... I'm... My dad hurt my
mother. She's... She's looking real
bad... I need some help!

OPERATOR

(Filtered)

Okay. Help is on the way. Is your
father still on the premises?

Tanisha sighs as she tries to gather herself.

INT. MOSS APARTMENTS (DAY) - FLASHBACK, 15 MINUTES LATER

Police now fill the apartment as Thomas is being hand cuffed. An emergency worker tends to Tamera as hate fills the eyes of Tanisha who is looking towards her father. OFFICER ROBYN, 28, walks over and takes a seat next to Tamera.

OFFICER ROBYN

Hey Tamera. I'm Officer Robyn. We're going to take your husband and process him for you, but I have to be honest, there's not much we can do beyond tonight if you're not willing to press charges.

Tamera shakes her head no as Tanisha tries to convince her.

TANISHA

Mom, you could have died if I didn't stop him. He's been doing this to you for years. It's time to finish this now.

TAMERA

Nisha, you don't understand. I still love your father... I know it's difficult, but I can't do that, I just can't.

Tanisha shakes her head in disgust as she looks at her father being lead out by another detective. Tanisha turns her attention towards Thomas once more as she addresses Officer Robyn.

TANISHA

What about me?

OFFICER ROBYN

Excuse me?

TANISHA

What if I was to press charges? I mean, he hit me too. Will that work?

OFFICER ROBYN

Definitely. How old are you?

TANISHA

I'm sixteen.

OFFICER ROBYN

Abuse to a minor carries a steeper offence. Are you sure you want to go through with this?

TANISHA

Yeah, what I gotta do?

Officer Robyn takes out her note pad and begins taking notes as Tamera shows she's upset with Tanisha's choice to report Thomas.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

Mom was upset with me pressing charges against my father, but eventually, even she admitted it needed to be done. Well, as time passed, mom had no choice but to work since we found ourselves on our own.

INT. MOSS APARTMENTS (EVENING) - 1999, FLASHBACK

Tanisha, now 21 years old, carefully sets the dinner table as she fiddles with the silverware until she feels it's just perfect.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

Unfortunately, being we lost my father's income, we had no choice but to stay in the Moss. Every now and then, just to cheer mom up, I would prepare dinner for the two of us to sit down and catch up.

Tanisha has a big smile on her face when her mother suddenly walks in the door. Tanisha quickly runs over to her mother and kisses her on the cheek. Tamera's mood is dim as she takes off her jacket and tosses it on a nearby couch.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Hey, so how was your day?

TAMERA

Just like every other day unfortunately. I have a real bad headache, so I think I'm just going to head to bed.

Tanisha mood changes to grim as Tamera begins making her way towards the back room.

TANISHA

Mom, come on, I mean I know you're tired and all, but the least you can do is give me five minutes.

TAMERA

I just told you I'm not feeling good. Besides don't you have to work tonight?

TANISHA

Actually, yeah, but I thought a nice dinner with my mother before I went to work would kind of ease the everyday bull shit that I put up with from night to night!

Tamera looks into Tanisha's eyes and notices the seriousness. She slowly makes her way to the dinner table and takes a seat. Tanisha takes a seat across from her mother and begins serving the food.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

So, I thought you had a half day or something?

TAMERA

I did. I had to run a few errands.

TANISHA

Really? Like what?

Tamera doesn't respond as she takes a sip of her drink. Tanisha notices her avoidance, and stops serving the food for a moment.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Mom, I asked you a question.

TAMERA

I heard you.

TANISHA

So you're not going to answer me?

TAMERA

Excuse me? I think you forget who's the mother and who's the daughter here, eh.

TANISHA

You went to see him again, didn't you?

Tamera remains silent as Tanisha gives her a look.

TANISHA (CONT'D)
Un-fucking believable!

TAMERA
Tamera! I won't allow that kind of
talk in this home!

TANISHA
Why now? You promised me you
weren't going to see him anymore!

TAMERA
Nisha, you don't understand. If you
were in my shoes, you would---

TANISHA
I will never be in your shoes cause
I'm not dumb enough to let a man
damn near kill me and visit him in
jail! Hell, if I didn't press the
charges that bastard would still be
here!

Tamera is silent once again as a frustrated Tanisha gets up
from the table.

TAMERA
Where are you going?

TANISHA
I'm going to be late to work. I'm
out of here.

Tanisha grabs her jacket and is about to walk out when her
mother responds to her.

TAMERA
He's getting out in a couple of
months.

Tanisha stops in her tracks and slowly turns around and faces
her mother.

TANISHA
What?

TAMERA
He's getting out in a couple of
months. Parole.

TANISHA

You've got to be kidding me! How is that possible?

TAMERA

What did you think; he was going to get life in prison? For beating on you?

TANISHA

I hope you didn't tell him that he could come back here!

Tanisha waits for a response but receives none from Tamera. Tanisha shakes her head in disbelief.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Unbelievable. Un-fucking believable! You know what, fine, you do what you have to do, but I'm not going to stand around and go through this shit again!

Tamera is about to respond, but Tanisha walks out the door before she can say anything.

EXT. MOSS APARTMENTS (DAY) - MOMENTS LATER, FLASHBACK, 1999

Tanisha makes her way to the bus stop located outside her building and has a seat on the bench. She has a few tears streaming from her face, when PATRICE, 21, walks up. She's wearing heels with a tight all in one body suit.

Tanisha quickly wipes her tears as Patrice approaches her.

PATRICE

Hey girlie! What's up with you?

TANISHA

Nothing. I was just on my way to work.

PATRICE

Out here a little early aren't you?

TANISHA

Yeah. Sometimes I just sit our here to clear my head. You'd be surprised what you can sift through waiting on a bus.

Patrice takes a seat next to Tanisha with a look of concern in her eyes.

PATRICE
Everything alright?

TANISHA
My idiot of a mother... She's...
Thomas is getting out in a couple
of months, and my mother is letting
him move back in!

Patrice is stunned as she tries to comfort her friend.

PATRICE
Damn girl. That's fucked up.

TANISHA
Tell me about it. I'm not staying
there Trice. I can't deal with all
that drama again.

PATRICE
So, does that mean you're ready to
move out with me and explore the
world!

Tanisha smiles as she looks at her friend.

TANISHA
It seems that way! I want to get as
far away from The Moss as I can!

PATRICE
Well, I'm not promising anything,
but we may can get a place in
Vancouver.

TANISHA
Fuck me Trice, I was talking out of
the area, not out of Toronto.

PATRICE
What else you got here? You work
two shitty jobs, getting paid shit,
and have nothing going for you.

TANISHA
I just can't let go, you know that.
I mean when he gets out it's going
to be the same old shit. When that
happens, she's going to need me
again.

Patrice nods her head in understanding as she changes the
subject.

PATRICE

Anyway, on another subject, I was trying to get over here before you left; you think you can get me in tonight?

Tanisha smiles as she looks at Patrice's desperate face.

TANISHA

Are you serious? You've been clubbin' a lot lately.

PATRICE

Well, when your best friend is a bartender at the joint, why not, eh?

TANISHA

As much money as I save you on the door charge, I should be getting a little something for me.

PATRICE

Are you kidding me? I just was your, what do you call it, therapist for like the last five minutes. I mean that has to be worth something!

Tanisha laughs as she notices the bus making its way down the street.

TANISHA

Here comes my ride. I'll leave your name at the door to get in.

PATRICE

Fuck that, I'm ready to go right now!

Tanisha checks out Patrice's outfit and shakes her head.

TANISHA

You really trying to raped up in there tonight wearing that fit, eh?

PATRICE

Girl, this outfit is banging!

TANISHA

Alright, don't say I didn't warn you.

Patrice nods her head as she follows Tanisha to the bus front door as it arrives.

INT. LEVEL NIGHTCLUB (NIGHT) - HOURS LATER, FLASHBACK, 1999

The club is packed as people are finding it hard to move around. The music is blasting as the dance floor is filled with dancers. Patrice makes her way through the crowd and to the bar where Tanisha is serving drinks.

She takes a seat on a nearby stool as Tanisha approaches her with a smile on her face.

PATRICE

What?

TANISHA

Look at you! You're drenched girl. Like somebody threw you in a pool or something!

PATRICE

Girl it's a mad house tonight. I'm so glad I talked you into letting me in.

TANISHA

Yeah, I bet. Any cute guys out there?

PATRICE

Girl, and I'm not even going to lie to you, there are at least a hundred good looking guys in this joint. Seriously!

Tanisha smiles as she pours Patrice a drink.

TANISHA

I guess I would hear that coming from you, with your standards and all.

PATRICE

My standards? Don't even go there with some of the lame cats you've been with.

TANISHA

Anyways, let me get back to work before I get fired from this job. Wouldn't want to ruin your free pass in, eh?

Patrice smiles as she quickly finishes her drink and heads back to the dance floor. Tanisha is collecting glasses on the bar when STEFANO, 22, walks up to the bar. He's wearing a stylish suit with a Bollman Hat to match.

Tanisha quickly makes her way over to him to take his order.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Yeah, what can I get you?

STEFANO

Yeah, let me get a Vodka, straight, and none of that watered down shit, something straight out the bottle.

Tanisha nods as she grabs a glass. As she's pouring his drink, Stefano looks at her as if he recognizes her.

STEFANO (CONT'D)

Say, don't I know you from somewhere?

Tanisha smiles as she hands Stefano his drink.

TANISHA

Save the lines for the ladies, not the bartender, eh.

Stefano continues to look at her when he snaps his fingers.

STEFANO

Church Street Elementary! That's where I know you from! You're, uh, Tameka, isn't it?

TANISHA

Tanisha. Yeah, I went there. Don't remember you though.

STEFANO

It's me Stefano. Remember, skinny kid with the coke bottle glasses?

Tanisha looks at him for a few moments, when she snaps her fingers.

TANISHA

Oh shit, I do remember you! Hey, it's been a long time! Where have you been hiding?

STEFANO

Shit, my family moved out of the Moss. I've been here and there, you know.

TANISHA

Cool. So what are you up to these days?

STEFANO

I'm on the hunt for some pretty young things right now.

TANISHA

Really? Maybe I shouldn't have heard that last part.

Stefano laughs as he calms down Tanisha.

STEFANO

Nah girl, it's not like that. You heard of Grind Squad before right?

TANISHA

Yeah, the rap cats out of Regent.

STEFANO

Yeah. They have a photo shoot for their new album that's about to drop, and they looking for Toronto's finest to pose with them. I'm just looking for some potential chicks to join the shoot.

TANISHA

Sounds like fun.

Stefano looks at Tanisha who is cleaning a few glasses.

STEFANO

Say, you wouldn't be interested in joining the shoot would you?

TANISHA

Me? Oh no, I'm not into that groupie shit.

STEFANO

It's not groupie shit, I mean, I do this for a living, and you've got a good look to be a model.

TANISHA

Yeah, and let me guess, after the shoot, one of the artists gets horny, and then that's when the fucking begins. Sorry, I'm not that type of girl.

STEFANO

It's a professional shoot Tanisha. It's not like that. There's going to be white people there and everything!

Tanisha laughs as she ponders Stefano's offer.

TANISHA

I don't know. I mean I don't know the first thing about modeling. I mean, I thought all those chicks were nothing more than video hoes.

STEFANO

I promise you, it will be totally professional.

Tanisha thinks for a moment before shaking her head no.

TANISHA

Look, thanks for asking, but I don't really have the time to waste on it right now.

STEFANO

Did I mention the job pays five hundred dollars?

TANISHA

Five hundred dollars?

Stefano takes out his card and writes some info on the back.

STEFANO

Meet me at this address tomorrow. Don't worry about getting all prettied up, we have people on it. I hope to see you there.

TANISHA

Damn, I have to work tomorrow at five.

STEFANO

Shoot shouldn't run that long. Meet me at around two.

Tanisha nods as Stefano hands her his card and some cash for his drink.

TANISHA

Thanks.

STEFANO

I hope to see you there.

Stefano walks off as Tanisha looks at the information on the card.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

Stefano had given me an opportunity to earn a little extra cash for a new place. I was skeptical at first, but Stefano was true to his word.

INT. PHOTO SHOOT (DAY)- NEXT DAY, FLASHBACK, 1999

Tanisha walks in with Patrice into the studio where the rap group Grind Squad is posing with a few other women. Stefano is directing a few shots when he notices Tanisha walking in.

STEFANO

Tanisha, glad you could make it.

TANISHA

Hey. Am I late?

STEFANO

No, we just use as many different shots we can and then decide which ones we want to actually post, you know.

Stefano takes a look at Tanisha, who is wearing excessive make up and a skimpy outfit, and laughs.

TANISHA

What?

STEFANO

I told you that we would get you ready. What's up with the make up?

TANISHA

I don't know. I just didn't want to come in her looking like whatever.

STEFANO

Don't worry; we're going to fix you up. Head over to the dressing room in the back.

Tanisha and Patrice start making their way towards the back room when Stefano stops them.

STEFANO (CONT'D)

Sorry Tanisha, no friends allowed in the dressing room. She can wait out here if she wants.

Tanisha nods at Stefano as Patrice takes a seat in a nearby chair.

PATRICE

Alright girl, do your thing!

Tanisha smiles as she makes her way into the dressing room.

After a few minutes, Tanisha reappears with her hair straightened and wearing a thong bikini with high heels. Patrice begins laughing as Tanisha looks around nervously.

PATRICE (CONT'D)

Girl, what in the hell are you wearing?

TANISHA

I don't know, this is like the most uncomfortable I have ever been in my life! Do I look bad?

STEFANO

(O.S.)
You look beautiful.

Tanisha is startled as Stefano approaches her. Stefano is impressed as he looks at her from head to toe.

STEFANO (CONT'D)

I can see why they had you in there so long. You look great!

TANISHA

I'm not going to lie to you; this shit is making me nervous as hell!

STEFANO

Don't worry about it. It's your first time. Actually there is one change we need. Take off the heels.

Tanisha shrugs as she takes off her heels. She poses for him for a moment as Stefano checks her out again.

STEFANO (CONT'D)
You definitely look good. You got this girl, for real. I'm going to tell you this too, your best feature is your feet.

Tanisha looks at Patrice confused.

PATRICE
Her feet?

STEFANO
Yeah! She has nice feet.

Tanisha is still confused as she questions Stefano.

TANISHA
So, is that a good thing?

STEFANO
Hell yeah. Now don't get me wrong, you're beautiful, but your feet are just gorgeous.

Tanisha shrugs again as Patrice tries to contain her laughter.

STEFANO (CONT'D)
Alright, shall we get it going?

Tanisha nods her head, and nervously makes her way over to the photo shoot.

A few hours has passed as Tanisha, who is a lot more comfortable now, walks up to Stefano laughing. Stefano goes into his pocket and counts out five hundred Canadian Dollars.

STEFANO (CONT'D)
Five hundred dollars, as promised.

Tanisha has a smile on her face as she takes the money from Stefano and recounts the money.

TANISHA
So, when am I going to know if my picture has been chosen or not?

STEFANO
Trust me; I don't think you will have any problems getting chosen.
(MORE)

STEFANO (CONT'D)

Speaking of which, I have a few other jobs I'd like to use you in. Very professional, no bullshit.

Tanisha smiles as she thinks for a minute.

TANISHA

Are they all paying as well as this?

STEFANO

More or less. Why don't you give me a call later, and we'll go over the details.

TANISHA

No problem there. Hey, you wouldn't happen to have the time would you?

STEFANO

Yeah, it's about four thirty.

Tanisha begins to panic as she quickly grabs her things.

TANISHA

Oh shit! I'm going to be late for work!

Tanisha is about to rush out of the studio when Stefano calls her back.

STEFANO

Tanisha, wait! The bikini is ours remember?

Tanisha stops in her tracks, and quickly hurries back into the dressing room.

INT. WALMART (EVENING) - HOUR LATER, FLASHBACK

Tanisha rushes into the store wearing the skimpy outfit she had on initially at the photo shoot. She quickly grabs a smock and runs over to the time clock to check in.

Tanisha's supervisor, JANELLE, 38, notices her attire as she approaches her.

JANELLE

This is not the club Tanisha. What you're wearing is not appropriate.

TANISHA

Come on Janelle, give me a break here. I may have gotten something going for myself, and I ran a little late okay.

JANELLE

Well, I hope it was worth it. But either way, I'm going to have to ask you to change into something more appropriate before working the floor.

Janelle walks off as Tanisha rolls her eyes at her.

EXT. MOSS APARTMENTS (NIGHT) - PRESENT TIME

Tanisha is still sitting on the stoop with a bloodied leg. She goes into her purse and smiles as she looks at her published magazine picture.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

Janelle was right. It was worth it, as I had my first picture published in a Toronto Hip Hop Magazine.

After a few moments, the smile slowly drops from her face, as a painful expression takes its place.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

The modeling gig worked for a good moment, but eventually, after five years, I needed something more secure. Stefano got me on a list to an exclusive modeling search party, and I had everything riding on it.

Tanisha rips up the magazine picture in sudden rage and tosses on the ground next to her.

INT. HIGH PRICED CONDOMINIUM (NIGHT) - FLASHBACK, 2004

The room is filled with aspiring models and agents as they all are mingling with one another. Drinks are being served as the event is very high class. Tanisha and Patrice, both 25, walk in wearing nice evening gowns with purses to match.

They walk over to the admittance table and register. After they are done signing in, they are both given a number as they make their way into the party area.

PATRICE

Girl, I don't know why I let you talk me into this shit.

TANISHA

Look, I've been telling you for years you needed to get into this modeling thing. It's easy money.

PATRICE

I don't like a bunch of people leering at me! I mean they just look at you with their judgmental eyes and shit.

TANISHA

Come on girl! You wear them skimpy ass outfits to the club every time you go out! You don't think all them fools aren't judging you there?

PATRICE

Yeah, but that's different. I'm trying to get laid, not get a job!

Tanisha starts laughing as she takes a look at her number.

TANISHA

I got number eight. What about you?

PATRICE

Number thirty two. I guess I'm meeting with this group over here.

TANISHA

Yeah. I'm on the other end. Oh well, look, don't be scared, just go there, show them what you're working with, and you'll do fine.

PATRICE

Yeah, yeah. Look, I'm proud of you girl. I mean, with all the shit happening with your dad as of late, you still have the spirit and shit to go through with this.

TANISHA

Girl please, after they picked his ass up, I didn't give him a second thought.

(MORE)

TANISHA (CONT'D)

I knew it was only a matter of time before he got his ass locked up again. Well, let's do this girl. Here's to the future.

Tanisha and Patrice hug each other as they each go their separate ways.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

After Thomas got out, he went to live with my mother as planned. This time he got caught up in some drug scheme, and a few months ago, they brought his ass right back in jail. My mother was devastated again, and I was forced to move back in just so she can keep the place.

Tanisha takes a seat in her section as she waits for her number to be called.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

This party was supposed to be my big break. I mean the place was packed with agents and scouts, but the gold was in the Edward Nigma Modeling agency. They represented all the top models in North America, so I came prepared to get this job.

Tanisha continues to wait patiently as time goes on. After about an hour, Tanisha has become a little impatient as she looks around. She's relieved when her number is finally called.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

About time!

Tanisha makes her way over to two interviewers. Interviewer One, is a female, 42, wearing an elegant evening dress. Interviewer Two is a balding male, 46, wearing an upscale tuxedo, and glasses hanging from the end of his nose.

Tanisha shakes both of their hands as she takes a seat across from them.

INTERVIEWER ONE

It's Tanisha right?

TANISHA

Yes ma'am. By the way, I love your dress. It's a good color and---

INTERVIEWER TWO

Excuse me Ms. Tanisha, but kissing up won't get you any further with us, so let's cease in the pleasantries if you don't mind.

TANISHA

I wasn't kissing up, I was just...
Never mind, I'm sorry.

Interviewer Two gives Tanisha a snooty look as Interviewer One starts the interview.

INTERVIEWER ONE

Okay, did you bring a copy of your resume or portfolio?

TANISHA

I sure did, give me one sec.

Tanisha goes into her purse and pulls out some folded papers. Both interviewers are unimpressed as Interviewer One takes the papers Tanisha gives them and looks them over.

INTERVIEWER ONE

Interesting. Most modeling resumes don't list Walmart as a previous job.

TANISHA

Yeah... I kind of didn't really know what you wanted so I listed what I've done in the past, you know.

INTERVIEWER TWO

Were you a model for their clothing line?

TANISHA

Um, actually, I stock the shelves mostly, but I do show people around in clothing.

Both interviewers frown at her response as Interviewer One looks at the rest of the papers.

INTERVIEWER ONE

What is this Grind Squad?

TANISHA

Oh, they're local rappers from down here. I made the cover with them on T.O. Magazine, and I---

INTERVIEWER TWO

Pardon me, did you say T.O. Magazine? What is that?

TANISHA

It's, um, well it stands for Toronto's Own. It's a hip hop magazine that features rappers from Toronto, it's very popular, I heard that copy sold almost ten thou---

INTERVIEWER TWO

Okay, that's quite alright. So these hip hop pictures that you gave me, is that all you have?

Tanisha nods confusingly as the interviewers look at each other.

TANISHA

Is something wrong?

INTERVIEWER ONE

My dear, a portfolio normally contains a set of professional pictures taken in a studio specifically for you. You're just in the background of these pictures.

Tanisha nods her head as she becomes embarrassed. Interviewer One hands the papers back to Tanisha and begins writing on a form in front of her.

INTERVIEWER ONE (CONT'D)

One last question. What do you feel is your best feature?

Tanisha is hesitant as both interviewers await a response.

TANISHA

I'm not sure really, but I've been told my feet are my best feature.

INTERVIEWER TWO

Your feet?

TANISHA

Yeah, I mean I could show you and let you---

INTERVIEWER TWO

That will be quite alright. Well, I think we're done here.

TANISHA

Look, I know this looks bad, but I've never really done this professional walkway stuff. I really just want a chance, and I'll show you I can do a good job.

INTERVIEWER ONE

Look, you have a cute look, but what we're looking for is someone with a little more experience than you have. Get some professional shots for your portfolio and in a year or two, who knows.

Tanisha nods her head in agreement, but is clearly upset with their decision as she fights back her tears.

TANISHA

Yeah... Um... Thanks for your time. Excuse me.

Tanisha gets up quickly and makes her way to a secluded corner of the room. She quickly takes a tissue out of her purse and wipes the streaming tears from her face.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

My entire life was decided, in under two minutes. I never worked so hard on something, and to be shot down like that, it hurt.

Tanisha continues to keep drying her eyes, when Patrice makes her way over.

PATRICE

Hey girl! So how did you do?

TANISHA

I... I fucked it up!

PATRICE

What? I thought you'd be a shoe in!

TANISHA

Yeah, well tell that to Mr. and Mrs. asshole over there. They didn't even give me a chance to prove myself.

Patrice hugs her friend as tears fill Tanisha's face once more.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Come on, let blow this joint.

Tanisha is about to walk off when Patrice stops her.

PATRICE

Actually Nesh, they wanted me to stick around and take some shots.

Tanisha is stunned as Patrice awaits a response.

TANISHA

They chose you? You didn't have any pics other than the ones we took with your camera!

PATRICE

I know it's a trip right. The lady told me I had great cheek bones or something. They want to take some professional shots of me tonight!

Tanisha is astonished as Patrice quickly approaches her.

PATRICE (CONT'D)

Look, this modeling thing was you, so if you want to go, we can jet.

TANISHA

No, I mean, that's great that you get the opportunity. Seems like you had the better judges. Wish I would have gotten them instead of the fucking assholes I got!

Tanisha's comments are loud as people are starting to look at her. Patrice quickly moves in to calm her down.

PATRICE

Hey, take it easy okay. Look, let's just go, you seem a bit wound up right now.

TANISHA

Trice, go take your pictures. At least one of us should come away with something.

PATRICE

Tanisha, it's not that serious okay.

TANISHA

I want you to take the pictures. Who knows this could be a big break.

PATRICE

Are you sure you're okay with this?

TANISHA

I'm fine, I'll just wander around keeping myself busy until you're done.

PATRICE

Okay, I'll try to finish as fast as I can. Thanks Nisha.

Patrice hugs Tanisha, and then swiftly makes her way back over to the party. Tanisha grabs herself a drink from a passing waiter and drinks it all in one shot. She notices a balcony entrance on the far side of the room.

She makes her way through the crowd grabbing herself another drink as she makes her way out to the balcony.

EXT. HIGH PRICE CONDOMINIUM (NIGHT) - FLASHBACK, 2004,
MOMENTS LATER

Tanisha leans on the railing as she admires the city from afar. A few tears still stream from her eyes as she takes a sip of her drink.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

At the time, all I could think about was how fucked up my life must be when my friend, who doesn't even like modeling, gets a job doing the one thing I like to do. I was happy for her and pissed at her at the same time. I quickly got over it however when he entered my life.

MARCUS

(O.S.)

It's a lovely view isn't it?

Tanisha turns around and notices MARCUS, 28, black, clean shaven, faded hair cut, walking towards her in a all black tuxedo, and a drink in his hand.

TANISHA

What was that?

MARCUS

I was just saying it's a lovely view isn't it?

TANISHA

Yeah. It's nice. Look, don't want to be rude or anything, but I really was out here for some alone time, so if you don't mind.

MARCUS

Actually I kind of do mind. I mean the party is on the inside of the house, and I was just wondering why you were on the outside of the house.

TANISHA

What are you deaf? I said I wanted some alone time. Is that too much to ask?

MARCUS

No, but since it is my condo, I feel I have the right to be here just as much as you.

Tanisha in embarrassed as she looks at Marcus.

TANISHA

Oh my god! I'm so sorry! I didn't mean to tell you where you can go on your property, I'm just... Oh god this is embarrassing!

MARCUS

Nothing to apologize for. So, I take it things didn't go well today?

TANISHA

Why would you say that?

MARCUS

The fact that your makeup seems to be running as if you've been crying.

Tanisha quickly goes into her purse and pulls out a mirror.

TANISHA

Wow, I look a hot mess right about now.

MARCUS

No. You just seem like you're upset that's all.

Tanisha fixes up her face as best she can while Marcus admires her.

TANISHA

How do I look now?

MARCUS

Much better.

TANISHA

Thanks.

Tanisha puts away her mirror as Marcus walks over to the railing next to her.

MARCUS

So, judges went a little rough on you?

TANISHA

Ha, I wish it was that good. I made a total ass out of myself.

MARCUS

Don't take it personal. These are a bunch of rich guppies just flexing their muscle, that's all.

TANISHA

Perhaps. I'm just curious, if you think their guppies, why have this at your home?

Marcus smiles as Tanisha takes a sip of her drink.

MARCUS

A favor for a client of mines. He's been trying to get a party at my house for a while now.

(MORE)

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Plus, it gives me a chance to meet lovely ladies like yourself.

TANISHA

Is that a fact?

Marcus nods as he offers Tanisha a seat at a nearby table. Tanisha takes a seat, as Marcus sits across from her.

MARCUS

By the way, I'm Marcus. And you are?

TANISHA

Not interested.

MARCUS

Nice to meet you Not Interested. Now is that like the Toronto Interests or the Vancouver clan.

Tanisha smiles at Marcus as she finishes off her glass.

TANISHA

Cute. I got to give you that?

MARCUS

I try to be. So, I know you're not interested, and you had a bad interview tonight. I also know that you want me to take you to dinner tomorrow. So is eight o'clock good for you?

TANISHA

Hold on there. I said you were cute, let's leave it at that. Besides, there must be like eighty girls in there looking for a well off guy like yourself, so take your chances with them.

MARCUS

So what you're saying is money doesn't impress you?

TANISHA

Not in the least.

MARCUS

Well then, you just shot up a few points in my book. Now, I have to take you out.

A smirk enters Tanisha's face as she checks Marcus out.

TANISHA

I'm flattered and all, but guys like you don't go to dinner with girls like me unless they're looking for a fuck.

MARCUS

Such language from someone so beautiful.

TANISHA

Do you get laid with these corny lines?

MARCUS

Sometimes. Women think I'm charming.

TANISHA

Yeah, well girls like me don't fall for bullshit lines.

MARCUS

You keep saying girls like you. What's so special about girls like you?

TANISHA

I'm from Moss Park.

MARCUS

The Moss Park?

TANISHA

The one in the same.

Marcus gets up from his chair and begins to walk away. After a few moments he quickly turns around and takes a seat back in his chair.

MARCUS

Wait a minute, I'm from Regent, so I guess I can still take you out.

TANISHA

Get out of here! You're not from the Regent.

MARCUS

Why do you think that?

TANISHA

I mean most guys from Regent don't have expensive ass condos or imported wines and shit. The only guys that I know from Regent that has close to this are street guys, and no disrespect, you don't look like a hustler.

Marcus laughs as he waves to a server that's inside the condo. The waiter comes out with a tray of champagne filled glasses.

MARCUS

Just leave the tray thank you.

The server leaves the tray as Marcus and Tanisha both take glasses.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

You're right; most guys get caught up in that street life. I wanted better for me, and my folks. After I graduated high school, I took every dollar I ever saved and went over to the States. I studied in New York, and by the time I was done there, I jumped into my career path, and never looked back.

TANISHA

And what career might that be?

MARCUS

Oh no. I don't divulge any more information until I get a name.

Tanisha shakes her head no as she takes a sip of her champagne.

TANISHA

Why are you trying so hard? Is this one of those let me try the chick that just had her dreams smashed type of ploy? Figured you'd impress me and get a piece of ass just because.

MARCUS

I see you never drop that guard of yours.

TANISHA

Many men have died trying to get past it.

MARCUS

Well, I normally get what I want, and right now what I want is you to have dinner with me.

TANISHA

Not going to happen.

Before Marcus can respond, Patrice makes her way out to the balcony interrupting the conversation.

PATRICE

Hey girl. I was looking everywhere for you. What are you doing out here?

TANISHA

Nothing. I just needed some air that's all. Patrice, let me introduce you to Marcus, the owner of this establishment.

PATRICE

Oh shit, this is your condo?

MARCUS

Yes, it is, and what a pleasure it is to meet you.

PATRICE

Nice to meet you too. Well, it seems like you two were into something here, so I'll be---

TANISHA

No, I'm ready to go. Marcus was just keeping me company while you did your thing.

PATRICE

Alright, well I'm done.

Tanisha gets up from her chair and begins walking off when Marcus calls her back.

MARCUS

Hey, not interested, can I at least get a name for the face. Just give me that.

Tanisha smiles as she thinks for a moment.

TANISHA

Tanisha.

MARCUS

Nice to have met you Tanisha.

Tanisha and Patrice walk back into the condo as Marcus admires Tanisha from behind.

INT. WALMART (DAY) - FLASHBACK, 2004, NEXT DAY

Tanisha is working in the linen isle stocking items from a box to the shelves. She stops for a few moments to check what she's done so far.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

I thought that would have been the last time I saw him. But the very next day, he showed up to Wally World while I was working.

Tanisha goes back to stocking the shelves when she's startled by Marcus, who walks down her isle carrying a bag.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Hey. What are you doing here?

MARCUS

Looking for you.

TANISHA

What, are you stalking me? How did you know where I was?

MARCUS

I'm not stalking. I'm just here to extend my dinner date offer once again. As far as how I found you, let's just say not many aspiring models put Walmart on their resume.

TANISHA

So I heard. Look, you showing up here... I'm starting to think that's it's getting into restraining order time.

Marcus smiles as he pulls a red rose out of the bag he was holding. Tanisha is shocked as he hands the rose to her.

MARCUS

All I'm asking is one dinner. If you don't like me after that, I'll never bother you again.

Tanisha thinks for a moment as she smells the rose he has just given her.

TANISHA

Okay. Fine. You win. I will meet you at your place tonight.

MARCUS

Why bother? I'll pick you up from your place.

TANISHA

Oh no. You smell like big money, and coming to my block smelling like that can get you in a lot of trouble, eh.

MARCUS

You forget, I'm from Regent.

TANISHA

It will be easier this way trust me. How's nine o'clock sound?

MARCUS

Nine is good for me.

TANISHA

Okay, I'll see you then.

Marcus is about to walk off when he suddenly turns back around.

MARCUS

Now, don't stand me up. If you do, I'll be at Club Level tomorrow night.

TANISHA

And I'll have our bouncer take you out the club using your head to open the door.

Marcus smiles as he finally makes his way out. Tanisha sighs as she looks at the rose once more.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

So, I caved in and gave him his first date. I did a lot of caving into him throughout the years. It's just something he had over me.

INT. FLEUR DE LYS RESTAURANT (NIGHT) - FLASHBACK, 2004, LATER THAT NIGHT

Tanisha and Marcus are being seated by the hostess of the upscale French Restaurant. Tanisha looks a little out of place as the hostess gives her a menu.

TANISHA

Damn, what kind of place you have me in here?

MARCUS

It's a French Restaurant. You know, high class.

TANISHA

French? Ew, I hate frogs!

MARCUS

They sell more than frogs here.

TANISHA

Not talking about the animal, I'm talking about the French! They had this girl who I could not stand in high school that was a frog! Fuckin' asshole!

MARCUS

So you hate an entire nation based off of one girl?

TANISHA

She was really a bitch, trust me!

Marcus laughs as their waiter walks up with a couple of wine glasses in his hand.

WAITER

Hello, my name is Jaques, and I'll be your waiter tonight. Can I start you off with an appetizer or drink?

MARCUS

Yeah, give me a bottle of Monte Bello, eighty seven please.

WAITER

Very good. Are you ready to order
the main course?

Marcus looks at Tanisha who is struggling reading the menu.

MARCUS

Give us a few moments, please.

The waiter nods as he walks off to fill their drink order.
Marcus smiles as he's amused with Tanisha's struggles.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Need some help there?

TANISHA

What language is this in?

MARCUS

I assume it would be in French
since it's a French Restaurant.

TANISHA

Look, this is a little out of my
league here. How about you order
for the both of us.

MARCUS

If you wish.

Tanisha puts down her menu and looks around as Marcus admires
her.

TANISHA

You must be doing real well. To
take me out to a place like this.

MARCUS

I do okay.

TANISHA

Okay? You don't just get into a
restaurant filled with guppies and
do okay. You must be loaded.

MARCUS

Are you intimidated by my money
yet?

TANISHA

I don't know. How much is that
bottle of wine you ordered?

MARCUS

About five thousand. It's a cheaper than I normally get, but we just met.

Tanisha is stunned as the waiter returns with the wine bottle. He shows it to Marcus, and then begins pouring it into their wine glasses. Marcus then places an order for their meals.

The waiter walks off as Tanisha continues to stare at her wine glass.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

You going to drink it, or just stare at it all night?

TANISHA

I don't know. This is a lot of cash you're spending on me. It's almost like you expect something in return.

MARCUS

I don't expect anything. Like I told you, I just wanted the one date. After that, if you choose, I won't bother you again.

Tanisha nods her head as she finally takes a sip of the wine. Her face frowns up as places the glass back on the table.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

I take it you didn't like it.

TANISHA

This is horrible!

MARCUS

I guess it's an acquired taste. Should I get you something else to drink?

TANISHA

No, no, I'm good. I'm alright.

Tanisha continues to look around at the restaurant as Marcus notices she looks a little uncomfortable.

MARCUS

You don't have to be tight you know.

TANISHA

Excuse me?

MARCUS

You're looking around like you're out of place or something. Loosen up a bit. You're no better or worse than these people here.

Tanisha nods her head in agreement as she decides to take another sip of her wine.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

I thought you didn't like the wine?

Tanisha frowns as she drinks down the entire glass.

TANISHA

Hon, one thing you'll learn with me is that I never let good money go to waste.

Marcus nods with approval as a smile enters his face.

About an hour has passed as Tanisha and Marcus are both laughing after finishing their dinner. Tanisha is a lot more loose at this point as the waiter comes back to check on them.

WAITER

Is everything okay here?

MARCUS

Yes, we're fine. I think we're about done here, so I'll take the check.

The waiter nods and walks off as Tanisha decides to question Marcus.

TANISHA

Okay, I have a question.

MARCUS

Shoot.

TANISHA

Why me? I know I asked you that before, but now, I just really need to know.

MARCUS

I told you before.

TANISHA

Yeah, I know you did, but since this is the end of the date, before I decide on seeing you again, I just really wanted to know, you know.

MARCUS

Who says I want to see you again?

Tanisha is at a loss for words when Marcus suddenly breaks out in laughter.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

I had you going for a second.

TANISHA

Shut up! That's not funny!

Tanisha finally manages a smile herself as Marcus moves in for a kiss. Tanisha is stunned at first, but goes along with the kiss.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

I know it sounds corny, but that kiss was when I fell for him. I mean, at the time, it was like a prince rescuing the princess. Even though I had fallen for him, I wasn't in love with him. It wasn't until my mother made a life changing announcement that he stepped up and earned my love.

INT. MOSS APARTMENTS (DAY) - FLASHBACK, 2005

Tamera is sitting on her couch nervously, when the phone suddenly rings. She quickly runs over to the phone and answers.

TAMERA

Hello... Yes, it's me... Uh huh...
Oh my god... Is there anything I---
Yes... I... I understand. How long?
Six months? Oh my god... No, I'm
okay... No, thank you.

Tamera is distraught as she catches herself from falling over. She's breathing heavily as she makes her way back to the couch. Tears begin to stream down her face after taking in the news.

INT. MOSS APARTMENTS (DAY) - FLASHBACK, 2005, HALL WAY

Tanisha and Marcus walk up to the outside door and stop before they go in. They are holding several bags as Tanisha turns to Marcus.

TANISHA

Look, I don't want to tell her anything right now, okay?

MARCUS

What's the big deal? People have babies all the time.

TANISHA

Yeah, I know that, but my mom is like old school. She thinks people should have babies after their married.

MARCUS

Well, when do you want to tell her that you're pregnant?

Tanisha is silent as she thinks for a moment.

TANISHA

Soon, okay.

MARCUS

Well, it better be sooner rather than later cause I'm not letting my kid get raised in a neighborhood like this.

TANISHA

Look, we'll talk about that later, right now, happy faces, please?

Marcus nods as he begins smiling. Tanisha unlocks the door as the two enter the apartment.

INT. MOSS APARTMENTS (DAY) - APARTMENT, FLASHBACK, 2005, MOMENTS LATER

Tamera quickly wipes the tears from her eyes before Tanisha and Marcus notice. Tanisha goes into her bag and pulls out a couple of videos.

TANISHA

Hey mom. Look, don't blame me for the selection here.

(MORE)

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Marcus was the one who picked
Something About Mary, but I know
you like Mel Gibson, so I picked up
Lethal Weapon 4. Lucky too because
it was like the last copy in the
store!

Tamera forces a smile on her face as Tanisha immediately
senses something wrong.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Mom, you okay?

Tamera turns her attention to Marcus.

TAMERA

Marcus, could you give us a few
moments alone.

MARCUS

Yeah, um, sure. Tell you what, how
about I grab us a pizza?

Tanisha nods as Marcus makes his way out of the apartment.
After he's gone, Tanisha takes a seat next to her mother with
a look of concern in her eyes.

TAMERA

I got some test results back, and,
I'm just going to be straight with
you, they're not good.

TANISHA

Test results? What test results?
What are you talking about?

Tamera struggles with her words as Tanisha becomes anxious.

TAMERA

Look, I wasn't feeling too well,
and I didn't want you to worry
about me. I went to the doctor, and
they ran a series of tests on me. I
never thought, I mean, this is, I
don't even know how to say it---

TANISHA

Mom, please, just say it.

TAMERA

I... I have cancer.

Tanisha is speechless as she takes in with her mother has
said.

TANISHA
I... Oh my god mom, I'm so sorry.

TAMERA
Why, it's not your fault.

TANISHA
Mom, I'm just... I... Oh shit.

Tanisha is at a loss for words as Tamera hugs her daughter. Tanisha has tears streaming from her eyes as the two embrace. After a few moments, they let go and Tanisha begins drying her eyes.

TANISHA (CONT'D)
Okay, we can get through this, I mean, once the treatment begins, I can work my schedule around it, and we can---

TAMERA
There isn't going to be any treatment.

TANISHA
What do mean there isn't going to be any treatment?

Tamera remains silent as Tanisha is devastated as she puts it all together.

TANISHA (CONT'D)
No momma, please, there has to be something... Don't tell me that!

TAMERA
The doctor said there is nothing he can do. We caught it too late.

TANISHA
That's bullshit! Look, we're going to find another doctor, a better doctor, and we're going to get a second opinion! We're going to get you better mom---

TAMERA
Tanisha, let it go baby. Just let it go.

Tanisha begins crying as her mother consoles her as best she can.

TANISHA

(Crying)

You can't die momma! You can't!

TAMERA

Nisha, it's a part of life. I know
it's hard, but---

TANISHA

(Crying)

No, you don't understand! I'm...
I'm pregnant.

Tamera is stunned as Tanisha wipes the tears from her eyes.

TAMERA

You're pregnant? How far along are
you?

TANISHA

I'm... I'm a couple of months.

TAMERA

Why didn't you tell me?

TANISHA

Mom, look it's not important.
How... How long did they give you?

Tamera's silence concerns Tanisha who begins to tear up
again.

TAMERA

I'm going to be here to see my
grandchild, don't you worry.

Tamera and Tanisha hug again as a look of uncertainty fills
Tamera's face.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

My mom didn't know it, but I
checked with the doctors and found
out the real time she was given to
live. She wasn't supposed to be
around to see Tonya born. But being
the strong woman that she was, my
mother proved the doctors wrong and
actually saw her granddaughter
born.

INT. HOSPITAL (NIGHT) - FLASHBACK, 2005, SEVEN MONTHS LATER

Tamera is lying in a hospital bed seemingly in pain as she's hooked to a heart monitoring machine. The door slowly opens as a Nurse is pushing Tanisha in a wheelchair into the room. Tanisha is holding her new born daughter TONYA in her arms.

Tamera notices them and does her best to sit up in the bed. After a moment, the nurse rushes over to assist her sitting up.

NURSE

I'll be right outside if either of you need me.

The nurse makes her way out the room as there is an uneasy silence in the room.

TAMERA

So this is the beautiful baby I've been hearing so much about?

TANISHA

Yeah. Tonya Raquel. She looks like her Grandma.

Tamera smiles as she looks at the baby. Tanisha leans over and gently hands the baby to her mother. Tamera adores the baby as she holds her in her arms.

TAMERA

She's gorgeous.

TANISHA

I... Mom, I just don't know how I'm going to do this without you.

TAMERA

You'll be fine. Sometimes, I...I really think you were stronger than me. When your father was doing, well you know, you were the one that got him the help he needed.

TANISHA

I hardly called spending time in jail was getting the help he needed.

TAMERA

He did Nish. I mean you weren't there when he got out. He was a changed man.

TANISHA

Changed my ass. He's right back in there, so how changed could he have been?

Tamera's mood changes as she slowly hands the baby back to Tanisha.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Come on mom; don't be like this, not over him.

Tamera begins to tear up as she grabs a tissue nearby to wipe her eyes.

TAMERA

I knew he was trying to make a quick score, but nobody would hire him. He promised me we'd finally get out of The Moss, and felt that was his only way to get what we needed to get out.

Tanisha ignores her mother as she admires her daughter.

TAMERA (CONT'D)

I want you to promise me something.

TANISHA

Mom, don't.

TAMERA

I want you to promise to go see your father, just once.

TANISHA

Damn it, I knew you were going to go there! After all the shit he's put us through, you're still catering to him!

TAMERA

Forgiveness is a part of life Tanisha.

TANISHA

Not this life!

Tamera becomes emotional once more as tears begins streaming down her face. Tanisha notices her mother's tears and tries to calm her down.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Hey, mom, don't okay? Don't do that.

TAMERA

Remember when you asked me why I kept going back to your father even though he beat on me, and eventually you?

TANISHA

Mom, look, we don't have to talk about this.

TAMERA

No, you asked me, and now I'm going to answer you. I kept going back because despite all the bull shit, the drama, and whatever, I loved him. I always have and I always will.

Tanisha shakes her head in disgust as her mother becomes a little sterner with her.

TAMERA (CONT'D)

Nisha, I don't have long to go, so please, promise me that you will go see him. Just one visit is all I ask.

Tanisha remains silent for a moment as Tamera awaits an answer.

TAMERA (CONT'D)

Tanisha, please.

Tanisha is silent for a moment before finally agreeing with Tamera.

TANISHA

Alright! Fine, I'll do it, but after that, he can burn in hell for all I care!

Tamera nods her head in understanding as the nurse walks back into the room.

NURSE

Did you two need a little more time?

TANISHA

No, I'm ready to go back to my room
and rest a bit.

The Nurse nods as she pulls Tanisha in her wheel chair
towards the door.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

I hated my mother for making me
promise to see my father behind
bars, but the hate was short lived
cause three weeks later, she died.

Tanisha takes one last look at her mother before the door
closes.

INT. MOSS APARTMENTS (NIGHT) - PRESENT TIME

Tanisha is still sitting on the stoop trying to get the blood
on her leg from flowing. She's finally able to control the
bleeding when the glimmer from her wedding ring catches her
attention.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

And then there was this. After mom
died, I was just lost. A few months
later, he proposed to me, and we
got married. At the time, he really
pulled me out of a bind.
Eventually, his mask came off, and
his true self was revealed.

Tanisha quickly takes off the ring and tosses it as far as
she can. She gets up and walks over to the ledge of the
building once again, and takes a long look as her hair flows
slightly with the wind.

INT. MARCUS CONDO (EVENING) - FLASHBACK, 2006

Marcus is talking on the phone and working on his computer
when Tanisha comes walking into the door seductively.

TANISHA

Hey hon. Patrice is watching Tonya
for the night, so I was thinking,
maybe me and you can have a little
us time.

Marcus turns away as he continues to talk on the phone. Tanisha continues to stalk him as she quickly straddles herself on top of Marcus and his chair.

Marcus tries to ignore Tanisha, but is unable to as she begins unfastening his pants.

MARCUS
(To the phone)
Yeah, hold on for a second.

Marcus put the phone on mute as he turns his attention to Tanisha.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
(To Tanisha)
What the fuck is the matter with you? Can't you see I'm on the phone!

TANISHA
You're always on the phone.

MARCUS
I'm in the middle of an important deal!

TANISHA
You're always in the middle of an important deal.

Marcus sighs as he takes the phone of mute and begins his discussion again. Tanisha finally unfastens his pants and begins seducing Marcus.

Marcus becomes enraged as he quickly pushes Tanisha off of him sending her tumbling to the floor. Tanisha is shocked as a scowl enters Marcus' face.

TANISHA (CONT'D)
(V.O.)
That look. That look right there. That look is implanted in my brain. I should have known then that there was a problem, and I should have left then. Unfortunately, I didn't learn from my mother's mistakes.

Marcus turns his attention back to his laptop as he wraps up the call he's on. After several seconds, he hangs up the phone and begins working on his laptop.

After a few moments, he looks back towards Tanisha who is still on the ground staring at him.

MARCUS

What?

TANISHA

Are you fuckin' serious?

MARCUS

What are you bitching about now?

TANISHA

I mean, after everything I went through with my father, you treat me like this?

MARCUS

I told you I was busy, and you're still pulling this shit? What else would you have me do?

TANISHA

I mean, did you have to be so violent? There are ways that you could have communicated that to me without tossing me half way across the room, eh!

MARCUS

I fuckin' told you I was busy! I'm on a fuckin' call, how many ways do I need to say it!

Tanisha jumps up and gets into Marcus' face.

TANISHA

Well, excuse me trying to get some affection from my husband! I mean, married people do fuck on occasion!

MARCUS

Tanisha, I'm really not for this today. I have several clients I'm working for right now, and unless I want to lose them, I'm going to have to pull an all nighter. I'm sorry if your feelings are hurt, but excuse me if I don't give a damn at this point.

Tanisha once again is stunned as she walks away with a dirty look in her eyes.

TANISHA

(Under her breath)
Fucking asshole.

Marcus stops on his laptop and jumps up from his chair. He grabs Tanisha forcefully by her arm and pulls her back.

TANISHA (CONT'D)
(V.O.)
Strike one.

Tanisha jerks her arm back as she meets Marcus face to face.

MARCUS
What did you just say?

Tanisha responds by pushing Marcus back.

TANISHA
I called you a fucking asshole! If that's how you want to act, fine, but---

Tanisha is silenced as Marcus SLAPS her in the face causing her to back down. He quickly makes his way back into her face.

MARCUS
I'm over here bustin' my ass trying to make money so you can buy Coach Purses, Chanel, Dolce and Gabbana, and all the other shit you waste money on, and you have the nerve to call me a fucking asshole!

Tanisha is silent as she tries to contain her emotions.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
Get this through your head, I have to work! Not that bull shit Walmart thing that you do, but actual work! So when I'm conducting business on the phone, stay the fuck away from me! Do you get me?

Tears stream down Tanisha's face as Marcus eases back a bit. He calms himself down as he approaches Tanisha.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
Shit, Nish, I'm sorry. I'm... Look, I know this looks bad, but I've lost a few big clients lately, and I've been wound too tight, and, god Tanisha I'm sorry!

He tries to help Tanisha up, but Tanisha forcefully pushes him away.

TANISHA
Get the fuck away from me!

Tanisha gets up from the ground and runs over to the bathroom. Marcus sighs as Tanisha locks the door from the inside.

Inside the bathroom Tanisha has tears streaming on her face as she looks at the bruise on her eye.

TANISHA (CONT'D)
(V.O.)
Strike two.

Tanisha wipes away her tears as Marcus begins knocking on the door.

MARCUS
(O.S.)
Tanisha, please, let's talk about this. Tanisha, please, I'm sorry, it was a mistake.

Marcus' pleas fall on deaf ears as Tanisha takes a seat on the edge of the bath tub. After a few moments, Marcus is able to unlock the door as he silently walks into the bathroom. He notices the bruise on her eye as he slowly approaches her.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
Tanisha? Look, I'm so sorry about this. Please forgive me.

TANISHA
You hit me. With all I've been through, you actually fucking hit me.

MARCUS
I'm sorry.

Tanisha gets up and is about to walk off when Marcus stops her once more.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
Tanisha, please, I'm sorry.

Tanisha doesn't respond to him initially, but after a few moments, she looks into his eyes, and calms down a bit.

TANISHA
I'm... Marcus, I can't have this type of shit going on. You have to understand this.

MARCUS

I promise, on everything, I will not lay a figure on you like that again.

Tanisha is still a little stunned, but after a few moments, eventually nods in agreement. Marcus smiles as he pulls her in close and begins kissing her. After a few moments, the two begin making out on the bathroom floor.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

Strike number three. And that's all it takes. Just like that, I became a victim of the same bullshit my mother went through. It didn't hit me til much later that I had fallen into that situation, but a lot changed with a visitor the next day that had my mind on some other "in the past" shit.

INT. MARCUS CONDO (MORNING) - FLASHBACK, 2006, NEXT DAY

There is a knock on the door as Tanisha is vacuuming the front living room. She turns the vacuum off and heads over to the door. She quickly puts on sunglasses to hide her bruise as she answers the door.

Outside the door JIMMY, 41, is standing outside waiting for someone to answer. He's wearing a set of dirty clothes and sneakers. As soon as Tanisha opens the door, she's taken by surprise with the odor from his clothes.

She quickly covers her nose as she questions him.

TANISHA

Can I help you?

JIMMY

Yeah, I'm looking for Tashika.

TANISHA

You mean Tanisha?

JIMMY

Yeah, something like that. You know her?

TANISHA

I know her, but I don't think she knows you. So what do you want?

JIMMY

Nah, I don't know her, but I know her pops and shit, and he told me to give her a visit.

Tanisha mood changes as she becomes more serious than before.

TANISHA

What the fuck do you want?

JIMMY

No need to get serious, and all. Look, just tell Tashika, or whatever, that her dad is getting transferred at the end of the week, and he wanted to rap with her before he leaves.

Tanisha remains silent for a moment before addressing Jimmy.

TANISHA

So he's sending fools over to my house now with this shit? What the fuck is wrong with him?

JIMMY

Hey, don't shoot the messenger, know what I'm sayin'. Look, he said the shit was life and death, so do me a favor and pass the message. He was my bunkie on the inside, and I owed him a favor.

Tanisha remains silent as Jimmy slowly walks off. Tanisha closes the door and takes a seat in a nearby chair to collect her thoughts.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

I figured it was time to keep my promise to my mother and visit this dead beat in prison. It was the hardest thing I have ever had to do in my entire life.

INT. CORRECTIONAL FACILITY (AFTERNOON) - FLASHBACK, 2006,
HOURS LATER

The visiting room has several families visiting inmates as Tanisha is lead to an empty table. Tanisha looks out of place as she adjusts her sunglasses on her face. Thomas walks in wearing an orange jump suit and is surprised to see Tanisha.

Thomas takes a seat as a smile grows on his face.

THOMAS

Look at you. You're beautiful.

TANISHA

I'm not here for that. I just came here to tell you not to send one of your bunkies to my house again! You're lucky my husband wasn't home!

THOMAS

I heard you were married. How's that going?

Tanisha shakes her head as she prepares to get up and walk off.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Tanisha, please. Just a couple of minutes.

Tanisha sighs as she again takes a seat across from her father.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I'm sorry; it's just being locked up in here... I just missed you that's all.

Tanisha is unmoved as Thomas continues.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Look, the reason I asked Jimmy to get you is because I don't have long here, and I just wanted to talk to you before I go.

TANISHA

Yeah, your bunkie told me as much.

THOMAS

Yeah, but he didn't tell you why I was getting transferred did he?

TANISHA

Didn't care enough to ask.

Thomas snickers as he answers Tanisha.

THOMAS

Same old Nisha I see. Such a hardened heart. Reminds me of how I was at that age.

TANISHA

Look, is there a point here?

THOMAS

Yeah. Look, I wanted to see you one last time cause by the end of the month, I'll more than likely be dead, and I... I just had to see you before the end.

Tanisha is silent as a little concern finally enters her eyes.

TANISHA

What's wrong? You sick or something?

THOMAS

I wish it was that simple. Being in here, you see a lot of shit. A lot of shit you'd like to forget, but shit nevertheless. Anyway, one of my friends got shanked by some Aryan asshole up in here. I normally wouldn't have gotten involved, but he was my friend, and I couldn't let this shit go.

Thomas thinks for a moment before moving on.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

So, I ratted the guy out which is a prison no no. The guy's trial starts in a month, and since they fear that his Aryan buddies might retaliate, they're transferring me to another facility.

TANISHA

Okay, so you'll be fine then.

THOMAS

Not really. Look the Aryans are connected everywhere, and I more than likely would have gotten shanked myself at the next facility. It doesn't matter though cause they made me an offer.

TANISHA

An offer?

THOMAS

Yeah. If they couldn't get to me, they would have come after you and the baby. I didn't want you involved in my mess. So basically, it's either me or you that needs to go, and I chose me.

Tanisha is stunned as Thomas continues on with his story.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

When I get to the next joint, I will meet up with some of the local Aryans, and they will finish it from there.

TANISHA

You can't just sit there and take it!

THOMAS

I made my choice. There is no turning back now.

TANISHA

Dad, you can't let them kill you!

Thomas smiles as Tanisha looks on with confusion.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

What?

THOMAS

It's been a long time since you've called me dad.

TANISHA

Look, we've had our problems, and as much as I really hate you, I don't want to see you dead.

THOMAS

You know, you have a lot of time to think while you're in here. You know, about this and about that, and I eventually realize that I wasn't just hurting your mother all those years, I was hurting you as well, mentally, and eventually physically. I just wanted you to know that I'm sorry.

TANISHA

Dad, look, it's not that serious right now.

THOMAS

No, it is. I am truly sorry for any pain or distress I caused you. I haven't done anything right as a father in your life, and I can never give back what I've taken from you.

Tanisha finally manages a smile as she holds her father's hand.

TANISHA

All these years, and all the hate I had for you was time I wasted, and I'm sorry.

THOMAS

You have nothing to apologize for. I would have hated me too in your situation. Funny thing, all my life I never did the right thing, and when I finally do the right thing, it costs me my life.

TANISHA

I guess, life has a way of canceling out mistakes, sometimes at too great of cost.

THOMAS

You always was the bright one in the family.

Tanisha smiles as Thomas becomes serious for a moment.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

So, tell me about your husband. What's he like?

TANISHA

He's great. He works on the exchange; we've got our own condo---

THOMAS

And he beats on you.

Tanisha stops as her smile quickly fades away on her face.

TANISHA

What...What are you talking about?

THOMAS

Your mother used to wear sunglasses all the time to cover up the bull shit I did to her. I witnessed the look for years, so I'm a bit of an expert on the matter.

Tanisha shakes her head in denial.

TANISHA

I'm just... I mean, this isn't... He didn't beat me, okay.

THOMAS

Fine, he didn't beat you. You mind if I see your eyes then?

Tanisha doesn't respond as Thomas reaches over and slowly removes the glasses from Tanisha's face. He becomes a little emotional as he checks out her bruise.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry.

TANISHA

It's not your fault; it was an accident, that's all.

THOMAS

Is that what he told you?

TANISHA

Look, dad, it's not like what happened with you and mom. We got into it, and we both went a little far. I shouldn't have started the situation and---

THOMAS

Never blame abuse on yourself Tanisha! Never!

Tanisha is shocked by Thomas' strong words as she tries to calm him down.

TANISHA

Dad, get a grip. It wasn't what you think it was.

THOMAS

You honestly believe that? Tanisha, you have been going through this your entire life.

(MORE)

THOMAS (CONT'D)

You know the signs, you know the act, and worse, you know the type, the look, the whole attitude!

TANISHA

It was just one time; I mean it never happened before.

THOMAS

Once is too many Tanisha. It's too, too many.

Tanisha sighs as Thomas finally calms himself down.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Far be it for me to give you advice on marriage considering that I was such a shitty husband and father, but it's already too late for you. The only thing that matters now is your daughter.

TANISHA

Dad, look, I think you're overreacting cause he's---

THOMAS

Think back. Think back to when you were watching me beat on your mother as a child. How did it feel?

Tanisha is silent as she quickly thinks about Thomas' words. Eventually a few tears begin flowing from her eyes as Thomas backs down a bit.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

It doesn't feel good, does it?

TANISHA

Why? Why in the fuck did you beat on her like that?

THOMAS

I was stupid. I was drunk half the time, and I know that's not enough to excuse my actions, but that's all I have. I can never take back what I did, and I have to live with the fact that while my wife was dying, I was in this hell hole!

Thomas' emotions have finally gotten the best of him as a few tears begin falling from his eyes as well.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

Tanisha, don't put your daughter through the pain I put you through. You will never forgive yourself, trust me.

TANISHA

What can I do, I mean; he's the child's father.

THOMAS

Do what your mother should have did. Leave. Take her and leave.

Tanisha is about to question Thomas, but before she can, a guard comes over and taps him on the shoulder. Thomas nods at the guard as he turns his attention back to Tanisha.

THOMAS (CONT'D)

It's about that time I guess.

TANISHA

When are you leaving?

THOMAS

This Friday.

TANISHA

Okay, I'll come and see you before you go.

THOMAS

No. I don't want you to come here anymore.

TANISHA

What? Why?

THOMAS

I took a risk bringing you here today. I just don't want to give those Aryan monsters a chance to hurt me even more. I had to risk it, because I needed to reconcile with you before it's done. I begged your mother to convince you to come, but she said you were a tough nut to crack.

Tanisha laughs as she wipes away the few remaining tears on her face. Thomas eventually manages a smile as well.

TANISHA

So this is it?

THOMAS

Yeah. This is it. Say, what was that old western song we used to sing before all this bull started. You know the song, the hang me song.

TANISHA

Yeah, I remember.

THOMAS

Why don't you sing it to me, before I go.

Tanisha smiles as she looks around the room.

TANISHA

Dad. Are you crazy, there's people up in here!

THOMAS

Sing low baby. Sing low.

Tanisha smiles as she begins singing to her father.

TANISHA

(Singing)

They gonna hang me in the morning, before the day is done. They gonna hang me in the morning, never gonna see the sun...

Thomas smiles as he looks at his daughter one last time.

THOMAS

Don't say another word. Those are the last words I want to remember you by.

Tanisha nods as the guard comes over and taps Thomas on the shoulder once again. Thomas slowly gets up and begins making his way out of the visiting area. Tanisha has tears streaming down from her face as she watches her dad walk off.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

A few weeks later I received notice from the new facility that my father was found dead. He was stabbed seventeen times. I didn't know what to feel when I first heard about it, but eventually, it caught up to me. When I found out, I was out of it for about a week.

(MORE)

TANISHA (CONT'D)

You would think your husband would be your support, but unfortunately, that wasn't the case.

INT. MARCUS CONDO (EVENING) - FLASHBACK, 2006, MONTH LATER

Tanisha is lying down on her living room couch. She covered up with a blanket, and has a box of tissues on the coffee table next to her. There are several used tissues all on the table as well.

Marcus walks into the home and notices Tanisha lying on the couch and the big mess of tissues on the coffee table. He frowns as he makes his way over to her.

MARCUS

What the fuck Tanisha? Look at this mess!

TANISHA

Please Marcus, I'm not in the mood.

MARCUS

It's been over a week now! When are you going to move on?

TANISHA

When I get over it! Damn! Excuse me if my mourning is bothering you!

MARCUS

It's not bothering me, but I mean enough is enough! You didn't mourn this long for your mother!

TANISHA

That was different! I mean she had cancer, and I knew what was the end result! For him, I just thought maybe he'd find a way to make... You know what, just leave me alone!

Marcus shakes his head with disgust as he makes his way into the kitchen. After a few moments, he returns and confronts Tanisha once more.

MARCUS

No dinner again? Are you fucking kidding me? You've been home for the past week doing nothing but moping around! I'm at work all day, and the least you can do is have dinner ready for me!

TANISHA

Marcus, did it ever occur to you that maybe, just maybe, I need some time for me. Is it that hard for you to understand that?

MARCUS

For an asshole like that, yeah it is!

Tanisha becomes upset as she slowly gets up from the couch.

TANISHA

What did you say? You didn't even know him, so how can you judge him!

MARCUS

You know what, you're foolin' yourself here! You were the one cursing the day he was born, and then all of a sudden, it's "oh my dad, I miss my dad, and blah, blah, blah". I mean seriously Nish, come on.

TANISHA

He changed Marcus, he was a better man before he died.

MARCUS

And you know this how?

TANISHA

Because, I went to see him about a month ago!

MARCUS

You did what?

TANISHA

I saw him. He told me he was going to die, and right there, at that very moment, I looked into his eyes, and I didn't see the monster that was in him before. I saw a man looking for redemption, and I gave it to him.

MARCUS

So, pops beat the hell out of you and your mother, and you go and see him, without telling me I might add, and you two have a miraculous discussion that just changes your whole outlook on him and his life. Get the fuck out of here.

Marcus begins laughing as he makes his way upstairs to their bedroom. Tanisha is enraged by his comments and races after him as he reaches the top of the stairs.

TANISHA

You know, he was a better man when he died. He also told me to leave your dumb ass as well, so maybe I should take his advice since you don't seem to take me seriously!

MARCUS

Leave! Get the fuck out! What are you gonna do, survive on that change that Wal-Mart pays you? Oh, no I'm sorry; you're still trying to do your modeling thing. Let's see, an aging woman with stretch marks. Hmmm... I can't imagine why nobody hasn't called yet.

TANISHA

You just constantly go out of your way to dump on me, don't you? It's just a big laugh at my expense, eh?

MARCUS

I mean, let's be honest here, other than being the mother of my child, you're pretty useless! You don't cook half the time, you're house work skills are shitty at best, I mean, to be honest, I wish you hadn't quit the club, at least you'd be doing something productive for this family!

Tanisha is stunned as Marcus awaits a response for her. After a few moments Marcus shakes his head as he looks at his wife.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

See, you don't have an answer for any of that do you? And you said you're going to leave me? Good luck.

Marcus turns around and is about to walk off when Tanisha forcefully pulls him back.

TANISHA

Wait a fuckin' minute, we're not through talking here!

Marcus reacts by pushing Tanisha back, which cause her to FALL down the stairs. Marcus quickly rushes over to Tanisha's aide as she lies unconscious on the bottom of the stairwell.

MARCUS

Tanisha! Tanisha! Oh shit!

Marcus quickly pulls out his cell phone and dials nine one one as he cradles Tanisha's head in his arms.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

I don't remember much about the fall. I just remember when I woke up; I was in a hospital bed with a broken arm and a fractured rib.

INT. HOSPITAL (NOON) - FLASHBACK, 2006, FEW DAYS LATER

Tanisha is lying in the hospital bed laughing as she cradles her daughter in her good arm. She has a bandage over her head as Patrice is sitting across from her laughing as well.

TANISHA

Girl, you are something else!

PATRICE

I'm saying, dude was trippin' all night. It's crazy, eh.

Tanisha shakes her head in agreement, and Patrice changes the mood for a moment.

PATRICE (CONT'D)

Like, on a serious note, Tish, I really wish you'd come bunk with me for a while, you know. I mean, I'm happy you're ditchin' the asshole and all, but this shelter thing is a little extreme, eh?

TANISHA

I've grown up in them all my life. I have to do this Trice. I have to go at it alone.

(MORE)

TANISHA (CONT'D)

I can't keep leaning on people. I have to make it myself.

PATRICE

I get all that, but you could stay with us until you're able to do that.

TANISHA

Girl, I don't want to intrude with you or your mother. Besides, this will be motivation for me to keep things going, eh.

Patrice nods her head in agreement. Their moment is interrupted by Marcus, who walks in with a vase full of expensive flowers.

MARCUS

Hey, how are you feeling?

Patrice quickly gets up and meets Marcus face to face.

PATRICE

You got a lot of nerve to show your face here!

MARCUS

I'm here to see my wife, is that a problem for you?

PATRICE

Uh uh, you're here to see the damage you caused! I'm gonna tell you like this, you better watch your back cause my cousin gonna be after your ass and---

TANISHA

Patrice! Take Tonya out for a walk. Give me a moment.

PATRICE

I'm not going to sit here and let his ass sweet talk you into some---

TANISHA

Patrice, trust me.

Patrice gives Marcus an evil stare as she walks over to Tanisha. She grabs Tonya from her arms and walks out the room leaving Tanisha and Marcus alone. Marcus shakes his head as he takes a seat next to Tanisha.

MARCUS

You need to talk to your friend,
seriously.

Marcus places the vase of roses on a nearby table.

TANISHA

She's just looking after my best
interest.

MARCUS

She's being nosey. Especially since
this whole thing is a big---

TANISHA

I'm going to need you to listen for
a moment cause what I have to say
is very important.

Marcus sighs as he nods for her to continue.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

I'm leaving you. No time frame, no
let's talk about it, I'm leaving
you plain and simple. I'm taking
out daughter as well cause it's---

MARCUS

Taking my daughter, are you crazy?
What makes you think that I'm just
going to let you take her?

TANISHA

If you would let me finish. I was
going to say it's not right for a
daughter to be away from her
mother. I think it's only fair.
Besides if you---

MARCUS

Look, you want to start something,
over this bull shit, than be my
guest, but you're not taking my
daughter!

Tanisha remains silent until Marcus calms down.

TANISHA

If you want to start something with
custody battles, that's fine, but
as of right now, the police bought
your bull shit "she fell down the
stairs" excuse, and I validated
everything you said.

MARCUS

That's because it was an accident!

TANISHA

Look, call it what you want, but if I roll over on you now, you go to jail, and Tonya stays with me anyway! It's your choice, either way we're out!

Marcus tries to control his emotions as he clinches his fists. Eventually, he nods in agreement.

MARCUS

Fine. Let me tell you this, you can't make it without me. It's a cruel world, and people like you don't survive.

TANISHA

I've been through this before, trust me.

MARCUS

Ah yeah. Daddy dearest, the worlds greatest father suddenly.

TANISHA

He wasn't the greatest, but he did give me the advice to leave your ass before it got to this. I should have listened.

MARCUS

You know what, fuck him. He's dead now, so what good is it to listen to him now?

Tanisha becomes upset, but holds emotions back as she addresses Marcus.

TANISHA

You know, my father was a piece of shit, but the difference between you and him was he wasn't afraid to admit it! Now get the fuck out of my room before I change my mind and rat you out!

Marcus nods his head as he walks out of the room. He slams the door as he leaves, leaving Tanisha alone breathing a sigh of relief.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

I wish I could tell you that everything went happily ever after, but it didn't. About the only thing it did do was give me a new found respect for my mother and how hard she struggled on her own.

INT. SHELTER (EVENING) - FLASHBACK, 2006, DAYS LATER

Tanisha walks into the shelter holding her daughter and a baby bag when one of the workers leads her into a room filled with bunks. Some of the bunks are occupied as Tanisha and the worker makes their way to a couple of empty beds.

Tanisha looks at her bed, and places the belongings under the bottom bunk. She takes a seat on the bed as she checks out her surroundings. The room is filled with other women, some looking batter and bruised.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

The women here are mostly the brave ones, trying to break that cycle they've been in. I spent a lot of time in places like this, but this time it was me that was trying to break the cycle, not my mother.

Tanisha looks at the cast on her arm and sighs as she looks at her daughter.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

The plan was to chill out here for a spell until I got my finance together, but things don't always work out in your favor.

INT. WALMART (EVENING) - FLASHBACK, 2006

Tanisha is struggling stocking the shelves as she's working with one arm since her other arm is in cast. As she tries to place a few items on the highest shelf, they eventually collapse and fall back on her.

TANISHA

Shit!

Tanisha looks around at the mess in frustration as she begins picking up the items she dropped.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

Patrice helped as best as she could watching my daughter, but in the end, I couldn't do it alone. I only lasted about two months. He was right. I could not survive without him. So I did what most women do...

INT. MARCUS CONDO (EVENING) - FLASHBACK, 2007, TWO MONTHS LATER

Marcus opens the door and notices Tanisha holding their daughter. Tanisha's hair is a mess as she quietly looks at Marcus. Marcus, in turn, nods as he allows Tanisha to walk in. He grabs her bag of belongings and closes the door.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

It was the hardest thing I ever had to do in my life. We talked, and came up with a couple of ground rules. After that, things were good. Sure, we argued like most married people, but he never laid a finger on me again. That is, until...

INT. MARCUS CONDO (MORNING) - PRESENT, HOURS EARLIER

Tanisha is dressed in sweats and has her hair in a scarf as she vacuums the living room rug when suddenly the doorbell rings. She cuts off the vacuum cleaner and walks over to answer the door.

She opens the door and notices GILL, 48, white male standing outside her door. He's wearing a fashionable suit with expensive shoes and sunglasses. As soon as he notices Tanisha, he smiles.

GILL

Here she is! You have no idea what I went through to find you.

TANISHA

Yeah, right. Can I help you?

GILL

Tanisha, it is you isn't it?

TANISHA

Yeah? Do I know you?

GILL

Oh, I'm sorry. Gill Hammond with the Edward Nigma Modeling Agency, I'm sure you've heard of us.

Tanisha is stunned as she covers up her head.

TANISHA

Oh my god! This is so embarrassing, I look like... Oh shit can you give me a sec or---

Gill begins laughing as Tanisha looks at herself in a nearby mirror.

GILL

Relax. I'm not here for a surprise photo shoot. To be honest, I like catching models off guard, to see what they really look like without the glamour. So, you going to invite me in?

TANISHA

Oh, yeah, I'm sorry. Come on in!

Gill walks into the condo and is lead by Tanisha to a couch in the main living room. She takes a seat across from him, but quickly jumps back up.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

My manners here, uh, can I get you something to drink.

GILL

No, I'm good, and please, sit, relax, you don't have to be nervous around me.

Tanisha nods as she takes a seat once again.

GILL (CONT'D)

Let me get down to business here, I want you to head a new campaign for our thirty something female base. I think you'd be perfect.

TANISHA

Well, not for nothing, but last time I tried to get with you people, you practically laughed in my face. Why the sudden change of heart?

GILL

Two reasons. First, the old regime you met with was just that; old. They were out of touch at what the demographic needed. Secondly, I've kept tabs on you and some of your submissions, and I have to say, you've emerged.

TANISHA

You have?

Gill goes into his pocket and pulls out a few of Tanisha's previous photos and hands them to her. Tanisha is shocked as she looks at the pictures.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Wow. I sent a lot of these to different people. Where did you get all of these?

GILL

Like I said, we kept tabs on you. I thought we lost you after you quit Walmart a year back. We hired a private detective to track you down.

TANISHA

I'm still shocked with this whole thing. I mean, your guys really ripped me last time, so this is a surprise.

GILL

Look, it's out with the old, and in with the new, and the new wants you. So what do you say?

Tanisha smiles as she nods her head in agreement.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

All these years, all this time, I couldn't believe it! It was my big break. I couldn't wait for him to come home and celebrate with me!

INT. MARCUS CONDO (NIGHT) - HOURS LATER

Tanisha is setting the dinner table with candle lights and silverware awaiting her husband's arrival. She smiles as she's wearing her white dress with matching heels.

Tanisha runs off to the kitchen to check her meal when Marcus walks into the home. Tanisha walks in to greet him, but can quickly tell he's been drinking.

TANISHA

Seriously Marcus. I mean it's not even eight yet, and you're already hosed?

MARCUS

I just went out with a few co-workers. We signed a big deal today. I'm not hosed, just a little buzzed.

Marcus looks around at the table set up and then notices the outfit Tanisha is wearing.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

What's all this about?

TANISHA

Well it looks like we both have something to celebrate.

MARCUS

Celebrate? What are you celebrating, the ability to cook a decent meal.

TANISHA

I see you have jokes, eh. Come on, take a seat, let me get you started.

Marcus makes his way over the table and has a seat, as Tanisha brings over a plate of food for the both of them. She then walks over with a bottle of expensive wine. She's about to pop it open, when Marcus stops her.

MARCUS

Girl, what are you doing? That's like a three thousand bottle of wine there.

TANISHA

Are you kidding me? You spent more on a bottle on our first date, remember?

MARCUS

No I don't remember, but seriously, don't open that bottle.

Tanisha sighs as she places the bottle down on the table without opening it. Marcus begins eating his food as Tanisha tries to get his attention.

TANISHA
Um, excuse me, I had a
announcement, remember?

MARCUS
(While eating)
I'm listening.

TANISHA
Well can you raise your head five
minutes so I can tell you the news?

Marcus sighs as he puts down his fork, and gives Tanisha his full attention.

TANISHA (CONT'D)
That's better. Okay, you remember
how we first met at the Edward
Nigma modeling party right?

MARCUS
I guess.

TANISHA
Well, what... Wait, what do you
mean you guess?

MARCUS
I don't know. Could you just please
get on with it!

Tanisha shakes her head, but continues on anyway.

TANISHA
Anyway, you know I've been trying
to do this modeling thing, and I
had really given up as of late, but
one of the Edward Nigma recruiters
came here today, and they want to
sign me to a multiyear deal to kick
off their thirty plus campaign!

Marcus is unmoved as he goes back to eating his food.

TANISHA (CONT'D)
Okay, you have nothing to say?

MARCUS

So out of the blue, some cat comes up here and offers you a deal. Just like that?

TANISHA

Yeah!

MARCUS

Get the fuck out of here! I mean seriously, they can't find anyone better looking than you?

Tanisha's mood is dashed as she questions Marcus.

TANISHA

Excuse me?

MARCUS

Oh, don't worry about it, it didn't come out right, I'm sorry.

TANISHA

I'm going to need a little more than that!

MARCUS

It doesn't matter anyway. Just give old boy a call and tell him thanks, but no thanks.

TANISHA

Tell him no thanks? I'm going to do it, so what are you talking about?

Marcus finishes up his food and gets up with his plate and heads to the kitchen. An upset Tanisha gets up and follows him looking for answers.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Marcus. Marcus!

Marcus ignores her until she jerks him by the arm.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

You know, what happened to I'm gonna support your dream, and all that bull shit you were spittin' to me?

MARCUS

Look, if it kept you occupied, why not let you chase it.

(MORE)

MARCUS (CONT'D)

The thing is, I'm not going to have my wife half nude for the rest of the world to see. You're the mother of my child for god sakes.

Tanisha is about to respond when Tonya walks down from the upstairs bedroom.

TANISHA

Hey baby, you ready to get something to eat?

TONYA

Yes.

TANISHA

Okay, take a seat at the table and I'll fix you a plate.

TONYA

Okay. You look pretty mommy.

TANISHA

Thank you baby, at least somebody thinks so.

Marcus ignores Tanisha as he makes his way to the living room. Tanisha quickly fixes her daughter a plate and sets it on the table for her.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Eat you dinner baby, I need to go talk with your father real quick.

TONYA

Okay.

Tanisha rushes over to the living room where Marcus has taken a seat and begin watching television. Tanisha stands in the way of the television which upsets Marcus.

MARCUS

You want to move?

TANISHA

Not until we've finished with our discussion!

MARCUS

What's to discuss, I said no. Now if you'll please, I'm trying to watch the damn game!

Tanisha turns the television off which causes Marcus to meet her face to face.

TANISHA

Now, we are going to talk about this like a husband and wife! You are not a dictator, and your word isn't final for shit!

MARCUS

Look, I'm not going to let my wife parade around half naked for the world to see! I know how this shit works!

TANISHA

Fine, I'll tell him that I won't pose for anything revealing!

MARCUS

You're not hearing me! I don't want you doing the shit period!

TANISHA

Why not?

MARCUS

Because I said so, that's why not!

Both Marcus and Tanisha are heated as the discussion is getting to a dangerous level. Tanisha calms down as she notices Marcus' aggressive mood.

TANISHA

Okay. Okay, I can see you're not in the right frame of mind to talk about this; we'll talk about it when you sober up.

Tanisha is about to walk off when Marcus suddenly grabs her back by her arm. Tanisha quickly jerks her arm back and faces Marcus.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

Marcus, don't.

MARCUS

I'm getting real sick and tired of this back talk shit. Now you want to go back to work, that's fine, but no wife of mine is going to be showing her ass to the world! End of story!

TANISHA

Can you keep it down! Your daughter is in the dining room!

MARCUS

So now we're worried about what you daughter hears? You obviously aren't worried about what she sees.

TANISHA

What are you talking about?

MARCUS

What do you think is going to happen when she sees an ad with you? She's going to want to follow in your footsteps, and I'll be damned if a daughter of mine will be flaunting herself like a common whore!

Tanisha is taken aback with Marcus' words.

TANISHA

Is... Is that what you think of me?

MARCUS

Hey, if the shoe fits...

Tanisha is speechless as Marcus takes a seat again, and turns the television back on.

After a few moments, Tanisha becomes enraged, and suddenly goes over to the television and pushes the flat screen television off the stand causing it to crash onto the ground.

Marcus is fuming as he quickly jumps up and gets into Tanisha's face. The two once again have a standoff.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

What the fuck is the matter with you?

TANISHA

Let me think, the fact that you called me whore!

MARCUS

That's what you want to be isn't it?

Marcus pushes Tanisha back slightly as he keeps advancing closer.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Come on; show me what you're working with!

TANISHA

Stop it Marcus, you're not in your right mind!

MARCUS

Fuck that, you want to be a whore to the world, be a whore for me!

Marcus continues to bully Tanisha until he backs her up against the wall.

TANISHA

Marcus, I'm serious!

MARCUS

Oooh, I'm shaking in my boots here! It's funny; they say that whore type of behavior is passed down from generation to generation. I guess that says a lot about your mother!

Tanisha abruptly SLAPS Marcus in the face. Marcus turns back to her with a sly grin.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Oh, I forgot, you're daddy's little girl aren't you?

Tanisha, filled with rage, ATTACKS Marcus brutally as she punches him as best she can. Her attacks aren't making a big impact as Marcus laughs her attacks off.

Tanisha gets one solid PUNCH to Marcus' jaw which causes Marcus to retaliate with a PUNCH of his own to Tanisha's eye. The blow sends Tanisha falling to the ground. Marcus mounts Tanisha and begins a barrage of brutal punches.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Fucking cunt! Like beating of people just like your daddy? You ain't no better than him!

TANISHA

Fuck you!

MARCUS

Fuck me? Fuck me!

Marcus gets up and DRAGS Tanisha by her hair into the kitchen. As she's being dragged, she gets a glimpse of her daughter watching the commotion. She recognizes the look of fear in her eyes.

Marcus quickly locates a knife and mounts Tanisha with the knife in his hands.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

Let's see if they want you after this!

Tanisha is terrified as Marcus takes the knife and slashes her face. Blood is everywhere as Marcus finally releases Tanisha from his grasp.

MARCUS (CONT'D)

(Breathing Heavily)

Now, let's see if they still want to post your pretty little face in a magazine now! Next time you lay your hands on me, I will fucking kill you! You understand?

Tanisha is sobbing as she tries to regain her composure. Marcus shakes his head in disgust as he walks off leaving her alone on the kitchen floor.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

The ironic thing was, with the beating I took, the only thing I could think about was the look on Tonya's face. It was the exact same look I used to have on my face when... Oh my god, that look.

Tanisha is still crying as she struggles to make it to her feet.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

This was it, this was the last time! I could not let myself be pushed into this shit any longer!

A few hours have passed as Tanisha slowly walks down the stairs with a few of her belongings and Tonya. She notices Marcus asleep on the couch.

Tanisha quietly grabs the car keys off the coffee table, and begins to make her way out of the house when she notices Marcus' wallet on the dining room table. She grabs that as well as she finally makes it out the house.

INT. CAR (NIGHT) - MOMENTS LATER

Tanisha pulls out of the drive way and onto the main road. She's driving down the road when she looks into her rearview mirror. She notices the scar on her face, and a few moments later she notices Tonya in the back seat.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

There was something that still was bothering me. It was something he said, about me being like my father.

Tanisha thinks back to her encounters with Marcus. After a few moments, Tanisha snaps out of her daze.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

Just like that, it occurred to me, and I couldn't believe it myself... Each encounter between us started with me. Marcus was right. I... I was my father.

Tanisha begin crying again as she pulls on the side of the road.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

My whole life... Just like that changed. My father was sick, and he passed on his sickness to me. The cycle was beginning again... Tonya... I... I just couldn't let my daughter follow the same path as me. It has to stop. It has to end tonight.

Tanisha gathers herself once more as she begins driving down the road.

EXT. MOSS APARTMENTS (NIGHT)

Tanisha pulls up on a street corner where ALBIE, 29, and a couple of his crew members are hanging out. Albie is wearing a black hoodie with jeans, and is shocked as he watches Tanisha getting out of the car and approaching him.

ALBIE

Nisha? Girl I know that ain't you?

TANISHA

Yeah. It's me.

ALBIE

Shit girl, you used to be a piece of ass? What happened, eh?

TANISHA

Nothing. Just some bull shit.

ALBIE

Looks like a whole lot of bullshit, eh. So what brings you down this way? I heard you moved out to guppie land and shit!

TANISHA

I'm in the market for a shooter. I remember you was the guy to talk to on shit like that.

ALBIE

I see. Trying to right that shit on your face I assume?

Tanisha doesn't respond as Albie smiles.

ALBIE (CONT'D)

Alright, fair enough. How much you got?

TANISHA

Let me see it first.

ALBIE

Alright, they're in the back alley. Follow me.

TANISHA

Look, my daughter is in the car.

ALBIE

So? Bring her with ya.

Tanisha doesn't respond as Albie begins to laugh.

ALBIE (CONT'D)

I'm just fuckin' with you. Lighten up, eh! I'll be back.

Albie walks away as Tanisha rolls her eyes in disgust.

Albie returns moments later with a book sack. He opens the bag to let Tanisha get a look at the weapons.

She pulls out a Desert Eagle hand gun and checks it out. Albie smile as she takes the gun back from her.

TANISHA

What?

ALBIE

You don't know your shooters do ya?

TANISHA

A gun's a gun.

ALBIE

Baby girl, this is a Desert Eagle point five o. This shit is strong enough to pop a tank. I think this is a little too much for you.

TANISHA

Alright, than what would you suggest?

Albie goes into his bag and pulls out two hand guns.

ALBIE

Here, I have a Beretta and a Smith and Wesson. I think you can handle both of these.

Tanisha takes the Beretta first and checks it out first.

TANISHA

This is kind of small isn't it?

ALBIE

Yeah, but it's a good piece to start off with you know. Now if you need something reliable, I suggest you go with the Smith.

Tanisha hands the Beretta back to Albie and checks out the Smith and Wesson.

TANISHA

This thing only carries a few shots right?

ALBIE

Yeah, but a Beretta can jam. Revolvers don't. I wouldn't want ya to get jammed up, eh.

Tanisha nods as she points the gun, trying to get a feel for it.

TANISHA
 Alright, how much?

ALBIE
 Five large.

TANISHA
 Is that a good price?

Albie looks at a few of his crew members and laughs.

ALBIE
 That's a very special price, just
 for you.

Tanisha thinks for a moment as she goes into her purse and pulls out Marcus' wallet. She pulls out five hundred dollars and hands it to Albie.

ALBIE (CONT'D)
 Hey, be careful out there. Once you
 pull this shit out you better use
 it.

TANISHA
 No problems there. Is it loaded?

Albie nods as Tanisha puts the gun into her purse. She quickly walks off back to her car and pulls off.

EXT. PATRICE'S HOUSE (NIGHT) - HALF HOUR LATER

Tanisha is writing a letter in silence when her daughter questions her.

TONYA
 Mommy, are you okay?

TANISHA
 Mommy is fine sweetie.

TONYA
 Why did daddy hit you?

Tanisha chokes up as she finishes the letter she's writing. She places it into an envelope.

TANISHA
 Daddy was just upset. He didn't
 mean it. Look, baby, I want you to
 remember something. Your daddy,
 he's... He's a good man. He really
 loves you, just like me.

TONYA

Doesn't your face hurt?

Tanisha tries to smile as she looks at her daughter.

TANISHA

My face is fine. Now look, I have to take care of something tonight, so you gonna have to stay with Auntie Patrice tonight. Now you be good and listen to her, okay?

TONYA

Okay mommy.

Tanisha hugs Tonya and embraces her tightly. Tears began falling from Tanisha's eyes as she finally lets her go. Tonya opens the car door and is about to exit when she notices Tanisha isn't coming.

TONYA (CONT'D)

Mommy? Are you coming?

TANISHA

No, I'm not. Here, give this to auntie for me okay? Tell her I'm sorry.

Tanisha hands the envelope with the letter to Tonya who takes the letter and finally exits the car. Tanisha watches as Tonya rings the doorbell. Once the porch light comes on, Tanisha starts the car, and quickly pulls off.

Patrice answers the door and notices Tonya standing with her book sack and a letter in her hand.

PATRICE

Niecy? What are you doing here?
Where's your momma?

TONYA

She has to do something. She told me to give you this when I saw you.

Patrice takes the envelope from Tonya and opens it up. She takes a few moments and reads through the letter. She's stunned as she finishes reading the contents.

PATRICE

Oh my god.

Tonya notices how upset Patrice is and questions her.

TONYA
Auntie, are you okay?

PATRICE
Huh? Oh, it's nothing baby. Come on in and get changed for bed. Grandma is going to stay with you while I run to the store real quick, okay.

Tonya nods as Patrice helps her into her home.

INT. CAR (NIGHT) - MOMENTS LATER

Tanisha is driving down the street with a determined look in her eyes.

TANISHA
(V.O.)
To summarize what I said to Patrice, I explained what needed to be done. It was too late for me, and there is no way I could allow him to continue to be in Tonya's life. We both have a sickness that needed to end. It needed to end tonight. I told her to take care of Tonya, and I thanked her for being such a good friend. If I had spoken with her, I knew she would have tried to stop me.

EXT. MARCUS CONDO (NIGHT)

Tanisha stops the car in front of the condo and obsessively stares at it from inside the car. She sighs as she checks her purse for the gun. After a few moments, she gets out the car and heads into the condo.

INT. MARCUS CONDO (NIGHT)

Tanisha cautiously makes her way into the condo, and notices Marcus still sleep on the couch. She quickly makes her way into the kitchen and fills a cup full of water. After she fills the cup, she makes her way directly across from Marcus.

She takes the gun out of her purse, and tosses the purse to the side. She points the gun at Marcus and sighs once again. She takes the cup of water and splashes the contents into Marcus' face.

Marcus quickly jumps up and notices Tanisha pointing a gun towards him.

MARCUS

What the fuck is wrong with you?
Is... Is that a gun? Are you out of
your---

TANISHA

Shut up! I've spent our entire
marriage listening to your ass! Now
you're going to listen to me!

MARCUS

I'm serious Tanisha, put the
fucking gun away!

TANISHA

I'm warning you, one more word, and
I put a bullet in your fuckin'
head!

Marcus backs down as Tanisha holds the gun nervously.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

You are a monster. A real fuckin'
monster, and I'm sorry, I can't
live like this anymore.

MARCUS

You're holding a gun towards me,
and I'm the monster?

TANISHA

Look at me! Look at my fuckin' eye!
Look at the cut on my face! Look at
what you did to me! Does this shit
look normal to you?

Marcus doesn't respond as Tanisha's emotions begin to get the best of her.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

You were right about one thing
though. I am damaged goods. My
father fucked me up. I'm no better
than you. Tonya though, she has a
chance to make it. There's still a
shot that she can actually live a
normal life, but not with us.

MARCUS

So what's your plan, huh? You're
gonna kill me?
(MORE)

MARCUS (CONT'D)

You ever killed anyone before?
They'll catch you and toss your ass
in jail, and then where is our
daughter? Did you think about that?

TANISHA

I'm not going to raise her. She'll
be alright. As far as me and jail,
well, I guess the phrase "I'll see
you in hell" is the response I'll
go with.

Marcus is silent for a moment as he notices Tanisha holding the gun nervously.

MARCUS

Okay, I'm sorry. Is that what you
want to hear? I'm sorry, I fucked
up.

Marcus tries to get closer to Tanisha, but Tanisha stands firm with the gun and doesn't back down.

TANISHA

Don't even think about it.

MARCUS

Look, we both know you don't have
the heart to pull that trigger, so
if you'll hand me the gun, we can
call this thing---

Tanisha FIRES two shots into Marcus' chest which catches him off guard. Tanisha's tears begin to flow once more as she unloads two more SHOTS into Marcus, killing him. Tanisha begins crying as she looks at the body of her husband.

The gun slowly slides out of her hand and hits the floor as she quickly makes her way out of the condo.

INT. MOSS APARTMENTS (NIGHT) - PRESENT TIME

Tanisha is crying profusely as she tries to get herself together once more. After a few moments, she makes it over to the ledge. She takes a long hard look at the bottom as she stands on top of the ledge.

She closes her eyes, and imagines herself normal. In her eyes, the scar on her face is gone, she's not bloodied up, her leg isn't bleeding, and her dress is clean. A mild gust of wind has her hair flowing in the air.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

I killed one demon. All that
remains is the demon inside of me.
The demon that came into my life
years ago.

Tanisha still has her eyes closed as she plunges from the building top.

INT. MARCUS CONDO (NIGHT)

Patrice walks into the open door of the apartment, and is stunned as she notices Marcus' body lying in a puddle of blood on the floor.

PATRICE

Damn it Tanisha!

Patrice quickly takes out Tanisha's letter and scans it over once more.

PATRICE (CONT'D)

"I have to do this... I'm going
back to where it all began." Back
to where it all began? What is
she... Oh shit! Moss Park!

Patrice quickly hurries out of the condo and heads back to her car.

EXT. MOSS APARTMENTS (NIGHT)

Tanisha is in mid air falling to her death when a slight smile enters her face.

TANISHA

(V.O.)

You go through life dealing with
all kinds of pain, suffering, and
stuff like that. When it's all said
and done though, death is the end
all pain. I had a disease that has
haunted me, and right here, right
now, when it's all about to be
over, I let go of the pain, the
suffering, and the anger. Any and
everything that plagued my life
suddenly disappeared. I was finally
released from all the frustrations
in life. For the first time in a
long time I was...

Tanisha hits the ground hard killing her instantly. Blood from her body begins to spill out slowly as a few surrounding people begin to scatter when they notice her dead body on the street.

TANISHA (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

Free.

About twenty minutes later, Patrice pulls up in her car. She notices the police have the area taped off. She decides to sneak past the line and runs over to where Tanisha had fallen.

The police have Tanisha's body in a body bag with just her face on display. Patrice begins screaming as tears begin racing down her face. Police notice her in the area and tries to calm her down.

The coroner zips up the body bag as Patrice is being consoled by a local officer.

FADE OUT.