

Act I

Scene I

(Johnathan and Joshua walk on their way to school.)

Joshua: *(hitting Johnathan on the shoulder)* Johnny boy. Wais de scene horse? How's life with de new mudda.

Johnathan: *(flinching in pain and anticipation at the lash)* As well as can be expected for living with a full class, grade A b*#^\$.

Joshua: Wha yuh mean? All ah couldda hear from you and yuh sister before school close was how nice she is and how allyuh glad allyuh fadda marrin she.

Johnathan: Dat muz be was she sista dat she make bamboozle we. We eh see she since dey come back from de honeymoon. All we seein is hard times.

Joshua: Wha yuh mean 'hard times'?

Johnathan: Ay doh study it. Look we reach an we late for class. I'll see yuh lata.

(Johnathan quickly departs leaving a bewildered Joshua behind)

Scene II

(Joshua spots Johnathan hurrying across the street and tries to catch up with him)

Joshua: *(panting slightly)* Johnny. Wait up boy. Ah swear yuh see meh an decide to walk fasta. Not bad for somebody who supposed to be sick in bed wit de virus. If yuh was playin hooky yuh couldda at least hav de decency tuh tell meh so ah couldda geh de week off too.

Johnathan: Nah. I have tuh go for meh sista an ah kinda late for she. If ah reach late for she she go feel ah forgeh she. Ah ha de cold real bad. I might give it tuh yuh so ah goin. Latez.

Joshua: *(grabbing Johnathan's arm noting as he winced)* If ah din know better, I'll say dat you avoidin we. Wheneva yuh make it in school yuh always hurry tuh get tuh class an on'y God knows where yuh does be for break an lunch. Yuh neva ha time tuh go nowhere wit we. Even Kimberly say she doh see yuh no more an it used tuh be dat yuh couldn't ah

pull allyuh apart. Yuh seem tuh be more tuh yuh self too. Yuh was always lively now yuh seem...dead. An since when yuh always wearin long jeans an long sleeve all de time so. Is you does say dat yuh find de sun way too hot. An yuh's not one tuh follow fashion trends. Yuh does set dem. So wha it is yuh ha tuh hide. Yuh join de taliban, yuh slicin, yuh doin drugs? What?

Johnathan: No. Is nothin so. Ah jus cah tell yuh now. Ah ha tuh go—

Joshua: For yuh sista. Ah know. I'll go wit yuh. Mum wouldn't mine if I ah little late. She an all worried about yuh. Yuh could tell meh on de way.

Johnathan: *(stopping dead in his tracks to face Joshua dead on)* Fine. If it will geh yuh off meh case. Is dat thing dat passin she self for a woman. She hav we as casts out an it ha nottin we could do bout it. Now leh meh go for meh sista.

(Johnathan storms off leavin Joshua to look behind him pensively)

Act II

Scene I

(Joshua and his parents go to Johnathan's home the following day to find out what is the matter)

Joshua: *(knocking on the door)* Mornin. Good mornin.
(Joshua sees a curtain rustle and calls louder)
Johnny ah know yuh dey yuh know. Ah see yuh peepin behind de curtain. Mornin!
(After a while Natillie comes out of the house wearing long clothes and closes the door behind her)
Mornin Nattie. Where yuh brother?

Natillie: He inside and he say to tell yuh he can't come out right now.

(At that moment Giselle opened the door and shoed Natille inside)

Giselle: George and Naomi. Long time no see. How allyuh goin?

George: We were just about to say the same thing. We are fine but Josh says dat he don't see Johnathan in school these days. He say Johnny say he have de virus?

Naomi: Yes we just came to see how he doin.

Joshua: And to give him he home work and explain it to him. He work real goin down dese days.

(Joshua sees Johnathan putting on yet another long sleeved tee shirt as he passed the doorway behind Giselle and waves but other than pausing briefly Johnathan ignores him. Giselle sees Joshua and quickly comments)

Giselle: Well I'll see to it that he gets his homework but right now he have some...chores to do. Don't worry, yuh'll see him in school tomorrow. Ah go make sure he go.

(Giselle returns inside and closes the door behind her leaving Joshua and his parents outside and began shouting at Johnathan and Natillie)

Act III

Scene I

(Johnathan, wearing the same long clothes from the day before, furiously makes his way across the school yard to confront Joshua)

Johnathan: *(opposing Joshua against a wall)* What de france yuh feel yuh was doin yesterday? Ah tell yuh tuh leave we alone. Why yuh had tuh come by we an bring yuh parents intuh it.

Joshua: *(pushing Johnathan off of him)* Whais your problem? You actin strange. A good fren will try an find out wha wrong. I was tryin tuh be a good fren. But if yuh doh want none...

(Joshua pulled away to leave and Johnathan pulls him back)

Johnathan: I'm sorry. But there is a way yuh could help meh. Sorry *friend*.

(Johnathan punches Joshua square in the face and a fight breaks out between them. A dean pulls them apart and sends them to the office.)

Ms. Jackson: What is the matter here? How did this fight start?

Joshua: I jus tryin to help him an he jus start on my case like I is de bad one.

Johnathan: Cah even stand up in a proper fight. If Mr. Parker din pull we apart yuh m*#? \$ c* \$? woulda be mine yuh p\$#@.

Ms. Jackson: Ay. None ah dat in my office. Ah puttin both ah allyuh on suspension. Mr. Shotes three days. Mr. Mayers five.

Johnathan: But Miss, I start de fight. Why Josh ha tuh be punished.

Ms. Jackson: The fact of the matter is that you were both fighting. That you started it and for your obscenities with no regard that a teacher is present you get a longer suspension.

(Both boys gather their things and leave the compound)

Scene II

(Johnathan is hurrying out of the school compound with Joshua behind him)

Johnathan: Look ah sorry yuh geh suspended too. It was on'y supposed tuh be me.

Joshua: What de f*@\$ is your problem man. Yuh punch meh, start meh in a fight, geh meh suspended den afta all dat, yuh sayin yuh sorry. An why yuh goin down de road. Dese days yuh's such a homer I say yuh goin home which if yuh forgeh is in de nex direction.

Johnathan: Look. Ah din want tuh involve yuh in dis but since yuh in it already ah might as well tell yuh de story. Giselle have issues. Muzbe menopause or something. But she does be on we case for everything. But she smart yuh see. She does on'y hit us when we fadda not dey. So he doh really believe dat she does be doin dem thing. So for de pass few days I was workin in Sports an Games tryin tuh geh ah little money so dat ah could find a lawyer tuh put Nattie in a foster home or somethin. Ah also wanted tuh be able tuh stay close tuh Nattie when we home so dat she wouldn't have it so bad. *(At this point he paused to make sure that no one in their immediate proximity was listening in to their conversation and he lowered his voice for added caution)* I've...um...been solicitin mehself tuh distract Giselle from Nattie. Ah could take care ah mehself but is Nattie ah ha tuh study. Yuh tink allyuh could take she?

Joshua: Ah din know is all dis yuh was goin thru. Doh go tuh work tuhday. Come home with me. We'll tell daddy. Ah tink he home tuhday. We go sort dis ting out. We could maybe take you too. Leh we go.

Johnathan: Tanks eh. Ah shouldda tell yuh from before but ah fine it kinda degradin.

Joshua: Doh mention it....

Act IV

Scene I

(The entire Mayers and Shotes family are assembled in a court room)

Judge Sitheman: It is my considered decision that the best course of action for Johnathan and Natillie Mayers is for them to be in the care of Mr. and Mrs. Shotes. Mr. Mayers may visit his children in the absence of his wife Giselle Shotes at the home of the children's new foster parents. Case dismissed.