

GETTING LIFE

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. LAMAR'S HOME - DAY

SUPER: FRIDAY 7AM

The constant annoying sounds of an alarm is heard blasting through this dark room.

A hand smacks it silent.

DENISE (27) is tapping LAMAR (29) to force him out of his slumber.

DENISE  
Babe, babe, wake up...

Lamar grunts.

DENISE  
Babe you need to be getting ready  
for your interview at ten o'clock.

Denise gets out the bed and opens the blinds to let the sun in.

LAMAR  
Alright I'm up, I'm up babe, I  
still don't know why I'm getting up  
three hours before my interview.

DENISE  
Nothing is better than proper  
preparation. You never know you may  
get hired today...  
(turns on the shower)  
I'll get the kids together, you  
don't need to be thinking about  
nothing but landing this job.

Denise is charged with energy as Lamar takes a moment to examine her.

LAMAR  
(stops her)  
Babe hold, hold, hold on. Come  
here...  
(he hugs her)  
My goodness you making me nervous.

They both laugh.

DENISE

I know I'm all over the place baby. But being a security guard at one of the top entertainment companies is paying tremendously. And you've been without a job for how many months?

He looks at her bewildered by the comment.

LAMAR

Six.

DENISE

That's six months too long...  
(she tries soothing him)  
I'm just saying baby, you may not be the best at taking interviews.

LAMAR

Babe listen, I may not be good at interviews but they must see something they like. I just applied for the job three days ago and already got an interview. The position been open for almost two weeks...

DENISE

So what does that mean?

LAMAR

They are waiting for somebody like me, to run the whole security department. Usually it's a whole process to land a job like this.

DENISE

I believe in you baby.

He cradles her face.

LAMAR

I know you do. And I know we need this job, trust me, I got it.

He kisses her.

LAMAR

Thank you.

INT. LAMAR'S CAR - DAY

With the car radio station turned on, Lamar cuts the volume down closes his eyes and takes a deep breath. He is saying a silent prayer.

A knock at the window interrupts him, it's Denise.

DENISE

Here babe take this put this in your suit pocket--

LAMAR

What is this?

DENISE

It's a recorder, beore you deny it just hear me out...

He becomes irate and tries to decline it.

DENISE

Before you deny it, listen. Think of it like this, if the interview goes well, that's great, I get to hear how well you did. But if the interview doesn't work in your favor, we can listen to key parts to focus on for your next interview.

She shoves the recorder in his suit jacket, then kisses a stale-face Lamar.

DENISE

(kisses him)

Okay, love you.

EXT. BOSS TO BOSS ENTERTAINMENT BUILDING - DAY

The aerial view of the building is glaring with sun rays beaming off the fleshly wiped windows.

We can hear a man's humorous laughter with joy and excitement.

GERALD (O.S.)

I can't wait. Today feels better than the day I came home...

INT. GERALD'S OFFICE - DAY

Walking back and forth, from wall to wall is GERALD (37). He is in a state of uncontrollable nervousness as he talks in his blue tooth.

GERALD

We got to celebrate after this...  
(puts Champagne in a bag)  
They say pussy is better than this,  
but I disagree.

Knocking at the door is his assistant RHONDA (30) who wears a blue tight fitting dress that shows all of her natural curves.

RHONDA

Boss, your ten o'clock is here, it  
is a Mr. Hall.

Gerald sits in his chair and turns it away from the door to face out the window, of his wonderful view of the city.

GERALD

I know who it is.

He removes his blue tooth from his ear, and switches his demeanor from joyous to cold.

GERALD

Bring him in.

Lamar walks in with confidence as he looks at the neatly kept office.

LAMAR

(to Rhonda)  
Thank you...

He is holding a professional binder.

LAMAR

I'd like to start by saying thank  
you for the opportunity to work for  
a company that has the  
accomplishments you have here at  
Boss to Boss Entertainment sir.

Lamar walks to a chair in front of Gerald's desk. He sits down.

GERALD

Did I say you can sit down?

LAMAR  
No sir you didn't.

GERALD  
You stand then.

GERALD  
(low tone)  
Go over to the file cabinet on the  
wall...

He does as he is told.

GERALD  
Open the top cabinet. Pull out the  
chrome nine millimeter...

Lamar shows no reluctance and continues with every  
instruction as he pulls out a chrome nine.

GERALD  
Open the second one. Load the mag  
with three bullets. Place the  
silencer on the weapon also. You  
have three attempts to hit the vase  
on that glass shelf, from where you  
are standing.

Lamar looks at the silencer, then Gerald, then the vase.

The vase is fifteen yards away from Lamar. He takes one more  
look at Gerald.

GERALD  
You may began.

With one shot the vase is busted and ashes pour out.

Gerald claps.

GERALD  
Say hi to my punk ass daddy.

Gerald swings his chair around and rises from his desk to  
greet Lamar.

GERALD  
What's the matter Mr. Hall? You're  
not happy to see me?

Lamar is now nervous and caught off guard.

LAMAR

Pleased to see you are doing good  
for yourself Mr. Martin--

GERALD

Call me Gerald. You can put the gun  
back in the top drawer.

After the pistol is placed in the top drawer, Gerald locks  
the cabinet.

Lamar looks very disturbed.

GERALD

It's funny how life works out ain't  
it?

Gerald makes his way over to the ashes that flows from the  
vase.

GERALD

One day you hold the key to my  
freedom the next day I hold the key  
to your employment...

LAMAR

Gerald I'd like to apologize for--

Gerald holds up a finger to his lips, SHHH!!!

There's a moment of silence while the ashes flows through  
Gerald's hand.

GERALD

Ashes to ashes. Let the interview  
begin.

Lamar has a seat directly in front of the desk and Gerald  
returns to his swivel chair.

LAMAR

I'm impressed with what you have  
built--

GERALD

Your last place of employment was a  
correction officer correct?

LAMAR

Right.

GERALD

Was this maximum? Minimum?

LAMAR

Cmon, man you know this I mean you were there...

Gerald stares at him blankly.

LAMAR

Maximum.

GERALD

Would you say you are a strong individual?

LAMAR

I work out every now and again I would say I'm pretty strong for my size.

Gerald is jotting down on a sheet of paper.

GERALD

I'm going to ask you a series of true or false questions, please answer them to the best of your knowledge. This will determine if you qualify for the position or not. Are you ready?

LAMAR

Ready.

GERALD

Is it true that you loved your job as a C.O.?

LAMAR

True.

GERALD

Is it true that the warden trains all of his officers to hate inmates?

LAMAR

(silently)

True.

GERALD

Is it true that ya'll have a motto as C.O.'s?

Lamar is silent.

GERALD  
Excuse me, I asked you a question.

LAMAR  
It's true, we have a motto.

GERALD  
(smiling)  
I'd like to here the motto please.

LAMAR  
(whispering)  
Prison is a revolving door--

GERALD  
I'm sorry sir you're going to have  
to speak up I can't hear you.

LAMAR  
(louder)  
Prison is a revolving door, our job  
is to make sure the others come  
back no more. And if so happen they  
come back twice make the others  
wish they had life.

GERALD  
And by others who are you referring  
to?

LAMAR  
Repeat offenders.

GERALD  
I don't understand the motto why  
would someone wish they were doing  
life?

LAMAR  
Because we treated the inmates that  
were doing life like royalty.

GERALD  
Why?

LAMAR  
Because we didn't want to wake the  
beast. They live there we work  
there.

GERALD

Oh I see so you treat the guys that were going home like shit, to make the ones doing life seem like the more privilege?

LAMAR

Mainly the repeat offenders.

GERALD

And what was some of these acts you were instructed to do to...

(uses quote gestures)

The others.

FLASHBACK

INT. PENITENTIARY - HOLE

Gerald is chained to a poll next to a couple other inmates.

They each have whips on their backs.

WARDEN MACK and a few correction officers are sweating from the beaten they have put on the inmates.

Gerald walks in, and is caught off guard by the sight, he attempts to retreat but is called back in by the warden.

WARDEN MACK

(country accent)

Here you are Lamar...

Handing him the whip.

WARDEN MACK

Why don't you gon head and let off some steam.

Lamar has the whip in his hand and looks like he wants to hand it back.

He looks at the inmates with sorrow.

WARDEN MACK

Don't you feel sorry for them. These fuckers sell drugs to kids. They steal from grandparants, your grandparants...

The pressure is among him, as the officers are laughing and drinking whisky.

WARDEN MACK  
(grabs Gerald's face)  
This guy here likes to play with  
guns. Givin the chance he will  
shoot you dead.

The Warden steps back and Lamar proceeds to smack Gerald  
angrily.

PRESENT

GERALD  
Would you say that being a  
correction officer turned you into  
an animal?

Lamar takes a deep breath.

LAMAR  
I would say no I have changed.

FLASHBACK

INT. WARDEN MACK'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Lamar is standing up looking at Warden Mack sitting behind  
his desk.

WARDEN MACK  
Do you want to stay here at this  
correctional institution?

LAMAR  
Of course sir.

WARDEN MACK  
Prove it.

INT. PRISON - NIGHT

Lamar's correction uniform is disheveled like he has been  
scuffling for several minutes. He slams Gerald to the ground.

PRESENT

Lamar is silent and sits very uncomfortably.

GERALD  
(tone gets louder)  
Have you ever used excessive force  
Mr. Hall?

FLASHBACK

As a correction officer Lamar stuffs Gerald's head in the pavement.

PRESENT

A nervous Lamar adjust his collar.

LAMAR  
Those times were actually the  
warden's orders to hurt you--

GERALD  
I didn't ask you to give me an  
explanation?

LAMAR  
Sometimes, it required for us to  
use excessive force.

Gerald jots more information down on his sheet of paper and smirks.

GERALD  
Do you think it's possible you or  
other C.O.'s damaged any inmates  
for life?

Lamar is becoming sad.

LAMAR  
Yeah I do man. That's why I  
apologized and that's also why I  
eventually resigned.

GERALD  
Why do you feel you are the top  
qualified for this position as head  
of security?

LAMAR  
Because I display leadership, a  
sense of focus, and can adjust to  
any situation--

GERALD

Okay you can leave now.

LAMAR

What? What do you mean that's it?

GERALD

Yes, that it. We found somebody better fit for the position.

LAMAR

You knew you wasn't going to give me the job in the first place. What you call me here for, to pick my brain, humiliate me. No you really just hurt yourself, all those old wounds you just opened up. I'm at peace with who I am, and what I did, I found peace, have you?

Lamar looks at Gerald as he holds his head down in shame.

Lamar walks out the office and Gerald raises his head up deep in thought.

INT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Gerald is calling Lamar before he reaches his car.

GERALD

Look man I heard what you said and I do think I'm holding on to some old hate. I can't keep going through life like this, I need to learn forgiveness...

Lamar is shaking his head agreeing with Gerald.

GERALD

Lamar I'll help you out and give you the position, as a matter of fact I'll make you head of security but you have to help me with my first steps in forgiveness.

LAMAR

Whenever you ready man?

GERALD

I'm ready now.

LAMAR

Right now?

GERALD

Today.

Gerald pops the trunk of his newer model Maserati.

He puts the bag in there and press the button to close it.

GERALD

Let's roll.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

INT. GERALD'S MASERATI - DAY

The interior of the car is a scarlet red, and the leather is shining throughout this vehicle.

Gerald is deep in his thoughts.

FLASHBACK

INT. CHOW HALL - DAY

An inmate name PAUL is walking to a table with his tray in hand. He looks over to view other inmates who are standing up and eating pizza out the boxes.

Paul looks down at his slop meal, and carrots.

Gerald walks up behind the man with a tray in his hand.

GERALD

You better keep it pushing nigga.  
Those are the lifers right there,  
and we ain't as privileged as them.

INT. PENITENTIARY/ HOLE - NIGHT

There are two guys on their bunks Gerald and Paul.

Gerald is on the bottom bunk, and Paul on the top.

GERALD

Have they issued their punishment  
on you?

Paul looks scared shit-less.

PAUL  
No, not yet.

GERALD  
You do know what they do right?

PAUL  
I've heard stories.

GERALD  
Well it gets worst than the stories  
you heard...

PAUL  
What do you mean?

GERALD  
Depending on what you're in here  
for.

PAUL  
Child support.

GERALD  
You serious they giving ya'll time  
for child support?

PAUL  
I lost my job and missed a month of  
pay. The judge gave me ninety days  
in jail. Then the same judge turns  
around and gives me a year for not  
paying for those three months that  
I was in jail.

GERALD  
Damn I'm sorry to hear that man.

PAUL  
The warden got it out for me.

GERALD  
He got it out for all of us that's  
going home.

The cell door opens abruptly and walking in is OFFICER HILL,  
along with Warden Mack.

Stumbling in holding a half empty bottle is Lamar.

Paul sits up in his rack and he is immediately snatched off  
with force and thrown to the ground, they kick him  
repeatedly.

Gerald turns over in his rack to avoid witnessing this beat down.

The warden invites Lamar in on the action.

WARDEN MACK

Hey Lamar it's time to break you in  
man come get some.

Paul is fatigued and bleeding from the punishment, as Officer Hill helps stand up his limping body.

Lamar is overly intoxicated and looks out of his mind.

He punches Paul in the gut making him slump to the ground.

Then Officer Hill and Warden Mack issues more punishing blows to Paul.

Lamar backs away taking another swig of the bottle.

The beaten is frustrating Gerald, he bravely rises out of his bed.

GERALD

Don't ya'll think that's enough  
punishment on this man?

The officers turn their attention on Gerald and Warden Mack intervenes.

LAMAR

Hold on fellas. I got this one...

Lamar makes his way to Gerald.

LAMAR

So you wanna speak out of place  
huh?

Lamar head butts Gerald, he sinks back onto his rack clutching his face.

OFFICER HILL

(out of breath)

Warden, we're ready for you to do  
the honors sir.

The warden walks up with a deep evil grin.

He is unzipping his pants and stands over top of Paul.

He then starts pissing on Paul who is now beaten unconscious.

BACK TO PRESENT

Gerald is still driving, with a more anger written expression.

Lamar is smiling and looks over at Gerald who is focusing on the road, he notices Lamar glancing at him.

GERALD

What the fuck are you looking at?

LAMAR

I'm proud of you man. This shows growth, maturity and the will to forgive, just makes life better that's all.

GERALD

Shut the fuck up man. You and all those correction officers need to be locked up for the way ya'll did us in there.

LAMAR

I know it was wrong and I'm sorry man. I'm also trying to right my wrong's--

GERALD

I don't give a shit on what you trying to do. Let's get something straight, I gave you this job to benefit me, not you. So don't be trying to get all in my head and shit, we ain't cool, we never going to be buddies, we going over here to your partners house to forgive and forget that's it.

LAMAR

My partners house?

The pair pull up to an immaculate estate with a drive way and front yard that is trimmed and groomed very well.

LAMAR

Hold on. We're at Warden Mack's house?

GERALD

So you and the warden was that tight you know where he live, why doesn't that surprise me?

LAMAR

Plenty of staff knew where he live.  
Me and my wife had countless  
dinners with him.

Gerald gets out the vehicle, he pops his trunk, then grabs his bag and Lamar gets out the passenger side.

GERALD

I need you to explain to Warden Mack what is going on, and just let him know I would like the opportunity to shake his hand and ask if it's possible to sponsor my entertainment company through programs for ex offenders.

LAMAR

Are you serious Gerald? Man that's great...

Gerald is becoming more frustrated as every moment passes.

LAMAR

You do know that me and the warden didn't end off on good terms?

GERALD

How can I forget?

FLASHBACK

INT. PENITENTIARY/ HOLE - NIGHT

Gerald is in a chair with his feet in a bucket, no shirt on cuts over his chest, and handcuffed behind his back.

Gerald is in a state of defeat and has no energy to resist the brutality of the events.

Lamar walks in and the warden is accompanied by Officer Hill, drinking a bottle of Jack Daniels.

The Warden spits out liquor on Gerald, who tenses up from the burning cuts on his chest.

Lamar is shocked to see this act of violence.

LAMAR

What the fuck did he do wrong now?

WARDEN MACK

What does he have to do wrong? The fucker is going home tomorrow...

Lamar stands there motionless and disgusted.

WARDEN MACK

He's getting out Lamar, we gotta make sure this bitch don't ever come back.

LAMAR

(shaking his head)  
This not right...

Lamar attempts to free Gerald's feet from the bucket.

LAMAR

This man don't need to be tortured.

The warden uses his taser to get Lamar's attention.

WARDEN MACK

What the fuck are you doing son?

LAMAR

Warden Mack, I understand your position and I've tried to respect it from day one, but this is going too far--

WARDEN MACK

Who the fuck are you to tell me I'm going too far? Do you ever get a chance to witness our inmates released? Have you ever seen somebody revisit this prison? No. You want to know why? Because nobody comes back for anything less than life. They know what they got coming soon as they walk through them doors. Now if this is too much for you, you can get the fuck out right got damn now, or...

The warden holds out the taser for Lamar to grab. Lamar looks at Gerald saddened by the situation.

WARDEN MACK

You can come over here and get your just do. Just like we did.

Lamar grabs the taser and Gerald looks up at him face busted and bruised.

Lamar looks back at Gerald and in one motion he breaks the taser. Lamar walks pass the warden and shoulder bumps him.

WARDEN MACK

Good muthafucka. I don't need no weak ass bitch on my staff.

The warden empties his bottle of Jack Daniels over Gerald causing him to scream in pain.

BACK TO PRESENT

EXT. WARDEN MACK'S HOME - DAY

The Warden opens the door and has a look of confusion.

WARDEN MACK

What are you two doing at my house together?

LAMAR

Well Warden, um this is shocking to me also but Mr. Martin here has become very successful in the entertainment industry. And he is doing tremendous things to turn his life around, hiring me is one of them.

WARDEN MACK

Hiring you?

LAMAR

I'm head of security at his entertainment company. And he also has a proposition for you if you are willing to listen.

WARDEN MACK

Get the fuck outta here you working for him? I gotta hear this one...

He opens the door, and they follow behind him entering his home.

INSIDE THE HOME

The Warden's house is lovely, the floors are glossy, the art decoration is tasteful, and the home neat and unsullied.

WARDEN MACK

Now what is this proposition you need from me?

LAMAR

I know this may seem hard to believe, but--

GERALD

I got this. Warden Mack I know you are all too familiar with the recidivism rate in our country.

WARDEN MACK

Which is why I tend to punish the repeat offenders that step through my prison gates.

GERALD

(sarcastically)

Yeah, cuz that's the reason.

WARDEN MACK

Of course continue.

GERALD

I'm trying to give the inmates and wardens across the state, a chance to help ex-cons become productive in a world where the chances of landing a job is slim to none. Through sponsorship dollars we will be able to reach plenty of inmates that are on their way home in attempts to find employment before their foot hit the pavement.

WARDEN MACK

So how much are you asking for?

GERALD

I'm not asking for anything personally, in good favor for our history and me actually thanking you for the man and mentality I have today just please help put together a fundraiser to raise a half of a million dollars to get the program started.

Warden Mack sits there and ponders for a moment, then smiles.

WARDEN MACK

I love it, I'm in...

Gerald pumps his fist with excitement and has a gracious attitude as he pulls out some paper work and places them in front of the warden's hand with a pen.

GERALD

This is just stating that we are granted access to talk to the prisoners that are on their way home.

The warden signs the papers with delight.

WARDEN MACK

I got some very wealthy supporters. If we present this right we could double your asking price...

He also pulls a champagne bottle out of his bag.

WARDEN MACK

(laughing joyously)  
You came prepared didn't you.

GERALD

Could you grab some glasses for us?

WARDEN MACK

Sure can.

GERALD

Hey Warden, how's Officer Hill doing?

WARDEN MACK

Funny you ask son, I haven't seen Officer Hill for the past week, no call no show, but he does have vacation days, I'm sure he's using them, be right back.

He goes to retrieve the glasses, as Lamar is smiling and over excited about the meeting, while Gerald stares just as blankly as before.

The warden hands the glasses to Gerald and he pops open the bubbly.

Gerald hands each both of them their glasses.

The three of them share a toast.

GERALD

To new beginnings, and thanking God for the chance for change. And most of all to forgiveness.

SIMULTANEOUSLY

To forgiveness.

All three of them down their drinks.

WARDEN MACK

So, what are the first steps?

GERALD

Let me run to the car and get my portfolio so we can focus on the guys that have been recently released.

Gerald walks away and Warden Mack continues sipping his drink.

WARDEN MACK

He's a prime example why we used to torture those inmates...

LAMAR

I still don't agree with your methods.

WARDEN MACK

You don't have to agree with them son, as long as they're affective.

LAMAR

Affective or not...  
(rubs his forehead)  
You can just as well make a monster out of them.

WARDEN MACK

They are already Monsters, I just control the beast inside of them.

Gerald walks back in with a flash drive in his hand.

GERALD

Sir do yo have a lap top or computer you can plug this into?

WARDEN MACK

Yeah, son sure do.

MOMENTS LATER

The three of them crowd around the lap top.

GERALD

When we were under your care sir,  
we had a rare opportunity to change  
lives, ours that is...

The person on the footage is Paul.

PAUL

Hello my name is Paul Smith...

Lamar is shaking his head and is trying to focus on the  
screen but blinks uncontrollably.

PAUL

If you are watching this, then you  
are witnessing events from about a  
week ago...

Officer Hill sits strapped to a chair. Blood is leaking from  
his mouth and he is in a convulsion state.

PAUL

Officer Hill here has been  
suffering for about a hour and a  
half, kind of amazing to me because  
I thought he would have died as  
soon as we cut out his tongue...

Paul dangles Officer Hill's tongue.

PAUL

You officers thought we would  
reform by segregation. No you put  
criminals together in a secluded  
room, we think of doing more  
criminal shit...

Lamar fall's to the ground knocking over the drinks on the  
table in front of him.

PAUL

By now Lamar should well on his way  
to a drug induced coma from what  
you just drunk...

Lamar is shaking uncontrollably as the warden looks in  
disbelief.

PAUL

As for you Warden Mack...

Lamar is reaching out to the warden.

PAUL

Your life should be coming to an  
abrupt end real soon...

The Warden turns to face Gerald, but is staring into the hole  
of a gun.

BANG!!!

Smoke is rising from the silencer of the chrome nine  
millimeter.

PAUL

Back to you Lamar. That amount of  
fentanyl would kill you if  
injected. But since you will  
survive we have other plans for  
you. I hope prison treat you better  
than we were treated.

Gerald turns off the computer then places the nine right  
beside Lamar, who is almost in a paralyzed state.

GERALD

Your prints is all over this gun,  
bullets and all...

FLASH

Lamar looking at the gun he holds in Gerald's office earlier  
that day before shooting the vase.

Gerald taps Lamar's face, then grabs his bag, picks up the  
phone and proceeds to the door.

GERALD (O.C.)

(changing his voice)

Yes nine one. I'd like to report a  
disturbance in the Fairfield area.

He exits the door and closes it behind him.

Lamar lays on the ground barely able to move but musters his  
arms as they still shake viciously.

Lamar's hand inches its way up to his chest, he is barely  
able to move.

He finally reaches his chest pocket, and removes the tape  
recorder.

Lamar forces out a smile.

DAYS LATER

INT. POLICE VEHICLE - NIGHT

The vehicle still has lights glaring and pulls into the precinct, where news reporters are waiting for the occupants to get out for a statement.

Paul and Gerald is cuffed in the back of the cruiser.

PAUL

You know we about to get a hundred years right?

GERALD

Fuck it at least we getting life this time.

PAUL

You muthafuckin right at least we getting life.

They both share a hysterical laugh.

THE END.