SUMNER’S

BLACK POWER

MOVEMENT

C. 2015
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Just two days before the start of our 2014-2015 school year and 10 miles from Sumner, the entire world watched as the unrest unfolded following the police killing of unarmed black teen, Michael Brown. This event sparked a national debate on the injustices that African Americans still experience even during a time when the country elected our first black president. I certainly felt an ironic mesh of emotions as I struggled with polarized images of our black men: one as the most powerful man in the world with security to protect him and one who was laid in a puddle of his own blood while security surrounded him.

Some of my students knew Michael Brown. They were angry like me, but unlike me, they were not surprised by any of it. To them, this was simply another example of institutionalized racism. The only difference was it was on display for the world to see.

Indeed, this directly impacted the lessons that I had to teach in our African American Literature class. I wanted my students to have an outlet for their thoughts and emotions. My job was to do more than simply teach them reading and writing; I now had to teach them lessons on life. I had to get personal and discuss my experiences with racism and the very real injustices they will face simply because of the color of their skin.

I am privileged to present to you their mesh of emotions in this year’s senior book, Sumner’s Black Power Movement, c. 2015. The literature we read from our Black Power Unit was some of the most refreshing pieces of work and never more relevant.

To my beloved Class of 2015: I am so very proud of you. I have had the honor of instructing and watching you grow as a more conscious reader, writer and thinker. Never stop believing that you matter. Never give up on your dreams.

Congratulations! You have survived my “Literature Boot Camp”!

-Ms. Fields

“Black power can be clearly defined for those who do not attach the fears of white America to their questions about it.”

-Stokely Carmichael
An eagle represents freedom in the United States. It can fly wherever it wants and do what it wants. Everyone deserves freedom, but not everyone is free in America.
Tupac is one of the greatest rappers ever! He was one of those people that could touch and inspire everyone with his music. As a strong supporter of the Black Panthers, he naturally gravitated toward their ideology. Tupac was the voice of a black 90s generation crying out from the oppression they faced in the form of poverty, violence and systematic racism during their time.
There was a time when African Americans were independent, strong and confident. They were owners of a large piece of land in Tulsa, Oklahoma known as Black Wall Street to most and “Little Africa” to some.

It all started in 1921 when they acquired this empty piece of land. They knew they could make it on their own and they did. They worked hard for 20 years to build this land that was strictly for blacks. They owned over 600 businesses, 30 grocery stores, 6 airplanes and 2 airports. There were also several schools, churches, condos, libraries and so much more.

Of course there were racist whites furious that African American people had something nice for themselves and totally independent from anyone. They couldn’t sit back and watch that happen any longer. It was their jealousy that caused them to bomb Black Wall Street. Over 300 African Americans died.
They tell us that we are nothing! Rape our women, steal their innocence and destroy their chances of having a
good strong black man. Now see the white man no longer beats us with painful lashes to show. He, instead,
sends our mind into a great depression. My people are still oppressed! Why? Because we have been told we
are nothing but slaves. I’m here to tell you it is all lie! Each and every one of us are black beautiful children of
God. We are not slaves. If we are nothing, as the white man proclaims, then why are we still alive? Why have
we gained our political freedom? Black is powerful. Black is important. Black matters. Deep inside, you are
greater than any standard someone sets for you.
Slaves didn’t get treated right. Their master had them working in sweltering, unbearable heat and beat them if they did not work at a fast enough pace. Slave homes where half way destroyed with broken windows and cracks in the walls. Water would seep through when it rained. I don’t think anyone can imagine sleeping on wet furniture or bearing that smell in the morning when the humidity hit their homes. Nevertheless, they survived. They worked. They would get up at the crack of dawn and do back-breaking, finger-pricking work.
Most people wouldn’t believe the hardship that women go through every day. In some people’s eyes, women are shown as weak and have a lack of confidence in comparison to a man. I see things differently. A woman, especially a black woman, is beautiful. They show empowerment and strength in anything they do. If there’s a road block a black woman can shoot right through it. An African American woman holds the life inside their womb that brings fourth another generation. If there were no women, there wouldn’t be man. Just the touch of a black woman can give you a shiver because of the empowerment inside the genes of a female. The pick shows the power and the beauty inside a woman. Identifying a black woman’s curves shows that no other breed can be made just like it. The black woman is unique in every way possible. The natural beauty is being shown with the black woman leaning back revealing herself. By her revealing her own self, this shows that she is aware of how truly strong and beautiful she is.
The power of a gun can kill
and the power of fire can burn.
The power of wind can chill
and the power of a mind can learn.
The power of anger can rage
inside until it tears you apart.
And the power of a smile,
especially yours, was supposed to heal a frozen heart.
You kept my history a mystery, but now I see.
The American Dream wasn’t meant for me.
Lady liberty is a hypocrite, she lied to me.
Promised me freedom, education and equality.
Never gave me nothing but slavery.
And you’re surprised at how dangerous you made me.
Calling me a mad man because I’m strong and bold.
Living in this dump full of lies you told.
No longer believing in opportunities in this new nation.
Started out a young paper chaser,
Black hoodie and black Tims,
Strapped with a glock and a Tec-9,
No longer a slave,
In a concrete jungle,
Where the white man no longer rules,
Take what’s rightfully mine,
My 40 acres and a mule.
Living everyday like a hustle,
Hollow-tips hovering over my head like a death-wish,
Knocking at my front door...
...My n*gga Lucifer yelling in my ear...

...All you ever gave my people was starvation.
I dream too...
...I dream ...
...of a place for a black man and black woman to live
Hand in hand.
I protested with posters and greeting cards,
Voicemails and sweet nothings.
I lodged for sit-ins, praying I’m not the next on a T-Shirt.
Sometimes I ignore it all and smile like a bamboozled fool
tap dancing around the issues that affect me.
Turning the other cheek.
I stayed patient and non-violent, but eventually...
...I was pushed to the edge.
And I waited.
AND waited.
WAITED.
You, America, still found reasons to deny me every time.
To deceive me.
To make me Public Enemy #1. Every. Time.
I guess I’ll fight back and not feel an ounce of guilt.
Knowing that it was you all along who fought the most.
I thought you would give me love.
That was until the shackles of reality hit me like hot perm
on new growth.
Deteriorating them important papers I thought you up-
held.
Killing the roots that never had a chance to stand tall.
Here’s my postcard.
Does it capture my good side?
This is self-explanatory. It’s about two cats: a black one named Yin and a grayish white one named Yang. Yin is telling Yang about a new power that he recently found out about. In order to get this power, the entire cat-munity has to come together. With all of their forces combined, “Black Power” will be unleashed. Certainly, one whole is more powerful than its individual parts.
Life moves very fast, so you should
focus on bettering your future
and letting go of your past.
Every decision you make is like balancing, heaven
or hell.
You only have a matter of seconds.
Police killing young colored men,
our family and friends.
Our lives seem threatened.
Wishing for better days,
For our problems to get solved in better ways,
For guns and drugs to be off the streets,
Food and shoes for the poor people.

Change is not always better,
but change will always help ya!
It can make you stronger or weaker,
Happy or sad.
You can help change the word
By giving your last.
If you want the rainbow,
you got to deal with the rain.
If you don’t want heartache,
you have to let go off the pain.
Change for you.
Change for the better.
Sumner IS black power. Being the first high school open for African-American students west of the Mississippi River is one of the greatest acts of black power. A lot of famous African Americans were birthed right out of Sumner. Sumner is more than just a school; Sumner is a family.
ARTWORK

Gregory Peeples
Black Power

Frederick Douglass
Black Power

W.E.B. Du Bois
Black Power

Martin Luther King Jr.
Black Power

Amiri Baraka
Black Power

R.I.P. to all of the fallen victims of the pig’s weapon.
Black Power!
How can you call yourself real when you don’t even know what it really looks like? How can you call yourself real when you still are working for the white man? You call yourself real working for the “White Man” not using your own head to start a business plan. When are you going to become real and realize we have to work for what we want not just wait for it to be handed to us. We walk around talking about all of our problems looking retarded like some of these people waiting on the bus. So when are you going to wake up and do something that’s real? Quit dreaming because if you don’t you’ll be just like a leaf in the river calling for help in silence but find itself leaving. How can we work for a man who has betrayed us? Making us sit way in the back of the bus like we are old metal just waiting to rust. Sometimes I think about the stuff they did to us I be wanting to be like Mentos dropping in a soda bottle and bust. The white man asks for trust from a black man. How can you ask for trust when you have never even been on your knees tasting, smelling and working in all of that dust? Let’s walk today and make something happen for real because the white man can never seem real.
A white policeman killed an unarmed black young man and didn’t get charged for it. Black lives matter in America too. No justice, no peace!
The entire world watched as justice was not served in Ferguson, Missouri. Shame on you, America. Shame.
ARTWORK

Jamal Watkins

Black Panther Skull Head

Although I walk this cruel world, I bow nor fold for anyone who thinks himself above me or any of my people because the color of our skin. We must win this battle against those who seek to hold us down. First, we must win the battle against ourselves and come together. We need to stop the senseless black-on-black violence, stop the madness over drugs in our communities and most of all stop the self doubt we place in our hearts. I not only speak for myself but for those who do not have the courage to speak out. I say, lets stand up and fight for our rights. If it gets violent, then we will defend ourselves. BLACK POWER!
As a high school student, I experienced a lot. Entering my freshman year of high school was a big step in my life. I remember that Sunday before the first day of school...

I couldn’t do anything but ask questions. I really didn’t think I was ready because of the countless movies I saw and the things I heard others saying about high school. Before I knew it, Monday morning came. On my first day of high school, I was shy and quiet. I didn’t know who to talk to nor what class to go to. I felt completely lost and frustrated. Thank goodness things changed.

After two weeks, I had so many friends. Knowing what I know now, I shouldn’t have befriended anyone because they influenced me in such a negative way. I started playing too much outside of class and skipping an awful lot. This would later forced me to retake a lot of classes. I tried to get serious towards the end of my freshman year until I ran into a few girls I didn’t see eye-to-eye with. We had a fight and I got put out of my school.

The rest of my high school career would be spent at Sumner high school. I never thought I would go here. My brother graduated from here in 2008. I felt more comfortable at Sumner my Junior year. I knew all of the teachers, coaches and students. I was cool and felt I could truly be myself here.

Now that I’m reaching the end of my Senior year, I definitely have a strong case of Senioritis. I am so thankful for everyone that stood by my side especially when I was down and thought I wouldn’t make it. I learned a lot and feel like I have seen it all.

I really didn’t trust people until I met Ms. May (or “mama” as I like to call her). She’s one person that never let me down. Thank you. I want to end by thanking my birth mother, Angela Barnett. Without you, I wouldn’t be here.

Life doesn’t stop here; it’s just getting started!
According to Malcom X, “A man who stands for nothing will stand for anything.” What could you possibly stand for today without an education? Nothing. Everyone should stand for something. Without an education, you’re the man that’ll stand for nothing. Anything sounds good to you. Anything feels good. Anything looks good. You’re the man that can be manipulated into doing anything. With an education, you become the man that knows something. The man that stands firm for something. The importance of receiving an education is a matter of life and death.

Malcom X also said, “There is nothing better than adversity. Every defeat, every heartbreak, every loss, contains its own seed, its own lesson on how to improve your performance next time.” As time passes, you learn that we go through things to better prepare ourselves for the next moments in life. Going through school or any educational process will have its ups and downs, but those ups and downs are the only experiences that teach you how to persevere for what’s to come later in life. Experience is the best teacher.

There will be times when a person can let the stress of trying to receive an education get the best of them. They have a strong desire to quit because of a major setback. Stumbling is not falling. Why quit when it’s almost over? Why not get back on track? When the going gets tough, the tough better get going. We have to persevere. These are the moments that will ultimately determine if we are the men who will stand for something or fall for anything. Those are the moments that will make a world of a difference. Those moments define what you will become later in life.
Multiple forms of oppression, mainly slavery and later sexism, restricted a black woman’s right to vote. African American women overcame many obstacles over the course of the Women’s Suffrage Movement from slaves to educated professionals. Their ability to persevere and enact change should be a catalyst to encourage African American people as a whole. For various reasons, more and more black women joined the Women’s Suffrage Movement as it progressed throughout the twentieth century.

Throughout the movement, similar struggles were presented to African American women that they faced as slaves. Not only did black women have to deal with sexism like white women did, black women also had to deal with racism. This double-blow prevented them from achieving political equality to black men, much less white women. Society limited black women the most during this time and some would argue that black women are still endure the most oppression.

African American women contributed significantly to the nineteenth amendment, which empowered all women by giving them the right to vote in 1920. Even though black women contributed to the passing of the nineteenth amendment, their struggle to actually get a vote continued for over two generations. The eventual success of African American women, and determination throughout the long and tiring battle to secure the right to vote they deserved, should be motivating for all to take a stand and see it through to victory.

Black women, in their struggle for the right to vote, fought racism AND sexism simultaneously, but they did it valiantly. From then on, black women began to take on leadership positions and excel to the economic success we are familiar with today. Even still, black women are still fighting for equality in our society.
Most grade graduates dream about the day they will walk across the stage on graduation day to receive their diplomas. They are under the impression they will be free from all work in their life and be able to finally live. When they get to high school, they soon realize the biggest decisions in their life will soon be made and their work has just begun. A person graduating from high school can take many directions in life.

To begin with, many graduates run from their parents and they desire to go to college as far away from home as possible. When graduates move away, they get their first taste of living away from home which brings more responsibilities. Cooking, cleaning, and doing laundry are a few examples of how college students have to learn to provide for themselves. College students who move away have to build relationships and meet new people. These new friends can take them down paths they should not go. For example, a college student might start partying and get into sinful acts. Their mom is not there to scold them. Earning a college degree gives a person greater earning potential and the ability to work in a field of their choice. A person majoring in Marine Biology will find a job in Marine Biology because they went to college for it. Going away to college can be a wonderful time for a person to mature and start their adult life, but it can also give a person the opportunity to go downhill with their life decisions.

Another decision a person may choose after graduating high school is commuting to college. Commuting is not a possibility for everyone graduating high school because of the location, but it can be a great opportunity for those who are in a drivable distance to a college. Living with parents and driving to college can save a college student a lot of money because they do not have to pay dorm fees. Staying with parents means mom is still around to provide home cooked meals and life does not dramatically change from high school. A commuting college student can stay under the wing of their parents for longer. They can get their parents to continue to pay for groceries and other necessities of life. A commuting college student can easily stay in touch with high school friends and can also make new ones in college. The influence of peer pressure is not as great to a commuting student because they will not be on campus on the weekends unless they choose to be. Commuting to college can be a great way to save money, while still earning a college degree.

Last, many high school graduates decide not to strive for a college degree and join the work force right after graduating. Choosing not to further education past high school doesn’t give a person the earning potential a college graduate has. One benefit, however, is that they won’t be in debt with student loans. This means they will not be forced to pay back expensive school loans and will be able to have more financial freedom. A person joining the work force has the ability to stay in touch with friends in the area they live in and can either live at home for a few years after graduating or find their own place. Joining the work force out of high school is a great option for some people who choose to do so, but it is not the best plan for those who want to further their education.

A person’s decision about what they will do after high school, weather it is going away to college, commuting to college or joining the work force, will affect them for the rest of their life. A lot of thought and prayer should go into any decision like this. In the end, if a person follows what they believe God wants them to do, it will end up the way God wants it.

Graduating from high school and earning that high school diploma is extremely important, however, you may not actually realize how important it is for you. You have probably heard your parents telling you that you need a good education, but are there really benefits to having a diploma from high school? Yes! There really are benefits and the aforementioned are just a few of the benefits. One of the main benefits of having your high school diploma is that you will be able to get better job opportunities. Instead of always being passed by for the good jobs, you’ll have the opportunity to get jobs that are more interesting. Afterall, you don’t want to be stuck flipping hamburgers for a living!
I have noticed a lot of things from the time I was little to now. One thing I’ve noticed is how the world changed throughout my 18 years of life. I see so many different people each day I travel to and from work and learn new things from the people at my job and my peers. Of all of the things I’ve experienced, the biggest is watching families struggle. 

A lot of families still struggle even while receiving government assistance. In my case, there were more than five people living in a small house with only one working for minimum wage. It seems that the older I get, the more I begin to realized poverty. I start to feel sad, but then I see how family and friends who started off without anything work to earn a decent living. Unfortunately, some of those same people that make money change on the people that were there for them when they didn’t have an anything.

I am happy for my minimum wage job, but I want more. I want to own my own McDonald’s store one day, learn new things, and be able to handle challenges thrown to me.
Dear Daddy,

When I came into the world, I loved you right off the bat. We had some good days, when I had a chance to see you. Sometimes we wouldn’t see you for months at a time. I’m ok with that, but when Kevin (my ex step father) tried to step up and be a father to Chris and me, you got mad and said, “I don’t want my kids calling another man dad!”

When I think about you it reminds me of my birthday. You never came to visit me on my birthday. Sometimes you would come two days too late. It always made me sad as a kid, but it doesn’t compare to my last birthday when I turned 18. You didn’t say anything about it. That hurt me and I can’t take it anymore. I hate the way you make me feel. After my grandma (your mother) died, you really stopped talking to Chris and me. I just want to ask you this: why? We are perfectly normal kids and we didn’t ask to be born.

Do you even love me? I know you love Chris. You never miss his birthday and you call him every day and that makes me feel some type of way. Do you love me? It’s okay if you don’t because we know that I’m not your real daughter. I’ve been stressed because of this. But never-the-less, you’re just a stereotype. You’re a man that doesn’t take care of his kids.

I’m going to keep it 100%. I don’t care anymore. I don’t care about you. You made my life a living hell by doing nothing in it. Now that Chris is about to be 20 in two weeks and I just turned 18 about a month ago, it seems like you want to be in our lives. NOW you want to try and buy us everything. We don’t want it so you can take it all back!

Sometimes I can’t believe my mother married you. You’re a bad person and you do bad things. Because of you, my mother has to work two jobs to take care of me and my brothers. She has to buy me everything.

At first I was sad about our broken relationship, but now I’m over this father-daughter thing because I put my all in it and you never really cared about us. It’s ironic because out of all of your children, I was the one that cared the most, but you were too blind to know.

This is the end. Don’t ask me for money like you always do and don’t call me lying to about you coming to visit because you’re not. Bye forever, stranger.

No Love here,

Your daughter .
Dear President Barack Obama,

It’s so hard to survive in this world we live in. As African Americans, we go through horrible things. We are accused of so many things as well. It’s sad how we are killing each other because of what others (whites) are brainwashing us with. I’m writing you this letter because I have a lot of questions that need to be answered.

Whichever way you look at it, whether socially, politically, economically, or in terms of education, African Americans are kept out of society. We are the most entertaining, creative group, yet we are equally the most oppressed. A majority of African Americans don’t make it any better either. We are disrespecting each other, stealing and killing.

We used to stick together through the toughest times. Even though we were beat, held against our will and forced to work for someone, we still banded together. Now that times have changed, we forgot were we came from and our horrible history with America.

Racism plays the biggest part in our lives. I’m tired of everyone talking down to African Americans. We have done so much for this country but get no appreciation from it. Of course we have some sour apples in the bunch, but African Americans are not ultimately responsible for our own oppression. America was always divided, greedy and just plain mean. If you don’t have a certain amount of money, they label you as poor. They stereotype us in so many ways. They label our neighborhood as the ghetto. Why not help us instead of talking bad about us? There are so many people without a place to call home, without work to make money nor do they have Medicaid. If you live in a poor black community, it’s hard for you to get jobs and housing based on your income.

On top of all the oppression we face as a second class citizen, we were reminded of our constant battle with police brutality. Not all police officers are bad, but it sure does seem like most of them are. African-Americans are practically bullied by officers. I remember numerous accounts of police officers stopping by our place just to harass us. This is why I believe Darren Wilson really harassed Michael Brown. Justice was not served. Will it ever be? We are supposed to feel safe around the police, but we don’t.

Mr. President, how is it that African Americans still get treated this way in a country that elected its black president? It’s sad to be born in a country that never cared about you. Who would want to live in a place that they are not accepted at? America is more sensitive to animals rights than they are to human rights for African Americans. What are we to do?

I’m just searching for hope...something I know you’re very familiar with,

Aaliyah Blakley
Dear Welo,

I miss you like crazy big cuz. I never knew you would go back to jail. What’s so messed up about you going back is soon after you did, Petey got killed and Aunt Bobby died a couple weeks later. You had to turn yourself in, though.

I know you were hurt after you heard what happened to your mom too. I was tore up about it myself. I got a phone call at 10:28 at night on April 11. Deja was crying on the other end and said that your mother fell down some steps and busted her head. I rushed to the hospital but when I got there, it was hard for me to see her like that. I need you to stay strong for me in there and I will stay strong for you out here. We will be praying for her every single day. The Lord will handle it.

You know me. I’m not doing anything out here in these streets. I stay out of trouble. I’m just going to school and trying to get me a job once I’m done. I got accepted to Ranken for heating and cooling. It’s going to take me two years to get done. Hopefully by the time I’m done, you will be home and we can start a heating and cooling business together.

I will get you on the right road with me when you get out. I told your mother and mines that we were going to be millionaires that would take care of the entire family one day. We are going to do something that someone in our family should have already done to make our lives better. I’m not mad that we’re not there yet.

The only thing I can do is step up and be the man of the family. It’s going to be hard work, but it will pay off in the long run. This is why I am ready to work hard so by the time I turn 25, I’ll be able to sit back, enjoy life and take trips all around the world. Then, I would be able to look back and know that the sacrifices I am about to make now will be worth it.

I know you’ve been wanting me to write you. It took me a while to write, but the idea came back to me when I chose to write a letter to someone that meant a lot to me in my life. I just wanted to touch base with you to see how you were doing and to let you know that I love you big cuz.

Your cuz,

J
Mother,

Why didn’t you believe me at 13 when I told you I didn’t get along with my stepfather, your fiancé? Every time you would leave for work, he would have these weird talks with me about sex and how he would wish that he was with me instead of you. When I first told you, why didn’t you take my side automatically? You made me feel like I was alone in this world and that’s part of what made us a dysfunctional family.

Once you started to work more, that’s when he would try to make his move. You would come home a 6 a.m. everyday. I wish you didn’t leave at night. I really hate the decisions you made. I was only 13. I remember back in July when you first got cancer the day before your birthday. Then, our god mother died on your birthday. That was the day you really stopped caring and I stayed out of school most of my freshman year to take care of you.

Now that I’ve grown up and we separated ourselves from one another, you feel like a stranger whenever you come around. I just wanted you to know that I am older and I feel that I can do better without you, but I’ll always love you. Forever.

Dad,

Or should I say the man who took care of me from birth to 11 years of my life? I really appreciate all the things you did for me when my mother didn’t want to do things for me. All the weddings I’ve been in, becoming a big sister to Yuniek, and loving the name you gave me when I was around you. Emani Holiday Porter, yeah I liked that a lot.

That dreadful day after I was taken away from my mother, you wanted a DNA test. You wondered why I was so bright when your skin color wasn’t close to mine. I didn’t look like you. We both saw each other for the last time on August 6, 2014. That’s when we got the DNA test results. My aunt read it, but I was confused. I didn’t know what she was saying until she said those heart-breaking words, “Maurice Porter is not your father, Tashia.” All I could do was cry. You raised me for eleven years only to find out I wasn’t yours.

I called my mother because she had some explaining to do. You said there could have been another person she knows by the name of Bennard Dorris. We looked all around for him in the system, but there was no sight of him. I almost gave up hope until they found him. He was a white man! It was too late to meet him though because he died April 11, 2014. He left a wife and kids behind.

I just wanted to let you know that you and my mother were a big help in my life. Thank you.

Your Daughter,

Emani.
Dear Mother and Grandma Fowler,

I’m writing this letter to you two because I want you to know how grateful I am for having two loving people in my life that care about me. You both kept pushing me to do well and made me go to school at times I really didn’t want to go at all. All my life I thought I wasn’t going to make it to this point because of how much I kept getting in trouble at school. You still never gave up on me. Mother, you gave me things even when I didn’t need it. You took me everywhere even when you didn’t have to. I love you so much and I will do anything for you.

To my loving granny, I love you because you took me in when I was little. I know we have our ups and down, but you never put me out. You never did anything that was bad for me. I want to apologize for the times I disrespected you with my smart mouth. I knew you were always just looking out for me. We been off and on for years, but because of you I’m about to go to college. If it wasn’t for you, I wouldn’t have come this far. I probably would have dropped out or something because of the state of mind I was in. Now that I’m grown, I know right from wrong and I also know what to do and what not to do.

Everything I do from here on out will be for you two. I am going to college and will study pre-law. I’m going to try my best to show everyone that I can do anything if I put my mind to it. After college, I want to get married and have a family.

Again, thank you for being the one who supports me, loves me, listens to everything I say, and not judging me. You held me up when I couldn’t stand. You wiped away my tears when I cried. Thank you for giving birth to me. I just want you all to know that and I will do anything for you. If you need it, I will always be there for you no matter what because family never gives up on each other or turn their backs when you need them. I love you mother and granny. Always and forever.

Sincerely yours,

Ollisha
Mama,

You’ve been here but you really haven’t. I feel like there’s a lot you don’t know about me, because you don’t know how to talk to people. This is why I never tell you about the secrets I have balled up inside of me, things that made me want to go kill someone. I should be able to tell you all the things that were done to me, but I can’t talk to you so I just leave it all in. This isn’t healthy for me. You yell, curse and put your hands on people. That makes them not want to be around you. That’s why I’m never at home because I’m tired of the nagging, cursing, and arguments. I don’t want to ever fight or put my hands on you so I leave. I’m a humble person who can take a lot. You tell me not to run from my problems but if I stay, I’m going to go crazy. I never saw that side of me and I’m actually scared of it. I feel you want to bring that out of me. You barely buy me clothes, have talks with me, be around me, pay my cell phone bill, give me money, or anything. You only take from me. You hurt me so much, but it’s fine because I will never let you bring me down. I’m too strong! You make me want to be the best woman I can be.

Ji’Ya Kay Pipkin,

My baby, my little girl that didn’t live long enough for anyone. I took care of you. I stayed up long nights just to keep an eye on you. You were only five months when you passed. It’s fine because you don’t have to hurt anymore. No more suffering. No more surgery. My sister, your mother, stressed a lot since you passed. She lost a lot of weight too. She’s fine now. I miss you so much. You were my baby even though I never gave birth to you. I took care of you, cleaned you, fed you through the tube in your stomach, cleaned the tube in your stomach and everything. Then things happened between your mother and your granny. You and your mother ended up getting put out and you caught pneumonia and stopped breathing. Luckily, your mother knew CPR and brought you back to life. You were rushed to the hospital and had to stay there for the remainder of your life. One night I got a call from the hospital saying they needed to speak to the parent of Ji’Ya Kay Pipkin. My heart dropped because I knew it wasn’t going to be good news. I couldn’t get in contact with your mother. I tried every phone number I had. I instantly started crying because the hospital called again saying you stopped breathing. Luckily, they brought you back. Later on that night, the hospital called again and said you stopped breathing. I just sat there with a blank face. I couldn’t say or do anything. No tears would fall. No words would come out. I couldn’t even cry at your funeral. I had my Ji’Ya shirt representing you, baby. I acted as if I wasn’t hurt. I love and miss you, Baby J. I will never forget you.

To My Self,

I am and will be a strong young woman and will do something with my life. All the things I been through and are still going through only makes me stronger and makes me want to do bigger and better things. I’m going to become a successful pediatrician or nurse. Maybe I’ll try being a lawyer because I’m a great debater. I always win arguments and I don’t give up until people know I’m right. I feel everyone has to go through something to get where they want to go in life. The older me will be stress free. I will never forget where I came from nor what I’ve been through though. It made me the person I am today and the person I will become.

With all my love,
Lasha Maria Morgan
Dear Daughter,

I’m so happy that I brought you in my life. If it wasn’t for you, I wouldn’t have kept going to school. I was at school when I first found out that I was pregnant. One of my formal teachers said that I looked like I was pregnant. After that, I took a pregnancy test that was positive! At the time, I was a kid. I didn’t know what to do; I just cried. I thought that would calm everything down. I didn’t know anything about kids and how to take of them.

I didn’t know how to tell my mother. I told one of my friends to call my mother and tell her for me, but when she called my mother and told her, she didn’t believe it. She told her to put me on the phone that’s when I broke down in tears. I didn’t know how she was going to take it. The next day we went to the doctor to make sure I was. All she could say was she didn’t believe in abortions and everything was going to be ok. Throughout my pregnancy I was worried, stressed out, and at a lost for words. I just was thinking about how everything was going to go when you get here. How was I going to take care of you? How will I be able to get you things? It was just so much to think about.

When it came close to my due date, I started having really painful contractions. I told your grandmother to call the ambulance because it was hurting so bad. When they put me in the ambulance, my contraction was nine minutes apart. They are supposed to be 3 minutes apart. At the hospital, there were cords hooked up to my belly that monitored you. My mother was at the hospital with me the entire time even though she was sleep while I was whining calling her name. The contractions hurt so bad! I tried to sleep, but I could not.

The next day around nine in the morning, I was given an epidural. This really helped me sleep. When I woke up, I called your dad and auntie and told them it was almost time for me to push. The doctors came to induce my labor at 12:40 that afternoon. I was so excited and scared at the same! It took six pushes until you came out. As soon as I looked at you, I cried. They cleaned you off before I held you.

I was so excited to see you! I wouldn’t let anyone hold you. I just wanted you all to myself. You were a very beautiful, healthy baby that cried like crazy! It was so stressful when everyone left me at the hospital by myself. I couldn’t get any sleep because you were crying and the nurses kept waking me up so I could feed you. Nevertheless, I am so thankful to have you in my life. You are a true blessing to me.
Dear God,

Are you there? Are you listening? If so I have been waiting for answers. Everything that was here is no longer here. Everything I touch turns to dust. My laughs turn into cries. The people that I loved the most turned their back on me. I lost my sister and my boyfriend in the blink of an eye. I have nothing. I am nothing. I stand alone.

It’s dark. Will the sun ever shine? I talk to you every night, but you never say anything back. I need you, but you pass me by. I’m waiting for your blessings to come my way. I know I’m not perfect because the devil is always on my back. Is there really a heaven and hell or is it all a lie?

I’m doing things that I said I’d never do. I have the deepest feeling that my days are getting short and I won’t be here for long. I’ll be up there with Jada. We can talk about the old days, I’m pretty sure we won’t miss them. It will be something to laugh about. I can give Derrick a hug and tell him how much his son looks like him and how he’s becoming a young man.

My sister was 15 with goals. She had a life to live but you didn’t give her a second chance. Why did you take her from me? When you took her you took a piece of my heart with you. I know Derrick was living too fast, but I was going to change that. You didn’t give me a chance. YOU JUST TOOK HIM AWAY! now his kids don’t have a father.

It’s a dirty world that we live in. You have the power to change that, so why do we suffer? Why do we live to die? Why do we die young? CAN YOU PLEASE ANSWER! Would I ever get through this? Would I ever be happy again? I need you I can’t do this by myself.

Man up above, if you’re listening I need your word today. In a couple of months I’ll be an adult. I plan to start college in fall. I want to major in Biology and become an Anesthesiologist. I want to live a happy fairytale life like get married have children and live with no worries. But people around me seem to know my future more than I do. They think I’ll be on drugs, have kids at an early age and drop out of college. I tell myself that’s not true but with the way I’m going, it may turn out that way.

Everything around me is negative. I just go along with it, I ask you to show me the pathway to the right directions but instead I go left. I try to talk to my mom but she tells me, “Who says life will be easy”? Yeah, she sounds like she really cares. Everything I say comes in one ear and out the other. She never see’s anything I do right only what I do wrong. All I ask if she could support me? I doubt if she can do that. Out of my entire school life she only came up to my school 3 times and I hardly remember that. I love her but does she love me back?

The only person who has my back is my granny. She understands, support and listen to me. My dad never had a father he’s still alive but doesn’t acknowledge me. It’s sad because I’m his only child. He loves drugs more than he loves me. It’s been nights I’ll cry myself to sleep. I’ll wait all day but he never kept his word, lies after lies I accept I love my father dearly but I don’t know why. Some people don’t have fathers because they dead but mines here and he don’t want me. Why don’t he love me god? I love all these people who seem not to love me back. But I can do this with or without them but I can’t do it without you. I need you. Why don’t you talk back?!

Sincerely,

A Girl Still Waiting for Answers
Dear Dad,

I could give a speech that would last beyond years, but you still wouldn’t understand. I could talk until I turn blue, but you’d say it’s my fault. For a long time I never understood why I wasn’t good enough for you to love me like a father does his child. At times I try to tell myself to not hate you because hate is a strong word, but when I try to remember good times with you, that’s when I hate you because I know there weren’t any at all. Those memories I have of you from my childhood stick in my mind…very few, but clear. I can recall a time when you would only call to talk to my mother because you didn’t care how we were doing or that we were alive. If my mother wasn’t laying on her back for you, we didn’t mean sh*t to you.

I bet you didn’t even think I knew or you probably didn’t even care. You showed you didn’t. I hold you responsible for your actions. There has been so much you have missed out on that I would be lying if I said I could forgive and forget. I’d be lying if I said that we’ll have a close relationship because you missed out on that opportunity, or better yet, you passed it up. I can remember the day of my 13th birthday. I called you and you said you didn’t even know my birthday was that day. It hurt me to know that my father, the man who helped bring me into this world, the man who is supposed to be my protector, the man who’s supposed to help me with my first broken heart, the man who’s supposed to walk me down the aisle one day, didn’t even remember the day God blessed him with me.

Was I not a blessing to you? Why did you choose to neglect me? I try to picture how my life would be different if you were a REAL father. All the heart aches I had could have been avoided if you told me about boys. All of my failed relationships happened because I was looking for love that matched the love I wanted from you. All of those lonely nights I cried and the only thing to catch my tears was a lifeless pillow. You…..YOU were to blame! For years I thought my mother was the reason you didn’t want to be around me, but she always said I would never understand and I never knew what she meant until I finally knew you. My behavior towards my mother changed drastically because of you; every fight I had with her should have been with you. Every heated argument we had should have been with you. Every “I hate you” was meant for you! You made me turn against my mother, the one who was there for me and never left. The one who told me about boys. The one who help me overcome those broken relationships. The one who said, “Stop crying, princess, your tiara is falling off.”

Now all I can ask is for her forgiveness because I didn’t know you were the evil behind it all. I can’t even look you in the eye to call you my father. You don’t deserve the title. You’re nothing but a sperm donor! Now I see it’s you who missed out on something beautiful! You missed out on all of my firsts: my first birthday, the first time I talked, my first tooth falling out, the first time I learned how to ride a bike, my first day of school. The list goes on and on. But it’s ok because your non-existence helped me become the beautiful young woman I am today. Your non-existence helped me push myself to achieve my goals just because the fire in me still burns bright. Your non-existence helped me make it all the way to my graduation, another event you won’t attend. I want you to look at me real good and see that I may come from you but I will NEVER be you.

I’m going to be a mother now and you’ve showed me everything not to be as a parent. When I have my baby, I will be the best mom ever to him or her. I will hug my baby every day to let him or her know that I’ll never leave their side. I will kiss my baby every chance I get no matter how old he or she gets because that is my blessing from God that I could never neglect or leave alone! I will be that parent at every game, at every dance recital, at every Christmas because you weren’t. I realize now that I was better off without you because I wouldn’t be the person I am today if you were around. So, thank you for being a deadbeat dad. Thank you for not caring about me because now I’m stronger and wiser. I hope one day you actually grow up and become a man but sadly we both know you won’t. Overall I’m happy and satisfied with my life. I wonder how you’re sleeping at night? On second thought...

...
Dear Dad,

I forgive you for walking in and out my life. I forgive you for all the hurt and pain you put me through. I forgive you for not being there for the most important years of my life. Even though you caused me nothing but pain and heartache, I still love you and don’t want anything but the best for you. I would ask my momma every day for you and she would try to tell me that you care, you just don’t know how to face your responsibilities at such a young age. I didn’t know what she meant by that but as I grew up, I finally understood.

Back then I would think it was my fault for you not being there for me. You had me thinking it was me. You made me feel like I wasn’t enough for you. You made me feel low and I hated myself for a while. I don’t hate you for the things you put me through. To be honest, you made me the young lady I am today. I know it might sound foolish, but you made me think in a different light. You made me strong. My momma always used to tell me what don’t kill you makes you stronger. I believe she always told me that because she never wanted to talk down about you.

With all the years that went by, I started to see that I could not hold on to the past. I feel that every girl should have a father around to teach them what their mother can’t. I’m just really grateful and thankful for my beautiful, independent mother. She has been by my side through everything. She is the air that I breathe. I love her so much. Without her, I don’t think I would have made it this far. Because of her I made it and it doesn’t stop here.

I’m going to give her the world. Wish I could say the same for you. Wish I can say I’m your girl...a daddy’s girl...your princess, but that’s a fairytale. You don’t exist in my world. Why would you not want to be part of my life? Why would you not want to see the great woman I’m becoming?

P.S. I wish you nothing but the best in life and I hope it isn’t filled with pain and confusion just as mines was.

Your Daughter,

Tonisha
Kendrick Claxton

*Pain*

Pain Is No Game, Pain Is No Game
It Will Grab You, Hold You Until
You Can’t Breathe
It Will Be Like a Melody
That Won’t Leave
It Will Cut You Deep
And It Will Leave You with No Sleep
Leave Your Heart with No Beat
Sleep With No Dreams
Soul with No Hope
WHERE DO I GO?!!

Pain Is No Game, Pain Is No Game
It Will Drive You Insane
Like A Person with No Brain
Have You up All Night
Like A Bright Light Is On
Have You Asking
Is There A Place Called Heaven
When Can I Call It HOME?!

Pain Is No Game Pain Is No Game
My Nights Moonless
Days Cloudy
Praying To God for Better Days
Hoping Jesus Help Me Find My Way through This Life Of Pain
Pain Is Gone Pain Is Gone
Those Days Are Gone
We Are Singing a New Song
Of Hope
With A Place to Go
We Have Found Our Way
Like Moses and the Egyptians Slaves
Free At Last Free At Last
POEM

Anttonyo Harris
30 for 30

What’s going through my mind
when I’m running up the slide line,
and I only got 1 person to beat?

When he runs fast
I run faster,
can he take the speed?

What’s going through my mind
when I see X open for the 40yrd TD pass?
He catches the ball and I’m hopping this moment
will always last?

What’s going through my mind
when I see a hole the size of Texas on the 28 toss
jet swipe?
What’s going through my mind when I’m about to
get a sack for a 18yrd loss?

What’s going through my mind
when coach is yelling at me when I dropped the
ball?
Why is it that on kickoff I get tackled ever time?

Coach told my dad I’ll most definitely letter.
You got to learn from your mistakes,
always making yourself better.

I’m a good player,
but I got a big head,
I think I’m the best.

I don’t listen in practice
or do the drills,
why am I so different from all the rest?

What’s going through my mind
when everything starts to go bad?
What’s going through my head when I’ll miss what
I once had?

I’m getting buried in the depth chart,
grades slippin,
where’d it all go?

I start to smoke, thinking’ who’s going to know?
I wasn’t a team player,
I was only out there for myself.

What was going through my mind
when I saw there were no trophies on the shelf?

Thinking back through all the years,
How swiftly they’ve passed by
I close my eyes and bite my lip,
Try so hard not to cry,

I was always such a scrapper,
A raging thunderstorm,
The day I shed my diaper,
I donned a uniform,

Fear is never a factor,
With the toughest, there I stood,
I have the will, the soul, the heart...
But, I always knew I would,

I watch football in my sleep,
So still, so calm, serene,
Once I step upon that field football,
I’m one power machine.

I marvel at the talents,
I’m intense and dedicated,
So keen, devoted, daring,
Just as I anticipated

My qualities are endless,
I’m faithful, kind and true
Righteous and respected,
A leader, Tonyo, that’s me!
You could never imagine the things I go through
I’m just a young girl out here looking for magic
Wondering why this is happening
The things I go through you’ll never know

I’m in a world that so cold nobody cares, nobody knows
Full of pain that can’t be shown
Too many things that can’t be known
I’m in this all alone

I have no one
I’m on my own
But then again
I have to stay strong

Because I know the pain won’t last long
Tomorrow is a brand new day
And yesterday is gone away
But the pain still lives on.....

I wonder why me
But, hey, I’ll never know
Everything is so outta control
I tell myself over and over again

Maybe there will be a bright future in the end
But then things happen and it make me wonder again
Why is this happening to me?
I’m just a young girl out here trying to make it

But I can’t fake it
Life is hard
I just hope one day...
...I can say I made it
Is It Vivid?

Throughout life you have to prepare for the consequences
Every move you make is marked liked a politician
    Is it Vivid?
The light is different
The older you get the light is dimmer
    Is life Vivid?
So throughout life experience live life as a winner not a contender
Describe the description of a fighting attendant
With no peace in his heart that’s not the slice of a lemon
    Is his life vivid?
Just trying to make a difference
But his past is in his picture
He feels it in his liver
    Is it vivid?
Or sorta iller these bombs you have to feel ‘em
It weakens up when you clear ‘em
Still the picture isn’t vivid
All he want is a person to sit and pay attention
Then they faces become so different for some attention?
Life’s cold and it’s wicked
Live life without the wishes
Go out with the fishes
Or even become a midget
    The picture still isn’t going to be vivid
God asked did he feel it?
    Is it really vivid?
I think he missed it
Postal office to ship it
But that contacted the feelings back to life in this description
As a commitment now they want to pay attention
And promised to be the realest
The road closed but still can’t picture it
Now the lesson is lyric-less
Coming up with an experiment
Because younger generations aren’t fearing it
Pick the right path and be clear with it
Souls come back spirit less so know one ever hear it quick
It takes a couple yells and screams to get the gear in shift
People often change so you often can’t be sincere
As if the power steer was stuck in the bible years
    Is the picture vivid?
    Are you able to pay attention?
Tamesha Roberts

With the Sky

SETTING: GRANDMA HOUSE IN THE SUMMER OF 2011

PLOT: MIMI IS A TEENAGE GIRL WHO WANTS TO BE NORMAL LIKE THE PEOPLE SHE SEES ON TV. SHE WANTS HER FAMILY WHO SHE MISSES TO TOGETHER. WHICH ARE HER MOM, DAD, AND OLDER BROTHER. HE MOM TRIES TO LET HER KNOW THAT THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS NORMAL THAT IS JUST SOMETHING THAT THEY PUT ON TV BUT SHE DOESN’T WANT TO LISTEN. SO HER MOM SEND HER TO HER GRANDMA HOUSE FOR THE SUMMER FOR SHE CAN BE WITH HER BROTHER WHO SHE SAYS SHE MISSES AND SEE THAT NORMAL FAMILY ARE ONLY ON TV SHOWS.

SCENE ONE

(After coming home from the last day of school Mimi ran straight to her room while her mom watched her from the living room couch then got up and followed her to see what was wrong)

PATRICIA

(Patricia walked to her daughter room to see what was wrong)

Was wrong Mimi is everything okay

(SHE STOOD BY HER DAUGHTER'S DOOR WAITING FOR AN ANSWER)

You know you can tell me anything that why I'm here to make your life easier

MIMI

(Mimi was lying face down on the bed and lifting her head up to giggle)

Your here to protect me I’m upset because all my friends are going on fancy the vacation and I'm stuck here once again here

(Mimi went to put her head back into her pillow then stopped and turned to her mom)

Why can't we be like normal people are normal families?

PATRICIA

(Patricia looked at her daughter and crossed her arms)

Well sweetie there's no such thing as normal it just something people put on TV kind like money trees is not real"

(Patricia came is set on Mimi's bed and look her skate in the eyes)

Tell me with you think a normal family is I'm just dyeing to know

MIMI

(Mimi looked down then looks at the TV which was playing "are we done yet")

A normal family has a mom and a dad brother and sister in a dog. Oh yeah and they live together and stay together no matter how head thing get between them

(Mimi turned to look at her mom and push herself back when she saw her mom face)
Tamesha Roberts

With the Sky (continued)

PATRICIA

(Patrice looked upset she just know that Mimi was talking about her)

What are you saying that we're not a real family, that if your dad and brother were here we'll be a real family a normal family?

(She turned to her daughter wetting for her answer)

MIMI

(Now feeling bed and nervous she started to stumbled upon her words)

I-I... UH I Want I meaning wasn't trying to make you feel bad.

(Looking down at her hands while juggling them)

PATRICIA

(Patricia started to walk back to the living room stopping by the kitchen to get something to drink then when to the living room and sitting on the all black fake leather couch and continued the witch the movie that was on TV and look upset)

MIMI

(Now feeling bad for what she had said she walked to her mom slowly and said very calm)

I did meaning to make you feel bad but don’t you every get tired of it just being you and me. Don’t you miss Chub, are dad even just a little.

PATRICIA

(Without looking at her daughter she said very softly)

I never wanted your father to leave!

(Tears started to run down her face)

I never planned on him leaving, but he did. I’m so sorry

(She said the lest part trying to sound sarcastic)

MIMI

(Mimi started to grow arguer with her mom)

And what about chub why did you make him move out!

PATRICIA

(Patricia look at her daughter as if she could have smack her into next week)

YELL AT me like that again and I’ll smack the black off you. You gone be in here looking like who did it and what for.
MIMI

(She looks at her mom as if she was why deep think)
Why did you make Chub Leave?

PATRICIA

(She turns and looks her daughter in the eye)
With your father gone your brother became a hand full he wouldn’t listen to mom and I couldn’t control him so I sandy her with someone that could.

MIMI

(Set there with a blank look on her face)
That is why he living with Grandma TT

PATRICIA

(Took a sip for her drink and looked at the TV)
Yes and because you miss your brother so much I think you should go visit her for the summer

MIMI

(As hoping her mom was isn’t talk about the whole summer)
Yes for the first two weeks of summer

PATRICIA

(Patricia looked at her daughter like if you said another word I’ll kill you they got completely calm and smiled)
You miss your brother so much I just want you to spend as much time with him as possible

MIMI

(Mimi’s face change colors with anger and she turned around and stomp to her room and shut the door behind her)
SCENE TWO

(Patricia is driving Mimi to the train station where she will be catch the train to her Grandma’s TT house)

PATRICIA

(Patricia you weren’t fighting to spend the summer with no kids)
COME on Mimi we do not want you to miss your TRAIN

MIMI

(Mimi walked slow feeling sad that she will not see any of her friends all summer)
Okay mom
(She said under her breath)

PATRICIA

(Helps her daughter put her thing in the car then they both get and to the car and Patricia pulled off slowly)
Now where you see your Grandma TT tell her I wish I could have come but I still have thing I need to do at home. Tell your brother I love him and miss him and here keep half and give half to your brother ok
(She reaches into the glove department and gave MIMI $150 dollar)

MIMI

(Mimi think to herself how can you miss someone one bet never go to see them)
Ok mom I will.

PATRICIA

(Patrice pulled up to the train stashed and stops then turn to Mimi)
Give me a hug and kiss before you go
(Patrice holds her arm open and waited for her daughter to give her a hug and kiss)

MIMI

(Mimi gives her mom a hug and kisses and gets out the car slow hoping that her mom will change her mind about the summer)
“BYE mom I love you” I’ll miss the house, the city, the people, the...

PATRICIA

(Patrice cut her off)
“WE’LL MISS YOU TOO AND DON’T HAVE TO MUCH FUN WITH OUT ME LOVE YOU”
(Shes pulled off without making sure her daughter gat on the train)
SCENE THREE

(MIMI GETS OFF THE TRAIN TO MEET UP WITH HER BIG BROTHER CHUB WHO WILL TAKE HER TO THEIR GRANDMA'S HOUSE AND LET HER MEET EVERYONE.)

MIMI

(Mimi gets off the train not sure if she gets off at the right stop she looks around for her brother)

Chub...chub...Chub!

CHUB

(Sleeping on the chars that the train stash he hears the loud train as it pulled off and jumps up)

I don’t want blue pizza

(Yelling off as he work up and then whip his eyes to see his little Sister)

Mimi girl is that you?

MIMI

(Hearing the yells she saw her brother and ran to him)

Chub I haven’t saw you and for ever

CHUB

(Seeing how much his little sister has grown he want to see if she’ll get mad when she talk about her)

Wow girl what you been eating elephants

MIMI

(Mimi whale face change)

No I been eating chicken

CHUB

(Whiting to be funny he keep going)

“Baby elephants are not chickens”

MIMI

(Starting to get mad she wiped off)

CHUB

(Laughing chub when after Mimi)

I’m just playing lil sis you can’t take a joke. Come on let go grandma waiting on us

MIMI

(Now feeling a little sad she and her brother left)

Ok then stop playing and let’s go before I kill YOU
SCENE FOUR

(Mimi and her big brother chub get to grandma house and chub friend are there and she INTRODUCE everyone to one another)

CHUB
(WILK INTO THE HOUSE WITH ON KNOCKING)
Grandma TT I back and I BROUGHT lil ugly with me
(He said in a playful way)
Was up everybody this my little sister Mimi

SHAY
(Without Turing her head away from the TV to see how Mimi looked)
Was up

DAYVON
(Looking down at his phone he said very quit)
Hi

MIMI
(Now feeling a little uncomfortable she set on a LAZY BOY CHAIR)
Hey everyone

GRANDMA TT
(Running out the kitchen)
Is that my baby?
(She gets into the living room and stops then look at Mimi)
Yes it is ooh child I the last time I saw you. You Was in diapers

MIMI
(Started to laugh)
It wasn't that long Grandma TT

GRANDMA TT
(Laugh with Mimi)
Well every wait feel longer when YOU’RE missing someone

MIMI
(Start to think about with her grandma had said)
It do

GRANDMA TT
(Gave Mimi a big hug)
“Now I got to go finish dinner make yourself at home baby”

SHAY
(Turned to chub)
Aye chub I know this happen party that is to night and we can go is at 8 p.m. so that meaning show up at 9 p.m. want to go. Davon going and so am I

CHUB
(Set next to shay and started to think)
A party is just with Mimi needs and it will help her get to know people

MIMI
(Wanted to know what her brother was doing by just saying she will go to the party without)
that a good idea only one problem I’m not going

CHUB
(Couldn’t find out way his sister was not happy)
Why not it will be fun

MIMI
(MIMI though to herself how could he be so careless)
People may shoot the party up. It look like this is about to rain. I have nothing to wear and my hair is a mess

SHAY
(WITH OUT THING SHE SAID)
EVERONE GONE BE COOL AND don’t know BODY CARE ABOUT WHAT YOUR WEAR ARE HOW YOUR HAIR LOOKS IS JUST GONNA BE FAMILY AND SOME CLOSE FRIENDS
DAYVON

(Getting off his phone to talk about the party)
No one will be shooting at the party anything gone be cool just true us and if not us true your brother do you think he will take you any were that not safe

CHUB

(Happy his friends talk his sister into going to the party)
Yea I wouldn’t take you some were if I know is not safe just come to the party with us it will be fun

MIMI

(Not really wanting to go)
Sure I’ll go but I’m not going to dance

CHUB

(Started smiling)
Ok it will be fun

SHAY

(Smiling)
Yes, let the party begin

GRANDMA TT

(Yelled from the kitchen)
Come get it why it hot
(The kids came to the kitchen to see to table fell with soul food and set down blessing the food and started to eat after they finish they help Grandma TT clean up than Shay and Dayvon want home to get ready for the party)

SCENE FOUR

The kids go to the party and Mimi is not happy and tries to go home with shay stop her and have a deep conversation about life

CHUB

(Sitting in the living room yelling)
Come on Mimi we going to miss the whole party messing with you
MIMI
(Coming down the steps)
Ok I’m coming putty take time this docent’s just happen

CHUB
(Not wanting her to know she look pretty)
How can ugly take time?

MIMI
(not really caring about what he said)
You just a hater

CHUB
(Ready I go he jump up)
Ok Grandma TT we will be home at 10 maybe 10:30 is that all good with you

CHARAGRANDMA TT
(Look at him)
Come back at 8:30 are I’m calling the police

MIMI
(Was happy about the time she choice)
Ok Grandma TT we will

GRANDMA TT
(Wanting the kids to stay in for the night)
Ok don’t have too much fun without me

CHUB
(Could not wait to see all his friends)
Well I will love to say all night and talk about we have people waiting on us

MIMI
(Feeling tired)
Ok let’s go before I change my mind

SHAY
(Waiting outside with Dayvon)
What took ya’ll so long

DAYNOV
(Growing tired if sitting)
Yea we was about to leave you two
SCRIPT

Tamesha Roberts

*With the Sky (continued)*

CHUB

(Couldn’t wait to get to the party)

*My grandma was trying to get us to stay in with her*

SHAY

(Was ready to go because she feels like she has been waiting for years)

*Ok we all here now let’s go*

(THE KIDS ARE TEENS WALK TO THE PARTY WHICH WAS TWO BLOCKS AWAY AND WANT THEY GET THERE IS WAS A LOT OF PEOPLE AT THE PARTY)

MIMI

(Started to feel nevus)

*You guys told me that is wasn’t going to be that many people here*

SHAY

(Thinking of a lie to tell her)

*That what my cousin told me*

CHUB

(Want to party her walk in leaving everyone he come with)

MIMI

(Get mad at her brother and turn a leave)

SHAY

(Saw Mimi and want to ask her what was wrong)

Mimi what’s wrong why you leaving we just got here

MIMI

(Not really wanting to talk)

Nothing

SHAY

(Wanting to be a good friend)

I just want to help you do you want me to walk home with you

MIMI

(Feeling that it will be better to walk with someone)

Yea

SHAY

(She and Mimi started to walk home)

So Mimi why you don’t want to be at the party you’ll meet people faster
Tamesha Roberts

*With the Sky (continued)*

MIMI

(Just wanting to go back to her grandma house and wishing that she had just stay home)
is not the people I just want to be around my brother but I guess her don’t feel the same way we haven’t saw each other and what fell like for every to me and the he only talk about me and make me go place I don’t want to be

SHAY

(Wanting to make her feel better)
well your brother love you he just don’t you to know how much and is a beautiful day my mom always told me that when the sky is blue your day will be felled with fun and happiest

MIMI

(Started to laughing)
Your mom it funny

SHAY

She was right to I never had a bad day when the sky is blue

MIMI

(Started to feel better)
Ok I’ll keep that in mind thanks for your words that did make me feel better

SHAY

YOU’RE welcome we cool

MIMI

(Smile why walking up to the house)
Ok we cool and when you see my brother tell him I’m at home

SHAY

(Smiled back)
Ok I will
It’s a Monday morning and I wake up for school. Today was an “A day” which meant I had Ms. Fields class. This class was hard as hell, but seemed to get easier over time. Let’s skip to lunch. A group of people starting walking to the central of the lunch room and yelled, “If you want to turn up and have fun, y’all should join K-Life. It’s where y’all can meet people from other schools like Vashon and Metro. We do club on Thursday!” Next thing I know, I see Michael asking all these questions. I started to walk away, but the guy that yelled approached me and asked my name. I told him and he asked if I wanted to meet Jesus. Was he joking? It didn’t matter, I left quickly.

I went to Ms. Fields’ class and wondered if I really did need Jesus and what Jesus had to do with K-Life. I didn’t have any friends at school so what did I have to lose? I decided to check it out...

When I got there, there were kids my age playing, running outside and shooting hoops. I was trying to find friends, but it seemed I was more different from those kids than I was from the kids at Sumner. I started to wonder if it was me. What could I do to get people to like me? Right before I left, a guy named Darrell walked up to me and asked if I like K-Life that night. I lied and said it was okay. I asked him why K-Life wanted to even help kids if they were already so lost in the world. He said that they only want to help kids follow Jesus, which helps them get off the street and have a more positive outlook in life. I felt comfortable enough to tell him the real reason I came. I only wanted to find friends. He told me that he would be my friend if I followed Jesus. I could do that.

Months had passed and I learned so much about God. I got others interested in wanting to learn more as well. One day, Lamont wanted to come to K-Life with me. This was a surprise because I thought he was a dumb jock that only cared about girls and sports. He turned out to be a really cool guy who was going to be a father pretty soon. I started calling him my homie, which was pretty cool. I could trust him as a friend and it felt good to have one, but now I have two! I even told Lamont that I would be his baby’s uncle once it was born!
There were two sisters named Samantha and Leah who lived in a big house, in a small town named Cedarville. They lived with their mother, Valerie, who was recently married to a lawyer, but 5 months ago, divorced. The money had gotten split up between the two. Valerie hadn’t really spent time with her oldest daughter Samantha, ever. Leah is the baby girl that’s 17 years old who gets all the attention.

Samantha is a pretty brown skin girl who has shoulder length, dark brown hair, with a nice size butt. Sam being uptight and having this “Don’t bother me attitude” came from a long 19 years of hurting and it didn’t matter how much money her mother had, she just wasn’t happy. She lied about getting raped just to have the spotlight on herself for a chance. Sam had big dreams in high school. She wanted to go to the army and make something of herself but she ended up putting her whole life on hold.

Leah is a pretty light skin girl whose red hair comes down her back with a coke bottle shape body. She is also the head cheerleader with the school spirit who goes to school every day determined to be someone and make it. Leah is known for an outgoing, goofy person, who gets a lot attention not only from her mother but also the boys at her school and from teachers, who constantly recognizes her. She is in an out of school relationship with someone name Dre but barely spends time with him because of afterschool cheerleading practices.

One day, Leah, Samantha and their mother Val decided to go to the mall and shop around. Soon as they got in the mall, Sam had smelled food from the food court and wanted to go grab a snack. Leah and her mother continued browsing the mall. On her way down, Sam had run into a dude, Carl. They did a little flirting around and Carl asked for her number. Sam gave him her number, blushing. Sam hurried and grabbed a snack then caught back up with her mother and sister. As she caught back up she told them about the Carl and how cute of a chocolate guy he was.

5 Months passed and Sam was still seeing Carl, Leah was sort of still seeing Dre and their mother started blind dating. Sam started to act different, as far as mood swings and attitude. Carl made her feel as if she was loved, something she says her mother didn’t do. So one day, she talked to her mom about moving out going to live with this Carl dude. Val thought it wasn’t such a great idea because she just gotten to know him and as far as living with him, things could go wrong. “You have big dreams and moving in with a guy you barely know will ruin your chances of them.” Said Val. Sam gotten upset and said “He loves me more than you do anyway! What could go wrong?”. She ran up to her room and slammed the door. Val decided she needed her space to calm down.

Val knows why Sam feels this way because as a child, she wasn’t always around to brush her hair or play games with her. All Val did was work long days and nights to provide for her family and Sam doesn’t understand that. Val went to knock on Sam’s door and see was she calm yet. No one answered. Val opened the door to a letter on the bed reading, “Mom, I’m sorry, but I really love this guy and think it’s time for me to follow my dreams. I promise to come visit, tell Leah I love her. Love Samantha.” Val was speechless.

That afternoon Leah comes home from school calling her mother and Sam’s name to let them know she’s home. Val comes downstairs and tells Leah that Sam packed her things and moved out. Leah is very upset because she didn’t even get to say goodbye and says “Ma, now things won’t be the same.”

A couple weeks later, the phone rings...
“Hello? Is anyone there?” A police officer asked. 
“Yes, who’s this, may I help you.” Val responded. 
“We have Sam here in custody; she’d gotten beaten up pretty bad.” 
“What happened? How? And who did this to my baby?” 
The officer replies, “We suppose her boyfriend Carl? Do you know Carl? We found her in a park down here in 
Arkansas.” 
“Arkansas! What is she doing in Arkansas! And yes, I know Carl! My daughter ran off with him 2 weeks ago.” 
“We’re going to need you to come down, your daughter really needs you.” 
Val told the officer, “I’ll be there soon as possible.” And hung the phone up. 

Val finally made it to Arkansas and went to the hospital where she found Sam. Val was so hurt when 
she walked in the room where Sam was. The doctors told her not to wake Sam, they said let her rest a while. 
As she sat beside Sam in the hospital bed, she couldn’t do anything but cry and pray for better days. She 
prayed and prayed and finally... Sam woke up! 

Sam looked shocked to see her mother beside her. 
“Look baby, I just want you to know that I Love you! And will never let you go again.” Val said. 
Sam cried and said, “Mama I’m sorry, I Love you too.” 
“I have to get back home to get to work in the morning but as soon as you get released from the hospital, call 
me! I’m going to come and get you so we can go home.” 

Days passed, and there was still not one phone call from Sam. Val started to worry more and more. 

Val called the hospital. 

“Hello, I’m trying to see when my daughter Samantha Jones is getting released from the hospital?” 
The nurse replied, “No, I’m sorry, she had gotten released yesterday.” 
Val hung up the phone, worried about where she had gone. 

Leah was as happy as she could be today. The pink ribbon from her blonde ponytail flew in the breeze 
behind her. Today, Leah felt more special than ever. She wore her new dress with blue and pink flowers. Be- 
ing outside for Leah today was like being in a beautiful dream of many colors. The sunshine was the yellowest 
of yellows. It flooded Leah’s beautiful smile, black eyes and pink face as she looked at everything there was 
to see. Then there came bad news. 

Leah hadn’t known about Sam being in the hospital, Val didn’t want her to get upset so she kept every- 
thing from her. So that day Leah felt all happy and special and was thinking about Sam. 

“Hey mom, have you heard from Sam?” 
Val wanted to lie so bad but she felt Leah should know what’s going on. 

Val responded, “Yes.” 

“Well? What did she say, how is she?” 

Val explained everything to Leah. The happy Leah that felt so special didn’t feel so special anymore. 

A week flew by and still no response from Sam. Finally Leah got tired of waiting by the phone for Sam 
to call so she called her mother downstairs and asked her mother could they go down to Arkansas and go 
look for her. Not for one second did Val think it was a bad idea. 
That night, Leah had gotten on Facebook and made a status saying that her and her mom was going 
to Arkansas in the morning to find Sam and bring her back home. She was talking about what her mother 
shared with her about how Sam getting beaten up and put in the hospital from dude that she says she 
“loves.” 

The next morning, they got on the first plane to Arkansas. They walked around the entire city with 
pictures of Sam asking people have they seen her. They came all the way to Arkansas to find out that Sam 
had died last night.
Chorus
This black power my people nation
It’s time for change no need to waste it
This world against us stands up and faces it
Mankind is falling I recreate it

Verse 1
Let me take you back to the old days when a black man had long days
Couldn’t sleep at night because he was so afraid he wouldn’t see his family on the next day
It was free labor they would work for nothing they would work for nothing
Couldn’t talk about it there was no discussion
I mean not a peep but if you got to fussing just a crack of that whip and the blood was rushing
Can you the pain down in the soul had to build the strength just to carry on
Deep down they dying but they standing strong because they sing a spiritual just to carry on
These days was passing we need a change and soon enough black leaders came
Most of them died didn’t see the change but they still living in the hall of fame

Chorus

Verse 2
Cast your bucket down where you stand take the ones that hate you try to make them friends
Still wasn’t equal it was in the plan that they wouldn’t make a way for a black man
But no matter what he was human being whites had the rights he want the same thing
Getting harder everyday it seems until Dr.King came with a dream
He believed the people was created equal they should stop oppression and free the people
He died believing he would see the dream through would you do the same if it was for the people
They marched on and stand proud every single day one man down
We must do what we can now before it’s too late and we back down
The odds against us been stacked now if you want a change you have to act now

Chorus

Verse 3
This life we living we living we didn’t choose it we was born into this world being accused
Because the way we think and the things we do it’s like being forced to have something to prove
Back then was thankful our time ungrateful black leaders died and they don’t get a thank you
They gave a speech they even made a way too in a world full of people who was raised to hate you
But the days we fought and struggled hard it made a change gave us a start
What the leaders did came from the heart they made a movement they played their part
But we made it here part of a nation we had to take our time be a little patient
There’s no time for breaks or no vacation because black power need recreation

Chorus
Chorus

They say they making noise
I ain't heard none yet
They say I fell off
Well now it’s time to bounce back
These n** still on me
And addicted like sum crack
  Broke n*** you wack
Girl you better look at the facts
Look at the facts
Yea look at the facts
Look at ‘em!!
Huh...

Verse 1

Fact is I’m hot...
Fact is she not...
  Facts as I am with my team
  Holding it down to the top
I been getting that money
They don’t even know,
These lame n**s stressing
And I been getting that dough
And I been holding it down
  Ain’t no playing around?
Beno, Dark, Louie, Keisha them my rounds
Huh..
I am hot in my town
We at Fairground
  Queen of this S***
In I don’t need a crown
Still gone get n** I don’t need a pound
They like my sound, its going down
I’m having fun this just begun
Huh..
MJ was set when we were number 1...
Came back had another threesome
  .. I am just saying!!

Chorus

Verse 2

Man I woke up this morning
Feeling sum type of way
This n** in my bed
Loud blunt up in the tray
And I got that money on my mind
And I just got paid
Bout to hit the studio and
Hot box like a slave
  “I don’t give af ** cuss
I been doing me anyway
Real n*** like my music
Bad chicks like my dance
In I rock anything
No matter what designer on my pants
Making beats like the bands
Call me Nene
I am the man
And I am doing tatts up on myself
Call that free hand
Understand, aye !

Chorus
All my life it seems like I been dreaming, when really I been sleeping in Dis Lake of depression that I’ve thrown myself in. I don’t know why. Guess I was too high, really didn’t have the pride or strength to survive, or maybe I’ve been telling myself lies, every day I wake I pray that my dreams may come alive, in the night just so I can awaken stronger than a knight, ready to fight, ready die, ready to sacrifice the truth from the lies, only cuz, I’ve been quiet for so long, in the night just taking in all the pain & frustration of being a young black man, that aint got nothing, but a dream an a heart that needs to be saved from the streets.

Don’t get me wrong, the life I’ve chosen to live has always been bitter sweet, even when times felt like they weren’t never going to change, changed the way I looked at life, and the life I’ve chosen to live so far. My pride always seems to hide behind my happiness, while my anger and frustration present themselves proudly, in the moment only because my pride has been been beaten by forgotten sins in the past. It’s been held captive from the realistic emotions because I’ve been walking through life not willing to forgive the ones I luv.

While the emotions hide in the back of my head, I often think of the times, when my bird had to fly away from home, to collect what she deserved, because she had been working so hard to achieve her goals while trying to keep food on the table, for her kids. Even when days kept getting harder and harder, she never gave up on us, she never gave up on trying to survive in this world. Through the trials and tribulations, we’ve faced in the past, had made us strong, it made us appreciate life more than we used to.

I believe that everyone gets second chances to achieve what they must. Growing up I was that kid that was always to himself, at times I had to suck up my pride, and accept the things I couldn’t change. For instance being put in a self-contained classroom that only had four to three kids in it. Growing up I was always being told that I wouldn’t amount to nothing; I hated the fact that I was put in a small classroom with very few kids than, the average amount. Back & Forth every day I was being faced with the position of having to cope your own learning disability, wasn’t an easy thing to do, because everything that was being taught to me was hard and confusing, but easy to get through because the person beside me was strong enough to help me realize that everyone makes mistakes, everyone messes up, but at the end of the day It’s up to us to learn from our mistakes and do better than last time.

Every night I dream of a day were no one is sick of being bullied lied to or even killed, every night I dream of my dreams coming to face reality, every day I dream of my dreams, pursuing my happiness, even when it’s not being shown in real life. I dream of a day were there isn’t any pain, but why dream pain when really everyday people go through it all the time. But I still dare to dream what is right in God’s eyes, I dream to be a better person even when it don’t show.
Spoken Word

Michael Mayfield

Michael’s Life Story

I sit and stare at the walls every night hoping that things will get better.
Hoping that my mother and father will come to a conclusion to come together for me and make the family
better than what it is now.
I regret even being here because of the struggle that caused this pain.
People look at me like a joke because of my appearance and see how easy it is to pressure me.
No respect has been given to me at all and people expect me to do things for them?
I refuse.
I have been beaten, molested, bullied, pushed around and much more man this......
...this is not right.

I’m starting to see my mother cry daily now because of the struggle we got.
But yet we’re still pushed by the people who just tests our kindness.
And my mother tell me it’s ok...
no...NO
No, Momma you know it’s not ok!
I can’t take it no more!
Careless,
To pull a trigger to a gun that hasn’t been pointed to my head yet...
Surely I know that I’m not pointing no gun to my head because I know I’m the only one my mother has.
Brought in this world and I see that I am and will be the only one that she needs.
I usually give her hugs and kisses when I leave and when I come in.
Never explain what is going on out there in the streets, but if I just.....

...if I just air myself out.
But something tells me it’s not even worth it because where will I go?
I’m not going to hell.
I just know it’s not the place for me.
Truthfully we are in hell right now, but what can I do?
I’m changing slowly, and realized that racism is still around but the only thing we could do is fight for our
rights.
I usually say “NO”, but for me to look back at all the things that I went through, I don’t care.
I don’t care about anyone else’s problems and I can’t trust anyone.
It kills me that I gotta hide the fact that I’m afraid and embarrassed to be black because we have bad titles for ourselves.

Black men as drug dealers and thugs that show no love to a real man that’s taking care of his kids or is in college

“SO” Tell me what is a real n*gga to a black man?

Some of you think of it as burning and getting the heat but then you running with your feet, when a real man show you his hands of what a real man is supposed to do.

You’ve been brain wash buy a fake life that you use to live in now days buy Lil Wayne, Tyga and Brown but none of them show you the crown of what a real man is supposed to do.

Take care and feed his baby’s respect and show love to his lady with a car, a job and a goal plan (Yes) that’s is what a real man is supposed to do.

“SO” Tell me who will be that black man that shows what a real man is supposed to do?

And ladies don’t think I’m done a threw because it is you to that makes a bad titles for our selves

Short shorts and skirts “HO” you wanna show him how you put in work with your body but not with your mind?

Some of you prolly have no plans but to lay down and make a baby buy a dumb man that doesn’t even love his self so how can he love you our your baby?

Now days black women are so lazy thinking food stamps and section eight is a prize but really it’s just holding you down from getting your own.

It’s funny how people say how they hate the police and the government but we wouldn’t even make it without them, not siding with them I’m just stating facts.

We have to come together as one show love and have fun so we all as black people can stop having a bad title for ourselves.