

BRED (Draft 5)

By

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INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY-DAY (DIFFERENT SCHOOL)

The banging and clashing of desks and school supplies are heard from the hallway outside of a high school classroom. The sound of girls screaming and boys yelling profanities are muffled.

Two security guards suddenly appear in frame as they rush to enter the classroom. The sound of them struggling to detain the fighting students is heard. One of them screams the name "Marcus" as he makes every attempt to stop one of the students. The classroom door is forced open by a security guard as the student is about to be pulled out.

CUT TO

Title card:

BRED - over black

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM-DAY

JOSIAH(15) is in his school slacks and faded hoodie. He toys around with one of the strings attached to his hood to pass the time and hides the bruises on his knuckles with his sleeves. He is distracted by the details of his environment and scans his classroom, watching his classmates' (all in required uniform) lips move and eyes slide towards him as they gossip. He is agitated by his teacher's robotic voice as he briefly glances at him writing a Venn diagram on the chalkboard. He drifts his attention towards the breeze coming from the outside of a slightly ajar window.

He is constantly peaking over his shoulder to a classmate that is about to shoot him with a wasp. Josiah fully turns around and stares down the classmate. He returns the stare, testing his credibility until Josiah unexpectedly stands up. Some of the classmates quite down and the teacher continues to write on the board, unaware of the issue at hand. The kid looks towards the teacher and then back at Josiah, attempting to stare him down. He puts his rubber band and paper away. Josiah sits down and draws his hood up and ties it around his mouth.

INT. SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE-DAY

The PRESIDENT(65) of the school sits comfortably on the front edge of his desk. His arms and legs are folded, his chin is raised as he lowers his piercing blue eyes at Josiah. He is decorated in a tailored suit and slick white hair. He is accompanied by Josiah's COUNSELOR and the HEAD OF SECURITY.

Josiah is slouched back in his seat beside his MOTHER (33) in her work attire with a look of exhaustion, and his little brother, ISAIAH(11) in her lap playing on a game device. He looks around, ignoring the president's deceptively meek and indistinguishable speech, through the Catholic minutiae of porcelain St. Mary statues, crucifixes, and framed scripture quotes. His hood is halfway on as he shakes his head "no" in response to a question.

PRESIDENT DIMARIA

No?... (Whispers) Of course. Well, Josiah St. Rita is our patron saint of impossible causes. We have faith in all of our beautiful children.

He directs a glance and an endearing smile towards Josiah's mother.

PRESIDENT DIMARIA

We are in the business of nurturing our students into outstanding citizens through the grace of God. You understand?

The room waits for a response from Josiah. His mother looks at him and notices the lack of attention on his face.

MOTHER

Thank you, Dr. DiMaria. We appreciate your generosity and trust me when I say we are making major adjustments at home.

PRESIDENT DIMARIA

Pleasure is mine, Ms. Daniels. We are pleased that your appeal went through and that your son is back in our community.

He looks towards Josiah

PRESIDENT DIMARIA

I'm convinced an angel has an eye on you at this very moment.

He crosses his legs and folds his arms.

PRESIDENT DIMARIA

That being said we are also looking to make some major adjustments for your benefit.

Josiah slowly begins to sit up and looks towards the security guard and social worker.

PRESIDENT DIMARIA

If you are planning to stay with us I need you to meet with Mr. Collins three times a week for a consistent behavioral assessment.

MR. COLLINS (38) lets out an inaudible sigh as he adjusts his tie.

PRESIDENT DIMARIA

And I will have my good friend Big Joe here keep a keen interest in your whereabouts, understood?

Josiah slouches back again and points his view towards the security guard. He nods "yes", slowly.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM-NEXT DAY

MR. LIVINGSTON (56) stands at his desk with his fists planted on his table. He is hunched over a history textbook, gnawing at a toothpick and pumping a stress ball. He flips the page as a student completes reading a passage.

MR. LIVINGSTON

Thank you, Louis! Josiah can you finish us off?...Josiah!

Josiah snaps to focus and turns his head from staring out the window.

JOSIAH

Nah I'm good.

MR. LIVINGSTON

Excuse me...Excuse me!

JOSIAH

I read like six times, you want me to teach the class too! Damn! I'm dumb tired.

MR. LIVINGSTON

I'm not asking boy! They don't give you three strikes here, you understand?

Josiah and Mr. Livingston lock eyes, one trying to intimidate

the other.

MR. LIVINGSTON
I'm not gonna tell you again. Last paragraph bo-

JOSIAH
Bro, I said I'm tired!C'mon ma-

MR. LIVINGSTON
I have to call Big Joe again? That's what you want right? You must be mistaken. I'm not about to let another one caged up.

Josiah skyrockets from his seat, knocking over his pencil and shifting his desk. The students turn to look at him in anticipation for the show.

JOSIAH
Fuck you say nigga?

MR. LIVINGSTON
Don't you ever call me that. Don't bring me down to that. Sit down and read!

Josiah leaves his seat completely.

JOSIAH
Nah you buggin'. Think you wanna tell me somethin' real quick.

MR.LIVINGSTON
You are not about to **Marcus** me in my own class. I did my time with him.

JOSIAH
Take his name out yo' mouth, nigga. I merc yo' old ass.

MR. LIVINGSTON
Sit down and stop wasting my time boy!

Big Joe enters through the door.

BIG JOE
What's going on Josiah? How we doin' today?

Josiah turns to him and points to Mr. Livingston.

JOSIAH

This nigga bein' sus right now! So disrespectful!

BIG JOE

I need you to sit down Josiah...I need you to calm down.

Josiah reduces his breathing and loosens his clenching body. **(Close up on his fists flattening)** He looks at Mr. Livingston and then at the clock behind him.

JOSIAH

Say less Joe.

Josiah returns to his seat. He picks up his pencil and roughly flips to the page and begins to read.

INT. BEDROOM-DAY

We hear muffled slaps and profanity fade into an audible rebuke as MARCELLUS (38) leaves Josiah and makes his way out of the room. He is halfway out of the door until he turns around to confront Josiah. He yells at him as he waves a folded belt in his hand and grabs the door in preparation to leave.

MARCELLUS (BOYFRIEND)

Let me hear about you pulling this shit again. (beat) Let me know if you want some more, ah-ight? (Whispers as he leaves) Ungrateful lil' nigga.

Josiah is by himself sitting in corner of his bed before school, tired, frustrated, hands covering his face. He rubs his bottom in pain. He looks up for a minute and stares at the closed door of a bedroom across the hall.

Josiah enters his older brother's room. He pauses in his steps, a bit taken back by its vacancy. He continues to dig through stacks of labeled boxes.

Josiah performs a rap song in the mirror as he listens to one of his brother's CDs with his CD player. He throws hand gestures and mouths the words enthusiastically.

Josiah tries on Marcus' t-shirts, pants, and hats. He is disappointed to find that none of them fit.

Josiah suddenly looks to the open doorway. He waits a moment and makes his way to a deep corner within a closet. He comes out revealing a smoking bowl in his hands as he studies it. He puts it in his pocket.

His mother walks through the doorway. She enters holding out her cell phone.

MOTHER

Negro, are you crazy? What the hell you doin in here?

JOSIAH

Is that him?

MOTHER

Mmhmm. You got five minutes before Marcellus is back.

Josiah grabs the phone and sucks his teeth.

JOSIAH

Fuck that nigga.

Mother slaps the back of his head while he giggles. Josiah brings the phone to his ear.

JOSIAH?

What's trill bro?

MARCUS

Siah? What's up? All trill in here bro. You holdin' it down?

JOSIAH

Yeah you know, bullshit-bullshit. When you out?

MARCUS

Soon bro, soon. Tell Mama I said much love for the commissary. Got me grubbin' in here.

JOSIAH

Yo Cousin Buck old ass in there?

MARCUS

Yeah, they moved him outta my wing... I don't fuck with that nigga no more. Marcellus back?

JOSIAH

Yea.

MARCUS

He ain't put his hands on you or
nothin', yea?

Josiah cautiously chooses his next words.

JOSIAH

Nah we straight out here don't trip.

MARCUS

Let me be the first to know alright? I
can take care of that, nah' mean?

JOSIAH

Nah we good.

Josiah looks up towards the doorway and notices his mother waving for the phone back.

JOSIAH

Alright, Mama looks like she is about
to bug out-

Isaiah runs in and jumps on Josiah's lap.

MOTHER

Isaiah, get your little ass outta
here!

Isaiah tries to grab the phone from Josiah's hand.

ISIAH

Let me talk to him! Let me talk to
him! Y'all never let me say nothin' to
him!

JOSIAH

You buggin' little boy, get over there
with Mama!

Josiah laughs in response to Isaiah's frustration as he tickles him off his lap. Marcellus suddenly enters. He pushes the mother off to the side and grabs the two children.

MARCELLUS (BOYFRIEND)

The fuck I say! Out!Out!...Come on
Nessa how you gon' let them in here!

Josiah shoves Marcellus' grip off of his shoulder. He walks back to his room ignoring his insults and slams the door behind him.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAYS-DAY

Josiah inhales deeply as he looks down at a water fountain. He continues to clean out the smoking bowl while he turns his head to keep an eye out. He puts the bowl in his bag and presses the water against his eyelids to cool down and reduce the redness.

He meanders around the hallways trying to hold in laughter. His hands run against the lockers, he attempts to jump and touch the top of every doorway he passes.

He stares at his class from outside the door as it goes on without him. He is startled by the sight of a nearby guard walking around. He scatters immediately and we see the guard follow after him.

CUT TO

INT. SOCIAL WORKER OFFICE-DAY

Mr. Collins sits at his desk rotating his thumbs. He looks towards Josiah's mother and then hesitantly towards Josiah. He adjusts his tie and links his fingers in front of his face, resting his elbows on the desk.

MR. COLLINS

This is a serious problem now and I'm not very confident it will go away.

MOTHER

I understand that Mr. Collins and I'm doing my best in-

MR. COLLINS

Ms. Daniels, we don't accept paraphernalia in our school let alone drug use! How does this- (beat) I highly question the state in which you raise him, Ms. Dan-

MOTHER

Nope! Nope! Uh-uh! I'm gon' have to stop you right there. You not gon' disrespect me like that in front of my kids, like it's nothing! Like you know me!

She lowers her voice, focusing her sharp words.

MOTHER

I hold my own and that includes these two beautiful boys right here. Now it's time for you to do your job.

Mr. Collins fixes himself in his seat. He slouches back, straight up, showing his deepest apologies in his posture. He looks towards Josiah and Isaiah sitting beside each other.

MR. COLLINS

Josiah, I'd like to hear your explanation.

Josiah sits upright in his seat and looks Mr. Collins in his eyes.

JOSIAH

My ass.

He looks at Mr. Collins and notices that he is sincere in his request.

JOSIAH

Real talk Mr. Collins...I come in here feeling like shit every day. Y'all make me come here! Y'all don't even know what's up! But who gives a shit, feel me?(beat) So what nigga like me supposed to do, right? Let me play the part.

Josiah throws himself back in his seat. The room goes quiet. Mr. Collins struggles to look at Josiah in his eyes and his mother stares at him in pain until she interrupts the silence.

MOTHER

We havin' a hard time right now. As you know Josiah is missing a brother at home. He's someone he looked up to a lot.

MR. COLLINS

The one in prison?

Josiah's mother nods with great hesitation. Mr. Collin shifts his gaze to Isaiah as he cleans his glasses, then back to his mother.

MR. COLLINS

(Whispers) Dear God. Ok. Ok. Ms. Daniels. I- I don't know what you want from me at this point. You make it impossible... I'm gonna do something I shouldn't and put my neck out for your family. But I highly suggest he sees some professional help before you get a visit from DCF. Otherwise, there is nothing I can do with him.

Josiah's mother looks at Josiah. He keeps his head down ashamed to look back at her. She rubs the back of his head and grabs one of his hands until he pulls it back.

INT. CHURCH-DAY

Josiah is slouched in a pew beside his family as the entire congregation is consumed by their open bibles. He looks up from biting his fingers and notices PASTOR WILKINS (46) locking eyes with him as he begins his sermon. He is sharp in a pressed suit and a platinum watch as he stands over his pulpit with an opened bible.

PASTOR WILKINS

Matthew 26 verse 28 says, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." Hmmm! Amen?

The congregation responds with a collective "amen". The pastor takes his handkerchief and wipes it across his forehead. He continues to look at Josiah as he speaks.

PASTOR WILKINS

We give and receive, give and receive. "Forgive, and you will be forgiven". That's what we signed up for! Nobody is sittin' on that pedestal, amen?

Congregation nods and claps in agreement.

PASTOR WILKINS

Don't let this three-piece fool you!

He chuckles at his own joke as he adjusts his tie.

PASTOR WILKINS

Like my father and his brother, rest their souls, I was stuck on that

corner too. It's what we did to get by, to get right, right now, amen?...On Marcus Garvey and Dekalb. Hmmhmm, that corner! Waitin for the next sucka, just like somebody is right now. I did that for years, man, like-like a nine to five! Because what else am I suppose to do right? What else can I do? The teachers think I'm stupid, the police put half my family in jail. I'm out here on my own!No one out here looking out for me!

The congregation begins to clap in acknowledgment.

PASTOR WILKINS

Tell me if I'm wrong but we all come across a time when we feel God ain't around, like he got *distracted* with someone else. Like he got better things to do. Amen?

The congregation replies with a collective "amen".

PASTOR WILKINS

But let me say this...I was dismantled by life, void of the bright light of the holy spirit. I let others suck it out of me because I thought,"hell, I was born this way". But I am up here telling you this with my freedom and my dignity because of our savior Jesus Christ! That is his power! That is his work! That I am sure of!

The congregation rises to its feet in adoration. Josiah looks up as he sees his family on their feet clapping and shouting.

PASTOR WILKINS

So, in the name of God, I want any individual who wants to know God like I do, to step up! Don't be shy, let me introduce you to Him! Amen?

The congregation's cheers grow louder. Josiah's mother turns to Josiah who is still sitting. She whispers in his ear and they look at each other briefly. He shows great hesitation as she helps him out of his seat and walks him to the stage.

PASTOR WILKINS

Bless you Josiah! You one brave man!
Please bow your head. Let us all bow
our heads as we introduce them!

Josiah slowly bows his head forward as he stares at his feet
and stands completely still.

PASTOR WILKINS

Lord, I call upon you today to bless
this child. To eradicate the trouble
in his heart and fill it with your
almighty love! To guide him to your
shining light!

Pastor Wilkins, closes his eyes.

PASTOR WILKINS

Hmmmmhmm. Josiah, y'all about to get
real acquainted with each other! Look
at me!

Josiah lifts his head and lets the pastors palm slide onto
the top of his head. The pastor tightens his grip on his head
and tightens his shut eyelids.

PASTOR WILKINS

Josiah? Do you accept Jesus Christ as
your Lord and Savior? The light at the
end of your tunnel!

Josiah continues to look at him and he nods his head.

PASTOR WILKINS

I said, "Do you accept Christ as your
Lord and Savior"? He needs to hear
you, Josiah!

JOSIAH

Yes.

PASTOR WILKINS

He can't hear you, Josiah. He needs
your faith, you understand?

JOSIAH

Yes!

PASTOR WILKINS

I can't hear you boy!

JOSIAH

YES!

Pastor Wilkins pushes him off and raises his hands to the ceiling.

PASTOR WILKINS

Good God, another soul has been saved!

Josiah turns around to an erupting congregation. Fainting and jubilant dancing takes place to the bombastic choir and church band. He looks over to his family and sees his mother crying, nearly clapping her hands off while Marcellus comforts her. Josiah is stoned to the floor beneath him, almost in shock. He looks to Isaiah who seems to mirror his reaction. He is confused with such a response to his own family member. Josiah's eyes change as if a sobering epiphany has glazed over him. He looks back to his crying mother and Marcellus and then back to the pastor behind him who continues to shout to God and pace back and forth across the stage.

He walks back to his seat emotionless. Numbed by the experience. His mother hugs him before he can enter the pew.

INT. SCHOOL CLASSROOM-DAY

Mr. Livingston begins a lecture on the Great Migration. His back is turned to the class as he draws out a minimalistic map of mainland America. He highlights the South in red circles and draws lines to Chicago, New York, L.A. and other various cities marked with blue circles.

MR. LIVINGSTON

Can anyone guess why this happened?
Why so many people felt the need to
travel so far with so little knowledge
of what to come.

He turns around to face the class.

MR. LIVINGSTON

Josiah?

Josiah's head is sunken into his hoodie as he shakes his head "no". He is not up for his usual antics today.

MR. LIVINGSTON

Let's think about this now. Six
million black folks like you dropped

everything. Family, community,
everything to head up North. What
factors contributed to this?

Josiah shrugs his shoulders. Mr. Livingston shows great
disdain for his lack of cooperation as he slams his marker
down on his desk.

MR. LIVINGSTON

Reconstruction! Industrial economy!
Equal opportuni-(beat) Give me
something! Josiah, you are here in
this city, in this class today because
someone in your family risked their
life to travel hundreds of miles with
nothin' but the clothes on their back,
you understand?

JOSIAH

You postin' up on me? Like I don't
know who I am and shit.

MR. LIVINGSTON

Oh, here we go. Did you do the
reading?

JOSIAH

(beat) Lookin' for one Mr. Livingston.
Word to God, you lookin' for one. But
that's a fail.com, cause I'm good
right now.

The classmates begin to giggle in response to Josiah's wit.

MR. LIVINGSTON

I'm looking for a sign of intelligence
Mr. Daniels. You need to catch up or
you'll be the next to fall by the
wayside...

He turns to the board.

MR. LIVINGSTON

Seems to run in your family.

The class is silenced as Mr. Livingston elaborates on his
map. Josiah watches Mr. Livingston write "Incarceration as a
reversal" across the board along with some statistical
figures. As Mr. Livingston turns around Josiah is already
halfway towards him. His mouth is fuming hot air, his body is

clenched into a solid weapon. He knocks over some books and shifts some chairs as he charges towards him.

MR. LIVINGSTON
Sit down, Josiah!

Director's note:(**Element music video shot-children's choir music rises OR CHURCH MUSIC**)

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAYS-DAY CHOIR MUSIC

The camera stays outside of the classroom. We are only able to hear screaming and commotion from the inside. A student walks by the window and watches in amazement. He takes out his phone to record the incident.

Big Joe runs into frame. He flies past the student and bursts into the classroom. Another security officer follows him. Big Joe explodes through the classroom door from inside, pulling Josiah out. His hands are extended out in front of him as he stares at his palms beat red in blood.He is calm and in shock, expressionless as he can not seem to take his eyes off his hands.

Director's note:(**slow-mo**)**He is carried away by multiple guards, each frame/shot is mirrored by a flashback of his brother being carried away the same way.**

INT. STATE PRISON-DAY

Tight shots of Marcus holding a pay phone to his ear. We see his scars on the knuckles that are wrapped around the phone. As well as a number on his jumpsuit.

INT. KITCHEN-DAY

Josiah's mother scrambles to grab her key and her bag. Her phone is left on the counter as she exits the front door, it buzzes alone in their house.

INT. PRISON CELL-DAY

Marcus walks up to his empty bed and sits at the corner of it. He is enclosed in white cinder block and steel. He bends his torso over his knees, resting the lower half of his face in his hands as his right heel constantly kicks against the blank white floor.

THE END