

THE KINGMAKER

Written by

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INT. BLACK IMPALA - NIGHT

Speeding out of a hotel parking lot is JAY TAYLOR (25), an in-shape code-switching Brotha with a boyish charm.

The dash shows: "1:17 AM"

JAY  
Call BJ.

Jay empties his backpack onto the passenger seat and snags an open bag of sunflower seeds. The tag on the backpack reads: *JAY TAYLOR* (scout). Line rings through the speakers.

BJ (V.O.)  
Miss me with the fuck-boy recap.

JAY  
Bruh, she asked me to fill out her Draft Kings lineup, mid-stroke. I lost focus. You listening, dude?

BJ (V.O.)  
I'm going back to sleep.

Jay pours a mouthful of seeds.

EXT. JAY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Jay makes a left and drifts into the right lane.

JAY (V.O.)  
She has a friend.

A TEXAS STATE TROOPER follows.

BJ (V.O.)  
I have girl.

JAY (V.O.)  
Are you twenty-five or forty-five?

WOO-WHOOP! POLICE lights flash.

INT. JAY'S CAR - SAME TIME

Jay grabs a cup and spits out his seeds.

BJ (V.O.)  
Was that a siren?

JAY  
Damn. I'mma hit you back.

Jay pulls into a QT gas station.

EXT. JAY'S CAR - NIGHT

The CLICK-CLACK of boots against concrete.

Jay rolls down his window.

STATE TROOPER (30s), white male, polished black boots, and a tan Stetson, approaches from the rear and stops short of the driver's side window. He shines his flashlight.

Jay knows the drill. Hands on the wheel. Fingers spread.

STATE TROOPER  
Know why I stopped you?

JAY  
No clue.

Trooper shines his light in the rear window.

STATE TROOPER  
Caught you swerving and you failed  
to signal.

JAY  
What?

Jay squints as the light hits his face.

STATE TROOPER  
Louisiana tags. What are you doing  
in Dallas?

JAY  
Does it matter?

STATE TROOPER  
License and registration.

JAY  
My license is in my backpack. May I  
reach for it?

Trooper shines his light onto the passenger seat and notices a **black handle** poking from beneath Jay's backpack. He unholsters his firearm.

STATE TROOPER  
DON'T MOVE!

JAY  
What I do?!

STATE TROOPER  
Is that a gun in your front seat?

Jay looks to his right.

JAY  
Yes. No sir, that's my--

STATE TROOPER  
--DON'T MOVE!  
(into shoulder walkie)  
QT on Fairfax. Black male.  
--HANDS ON THE WHEEL!

JAY  
I'M GRIPPING IT.

Trooper opens Jay's door and removes him from the car.

JAY (CONT'D)  
That's my radar gun. I'm a scout.

STATE TROOPER  
What kind of scout?

The Trooper kicks open Jay's legs and frisks him.

JAY  
I'm unarmed. Look at me!

STATE TROOPER  
Stop talking.

DISPATCH (V.O.)  
Trooper, what's your status?

JAY  
I'm a baseball scout.

STATE TROOPER  
You sure don't look like a scout.

EXT. GAS STATION - FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER

HUM of fluorescent lights.

Three police cruisers surround Jay's car.

Two GAS STATION ATTENDANTS watch from inside the store.

**GAS STATION - FENCE LINE**

Jay posts at the curb and checks his gun.

BIG COUNTRY (20s), a thick good-ole-boy rookie officer, walks up to Jay and returns his driver's license.

BIG COUNTRY  
Me and Brown use that same gun.

OFFICER BROWN  
Move out the way, Country.

OFFICER BROWN (30s), a lively Sista, squats in front of Jay and pounds her glove.

Trooper stands next to a pump, about 60ft 6in away. A light sweat on his brow. His hat rests on the trunk of his cruiser.

JAY  
Give me your best bolt.

OFFICER BROWN  
Make this one count, Sarge!

Officer Brown pounds her glove. Jay points his gun. Trooper delivers the pitch... PUMPH.

STATE TROOPER  
How fast? Don't tell me.

Big Country laughs. Brown stands. Trooper jogs up.

OFFICER BROWN  
Sarge had a gas station tryout.

STATE TROOPER  
You sign players in their thirties?

JAY  
My pops signed a guy who was twenty-seven, but he throws ninety-seven.

STATE TROOPER  
How hard was that last one?

Jay turns the gun. The display shows: **77**

EXT. HIGH END NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

A brown SUV parks across from a lavish home.

SUPER: Highland Park Neighborhood - Dallas, TX

DONOVAN (V.O.)  
Ant... Anthony. Hey, wake up.

ANTHONY (V.O.)  
Huh?

DONOVAN (V.O.)  
I'll be back in five minutes, okay.

ANTHONY (V.O.)  
I don't wanna sleep in here  
tonight, Donovan.

DONOVAN (V.O.)  
We're not, man.

ANTHONY (V.O.)  
But you said they won't let us in  
the shelter after ten.

DONOVAN (V.O.)  
We're not going to the shelter.

EXT. LAVISH HOME - NIGHT

DONOVAN BAKER (18), African-American, wiry build, approaches the front door holding a PIZZA CARRY BAG. A hat and a cinched hood hide his face. He rings the doorbell.

A BLONDE SMOKE SHOW (17) answers in a bikini. TEENS pass a bong in the background. Party music pumps.

SMOKE SHOW  
Chance. Did you order a pizza?

CHANCE ADAMS (18), 6'4" 180lbs of sun-tanned cockiness jogs to the door and kisses the Blonde. He's *LIT*.

CHANCE  
My man, Donovan.

Donovan hands Chance a pizza box.

CHANCE (CONT'D)  
Just what the doctor ordered.

DONOVAN

This is the last time I deliver out  
this way.

SMOKE SHOW

Ask him to do a rail with us.

CHANCE

That's not his thing.

DONOVAN

Let's settle-up.

They tap phones. Donovan's phone dings as he walks off. **\$200  
deposited** flashes on his screen.

CHANCE

You playing ball this summer?

DONOVAN

Doubt it.

EXT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

Break lights illuminate. SUV pulls off.

DONOVAN (V.O.)

Let's go get that hotel.

ANTHONY

Can we get pizza?

DONOVAN

Of course.

INT. JAY'S CAR - DAY

Jay barrels down the highway.

JAY

Call B.J.

Line rings.

BJ (V.O.)

Where you at?

JAY

Went to the wrong field. I thought  
I was early for once.

BJ (V.O.)  
You're good. He's still stretching.

Incoming Call: "RICK (supervisor)"

JAY  
Text me the address, bruh, gotta  
take this call from Rick The Dick.

Jay taps the display screen.

JAY (CONT'D)  
Hey, Rick. What's up?

RICK (V.O.)  
Nothing much, bud. Got a minute?

JAY  
Yeah. Just heading over to watch  
Chance Adams.

RICK (V.O.)  
Nice. I won't be long.

JAY  
No worries.

RICK (V.O.)  
Good. I've talked this over with  
Tim and he's in agreement. We're  
shrinking the scouting staff by  
two, Jay, and you're in limbo.

Jay changes lanes and slows down.

RICK (V.O.)  
Still with me, bud?

JAY  
I'm here.

RICK (V.O.)  
Any thoughts?

JAY  
I relocated for this job. Plus, I  
was told I had a good chance of  
landing a two-year deal after my  
first draft.

RICK (V.O.)  
Who told you that?



JAY  
Tim. Your boss.

RICK (V.O.)  
When?

JAY  
When I signed the damn contract and  
moved to Dallas.

RICK (V.O.)  
JAY. Brotha. This isn't personal.  
We're moving away from that  
antiquated model your father swore  
by and personally I don't think  
you're hungry enough.

JAY  
My dad has nothing to do with this.  
I busted my ass all spring and  
didn't get one guy in the draft.  
Shoot me straight, Rick.

RICK (V.O.)  
I'm shooting you straight, bud.

JAY  
Do I need to update my resume?

RICK (V.O.)  
That's up to you, Jay. Again, I  
haven't made my decision.

JAY  
I mean, what more can I do?

RICK (V.O.)  
You have about twenty days before  
your contract is up. Maybe you'll  
find someone worth signing at your  
tryout camp next week.

JAY  
You still want me to hold it?

RICK (V.O.)  
Why not? You've already rented the  
field. Hey, gotta run, bud.  
(to server)  
Lemon-pepper flats, right here.

Call ends. Clock on the dash shows: "6:22 PM"

EXT. CREEK NATION BALLPARK - DAY

Dust kicks up as Jay turns into a gravel parking lot.

SUPER: Dallas, TX

KIDS play whiffle ball on a patchy side field. A mammoth BARBECUE PIT pumps mesquite-flavored smoke skyward.

An overhead banner reads:

"CREEK NATION Baseball Tournament 7/25 - 7/28"

INT. JAY'S CAR - DAY

Jay scrolls through his phone and stops on: POPS (cell). His phone DINGS. Message from Sydney. He taps the screen.

On cell screen: an ultrasound image of a fetus.

On cell screen: "We need to talk."

Jay stares at the pic and closes his eyes.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Jay jogs to the entrance. The TICKET MAN (50s) stops him.

TICKET MAN  
Pump your breaks, boss. Ticket.

JAY  
I'm a scout, sir.

TICKET MAN  
Five dollars.

Jay checks his pockets, then his phone.

JAY  
You serious? Can I CashApp you?

TICKET MAN  
What do you think?

JAY  
Let me through this one time.

TICKET MAN  
When the Texas Rangers start letting me into games for free, I'll do the same.

Jay spots JENNA REYES (20s), rookie scout, walking by looking official in brown khakis, her team's polo, and a cap.

JAY  
Reyes! Let me hold five.

JENNA  
Dang, you just getting here?

She jogs over and pays for Jay.

JENNA (CONT'D)  
Here you go, sir.

JAY  
Thanks. I'll be up in a sec.

EXT. STANDS - NIGHT

All eyes on Chance, from the party, as he and his SQUAD jog onto the field. Chance takes the mound and warms-up with his CATCHER. The ball is a *BLUR* as it zips to the plate.

#### **PITCHER'S MOUND**

Chance pauses before his final warmup pitch, makes the money sign with his fingers, and delivers another heater. POW!

#### **STANDS**

Solid crowd but more SCOUTS than FANS.

STUDENTS and NERVOUS PARENTS sit in the lower section. Midway up sits a small SCOUTING CONTINGENT:

Radar guns up - back down.

Scouts write notes.

It's a rhythmic flow.

#### **SCOUT SECTION**

Loaded with WHITE MALES (26-50) and one FEMALE SCOUT. Everyone is dressed in collared shirts and slacks.

Scouts fidget with either their guns or cameras.

Jay enters from the far side of the stands and slides into the back row of the scout section - next to BJ (25), African-American, in even better shape than Jay.

Jay daps BJ. A VETERAN SCOUT eyes Jay.

JAY  
You scouting me or the pitcher?

The Veteran looks to the mound. Jay smirks at BJ.

BJ  
You good, bro?

JAY  
I'm straight.

The scoreboard shows: "6:51 PM"

Curious YOUNG FANS sneak peeks at Scouts' guns.

#### **SCOUT SECTION - BACK ROW**

The stadium lights BUZZ as they crank up.

BJ adjusts his tri-pod and secures his camera.

Jay stares at the field, clearly zoned out.

UMPIRE (O.S.)  
Play ball!

Chance delivers the opening pitch, HISS-POW and freezes the innocent LEADOFF HITTER!

YOUNG FAN (O.C.)  
Ninety-Six!

BJ  
Dude, what's up?

JAY  
I'm straight, BJ.

BJ  
Who you barkin' at?

**Jay writes on his pad (on-screen):** Chance Adams - clean stroke, playing catch at 96. Dude's almost too cocky!

JAY  
Rick says I'm on the chopping block  
if I don't wow him.

**FIELD - HOME PLATE**

Chance toes the rubber. Peers over his glove.

CATCHER sets-up. HITTER steps back in.

Ump squats and Chance unleashes GAS!

A futile swing & miss.

UMPIRE  
Stee-rike THREE!

**SCOUT SECTION - BACK ROW**

Multiple guns flash: **95 95 96**

SCOUT CHATTER (O.C.)  
I got a six. What'd you get?

BJ  
When's your contract up?

JAY  
August 15th.

Jay taps Jenna Reyes, seated in front of him.

JAY (CONT'D)  
What'd you get, Jenna?

JENNA  
Five on mine.

Two more fastballs and a wipeout slider, *WHAP!*

UMPIRE (O.S.)  
STRIKE THREE!

Jenna turns and 'big-eyes' Jay.

JENNA  
He calls that a curveball? More  
like a slider to me.

JAY  
I don't care what he calls it. It's  
a *BANGER*.

Fans holler as Chance jogs off the field.

**SCOUT SECTION - BACK ROW**

Lots of CLICKS and ZIPS as Scouts prepare to leave.

Jay closes his pad and nudges BJ as...

A stylish and ultra confident black woman, SERENA SCOTT (mid-20s) sits down on the front row next to Chance's moms, two impeccably dressed white women (late 40s).

JAY  
Who is that?!

BJ  
You didn't know Chance's Moms chose  
Scott & Associates?

JAY  
Serena Scott's a Sista?!

BJ  
And bad too.

Jay locks onto Serena.

Game continues as background noise.

BJ (CONT'D)  
You staring kinda hard.

JAY  
Not my type.

BJ  
Good, cause I'm taking her out for  
drinks tonight.

JAY  
Does she know this?

BJ  
Watch and learn.

Jay can't take his eyes off Serena.

EXT. DUGOUT - NIGHT

The charismatic Serena Scott holds court.

SERENA

The family requests that all contact with Chance be scheduled through my office. This includes text messages and DM's.

Scouts approach and she hands out business cards.

CONVERSATIONALIST SCOUT (O.C.)

Give me a break. How are we supposed to get to know the kid?

SERENA

Schedule more than one visit.  
(to all scouts)  
Ladies and gentlemen. There will be a cutoff date for home visits. Call my office to request a Zoom if you miss the window. No exceptions.

BJ squeezes his way to the front.

Serena hands him a card. BJ winks at Jay.

BJ

You in town long enough to grab an adult beverage?

SERENA

Not this season. You guys don't pick early enough.

Jenna walks up to Jay.

Serena makes eye contact with Jay.

SERENA (CONT'D)

I know you're scheduling a visit. You guys lost a hundred games.

Jay looks at the logo on his shirt.

JENNA

Dang, see how she looked at you? CashApp me that five, tonight.

Jenna hangs back as Jay steps to Serena.

She hands him a card. Her hand lingers.

SERENA

Text me your crosschecker's cell.

JAY  
 You know Rick?

SERENA  
 We were classmates at Howard Law.  
 He's a brilliant prick.

Remaining Scouts disperse. BJ and Jenna linger.

JAY  
 I can give you his number now.

SERENA  
 Text it.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Sensual moans. A condom wrapper and two empty mini-bar bottles of Jack lie on the nightstand.

**BED**

Jay stares at Serena as she rides him.

SERENA  
 Where's my guy on your team's draft board? DO NOT touch my breasts.

JAY  
 Too early for draft talk.

SERENA  
 You better not climax.

JAY  
 Slow down. SERENA (CONT'D)  
 Don't hold out.

She grabs his hand and places it on her throat.

JAY (CONT'D)  
 Okay. Okay. Chance is at the top.  
 The two starters from LSU are right behind him. Oh shit. You--

SERENA  
 --Shut up. Choke me.

It's curtains for Jay.



INT. HOTEL ROOM - BED - MOMENTS LATER

Jay leans in to kiss Serena. She hops out of bed, and strides to the restroom - fit, naked, and sexy.

SERENA

Be out of here by the time I finish  
my shower.

Jay pulls the covers over his body.

INT. DONOVAN'S SUV - NIGHT (PRE-DAWN)

The neon glow of the AM/PM Fitness sign illuminates the empty front seats. The driver's side and passenger side seat belts are looped through the door handles. A phone alarm CHIMES.

SUPER: Dallas, TX

Dash clock shows: "5:03 AM".

Back seats are flat. Two sleeping bags rest side-by-side.

Cardboard lines the back windows.

A small aluminum bat with a strong brown hand gripping it lies between the sleeping bags. The phone alarm CHIMES again.

Donovan, youthful but focused, sits up still gripping the bat. Seconds later a smaller version of Donovan, ANTHONY BAKER (10) pokes his head out of his sleeping bag.

DONOVAN

Be back in an hour.

ANTHONY

It's hot, Donovan.

Donovan reaches into the front, starts the car, and flips on the air. Anthony sits up.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

Do you ever dream about Mama?

DONOVAN

I haven't in a while but I used to.

ANTHONY

She's not sick in my dreams.

Anthony lays his head on Donovan's shoulder.

INT. AM/PM FITNESS - NIGHT (PRE-DAWN)

Donovan powers through a HIIT Workout.

GYM MEMBERS trickle in.

### LOCKER ROOM

Donovan exits the shower area and changes at his locker.

A GYM EMPLOYEE (19), white dude, walks into the shower area.

Donovan grabs a small package from his locker.

### SHOWER AREA

Donovan and the Gym Employee grip-up. The Gym Employee opens his hand and smells the *sack of weed*. Donovan heads out.

GYM EMPLOYEE

I'mma get a zip next time.

DONOVAN

Bet.

### FRONT DESK

The morning sun shines through the large front windows. Donovan leans against the counter and takes a glazed donut from a small spread.

A BLACK WOMAN (23), in manager's attire, approaches and takes the donut out of Donovan's hand. Her name tag reads: LARISSA.

LARISSA

Aren't you in training?

DONOVAN

I'll burn this right off.

LARISSA

I can help you with that.

She gives him a "look" and bites the donut.

DONOVAN

I got Ant outside.

LARISSA

You got something for me?

Donovan hands her three twenties.

DONOVAN  
That should cover my dues.

LARISSA  
Is that it?

Donovan grabs a box of chocolate POCKY STICKS from his backpack. Larissa takes the box and smells inside.

LARISSA (CONT'D)  
You need to wrap this better.  
Smells like some fire though.

DONOVAN  
We good to stay overnight?

LARISSA  
Park on the side away from the  
street. You can use those outlets.

Donovan sets a copy of The Alchemist on the counter. Larissa rolls her eyes. He pulls up his CashApp QR code on his cell.

DONOVAN  
You'll like this one.

She smiles, slides him a large box of donuts, and scans his QR code. **\$75** flashes on Donovan's screen.

LARISSA  
Share those with Anthony.

DONOVAN  
Cool. Read the book while you vibe  
with those Pockies.

Donovan winks and grabs the donuts. She watches him leave.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Donovan checks an incoming text from RICO:

"this my 3rd text lil nigga. get at me"

The message zaps Donovan's dopamine spike.

INT. JAY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jay spins in his gaming chair as GTA loads on the TV.

SUPER: Dallas, TX

His cell phone vibrates on his lap.

"BJ" shows on the display. Jay puts it on speaker.

JAY  
What up, bruh?

BJ (V.O.)  
Any update on your contract?

JAY  
Nah. But Rick still wants me to  
hold my tryout camp. Waste of time.

BJ (V.O.)  
It's actually your best shot.

JAY  
Facts. Oh yeah, Syd's pregnant.

BJ (V.O.)  
Whoa. Is it yours?

JAY  
Come on, man.

BJ (V.O.)  
What'd she say when you asked her?

JAY  
I haven't replied to her messages.

BJ (V.O.)  
What you gonna do?

Knock at the door. Jay rolls to the door.

JAY  
About Syd?

BJ (V.O.)  
About everything.

Jay opens the door and grabs his order.

JAY  
I'm open for suggestions.

EXT. COLLEGE FIELD - DAY

Jay stands near the 3rd base line and addresses a group of exhausted TRYOUT CAMP PARTICIPANTS.

JAY

I appreciate you taking the time to attend our tryout this afternoon. Just because I didn't offer you a contract today doesn't mean your baseball journey should end today.

An 6'3" Navajo brother, AUSTIN MALLORY (20) walks around the dugout in jeans and a hoodie. He sets down his bag.

AUSTIN

Is this where the tryout is?

JAY

We're just finishing up.

AUSTIN

Can I at least run for you, sir?

Jay gives him a once-over.

JAY

My dad always says that if a guy asks to run, that means he can go. Alright, get stretched.

## **OUTFIELD**

Jay posts in centerfield at the end of the sixty-yard setup. Austin, still in jeans, stands at the foul line. Most of the Camp Participants gather near the start.

JAY

I'm going on your first move.

Austin nods and blasts out of his stance. He moves like a D1 receiver. His powerful strides eat up the turf field.

Jay tracks Austin as he crosses the line.

On-screen timer: **6.41**

JAY (CONT'D)

Hell yeah! Six-four in jeans.

Austin jogs by Jay.

AUSTIN  
My best is 6.38.

Jay whips out his phone and texts BJ: "think I found one!"

**DUGOUT**

Austin and Jay sit on the bench as Austin changes shoes.

JAY  
I need to see you swing and play  
defense, but it's getting dark.

Jay notices a black monitor on Austin's right ankle.

JAY (CONT'D)  
Damn, you're on house arrest?

AUSTIN  
Yes, sir. I can't leave Dallas  
County for eighteen months.

JAY  
You definitely caught my attention  
today but I can't sign you based  
off a sixty and under the present  
circumstances. Fill out that info  
card and I'll pass your name along  
to some college coaches in the  
area. Cool?

AUSTIN  
Thank you, sir. You made my day.

They bump fists.

Jay texts BJ: "Never mind. Buddy's on house arrest."

EXT. CITY PARK - NIGHT

Donovan's SUV pulls up next to a tinted black Charger.

SUPER: Dallas, TX

The Charger's window rolls down and RICO (30s), a stone-faced  
brotha, looks straight ahead.

Donovan hops out and hands Rico an envelope.

DONOVAN  
I been on the move. My bad, Rico.

RICO  
Don't have me come looking for you.

RICO (CONT'D)  
Fuckin with you, boy. You ready to re-up?

DONOVAN  
Gonna be my last one for a minute.

RICO  
Last one? You still down two racks, lil nigga. Or do I need to take that raggedy-ass ride off your hands? Don't sit on this.

Rico tosses him the product.

Anthony peeps through the back window.

DONOVAN  
I'm on it.

Rico rolls off. Donovan turns and sees Anthony.

DONOVAN (CONT'D)  
I told you to stay down.

INT. CROSSTOWN FITNESS - BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Jay enters wearing a Grambling baseball shirt and shorts. He pounds a few dribbles.

On the far end, TIA RUSSELL (20s), brown skin and a cute ponytail, hits a shot. She glances at Jay.

Jay BRICKS a long three. The ball ricochets to Tia's end. She scoops it as Jay jogs down.

JAY  
Thanks.

Tia rolls the ball to the other end.

TIA  
Are you stalking me?

JAY  
What makes you think that?

Jay jogs to get his ball and dribbles back.

TIA  
You're here every Friday at one.

JAY  
That's called a routine.

She puts up a shot.

TIA  
But you never speak. It's creepy.

JAY  
Nah. You're not full-time stalker  
pretty. More like gym-stalker cute.

Tia almost cracks a smile.

TIA  
I knew it.

Jay laughs and misses another shot.

JAY  
What? I've seen you peek at me when  
I pass by the front desk. So I  
guess you've been noticing me, too.

TIA  
Have you hit a shot yet?

JAY  
This is cardio. Baseball's my game.

Tia goes in for a layup.

TIA  
Nice shirt... for a stalker.

JAY  
You like Grambling?

TIA  
Jackson State all day. But I like  
baseball. My little brother plays.

JAY  
Word? I hold clinics at Foster Park  
on Saturdays. How old is he?

TIA  
Nine.

JAY  
Bring him tomorrow.



Jay hits a shot.

MALE VOICE (O.C.)

TIA. Let's go, my session's over.

Jay turns to see CHAD (20s), 'swole', white, and serious, at the door. Tia smiles as she passes Jay on her way out.

JAY

That's you?

TIA

See ya later, Mr. Grambling.

JAY

We start at nine.

EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD - DAY

Jay stands in front of ten FIDGETY PLAYERS, boys and girls ages 6-10. Tiny units of unpredictable chaos.

SUPER: South Oak Cliff, TX

JAY

This is a good-looking group.

RANDOM KID #1 (O.C.)

Where's the scout?

RANDOM KID #2 (O.C.)

He's the scout.

Jay grins, a bit uneasy.

JAY

Let's start over. Welcome to our first Saturday RBI session. I see everyone is wearing their RBI tees.

Jay scans the parents. His gaze stops on a young lady in a Jackson State dri-fit. She's the one from the gym, Tia. Two boys, EVIN (9) and Anthony stand beside her.

Jay smiles - BIG.

RANDOM PLAYER (O.C.)

COACH! When can we start?

Tia finger waves and nudges Evin and Anthony.



EXT. LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD - DAY

Players high-five Jay as they leave the field.

Tia smiles as Evin and Anthony approach. Jay trails.

JAY  
Are these your brothers?

TIA  
My brother and his friend Anthony.

JAY  
Great job today. You earned these.

Jay hands the boys an RBI t-shirt.

EVIN  
Thanks! We back next Saturday?

JAY  
Don't think so. Scouting trip.

EVIN  
Aww man.

ANTHONY  
We can practice with Donovan.

TIA  
No shirt for me?

JAY  
I'll get you a coach's shirt.

Tia looks at Jay and ponders for a moment.

TIA  
Do you ever scout men's leagues?

JAY  
Eh, not usually on my schedule.

TIA  
Wanna see one next Sunday?

JAY  
Is your man playing or something?

TIA  
No. There's someone you should see.

JAY  
Will you be there?

TIA  
Does it matter?

JAY  
Hell yeah. I'm a picky stalker.

TIA  
Funny. I'm working concessions.

JAY  
In that case, I'll be in town.

Evin looks up.

EVIN  
But you said--

Tia pushes Evin toward the dugout.

TIA  
You'll come back in town for me,  
but not for these kids?

JAY  
Just to drop off the shirt I  
promised you.

TIA  
Whatever.

JAY  
Anyway. What's the address?

TIA  
I'll text you.

She grabs Jay's phone and enters her info.

Jay looks at his phone.

JAY  
What time?

TIA  
Eleven.

JAY  
What you doing tonight?

TIA  
Watching these knuckle-heads.

Tia and the boys head to her car.

JAY  
This guy better not be a grown man.

TIA  
Just be there.

Jay CHEESES and watches her all the way to her car.

INT. JAY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jay plops into his gaming chair and props his iPad on a food tray. He taps "FaceTime" - "Mom & Pops".

ON FACETIME

CHARLES & REGINA TAYLOR (late 40s), youthful and vibrant, appear on screen.

CHARLES  
What up, my guy? I say it right?

Regina removes her gardening gloves and laughs.

REGINA  
Baby Boy.

Jay leans back and grins.

JAY  
Hey, Mama. How's the garden? Pops, you nailed it, my dude.

REGINA  
Collards and blackberries are ready for you. Muscadines too.

CHARLES  
Meet any new prospects?

JAY  
I see a new one every game, Pop.

REGINA  
He means young lady. Charles, leave him alone.

CHARLES  
Just asking because I ran into Sydney yesterday.

Regina rolls her eyes.

REGINA  
Don't mention that name around me.

CHARLES  
Come on, Regina. You used to like  
the girl.

Jay grabs his phone and checks an old message from Sydney:  
"HELLO. No response? My next call is to family court Jay"

JAY  
What'd she tell you?

CHARLES  
She said give her a call sometime.

REGINA  
The nerve of that girl. Yeah, call  
her and ask for that ring back.

JAY  
On that note, I'm out. Love y'all.

Regina moves behind Charles and mouths: "Check your CashApp."

JAY (CONT'D)  
I'm good, Mama.

CHARLES  
Be safe on that road, man. You get  
that new contract yet?

JAY  
Working on it. Gotta go.

REGINA  
We love you. Travel safely.

Jay ends the call. His phone DINGS.

**CashApp: \$125 Note: for your cell bill**

INT. TAYLOR HOME - CONTINUOUS

Regina takes a seat next to Charles.

SUPER: Shreveport, LA

REGINA  
He needs to know.

CHARLES

I want to keep him out of this.

REGINA

You heard the attorney. If this goes to trial, we'll all be subpoenaed, including Jay.

EXT. MUNICIPAL PARK - DAY

Large open field. Country setting.

SUPER: Dallas, TX

Trucks and family-sized cars cover the parking lot.

Concession stand doubles as the ticket booth.

CHILDREN'S laughter echoes.

INT. JAY'S CAR - DAY

Jay pulls into the lot and spots the main field.

EXT. MUNICIPAL PARK - ENTRANCE - DAY

BBQ pit smolders near the entrance.

Jay heads to the concession stand.

A voice from behind him.

TIA (O.C.)

Look who decided to show up.

Jay turns and sees Tia.

JAY

I said I would try to make it.

He smiles and leans in for a hug. Tia holds out her hand.

TIA

Ticket, please.

JAY

Huh?

Awkward pause. She smiles and daps Jay.

TIA  
Too easy.

Jay looks around. PLAYERS from both SQUADS roll in.

JAY  
A lot of grown dudes in work boots.

TIA  
*This is* the Dallas Men's League.

JAY  
Which one's your guy?

TIA  
I'll let you figure it out. You  
bring your gun?

JAY  
Will I need it?

TIA  
Uh, yeah.

Jay taps the strap of his backpack.

JAY  
Always with me.

They walk to the backstop.

EXT. FIELD - OUTFIELD - DAY

A lean wiry brotha strides along the right-field fence line.  
It's Donovan from the early morning workout.

Anthony tries to keep up, but he's yards behind.

EXT. FIELD - WALKWAY - DAY

Jay's head follows Donovan.

TIA  
Looks like you found your guy.

JAY  
He moves like a pitcher I played  
with in high school, Josiah Gray.

TIA  
Was he any good?



JAY  
He's in the big leagues right now.

TIA  
Did he strike you out?

Jay turns and grins.

JAY  
He struck everybody out.

Tia seems to be letting her guard down. She bumps Jay.

TIA  
Wanna meet him?

JAY  
Sure.

EXT. FIELD - BULLPEN - DAY

Donovan jogs over and shakes Jay's hand.

DONOVAN  
Hi, sir. I'm Donovan Baker.

Jay holds the grip.

JAY  
Nice to meet you, young fella. I'm  
Jay Taylor.

DONOVAN  
Thanks for coming.

Donovan smiles at Tia as Jay sizes him up.

JAY  
You about 6'1" 175?

DONOVAN  
Exactly.

JAY  
What pitches do you throw?

DONOVAN  
4-seam fastball, spiked curve, and  
sometimes a change-up.

Anthony runs up.

JAY  
Looks like your catcher's here.

DONOVAN  
That's my little bro, Anthony.

JAY  
I'll let you get loose. Great to meet you, Donovan.

EXT. FIELD - PITCHER'S MOUND - DAY

SHORTSTOP and SECOND BASEMAN step on 2nd base and tap gloves.

SHORTSTOP  
(to Donovan)  
Do your thing, young buck.

Donovan looks to the sky and toes the rubber. He peers over his glove and begins his delivery. His thin wiry levers move in concert as he cuts loose. POW!

#### **STANDS**

Jay and Tia sit on the back row of the wooden bleachers.

JAY  
Oh shit. Gotta get this on video.

Jay shows Tia the speed. Radar Display: **93**

Jay fumbles his phone. Tia grabs his gun.

TIA  
I'll clock him, you record.

UMPIRE (O.S.)  
Haugh! One.

Tia shows the radar reading to Jay. He nods.

TIA  
I'll call them out to you.

UMPIRE (O.S.)  
Stee-ri-ke-TWO.

TIA  
Ninety-five.

Donovan winds-up and releases THE BANGER!

The hitter's knees buckle. Ump shows out!

UMPIRE  
STRIKEEEE THREE. You're out!

JAY  
(to Tia)  
Yep, I've seen enough.

FOLKS in the stands high-five and point.

Tia leans into Jay.

TIA  
Told you.

**Jay's notes on-screen:** Donovan Baker - wiry athletic build, fast arm, will throw harder. Curveball is a BANGER! JOB SAVER - offer 50k - Call Rick!

EXT. CONCESSION STAND - DAY

Jay and Tia walk toward the parking lot.

A tinted BLACK CHARGER starts. Tia shakes her head.

JAY  
Thanks for introducing me to Donovan. Solid young man.

TIA  
It's just him and his little brother. Hopefully, you saw something you liked, Mr. Jay Taylor, scouting supervisor.

JAY  
Did you Google me?

TIA  
Had to do my research.

JAY  
Since we're researching each other, how about we grab a late breakfast? I owe you.

TIA  
How about lunch?

JAY  
Bet. You pick.

TIA  
What do you like to eat?

Jay pauses and smiles.

TIA (CONT'D)  
Dirty mind.

JAY  
Noooo. I'm vegan.

TIA  
I knew something was up when you  
turned down that link sandwich.

Tia looks up at Jay. Light pause.

TIA (CONT'D)  
I know a spot.

JAY  
That's what's up. I'll follow.

TIA  
I'll ride with you. Mr. Stalker.

JAY  
You stalked me, Ms. Google.

TIA  
Never know.

They walk through the lot as the tinted black Charger creeps.

JAY  
You know this dude?

TIA  
He's the reason why Donovan needs  
to get away from here.

Jay watches the Charger peel out and exit.

INT. SPIRAL DINER - BOOTH - DAY

The energy between Jay and Tia is like they've known each other for years. Small talk as they sip their drinks.

TIA  
Let me try yours.

Jay slides his closer to Tia.

TIA (CONT'D)  
That's so good.

JAY  
My juice game is top-tier, Tia.

Tia blurts out a goofy laugh.

Jay's eyes bug.

TIA  
What?!

JAY  
Let me find out you have the  
obnoxious ballpark laugh.

TIA  
What's wrong with my laugh?

JAY  
Nothing. It's almost cute.

Tia shoots Jay a fake pouty face.

Jay hops up and slides into her side of the booth.

JAY (CONT'D)  
I'll make it up to you. Dinner  
tomorrow. If your dude gives you  
another pass. He's a big ass dude.

Tia side-eyes Jay. They both laugh.

Phone vibrates. They check.

It's Jay's. Text from Rick:

"Need you to cover the Jayhawk All-Star game tomorrow."

Jay replies, "No problem" and spins his phone.

TIA  
What's wrong?

JAY  
Rain check on dinner. Gotta head to  
Kansas.

TIA  
That's so cool. One text and you're  
out. I'd love that freedom.

Jay looks at Tia.

JAY  
I'm not leaving until the morning.  
You down to ride tonight?

TIA  
Let's ride.

Jay cheeses big as hell.

INT. JAY'S CAR - NIGHT

They pull into an empty MLB stadium parking lot.

Perfect view of the ballpark. Starry night.

TIA  
I've never been here when  
everything is quiet.

JAY  
This is my thinking spot.

Silent moment as cars cruise by. Light R&B music.

They both stare out the front windshield.

TIA  
I had fun today.

JAY  
Me too.

TIA  
I felt powerful holding your gun.

JAY  
My pops says a scout's radar is  
just a tool, but his word can  
change lives. He calls us  
Kingmakers.

This lands with Tia.

TIA  
Your dad's a scout too?

JAY  
Used to be.

Jay turns down the radio.

JAY (CONT'D)  
You ever been to the Dominican?

TIA  
No, but I heard it's gorgeous.

JAY  
You'd love it. I mean if you like  
starry nights and beaches.

TIA  
My turn. What's your vice?

JAY  
Where did that come from?

TIA  
You don't have stalker vibes. You  
kinda come off as Mr. Perfect.

JAY  
I'm definitely not perfect.

QUICK FLASH - INT. HOOD STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

Southern hip-hop. Plumes of weed smoke. A SLEEK BLACK DANCER  
closes the curtains to a private room. A SPANISH DANCER rides  
Jay. He makes them kiss each other. Debauchery ensues.

END QUICK FLASH

Tia waves her hand in front of Jay's face.

TIA  
Lost you for a sec.

JAY  
I went through a stage of looking  
for love with the wrong women.

TIA  
(grinning)  
Are you a Fuck Boy, Jay?

JAY  
Anyway. What's your vice, Ms. Tia?

TIA  
No vices in this camp.

JAY  
The wholesome flow with an edge.  
Definitely attractive.

Jay and Tia share a moment.

JAY (CONT'D)  
Meet me at the trunk.

TIA  
What?

Jay hops out. Tia does the same.

EXT. JAY'S CAR - NIGHT

Jay taps his phone and slow jams begin.

Tia looks at Jay. He takes her hand.

TIA  
I see you put on your best  
Grambling 'got-the-draws' playlist.

JAY  
Is it working?

TIA  
Not tonight, playa.

Jay grins as they slow groove under the stars.

EXT. MUNICIPAL PARK - GRAVEL LOT - NIGHT

Jay walks Tia to her car. Chill vibe.

TIA  
I really appreciate you coming out  
to see, Donovan.

JAY  
It was worth it.

TIA  
My mom used to babysit him and his  
little brother.

TIA (CONT'D)  
I enjoyed hanging with you.

JAY  
Hopefully this isn't the last time.

TIA  
Jay, I do have a boyfriend. But I  
definitely want us to be friends.



JAY  
I'm cool with friends. For now.

They reach Tia's car. She fake jabs at Jay.

JAY (CONT'D)  
Was that a Friend Zone jab? I just want a church hug.

TIA  
Maybe next time.

She gives him a playful push.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Jay's Impala heads north on I-35.

JAY (V.O.)  
Donovan. This is Jay. Can you meet me at AM/PM Fitness in thirty minutes? How does your arm feel? Bet. I'll be there in a few.

Jay exits and reverses course. He makes another call.

JAY (V.O.)  
Bee Jay. My man. Hook me up with your Rapsodo dude... Today, ninja. Rick and Wichita can kiss my ass. If I'm going down, I'm going down chasing the player I want.

INT. TMI SPORTS ACADEMY - DAY

Jay, Donovan, Anthony, and a VIDEO TECH (30s) watch replays of Donovan's delivery on a monitor.

DONOVAN  
Any chance I can get a copy?

VIDEO TECH  
I'll email the file to you.

JAY  
Can you shoot me the pitch data?

VIDEO TECH  
No problem.

Jay grips Donovan.

JAY  
Good work today.

DONOVAN  
Thanks for doing this, Jay.

Anthony hugs Jay. This catches Jay off-guard.

INT. JAY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jay Zooms with a clean-cut BLACK GENTLEMAN (20s). The name on the laptop shows: RICK ELLIS. Rick "The Dick" is a Brotha!

RICK  
So you didn't go to Wichita?

JAY  
I worked out Donovan Baker instead.

RICK  
That's disappointing.

JAY  
Rick, let me sign this guy. He would've gone in the first five rounds this year.

RICK  
He's not even six feet.

JAY  
Come on, man, he's 6'1".

RICK  
No parental info.

JAY  
Mom's deceased and he's unsure about his father's whereabouts.

RICK  
I'm a stickler for risk profiles, bud. And young Mr. Baker has a collection of red flags. Plus, we don't have any pitch data.

JAY  
Check your inbox.

RICK  
Wow, bud, you're on top of this. I'll look it over. No promises.

(MORE)

RICK (CONT'D)

By the way. Serena said it was you who helped us reconnect.

Serena peeks her head into the camera and smiles.

JAY

Has she been listening?

RICK

It's all good, Jay. I'm in D.C. with Serena for a few days.

Rick holds his finger up "shhhh". ZOOM ENDS.

INT. RICK'S HOTEL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Rick removes his shirt and lies next to Serena. She exudes sensual sophistication in her forest green silk pajamas.

SERENA

Who were you guys talking about?

RICK

An undrafted high school arm.

SERENA

Is he worth my time?

RICK

Jay's desperate. Intriguing report though.

Serena glides her hand across Rick's chest. He reaches for her top. She smacks his hand.

SERENA

Anything left in the budget?

RICK

Still have around two-hundred.

SERENA

Give him a hundred and let me step in as agent. That ten percent would be a nice gift don't you think?

She tugs at his sweat pants.

RICK

If we move on this, it'll be more like twenty.

SERENA  
You're so cheap.

Serena pulls down Rick's sweats.

INT. JAY'S CAR - DAY

Jay cruises down I-35 South.

The Rumor Podcast pumps a twenty-year-old story about Cal Ripken putting "the hands" on Kevin Costner.

Incoming call: "Tia"

JAY  
Well look who it is.

CHAD (V.O.)  
You need to back off my girl.

JAY  
Put her on.

CHAD (V.O.)  
Don't try me.

Call ends. Jay taps the phone button.

JAY  
Call Tia.

Straight to voicemail.

INT. AM/PM FITNESS - NIGHT

Jay and Donovan sit in the café area. Anthony sits at a nearby table playing games on his iPad.

Donovan laces his steel-toe boots.

JAY  
Have you made plans to get your G.E.D.?

DONOVAN  
Already have it, sir. I qualified for college as a sophomore.

JAY  
S.A.T. or A.C.T.?

DONOVAN

Both.

JAY

Do you work?

DONOVAN

Part-time warehouse gig.

JAY

I'll get to the point. I like what I saw during your game. Have you thought about pro ball?

Anthony, still on the iPad.

ANTHONY

That's all he talks about.

DONOVAN

All the time.

JAY

I don't understand why you weren't recruited by any schools.

DONOVAN

Coach McCoy at Northlake gave me his card last year, but he's the only one. I've missed a lot of school since our mom passed.

JAY

I couldn't imagine. Is there anything else I should know? Do you drink or smoke?

DONOVAN

No sir. I mean I've tried both.  
(to Anthony)  
Ant, go order a smoothie.

ANTHONY

I don't want one.

Donovan hits Anthony with a serious look.

Anthony drags himself to the counter.

Donovan looks at Jay.

DONOVAN

I was suspended my junior year. A student accused me of selling weed.

JAY  
Shit. Were you?

DONOVAN  
Yes. But not that day.

JAY  
Have you ever been arrested?

DONOVAN  
Yes, sir. Shoplifting.

JAY  
Shoplifting isn't an issue, but the weed situation.

Jay leans back and crosses his arms.

JAY (CONT'D)  
I don't know man. Am I signing The Plug if I offer you a contract?

DONOVAN  
I've made a few bad choices. Taking care of Anthony has been tough.

JAY  
Do you two stay in your SUV?

DONOVAN  
Yes, sir. We stayed at Tia's for a minute but after my suspension, Mrs. Russell said I had to leave.

JAY  
Do you still sell?

Donovan pauses.

DONOVAN  
That's been one of the ways for me to keep us fed and together. But I'm not about that life.

JAY  
You sure? 'Cause my name's on the line right next to yours.

Donovan glances at the clock on the wall: "6:17 PM"

DONOVAN  
Mr. Taylor, if I don't leave now, I'll be late for my shift.

JAY  
Grab something from the café. I'll  
be in touch.

INT. JAY'S CAR - DAY

Jay continues down the interstate.

RICK (V.O.)  
We're good with you making an offer  
to Donovan Baker.

JAY  
Really?

RICK (V.O.)  
Your video and the pitch data  
sealed the deal. Good work, Jay.

JAY  
What kind of offer can I make?

RICK (V.O.)  
We'll go as high as twenty.

JAY  
Is that all we have?

RICK (V.O.)  
That's what we've earmarked.

JAY  
What about money for school?

RICK (V.O.)  
Zero.

JAY  
Zero? Come on Rick.

RICK (V.O.)  
I'm not giving high school dropout  
money for school. He won't use it.

JAY  
He's a good kid.

RICK (V.O.)  
You've heard my position. Any  
additional red flags.

JAY  
No. He's good to go.

INT. RUSSELL HOME - NIGHT

A small gathering, minus Donovan and Anthony, congregates in Tia's parents' living room.

TIA'S MOM (O.C.)  
He said 7:30, right?

Tia checks her cell as she walks past her mom, JUDY RUSSELL (50) and into the kitchen.

TIA  
He'll be here, mama. Has anyone heard from Donovan or Anthony?

Tia's boyfriend, Chad, sits on a barstool next to Tia's dad, LARRY RUSSELL (53).

LARRY  
Vegans don't eat cheese. Everything your mom made has cheese in it.

TIA  
I'm sure he's already eaten.

Serena Scott enters from Larry's office.

SERENA  
I've printed copies of the revised contract. Everything looks good.

Serena grabs a bar stool next to Chad.

SERENA (CONT'D)  
Dinner smells wonderful, Judy.

Tia checks her phone.

TIA  
He's up the street.

INT. RUSSELL HOME - NIGHT

Doorbell RINGS.

Tia bounds to the door and opens it.

TIA  
Hello, Mr. Taylor.

Jay smiles and steps through in full scout attire sans the hat. He tucks a manila envelope with his team's logo under his arm. Definitely the contract.



Tia holds out her hand. They shake. Awkward.

JAY  
 (quietly to Tia)  
 Sup, Road Dawg? Where's Donovan?  
 (to the room)  
 Hello everyone.

TIA  
 I thought they were with you.  
 Probably just running late.

Serena stands. Evin jogs by.

SERENA  
 Good evening, Jay.

She catches Jay off guard.

TIA  
 Let me introduce you.

Tia points to her mom. Her Dad walks over.

TIA (CONT'D)  
 My mom, Judy, and my dad, Larry.

Jay shakes hands with Judy and Larry.

JAY  
 Thank you for hosting this event.

TIA  
 You know Evin and that's CHAD.

JAY  
 What up, E?! How's your swing?

EVIN  
 (slow-mo swing)  
 It's great.

Jay looks past Chad.

TIA  
 You seem to already know Ms. Scott.

JAY  
 (to Serena)  
 What are you doing here?

CHAD  
 She got Donovan a better contract  
 after your low-ball offer.

JAY  
Mind if I look it over?

Serena hands a copy to Jay.

SERENA  
Standard contract. Rick approved a bump to sixty-five. He said, don't bother calling.

TIA  
Isn't that great? Serena said you played a key role in getting Donovan the higher bonus.

Jay surveys the room.

JAY  
Speaking of Donovan. I haven't been able to reach him all day.

TIA  
I'll call him.

JAY  
T, can you help me bring in a few things first?

EXT. BEHIND DOLLAR GENERAL - SAME TIME

Donovan turns off the lights to his SUV.

INT. DONOVAN'S SUV - CONTINUOUS

Donovan's phone dings. Message from Rico:

"you moved that gas lil nigga? dont fuck around n find out."

Donovan deletes the message, hands Anthony the phone, and checks his backpack.

DONOVAN  
Say it back to me.

ANTHONY  
Wait until I see you get into Rico's car, then call 911.

DONOVAN  
Remember, it's Foster Park.

Donovan leans his head against Anthony's.

DONOVAN (CONT'D)  
We good. I promise.

EXT. RUSSELL HOME - NIGHT

Jay and Tia walk to the car.

JAY  
How did I miss it?

TIA  
What?

They reach Jay's trunk and he takes her left hand.

A modest engagement ring sparkles.

TIA (CONT'D)  
I wanted to tell you.

JAY  
You don't owe me an explanation.

Jay pops the trunk. They stand face to face.

Evin runs outside.

EVIN  
Everyone's waiting.

TIA  
We'll be there in a minute.

Evin heads inside. Jay looks at Tia.

JAY  
I know we just met and who knows  
where our friendship was headed,  
but I can tell you this--

Jay pulls Tia to him. Evin pops his head out the door.

EVIN  
We're about to set the table.

TIA  
EVIN. Back inside!

JAY  
We should head back in.

TIA  
Yeah.

INT. RUSSELL HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jay helps Tia set the hats and tees on the couch.

JAY

A little swag for everyone. All we need is the man of the hour.

Evin shows Tia his phone.

Message from Anthony: "dont tell ms tia but donovan is in trouble with rico"

Tia shows Jay.

JAY (CONT'D)

The Dope Boy?

TIA

Yep.

Jay calls Donovan. Tia uses Evin's phone and calls Anthony.

JAY

Voicemail.

TIA

Anthony. Are you okay? Is Donovan with you? Where are you? Stay put.

Jay pulls out his keys and heads to the door.

JAY

Text me the address.

TIA

I'm rolling too.

JUDY

Tia! It's not safe.

JAY

Mama's right.

Tia *looks* at Jay. They head out the door.

Chad and Serena look at each other but don't move.

EXT. FOSTER PARK - NIGHT

Donovan squeezes through a hole in a chain-link fence. He uses the shadows as he crosses the park. A pickup basketball game continues nearby. Rico's car idles in the distance.

INT. RICO'S CAR - NIGHT

Rico slurps the last of a Capri-Sun. Donovan looks unnerved.

RICO  
I love these lil' muthafuckas. Now,  
what were you saying?

DONOVAN  
I can't risk it anymore. I'm done.

RICO  
I almost respect that. I'm thinking  
Ant probably gone' stay with Tia  
when you head out to play ball.

Donovan unzips his backpack.

EXT. DONOVAN'S CAR - SAME TIME

Anthony peers out of the driver's side window.

911 OPERATOR (V.O.)  
911. What's your emergency?

ANTHONY (V.O.)  
My brother's in trouble.

INT. JAY'S CAR - NIGHT

Jay focuses on the road. Tia rubs her legs.

JAY  
They're gonna be alright.

Jay holds her hand.

TIA  
There's Dollar General. Anthony  
said they're parked around back.

INT. RICO'S CAR - NIGHT

Donovan sets a package on the armrest.

RICO  
Hold up. Ain't no refunds here.

Donovan slips the package into his backpack.

RICO (CONT'D)

Like I was saying. Lil bro's too young to carry your full load but I'll groom him.

DONOVAN

DON'T FUCK WITH ME, RICO.

Rico pulls his Nine.

RICO

Take the bass out your voice before I pop that pitching arm, nigga!

DONOVAN

Shoot it! Anthony's off limits!

Rico chambers a round.

EXT. BEHIND DOLLAR GENERAL - SECONDS LATER

Jay parks behind Donovan's SUV. He and Tia hop out and run to the driver's side door. Anthony pops his head up, opens the door, and hugs Tia.

JAY

Where's your brother?

ANTHONY

Across the park in Rico's Charger.

JAY

Let me see that bat, Ant.

Tia grabs Jay's arm.

TIA

Be careful.

Jay squeezes through the fence.

INT. RICO'S CAR - SAME TIME

Rico jams the 9mm into Donovan's side.

RICO

It's gone go like this. Either you break me off part of that signing bonus or lil bro joins my team. And he'll be pushing more than weed.

DONOVAN  
You can have it all, Rico.

Police lights flash. Cop's horn BUMPS. Rico tucks the nine.

RICO  
You called the cops?!?

Donovan reaches for the door. Rico locks it.

RICO (CONT'D)  
No the fuck you not!

EXT. PARK - SAME TIME

Jay sprints toward the action.

EXT. COP CAR - SAME TIME

OFFICER exits his vehicle, gun drawn.

Rico burns off!

Jay approaches, bat in hand. Officer turns and aims at Jay.

OFFICER  
FREEZE!

**END OF EPISODE**