

The Ten Crack Commandments

by

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Based on, the song by the Notorious B.I.G and completely fictional characters...

Current Revisions by

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Doomed From the Start Productions

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FADE IN:

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

Close up shot shows rubber glove covered hands turning on the pilot of a gas range stove. A large pot of water is placed on the lit eye of the stove.

VOICE (OS)

"Rule number uno: never let no one know how much dough you hold, because you know the cheddar breed jealousy especially if that man fucked up, get your ass stuck up..."

INT. STOREFRONT/ARCADE - DAY

DARIUS MOORE, a young African-American male approx. 25yrs old, is crouched down between a pair of vintage Pac-Man arcade games in an old storefront as...

EXT. STREET - DAY -- CONTINUOUS

POLICE OFFICERS crouch outside behind squad cars and a gang of angry COLOMBIANS across the parking lot from the Police exchange gunfire.

COLOMBIAN GUNMAN #1

¡Todos morimos hoy, bastardos! [We all die today, bastards!]

DARIUS (V.O.)

There's something sinister about the thud of a nine millimeter handgun being fired over Spanish...

POLICE OFFICER #1

Drop your weapon you piece of shit Mexican!

DARIUS (V.O.)

...and redneck. That combination tells me I'm going to die today surrounded by not one friendly sympathetic face.

COLOMBIAN GUNMAN#2

Colombian!

COLUMBIAN GUNMAN #1

¡Somos colombinos, cerdos estúpidos! [We are Columbian, you stupid pigs!]

POLICE OFFICER #2
Whatever, go back to Africa!

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

SUPERIMPOSED TITLE: ANOTHER TIME

Establishing shot of a quiet upper middle-class tree-lined neighborhood at dusk. All the houses look nice and similar; the focus is on a yellow veneer home with a lone light on in an upstairs window, the voices and giggles of children can be heard.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT

Darius is tucking in his triplet preschool daughters as his grandmother BEATRICE watches from the bedroom doorway. She is smiling with a cigarette dangling from her mouth. Darius is playfully tickling them as he tucks them in.

DARIUS

If you promise to go to sleep now
and not give Granny a hard time,
Daddy will bring you something
special when he gets home from
work.

BEATRICE

Oh they'll get more hard times than
they give if they fuck with me.

DARIUS

Granny, don't curse. You'll scar
them.

BEATRICE

I cussed yo' little ass out and you
turned out fine.

DARIUS

You think?

BEATRICE

Hell yes. Beatrice Divine Williams
knows how to raise some chill-un...
at least in today's world. Outside
the home, that's where you get the
scars. Damn, pedophile priest,
preachers, teachers, and
politicians. Look at Michael
Jackson's ass...

DARIUS

Granny Michael Jackson is a legend.
He didn't do that.

BEATRICE

That Negro is a freak. All I'm
saying is when your doggone
children can't go to church,
school, or take a summer job
interning at the White House
without some crinkled up old
motherfuckers trying to finger fuck
'em...

DARIUS

Granny! Okay, okay! Shit! That's
enough!

BEATRICE

Scars Darius, scars. Them there
some scars.

Darius kisses his grandmother on the forehead

DARIUS

I get it Granny. I'm out. Love you.

BEATRICE

Love you too baby, have a good
night and be safe. Those scars are
out there.

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

Close up shot shows rubber glove covered hands pouring a
measuring cup filled with powdered cocaine into a large pot of
boiling water.

VOICE (OS)

*"Number two: never let 'em know
your next move. Don't you know bad
boys move in silence or violence?
Take it from your highness I done
squeezed mad clips at these cats
for they bricks and chips..."*

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Darius walks out to his car parked in the driveway, a vintage
1968 Cadillac Eldorado with modern 22-inch rims and tires.

INT. 1968 CADILLAC ELDORADO - NIGHT

Darius starts the engine of his car and the radio begins to play the opening of "Summertime" by Janis Joplin.

EXT. HIGHWAY - NIGHT

Darius cruises into the inner city as the song blares from his radio. A series of establishing shots begin to show the tranquility of suburban life fading into the graffiti filled walls and litter strewn streets of anywhere urban America.

EXT. CAR WASH - NIGHT

An aerial shot shows an inner city car wash parking lot filled with other vintage cars similar to the one Darius drives. They are mingled together with modern luxury vehicles surrounded by a cadre of young black and Latino men dressed in sports attire, baseball caps, and gaudy jewelry. There are scantily clad women in booty shorts intermingling with the bunch as Darius pulls into the lot. The Janis Joplin song fades and is replaced by the numbing bass of hip-hop music from the surrounding vehicles.

INT./EXT. 1968 CADILLAC ELDORADO - NIGHT

Darius parks his car in an available space, gets out and leans on the hood while surveying the scene.

DARIUS (V.O.)

Don't let the suds and bubbles fool you, this is no scene from Grease. John Travolta will not break into song at anytime. This is what is locally called a dope man's convention. People here network, talk shit, make arrangements to buy dope and/or pussy, settle beefs, start beefs, and in between all that they might even get their cars washed. I've come here to meet and greet, make a little small talk, but I'm mainly here to meet my...

A tall lanky black male with a mouth full of gold teeth, long oversized tee shirt, and Air Force One sneakers approaches and gives Darius a hug and an elaborate handshake.

MIKE

...kinfolk! What it be like Dee? I see yo' whip all freshly dipped. Twenty-two's block choppin'!

DARIUS

What up, Mr. Murphy? What it do?
You ready to make these rounds?

MIKE

For sho, little cuz, but first let
me see if Annie Mae gonna come by
later.

INT. 1968 CADILLAC ELDORADO - NIGHT

Darius watches as Mike approaches a few scantily clad women. He blows his car horn but Mike ignores him. Darius stares on impatiently.

DARIUS (V.O.)

That's my cousin on my daddy's
side, a man with priority issues
and no dough. You'd think a broke
nigga would be about his paper and
only his paper.

INT. STOREFRONT/ARCADE - DAY

Darius is crouched down between a pair of vintage Pac-Man arcade games in an old storefront as glass and ricocheting debris rains down around him. He crouches with his head between his knees and awaits his fate. Slumped dead and headless against the far wall of the arcade storefront from Darius are the remains of his cousin Mike.

DARIUS (V.O.)

You can probably tell by the
signature white tee and Air Force
One's that the headless corpse in
the corner of the room is what
remains of my well-meaning yet dim-
witted cousin Michael Nathan
Murphy. No one will miss him. His
mother despises him, his friends
aren't really his friends, and his
enemies... well you can tell what his
enemies think.

INT. DARK OFFICE BOARDROOM - DAY

Darius morphs into a junior executive wearing a power suit. He is giving a PowerPoint presentation on his life's achievements to a boardroom full shadowed figures whose faces can't be made out.

DARIUS

Me? My name is Darius Phillip Moore. And like all things American I am more statistic than person - young, black, male, and about to be shot. Homicide or heart failure, it had to be one or the other. I'm not complaining. Through all of the obstacles that I have faced trying to avoid my predetermined outcome I've actually been able to obtain a decent high school education, an associate's degree in business-management, a twisted yet loving family, and distinguished placement in my career field, a career field perhaps frowned upon by most yet viewed as being one half step above a lawyer. Yes, ladies and germs, I'm an urban pharmaceutical exchange broker or in layman's term's... a drug dealer.

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

Close up shot shows rubber glove covered hands pouring a box of Armand-Hammer baking soda into large pot of boiling water.

VOICE (OS)

"Number three: never trust no-body. Your mom will set that ass up, if properly gassed up. Hoodie to mask up, for that fast buck. She be layin' in the bushes to light that ass up..."

EXT. STREET - DAY

In the background parked a half-block away from the storefront is a black SUV blaring the song: "Ten Crack Commandments" by the rapper Notorious B.I.G.

NOTORIOUS BIG

"I been in this game for years, it made me an animal. Its rules to this shit, I wrote me a manual. A step by step booklet for you to get Your game on track, not your wig pushed back..."

INT. STOREFRONT/ARCADE - DAY

Darius is still crouched down between the vintage Pac-Man arcade games. The gunfire settles down a bit as the police and narcotraffickers seem to be reloading. Darius remains crouched with his head between his knees.

DARIUS (V.O.)

I recognize that song. I wonder what young gangster has the oysters to be bumping his system that loud the middle of the OK Corral. Nevertheless that's a song I should have hummed every morning in the shower, a helpful tune to whistle while pouring the morning coffee. But selling drugs was not always my path in life, before the coke, the guns, and impending death... I had dreams.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Darius enters a nondescript corporate office building...

DARIUS (V.O.)

My cousin Mike once dubbed me an All-American Negro. I was full of resume crispness and community college dreams.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

...where power suit clad CORPORATE TYPES juggle phone calls, meetings, and memos. Darius enters the door of what appears to be a corner office but instead turns out to be a dusty mailroom.

INT. OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY

Darius is pushing a mail cart through a maze of office cubicles.

DARIUS (V.O. CONT'D)

An Associates degree goes a long way in the mail rooms of most corporate dungeons.

Close up of resume.

DARIUS (V.O. CONT'D)

I changed the name on my resume to read D. Phillip Moore so as not to sound too black being that I was cursed with one of those "Ghetto French" names that most inner city moms seemed to gravitate towards.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

A NEW MOTHER who has just given birth is holding her newly born infant.

NEW MOTHER

I'm going to name you...

INT. HUMAN RESOURCE OFFICE - DAY

TWO WHITE FEMALE HUMAN RESOURCE WORKERS are looking through stacks of applications, as one of the women reads the names on the headings of each of the resumes the other woman shouts back their proposed ethnicity.

HR WOMAN #1

...Lakadashia!

HR WOMAN #2

Black!

HR WOMAN #1

Shantavia!

HR WOMAN #2

Black!

HR WOMAN #1

Phillip?

HR WOMAN # 1 AND #2

I see promise here...

DARIUS (V.O.)

Though my mother named me...

INT. PUBLIC HOUSING APT. - DAY

A group of rowdy children are running in and out of the screen door of a rundown tenement apartment as Darius grandmother BEATRICE, with a cigarette dangling from her mouth, is sitting in a beat up living room chair watching a small TV which is sitting on top of a larger non-working TV.

DARIUS (V.O.)

...it was my grandmother, Beatrice Divine Williams that raised me. We all called my grandmother Granny who, for as far back as I could remember, was very soulful.

BEATRICE

You lil' motherfuckers stop runnin' in and out slammin' my screen door while I'm watching my stories!

DARIUS (V.O.)

And even though we were only in the third grade at the time, and it was summer vacation, she'd scream...

BEATRICE

You horrendous prepubescent sommabitches need jobs!

DARIUS (V.O.)

She had a way with words.

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

Close up shot shows rubber glove covered hands poring ice from a bag of ice into a large oval tin bucket.

VOICE (OS)

"Number four: know you heard this before - never get high, on your own supply..."

INT. PUBLIC HOUSING APT. - DAY

Beatrice, with a cigarette dangling from her mouth, is sitting at a small kitchen table sipping coffee and doing a newspaper crossword puzzle. A YOUNG DARIUS is sitting at the table attentively trying to partake in his grandmother's morning ritual.

DARIUS (V.O.)

Granny insisted that for all her country-ghetto disposition that she and anybody else with half a mind could improve their station in life. To her a person wasn't too far removed to learn something which she demonstrated by her daily ritual of doing crossword puzzles.

BEATRICE
Let's see... hmmm... five letter word
for "give way".

YOUNG DARIUS
Yield!

BEATRICE
I know. I know. Eleven down... hmmm...
word for "orthodox..."

YOUNG DARIUS
Traditional!

BEATRICE
Boy! What I tell you...

YOUNG DARIUS
I'm just trying to help Granny...

BEATRICE
Ten letter word for "Darius..."

YOUNG DARIUS
What?

BEATRICE
"Asswhoopin'!" Now get on your
chores!

YOUNG DARIUS
I ain't got none!

BEATRICE
(correcting)
I don't have any... well, make some
up!

DARIUS (V.O.)
Granny was that stereotypical inner-
city grandmother with a twist. She
came from the deep, deep, deep
south...

INT. COUNTRY SHOTGUN SHACK KITCHEN - DAY

SUPERIMPOSED TITLE: DEEP DEEP DEEP SOUTH

Beatrice, with a cigarette dangling from her mouth, is in the kitchen of her country shotgun shack cooking soul food. She is listening to Al Green on an old record player as she cooks.

She receives a phone call on an old beat-up rotary phone. With a worried look on her face she hangs up and pulls her apron off.

DARIUS (V.O.)

She embodied that too hip, chain-smoking, soul food sage, the kind that moved from the south up north to raise her children's children.

EXT. PUBLIC HOUSING APT. - DAY

Beatrice, with a cigarette dangling from her mouth and small suitcase in hand, is at the door of a public housing project apartment as a filthy looking YOUNGER DARIUS answers the door.

DARIUS (V.O.)

And Granny did just that when my mother Charity Hope Taylor became a little too infatuated with my father, one Mr. Amadeus Moore, or more so with their shared obsession of heroin, smack, H. I was their only child - as far as I knew.

INT. PUBLIC HOUSING APT. - DAY

Inside the apartment Darius' MOTHER is lying strung out on a stain covered couch with a rubber tube tied around her arm. BEATRICE sets her suitcase down, takes the cigarette from her mouth, and blows a bellow of smoke out the side of her now pursed lips. She looks at her daughter disgusted.

BEATRICE

Oh lord, lord, God, sweet Jesus. This ignorant bitch... Don't you worry, Darius, Granny is here now.

DARIUS (V.O.)

Soon after Granny showed up my mother decided to leave - or was convinced. I don't really know which. All I know is we never saw or mentioned her again.

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

Close up shot shows rubber glove covered hands, holding pot holders, placing steaming pot of cocaine/baking soda mix into large oval tin bucket filled with ice.

VOICE (OS)

*"Number five: never sell no crack
where you rest at. I don't care if
they want an ounce, tell 'em
bounce."*

INT. ELDORADO CADILLAC - NIGHT

Darius and Mike are driving along the dark ghetto streets making their rounds. Mike is silent which puzzles Darius.

DARIUS

Why you so quiet? Annie Mae turned you down? You have to have some sorry dick for Annie Mae to turn...

MIKE

She's pregnant.

DARIUS

Who?

MIKE

Annie Mae...

DARIUS

Now ain't that some shit. Is it yours?

MIKE

She says it is...

DARIUS

...you didn't wear a hat?

MIKE

She didn't look like she had...

DARIUS

...AIDS ain't got a damn look... but that's what you get when you dip wrong. Congratulations, dummy.

MIKE

Congratulations my ass! I am not trying to be nobody's baby-daddy...

DARIUS

...especially the baby-daddy of the neighborhood pop off, huh?

MIKE

You goddamn right, I mean it would be different if it was someone like Leticia, peace be upon her, a lady, a real down ass chick... but Annie Mae? Fuck that! Fuck that right the fuck nooow!

INT. SCHOOL DANCE - NIGHT

SUPERIMPOSED TITLE: A MORE INNOCENT TIME

Darius is dressed in an all white three-piece suit accented with a turquoise pocket square. His pocket square matches the prom-style dress of his date LETICIA, an average height African-American female with beautiful full lips, almond shaped eyes, and a honey brown complexion. They slow dance and kiss each other tenderly to the rhythm of the Al Green tune Love and Happiness. The music fades along with the scene.

AL GREEN

"Love and happiness. Wait a minute... Something's going wrong. Someone's on the phone, three o'clock in the morning. Talkin' about how she can make it right. Well, happiness is when you really feel good with somebody..."

DARIUS (V.O.)

Yeah Leticia was a real lady, a young lady who lived a short life, short changed by my lack of money, hope, luck, just a fucking lack of everything...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Establishing shot of a busy county hospital shows a large contingent of poor people waiting in line around the hospital building for a chance at some routine medical care and prescription refills. Near the front of the line are Darius and his girlfriend Leticia who is swollen with child. They are in the line waiting their turn for free prenatal care when Leticia goes into premature labor.

DARIUS (V.O.)

It was like it yesterday that she died...

LETICIA

(falling limp against
Darius)

(MORE)

LETICIA(cont'd)

Darius I think something is wrong.
My stomach is...

DARIUS

Hold on baby. Let me get some help.
HELP!

Darius struggles frantically to get Leticia inside the hospital to the front of the line.

INT. NURSES KIOSK - DAY

A nurse behind a kiosk glass window looks up from her paperwork unsympathetically at Darius and the now shivering in pain Leticia.

NURSE

Sir you have to wait your turn,
everyone here is...

DARIUS

Ma'am I need help now! My
girlfriend is having a baby...

NURSE

Sir...

Darius slams the full force of his fist against the kiosk glass, cracking it, and cutting his hand.

DARIUS

Don't sir me, bitch! We need help
right the fuck now!

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Leticia is hurriedly wheeled down a hospital hallway to a delivery room. Darius with his bloody hand wrapped in a towel is detained by a SECURITY GUARD due to his violent outburst.

GUARD

(sympathetically)

Look man, I know you're stressed
and I don't blame you but you're
going to have to pull it in and be
here for your family.

DARIUS

If I had insurance I wouldn't be
here...

GUARD

Exactly brother, but the reality is you don't and they know it, so you're at their mercy so let's just be cool, calm, and collected so that you can be around for that baby... and i can get off at the end of my shift without any mishaps.

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

Close up shot shows cooling cocaine/baking soda mixture separating into gooey clumps that float to the top of cooling pot.

VOICE (OS)

"Number six: that goddamn credit, dead it. You think a crack head payin' you back, shit forget it..."

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

Darius is waiting for news on Leticia's condition. A DOCTOR with bloody hospital attire comes out into the hallway where Darius is impatiently pacing.

DOCTOR

Mr. Moore? Darius Moore? There's never an easy way to say... Sir... Sir...

Darius is crying as he leans on the hallway wall and crumples down to the floor.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Leticia's complications. Her body just couldn't take the strain...

EXT. LETICIA'S PARENTS HOUSE - DAY

Establishing shot of a small lower middle class home. Screaming and crying can be heard from the inside of the house.

INT. LETICIA'S PARENTS HOUSE - DAY

Darius is standing in the living room of LETICIA'S PARENTS house informing them of Leticia's death.

LETICIA'S FATHER is staring at Darius with anger and tears in his eyes as LETICIA'S MOTHER is heard from another room loudly grieving.

DARIUS (V.O.)

The day Leticia announced to her parents that she was pregnant and wasn't going to get an abortion they kicked her out and she came to live with me and Granny.

CUT TO:

INT. DARIUS HOUSE - DAY

Beatrice/Granny, with a cigarette dangling from her mouth, is hugging a weeping Leticia.

BEATRICE

We're family, girl, and as long as I have a roof, you have a roof... okay. Now quit all that damn crying and get your stuff.

LETICIA

I ain't got no stuff...

BEATRICE

(correcting)

I don't have any... nevermind. We'll get you some stuff, some real nice stuff.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. LETICIA'S PARENTS HOUSE - DAY

Darius is standing in the living room of Leticia's parent's house as Leticia's father angrily points him toward the door. Leticia's mother can still be heard grieving in the background

LETICIA'S FATHER

I think it's best you go now... You get the hell out my house and don't you ever show your face around here again... Do you hear me?

LETICIA'S MOTHER (O.S.)

(crying hysterically)

My baby! Oh God, why! Take me lord, take me!

DARIUS (V.O.)
 They never gave me a chance to
 explain to them they were
 grandparents of...

INT. PUBLIC HOUSING APT. - DAY

Darius and Beatrice are standing over a white baby crib as a medium close-up shot shows three infant girls sleeping soundly...

DARIUS (V.O.)
 ...Three beautiful little girls,
 triplets.

BEATRICE
 It's God's will.

CUT TO:

EXT. ELDORADO CADILLAC - NIGHT

Darius and Mike are driving along the dark ghetto streets making their rounds. The Eldorado stops and Mike hands a package through the passenger side window to a seemingly underage YOUNG DEALER.

INT. ELDORADO CADILLAC - NIGHT

The Young Dealer hands Mike a paper bag filled with money. Mike rifles through the bag as he eyeballs the young dealer suspiciously.

MIKE
 Shit all here, ain't it?

YOUNG DEALER
 Yeah.

MIKE
 You sure motherfucker?

DARIUS
 Would you leave that little nigga
 alone. We gotta go.

YOUNG DEALER
 (humorously)
 Yeah nigga, leave me alone. Fucking
 bully.

MIKE
 (yelling from car window
 as it pulls off)
 Oh Yeah, I'm gonna bully yo ass
 alright if my shit come up short!

Young Dealer gives Mike the finger.

MIKE (CONT'D)
 You think this a game.

DARIUS
 No. But you do, goofy.

MIKE
 Alright, Alright. Watch and see...
 when you come up short.

DARIUS (V.O.)
 Mike knew that would never happen
 due to the fact that all the
 workers that sold dope for me
 didn't necessarily fear me, but
 feared my boss, the infamous BIG
 BAD BRAD.

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

Close up shot shows rubber glove covered hands using a ladle
 to scoop floating gooey clumps out of cooling pot and placing
 them on a cookie sheet under a heat lamp.

VOICE (OS)
*"Seven: this rule is so underrated -
 keep your family and business
 completely separated. Money and
 blood don't mix like two dicks and
 no bitch. Find yourself in serious
 shit..."*

EXT. LIQUOR STORE - DAY

Darius and Mike are hanging out sipping forty ounce bottles
 of malt liquor.

DARIUS (V.O.)
 Soon after Leticia died I lost my
 job.

(MORE)

DARIUS(cont'd)

They were cutting back on staff and I was one of the first to go, so I did what most young black men do in my position (beat) I hung out. And what better person to hang out with then my cousin Mike Murph. This Negro was an expert at not doing shit all day and making it look productive. I knew with three additional mouths to feed that I would need some money and soon and that's when Brad showed up.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - DAY

Darius and Mike are walking through their rundown neighborhood when they spot a candy blue fully restored classic 1964 Chevrolet Impala with gold rims parked in front of a seemingly abandoned house. The vehicle has custom tags that read BIG BAD 1. As they check out the car they are approached and surrounded by a group of THUGS.

THUG #1

What you bitches up too?

THUG#2

I think these pussy motherfuckers was about to steal Brad's car.

THUG#3

Aw, hell naw, some sorry ass car thieves trying to jack my boy... I swear crime in this neighborhood is just getting senseless!

THUG#1

Looks that way...

THUG#3

(pretends to cry)

You know (sniff, sniff) if anybody was to try to (sniff, sniff) steal my homie Brads ride...

Thug #3 pulls a gun from his waistband.

THUG #3(CONT'D)

(suddenly very serious)

...I'd have to kill that motherfucker!

THUG#1

Or at least beat his ass within an
inch of his life.

MIKE

(panicking)

Hold on man, it ain't like that... I
ain't never stole a car in my life.

From behind the thugs appears BRAD, a guy who appears to be much younger than he really is due to his height of five feet. He's dressed in black baggy jeans, black Timberland boots, and a black t-shirt with the words BIG BAD BRAD airbrushed in white and sky blue lettering across the front.

BRAD

Yo, hold up fool, I know this dude...
what up player? What yo name is?

DARIUS

Darius. Darius Moore. They call me
Dee.

BRAD

I know you... you ever been on lock
at the juvie up by Silverdale?

DARIUS

Naw. Not me.

BRAD

Aw, don't act like you too good to
do some time nigga... We went to
school together, you that cat that
caught that package for me a while
back...

DARIUS

Yeah, Piedmont High, Brad Jordan,
right?

BRAD

Thaaaaaaaat's right! Yo this nigga
got heart! This one time I was
making a dash, campus po-po right
on my ass and...

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. PIEDMONT HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Establishing shot of an inner city high school morphs into A YOUNG BRAD JORDAN running down the school hall with campus authorities hot on his tail. Brad is carrying a bag; he rounds a hallway corner where he spots Darius at his locker. Brad passes the bag to Darius which Darius tucks into his locker as the school authorities race by him to pounce on Brad. Brad winks at Darius.

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

Close up shot shows rubber glove covered hands using a spatula to spread gooey clumps into a thin layer of paste.

VOICE (OS)

"Number eight: never keep no weight on you. Them cats that squeeze your guns can hold jobs too..."

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - DAY

Brad signals Darius with a head nod to walk with him. Darius and Brad begin to stroll down the street and talk. Mike tries to join them but is blocked by one of the thugs.

THUG#1

Where the fuck you think you going?

BRAD

(to Mike)

Yo, man you hang out with the homies here while I talk to your boy Darius Dee for a minute.

Brad and Darius continue their stroll

BRAD (CONT'D)

Say man, I appreciate what you did for me that day. That took heart. I still went down on some other warrants and shit, but it was all good.

DARIUS

Ain't no thang man.

BRAD

Yo, you a college dude, ain't cha? All smart and shit.

DARIUS
Yeah, marketing and business.

BRAD
That's good to hear. I need some true blue cats on my team like you, take this shit high-tech, new millennium.

DARIUS
Naw man, I can't get down with that.

BRAD
I understand. Ain't no love lost. It ain't for everybody. But if I can ever do you a solid, don't be afraid to ask.

DARIUS
No doubt.

BRAD
Is that nigga back there your relation or something?

DARIUS
Yeah, cousin.

BRAD
He's going to be a problem for you one day.

DARIUS
Why you say that?

BRAD
Those eyes. That nigga got them beady eyes. Just like my daddy and my daddy wasn't shit. Watch him.

DARIUS
Will do.

CUT TO:

INT. PUBLIC HOUSING APT. - DAY

Darius is fixing his tie in the mirror and adjusting his cuff links while Beatrice looks on, with a cigarette dangling from her mouth.

BEATRICE

You want some breakfast? You're looking poor around the waist.

DARIUS

I ate already, Granny.

BEATRICE

Olde English isn't food. I know you been depressed but you going to have to come back to pork chops and collard greens someday.

DARIUS

Uhhh, not the pork.

BEATRICE

Okay, Farrakhan. That pig's been good to black folks, raised generations. I don't see why you young folks hate on him now. I'll fuck a pig up, from the rooter to the tooter.

DARIUS

(laughing)

The snout too?

BEATRICE

Hell it's just two holes in the meat is all, still edible.

DARIUS

Anyway Granny, how do I look?

BEATRICE

No one will deny my grand baby a job looking that sharp.

DARIUS

Thank you Granny, how I wish that was true.

BEATRICE

If you think negative, you get negative. So perk up!

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

Close up shot shows rubber glove covered hands using a utility knife to cut various size squares of the now dry and brittle paste.

VOICE (OS)

"Number nine should've been number one to me. If you ain't gettin' bags stay the fuck from police. If niggas think you snitchin' they ain't tryin' to listen. They'll be sittin' in your kitchen, waitin' to start hittin'..."

EXT - INNER CITY - DAY

"Me and the Devil Blues" by Robert Johnson begins to play.

ROBERT JOHNSON

"Early this mornin' when you knocked upon my door Early this mornin', ooh when you knocked upon my door And I said, "Hello, Satan," I believe it's time to go. Me and the Devil was walkin' side by side Me and the Devil, ooh was walkin' side by side And I'm goin' to beat my woman until I get satisfied."

A CRACK ADDICT, in soiled clothes is walking down an inner city street counting coins in the palm of his hand. His eyes are bloodshot and bulging as though he is full of unbridled energy but he stumbles about as if he is drunk.

EXT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

A few YOUNG MEN in athletic gear are standing in front of a beat up clap board house. The crack addict gives his money to one of the Young Men who in turn directs him to another Young Man who gives the Crack Addict a vial of crack and directs him inside the crack house.

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

A close-up shot shows the addict lighting his pipe with a disposable lighter. The fingernails of his hands are caked with dirt and his fingertips looked burnt on the tips. He takes a drag off the pipe and his eyes roll back into their sockets as he exhales grayish white crack smoke into the air. The distinct crackle, hiss, and pop of the burning crack can be heard. The Crack Addicts dry cracked lips erupt into missing tooth smile.

ROBERT JOHNSON (CONT'D)

"She say you don't see why that you will dog me 'round Now, babe, you know you ain't doin' me right, don'cha She say you don't see why, ooh that you will dog me 'round It must-a be that old evil spirit so deep down in the ground. You may bury my body down by the highway side. Baby, I don't care where you bury my body when I'm dead and gone. You may bury my body, ooh down by the highway side. So my old evil spirit can catch a Greyhound bus and ride."

EXT. BUS - DAY

Darius steps off a city bus in his finest Brooks Brothers suit with briefcase in hand. He strolls down the street with a determined yet professional look on his face. He begins to blend into a crowd of other serious and determined looking young men. He is the only African-American face in the crowd.

EXT. BELMONT PHARMACEUTICALS -DAY

Establishing shot of Belmont Pharmaceuticals office building.

RECEPTIONIST

Mr. Moore? (OS)

INT. WAITING AREA OF BELMONT PHARMACEUTICALS - DAY

A friendly looking RECEPTIONIST ushers Darius toward the office of a waiting MR. SOLARIS

DARIUS

Yes.

RECEPTIONIST

Mr. Solaris will see you now.

INT. MR. SOLARIS OFFICE - DAY

MR. SOLARIS, a fairly young (early-30's) yet balding white male is sitting in a high back leather chair behind a large mahogany desk. Darius is sitting in a small chair in front of Mr. Solaris desk with his brief case on his lap.

MR. SOLARIS
So Mr. Moore, can I call you
Darius?

DARIUS
Sure.

MR. SOLARIS
So Darius, what do you feel you can
contribute to Belmont?

DARIUS
I'm a hard and diligent worker. I'm
self motivated yet a team player.

MR. SOLARIS
I see. Do you play racquetball?

DARIUS
I can't say that I do.

MR. SOLARIS
Pity. I would have hired you just
off that. (Laughs) I'm kidding.

DARIUS
That is a pity.

Solaris leans in toward Darius.

MR. SOLARIS
Now, don't take this the wrong way
but you brothers have to learn to
play more than basketball. Golf,
stuff like that; you need more
Tiger Woods.

Darius leans in toward Solaris and quips...

DARIUS
I am Tiger Woods.

MR. SOLARIS
Now that's funny. That's what I'm
talking about. Grab the bull by the
horns.

DARIUS
Yeah. The bull.

MR. SOLARIS
You're not gay are you?

Solaris leers at Darius seductively.

DARIUS

No.

MR. SOLARIS

Good. I can't stand a fucking fag
and I know you brothers would
agree. I am right, huh, am I right?
Up top!

Solaris raises his hand in a high five position.

MR. SOLARIS (CONT'D)

Fuck yeah, I'm right!

Darius shares an awkward high-five moment with Solaris.

INT. CRACK HOUSE - DAY

Close up shot shows rubber glove covered hands placing small pieces of crack cocaine into glass vials with different colored caps on them.

VOICE (OS)

*"Number ten: a strong word called
consignment. Strictly for live men,
not for freshmen. If you ain't got
the clientele say hell no - cause
they gon' want they money -rain,
sleet, hail, snow."*

INT. WAITING AREA OF BELMONT PHARMACEUTICALS - DAY

Darius is politely preparing to leave the office when...

MR. SOLARIS

Look, if I come across anything
Darius I'll let you know.

DARIUS

Thank you Mr. Solaris.
(Shakes Solaris hand)

Solaris nods his head in the direction of the receptionist.
Darius looks over.

MR. SOLARIS

(Whispering to Darius)
See her, that one there, she loves
the mocha latte.

(MORE)

MR. SOLARIS(cont'd)

Can't get enough of it. You want me to set you up? I mean I can't hire you right now but the least I can do is...

DARIUS' POV - RECEPTIONIST

She is looking up, smiling, clueless as to what Solaris is whispering about.

BACK TO SCENE:

DARIUS

Naw. I'll pass. Thanks.

MR. SOLARIS

(Sounding very serious)

You sure. Say the word and...

EXT. SMALL DINER - DAY

Darius is standing in front of a small hole in the wall diner that has a "NOW HIRING - SOME BENEFITS" sign in the window. He goes in.

INT. SMALL DINER - DAY

An OLD WOMAN with a nasty-looking hair net on is standing behind the cash register as Darius walks in.

The Diner is mostly empty except for a patron or two sipping coffee and reading the paper. A chalk board on the wall displays "Today's Special: MEAT LOAF".

OLD WOMAN

Can I help you? Today's special is Salisbury steak, comes with two sides and a drink.

DARIUS

But the board says meatloaf.

OLD WOMAN

Same thing. You want it?

DARIUS

No ma'am. I came for...

CLOSE UP: GUN

The Old Woman puts her hand on a 357 Magnum concealed behind the counter.

INT. SMALL DINER - DAY

Darius is standing staring at the Old Woman - smiling his best - "please hire me" smile.

DARIUS
...the job.

OLD WOMAN
Job?

DARIUS
Yes, your sign says you're hiring?
Some benefits?

CLOSE UP: GUN

Old Woman's hand releases 357 Magnum concealed behind the counter.

BACK TO SCENE:

OLD WOMAN
The sign? Oh the sign! That sign!
Yes. Yes. Hey Bernie!

An OLD MAN/BERNIE comes from the swinging door of the diner kitchen area

OLD MAN/BERNIE
That sign is a typo boy. It means
to say AIN'T hiring.

DARIUS
But the...

Old Man/Bernie points to a tattoo on his arm

OLD MAN/BERNIE
Listen (beat) and listen real good.
We. Ain't. Hiring.

Darius notices a confederate flag with skull and crossbones on the old mans forearm.

DARIUS
I understand.

Darius turns to leave.

OLD WOMAN
But you can come back for the
special anytime.

INT. A SERIES OF INDISCRIMINATE OFFICES - DAY

A series of close-up face shots show a cadre of potential EMPLOYERS who give Darius various reasons he can't be hired.

EMPLOYER ONE
We could start you out as an intern until you got your bachelors, but an Associates degree just won't cut it around here.

EMPLOYER TWO
You seem to be a bit over qualified for entry level and all our management positions are filled internally.

EMPLOYER THREE
Well we have some great positions overseas for someone with your skills you might have to learn a little Bengali, it's an easy language.

EMPLOYER FOUR
Let me be honest with you... your package (beat) it isn't stripper material... looks like the dick fairy skipped you.

EMPLOYER FIVE
We discontinued our affirmative action program last quarter we apologize for the... we have to hire more white people... free rides over.

EMPLOYER SIX
This is the YWCA. You should try the YMCA? Boys Club? Boy Scouts?

EXT. PHONE BOOTH - DAY

Darius is dialing a number. We hear a ring, a click, and a muffled hello. The entire conversation coming from the receiver is muffled, we only hear Darius side of the conversation clearly.

DARIUS

Brad? Yeah I'm at a pay phone. Land line. No. No cell phone. Yo man, remember when you said... if I need anything. Yeah, I said a pay phone, it's cool. Well I need to take you up on that offer. Yeah I know what I said... but that's dead. Two o'clock? Okay Strawberry Trail? Okay. Okay, I'll be there. And thanks man. No really. In a minute.

Darius hangs up and sighs.