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First Time Felon

By Daniel Therriault

Give it back!
Basic cable, no telephone.
One hour, three hours, full day, overnight.
Three hours.
I don't want no drugs, no guns,
no trouble in here.
People live here, it's their home.
There are children in here.
You understand?
Look here.
See that there cane and that there cross?
That stands for ''Vice Lord.''
I was born Vice Lord.
My daddy was a five-star.
Oh man, that's nice.
See, my baby is a big dog.
Go on home! Go the fuck home, Tanisha!
Hey, Pookie!
Hey, what'd I tell you? Come here.
Ta-dow.
Ta-dow.
-Give her one of these.
-Don't trip.
-She ain't paid for them last three.
-We go way back with her.
This is the last one
we give your ass for free.
Take that shit and go home, Tanisha.
Get the fuck out of here.
Sweetie, I gotta go.
All right, come here.
-I'll see you later.
-All right, baby.
I wanna get one of those.
Damn, I can't get down with that?
Greg! Pookie!
What's up, what's up?
What's up, man?
Yo, yo, check this out, man.
I don't like the way things looking.
We need to shut this down. Five-O.
-We ain't made shit.
-Shut it down, man.
-Why you tripping?

-Cops all over the place.
Freeze!
Slow, slow!
Turn around!
Listen up!
I said, ''Listen up!'' Quiet!
You have drugs,
put them in this garbage can!
We find them later,
you gonna wish you had!
Now, what the fuck is you looking at?
I ain't motherfuckin' Picasso, goddammit!
I ain't a fucking painting on the wall!
Who you talking to,
you little midget bastard!
Ain't nobody
in your motherfucking business.
You bitch!
What, bitch?
Stuttering motherfucker!
He ain't mean nothing by it.
He just fucking with you.
You ain't sound right.
No, I meant that shit, motherfucker.
We'll take care of this later, punk.
-Name?
-Edward Buber.
Want protective custody?
Up to you, but they don't pay me enough
to go in there, not by myself.
Division Six.
-Name?
-Tyrone Sims.
Division Six.
-Name?
-Peter Jackson.
Division Five.
-Name?
-Greg Yance.
-Division Six.
-Hell no, Officer, we's together.
That's my clique.
No changes, move it!
What you want? Money?

Get this idiot out of here.

Name?

A motherfucking white boy!

I'm gonna take all your goddamn shit!

-What's up, folks?

-What's up? Yeah, yeah.

What's up, boss?

Roll up in there.

What up, folks?

What up?

This motherfucker's a hook!

I seen him and his fag-ass crew earlier!

Look at his motherfuckin' tattoo!

Fool ain't Disciple!

-This here Vice Lord.

-Ta-dow, people.

Four-star Vice Lord.

This Disciple house, fool.

-I guess I'm in the wrong room.

-You got that right.

False flagger.

I'm gonna show you

how we handle that little action.

Bada-bing.

Jump that false flagger down here to me.

Get on your knees, motherfucker!

This ass...

...he tried to go over to the Vice Lords.

But we got the bitch back.

Been breaking him off a little

something-something for two days now.

I ain't no false flagger.

I'm Vice Lord for life.

Shit.

Hear somebody call out 'boss', thought

the nigger knew me from the street.

-They call me 'Boss Dog'.

-I didn't know they called Disciples 'boss'.

-This shit is just a confusion, it's a mix-up.

-Let me handle this here.

Stand up.

Step the fuck up outta here.

Raise out!

Give me my shirt back!

What's up, partner?
What's up, partner? You Vice Lord?
Ta-dow.
You in the right room now
and you gonna need this here.
They tell me they had you
over in the Disciples' room.
You see one of our soldiers over there?
Yeah.
He still alive?
If you wanna call it that.
You know they got us outnumbered.
It's about 75 of them,
only 20-something of us.
They beat that man up
and stabbed that man over an orange.
Over a goddamn orange.
We gonna kill them motherfuckers.
Y'all hear me?
Yeah.
We gonna move on in Disciples' ass today.
Motherfucks.
This shit ain't happening.
Mama, no...no, it wasn't nothing.
Shit, I didn't do nothing.
Mama, it was a police sweep.
Picked up everybody on the block.
It didn't matter what you were doing
or not doing. I'm telling you.
What?
Yeah.
Nigger--
That there's some bullshit.
I won't go back to that damn place.
You got to plea-bargain for me.
I can't. You had over 5 grams on you.
That's trafficking.
-You don't understand.
-No, you don't understand.
They got motherfuckers in there
for chopping up their mama.
They gonna put me in there
with murderers and rapists?
Not one word out of you in court.

Understand?

No, I don't understand. Look at me.

You the public defender, you do your job
or I talk to the judge myself.

No, you will not.

You will keep quiet and let me do my job.

Just let me do the talking.

Now, come on. Go.

Stand up.

I have no choice but to assign you
the minimum mandatory sentence...

...of five years without parole,
to an Illinois correctional facility...

...according to Section 97,
Paragraph 3 of federal guidelines.

Because this is your first offense,
pending qualification...

...you will be given a choice
to serve an alternative sentence...

...under the jurisdiction
of the prison boot camp program.

This shit's a fucking joke.

You did what you did
and now you got to pay.

You think you can do whatever you want
and get away with it?

Five years for my first offense?

That's bullshit there, Mama.

What about this boot camp?

I don't know.

I heard it's out in the middle of nowhere.

Guards yelling at you,
telling you to do pushups.

Like the army. What's wrong with that?

It'll give you discipline.

I don't want my son
to go through five years of this.

You get through that boot camp
and you come home!

Boss Dog!

Pookie!

-What's up, player?

-What's new, partner?

-All right. What you get, man?

-Shit.

I got five years.

Or this here boot camp shit.

Word?

I heard some shit about that boot camp.

Redneck Ku Klux Klan motherfuckers.

Tell you to eat your own shit,

you got to do it.

Shit, dog...

...I don't know if I wanna become

the type of nigger I gotta be...

...to try to survive up in this bitch

for five years.

-What up, King?

-Hey, baby, what's up?

-What's up, dog?

-What's happening?

I'm out.

What?

-How's you out and we in?

-Shit, nigger, I paid my lawyer.

See, the key to this shit

is having a good lawyer.

I give him a little something each month,

even if I'm not arrested.

What happened to

all that motherfucking money y'all made?

How many times I told y'all

you got to save your money?

Now this shit here is the consequences

of the motherfucking game.

Now you gotta deal with it.

Let me tell y'all something, both of you.

Keep your motherfucking mouth shut.

All right, I'm outta here.

-All right, King.

-All right, player.

That there's a slick-ass nigger.

I didn't qualify for no boot camp.

I got that prior, man.

Them ugly-ass sneakers?

I told you to leave them shits in the store,

you stupid-ass nigger, man.

What you said about doing shit

you don't wanna do up in here to survive?

I'm gonna have to do 'em, boss.

I got five years, no parole.

Won't be no boot camp for me, man.

Peter Jackson?

-Yeah.

-Let's go!

-All right, player, stay up.

-You do what you got to do now.

Ta-dow.

You're dead, motherfucker!

-Fuck you, bitch-ass nigger.

-Hear me? You're dead!

-Fuck you.

-You're dead!

-Stuttering-ass bitch!

-Dead, motherfucker!

Shit.

What the fuck you looking at?

My uncle, he owns a used-car lot
on Western.

When I get outta here,

I'm gonna ask him for a job.

Maybe he'll hook some of you up
with a job, too.

All right, check it out, right there.

See the cat eyes?

How the fins are in the back there?

Clean as hell, ain't it?

I can tell you anything about cars.

Right here we got

a 1984 Cadillac Eldorado....

Oh shit, man, there it is.

I don't see no walls, no fences, nothing.

-How they gonna keep us in here?

-Let's rock.

I'll book right now.

That ain't shit, man.

You oughta put your ass in the chair!

Man, shut up!

Break that up! Get off the bus!

Go, go, go. Get off the bus, go, go!

Shut up!

Be quiet!

Get your hands down!
Get your nose up against that wall, freak!
You!
Turn around, face me!
Arms out!
Couple of gangbangers!
You low-lives...
...are now in
the Impact Incarceration Program!
Your first rule is
always acknowledge an order...
...by saying, 'Yes, sir. No, sir.
Yes, ma'am. No, ma'am!'
-You scum understand that?
-Yes, sir!
-I can't hear you!
-Yes, sir!
Everybody turn around and face me!
Do I look like your friend?
What is your first name, fat boy?
Your first name is 'inmate!'
What is your first name?
'Inmate,' sir!
-Do you think this is funny, moron?
-No, sir.
-Wipe that smile off your face, inmate.
-I can't, ma'am.
Get him out of here!
Let's go, come on!
See how funny the penitentiary is?
Dummy!
One down...
...17 to go. Guards!
Everybody else, move out!
I'm Superintendent Sorley.
From this point forward,
you will take no actions on your own.
You will do absolutely nothing...
...unless you are instructed to
by a member of this staff.
-Do you understand that?
-Yes, sir!
You have no reason to say anything
to the inmate standing next to you.

You are all here alone.
If after 120 days, you all decide
you wanna call each other up...
...and talk about all the good times you had
while you were here, that's fine.
But while you are here, no talking. Ever.
Any time, any place...
...ever.
This program is unfair.
It was designed to be unfair. Life is unfair.
-Do you understand that?
-Yes, sir!
Now, there will be no escapes.
If you try to escape,
we will apprehend you.
We'll hunt you down like the animals
that you are and after you are caught...
...you will get seven to 10 years added
to whatever time you're doing.
-Do you understand that?
-Yes, sir!
You're all non-violent first-time felons.
Sentences between two and five years.
Now, all of you, each and every--
Stand up.
You put your eyes on me again,
I will pop them right out of your head.
Yes, sir!
My staff will not lay a hand on you.
And you will not lay a hand on my staff.
Anyone who takes a swing
at one of my staff members...
...will then cease to be an inmate
and will become a convict.
And believe me...
...we know how to deal with convicts here.
This program exists solely to make room
in our over-crowded prison system...
...and to save taxpayers' dollars.
That is all we have to do.
It is not our job to straighten you out.
It is your job.
It is your responsibility.
Move out!

-What are you in for?
-Car theft, ma'am.
-Are you a drunk driver?
-No, ma'am.
You run over old ladies
while they get in your way?
Why are you wasting my time?
-Get out of my chair!
-You sold my sister heroin?
-No, sir.
-Why, my sister ain't good enough?
-No, sir.
-What? What?
What is this? Pick it up!
-What's your last name, you idiot?
-Buber, ma'am.
-Ever attempt suicide?
-No, ma'am.
You're sure, with a name like ''Boob''?
You sure look like an idiot to me.
-Yes, ma'am.
-You're a real piece of work, idiot. Shot...
...stabbed. What's that?
Bite mark, ma'am.
-Who bit you, you idiot. Your girlfriend?
-Yes, ma'am.
Being mean to her? Probably deserved it.
A look at your body
and your secret's out, Sims.
We both know you don't belong here!
Ma'am, I have a bullet in my back.
-Now? It's in your back now?
-Yes, ma'am, right here.
That's just great. What else, you idiot?
I have no feeling in these fingers
from the handcuffs when I got arrested.
You're not gonna get out of work detail
'cause of that!
-I wasn't--
-Shut up! Nobody asked you.
Keep looking straight ahead, dummy!
Everybody!
Prepare to mount!
Mount!

Sleep!

Fuck Calhoun!

Everybody on their feet!

-Who wants to fuck Calhoun? You?

-No, no, sir.

-You wanna fuck Calhoun?

-No, sir.

How about you?

-You wanna fuck Calhoun?

-No, sir!

No talking ever!

That means never!

Maybe we should be able to say
whatever we want to...

...in language they understand.

If they can't take it in here
without losing control...

...how are they gonna make it in the street
where it'll be 10 times worse?

Yes, but within limits.

We have our boundaries

and one of them is no cursing.

That's not what they understand, Captain.

I know what these kids understand!

I grew up with kids like this.

We must be so much worse
than the street to them.

If you get them early
and just hit them hard!

You can't hit them so hard
that you demoralize them.

You've gotta give them some respect
and some space to come up.

These kids are not
from your neighborhood.

They're not going back
to your neighborhood.

How about you?

Help the ones you can help...

...and I'll work with the ones you can't.

You know what I think?

You should project your voice
from down here.

It's easier on your throat.

You wear white because you are ghosts.
Ghosts do not exist.
As you have been told,
your milk cartons face front!
Do it!
And your plate touches the tray! Do it!
You'll have exactly 10 minutes
in which to finish your food.
At--
Did you hear what I said, numb-nuts?
Milk carton faces front!
Get up, Yance!
Get up! You'll eat standing. Let's see
how much you can have in five seconds.
Go!
Not good enough! Give me 50 right now!
Everybody else, eat!
Down, sucker!
Down!
One.
-Down!
-Two.
-Down!
-Three.
All right, rodents!
You ate off them,
now it's your turn to clean them!
When I return,
I expect every pot, every pan...
...and every dish in this kitchen
to be spotless!
-Do I make myself clear?
-Yes, sir!
Get to work!
You son of a--
Hey, stop! Break it up!
You think every time you have a problem
with others you can resort to violence?
No, ma'am!
You think you have to marry
everyone you work with?
No, ma'am!
The two of you lack motivation
for working together as a team!

We will assist you in acquiring
the proper motivation.
Let's see how well you work together
carrying this log for the next 24 hours!
Up the log, lift! Come on, down!
Up at the knees! Down!
And up!
Come on, move, move, move!
Don't you fall, don't you!
Feet on the ground. Good, down.
Down.
Up and come on down.
Row the boat! Row, row, row your boat!
Hurry up and wash your ass!
That log's on the floor tomorrow...
...you carry it another 24 hours.
Shit, mosquitoes!
By your leave, sir!
-By your leave, sir!
-What did you say to me?
By your leave, sir!
Answer me. What did you say?
Sir, I said that I don't believe--
-You think this is the Cub Scouts, moron?
-No, sir, I don't think--
You think if you keep cryin', I'll send you
home to your mama and daddy?
You quit me now...
...and I'm gonna ship your butt
right back to prison, dummy!
Right now, understand?
Is that what you want?
-Is that what you want?
-Yes, that's exactly what I want, sir!
I quit, sir, I quit!
Get out of my face, quitter.
Go on, move, loser!
Pack your gear and get a move on!
Man, this shit here fucked up!
They got some dicks in here!
I been thinking.
We have the wrong approach.
-What? What you talking?
-You're Disciple. I'm Vice Lords, right?

Fool, I know I'm folk!
This gangbanger shit don't hold up in here!
Don't do nothing
but send us both back to county!
And I ain't going back
to no motherfucking prison!
When we get back on the streets
we do what we gotta do.
Motherfucking straight!
Seem to me we got to work together.
Unless we ain't never gonna get no sleep.
-What's your name, partner?
-Tyrone.
Greg.
I'll put it to you like this here, player.
We peace this shit out,
we be outta here by July.
Be back on the streets by summertime!
Won't see none of these
bitch-ass motherfuckers no more.
Can make some money, get some clothes,
take care of some business.
Goddamn, it sound good to me.
You down with that?
I'm down with that.
Well...
...you bring 'em,
I'll wash 'em, you dry 'em...
...we both stack 'em, all right?
For now.
Drill me night and day, baby,
till I get my fill,
-Drill me, baby,
-Drill me, baby,
-Drill me all night long
-Drill me all night long
-Hoo-rah!
-Hoo-rah!
-One mile!
-One mile!
-Two miles!
-Two miles!
-Three miles!
-Three miles!

-No sweat!

-No sweat!

Hey, player.

You don't stammer when you cadence.

Okay, gentlemen.

Who can find out the 'X'?

You.

You.

You think you got the answer, go up there.

Go ahead.

No, that's too easy, player.

He's trying to insult our intelligence.

Are there any volunteers?

-We got one right here.

-Oh, Tyrone!

Come on, Sims.

Go ahead, Einstein, show him.

Let's see you do it.

...equal 28.

X equals seven.

All right.

Experts report that the Midwest can expect

some of the worst flooding in years,

Heavy rains continue to swell

the Mississippi River,,,

,,,to the highest levels seen in years,

Closer to home, no rain is expected

in this small Iowa River town,,,

,,,but residents decided to spend

the weekend sandbagging the local levee,,,

,,,in hopes of avoiding the heavy flooding,,,

,,,which their neighbors to the north

have been battling for the last week,

This is the worst flooding

the Midwest has seen in over 50 years.

And right now

the National Guard is spread so thin...

...that the governor has asked for our help.

This is a perfect opportunity for us...

...to show what this program

and our men are all about.

River broke through

right here at Davenport.

Flooded 25,000 acres of farmland.

Right now,
Davenport is 15 feet underwater.
Fifteen-thousand people have lost
their homes and been evacuated.
-You got any questions?
-No, sir.
Sir, I don't think our unit is really ready
to deal with a situation like this.
Those are the orders.
Our men are gonna help with this flood.
And I'll tell you,
they're gonna do a damn good job.
All right, let's get it.
This is the perfect challenge
for these inmates.
Just the kind of positive publicity
this program needs.
-It's gonna be great for these kids.
-It'll be great for some of these kids.
Some of these other kids will finish
this program and be back on the street...
...doing the same thing that got them here
in the first place. Or worse.
And tell me, Captain.
What is it gonna do for this program
if one of these kids assaults a farmer?
Or worse yet,
touches some white girl in that town?
That is not gonna happen.
These are non-violent felons.
Ten years ago, these first-time kids
would've just been given probation.
The same way
first-time rich white kids still are.
Those white kids you're talking about,
they got nice homes and nice parents.
You can be sure they won't allow their kid
to get caught a second time.
These men don't come
from those neighborhoods!
And the last thing they need is somebody
telling them that their race is an excuse!
This program believes
that young men can change.

-Are you with the program, Officer?

-Yes, I am, ma'am.

All right.

Got a mighty long time on this here land,

Got a mighty long time on this here land,

I can't have me a woman,

so I use my hand,

I can't have me a woman,

so I use my hand,

All right, people, hands on your hips!

-One!

-Down!

Up!

-Two!

-Down!

Up!

Three!

Yance!

Get over here!

What's the matter

with the rest of you people?

Get those hands down!

You think this is a joke?

You still wanna be gangbang around here?

No, sir.

I saw what you just did.

-That wasn't no gangbang--

-Who told you to talk without permission?

You think the rules are for everybody

but you?

That's what got your little butt here

in the first--

Tom, I'll take him to the storage room

for a few minutes.

You make sure I'm not disturbed?

You follow me, Miss Yance.

Straight ahead.

Take your hat off.

You know you're the enemy, Yance?

You don't know that, do you?

I'll bet your black ass doesn't even know

there's a war going on.

And I'm not talking about the war

on crime and drugs.

I'm talking about the war
between Black people...
...and niggers.
That's what you are, Yance.
You a motherfucking nigger.
Let me tell you something.
God, I hate niggers.
I love Black people.
Honest, hardworking,
law-abiding Black people.
Niggers like you make me sick.
There's no problem for a nigger
to get his own people hooked on drugs.
Got the girls on the corner
turning \$5 tricks.
No problem for a nigger
to shoot another nigger.
No problem for a nigger to rob and steal...
...from good, honest,
hardworking Black people.
That's what they want.
You're doing their work for them.
You know what's so fucked up about that?
You look at me
and you call me an ''Uncle Tom?''
You are the Uncle Tom!
You fucking joke!
You are the real enemy of Black people.
White people look at me,
it kills me that they see you...
... 'cause there ain't but one nigger
in this here closet.
You been here this long
and you gonna try to run a game on me?
This here is where the game ends.
I don't believe
you're ever gonna have a home.
Or have a half-decent job.
Or get an education.
Or even have a family worth a shit.
You know why?
Do you know why?
Because you're happy
just to be a motherfucking nigger.

The clock is ticking, son.
You have no time.
I don't believe you'll make it through
that motherfucking flood.
Get out.
When I get outta here...
...I'm gonna come back down here
and smoke Calhoun.
Yeah?
Well, I'll posse with you.
Motherfucker talking all kinds of crazy shit.
He the type of motherfucker
hate his own damn race.
Call me a nigger.
That's the type of nigger right there.
Gotta say ain't nothing but an Uncle Tom.
Yeah.
Yes, sir.
Yes, he is.
A staggering amount of the Midwest
is underwater tonight,,,
,,,as the deadly Mississippi
continues to rush southward,,,
,,,destroying everything in its path,
It's official, folks,
This is the worst flood
to hit the Midwest in 100 years,
As one exhausted volunteer put it,
all you can do is hope for the best,
All right, off the bus and fall in!
Let's go! Move, move, move!
Rednecks.
Confederate flag
under them damn sandbags.
Sims, give me 50!
-Mary McBride, Dept. of Corrections.
-Civil Defense, welcome aboard.
Thank you.
Might not look too bad
on a nice day like this.
A hundred miles north of here,
it's raining like hell.
We're gonna get the full brunt of that
when it rolls down here.

The crest is already rising fast.
We'll have to raise this whole bank
...or we'll lose 1,500 acres of crops,
and the whole town of Niota.

Okay.

All right, I wanna see those sandbags
move. Let's go, team. Go, go!

Let's make those sandbags
fly through the air.

Let's go!

What the hell is this?

I ain't working with these people!

You talking about my men?

How we supposed to work
with one hand on our wallet?

Military don't work with convicts.

I didn't realize a yearly camp-out
made you fellas military.

You're just a prison guard.

You got no say over us.

You just keep the criminals away from us.

-Where you from, Guardsman?

-Kentucky.

How's about I just kick your ass
all the way back to Paducah?

Let's move those bags!

Let's show these people, man.

Move those bags!

Come on, let's go, come on.

Come on!

Work those bags, come on!

Move those bags!

-Hoo-rah!

-Hoo-rah!

-Some people say we're just no good,

-Some people say we're just no good,

-Sometimes we don't do what we should,

-Sometimes we don't do what we should,

But then some good come from our hood,

-We work for the pride, don't need no pay,

-We work for the pride, don't need no pay,

-One sandbag!

-One sandbag!

-Two sandbags!

-Two sandbags!
That fish of yours stinks.
This here is catfish. This is soul food.
Excuse me.
You men have done a fantastic job today.
-Y'all eat up.
-Thank you, ma'am.
-There's plenty more.
-Okay, ma'am.
If you don't want it,
I might as well help myself.
You're insulting these people who made
this meal with your lack of manners.
Your meal is done, boy.
You get outside, you wait outside.
And you're next.
We will not break discipline, gentlemen.
We will not. Understood?
And we will not eyeball me, Yance.
Get out, you, too. Go, get out!
That means now, Yance. Go, now!
Do we have a problem?
Okay, we all have a problem.
Everybody, get the hell out.
I'll teach you goddamn fools!
All right, men, you have been disciplined.
Now go back and finish your meal!
They need to eat to keep their strength up.
You embarrassed them
in front of the whole town!
I know you have your agenda
and I respect that, but you go too far!
One more time
and I will see to it that you are suspended.
-Don't worry about your town,
-Don't worry about your town,
-We ain't gonna let you down,
-We ain't gonna let you down,
-Pick you up and turn you around,
-Pick you up and turn you around,
-You must be thirsty after all that work.
-Thank you, ma'am.
I'd work all day
with this fresh air out in the wilds.

-In ''the wilds?''
-Wilderness.
Whatever you wanna call it. It's beautiful.
Where I come from you can't even breathe.
The buildings cramp you in so.
Nothing like this.
All these beautiful trees, fresh air.
Hey, everybody!
Grandview is underwater!
It's headed your way!
Sharon's got a sister in Grandview.
If you don't mind me asking, sir...
...what would happen if this town floods?
Well, the bolt factory outside town
will definitely flood.
Sharon works there.
Most people here do.
They'll all lose their jobs.
People's homes...
...they'd be ruined.
No home, no job.
Families will have to move.
The town just won't be the same.
-I'm gonna call you ''nature boy''.
-Those frogs eat them damn mosquitoes.
This air out here is straight.
-Got some decent people, too.
-For crackers.
They're people just like you and me.
So, what you saying?
-We need to save this damn town.
-Yeah, do some good work.
Come back down here,
work on a damn farm.
That right? I'll ride the tractor.
Put a spoiler on it.
-Yo, Greg.
-What's happening, player?
What will we do
when we get back on the streets?
Shit, man. I'm just trying to do
what I got to do, you know?
You know I'm Disciple, and you...
...you still Vice Lord.

Shit. Listen here, dude.

-I'm just trying to live my life.

-One life to live, huh?

Ta-dow.

Ta-dow.

Hey, dude, you ain't moving nothing.

This is how.

Sims!

Get over here!

After 3 inches of rain last night,
flood waters destroyed main levees,,,
,,,40 miles north of Niota,
Niota's in a bad place.

When the flood passes this curve,
it's gonna hit us hard.

-You have children?

-Yes, sir, two boys.

-You a free man in what, two weeks?

-Eight days, sir.

How'd you get involved
in the drug business?

-Did your mother sell drugs?

-My mother didn't sell no drugs, sir.

Okay, what about your father?

I don't know!

Where is your father? He still alive?

I don't know, sir.

-I'm just asking. What's your excuse, son?

-Ain't no excuse here.

Don't bullshit me.

There's always some excuse.

'My family was poor,

I didn't have no father.

'My mother was turning tricks.'

It doesn't stop with you,

your mother and father.

You got children of your own

and they're watching you.

And if your kids say:

'My daddy is a gangbanger,

my daddy is a drug dealer.'

You're giving your kids the perfect excuse.

Don't talk about my kids!

You're gonna go get a gun and shoot me

'cause I dissed you, huh?
-Just don't talk about my kids.
-Put your goddamn hand down, boy.
-What about the mother of your children?
-Don't even talk about her!
I'll teach my kids!
Teach your kids what, boy?
How to be a gangbanger?
How to sell a \$5 vial of crack cocaine?
You leave that man alone!
Leave that man alone!
-My kids ain't like that!
-Your kids shooting our people.
-Robbing our people.
-You all talk!
-Don't walk away from me!
-Inmate, be quiet now!
Sergeant, I want you--
What!
You ain't gonna do nothin'!
When your kids come to boot camp,
I won't let them back on the street!
I swear, I'll kill your motherfucking ass!
You ain't doing nothing to my kids,
dammit!
I hit hard, don't I?
Seven more years in the penitentiary.
I don't let nobody
talk about my family, ever!
Shut up, inmate.
That's it. You're suspended.
Don't push me, man.
Do something. This ain't right, Captain!
That inmate attacked an officer.
He's going back to county!
Come on, everybody back to work!
All right, let's go!
Everybody, let's move it!
Ma'am, Sims was okay.
He was gonna make it.
Boot camp's about tearing down
and building up.
Calhoun don't build up nothing!
He don't do nothing but tear down!

Look at what we do,
helping people save their town!
Y'all wanna play boot camp?
This shit here bigger than boot camp!
-This shit is for real!
-What will you do about it?
You gonna pout?
Lay down and go back to prison?
I got no time for this shit.
You better think about this.
Fuck this!
Listen up, everybody, listen up,
The main levee's not going to hold,
-Everybody in the truck now!
-Guards, let's get the inmates on the bus!
On the double!
You're starting to piss me off.
You wanna go back to prison?
Come on.
Let's move it. Move it.
Give me a hand!
Faster!
Over here!
Hold it.
We got it, we got it.
Come on, man.
Everybody off, back to the truck!
It's not gonna hold!
Let's go!
Let's go, guys.
It's slipping! Hold on!
It's not gonna hold!
Oh, shit.
Get down!
We can stop it!
It's not gonna hold! Yance, come on!
I ain't coming down.
Yance, quit!
No!
You sure about this?
We're on the high ground so we can relax.
What's the matter with them?
They feel that they shouldn't eat your food.
Because they couldn't stop

your town from flooding.
You guys did the best job
that you could do.
There's no reason for you
to feel like you failed.
If you weren't here
we would've lost everything.
We know we lost our homes, but....
You got out the furniture,
and the clothes and all the appliances...
...and we were able to do this
while you helped us.
Some people even got out
all of their livestock.
What you guys did for us, that was just...
...just amazing.
It was just amazing.
So...
...would you please come and eat with us?
Come on. Please, you deserve it.
You know what else? You guys are heroes.
You are.
Come on and eat with us. Come on.
Yeah.
Yeah, thank you so much!
Inmate Buber.
Inmate Yance.
Inmate Yance...
...for a job well done. Congratulations.
The levees may break...
...and you may work hard in this life
for some things that won't come through.
But today, believe me,
you have all come through.
All 14 of you men
have been through 120 days...
...of hard work, discipline,
and commitment.
And you all deserve to graduate.
I just want you to know...
...that I am proud
of each and every one of you...
...and you should all
be proud of yourselves.

Life is tough. It's hard.
Nobody knows that more than you do.
And when you leave here,
you may run into some setbacks.
But no matter what these setbacks are,
no matter how difficult it is...
...I want you to never give up. Never!
Just like Niota.
Hoo-rah!
Hoo-rah!
Hoo-rah!
Hoo-rah!
Let's go, let's go!
I wanted to congratulate you.
And...
...good luck.
Thank you, sir.
I've seen a lot of guys
graduate this program.
A month later they're back in the pen.
But what about you, son?
You gonna be one of those guys?
Or are you gonna surprise me?
Boss Dog! What's up?
I heard you was back!
-What's up, baby?
-Oh, yeah. Ta-dow, what's up?
Gimme some love. Good to see you, man.
Oh, shit.
You's a muscled-up nigger now, huh?
Man, they work your ass
in that there boot camp.
-Goddamn, Pookie, you're dipped in gold.
-Hey, man, business is slamming.
Shout out to my niggers, man.
-Ta-dow.
-I got my own corner. Kingpin ain't shit.
I'm moving up, motherfucker.
Come on, man, let's walk.
No, dog. Can't go nowhere with this here.
Damn.
-Can't go 100 feet with that.
-Yo, man, bust that shit!
-By the time they fix it, it'd be next month.

-No, dog, I'm gonna play it straight.
-How long you in house arrest?
-Four months.
Shit. Damn.
Hey, Pook. How the hell you get out?
Shit.
Boss, Cook County's bad, man.
But Stateville....
Goddamn.
I seen some shit.
I wanted to get the fuck out.
There was a major deal going down.
I heard some niggers talking shit.
So I took what they said
and dealt myself out.
I been out three months.
Goddamn!
Greg, what's up?
Hey, Pookie, how you doing?
All right. How you doing, man?
What's up with you, man?
You're different.
-What'd they do, bust your ass all day?
-No, dog.
-It's just weird being back, that's all.
-Yeah.
Hey man, I didn't know
your little sister had a baby girl.
How you doing, Crystal?
What's up?
Hey, how you doing, Miss Yvonne?
Yeah. All that shit hits you at one time.
Remember my homeboy, Alex?
-He dead.
-Yeah?
Carl got shot. He dead.
He was in boot camp like you.
Went back to hustling.
What's that motherfucker with the
nappy-ass head and the Mexican girlfriend?
-You talking about Jamie, right?
-Yeah, he dead.
Tanisha dead.
But that was AIDS, though.

Hey man, did you fuck her?
Yeah, me neither.
Hey, whip out the cream.
-Welcome back, player.
-Good to be back, my man.
Boss Dog.
Ta-dow.
-Be safe, man.
-Yeah, man.
Stay up.
' 'With warmest thanks from your Niota
family. You'll never be forgotten.
' 'Signed, Sharon.' '
She was the cook.
They sent pictures.
See, there's the church we used to eat in.
Oh, every day was like Thanksgiving, boy.
They had this catfish, used to fry it whole
without the head. It was good.
Wasn't nothing as good
as your cooking though, Mama.
People was thanking us every day,
thanking us for this, thank you for that.
We had a cadence we used to sing.
Y'all wanna hear it?
Yeah.
Please?
-Could we please hear the song?
-Come on, let's hear it.
' 'They say in Niota,
the people's mighty fine.
' 'Feed us twice a day,
so now you're friends of mine.
' 'Oh, won't let you flood,
' 'cause there's lots of love.
' 'Ooh, ooh, ooh, hya!''
Y'all in jail wasn't singing about no love.
We was. If you were there,
you'd have been singing, too.
I know they didn't have no fish like mine.
But it's nice they sent you that card.
My mama had an interview with her boss.
You were never in.
You didn't get back to me.

l couldn't get the anklet turned off...
-...they had to cancel the interview--
-Who's that? Give me the phone.
Yes, is this his parole officer?
Ma'am, why can't my son
ever get a hold of you?
And why can't he go to the library
and get some books?
He likes to read
and he wants to do some job research.
You don't want him to get into trouble?
He had discipline...
...and a lot of activity at boot camp.
He came back all gung ho.
Now you force him
to be idle for four months?
Don't you think
that's a little counterproductive--
Thank you.
There it is.
Ta-dow.
Hey yo, Boss Dog!
What's up, player? Yo, come here, man!
-So you out, huh?
-Yeah. Let's take this ride, player.
Yo, l just got this anklet off.
l only got two hours.
l'll drop you off.
Why you tripping? Come on, man.
Trick or treat, motherfucker.
-This is my nigger, Boss Dog.
-What's up, man?
Where to?
-l got to go to the library.
-Library? What's the fuck up with that?
Shit, there go Laverne.
She know you out yet?
Laverne! Look who l got here, baby!
Damn, she's slamming.
-That thing can't do shit with speed.
-l show you what this motherfucker can do.
-Bring it on, goddammit.
-Let me go.
-Watch this bitch.

-Ta-dow.
Why you ain't go with them?
Why go with them
when I could be here with you?
Why you ain't call me?
I don't know. I hear things.
You think I was gonna wait?
-Just saying you didn't write me--
-I don't write no one.
Your hair looks different.
You like it?
It's pretty.
People say you think you better
than everybody else now.
You ain't down like you was.
You wanna be just another fool
can't get no job.
Do I look like a fool?
I gotta go.
Can't be seen
with a nigger with no money?
Straight out, Greg?
I'm the same, even if you ain't.
I'm the same, too.
Just ain't hustling, that's all.
I gotta get my hair done.
Feels lighter.
They're long, but they were on sale.
I got you some shoes.
They're durable.
A nice white shirt.
Ta-dow.
' 'Now's the time for something new
' 'There ain't nothing you can't do''
You tell them the truth, straight out.
Don't hide nothing.
Think positive.
Look at yourself.
-What are you looking for?
-Anything.
What kind of salary?
Minimum wage, anything.
What was your last job?
Burger King.

-When was that?

-'91.

What've you been doing since?

I've been in a boot camp for young men
headed down the wrong road.

What did you get arrested for?

Selling drugs.

I completed my high school GED
with honors.

I also have a recommendation from
the superintendent of the boot camp.

What kind of drugs did you sell?

Heroin.

Why don't you try back in about a week?

Thank you very much.

If you have any openings,
my number's on the application.

Thank you.

I was wondering if you needed any help.
Maybe in the kitchen.

I could wash dishes, be a short-order cook.
I'll do anything.

I don't need any help.

Part-time, full-time, no-time.

Thank you.

-Can't get nothing.

-Just a goddamn nigger to them.

They don't want you to open the door
for them, messenger for them...

...pour their watery-ass coffee
for them, nothin'.

That's why I ain't gonna drag my ass
down to no motherfucking job interview...

...and ask them for some bullshit
they ain't never gonna give me.

They give the sisters work. That's cool.

They ain't gonna give me no mop
to slop their shit with.

I don't have your fucking money.

Man, ain't one brother out here got a job.

My homeboy, Lovell.

He down there at the Hyatt Regency
making about \$6.40 an hour.

He ain't never been in prison, man.

He ain't got no arrest sheet.
Out of all the motherfuckers you begged to
give you a shit job, was there one brother?
Hell, no.
Not one goddamn nigger
got a job to give us.
Check out Jason's brother.
He owns that funeral parlor.
Only legit business around
that makes money.
I already did, dog.
Got a motherfucking waiting list.
-Believe that shit?
-That's bullshit.
-Fucking waiting list at a funeral parlor.
-Straight up, man.
You know you always
got a job with me, right?
Hey, bitch!
Motherfucker, I'm tired of your ass!
What's up, boss, my man?
I heard you was out.
Didn't even try to contact me?
What's up with that?
I heard you squaring up on me.
How your job search?
-It's all right.
-You got a job?
Ain't all right, then.
I hate to see you like this, homey.
How much longer can you take
this poor-man shit?
Who's paying your health for you?
Getting over on your mom?
-She pick out your clothes for you, too?
-I don't work for you no more.
I ain't asking you for shit.
Matter of fact, get the fuck outta my face.
Damn, I didn't know it was bad as all that.
You'll be all right.
Gorgeous, come here.
What's up, Greg?
Tell you what, let me know
when you wanna work just one day.

Put some papers in your pocket,
me and you can go out and kick it.
I gotta tell you, don't look like you had
yourself no fun in a long goddamn time.
You have to hang in there.
What you think I been doing?
I been out every day, all day...
...looking for a job, any kind of job,
for three months now.
I haven't had an interview in two weeks.
-Ain't nobody wanna hire me.
-Something will come up.
Mama, this ain't the '70s.
You can't just walk out there and get a job.
Ain't nobody gonna hire me
unless I tell 'em I been to college or....
I know guys never been to prison
and still can't get a job.
They catch you lying and that's it.
This is it now, don't you understand?
I'm a grown man and I live with my mama!
I can't get a damn job!
You think I wanna be here?
This is it.
This is bullshit! All of it, it's bullshit!
Wait a minute.
'Bullshit?'

This...

...what you just did, is bullshit.
This is who you are.
This is what you accomplished.
Now, you go and get what's yours.
You're a man.
A man like who?
Who you trying to be like, baby?
Like your father?
I'm not gonna let you be the man
your father was.
I don't need another dead man.
I am not gonna have you
give up and die on me, too, goddammit.
I am not going to let you die.
This is what we're gonna do.
Now...

...you're gonna go down there
to them employment people again.
You're gonna look them in the eye...
...and you're gonna tell them the truth.
Step up, baby...
...and tell them who you are.
You are Greg Yance...
...and you are not going to die.
Can I tell you about
my experience down there?
I worked 18 hours a day...
...for \$3 a week.
Throwing sandbags from dawn to dusk.
Stepping in water with snakes
and all types of insects I never seen before.
We worked in 110-degree heat.
Uniform soaked.
Feet blistered, hands raw,
mosquito bites all over my body.
After we finished, we'd still have to do
our P.T., that's physical training.
Stomach crunches and pushups
and jumping jacks.
Then we'd still have to jog
three miles a day.
I know that may sound like
a nightmare to you, but....
Throwing sandbags on that levee
was the best job I've ever had.
The people there...
...they made us feel like we had a purpose.
We made a difference and they thanked us.
I'm a hard worker,
I like backbreaking work.
I work good with my hands.
I'll work on the outside
and start at the bottom.
Making \$3 an hour would be
a very big accomplishment for me.
I'm just asking you.
Please, could you look for anything?
Just anything. I'm willing to work.
I'm sorry, we just don't have anything
for you right now.

What's wrong? You tripping me out.
Shit, ain't nothing,
everything just going in slow motion.
-You know something?
-What's that?
For a minute, I thought I wouldn't
end up hustling for the rest of my life.
For me, there ain't nothing else.
Especially seeing
what your ass is going through.
Shit.
When you wanna start?
If nothing come through by next week....
Monday.
What's going on?
-What's up?
-What's up, Pookie?
All right.
You know that motherfucker?
-I thought you knew the nigger!
-I don't know that motherfucker.
Let's get the fuck outta here, man.
Pookie, check this out.
Snitchin' bitch!
That'll shut your fat fucking mouth.
You see anything?
-Tell me you saw something, motherfucker.
-You got it, dog.
You a snitch, too?
No.