

FUNERAL

Written by

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Featuring the poem "what the ocean said to the black boy" by Clint
Smith

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FADE IN:
MONTAGE OF EXT. SHOTS OF LAWRENCE. SLOW SHOTS OF SCENERY THAT FEELS ALMOST DEAD. WE HEAR NARRATION:

HOTEP HENRY (V.O.)
You know how to swim boy? I know you can float. Felt you bobbing along my surface. Before you even knew you could. They say you just a conflagaration of bad intentions boy. They use me to put you out. Don't want you burning this place down. Again. They see a little too much L'ouverture in you. A little too much Turner. A little too much of what they already had enough of. What you see when you look at me? You know how many of y'all I swallowed? You just a drop of ink on this canvas, boy. They call me blue because they don't understand how the sky work. They call you black because they don't understand how god work.

AT ONE POINT, WE SEE HOTEP HENRY RECITING THE ABOVE POEM FROM A BOOK ON MASS STREET.

MONTAGE ENDS ON A BLACK TWENTYSOMETHING SITTING ON A BEACH, STARING INTO THE KANSAS RIVER. HE'S TEARY-EYED. HOLD.

CUT TO:
TITLE CARD. "Let the Sunshine In" by Milton Henry plays.

CUT TO:

EXT. MASS STREET - DAY

ONE MONTH LATER. WE SEE A CAR PARK AT A PARKING METER. Two black males exit the car - FREDDIE and JAYLEN. Jaylen, in the drivers' seat, pulls out an old parking ticket and places it in the windshield. He completely ignores the parking meter.

The duo start walking down Mass.

JAYLEN
So this Alexis shit - you know she's bad, I know she's bad...but does she know that I know she's bad? Y'know?

FREDDIE
So you're trynna hit hit?

Jaylen does the "thicker than bowl of oatmeals" point.
Freddie chuckles.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

And you really think you got a
chance?

JAYLEN

Call me Chance the Fuckin' Rapper,
I'm already in it bro. She just
broke up with Trent, I know she's
out here lookin for some dick and
hey, the other day -- I was swipin,
I caught her, what can I say, may
or may not have been a match.

FREDDIE

Aight my guy.

JAYLEN

Bro, you could be a lil more
excited for me.

FREDDIE

Ion know man...considering the
situation, it might not be the best
time for this shit forreal

JAYLEN

Bro, issa funeral, she's gonna be
sad, sad bitches are the easiest
target. I'm not missing my chance.

FREDDIE

It's a wake, not a funeral.

JAYLEN

Same damn thing, fuck you talkin'
bout

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

Jaylen and Freddie are seen in a fast-food joint off Mass.
Jaylen is scarfing down a huge-ass meal. Freddie has fries in
front of him. He's had maybe three.

JAYLEN

Your ex might be there.

FREDDIE

Who?

JAYLEN

Sam.

FREDDIE

...Okay

JAYLEN

You trynna smash?

FREDDIE

She's probably got a man. Plus, I ain't into her like that. We're friends.

JAYLEN

Oh yeah? When was the last time y'all talked?

FREDDIE

...The break up.

Jaylen gives Freddie a look.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

Fuck off.

Beat.

JAYLEN

Yo, you ever hear how he died?

FREDDIE

...Nah...just that he jumped off a building. You?

JAYLEN

I heard they found him with his heart missing. Nothin' besides that though.

FREDDIE

Wait...like...metaphorically?

JAYLEN

Nah, like literal, like hole-in-his-chest heart-ripped-out, type missing.

FREDDIE

Damn...

JAYLEN

Yeah. Shit's crazy. He was goin' to Yale, nigga had so much ahead of him.

Beat. Freddie eats a fry.

JAYLEN (CONT'D)

Yo, you think he subscribed?

FREDDIE

...Do I think he subscribed to what? You're YouTube channel?

Jaylen nods. He's very genuine.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

Fuck wrong with you bro. He's dead. Why would it matter?

JAYLEN

I know, I was just thinking -- y'know how people say they do that shit, when they never really do.

FREDDIE

...Nigga, he's fucking dea--

JAYLEN

Aight my bad...shit
(beat)
You trynna go to Love Garden?

CUT TO:

INT. LOVE GARDEN - NOON

Jaylen and Freddie are seen flipping through records at Love Garden. Jaylen is flipping through 2000s R&B. Freddie is either flipping through old soul records or classic reggae.
HOLD.

Freddie gets a text...he reads it...it's from his boss. He groans. He puts his phone back in his pocket.

His phone starts ringing.

FREDDIE

(groan)
Yo, I'll be right back bro.

Freddie exits the store, while answering the phone.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)
What's up?

CUT TO:

EXT. LOVE GARDEN - NOON

FREDDIE
Nah, I can't...I got a wake today.
I'm out in Lawrence right
now...Tomorrow? Ion know man, you
already got me workin four days
straight afte--...Aight, yeah I can
make it...Aight. Have a good day.

Freddie hangs up the phone. He scratches his head, looks at
the ground. CAMERA STAYS ON HIM.

CUT TO:

INT. LOVE GARDEN - NOON

Freddie enters back into the record shop, walking straight to
Jaylen.

FREDDIE
You ready to go?

JAYLEN
Yeah, just gimme a sec...you good?

FREDDIE
Yeah, yeah.

JAYLEN
Who was that?

FREDDIE
...Doesn't matter...

JAYLEN
(chuckle)
...You can't have a job and be good
at music, man.

FREDDIE
What?

Jaylen grabs his record and walks over to the check out
counter. Freddie stands there.

CUT TO:

QUICK CUTS OF JAYLEN AND FREDDIE BUYING RECORDS.

EXT. MASS STREET - NOON

Freddie and Jaylen walk down Mass, bags in hand. They pass by a black man dressed in traditional African attire, holding a copy of *The Autobiography of Malcolm X* - HOTEH HENRY. He notices Freddie and Jaylen yells out to Freddie:

HOTEH HENRY

Hey brother! Yeah you -- remember
to always love yourself--

JAYLEN

Man--

Freddie grabs Jaylen. They continue walking. Freddie looks back as Hotep Henry continues preaching from his soap box.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT - EVENING

The Wake. It's in a frat-house. A group of ten-to-fifteen college-aged kids are seen, standing in front of a table. They're all holding candles.

On the table, is a photo of Danny. A note under it reads "1996/1997 - 2019". A white girl - GRACE - stands in the front, beside the table. She has a candle in her hand.

GRACE

We're all here to honor Danny
Thomas, someone we all cared for.
He was a smart kid, with a warm
heart. Danny - you'll be missed.

Grace raises her candle.

GRACE (CONT'D)

To Danny.

The group all raise their candles. FOCUS ON CANDLES.

GROUP

To Danny.

SMASH CUT TO:

FOCUS ON SHOT GLASSES.

GROUP

To Danny!

Three twentysomethings - from the same group seen before - are seen taking vodka shots. The wake has turned into a kickback.

Danny's table has been turned into a beer pong table. Danny's picture is now on top of a TV, as two men play Fortnite.

CUT TO:

Jaylen and Alexis are seen talking. They're both laughing.

Freddie is a few feet away, sitting on a couch, by himself. He's babysittin' a drink.

CUT TO:

HENRY

You hear about that shit in the news? Nazis are marching down Broadway Saturday. Forreal, we all gotta get together and do something.

GRACE

Oh, Shaun King posted an amazing Twitter thread about it this morning! He destroyed them.

CARLIE

(in the background)
Isn't he cancelled?

JASON

Yeah, twitter threads are cute I guess, but what about some actual action, physical force, anything

GRACE

Yeah, but you can't let yourself get emotional over stuff like this though.

JASON

...Over Nazis??

CUT TO:

Freddie is seen leaning in the corner, babysitting his drink still. CARLIE runs up to him.

CARLIE

Freddie! It's been so long, how're you??

FREDDIE

Good, just doin' me. Watchu been up to?

CARLIE

How're you and Samantha?

FREDDIE

...We broke up.

CARLIE

Awh. When?

FREDDIE

Like, two years ago.

CARLIE

Was it cause school? I know she went to Chicago, but you two were too cute to break up! I'm sorry she did that to you.

FREDDIE

I broke up with her.

CARLIE

Oh. You sure about that?

CUT TO:

HENRY

Yeah, me and the boys went to Cali for the summer. Interned for Google. Yupp, just the bros, beers, babes and bongz! Shit was dope! Left with two rec letters too.

CUT TO:

GRACE

I made a twitter thread exposing Eddie Murphy this summer! Got him cancelled. Periodt, tea spilt! Yeah, he's dropping a Netflix movie, but fuck them. I mean, do they not know how many times he said the f word? I mean, I know it's the 80s, but gosh.

CUT TO:

AARON

You hear the new Gibbs & Madlib? I fucked with it, but ion know, nothin' can top *Pinata* bro.

FREDDIE

...True. I kinda fuck with *Fetti* more though.

AARON

What's that?

(beat)

As in like Fetty Wap?

CUT TO:

BAILEY

We got married! Three months as of next week.

FREDDIE

Congrats. Sorry again that I couldn't make it.

BAILEY

Thank you! It's okay, we still had fun without you.

BEN

What kept you busy? Popeyes sandwich release?

FREDDIE

...Excuse me?

CUT TO:

KYLE

Yeah, I'll probably go to USC for my Masters next year. Either that or Stanford.

FREDDIE

You excited for that?

KYLE

Yeah, my parents are gonna love it. I know they always wanted one of their kids to go to graduate school.

FREDDIE

Are you excited though?

KYLE

...What's the question again?

CUT TO:

JASON

Yeah, just finished my last feature, probably going to Slamdance with it. Right now though, I'm just writing, prepping for my next few movies.

FREDDIE

That's cool. What kinda shit you m--

JASON

The tone's a mix of Italian neo-realists, like Antonioni and Rossellini, with surrealists like Fellini and Bergman, while adding the black-and-white photography of *Vivre sa Vie*, we use that to help emphasize the surreality.

FREDDIE

...Oka--

JASON

Now, in terms of dialogue, I kinda go back and forth between the theatrical, dramatics of Sorkin's writing, with the naturalism of someone like Linklater. It really creates a style that, I think, creates something we've never seen before.

FREDDIE

...All right.

JASON

...I like your energy, Freddie. You ever been in a short film?

CUT TO:

Ben, Henry, Freddie, Aaron and Jaylen are seen in a circle.

BEN

(to Freddie)

You used to be so fun man. What happened?

Beat. Freddie takes a sip of his drink.

AARON
 (to Freddie and Jaylen)
 How's school goin' for y'all?

Others not in the circle start listening in.

JAYLEN
 Good! About to graduate JUCO,
 probably, head here next semester.

FREDDIE
 ...I'm takin' a semester off.

BEN
 Didn't you say that...three
 semesters ago? That's a helluva
 break, Freddie.

The group laughs, save for Freddie.

FREDDIE
 Yupp. Well...you know me.

The group laughs harder. CU ON THEIR INDIVIDUAL FACES. We hear laughter, but only see judgmental expressions.

HENRY
 (to Freddie and Jaylen)
 Yo, you guys tryna hit my rig
 downstairs real quick?

JAYLEN
 Hell yea! Yo, Freddie, esketit.

Henry heads towards the basement. Freddie and Jaylen follow.

PASSERBY
 Yo, Samantha made it!

Freddie turns towards the front door. He sees SAMANTHA enter. She's with her boyfriend, ALBERT.

Freddie sips his drink and continues following Henry and Jaylen.

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. CLIFFORD LAKE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Dead of night. We see a dark silhouette walking through the lake -- it appears to be Freddie, though the image isn't totally clear. He's deep in thought, eyes to the ground...

QUICK CUTS...LOUD BUZZING IS HEARD...WE NOW SEE FREDDIE FRANTICALLY WALKIN THROUGH THE LAKE, LOOKIN UP AT THE SKY...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. EXAMINATION ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Freddie, shirtless, is seen on an examination table, a cloth sheet draped over his body. A heart lies next to him. HOLD.

Suddenly, a drill enters frame...we hear a scream...

FADE TO WHITE.

FADE IN:

INT. FRAT HOUSE BASEMENT - NIGHT

The walls are covered in black artists and rappers - CHANCE, KANYE, TRAVIS, DRAKE. Henry is seen setting up his dab rig, while Michael and Jaylen sit across from him.

HENRY

Yeah bro, I'm just sayin you guys shouldn't be called African Americans cause we're all Americans, right? You are just as American as the rest of us.

Michael and Jaylen look at each other.

JAYLEN

(to Henry)

...How much longer did you say that was gonna take again?

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Freddie and Jaylen are seen laughing, chillin' in a bathroom. They're passing a blunt to each other.

JAYLEN

(imitating Henry)

Y'all are just as American as the rest of us.

(regular voice)

The fuck??? I wanted to slap that dude in the face so hard.

FREDDIE
Why didn't you??

JAYLEN
Bro, those rigs hit hard! I'm not
missin' out on that shit.

Freddie laughs.

JAYLEN (CONT'D)
Motherfucker still got me fucked up
though, god damn.

FREDDIE
You know what fucks me up? Danny.
Bro, he would've hated this shit.

JAYLEN
Bro, I know! All these corny ass
niggas. Didn't he get in a fight
with Ben senior year?

FREDDIE
Almost. Ben called him a nigger
then avoided him for five weeks.

Jaylen laughs.

JAYLEN
Whata bitch.

FREDDIE
...Hey man. When I die, can you
promise me somethin'?

JAYLEN
Of course bro, what is it?

FREDDIE
That you won't let any wack shit
like this happen in my name.

Jaylen laughs.

JAYLEN
I gotchu bro. Only cause I know
you'll do the same for me.

FREDDIE
Facts.

Jaylen daps Freddie up.

JAYLEN

(beat)

Yo, you doin' okay tho man?
Forreal?

Freddie shrugs.

FREDDIE

I'm doin' me.

JAYLEN

Ight. Lemme know whenever you're
trynna bounce. I got this shit with
Alexis sealed, so I'm ready
whenever.

FREDDIE

Oh, forreal? You got her like that?

JAYLEN

Nigga, you know it. Don't act like
it's not easy! I'm the realest one
here!

Freddie laughs.

JAYLEN (CONT'D)

Ayye, I'll see you out there. Love
you bro.

FREDDIE

Love you too man.

Jaylen exits. HOLD ON FREDDIE.

CUT TO:

EXT. DANNY TALKING HEAD

The Scout in Kansas City. CU ON DANNY. Danny is seen,
headphones in ear, looking straight into camera. He takes the
headphones out.

DANNY

This the new tape? Wow...You know,
you keep getting better bro
and...it's inspiring. Never stop
doin' you. You're gonna make it
man. I mean it.

CUT TO:

DANNY (CONT'D)
 Me? I'm...I'm doin' okay.
 Yeah...the funeral was...it was
 nice to see family.

CUT TO:

DANNY (CONT'D)
 Yeah, I'm going to Yale for my
 Masters! I'm excited. First one in
 my family to go to college, first
 one to graduate school.
 I'm...appreciative.

CUT TO:

DANNY (CONT'D)
 What do I wanna do after?
 (beat)
 Uhh--

CUT TO:

DANNY (CONT'D)
 I miss her a lot man.

CUT TO:

DANNY (CONT'D)
 I see...things, man. I feel like
 I'm losing it out th--

CUT TO:

DANNY (CONT'D)
 They told me I'd be the only nigga
 up there...I didn't realize it'd be
 that bad though.

HOLD.

CUT TO:

DANNY (CONT'D)
 ...I miss her a lot, man.

HOLD.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Freddie is seen staring off, deep in thought.

CROSSFADE TO:

INT. FRAT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Freddie sits down at a couch, surrounded by the other kids.
Aaron looks at him.

AARON

Yo, Freddie, you trynna hit this?

FREDDIE

Nah...I on smoke anymore.

BAILEY

Freddie, passin' up a blunt? Ain't
you the biggest stoner here?

The group laughs. Freddie is silent.

BEN

Shit's still crazy to me. Me and
Danny used to play football every
day after school back in the 5th
grade. You know that park behind
Walnut Grove down the trail? We'd
play there for hours....Now he's
gone.

HENRY

I didn't even hear about that shit
till last week.

GRACE

Really? I saw it on the news that
weekend.

KYLE

My mom texted me about it the next
day.

AARON

(to Freddie)

Where were you when you heard about
Danny?

FREDDIE

...Work. Was scrollin' through
twitter on my lunch break.

Aaron nods. The conversation continues. FOCUS ON FREDDIE. He takes a sip of his drink.

FADE TO:

EXT. HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Freddie and Jaylen are seen walking up to a Lawrence house.

JAYLEN

So, shit you're seein starts moving?

FREDDIE

Yeah. Lights hit different. Colors are like..brighter.

JAYLEN

For how many hours?

FREDDIE

8.

JAYLEN

Yo, I'm excited, but ion know if I can handle bein' with white chicks for that long.

FREDDIE

Jaylen, you ain't findin' no niggas with acid. Issa white people drug. You gon' have to deal with it.

JAYLEN

Aight man, if you say so.

Freddie knocks on the door.

JAYLEN (CONT'D)

You okay though?

FREDDIE

What?

JAYLEN

How's your psyche. I just know with your grandm--

FREDDIE

I'm fine, chill dawg.

JAYLEN

I've seen your snap story. You've been partying every weekend. A break ain't the worst thing, b.

FREDDIE

You ever work in a factory full time? Nigga, this IS my break. Now, stop worryin' bout me, worry bout yourself.

JAYLEN

All I know is I wouldn't be here. I would be at her funeral.

Freddie knocks on the door again.

FREDDIE

(beat)

I could only afford one ticket.

JAYLEN

...You paid for your mom to go? This the same mom forced you to move out? Ain't help you for school, rent, car shit, nothin? Nigga, excuse me?

FREDDIE

It's my mom, nigga.

JAYLEN

Bro, I'm sorr--

The door swings open. STELLA and MOLLY - two white girls - open the door wide.

STELLA

Freddie! Jaylen! What's up?

MOLLY

You guys ready??

INT. HOUSE - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

"STAY HIGH" BY THREE 6 MAFIA PLAYS. CU ON FREDDIE. He places a tab of acid on his tongue. He closes his eyes and swallows. He suddenly falls back...

SLOW-MO ON FREDDIE FALLING BACK INTO A COUCH. TIME SEEMS TO FAST-FORWARD AROUND HIM AS HE MOVES SLOWLY.

He starts sinking into his seat - he looks to Michael, on his left.

JAYLEN

Bro?

Freddie nods, with a smile on his face.

MOLLY

Guys...what the fuck...

STELLA

(chuckle)

Yo...we should go to a park.

FREDDIE

A park!

MOLLY/JAYLEN

A park??

STELLA

Yeah! Centennial on 6th!

Freddie, Molly and Jaylen all stare at Stella. HOLD.

CUT TO:

EXT. CENTENNIAL PARK - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

The group is seen racing to the park - they're all like lil' kids, enjoying the first day of summer, the first day of freedom. "Cherry Oh Baby" by Eric Donaldson plays.

We see several scenes of their trip at the park...

CUT TO:

Jaylen and Freddie passing a football to each other perfectly. They're in wonderment at their own skills.

CUT TO:

Stella and Molly wandering through the park, staring at the trees.

CUT TO:

The group running through the jungle gym, jumping off swings, etc.

Freddie makes it to the top, swinging. He looks out to see a girl and a guy - it's SAMANTHA. She's smiling, walking with the dude.

Freddie jumps off the swing, staring at them.

JAYLEN

Yo Freddie, you good?

Jaylen jumps off his swing. Freddie turns to him - he suddenly sees, behind the swings', Hotep Henry.

HOTEP HENRY

You two with these white women - why?

JAYLEN

(beat)
How else you gettin' tabs, bro?

HOTEP HENRY

You brothers need to understand that these white women don't love you! They want you to rap and be all up in they TV, but they don't want you to SEE what you could really BE. Those skinny pants they got you wearing boy, that's to castrate you. They don't want you to feed, they just wanna stop your seed. Wake up!

FREDDIE

Yo, suck a dick bro!

HOTEP HENRY

Excuse me, son?

FREDDIE

Nigga, nobody gives a fuck what your old ass got to say. Get the fuck outta here OG, for real.

HOTEP HENRY

They want to divide us! You lettin' them win boy. You using two eyes when back home we had three! Do your research!

FREDDIE

Bro, I swear if yo raggedy ass don't stop.

JAYLEN

Yo, chill bro--

FREDDIE

Nah bro, I ain't lettin' some corny ass nigga with a bad line-up argue with me.

HOTEP HENRY

Bad line-up?? Nigga, you look like a character from Skyrim!

FREDDIE

Skryim?? Excuse me, Prince Akeem, Kunta Kinte-headass?? Nigga, you have no drip, man, I bet you the type to grab the AUX at the party and play Common or some shit.

HOTEP HENRY

You look like an ugly Khalid. How you gonna be an ugly version of an ugly person, brother? I just wanna know.

FREDDIE

Oh, that's it.

Freddie steps forward, ready to fight, but Jaylen pulls Freddie away. The group leaves. Hotep Henry stays behind.

HOTEP HENRY

We wuz kangs!!

CROSSFADE TO:

INT. HOUSE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

The group is seen on a couch, they're all cased, laying around. Their eyes are closed.

JAYLEN

I...am...smacked.

MOLLY

Hey. What's your guys' biggest fears?

STELLA

(chuckling)
What?

MOLLY

What's your biggest fear? Like, seriously.

(beat)
Mine's dying alone.

JAYLEN

Never getting to see the world.

STELLA
The world dying.

FREDDIE
My soul. I'm scared...they're gonna
take my soul. I'm scared they're
gonna take it and I won't even
notice. I'm scared they'll take it
without me getting to really know
it. I'm scared that they took my
moms and they'll take my kids and
their kids and their kids.

(beat)
And I'm scared that I might be
makin' it too easy for them.

MOLLY
Who's they?

HOLD ON FREDDIE. He's breathing heavily.

CROSSFADE TO:

The group is seen chillin at the crib, all laying back.
Freddie is staring into dead space. Jaylen is scrolling
through twitter.

JAYLEN
Huh...Danny's dead.

The group doesn't react - except Freddie.

MOLLY
Who?

JAYLEN
Danny Thomas. He killed himself
last night.

MOLLY
Oh...awh. I hope his mom's doin'
okay.

Freddie gets up and walks over to Jaylen.

FREDDIE
Lemme see that.

Freddie grabs the phone. He reads it. He hands it back to
Jaylen.

Freddie starts hyperventilating.

JAYLEN
Yo, bro...you good?

FREDDIE
Yeah, I just..I need a moment.

Freddie leaves the room.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Freddie enters the bathroom. His shirt is drenched. He's freaking out. He stares at himself for a second. He looks down at the counter...he grabs a sword lying on the counter...he stabs his chest and carves a hole. He reaches in and pulls out a bright green neon orb...he stares into it...

CROSSFADE TO:

EXT. KANSAS RIVER - MORNING (FLASHBACK)

Freddie is seen sitting on the coast of the Kansas River, watching the water. He's teary-eyed. He's still tripping.
HOLD.

Freddie pulls out his phone and starts dialing...

FREDDIE
Hey ma...how're you?

CUT TO:

MONTAGE OF SHOTS.

FREDDIE (V.O.)
Just thought I'd call, see how you are. I'm good, just...workin'. School...nah, the jobs...ion know it's really getting to me. I just, I need a brea-- yeah, it's good money, but I feel like I'm dyin...no I haven't...Colossians 3:23. I'll read it tonight...how Was the funera--...All right...talk to you later.

CUT TO:

Freddie is on the coast, teary-eyed.

FREDDIE

Bye.

Freddie hangs up. He looks out to the river.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

...Love you.

HOLD ON FREDDIE.

FADE TO:

INT. FRAT HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

FOCUS ON FREDDIE. The conversation around the room continues...

BAILEY

That's still no excuse. I'm sorry, but killing yourself? That's pathetic. Everybody's lonely. It's called growing up, we just have to get used to it.

FREDDIE

...Ion know bout that.

BAILEY

Huh?

FREDDIE

That's only a part of growing up if you let it.

BEN

Says King Sad Boi.

FREDDIE

Excuse me?

BEN

You can't be talkin' bro. Ain't you the saddest one here?

Freddie gives him a quizzical look.

BEN (CONT'D)

You're the only one here stuck home, workin' the same shitty job you worked since high school, no school, doin' the same shit we all left behind. Your life's a fucking joke bro.

FREDDIE

Fuck you. I'm the only one here actually doin' what I really wanna do. I ain't startin' a family or gettin' married just to say I am. I'm bein a fuckin' person. Y'all are just robots.

Beat.

BAILEY

Fuck you too, Freddie. Sorry for inviting you to my wedding.

FREDDIE

You called me a nigger to my face five times junior year. Suck my fucking dick. Your boy-toy's a cocksucker anyway.

Someone chokes on a drink. Silence.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

...What?

AARON

Bro, you can't say that. That's homophobic.

FREDDIE

What? Cocksucker?

GRACE

Oh my god, are you trying to get cancelled?

AARON

The old Freddie wouldn't have said shit like this.

BEN

You'd think *you people* would understand shit like this.

FREDDIE

...You people?? So we're just gonna let him get away with that?

Beat. Freddie gets up.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

Fuck y'all.

Freddie heads for the backdoor. He passes by Jaylen and Alexis.

JAYLEN
(to Freddie)
Yo, you good?

Freddie walks past him, straight to the backyard.

ALEXIS
...What's with him?

JAYLEN
He's just goin' through something.
You know how it is.

Alexis looks at him confused. Jaylen tries to change the subject.

JAYLEN (CONT'D)
Look, either way, I'm excited to
move up here though. KU's gonna be
dope.

ALEXIS
Oh my god, you're gonna love it!
Promise you'll hit me up?

JAYLEN
Of course, Lexi. You're number one
on my list...Hey, you free this
Saturday? Got tickets to see Rico
Nasty at The Granada. You trynna
go?

ALEXIS
Like, as friends?

JAYLEN
...I was thinkin'...like as date.

ALEXIS
Oh...oh my god...I'm sorry Jaylen
...but I got a mans.

JAYLEN
(beat, then chuckle)
No, you don't.

ALEXIS
...Yes I do.

JAYLEN

I didn't see shit on your Facebook.
Or your snap. Shit, not even on
Insta.

ALEXIS

I like to keep that stuff privat--

JAYLEN

Who is he?

ALEXIS

What?

JAYLEN

Who is he?

ALEXIS

...Kyle.

Alexis points across the room to KYLE - a white dude standing
on the other side of the room.

JAYLEN

Kyle...Kyle??

ALEXIS

Yeeeeaaah. Kyle.

JAYLEN

Why him?

ALEXIS

What do you mean "why him"?

JAYLEN

That man is at most a 3. You're a
9. You could do so much better.

ALEXIS

And that's you?

JAYLEN

I'm a 6 at least, I'm at least in
the middle!

ALEXIS

You're a 6?

JAYLEN

Yes! The personality might make it
a 5, but I sure as hell am not no
3.

ALEXIS

I'm sorry Jaylen, but you're not my type.

JAYLEN

And he is?? He tweets about being pegged every other day, his favorite rapper is fucking Russ. He don't have the same swag, the finesse. I'm cute as fuck, I'm funny AS FUCK--

ALEXIS

I don't date black guys.

JAYLEN

Wow. So you hate our people now, huh? You MAGA now?

ALEXIS

It's not like tha--

JAYLEN

So you're like a female Daniel Caesar?

ALEXIS

It's not like that! I just...prefer white guys. It's just a preference.

JAYLEN

Baby girl, massa isn't gonna love you like I love you.
(sigh)
You know what would happen if a nigga said the shit you just said?

ALEXIS

Well, that's different.

JAYLEN

How?

ALEXIS

Cause niggas ain't shit.

JAYLEN

...What?

ALEXIS

(shrug)
I'm not wrong.

JAYLEN
 ...THIS NIGGA IS A CORNIER G-EAZY!

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

FREDDIE is seen standing in the background, pen in hand, smoking and breathing in the moment. SUDDENLY, WE HEAR A FEMALE VOICE:

SAMANTHA (O.S.)
 I thought you stopped smoking?

Freddie turns around - coming from the house is SAMANTHA. She closes the screen door behind her.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
 At least, that's what you told them right?

FREDDIE
 ...Ion smoke with strangers.

SAMANTHA
 Oh yeah?

FREDDIE
 Yeah.

SAMANTHA
 How're you?

FREDDIE
 I'm good. Just...on my regular shit. How bout you?

SAMANTHA
 Good. Could be better.

She smiles. Beat. Freddie passes his pen. She takes it.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
 I'm sorry about your grandma.

FREDDIE
 You heard about that?

She nods.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

Thanks, 'preciate that for real.
It's been hard, but...you know how
it is...you know, you're the first
one to ask about her.

SAMANTHA

I'm not surprised. They're all
cornballs in there. All they wanna
talk about is which classmate
became a pornstar.

FREDDIE

They're just jealous. Morgan's
makin money and they ain't.

SAMANTHA

Wait, it's Morgan??

FREDDIE

Yeah. You didn't hear?

SAMANTHA

No! They all thought it was Ashley

FREDDIE

Nah, it's Morgan. She's verified on
Pornhub and everything.

They start laughing.

SAMANTHA

That's so weird.

FREDDIE

Hey, at least she's doing big
things.

Samantha chuckles.

SAMANTHA

...So...do you know what happened
to him?

FREDDIE

...Nah. I think 'cause his mom, but
honestly, it could've been
anything.

SAMANTHA

But...he had such a great life. He was graduating UMKC a year early, he was going to Yale for his Masters. I know he loved his mom, but...he had so much ahead of him.

FREDDIE

Who said he wanted that shit though...like really

SAMANTHA

...Huh?

FREDDIE

UMKC. Yale. He didn't want that shit. Danny hated school. He hated KC, he always talked about all the fucked up shit he saw down there. Yeah, all that shit he did was impressive, but he only did it cause he thought that's what everyone else would be impressed by.

SAMANTHA

...Hmm...

FREDDIE

...I guess we're all just stuck doin' shit we don't wanna do.

SAMANTHA

...And what do you wanna do?

FREDDIE

Me?...I wanna rap.

SAMANTHA

(chuckle)

You wanna rap?

FREDDIE

Yeah. What? What's so funny?

SAMANTHA

You being serious?

FREDDIE

I told you when we dated Sam, I wanna do big shit. Well, this is it!

SAMANTHA

Freddie Wilson. Rapping. I never thought I'd see the day.

Beat.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Well, lemme hear it.

FREDDIE

...What?

SAMANTHA

A rap. I wanna hear you rap. Right now. Anything you got. I just wanna hear you.

FREDDIE

...Ight

Freddie pulls out his phone.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

Lemme pull somethin' out--

SAMANTHA

No, not somethin' you recorded. Rap for me, right here, right now.

Freddie is thrown off.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

If you can't do it for me now, how do you expect to do it for anyone ever?

Beat. Freddie stands up on a table and raps a freestyle. It's only Samantha, but he raps as if it's the entire Sprint Center in front of him. It's confident, direct and honest - you hear both the sincerity, the passion and the potential. He finishes. He steps off the table.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

Wow. You wrote that?

FREDDIE

Part of it. Part of it's off the dome though.

SAMANTHA

It's good. I think you got something.

FREDDIE

Thanks.

SAMANTHA

I missed you, Freddie. As a friend,
I missed you.

Freddie cracks a smile. They look up at the stars.

FREDDIE

They look great tonight, don't
they?

SAMANTHA

...They're okay.

FREDDIE

...You know...you were the first
one that made me look up at them. I
never really believed shit like
that before I met you.

SAMANTHA

...Mmm...

FREDDIE

So, how are you and that white boy?

SAMANTHA

...Who?

FREDDIE

The long blonde haired one. Al or
something?

SAMANTHA

Oh, Albert...we're doing good...he
proposed a few months ago...we're
engaged.

FREDDIE

You serious?

Samantha nods. It's not a happy nod.

FREDDIE (CONT'D)

Oh my god, Sam, that's incredible.
Congrats!

SAMANTHA

Yupp. We get married in six months.

FREDDIE
That's amazing. I'm real happy for
you.

Beat. Samantha's eyes start tearing up.

SAMANTHA
(mutter)
...I don't...

FREDDIE
Yo, you okay?

SAMANTHA
...I don't wanna marry him,
Freddie.

Beat. Samantha hugs Freddie. It's tight. Freddie hugs her
back. HOLD.

Eventually, she lets go.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
I should go. Keep in touch?

She walks off, wiping a tear away. He watches her leave. He
turns and breathes in the scenery one last time. Then, out of
the corner of his eye, he notices something...near a
bush...he walks over to investigate...he digs a little...

It's a heart. A human heart. He picks it up. He stares at it.
HOLD.

CUT TO:

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Freddie walks through the rowdy house, from the back, to the
front, ignoring all around him. He's deep in thought.

EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Freddie is seen exiting the house. He pulls out his phone and
starts dialing...

FREDDIE
Hey. It's Freddie. I don't think
I'll be able to make it in
tomorrow...Nah...I quit.

Beat. Freddie hangs up. He starts walking off down the street, into the sunrise, freestyling bars to himself. "Slow it Down" by Little Brother plays.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END