

HILLSIDE

Written by

Nikki April Lee

Adromachadi14@gmail.com

WGAE Copyright © 2016

FADE IN:

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Bright and early, it's a school day for DESHAWN BERNARD, 14, African-American who lies in bed staring at the ceiling without a single effort to move.

DESHAWN (V.O.)
Hillside. A place of broken dreams,
dangerous gangs, abandoned mothers
and...

Deshawn looks over at a picture of him and two others in a happy professionally taken picture, his brothers TRYIS BERNARD, late 20s and JAHEIM BERNARD, early 20s.

DESHAWN (V.O.)
... and fallen brothers.

Deshawn moves around his room. He slips into any clothing he can find in his trashed room. The walls are covered with basketball stars.

Deshawn straps on his backpack. He kisses the tips of his fingers and presses them against the image before leaving.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Deshawn heads toward the kitchen when he halts right outside the door. He peeps around the corner to see his brother Jaheim in an argument with his mother TONYA BERNARD, 40s.

JAHEIM
Momma, we gonna make it. I'm the
man now. I can get money. Don't
worry about it.

TONYA
How? You don't have a job yet. How
you gonna get money?

Tonya runs her hands over a newspaper.

JAHEIM
I'ma get it. I got an interview
today at the warehouse. I got it.

Jaheim looks down at his mother studying the newspaper. He snatches the paper from her.

JAHEIM (CONT'D)

That ain't gonna bring him back.

Tonya sobs. Jaheim wraps his arm around his mother.

Deshawn watches from a distance.

Tonya straightens herself.

TONYA

I've got to get to work.

She hops up and leaves. Jaheim throws the newspaper in the trash and storms out the back door.

Deshawn goes to the trash and picks up the newspaper. On the front page is an article with his brother Tyris' picture with the title, "Man Killed By Police No Weapon Found."

Deshawn rips the article out of the paper.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Deshawn walks alongside his best friend BYRON A.K.A. SPIKE, 13, on the way home.

SPIKE

I can't wait until school out. We can go to basketball camp and school them other boys.

DESHAWN

When we go to the pro, what team we going with?

SPIKE

The Bulls.

DESHAWN

Why not the Lakers?

SPIKE

Because they suck.

DESHAWN

They don't suck. You suck.

SPIKE

Whatever. My brother told me your brother gonna lead Hillside Boyz with him.

DESHAWN

Really?

SPIKE

Yep. You know what that means?

DESHAWN

What?

SPIKE

We gonna be Hillside Boyz leaders
next.

The two hoot and howl like wolves in celebration.

DESHAWN & SPIKE

Hillside Boyz! Hillside Boyz!
Hillside Boyz!

EXT. PARK - DAY

Deshawn is on the basketball court alone. He practices his shots. He's really good at it, he hardly misses.

INT. COP CRUISER - DAY

A cop car cruises slowly past the park. Inside is OFFICER CHANCE MONTGOMERY, Caucasian, late 30s, husky. He surveys the neighborhood. In the background, dispatch is communicating with other officers.

Chance slows down almost to a stop to watch Deshawn as he takes one perfect shot after another.

Deshawn bends his knees ready to make another shot when a flashback crosses his mind.

BEGIN FLASHBACK

EXT. HILLSIDE PARK - FIVE YEARS AGO - DAY

Deshawn is a puny nine-year-old with his older brother Tyris, a young teenage stud.

Tyris stands behind Deshawn as they both look up at the basketball hoop. Tyris place the ball in his hands.

TYRIS

Always aim for the back board. You remember how I told you to hold it, right?

Deshawn maneuvers his hands properly on the ball. He bends his knees and gazes at the hoop towering high above him.

TYRIS (CONT'D)

Go ahead.

Deshawn propels the ball upward. The ball SMACKS the backboard and drops down into the basket.

TYRIS (CONT'D)

YEAH! That's it, boy! You got it.

The two high five. Tyris runs after the ball.

TYRIS (CONT'D)

Okay, let's play.

END OF FLASHBACK.

INT. HILLSIDE PARK - CONTINUOUS

Deshawn's eyes fill. Before the tears could fall, he throws the ball out of rage. He plops down on the concrete. He sobs, alone.

Chance pulls over. He crosses the park and retrieves the ball out of the grass. With little experience, he bounces the ball on the court as he makes his way to Deshawn.

Defensive, Deshawn jumps to his feet and gazes at the cop.

CHANCE

Hey. This yours?

Deshawn doesn't answer. A look of anger and curiosity spreads across his face.

CHANCE (CONT'D)

I'm Officer Montgomery. Chance Montgomery. What's your name?

DESHAWN

Deshawn.

CHANCE

Hey, Deshawn. I believe this is your baske--

DESHAWN

What are you doing here?

CHANCE

To give you your ball back. You looked upset.

DESHAWN

Why you in Hillside? We don't like cops.

CHANCE

It's my job. I have to make sure it's safe.

Deshawn chuckles.

DESHAWN

Too late.

Deshawn turns to walk away.

CHANCE

What is your last name Deshawn?

DESHAWN

Why?

CHANCE

Just curious. You look familiar.

DESHAWN

Bernard.

Something hits Chance.

CHANCE

Are you Tyris Bernard's brother?

DESHAWN

Yep.

CHANCE

I'm sorry.

Deshawn shakes his head.

DESHAWN

No, you not. You just like them.

CHANCE

I was on vacation with my family when it happened. If I were there, that never would have happened.

DESHAWN

Vacation?

CHANCE

Yes. I took my family to Disney World. Have you ever been?

DESHAWN

No. Can't afford it.

CHANCE

One day you will.

DESHAWN

I know. After I get into the NBA I'ma take my brother and momma.

CHANCE

NBA, huh? Are you any good?

Deshawn smacks his teeth. He snatches the basketball out of Chance's hand. He steps a good distance from basket and takes the shot. The ball drops with perfected ease into the basket.

CHANCE (CONT'D)

Can you do it twice?

DESHAWN

You got money?

Chance digs in his pocket. He retrieves a twenty-dollar bill.

CHANCE

Will this do?

Deshawn smiles.

Deshawn dribbles the ball between his legs like an absolute pro. Chance comes at him to block him from making the shot. He manages to push him back to the other side of the court.

Trapped, Deshawn takes the shot. The two watch as the ball fly through the air and lands perfect into the basket.

Chance is blown away. Deshawn holds out his hand.

CHANCE (CONT'D)

Who taught you to shoot like that?

DESHAWN

My brother. Tyris.

Deshawn shoves the money into his pocket.

CHANCE

You're really good, Deshawn. You could become a professional NBA player if you really want to.

DESHAWN

I know.

CHANCE

It takes more than skill, you have to stay in school and make good grades. Who knows, you might change your mind and be something else, maybe an architect.

Deshawn eyes the ground then looks back up into the cop's face. A deep sadness.

DESHAWN

That's what my brother was gonna be.

Regret stains Chance's face.

CHANCE

I'm really sorry.

Deshawn picks up the basketball.

DESHAWN

Yep. Me too.

Deshawn walks away.

INT. MONTGOMERY HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Chance comes into the bedroom. His wife KRISTEN MONTGOMERY, 30s, blonde is already in bed. She doesn't look too pleased.

Chance hops into the bed.

KRISTEN

I tried to call you today. I wanted to have lunch together. I called your Captain, he said you were patrolling Hillside.

CHANCE

Yeah, I was. Mike called out, family emergency.

KRISTEN

So you volunteered?

CHANCE

Yeah, it wasn't a problem. It was several of us close by. I didn't mind.

KRISTEN

You could have let someone else do it, Chance.

Chance turns to her.

CHANCE

It's not a big deal.

KRISTEN

Really? Hillside is one of the most dangerous neighborhoods in the city. They have gangs, drugs, and other bad business. I don't want you going over there.

CHANCE

I'm a cop, Kristen, it's my job.

KRISTEN

It's also your job as the father of our two girls to protect them and be here for them.

CHANCE

What do they have to do with this?

KRISTEN

What if something happens to you? What are we suppose to do?

Chance gets out of bed.

CHANCE

You live Kristen. Just live.

He walks out.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Chance flips on the light. Kristen follows him.

KRISTEN

We need you here Chance.

Chance pours a glass of water.

CHANCE

I met this amazing kid today.
Deshawn Bernard. He wants to be a
basketball player.

KRISTEN

Bernard? Sounds familiar.

CHANCE

He's the younger brother of Tyris
Bernard, that kid that was gunned
down a month ago. Poor Deshawn. It
must have been really hard on him.

KRISTEN

The news said there was a gun.

CHANCE

There wasn't.

KRISTEN

He was in that gang though.

Chance looks at Kristen quizzically.

CHANCE

What are you saying? That he
deserved it?

KRISTEN

I'm saying, actions have
consequences. You live in a
neighbor like that, around all that
bad stuff and bad things happen.

Chance chuckles. He amazed by his wife's opinions.

CHANCE

I looked him up. Tyris graduated
from the nearby community college.
He studied architecture. He was a
kid with dreams, like Deshawn, they
just grew up in a bad place. You
can't punish them for that.

Chance walks away. Kristen yells after him.

KRISTEN

Well, it doesn't mean you have to
go risking your life to save
theirs.

The straw that breaks the camel's back. Chance explodes.

CHANCE

I'm a cop, Kristen! It's what I do. I risk my life. I won't hide away when there are innocent people out there who needs me. I don't care how they feel about us, they need our help. Or else what's the point?

Kristen is stunned into silence.

CHANCE (CONT'D)

You of all people should know. You're a teacher. You've met hundreds of children from broken homes. You try to help them, don't you?

KRISTEN

I'm not a social worker Chance. I'm a teacher. It's not my job to fix broken homes. I have two girls to think of, who needs me at the end of the day.

Chance is at a lost for words.

CHANCE

I love my girls as much as you do, but I didn't become a cop to live the good life. I became a cop because I like saving people's lives. I won't apologize for that.

Chance leaves.

INT. BEDROOM - LATER

Chance is too awake to sleep. Kristen comes in. She climbs in and carefully cuddles up to Chance. Chance wraps his arm around her.

KRISTEN

I'm sorry. I'm just afraid. You're right, they do need your help. You're a great cop, father, and husband. Just be careful okay?

CHANCE

I will.

Chance plants a kiss on her lips. Kristen closes her eyes but Chance's eyes stare at the ceiling.

INT. HILLSIDE PARK - DAY

Chance parks the cruiser on the side of the road. He watches Deshawn and his friends play a game of ball.

Deshawn goes to take a shot when he sees Chance's car. He tosses the ball to Spike.

DESHAWN

Hey, you keep playing alright? I'll be back.

SPIKE

C'mon man, we about to beat them.

Deshawn jogs to the cop car. Chance gets out.

DESHAWN

You ain't tired of Hillside yet?
You here every day.

CHANCE

It's my job.

The two perform a handshake.

From a distance, Spike and a few of the other boys watch in disbelief.

SPIKE

What's he doing?

Deshawn checks out Chance's car.

DESHAWN

Can I get in?

CHANCE

Yeah, other side.

INT. COP CRUISER - DAY

The two hop in the cruiser.

Deshawn is amazed by all the gear.

DESHAWN

I never been in one of these before.

CHANCE

Let's hope you never will, but only if you're an actual cop.

DESHAWN
Can you keep this?

CHANCE
As long as I'm a cop, yes.

DESHAWN
What else you get?

Chance looks around.

CHANCE
Well, I get this utility belt. It has mase, a baton, handcuffs, a gun...

DESHAWN
Can I have the gun?

CHANCE
No. You're a minor.

DESHAWN
I can't wait to get my own gun.

CHANCE
Just make sure you use it for the right reasons, protection. I hear the Hillside Boyz gang can be pretty dangerous.

DESHAWN
No they ain't. They protect us.

CHANCE
From who?

DESHAWN
You.

CHANCE
We're not all bad, Deshawn.

Deshawn nods. A small smile on his face.

DESHAWN
I know.

Deshawn looks around, he picks up an officer ball cap.

DESHAWN (CONT'D)
Can I have this?

CHANCE
Yeah.

DESHAWN
Cool.

Deshawn sports the hat. He checks himself out in the sun visor mirror.

CHANCE
Deshawn, what do you know about Hillside Boyz?

DESHAWN
Why?

CHANCE
I'm just curious. Do you know someone whose in it?

DESHAWN
No.

CHANCE
Are you sure? It's okay to tell me.

DESHAWN
I ain't no snitch.

CHANCE
So you do know someone?

DESHAWN
Nope.

Chance chuckles.

CHANCE
Okay, I'll drop it.

DESHAWN
Good.

Suddenly dispatch buzz through.

DISPATCH
Radio to units 412 and 122.

Chance snatches up the microphone.

CHANCE
This is unit 412, go ahead.

DISPATCH

Please respond to 1254 Benet St. in
North Hillside for a report of
several gunshots heard.

CHANCE

Copy, en route.

Chance looks to Deshawn.

CHANCE.

I have to go. You stay at the park.
Don't go anywhere, you hear me?

Deshawn nods.

Deshawn hops out. Chance flips on his lights and bolts down
the road out of sight.

Deshawn puts on his ball cap. Spikes runs over.

SPIKE

What was that all about?

DESHAWN

He had to go. Shootin' in North
Hill.

SPIKE

What's that on your head? He gave
you that?

DESHAWN

Yeah.

Spike looks him up and down.

SPIKE

Sellout.

Deshawn offended.

DESHAWN

I ain't no sellout.

SPIKE

Then what you doin with that cop
hat then?

DESHAWN

He gave it to me.

Spike gets in his face.

SPIKE
He killed Tyris.

DESHAWN
No he didn't. It was another cop.

SPIKE
They all the same.

DESHAWN
No they ain't.

SPIKE
If we gonna be Hillside Boyz, we
can't be talkin' to any cop.

DESHAWN
I ain't talkin to him.

SPIKE
Get rid of it.

DESHAWN
What?

SPIKE
If you a Hillside Boy, get rid of
the hat.

Deshawn snatches the hat off his head. The boys watch as he crosses the park to a trash can. A hint of guilt plops on his face before he shoves it in.

DESHAWN
We good?

SPIKE
Yeah, we good. Come on, let's play.

Spike and the others run to the baskets. Deshawn looks back at the can before he joins them.

INT. DESHAWN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Deshawn is doing homework on his bed when he hears sirens. A reminder.

He opens the window and hops out.

INT. HILLSIDE PARK - NIGHT

Deshawn creeps across the park to the trash can from earlier. He pulls out the police cap now covered with food and trash.

EXT. HOME - NIGHT

Deshawn hoses off the cap.

INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - NIGHT

Tonya walks into the laundry room. She looks worn down and nearly defeated. She gets ready to open the dryer when Deshawn runs in.

DESHAWN

I got it, momma.

TONYA

Oh, thank you, Deshawn. Those your brother clothes. Lay them out so they don't get wrinkled.

DESHAWN

Yes, ma'am.

Tonya sighs with exhaustion.

TONYA

I'm going to bed. Good night baby.

DESHAWN

Good night, momma.

Deshawn waits until she's out of sight. He pulls the clothes from the dryer. He pulls the police ball cap out of the mix.

INT. DESHAWN'S BEDROOM - LATER

Deshawn pulls out a shoe box from under his bed. Inside is a gun, the news article of his brother Tyris and a large fold of cash.

He places the ball cap into the box and closes it shut.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Chance is at his locker preparing to go home when another officer walks in THOMAS, 40s.

THOMAS

What a day, huh? Thank God it's Friday.

CHANCE

Won't make a difference for me, I've got to work this weekend.

THOMAS

That sucks. Hey, great job on the arrest today. I heard there was another shooting in North Hillside.

CHANCE

Yeah. I guess I got there in time.

THOMAS

I don't know how you do it.

Thomas sits on the center bench and unties his shoes.

CHANCE

Do what?

THOMAS

Patrol Hillside.

CHANCE

Somebody's got to do it.

THOMAS

Better you than me.

CHANCE

It's not bad. Remember that kid Tyris Bernard who was gunned down a month ago?

THOMAS

Yeah?

Chance unloads his utility belt.

CHANCE

I met his brother a week ago. Deshawn Bernard. The kids a hell of a basketball player. He's a great kid. He's got big dreams.

Thomas doesn't look too happy about it.

THOMAS

Did you hear about Mark?

CHANCE
No. Are they charging him?

THOMAS
No.

Chance freeze. He looks at Thomas.

CHANCE
No?

THOMAS
Rumor is they're letting him off
the hook. They're justifying it as
self-defense.

CHANCE
Are you serious?

THOMAS
He felt threatened, Chance, he had
to do what he had to do. He had a
gun.

CHANCE
There was no gun. I read the notes
and check evidence myself. There
was no gun.

THOMAS
Well, regardless, he did what he
thought was right at that moment.

Anger bubbles up on Chance's face.

CHANCE
You sound like my wife.

THOMAS
Well, you need to listen to her
then. And you need to stop getting
friendly with this Deshawn kid. His
brother was in the Hillside gang
and his second oldest brother is
doing the same. You know how this
goes, Chance. It's only a matter of
time before he's a part of it too.

CHANCE
The kids just need reassurance.
They've lost trust in us, Thomas.
They need protection and good
influence.

(MORE)

CHANCE (CONT'D)

They rely on the gangs for protection because they have no one else.

THOMAS

Case in point. It's too late for most of them. It's dangerous. If I were you I'd stay out of it. Do your job and go home.

Chance is over this now.

CHANCE

What would you know about danger? You've been patrolling the same gated neighborhoods for ten years.

Thomas stands.

THOMAS

They know me over there. They trust me.

CHANCE

Of course they do, you're the only one who patrols that area. Even the new guys can't get those shifts.

THOMAS

What are you saying, Chance?

CHANCE

I'm saying how would you know what dangers are out there when you're in the better parts of the city?

Thomas gets in his face.

THOMAS

You wanna know what I know? I know that patrolling Hillside is a waste of time. It's nothing but a bunch of broken families, drugs, crimes, and thugs. I have a wife and kids to care for. I'm not gonna risk my life for some gang.

Chance gets back in his face.

CHANCE

Then you don't deserve to be a cop.

THOMAS

I don't have to listen to this.

CHANCE

Don't worry, I was just leaving.

Chance puts away his belt and SLAMS the locker shut. He stops at the door.

CHANCE (CONT'D)

Why did you become a cop by the way?

THOMAS

To protect my friends and family from danger.

CHANCE

Yeah? Well who protects *their* friends and family from danger? Who's going to make sure they're communities are safe enough to live in? Huh?

Thomas says nothing.

CHANCE (CONT'D)

All lives matter Thomas, not just ours.

Chance leaves.

INT. PRECINCT LOBBY - DAY

Chance rushes toward the exit when he sees a crowd of cops off to the side.

At the center is OFFICER MARK RAINES, the cop accused of killing Tyris. The cops surround him shaking his hand wishing him luck on getting off.

Chance swells like a raging bull. He storms over to the crowd, pushes his way through.

MARK

Hey, Chance!

Chance blows him straight in the face. Cops pull him off. Mark holds his bleeding nose.

EXT. BERNARD'S HOME - DAY

Chance pulls up in front of Deshawn's home. There is a car already in front.

A MAN in a suit carrying a briefcase, a lawyer, comes down the steps and hops into his car.

Deshawn comes out of the house. He isn't happy at all. He must have heard the news.

Chance gets out of the car. Deshawn burns with hate. The cop hat dangles in his hand.

CHANCE

Deshawn, let me explain to you--

DESHAWN

Explain what? That cop getting away with killing my brother?

Deshawn throws the hat at him.

CHANCE

This isn't over yet.

DESHAWN

What does it matter? We all know what's going to happen. He gonna get away with it. Yall *always* get away with it. My brother's dead because of you!

Angry tears roll down Deshawn's cheeks. Pain swallows him up.

CHANCE

Deshawn, not every cop is like that.

DESHAWN

Liar! I hate you. Get out of my neighborhood.

Jaheim comes out of the house. He pulls his brother to him.

JAHEIM

Is there a problem, Officer?

Chance looks at the gun dangling by Jaheim's side.

CHANCE

No. No problem.

Chance climbs back into his car and leaves.

INT. CHANCE'S HOME - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Chance sits at the table, he's far away in thought.

Kristen comes in. She blinks at the light.

KRISTEN

Honey, it's two in the morning,
come to bed.

CHANCE

I will, in a while.

Kristen sits down next to him.

KRISTEN

There's nothing you can do now.

CHANCE

He's going to get off. They're
already celebrating it.

KRISTEN

You tried...

CHANCE

Deshawn hates me now. Distrusts me.
They all do.

Kristen is unsure what else to say. She places a hand on his.

KRISTEN

Don't give up. Keep doing what
you've been doing. Eventually,
they'll see that not all cops are
bad.

Chance nods.

KRISTEN (CONT'D)

Come to bed now. You need rest.

Chance gets up and follows his wife out.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Chance jogs through his neighborhood. He takes notice of his beautiful surroundings. Each home, a repetition of the one before it, beside it and across from it. A cookie-cutter neighborhood.

Chance passes by each row of streets with more replicas of lovely homes. Nuclear families work and play in their perfect yards. Worry-free smiles on their faces.

Chance breaks into a run.

He breaks when he comes to the entrance of his community. The huge black steel gates with key code entrance.

He watches as a citizen leans out of her car to key in her code. The gate opens automatically and closes immediately after she drives in.

Chance stares at the massive gates, a metaphor of his life; safety, protection, crime-free neighborhood, great schools, law-abiding neighbors; a perfect lifestyle. A lifestyle Deshawn and others like him have never known or would ever know in their lifetime and generations to come.

Unable to tolerate the notion, Chance turns away and jogs back home.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Jaheim sits in the car next to his best man DERRICK "TANK" BRASMAN, 20s.

TANK

What you gonna do for your initiation? You know it's got to be something big.

JAHEIM

I got something.

TANK

What is it?

JAHEIM

Ambush.

TANK

On who?

Jaheim gives a sinister smile.

JAHEIM

A cop. Get the guys, tell em to meet me at the warehouse.

TANK

Bet. Let's do it.

INT. CHANCE'S HOME - NIGHT

Chance prepares to leave. Kristen straightens up his uniform.

CHANCE

What kind of starch did you use on this? It's stiff as a board.

Kristen giggles.

KRISTEN

It makes you look nice and neat.

CHANCE

And stiff.

Kristen kisses him.

KRISTEN

Be careful.

CHANCE

Always. Try not to stay up. Get some sleep.

KRISTEN

I haven't gotten sleep since the girls were born.

CHANCE

You wanted them.

KRISTEN

You did too.

CHANCE

I did. Have a good night. I love you.

KRISTEN

I love you too.

INT. COP CRUISER - NIGHT

Chance strolls through the neighborhood. There is an eerie dead silence in the air.

Dispatch buzz in.

DISPATCH

Radio to unit 412.

CHANCE

This is unit 412, go ahead.

DISPATCH
Report to address 2344 Dylar St.
for a domestic disturbance.

CHANCE
Copy that, I am on the way.

EXT. HOME - NIGHT

Chance hops out of the car. He waits for any sounds. He walks up to the door and listens. Silence. He knocks.

A YOUNG WOMAN answers the door. A scowl on her face.

YOUNG WOMAN
What you want?

CHANCE
Someone called the police for a
domestic disturbance.

YOUNG WOMAN
No. Ain't nobody call you.

GUNSHOTS are heard. The woman SLAMS the door shut.

Chance ducks down. He draws his gun. He reaches for his magazine. Nowhere.

CHANCE
What the hell?

He checks the ground.

CHANCE (CONT'D)
Damn it!

Chance sneaks out to his car.

Coming toward him is a massive group of men armed with all sorts of weapons.

Jaheim spots Chance trying to get in his car. He shoots at the car. Chance runs off on the side of the house.

He watches as the boys shoot up the cop car. Others SMASH the glass and STAB the tires.

CHANCE (CONT'D)
Shit!

Chance disappears behind the house.

INT. DESHAWN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Deshawn is on the bed, anger evident on his face.

Tonya bursts through the door.

TONYA

Get on the floor, they shootin'!

Deshawn quickly gets to the floor. Tonya crawls out of the room.

Deshawn looks up at the picture of him and his brothers.

DESHAWN

Jaheim...

Deshawn crawls out the window.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Deshawn creeps down the street. GUNSHOTS are still heard in the background.

Deshawn notices the burning cop car. He spots the familiar name on the rear, Montgomery. Fear floods his face.

Jaheim and his mob hoot and holler down the street. He turns to them.

JAHEIM

Spread out! Find him, bring his ass here alive!

The mob goes wild, they scatter like insects.

EXT. YARD - NIGHT

Chance dodge between bushes and over fences from yard to yard. He hides behind a car.

He pops open his phone and dials.

CHANCE

Hello, this is Officer Montgomery from unit 412, I need back up to North Hillside. I've been caught in an ambush. I need back up now!

He clicks the phone. A NOISE comes. He freezes.

DESHAWN
Hey, Chance!

Chance peeps around the car.

CHANCE
Deshawn, what are you doing out
here? Go home!

DESHAWN
They're looking for you.

CHANCE
I know that.

DESHAWN
Come on, I know where to hide.

Chance is reluctant at first, especially after their last conversation.

DESHAWN (CONT'D)
Trust me.

Chance follows him.

INT. ABANDONED HOME - NIGHT

Chance and Deshawn break into the boarded up home.

DESHAWN
They won't find us here.

Chance kneels to catch his breath.

CHANCE
Deshawn, listen to me.

Deshawn turns to him.

CHANCE (CONT'D)
I'm sorry, about the cop. It wasn't
right.

DESHAWN
When I find him, I'm gonna hit him
in his face.

Chance shakes his head with a chuckle. He stands, still
breathless.

CHANCE

First off, assaulting a cop is a felony. You don't want that. Second, I may have already taken care of that.

Chance flexes his wrapped knuckles.

Deshawn smiles impressed.

DESHAWN

Cool.

CHANCE

Yeah. Listen, cops are on the way. If your brother doesn't back down, it's going to be trouble.

DESHAWN

Give me your phone. I can call help. Spike, my friend, he'll help us.

CHANCE

Are you sure?

DESHAWN

Yeah.

Chance gives him the phone.

Deshawn dials.

INT. SPIKE'S HOME - NIGHT

Spike is in the living room watching a game on tv. The phone RINGS. He runs over to answer.

SPIKE

Hello?

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

DESHAWN

Hey, Spike, you gotta help me.

SPIKE

Where you at?

DESHAWN

I'm at the old shack down the street.

(MORE)

DESHAWN (CONT'D)

I'm here with the cop they lookin for. You gotta help me get him out of here or else everybody gonna be in trouble.

Spike looks a little sour.

SPIKE

Alright, I'll be there in a minute.

DESHAWN

Okay.

Deshawn hangs up.

DESHAWN (CONT'D)

See? He coming to help.

CHANCE

Let's hope he gets here in time.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Jaheim is surrounded by some of his crew waiting. Spike runs up to him.

JAHEIM

What is it, little man?

SPIKE

I know where the cop is? He wit Deshawn.

Jaheim swells.

JAHEIM

Let's go.

INT. ABANDONED HOME - NIGHT

Chance paces.

CHANCE

Where are they?

DESHAWN

Where's spike?

Sudden GUNSHOTS beat against the house. Chance pulls Deshawn to the ground covering him with his body.

EXT. ABANDONED HOME - NIGHT

Jaheim stands in front of large crowd of boys and men. Spike and Tank by his side.

JAHEIM

Let my brother go cop, and you
won't get hurt.

INTERCUT - CHANCE AND JAHEIM

Chance slowly gets up.

CHANCE

Are you alright?

DESHAWN

Yeah.

CHANCE

Go. He wants you out there. He
won't shoot anymore with you in
here.

DESHAWN

What about you?

CHANCE

I'll wait.

DESHAWN

Then I'll wait too.

CHANCE

No. Go right now before you get
hurt.

JAHEIM

Deshawn! You in there?

DESHAWN

Yeah!

JAHEIM

I'm proud of you boy. Bring the cop
out.

Deshawn looks at Chance. Chance shakes his head.

DESHAWN

No.

JAHEIM

We ain't gonna hurt him. Tell him to come out. We just wanna talk. Either that or we shoot the door down.

CHANCE

Alright! I'm coming out.

The mob waits as Deshawn and Chance come from around the back. Chance keeps Deshawn behind him just in case.

JAHEIM

Let my brother go, cop.

Chance puts his hands up.

CHANCE

Go.

Deshawn refuses.

JAHEIM

(to Tank)
Get him.

Tank and a few others separate the two.

JAHEIM (CONT'D)

Bring him!

The mob yells out. They drag Chance to the street.

Deshawn tries to break from Tank's grip. He looks over at Spike. Spike nods with a sinful smile. He walks off to join the crowd.

EXT. STREETS - NIGHT

Chance is on the ground. Fear pounds in his eyes.

JAHEIM

Piece of shit!

Jaheim kicks him. Some of the others join in.

DESHAWN

No! Stop!

Tank gives Chance a couple of punches to the face.

Chance is too weary to fight back.

A gun COCKS.

The boys stop their assault. Chance looks up weakly at a gun point down at him. He looks past the barrel at the hateful look in Jaheim's eyes.

Deshawn breaks from his bonds.

JAHEIM
This is for my brother.

DESHAWN
No!

Deshawn stands in between Chance and Jaheim.

Deshawn is furious, he shoves Jaheim.

DESHAWN (CONT'D)
Is this what you want? Huh? You
wanna die?

Jaheim staggers back as his brother continues to shove him

DESHAWN (CONT'D)
You want me to lose another
brother? Is that what you want?

Jaheim pushes back but Deshawn keeps coming at him with a mix of punches and shoves.

DESHAWN (CONT'D)
You want momma to lose another son?
What's gonna happen if we lose you?
Huh? Answer me!

Everyone watch the two brothers go at it.

Jaheim shoves Deshawn to the ground.

JAHEIM
They killed our brother. It's time
we kill theirs.

Jaheim goes back to Chance who is crouched on the street. He doesn't move in fear of his life.

Jaheim aims the gun at him.

Deshawn hops off the ground. He gets in between them again. Deshawn lets the gun push in his head. His eyes fiery with boldness. No more fear.

Jaheim is stunned.

JAHEIM (CONT'D)

Move.

DESHAWN

No.

JAHEIM

I said move!

DESHAWN

I ain't movin' nowhere!

Cop SIRENS blare in the background. An ocean of cop cars races toward them.

Tank grabs Spike and runs. Other follow.

Chance quickly gets off the ground.

Jaheim looks at the flood of cops as they get near. He looks scared for the first time.

The cars stop and cops get out all weapons aimed at him.

COP

Put down your weapon and put your hands up!

CHANCE

Put it down. Hurry up.

Jaheim turns to Chance.

CHANCE (CONT'D)

Do it, I can help you. If you don't put it down, they'll kill you. Put it down.

Jaheim stares at Chance with uncertainty. He looks down at Deshawn. Deshawn is frightened. He may lose another brother. He looks back at the cops who are ready to fire.

CHANCE (CONT'D)

Put it down, now. I can help. Trust me.

Jaheim gazes at him. How can he trust him after what happened to his brother?

CHANCE (CONT'D)

Do it.

Jaheim lays the gun on the ground. He puts his hands up.

CHANCE (CONT'D)

I'm going to put your hands behind
your back. Just do as I say until
we get to the station.

Chance pulls Jaheim's hands behind his back. They walk slowly to the cops. Jaheim looks back at Deshawn, fear and apology in his eyes.

A couple of cops take him off of Chance's hands.

Deshawn watch as the car drives off. Chance comes over to him.

CHANCE (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

Deshawn shakes his head as his eyes fill. He breaks into a cry. Chance kneels and pulls him close. Deshawn wraps his arms around the cop as if to cry to his father.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Deshawn plays in the street with some of the boys.

SUPER - ONE YEAR LATER

A cop cruiser rides toward them.

DESHAWN

It's Jaheim!

Deshawn bolts through the yard onto the porch of his house.

DESHAWN (CONT'D)

Momma! It's Jaheim. He home!

Tonya bursts out of the door.

The cruiser parks in front of the house.

Neighbors come out to see the commotion.

Chance hops out of the car. He goes around the side to let Jaheim out.

Deshawn runs into his arms.

JAHEIM

Shawn, what's up man!

Jaheim looks up at his crying momma.

JAHEIM (CONT'D)

Momma...

Jaheim walks to her. Right before embrace, she SMACKS him hard across the face. Everyone's eyes pop.

TONYA

What's wrong with you boy?! Don't you ever do that to me again!

Tonya pulls him into her arms. Jaheim hugs her tight.

JAHEIM

I'm sorry, momma.

Deshawn looks at Chance and smiles.

TONYA

How you get out so early?

JAHEIM

The cop help me out. I'm on parole for another year, though.

TONYA

Thank you, Officer.

CHANCE

You're welcome ma'am.

The two go inside.

Deshawn goes to the car.

DESHAWN

How did you get him off?

Chance folds his arms.

CHANCE

I ain't no snitch.

They chuckle.

DESHAWN

Thanks.

CHANCE

You're welcome. Keep him out of trouble, okay?

Deshawn nods.

CHANCE (CONT'D)
Oh, I almost forgot. I got you something.

Chance hands him a box.

CHANCE (CONT'D)
Don't lose it.

Chance leaves.

Deshawn opens the box. A huge smile brightens his face.

EXT. HILLSIDE PARK - DAY

Deshawn takes a break from a game of basketball with Spike and his friends.

SPIKE
Hey, that cop really came through for Jaheim. I know you happy.

JAHEIM
I am.

SPIKE
We still going to that summer camp next year?

JAHEIM
Yeah, maybe.

SPIKE
Maybe? How else we gonna learn to be the greatest ball players since Jordan?

Deshawn laugh.

SPIKE (CONT'D)
What could be better than that?

One of the other boys calls for them to come back to the game.

Deshawn reaches into his pocket and pulls out an official police badge with his name on it. He smiles answering Spike's question.

SPIKE (CONT'D)
Come on Deshawn!

Deshawn shoves the badge back into his pocket and joins the boys.

FADE OUT.

THE END.