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# Life Support

By Nelson George

I was with a guy that...  
I knew was  
shooting drugs.  
He had \$100,000  
in this arm,  
and he had \$50,000  
in this arm.  
And I said,  
"Okay, go to the doctor.  
Get a test  
before we even  
do anything. "  
And then I just threw  
all that out the closet  
and said "Later" for it.  
Me and Slick used  
to get high together.  
Then he got locked up.  
He called me.  
He created  
this story about...  
his friends in jail had gotten tested,  
you know, some of them,  
and they came up positive.  
And he thought that  
I should get tested.  
As soon as he said that, I knew it.  
I knew it.  
I knew it. I knew it.  
I was ready to kill his ass.  
I was ready to kill myself.  
I was ready to kill somebody,  
you know? Shit.  
We have felt it.  
"Oh, he loves me.  
You know, he would tell me.  
He wouldn't... " you know.  
And I just told myself  
a whole bunch of bullshit.  
You know?  
Just a bunch of bullshit.  
- Yeah.  
- I knew that he slept with other women.  
I also knew that,

you know, he shot drugs.  
But I was like,  
"No, whatever. "  
I guess in the back of my mind  
I had this crazy thing  
about how I was just  
gonna, you know,  
prove how much I loved him  
and how much better  
I was than all  
the women that he had.  
And I was going...  
just I was going to show my love.  
I was so stupid. And sometimes  
I wake up in the middle of the night  
mad at myself. I'd be like,  
"Girl, you're so dumb. "  
I was young.  
He was older.  
He looked nice.  
I asked him.  
He said no.  
And that was it.  
The condoms were sitting  
right there in a basket.  
They were sitting right there.  
All I had to do was pick it up  
and open it. But because  
he didn't have that look...  
and come on, I didn't even  
know what the look was.  
- But I just figured...  
- There is no look.  
Exactly. Exactly.  
A lot of women  
and a lot of men  
they figure, "Well,  
the people I've been with,  
- all of them is clean. "  
- They look clean.  
Yeah, that "Everybody  
I messed with, they was clean. "  
- That's what I used to say.  
- And I'm saying, so...

- Really?  
... what that mean?  
I know, right?  
Right? I tried.  
Ma, I can't find my sneakers.  
They're probably under  
the bed where you left them.  
Don't make me come show you.  
Under the bed, baby.  
Good morning, this is WVKS,  
the voice  
of Brooklyn speaking...  
Is that you making  
all that noise, Slick?  
Yeah. I love you too, baby.  
Aw.  
- Thank you for my foot rub.  
- Mmm.  
I couldn't sleep for shit.  
Are you gonna stay off it today?  
I will try.  
I'll take the bus for sure.  
- I'm gonna know if you're lying.  
- You don't forget  
your belt today.  
And make two of them sandwiches.  
- She needs two.  
- Oh yeah?  
Anything else I can  
do for you this morning?  
Give me the winning lotto number.  
Ah. I'll get right on that.  
Kim, you better be  
almost ready.  
And I want  
those teeth brushed,  
and no food  
on that face, either.  
Okay.  
You want a sandwich?  
No, I'm good.  
You are stubborn.  
You know you're supposed  
to eat before you take that.

- Fine. Make me a sandwich.  
- Good.  
I found them.  
Princess Kim.  
Don't you look nice.  
- Are you taking me to school today?  
- No, your mama's feet hurt,  
so I'm gonna drop you off  
on my way to work.  
No, Slick. I want to.  
And I'm ready, so give  
your daddy a kiss goodbye.  
- Come on. Let's get a move on.  
- Bye.  
Bye, baby.  
All right,  
put these away for me.  
- After you take yours?  
- Yeah.  
All right. I love you.  
- Have a good day.  
- I love you too. Be good.  
Take care of yourself.  
There goes your little  
boyfriend showing off for you.  
He's not my boyfriend.  
- If you say you like him...  
- He's too young for me anyway.  
He is definitely  
too young for you.  
All right. Now listen.  
I don't care what the rules are.  
If you get hungry in the afternoon,  
I want you to take out  
that extra sandwich  
your father made you and eat it.  
And if they say something,  
you tell them to call me.  
- Okay okay.  
- Ah. Hey.  
- Love you.  
- Love you too.  
- Have a good day.  
- You too.

- Bye. Be good.  
- Bye.  
Kelly. Kelly.  
Kelly!  
Come on, girl. Get yourself up  
and go to school. I gotta go.  
Okay.  
- Bye. Be good.  
- I love you, Grandma.  
Love you too.  
Oh shit.  
Amare, what the fuck?  
I believe... come on.  
- Did my grandma see you?  
- Nah.  
I waited till she left  
so it wouldn't be no drama.  
I've been up all night.  
Yeah, no shit.  
You smell like an ashtray.  
Look at you with them cornrows.  
When did you get them done?  
I don't know.  
Like a couple of days ago.  
What's his name?  
Why it always gotta  
be about some guy?  
Marcus.  
What happened?  
Your sister kicked you out?  
Yeah, Tanya is  
not feeling me right now.  
Fuck her and that bitch-ass  
garbage man nigger  
she married, you know?  
You all right?  
Yeah.  
Hey...  
I could stay with you?  
Yeah yeah.  
You can be here as long  
as my grandma don't catch you.  
Baby, your grandma needs  
to learn how to forgive and forget.

Take off your shoes, fool.  
And plea... ugh.  
Please take a shower  
before you leave here.  
That is so nasty. Ugh.  
Your bed feels like  
the Four Seasons or some shit.  
You need anything before I go?  
No. I'm just gonna  
stay a couple of days,  
you know, until I can  
get back up with Michael.  
Michael?  
What happened to Louis?  
Man, that was last month.  
You gotta keep up, girl. Come on.  
Okay. Whatever.  
What's up?  
You know who it is. Holler.  
Hey, Kelly.  
It's your mother.  
I picked up some new DVDs.  
I got that Chris Tucker movie  
and... I don't know, something else  
that ain't even come out yet.  
Anyway, I'll see you  
at dinner tonight, all right? Bye.  
We have to talk  
about some funding, ladies.  
We really need to make  
sure that every time  
we are at a site  
or at a meeting  
or at a forum  
or what have you,  
that anybody that you're talking to,  
that you are referring to anyplace  
for testing, counseling,  
what have you, support group...  
make sure you get those  
stat sheets filled out  
so we can hand them in  
and we can get paid.  
And we keep on doing

what we're doing.  
Okay. The female condom, girls.  
If we're teaching women  
how to take care of themselves,  
then they gotta  
take care of themselves.  
I have such a hard time  
getting our young sisters  
to just even try it.  
They like, "What's that?  
I don't like it.  
- I don't think it's gonna feel good. "  
- Yeah.  
I say, "Well, listen.  
This will put you in control  
of protecting yourself  
and your own sexuality... "  
But a lot of the older  
women don't know about  
Reality and female condoms.  
- Right.  
- They never heard of 'em.  
The Muslim women, they'll  
take the Reality before they take...  
and I don't know, maybe it has  
something to do with their husband...  
they get questioned  
less with the female condom  
- than they would with a male condom.  
- Sure.  
You could always tell them  
that they can put that on eight hours  
- before their partner get there.  
- I think that's a good  
little key right there.  
We gotta definitely  
let them know that they  
can wear it for a while.  
You know what I mean? Because...  
before you go to the club...  
- Oh my god.  
- I mean, that's what it is. If...  
- That's right.  
- If you're planning



on getting down like that...

I can order

the vagina demonstrator.

And we can use that to take

it out into the field with us.

- I think you should order that.

- It's okay to invoice.

- It's done.

- I think the quicker we can use it,

- show 'em how easy it is to do...

- Right. Yeah.

...it will make it as simple

as putting on a condom

in their minds,

you know what I mean?

That was great today.

- Good turn out.

- Good morning, this is Life Support.

Deyah just walked in.

Got a couple of minutes?

She was asking for you.

Yeah, sure I do.

Deyah...

you want a chance

at having an healthy child,

you gotta keep taking the AZT.

And going back

to the hills of Jamaica

to see the Obeah man,

that ain't the answer.

Listen now. There is there a herb  
that might make the virus go away.

Don't you think we'd all be  
in Jamaica if that was the truth?

Can't nothing make  
this virus go away.

Now look,

you saw my daughter.

I was HIV positive

when I had her.

She's nine

and she's HIV negative.

And there's almost

no way in hell

she would even be here  
if I wasn't clean and sober  
and taking AZ when I was pregnant.

You go ahead and take  
all the herbs you want.

But that baby...

that baby needs medicine.

What about your husband?

Is he going to Jamaica with you?

- Good morning, Life Support.

- You haven't told him yet.

No.

He's not gonna want  
to hear about no HIV.

I can't tell him, Ana.

You don't understand.

Why haven't you told him?

Are you... I mean...

you're worried, you think he's going  
to get violent with you or something?

No.

Then you need to tell him.

Look, I ain't going to lie.

When Slick told me

he had the virus,

I wanted to kill him.

I mean,

we were struggling.

He was in jail.

I was still getting high.

Had already lost custody

of one daughter 'cause of the drugs.

I mean, it was a hell

of a wake-up call,

but him telling me

actually saved my life

and my family.

Just think about it.

You're stronger

than you think, girl.

No...

Amare!

Amare.

Amare.

Amare. Amare!  
Amare, wake up!  
Amare! Wake up.  
Are you all right?  
You need me to take  
you to the hospital?  
- I just fell asleep. Or something.  
- Right.  
You fell asleep?  
Amare, you can't  
smoke in here.  
Oh yeah, right. Sorry.  
Amare, look at me.  
Are you sick  
or are you high?  
Forget it.  
It doesn't even matter.  
If you don't take care of yourself,  
you're gonna end up  
in the hospital again.  
I'm taking my meds, I'm just...  
they just...  
they make me sleepy is all.  
Amare, don't play me.  
You think I don't know about meds?  
Well, I know you know.  
You're a smart schoolgirl.  
You know lots of stuff.  
Yeah, well, fuck you.  
What do you want from me?  
Am I supposed  
to be like you,  
with your big house  
and your big old grandma  
keeping you safe from harm and shit?  
You're gonna throw  
that in my face?  
Nah, well I wouldn't do that.  
Come on.  
You know it's been me and you  
since my parents died.  
Come on, now.  
- Come on. Leave me alone.  
- You can't smoke in the house,

Amare. Damn it.  
Did you talk to Michael?  
Yeah. We're gonna get up soon,  
so it's all good.  
Well, what are you  
gonna do now?  
'Cause I got  
a lot of homework to do.  
Okay.  
Hey... your... your grandma  
is coming home soon?  
Yeah.  
There's a lot of stuff  
I gotta get done anyway, so...  
Amare.  
Why don't you  
give me a call later  
and we'll figure out  
about tonight, all right?  
Yeah.  
Tonight. Later.  
All the little girls  
like Chris Brown.  
And I think he's cute too.  
I have him  
on my notebook.  
Look at her.  
Doesn't she kind of look  
like your sister?  
Except she's 6'-3".  
Mm-hmm.  
You know I'm gonna be 6'-3".  
You just might be.  
Do you wanna go  
to a basketball game sometime?  
Yeah, I'd love  
to go to a game.  
You know what?  
You should ask your sister  
if she wanna  
come with us.  
I bet you she'd  
wanna come if you invited her.  
- Okay. I think she'd really like that.

- Right.

On top of that,  
the school is so overcrowded  
they got them eating lunch

**at 10:**

She ain't hungry

**at no 10:**

And how she's supposed  
to learn anything  
if she's sitting in class half the day  
on an empty stomach?

Well, sounds like you're on it.

What's that supposed to mean?

Just what I said.

You're good with Kim.

It's good you're so involved.

Anyway, I brought her  
some snacks for later.

And I got a kitchen full of food.

We do this every Friday.

Every Friday I tell you the same thing.

No, it's no bother.

- Hey, Miss Kelly.

- Hi, Mom.

Hey. These are for you.

- Did you get my message?

- Yeah, thanks.

- What?

- You wanna keep your hair like that?

I mean, I like it.

I'm just saying, you know,  
you play basketball  
and girls might get a little...

Mom, I'm gonna keep  
my hair like this, all right?

All right.

Girls might try  
and test you, though.

It's all I'm saying, you know...

Okay.

Okay.

- I like it. It's tight.

- Thank you, Kim.  
So, you all gonna watch  
the Liberty game tonight?  
- Oh yeah.  
- Kim wants to ask you something.  
What's up?  
About the game.  
I really want you  
to take me to the Liberty game.  
- Can we go?  
- Of course we can go.  
That would be fun me...  
and you at the Liberty game,  
all the way in Manhattan  
on Friday night?  
They play the Sparks  
on the 10th.  
Life Support got  
a whole block of tickets.  
But if we wanna go,  
we gotta sign up soon,  
because, you know, the tickets  
are gonna go soon...  
Wait, so now  
we're all gonna go?  
Well, I thought  
it'd be fun.  
You know?  
A little girls' night out.  
You better check out  
where those seats are.  
Yeah, last time I got  
a nosebleed sitting in them seats.  
We got binoculars.  
It's a good thing,  
'cause you're gonna need them  
up there in those bleachers.  
You should have heard  
her talking about  
"Oh, so now we're all gonna go?"  
With that old snotty-ass voice  
she uses now.  
What snotty-ass voice?  
The one that says

"You don't know shit. "

I seem to remember  
somebody else being the same way,  
walking around  
in those dungarees  
talking about,  
"What you need my number for?  
- What you're gonna do with it?"  
- Whatever. We're not talkin' about me.  
Yeah, but you were  
just like them sometimes.  
- Them who?  
- Kelly and your moms.  
You're always making  
excuses for them, Slick.  
- No, I don't.  
- Yes, you do.  
You don't even  
know Kelly like that.  
I mean...  
barely.  
I don't know what  
you want me to say, Ana.  
I know it's rough with y'all,  
Kelly acting the way she does,  
- but you're in it too.  
- What is that supposed to mean?  
That means you need to chill out.  
She's a teenage girl. It doesn't  
matter whose roof she's living under.  
She doesn't wanna be seen  
out in public with her mother.  
It's a fact of life.  
Well, maybe that's  
your fact of life.  
You hid your moms  
till we were damn near married.  
That's 'cause I ain't wanted  
my moms to hurt you.  
Oh, man.  
But baby,  
you know the rap.  
People are not going to change  
until they're ready.

So what you want me  
to do, stop trying?

Uh-uh.

What I wanna do...

is go to bed.

Come on.

I gotta chill out.

Yeah.

Well, I met someone.

Okay. Okay.

But I can't... I haven't  
told him yet and I can't tell him.

Yet.

But I... I've decided that...

I'm going to this weekend.

But it's that thing

of, you know...

- When to tell, how to tell?

- Yeah. How to tell?

- Do you kiss first and tell?

- I know, I know.

- I know, I know, sometimes...

- Do you shake hands and tell?

Do you hug? I mean, you know,  
it's that... that scary part  
of when to tell.

Sometimes, they, you know...

- I mean, rejection is hard.

- Yes it is.

They walk out the door.

You know you'll never hear from him.

They're never gonna call you.

And then some ask you for  
the condoms and a dental dam.

"Go get it. Let's use it. "

It could go either way.

My thing was just

to come straight out and tell him.

- Yeah.

- You know? From the very beginning.

"I'm HIV positive. "

You know?

"What you wanna do?"

- I love that.



- I got some really crazy responses.  
- Yeah.  
- "I don't care. I use two condoms. "  
"I don't think I can have  
sex with you," he said,  
"but I can eat  
your pussy, right?"  
- Oh my god!  
- I was like...  
"Hell yeah!"  
Me and my partner...  
he's really not into using condoms.  
But if we have unprotected sex,  
I mean, let alone  
a pregnancy at my age...  
but I don't want  
another strain of the virus.  
But he says that he can't  
feel anything, I mean...  
and actually, ladies,  
- he kind of shrivels up when I say...  
- Right.  
..."Let's use the condom. "  
- Have you ever tried putting  
the condom on with your mouth?  
- Girl, how you do that?  
- Easy.  
And it'll get him excited.  
I don't think he'd shrivel up so much.  
But no, seriously...  
The number you've dialed  
is temporarily not in service.  
Simon, right?  
- Yeah?  
- I'm Kelly. Amare's friend.  
Okay. How are you doing?  
I'm good. I'm looking for Amare.  
Have you seen him?  
Yeah, I've seen him.  
He was acting  
all stuck-up as usual.  
- When was this?  
- A couple of days ago.  
Said him and his daddy been

drinking Cristal at some fancy hotel.  
Wait, you're not talking  
about Michael, are you?  
I don't know his name.  
Owns some recording studio...  
"Hatlantic" something.  
All right. Thanks.  
Bring that back.  
It's hot right there  
but it's missing something.  
Take it back to the break.  
You could still use more punch.  
What's up?  
Can I help you?  
Yeah, I'm looking  
for Michael Johnson.  
That might be me. It depends.  
Who am I talking to?  
I'm friends with Amare.  
My name is Kelly.  
- Amare?  
- Yeah. He told me about you.  
I'm just...  
I'm just looking for him.  
Yeah yeah yeah.  
I know who you're talking about.  
- Fix that. Fix that.  
- Word up, man.  
Come on, let's talk out here.  
It's all good.  
So, I'm saying, where...  
- Oh.  
- Now, what did you come over here for?  
L... I just came over  
here looking for Amare.  
I just wanna make  
sure he's all right.  
Well, he was passing out  
flyers for me  
a couple of days ago.  
He seemed fine to me.  
Well, has he been  
staying with you?  
- Staying with me?

- Yeah.

What are you talking about?

I barely know him.

No, wait a minute.

What are you talking about?

- I thought you were his boyfriend.

- Now are you deaf, dumb or blind?

I got a wife

and three kids.

Now I think you got me

confused with somebody else.

Now he works for me

off and on, but that's it.

Yo, man.

Are we gonna do this?

What did you say your

name was again, baby?

Now, fellas, you think baby's bad

enough to be in our music video?

- Oh, no doubt.

- She looks like

- she can drop it like it's hot.

- Yeah.

HIV is the leading

cause of death

for black women

ages 25 to 34...

the leading cause.

And if your man just came out of prison,

get him tested. You don't know

what he's doing in there.

All you know is what he tells you.

Carlos isn't gonna

take no test.

Well, then you need

to kick Carlos to the curb.

In the meantime,

get him to wear one of these.

I hate jimmy hats.

Well, then I hope

you like taking pills.

Because once you get this virus

you're gonna be taking

about 12 of them bad boys a day.

See? I know my man  
ain't got AIDS.  
- How do you know?  
- 'Cause he ain't getting nasty  
with no faggots  
behind my back.  
He loves my pussy.  
Yeah, well, that might be true,  
but that don't mean  
he ain't creeping around.  
Just ask Terry McMillan.  
Now I've been living  
with this virus for 10 years.  
And no, my husband wasn't  
creeping around with some other men...  
or women.  
He was shooting cocaine.  
And so was I.  
Now maybe I don't have  
no excuse, but after this moment  
y'all ain't got one either.  
'Cause I'm standing here  
telling you  
this disease ain't no joke.  
And I'm not going to  
shut up about it.  
I don't care  
if y'all don't care.  
If y'all stop dying,  
I'll stop talking about it.  
In the meantime...  
got to use  
your head, sisters.  
Excuse me.  
Can I ask you a question?  
Yeah.  
How do you suggest  
I ask my man to take a test?  
I mean, I don't know  
how to go about that.  
Well, tell me  
a little bit about your man.  
Does he go to the doctor?  
His he that kind of guy? Or does he...

Uh, you, um...

Hey, baby.

We're in here.

- Hey.

- Hey.

So what, you decided  
about the Liberty game?

Ma, I got practice every  
day and homework every night.

Game's on Saturday.

You study on Saturdays too?

Look, I just came over  
to drop these off.

Kim left them  
at Grandma's.

Speaking of which,  
you picking her up?

Oh shit. I gotta go.

Nice talking  
to you, Kelly.

- All right.

- Yeah, right.

Watch the stove.

I got that sauce on low.

- Where is Kim at?

- Gymnastics.

New class over at BAM.

- Mm-hmm.

- What? I took you to gymnastics.

One class, Ma.

You forgot to pick me up.

So how's basketball?

First game's next week.

All right, then.

I'll be there.

Ma...

Amare's sister Tanya  
kicked him out.

Are you hanging out  
with Amare again?

Ma, I'm real worried about him.

- Because?

- Because...

he left his meds

at the house.

- This is not good.

- No, I know.

So today I went by  
his boyfriend's job.

- Boyfriend?

- Yeah, some older guy named Michael.

He's supposed to be some  
record producer or something.

He was a real asshole.

I've been trying  
to call his cell  
but his sister  
must have cut it off.

Is he getting high again?

I don't know. Maybe.

Well, he might  
just be ignoring you.

I mean, he might  
just be getting his high on.

Oh, is that something  
drug addicts do, Ma?

I sounds like you're  
asking me for help, Kelly.

Look, Ma, maybe you could just talk  
to his sister or something.

Just help him get off the street.

He got a serious cough.

I've never seen him this bad.

Okay, babe.

I'll try and help you.

Where's Tanya working at?

Is she still over at that nursing home?

No, she works over

at the dry cleaner on Pitkin Ave.

All right. I gotta go.

And... thanks.

Call me when  
you get home.

- Tanya?

- Yes.

It's Ana Wallace.

I used to be friends  
with your parents.

Kelly and Amare  
used to play together...  
Yeah, I know.  
I know. I know who you are.  
You haven't  
changed that much.  
Listen, Kelly said Amare  
is in bad shape and whatever.  
So, you know,  
I work for this outreach program  
and I was hoping that maybe  
I could find him someplace to stay.  
Yeah, well,  
if I hear from him I'll let you know.  
How is he gonna reach you  
if you turned off his cell phone?  
I didn't turn off  
that boy's cell phone.  
He probably lost it or sold it  
or something for all I know.  
- My bad. I'm sorry.  
- Who you been talking to?  
- I shouldn't have assumed.  
- Uh-huh.  
We're just worried about him.  
Everybody's worried  
about Amare but Amare.  
And if he is not gonna  
take responsibility for himself,  
I'm not gonna be responsible  
for him anymore.  
Well, do you at least  
know where he might be?  
He works for a club promoter sometimes,  
handing out flyers and stuff.  
What about his friends?  
He doesn't have that many.  
There is one kid  
that he hangs out with,  
from the support group.  
I think his name is...  
- Ness.  
- Light-skinned Ness  
or Skinny Ness?

I guess he's kind of skinny.  
I don't know.  
He's always  
eating up my food.  
Skinny Ness.  
What about his treatment?  
Where does he go?  
I don't know. Sorry.  
Do you want me to call  
you if I find him?  
If you want, yeah.  
I don't hate him,  
you know?  
He's my brother.  
But I got my limits.  
And I'm trying  
to do something here.  
I'm trying to get out  
of the projects and finish my degree  
and... start a family.  
Hey, I understand.  
We all gotta make our choices, right?  
- What are you trying to say?  
- I'm trying to say  
if you wanna give up  
one of 'em, you gotta live with it.  
Oh, so now you're  
all righteous?  
Huh?  
I remember you, Ana.  
I remember you and all  
y'all crackheads, uh-huh,  
up in my house  
with my parents.  
And y'all didn't give  
a shit about us.  
I raised Amare.  
Me... all by myself.  
And I was a 13-year-old out there  
in the streets stealing shit...  
diapers and wipes  
and Similac and all that.  
So don't you talk to me  
about making choices.



Okay?

"I go, Andronicus.

O, how this villainy doth  
fat me with very  
thoughts of it.

Let fools do good  
and fair men call  
for grace.

Aaron will have  
his soul  
black like his face. "

Very good. Very good,  
Jean Claude.

You're really making  
good progress.

So, see y'all next week.

Thank you. Very good.

Hey, Ma.

- Give me a minute.

- Okay.

You know,

I was thinking.

You should come to  
that Liberty game with us.

All right, okay. I know  
the seats aren't that good, all right?

But it's really more  
about the experience.

You know, a family  
outing, right?

You sure you're  
gonna want me to come  
even if Kelly  
don't wanna go?

Of course, Ma.

What's the doctor say  
about your feet?

Stay off of 'em,  
which I can't.

What about the new painkillers?

I threw them away.

They gave me diarrhea  
and started giving me these  
weird sores in my mouth.

You better do what  
the doctor says, Ana.  
I'm just gonna buy some new  
shoes. I think that'll help.  
Something we need  
to talk about.  
What?  
I'm putting the house up for sale.  
What?  
Why? Where you going?  
Back down to Virginia.  
Well, what about Kelly, though?  
She could finish  
high school down there  
or she could stay with  
you for another year.  
At this point, I'm tired.  
I need to go someplace  
and sit myself down.  
Well, I think she should  
stay here with me then.  
It's up to her, Ana.  
I can't believe you  
doing this to me.  
I'm not doing  
anything to you, Ana.  
Ma, you took her  
from me 11 years ago.  
I kept your child  
out of the system.  
I know, but I'm still her mother.  
I mean, how long are you gonna  
keep punishing me for how I was?  
Did you hear anything  
I just said? I'm tired.  
I'm gonna get myself a condo in Newport  
News and I'm gonna relax for a minute.  
I've been taking care  
of everybody else for 40 years  
and now I'm gonna do  
something for myself for a change.  
You ain't never gonna let me  
get out from underneath this, are you?  
You are a selfish woman, Ana.

You know that?  
Why don't you try thinking  
about somebody else for a change?  
Kelly!  
What are you  
doing here?  
I need to talk to you.  
I'm Mrs. Wallace.  
I'm Kelly's mother.  
Oh, Mrs. Wallace, my name's Marcus.  
It's a pleasure to meet you.  
Yeah, well, I'm gonna  
be late for practice.  
This won't take long.  
- Hey, well, let me go then.  
- Hold up. Before you go,  
- let me give you something.  
- Ma, don't.  
Here, these should fit you.  
I want you to read all this  
literature from cover to cover.  
Thanks, Mrs. Wallace.  
You can thank me  
by being safe.  
I'll... I'll call you later.  
Ma, you know you just  
embarrassed me?  
What? I embarrass  
you by doing my job?  
Why are you here?  
Did you find Amare?  
Well, I got some leads.  
Come on.  
Come over here with me.  
I need to sit down while I tell you.  
So, you got a boyfriend?  
Ma, just tell me about Amare.  
All right, but first  
let me show you these.  
- They nice, right?  
- Yeah, they nice. What'd you hear?  
Your grandma told me she thinking  
about moving back down to Virginia,  
and I was thinking it might be a good

time for you to move in with me and Kim.  
I really don't want to talk  
about this right now.  
Well, what about Markus?  
What's gonna happen  
to Markus if you go?  
Look, are you gonna tell me what  
you found out about Amare or what?  
All right. Okay.  
I talked to his sister.  
She gave me the name of  
this guy he hangs out with.  
I think I know where  
I can find him.  
That's it?  
You came all the way  
over here to tell me  
you might be able to find  
some guy Amare knows?  
Look, I got a job  
and your sister to raise.  
You asked me to help you,  
Kelly, and that's what I'm trying to do.  
Well, I got to go.  
Call me if you find  
out anything else.  
- Well, answer your cell phone.  
- Yeah, I'll see you.  
Here you go, baby.  
Did you put the protein powder in it?  
- It's in there.  
- Can I have some?  
- What do you say?  
- Please.  
I need to look at  
that homework, okay?  
Go get it and bring it in here.  
My mother not gonna do nothing  
but talk against me on this.  
I mean she sees how  
I am with Kim.  
She even pointed it out  
the other day how involved I am  
with her school and everything.

But when it comes to Kelly,  
she acts like she's hers  
or something now.  
I think you're looking  
for someone to blame.  
Kelly's got a mind of her own.  
Yeah, a manipulative one.  
It's okay when she comes  
to ask me for help,  
- but when I ask her to do something...  
- Wanting to move her in here  
is a little more than  
something, don't you think?  
Besides, where's she gonna sleep?  
You gonna put her in there with Kim?  
She could sleep wherever  
the hell she wants.  
If she decides to stay,  
we're gonna figure it out.  
No, you're gonna figure it out.  
It doesn't seem like there's a  
whole lot of "we" going on here.  
Well, no, you damn right it ain't.  
This is my problem.  
Kelly is my family.  
Oh yeah, well, you wouldn't  
know it by the way she acts.  
Aside from this Amare business,  
when was the last time  
- she even came over here?  
- Fuck you, Slick!  
Ma!  
She's sorry.  
Yes, I am.  
Sorry, baby.  
I shouldn't have said that.  
Come on.  
Come sit down.  
Come watch the game  
with your mom.  
- Here you go.  
- Thank you, Daddy.  
Come on, Slick. You love me  
or you gonna stay mad at me?

I'm gonna do both.

Move over.

Viv, I mean that was my girl,  
you know what I'm saying?

And we got pregnant  
around the same time.

I got pregnant with Kelly  
and then Viv got pregnant with Amare.

So, the kids grew up real tight.

He just doing crack and the rest  
of that stuff right now, right?

- And he's positive.

- He has nobody to talk to.

- His parents are gone.

- And my mother  
already threw him

out of her house  
for stealing or something...

I don't know, some ignorance.

But, you know he's too young  
to be out there, HIV positive,  
you know, with all this stuff going on  
and not have any family  
other than my daughter.

Welcome to the United  
Community Church of God.

My name is Sister Bernice.

It's so good to see you all here today.

Who would like to share?

Lunch will be served  
promptly afterwards.

Hey, what's up?

People call me Ness.

I've been positive for two years.

I got the bug shooting H.

A few days ago, I go in the  
drugstore to get my new meds.

The guy behind  
the counter's cool  
until he sees the prescription.

I know you know what I'm talking about.

The guy got all nervous,  
put the paper up on the counter  
like he was afraid

I was gonna touch him.  
But I stay upbeat about it, you know?  
Maybe I got the same type  
of HIV Magic Johnson got.  
He got it, put on 50 Ibs.  
Got movie theaters  
all across the country, you know,  
put frappuccinos in the 'hood.  
Did a commercial for Lincoln Navigator.  
Maybe I got that same  
entrepreneur strain of HIV  
like Magic got, you know?  
This HIV could be the kick in the ass I  
need to get my life on the right track.  
Well, you'd think with all the money  
Mr. Bush is giving these churches  
they'd at least be able to  
afford some fresh vegetables.  
Ana, how you doing, girl?  
What's up, Ness?  
I figured I'd find you here.  
I liked your share.  
Yeah, this nigger will  
say anything for a hot meal.  
Yeah, I noticed.  
Hey, look, you know Amare, right?  
He owes you money too?  
No no no, it ain't  
nothing like that.  
I ain't seen him  
in a while.  
Heard he was doing some  
street business, though.  
Hustling?  
Nah, that's not his game.  
Not that I know of.  
Heard he was selling his  
anti-wasting injections.  
You know the bodybuilders  
love that steroid shit.  
Wait a minute. He left his pills  
at my mother's house,  
he's selling his 'roids.  
Sounds like your boy's not planning

on sticking around much longer.  
Why is he wasting his time  
selling steroids?  
Hey, if you're gonna die anyway,  
you might as well do it  
with a little bit  
of money in your pocket.  
That's a fucked-up thing to say.  
Hey, you might want to ask around  
about Amare under the El on New Lots.  
Them boys is trade,  
but they into selling meds too.  
All right, thanks.  
Yeah. Wait, Ana.  
Hook me up.  
If I find out any more about  
Amare, I'll get at you.  
All right, I'm gonna  
hold you to that.  
Gotcha.  
Don't let Sister Bernice  
catch you with those.  
Hey, how you doing?  
My name is Ana Wallace.  
I'm from an outreach group  
called Life Support.  
What's wrong with your feet?  
Must be walking on them  
too much, you know?  
Anyway, I'm looking for this kid  
right here. His name is Amare.  
I thought you might know him.  
- He's cute.  
- Mm-hmm.  
- Sorry.  
- No?  
I wish I did.  
All right.  
Well, thank you.  
You think you could  
help me out?  
I need some money so me and my  
boyfriend could get off these streets.  
Well, I don't have



no money for you,  
but I do work for  
this HIV prevention  
and support program.  
Now, if you fit this profile,  
we could definitely help you.  
We got free testing,  
free counseling services,  
some condoms in the bottom  
of that bag too.

Okay.

- What's your name?

- Andre.

All right, I'm gonna  
be looking for you.

- Okay.

- Okay.

Miss?

You sure you can't  
spare anything?

Here. \$5.

Now you got more than me.  
Don't spend it on no drugs, either.  
I don't do drugs.

Okay, well...

call that number, all right?

- Tender?

- Mm-hmm.

Describe for me how the  
sensations have changed.

They tingle like I got  
frostbite or something.

- Has the Neurotin helped with the pain?

- I stopped taking it.

- Ana.

- How am I supposed to make it to work  
and take Kim to school?

I can't even get past the bathroom.

All right.

I'm gonna replace it with Vicodin.

Try it. Let me know  
if it works better.

Great. Another drug.

Look, we got to wrap this up.

I got to get to my daughter's  
basketball game.

If you don't slow down,  
you're gonna lose  
the use of your feet,  
- period.

- Well, what you want me to do,  
lie in bed all day  
thinking about dying?

We've been through this, Ana.

You got to take better  
care of yourself.

This virus will make you  
a cripple if you let it.

Thank you.

Hey, Ma, you should've seen it.

Kelly had 12 points  
and a lot of assists.

Yeah, you missed it.

I got held up at the doctor.

I'm sorry, baby.

You should've seen  
her hustling all over that court.

She made me so proud.

She's fierce.

She's really  
getting good at this.

- Can I stay over with Kelly?

- Not tonight, Kim.

You'll see her this weekend.

- I need to talk to you about Amare.

- What about that boy?

Nothing, Ma.

It's between me and Kelly.

Fine. Don't tell me, then.

He's just in a little trouble.

I'm just trying to get him  
into a shelter, that's all.

I'll wait for you in the car.

Come on. Let's go.

How could you throw  
a sick boy out on the streets?

- That's just plain cruel.

- Grandma didn't throw him

- out on the street, Ma.  
- She did, last summer.  
He stole her pearl earrings, Ma.  
You forget about that?  
So, what?  
You giving up on him now too?  
- No.  
- Am I out here wasting my time?  
'Cause my feet hurt.  
I don't need to go through this.  
Look, that boy ain't thinking straight.  
He's not taking his pills.  
He's selling his steroids.  
And being out there on the street,  
- I mean, that's like a death sentence.  
- I know that, Ma.  
Did you know he was  
selling his meds?  
Nah. I mean I knew he was in trouble.  
That's why I came to you for help.  
All right.  
But what about this  
boyfriend of his? Michael?  
I went by his studio,  
remember?  
He acted like he  
barely even knew Amare.  
Yo, Kelly!  
Grandma's outside waiting for you!  
Kelly, I really am sorry  
I missed your game, babe.  
Whatever, Ma.  
- Hey, come here.  
- Stop it.  
Oh, someone told me the other day  
I was supposed to use this.  
Put that away.  
- Speak of the devil.  
- Ah.  
Yo, so how come your Mom  
be passing out rubbers and shit?  
'Cause she works for  
an AIDS outreach group.  
- For real?

- Yeah.

Oh, that's some heavy  
shit right there.

I couldn't do it... you know,  
being around them people all the time.

- I'd be, like, paranoid.

- Yeah.

Amare?

Amare, hold up!

Hey wait, Kelly!

What's going on?

Who is that?

You okay?

What do you think  
you're doing?

Do you know the fright you gave me when  
I looked in your room and you were gone?

Where have you been?

And don't even think  
about lying to me.

I was out with Markus.

**Till 1:**

Have you lost your mind?

- I'm sorry, Grandma, but...

- But nothing!

I do not want you having  
the same kind of life as your mother!

I can't stand it!

I can't stand it!

Now, you need

to be very careful

about the people that

you pick for your friends

and the influence that

they have on your life.

You have to be very careful,

and I'm not putting up with it.

And I don't want to see it again.

I don't want you coming

in here this time of night.

I want you coming in here

at a reasonable time.

And if you can't come

in here at a reasonable time,  
then you don't need to go out.  
Or you need to go someplace else  
where they don't have  
any rules and regulations.  
Grandma, it's not what you think.  
I saw Amare and he left before  
I even had a chance to talk to him.  
That boy has brought  
nothing but trouble  
into this house.  
Grandma, he's sick  
and he's gonna die  
if somebody doesn't help him.  
You might not care  
about that, but I do!  
Don't talk to me about  
I don't care. Nuh-uh.  
Amare's welcome in this house  
as long he's willing to abide  
by the rules and regulations.  
And last summer, when  
he started all of that,  
"Oh, the house got robbed" stuff,  
I'm sorry, baby, but  
that was unacceptable to me.  
I'm willing to help Amare  
when he's ready.  
Well, Grandma,  
it's kind of crazy  
'cause I feel like half the time  
he doesn't even want my help.  
He be lying and playing me,  
and I don't understand why  
he would do something like that.  
Well, that's just like your mother.  
She tried every trick in the book.  
But Ma is not like Amare.  
Ana hurt me.  
It's taken me a long  
time to forgive her.  
And sometimes I still can't.  
I try my best to remember  
everything she's done with herself

ever since she stopped  
messing with those drugs...  
because she does try.  
Hey, Sandra.  
- Hey.  
- How's it going?  
Bad day, Ana.  
She was just in here last week.  
She was healthy as could be.  
It wasn't the virus that killed her.  
Her husband shot her.  
Did you do a  
domestic-violence screening?  
I asked her.  
Hey.  
There wasn't anything  
else you could have done.  
I'm sorry, girl.  
Damn, Deyah.  
Why didn't you say something?  
Already?  
Mm-hmm.  
Some college girl took it.  
The realtor said her  
father's putting up cash.  
I know. Surprised me too.  
Did Kelly say what  
she wanted to do yet?  
Ask her. Kelly!  
Ma, don't put me in that position.  
Ana wants to ask you a question.  
So, you watch that  
Chris Tucker movie I got you?  
Yeah, he crazy.  
I thought you would like it.  
Why don't you come live with me  
when your grandma moves?  
But, Ma...  
you know I always wanted  
to leave New York.  
And I'm going to college  
down south anyway.  
It'll be a good transition.  
So, that's it. You decided?

Mm-hmm.

Look, Ma, don't take it personally.

I just think it would be a good idea.

It's not me I'm worried about.

It's... it's Kim.

Maybe we should cut back

on the sleepovers,

'cause she really

looks up to you

and we got to make it so she don't feel

so much when y'all leave her.

Or maybe Kim could just

move down south with us.

She could have a backyard,

ride a bike in the streets.

It would be a real childhood.

What the hell are

you talking about?

- It was just an idea.

- You ain't taking my child nowhere,

- you stuck-up little bitch!

- Excuse me?

You heard me!

I'm tired of trying with you!

- Good, stop then!

- Live with your grandmother!

Maybe next time you see me

I'll be dead in my grave!

That's some straight bullshit!

I ain't the one that

gave you the virus, ma!

Go get with Slick on that!

- You leave Slick out of this!

- You ain't gonna make me

feel guilty because you're sick,

because you was a fucking fiend.

It's too hot for you

to be working out here.

I'm just doing

what I got to do.

Dropped Kim off at my mom's.

And?

She sold the house.

She's taking Kelly

to Virginia with her.  
Oh yeah?  
That's all you got to say?  
Moving down south.  
Shit, that's the Black American dream.  
Let 'em live it.  
They want Kim to go, too.  
Oh, hell no.  
She ain't going down there.  
Yeah, exactly. Now you know  
how I feel about Kelly.  
You gotta want what's best for Kelly,  
not what's best for you.  
I'm telling her she can't go.  
Oh, that might work.  
Shut up, Slick. You know,  
I could use a little support right now.  
Ana, I'm about tired  
of this shit.  
You ain't the only  
one that's sick.  
You ain't the only  
one hurtin'.  
Yeah, well, this ain't about you  
and how you feel. It's about Kelly.  
You tripping, Ana.  
You acting like a fiend.  
And I feel for Kelly.  
Got you clocking her every move.  
Lucille ain't taking  
her away from me again.  
Well, we're gonna talk  
about Kelly when I get home.  
You know, you never did  
care about her anyway.  
Even when she was a little girl  
you refused to be her daddy.  
Oh, hold on now.  
Hold on now, that's not true.  
Because we both know  
she never liked me.  
First, I'm the guy that  
her mama met running in the street,  
and then I'm the guy



gave her mama HIV.  
And you never did  
a damn thing to change that.  
She wasn't wrong.  
You know, you can be  
a straight up bitch, Ana.  
I was careful. You was the one  
that got buck-ass wild,  
shooting up with strangers  
on the fucking corner and shit!  
Are you ever gonna let that go?  
Because we both know the game, baby.  
It could've just as easily been  
you that gave it to me.  
Yeah, but I didn't, Slick.  
Because I handled my business!  
You the one that let it slip,  
and you brought me down  
right with your ass!  
- Fuck you, Ana!  
- Slick...  
You just better  
get the fuck out of my face.  
I lost custody of  
my daughter when I was 25...  
'cause of the drugs.  
I signed her over to my mother.  
And now my mother's about  
to move back to Virginia...  
and she's probably gonna take  
my daughter with her.  
And I just...  
I miss her, you know?  
I just miss her.  
I just miss her all the time.  
I miss what I missed of her...  
growing up, you know?  
And I got a younger  
daughter and we so tight,  
and now I'm clean, I'm sober.  
I'm like, I try my best  
to be a great mother...  
but every day I spend  
with my younger daughter

just makes me really realize  
how much I missed  
with my older daughter.  
And she could be so fucking  
sarcastic sometimes,  
and angry with me,  
and my mother  
is the same way.  
Sometimes when my daughter talks,  
I hear my mother's voice coming out  
of her mouth and I know that's  
because she been with her that long,  
it's not my own. My own is  
not there like it should be,  
and I want my own voice  
to come out sometimes a little more.  
Now that may be  
completely selfish.  
You know, you may say, "Ana, what  
the fuck? You the one was getting high,  
and you the one that caught this,"  
you know, all this kind of shit.  
But you know what?  
I'm just like, you know,  
I'm trying to be a different  
person. And you know,  
I mean, how's she just  
gonna up and move?  
Like... my daughter's  
almost grown.  
Like, it's gone.  
It's gone.  
I just feel like  
I'm running out of time.  
I feel like she's about  
to leave me, you know.  
And I'm here now, you know,  
and I wanna be there.  
Like I said, this is just one  
of them days, you know?  
Okay, so this  
promoter named MJ-2  
runs these parties  
over at The Pit.

He's all up in that  
homo-thug world.  
Got guys hustling  
for him, the whole shit.  
If anybody could find  
Amare, it's him.  
- He gay?  
- How the hell do I know?  
What, I got gaydar  
or some shit?  
I don't know, you just seem to know  
a lot of different kinds of people,  
- that's all.  
- Just 'cause he's running the parties,  
don't mean he can't be straight. He got  
a family living out in Staten Island...  
white picket fence,  
the whole shit.  
Yeah, family.  
Definitely can't be gay.  
So, what's up?  
You gonna introduce me or what?  
You gonna hook me up?  
I can't believe you get  
this much ass.  
He got a party happening tonight.  
What'd you say  
his name was again?  
MJ-2. You heard of him?  
Owns a recording studio  
called Hatlantic.  
Thinks he's a producer,  
but his joints are corny.  
- You ready?  
- Can I finish my fried rice, please?  
Well, hurry up then.  
You looking for MJ-2, right?  
That's him deejaying.  
Thanks for dinner.  
I'm out.  
Yeah, I know Amare.  
He gives out flyers  
for me sometimes.  
Not a lot of jobs out there for

young brothers, so I try to do my part.  
Well, he works for you,  
so I thought, you know,  
you might know some way  
to find him that I don't.  
Damn, that boy's popular. Got all  
kind of women looking out for him.  
Excuse me,  
this is not a funny  
situation to me.  
And turn that fucking thing off  
so you could talk to me for a minute.  
I'm gonna tell you what I told shorty  
that came looking for him last week.  
I haven't seen him in a while.  
Shorty... that wouldn't have happened  
to be at Hatlantic, would it?  
This is starting  
to get tiring, okay?  
I provide a service here,  
a place where these boys  
could be themselves.  
Other than that, I try not to get up  
in anybody's business.  
Maybe you should think  
about doing the same.  
Well, ain't you a saint?  
Let me tell you something,  
MJ-2... or is it Michael?  
I wonder what would happen  
if I go to Staten Island  
and ask your wife  
what she think about your  
little two-timing ways.  
Bitch, don't you ever try  
to threaten me or my family.  
I will have your ass killed.  
Go ahead! Please!  
I got the virus.  
I'm already dead,  
motherfucker! What?  
And let me tell you something:  
I don't give a fuck  
about you or your little

lying booty-bandit ass,  
but you gonna help me  
find that boy  
before he dies on  
these fucking streets.  
Do you hear me?  
Yeah, okay. Okay.  
Put your number in my phone.  
You just gotta make  
a nigger go there. Here. Store it.  
I was scared  
you weren't coming home.  
I thought about it.  
I even went past the old spot.  
Saw a lot of folks out there.  
Getting high?  
Ana, you keep pushing  
and pushing  
and I don't know why.  
I know our life  
ain't perfect, okay?  
But it's good...  
a lot of the time.  
Better than it was before,  
when we were using.  
But you saying I could be  
a bitch sometimes?  
Yeah.  
Well, damn, you could've  
hesitated or something.  
I guess I could have,  
but what's true is true.  
You being honest  
or you being funny?  
Both.  
I love you,  
but sometimes...  
you play all of us...  
me and Kelly,  
and your moms.  
You do what you want  
no matter how it affects us.  
That is not true.  
See? There you go right there.

You gonna ask the question  
but you don't wanna hear the answer.  
You're stubborn,  
and you don't listen.  
Okay, Slick.  
I'm sorry.  
I'm gonna work on it.  
So what, you been sitting  
here all night?  
Hardly.  
I've been all over.  
I said some wild shit  
tonight about dying.  
- Like what?  
- Don't even matter.  
I didn't mean it.  
The bottom line is  
I want to be around  
for a long time.  
Me and you,  
that's how it needs to be.  
You and me, not just you.  
And you need  
to chill out some.  
And, you know, maybe  
you can give me a  
foot rub sometime. Huh?  
Aw, yeah.  
Now you go in there  
and make me a sandwich too.  
- At the same time?  
- Uh-huh, rub my feet  
- and make the sandwich.  
- Okay, baby.  
Hello? Where?  
Right now?  
Okay. Okay.  
Who's that?  
That was the guy  
from the club.  
He said he knows  
where to find Amare.  
I'm gonna see if I can  
bring him home.

Okay. Let's roll.  
Oh, he don't look right, baby.  
Listen, you go.  
I'm gonna be right here.  
Okay. Okay, baby.  
Amare?  
Hey, how you doing?  
Miss Wallace?  
Is Kelly with you?  
What are you doing here?  
I've been looking  
for you all over Brooklyn.  
Let's go inside the building  
and talk for a minute, okay?  
I wanna stay here,  
Miss Wallace.  
It's kinda  
hot out here.  
I'm fine.  
Remember when...  
it would get too hot  
in the apartment,  
my parents would come  
down here with us?  
Mm-hmm.  
Remember when y'all  
was having that barbecue,  
right over there?  
We knew y'all was  
just getting high.  
There was  
a big-ass rottweiler.  
He was coming at us  
and we was yelling for y'all.  
Y'all were right over there,  
but nobody came.  
So Kelly grabbed a rib off  
her plate and she threw it at him.  
He was our best friend  
after that, you know?  
You know how I was  
always happy for Kelly  
that she got to be  
with Lucille.

I mean...

I think she could be  
a bitch sometimes...  
but she kept her straight.  
You know what I'm saying?  
Yeah.

Yeah, I know. I really do.  
Listen, Amare, I want you  
to come home with me, okay?  
Come on.

Let's get out of here.  
I got a room set up  
for you and everything.  
I appreciate the thought,  
but I'm cool here.  
It ain't cool.

You can't stay out here, baby.  
You know your sister's the one  
who told me you was  
out here, right?  
She wants you to come  
home with me too.  
That's a lie.  
If she cared about me,  
she'd come down  
here herself.  
I'll be right back, okay?  
Just stay right here.  
I'm coming right back.  
Watch him.  
Damn elevator.

Tanya! Tanya, open up the door!  
Open the door!  
Your brother's outside dying!  
Tanya, open up this door,  
I know you hear me!  
I know you fucking hear me!  
Open up this fucking door!  
Fuck this bullshit.  
Hello? Yes.  
I want to report attempted suicide  
at the Tilden Projects.  
He's sitting on a bench  
in front of number 315.



Please send somebody quick.  
Fuck. Some fucking choice!  
Amare?  
He looks bad, Ma.  
They said  
he has pneumonia.  
He might not make it, Kelly.  
Ma?  
Ma, I'm sorry about  
everything I said.  
It's all right.  
Come here.  
Let me talk to you. I need  
to talk to you about something.  
Tonight,  
when I found Amare,  
he reminded me  
of a couple of things.  
I know you been trying  
to do the same thing,  
but I just wasn't  
really trying to hear it.  
I know I walk around here  
thinking I'm different.  
You know, I'm better now.  
But deep down inside  
I'm still that same old drug fiend.  
I'm still scheming.  
But only this time  
it ain't for drugs. It's for you.  
What I'm trying to say is...  
I've been putting myself first,  
trying so hard  
to make you love me.  
I ain't even really heard what you  
been trying to say to me, you know?  
Baby, just please  
be patient with me,  
'cause I'm really trying.  
And you've grown.  
You've grown up to be  
quite a strong young woman...  
you know?  
I'm really proud of you

and I want to respect  
what you need.  
So, even if that means  
that you need to move down  
with your grandmother...  
- I'm sorry.  
... then that's what it's got to be.  
Okay?  
And don't be sorry.  
Just be yourself.  
You're beautiful.  
- It's gonna be all right.  
- Okay.  
Each month we come up here  
and we celebrate people  
that have passed.  
But today, I just  
wanted to talk  
a little bit about those  
who are still with us.  
You know, day by day we struggle,  
and not only with the virus.  
We struggle  
with the government,  
we struggle with  
those who judge us,  
we struggle with those  
who ignore us, who fear us.  
We even struggle with  
those we love...  
and those who love us.  
So, today we give thanks  
for all those who  
stand alongside us...  
our families  
and friends...  
doctors, nurses,  
just everyone that...  
helps give us the strength  
and courage to carry on.  
Each month we come up here  
and we release these balloons  
in honor of those we lost.  
And we do it with love,

with sorrow,  
and with the hope  
that one day they'll find  
a cure for this virus.  
This is for Deyah Kingston.  
Christopher.  
- For Amare's parents.  
- Viv and Trey.  
Amare.  
Colleen.  
Edna.  
Amy.  
Lawrence.  
Maria.