MIKE ENEMIGO
PRESENTS

THE CELL BLOCK PRESENTS
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THE CELL BLOCK PRESENTS

MIKE ENEMIGO
THEE ENEMY OF THE STATE
SPECIAL EDITION

LOYALTY
AND BETRAYAL
ARMANDO “CHUNKY” IBARRA

THE LEGEND OF
FAST EDDIE
ANTHONY MURILLO

THE CELL BLOCK PRESENTS
MUSIC FUNDAMENTALS OF
THE GAME
MAURICE “MAC BAS” VASQUEZ

THE CELL BLOCK PRESENTS
CONSPIRACY
THEORY
MIKE ENEMIGO

KANO’S
STRUGGLE
CA$CHIO$ GREEN

LON$ ANGEL$S
ALEX VALENTINE

THE CELL BLOCK
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Mike Enemigo is the new prison/street art sensation who has written and published several books. He is inspired by emotion; hope, pain; dreams and nightmares. He physically lives somewhere in a California prison cell where he works relentlessly creating his next piece. His mind and soul are elsewhere; seeing, studying, learning, and drawing inspiration to tear down suppressive walls and inspire the culture by pushing artistic boundaries.

THE CELL BLOCK
A NEW ERA, THE NEW STANDARD. WE ARE THE NEW MOVEMENT.

The Cell Block is an independent multimedia company with the objective of accurately conveying the prison/street experience and culture, with the credibility and honesty that only one who has lived it can deliver, through literature and other arts, and to entertain and enlighten while doing so. Every book or product is created by a prisoner, in a prison cell. We are a network of prisoners, who, against all odds, come together to accomplish, achieve, and improve the lifestyle of our community. This is our society; we should and will run it.

Represent and support the company that represents and supports you. Represent and support the TCB movement!

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The following is a compilation of various works by TCB authors!
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I started rappin’ sometime in the later part of 1993 after I met a local Sacramento artist named Shade, who, at least at that time, was most known for his feature on Brotha Lynch Hung’s first album, 24 Deep – second side, last song, “Walkin’ To My Funeral.” I remember when I first met Shade and he put a cassette tape in his boom box that had a couple of his songs on it. I was amazed when I heard his voice coming out the speakers. I couldn’t believe that I was actually standing right next to the guy whose voice it was; I still remember the feeling….

Shade lived right around the corner from me, so after we met we began hanging out from time to time, and since he and his other friends were always rappin’, I, too, eventually started trying to rap. See, in my neighborhood, certain bangers were respected and hood famous for putting in work, as were a few successful jackers. But really, they were more feared than anything else. And of course you had those who were known for being ballers, but there were only a couple of them and they didn’t talk to anyone like us. I’d only see them when they’d smash through in their old-schools on gold Ds with their systems slappin’. And that seemed so far out of our reach, even though we all wanted to be like that, it just didn’t seem realistic. But to be a dope MC? You didn’t have to kill nobody, and you could be broke as hell; it was a different type of respect. And with enough dedication and practice, it was something you could teach yourself, in your bedroom, just you and your beat tapes. I was seeing firsthand the respect and acceptance these guys were getting for being able to rhyme. I mean, you gotta remember, at this time, not everybody was rappin’. It was only a select few. So when I saw what being a rapper got you, I wanted it….

I can’t remember exactly whose it was, but one day when I was hanging out with Shade and his friends they had a karaoke machine. Everybody was smoking weed, passing the mic around, and freestyling over a Scarface instrumental or one of the piece-tapes someone had made – the tapes where someone would record a little piece of instrumental from the end of a song over and over again, piecing it together until it became one long instrumental you could rap over. Anyway; puff,
spit, pass; puff, spit, pass. I remember when the mic got to me, I didn’t wanna rap. However, I didn’t wanna look like a punk, either. So, against my better judgment I grabbed the mic and started spittin’ my freestyle. And, yeah... I got about six words out before I fumbled. Everybody laughed; I was humiliated. Oh, my god, it was terrible! I wanted to go home and never hang out with them again! But, then Shade told everybody that I had just started, and so they stopped laughing, and instead began giving me tips and words of encouragement.

After everybody left I convinced Shade to let me get the freestyles we recorded with the karaoke. He had a whole Nike shoe box of the damn things so he gave me a few to take home. I remember I thought I had some top secret shit. After all, I had some music that nobody else had, and I knew the guys; guys who were like neighborhood celebrities.

Eventually I came up on my own karaoke machine, and that’s when me and my other friends – a group separate from Shade and them – started recording our own raps. At this time, I never thought about being a real, professional rapper or anything. In fact, the thought never even crossed my mind; I didn’t even think I’d ever go to a real studio, let alone be some kind of rap star. I was content with what I was doing with my karaoke and instrumental cassettes. After all, I was getting kind of good. I wasn’t better than Shade and them who were several years older than me and more experienced, but amongst my crew, I was the best. I was even getting props from guys and girls who were older than me and underestimated my talents when I told them I rapped. To see the look of surprise, approval, and acceptance on their faces was a terrific feeling. To hear one say, “That little fool didn’t really write that,” was an even better one....

It wasn’t too long, however, before my hobby of rapping with my friends took a back seat to other things my friends and I started doing; you know street-type bidness. After all, my aspirations with rap never went above being dope amongst my friends. Nothing else was in sight with it. However, to sell sacks of weed so I can make a few bucks to buy the things I desired; and what was going on in my neighborhood, to just be able to walk a couple blocks without getting chased or jumped by the local bangers; well, that was real. It was something that demanded immediate attention.

As a result of what was going on in my environment I started packing a gun, and in 1995 I was arrested for three shootings, convicted, and sentenced to the California Youth Authority. While I was there I would rap from time to time with a few other guys who also rapped, but other than that, rapping and being an MC was so far from what was going on in my current environment, I had my mind on other things....

Two and a half years later, on September 30, 1997, I was paroled from the Youth Authority. However, I had to do three months on house arrest, so my cousin came over and dropped off a bunch of cassette tapes that I hadn’t had the chance to hear
because I’d been incarcerated. Hearing all that new music along with being stuck at home, not being able to go out with the exception of certain hours each day, I was inspired and motivated to start writing raps again. And when my cousin came back over to spend some more time with me, I spit my new rhymes for him. He thought they were dope and asked if I’d ever thought about taking hip-hop a little more serious, to the next level, and actually trying to make a CD. I told him I hadn’t. He asked me if I would, if given an opportunity, and I told him yeah. He said he’d look into some things, I said OK. In truth, though, I assumed we were just talking for something to do. I didn’t expect any type of actual result from our conversation.

Three or four weeks later, however, probably sometime in November, 1997, I got a call from my cousin letting me know we had a meeting with a producer by the name of Jay Stone. So a couple of days later, during the time I was able to leave without violating my house arrest, my cousin and I got together and went to Jay’s house.

Jay had a music studio in one of his rooms; it was the first time I’d ever met a real music producer or set foot in an actual studio. We all spoke for about 30 minutes, then my cousin and I left. In regards to Jay Stone, nothing went further than this one meeting. However, the one thing I specifically remember learning from Jay Stone is this; when it comes to the music business, the more you put into it, the more you’ll get out of it. When he said that, I understood what each word meant, but I did not understand the full meaning of the concept until years later.

A few months went by, and by this time I’d moved in with my girlfriend. One day, while I was at her brother’s house, a guy by the name of G-Idez called. G-Idez and I had known each other for a number of years, probably since 1992 or ’93, although we weren’t on the best of terms. But, when he found out I was there, at my girl’s brother’s house, he asked to speak to me. When we spoke he said he’d just finished an album, that it’s been years and we should let go of any old grudges, and instead get together and do some things. I let him know it was all good and that I was with the bidness. Incidentally, we ran into each other a week or so later while leaving a strip club, and we agreed to get together within the next couple of days.

I started hanging out with G-Idez often, and through him I met a lot of local artist who were also trying to do something with hip-hop. It was also through him that I was introduced to Riq-Roq, the owner of “Hitworks” music studio.

Now, you gotta remember something about this time; this was early 1998, and technology was not as it is today. Not just anybody could record music. All the online shit that exists today did not exist back then. Back then, it was something special to just know someone at a studio, let alone be able to afford some time to record. See, studio time was $75 an hour. If you knew somebody, $50. But who could afford that shit? I know I couldn’t. Nor could the people I knew. But Riq-Roq changed all that with Hitworks. He gave us a chance to actually record our
music in a real studio with real equipment. He made producing a CD realistic for us; he gave us hope.

I called my cousin and told him about Riq-Roq, Hitworks, etc., and asked if he still wanted to invest in my music. He agreed to speak with Riq, and after they spoke, Riq gave us a 45-hour time block for $500. Crazy rate; you do the math. And this right here, having 45 hours of recording time in a real music studio, along with G-Idez having recorded his own CD that I was able to knock in my hooptie, this was the moment when I first thought that maybe, just maybe I could do something with hip-hop.

I started spending a lot of time at Hitworks. Not necessarily to record, but to learn and meet people – people like me who had a dream of making hip-hop. It was there that I met guys like Scoob Nitty, Baby Regg, Foe Loco, Assassin, and many other artists. It was like a big hangout, a big network of sorts, and for the most part everybody was cool with one another.

I still remember the first song I recorded on my time block. It was called “Sabotage,” and I recorded it the same day I met Scoob Nitty. I remember because, although I’d just met him, I asked him to do my hook, and he agreed. It went like this: “We drop phat tracks on DATs/ We bail on yo’ block wit’ glocks, and Pontiacs/ We fuck wit’ the mob, we sabotage wit’ fully macs/ You don’t know the stress we under, these are the days of thunder.” The song was slappin’; we exchanged pager numbers; we became friends.

I also became real cool with Baby Regg, who actually lived only about 5 minutes from me, so we started kicking it almost daily. Regg knew how to make some slappin’-ass beats and agreed to produce my album, so my cousin bought an ASR-X Pro, a Yamaha keyboard, plus some other shit. Soon afterwards, though, my cousin and I had a falling out over some drug bidness, and he was not only pulling back from the music, but he wanted his equipment back, too. Now I had no money or way to get beats. However, after having a chat with Regg, he agreed to produce my beats for free if I could find a way to keep the equipment – mainly the Pro. So, I gave my cousin the Yamaha back, gave him a G-stack for the Pro, and me and Regg kept pushin’. Luckily for me, Regg had too much love and passion for hip-hop to really be concerned with money at the time. A pack of Newport’s and a 40 oz and ya boy was good; he finna bang on drum pads all day.

From being at Regg’s house all the time I got to know Foe Loco a lot better. Foe had rapped for a long time, was dope, and was respected among the local MCs. Since he literally lived just three turns from my apartment, we became road-dogs and began kicking it daily. For the most part, we’d either be at my apartment, Regg’s house, or the studio.

Now, during this time I was selling a little bit of ‘cain to get money for necessities – food, clothes, gas, insurance, my portion of the rent, etc. But other than that, I wasn’t really caught up in any street bidness. I was kicking it with my hip-hop
folks and trying to focus on making music, staying out of jail, etc. Sure, I had a pistol; that’s mando. But I kept it tucked, feel me? I know that’s a dangerous thing to do, but I didn’t want immediate access to it at all times. Too many people act tough and front like they want it, when they really don’t. But, see, I got a habit of buying tickets. And that? Well, that just leads to a mess….

One day, Foe had me take him to a studio that, unknown to me prior, was right behind my neighborhood. That’s when I was introduced to the known Sacramento producer Big Hollis, who was also the owner of the studio. I took Foe there to pick up a beat so he could do a feature for a compilation Big Hollis was working on called “From Sac to the Bay.” When Hollis played the beat, I couldn’t believe what I was hearing. It was one of the hardest beats I’d ever heard at the time. It was exactly the kind of beat I needed to help me express what I wanted to with my music; however, at the time, I didn’t know how to articulate exactly what I wanted, I only knew when I heard it.

Anyway, the beat connected with me so much I just had to get a verse on the song, which Foe, if I remember correctly, was calling “Let It Go.” So I asked Foe if I could get the middle verse and he told me it was all good, but that I gotta come extremely raw lyrically. He wanted very detailed, intricate, creative shit. I asked him what he meant and he gave me an example. He explained things I’d never thought about before. His example gave me a whole new perspective in regards to hip-hop and writing rhymes. See, Foe’s an MC, and he’s competitive. And at the time, I did not look at things the way he did. However, I was about to. And this is important because it’s when things changed for me. I went to the next level, lyrically.

Hollis and I kept in contact and developed a friendship. And although it was more expensive, I started to record some of my songs at his studio, too. Hollis gave me a couple of beats for my project as well as added his touch to a couple I’d made myself, and everything was coming along nicely. However, I knew I was only going to be able to do so much on my own. In order to really pull something off, I was going to need a much bigger machine than what I was working with.

On February 23, 1999, Big Hollis called me up and said he wanted to sign me to his label, Out of Bounds Entertainment, and that if I was interested, to slide through to the studio before he went out of town so we can discuss some things. In my coolest, calmest voice I said, “OK, um…yeah, I’ll come through.” However, to keep it one-hun’ed, I was stupid juiced. This is what I needed. So I got in my 1970 Cougar, the one with the major slap, and hit the backstreets at about 80 tryna get there. Shit…he aint’ finna go outta town before he talks to me.

When I got to the studio, Hollis had explained how he’d let a few people hear the demo I’d given him, and how he felt like we can pull something off together. He said he was about to go to St. Louis for a couple days, then Texas, and when he
got back he wanted to have a meeting between me, himself and his partner, and at that time we can make something happen. Still keeping my excitement in check, I said it was all good and I left.

On the drive home I felt like a million bucks. No more was the 80 MPH through the backstreets. Nope; I rolled my window down, slapped my demo CD as loud as my system would push it, and drove, well, rather slow. I wanted e’rybody to see and hear me, playboy. I was happy. Furthermore, I was in a zone; reflecting. From meeting Shade outside the 7-11 on Lincoln Village Dr five years earlier, it had been a minute, a bit of a ride; you know, a few shootings and whatnot, a few years in the California Youth Authority, a little bit of hustlin’ to eat and pay for studio time, etc. However, I think all that’s now coming to an end. I was finally going to be able to do the one thing I knew of that would not only give me respect in my neighborhood, but also put some food in my stomach; all the while, allowing me to stop taking certain chances. Ah…life is good.

Ten minutes after I arrived home, still feeling high on life, the police raided my apartment in search of drugs and guns. They found some weed and a pistol so I was taken to the Sacramento County Jail and charged. Remember, I was a parolee who got caught with weed and a pistol, so, you know, things didn’t look too good. However, being that I was on YA parole and had no adult record, they ended up offering me a deal for seven months county time in exchange for a guilty plea. It was bad timing in regards to where I was at with my music, but I’d expected it to be much worse. So I quickly jumped on that deal.

Out of seven months, I only had to do like, four months and twenty days, or something. It was really no sweat. I had my girl go holla at Hollis and tell him the bidness so everything would be straight when I got out, ya know? And the four months flew by, too. I only had twenty days left. Then fifteen. Then…what? The parole board is here to see me? Why? I get out in like, ten days, right? Nope; CYA wanted their time, too; a whole year.

After my four months and twenty days in the county jail I was taken back to YA to do my one-year violation. And while I was at NRCC, the YA reception in Sacramento, I heard Hollis’ commercials on the local radio station. I was juiced, but at the same time, sick. I was supposed to be a part of that. Well, there wasn’t anything I could really do other than stay out of trouble so I could get out as soon as possible. Hopefully Hollis would still fuck with me once I hit the pavement….

My year went by rather quickly and I was due to be paroled on May 22, 2000. It’ll be all good; my birthday is May 20th and I’d be 21, and I don’t remember the exact day, but a week or so after I’d be paroled, Dre and them were coming to Sacramento for the “Up in Smoke” tour, and as a way to celebrate my release, my folks had gotten me a ticket to it. What better for an aspiring MC to come home to than a concert with Dre, Eminem, Snoop and the rest of their crew?
May 19, 2000 was a Friday. I woke up feeling good. I’d be turning the big 2-1 the next day, and I’d be getting a visit from my girl and mom. Two days after that, on Monday morning, I’d be paroled. Yeah! Finally! A couple of hours later, however, I was called up to the program office, they said I had a visit. A visit? What visit would I have on a Friday? Well, as soon as I arrived at the program office I got my answer; it was a visit from a Sacramento District Attorney and his investigator telling me that they were happy to announce I would not be paroling on Monday, and instead I’d be transported back to the Sacramento County Jail, as they were there to serve me a warrant for a 187 and two 664/187s. And the information that provided adequate evidence for the warrant? My cousin, my girl, and her brother. What the fuck?

Anyway, I was taken back to the county jail to fight my charges. When I get there, the last thing I’m thinking about is music. That all seemed like a long-lost hope by now. And I’m no longer writing as a way to express myself and release certain emotions. Naw; instead, I’m on some rider bidness. At this point, what else did I have?

About a year later, on May 21st, 2001, I was sent to the 8th floor in my county jail, which is the hole, for a stabbing. This is where I did the rest of my time while fighting my case. In the hole I was single cell and only allowed to come out of my cell for an hour a day, by myself. During that hour I could use the phone, take a shower, watch TV, etc. And to my surprise, the 8th floor, and the 8th floor only, was able to get B.E.T. This allowed me to catch up a little bit on some of the latest hip-hop. Since I was in a cell by myself with no one to really talk to and nothing but my own thoughts to deal with, I began to write again. Not a lot; but a little.

One day a guy who had come out for his hour of program stated rappin’ at my neighbor’s door. His name was Shaka, and he was dope. Him rappin’ at my neighbor’s door became his routine. So one day I called him over to my door and told him I liked his rhymes, and that my brother rapped. I spit some of my brother’s rhymes for him. He said they were dope and asked why my brother wasn’t dropping the shit. I told him my brother was bullshitting, caught up in the streets. We both agreed it was a shame.

Shaka and I became real cool. He’d always come to my door and ask to hear one of my brother’s songs. One day I felt comfortable enough to let Shaka know that they weren’t my brother’s rhymes, they were mine. He said he had a feeling they were mine, because if anybody out there was that raw they’d be droppin’ them. He then suggested I record my vocals over the phone. He said I couldn’t waste that kind of material and that people will like it. I was still on some rider bidness, so I didn’t trip.

On November 1, 2002, I was convicted. Despite an eyewitness swearing there were only two people who committed the crime and they were both darker-
skinned Mexicans, and despite both of my co-defendants being darker-skinned Mexicans and confessing to the crime, the DA said there were three people who did it and that my pale-ass was one of them. About a month or so after I was convicted, I was sentenced to life without the possibility of parole, two 25-to-lifes and some mo’ shit. Now, I don’t want to get into the details of this part of the story at this time; however, I will say that the fight is not over. I’m in a decent position.

On December 31, 2002, I was sent to Tracy – a reception center prison for Northern California. Two or three days later, though, I got caught with an “inmate manufactured slashing device.” Hey, what can I say; I made my strap before I even made my bed. Once again, I was put in the hole, and then eventually transferred to the infamously corrupted Corcoran SHU to do a 10-month SHU term for the slashing device.

There, in the Corcoran SHU, I was locked down for 24 hours a day. I was given three showers a week and yard from time to time in a dog cage. The only physical contact I had with any other human being was with my cellmate. However, that only lasted a couple of months; we eventually got into a cellfight. I was then given an additional SHU term for assault and placed on single-cell status. It was during this time that I was put in a cell where I was able to get MTV 2 if I connected a headphone wire to my TV antenna and moved it around the cell. MTV 2 let me catch up on all the latest music, videos, and even interviews and things. And since I was in a cell by myself, I was able to focus on me, what I was doing, and what I’m into.

Inspired, I started to write again (I Ain’t a Killa, Dog Eat Dog, Fly far Away). Only this time, it was different. It wasn’t about making money legally. It wasn’t even about respect from the guys in my neighborhood. After all, by this time I hadn’t seen or even heard from them in years, and odds are I’ll never see or hear from them again. This time hip-hop had a much deeper meaning. I was sentenced to die in a prison cell; I had gone through a lot of struggles over the years; I was suffering inside. This time, I really had something to say, to express to the world, and hip-hop was going to be my outlet; my way of being heard, my way of escaping prison, my way of being alive. So, sometime in the last months of 2004 I decided to dedicate myself and focus on hip-hop, 100%. I began to write more, and I began to think about how I was going to pull off the impossible; something that has never been done by a man in my position. I was going to not only record my rhymes in my prison cell, but also break them out to the streets, have my songs produced, and release my story to the world…. The plotting began.

Because I was locked in a prison cell, I was not too aware of what was going on in the streets of Sacramento and Northern California. My information was coming from MTV 2 and hip-hop magazines, so I was paying attention to artists all over the country, what they were doing, and what was working for them. One thing I’d been reading about was the popularity of mixtapes, and how artists like 50 Cent had made it OK to make a whole CD rapping over other peoples’
beats. When I was out, that type of thing was considered biting and looked down upon. However, now up-and-coming artists who don’t necessarily have money for beats are able to produce an entire CD using pure instrumentals, and it’s OK. In fact, not only is it OK, but it’s hot. You take a popular beat that everybody likes, most likely ones that’re commercial hits, then spit your grimy, non-commercial rhymes over them, and you got some hot underground music to catch a buzz off of. This is what guys on the east coast and in the south were doing. At this particular time, guys like Mike Jones, Paul Wall, Chamillionaire, and Slim Thug were blowin’ up off this shit.

Although I was able to imagine, I had never actually heard a mixtape at the time this was going on. But, I knew that, as soon as I got out of the SHU and to a regular yard (in a few months), I was going to hunt some down and study them. With my lack of resources, due to my incarceration, I knew the mixtape angle was going to allow me to get beats without having to come up with a bunch of money. And now that I had my plan for basically having an unlimited amount of dope-ass beats, what I’d have to focus on once I got to the yard was getting a recorder so I could record my vocals. However, if absolutely necessary, I knew I could always spit ‘em over the phone.

In March of 2005, I was finally let out of the SHU and transferred to a regular prison yard where you come out with everybody and have access to a lot more shit. When I got there, I looked for some mixtapes to study, but nobody knew what I was talking about. I got on the phone, called a couple people in Sac and told them about the mixtapes. Nobody knew what I was talking about; said it wouldn’t work anyway, it’s bitin’. I couldn’t believe what the fuck I was hearing. Anyhow, I was going to do what I felt was the best thing for me to do. However, regardless of what that was, I first had to find a way to record my vocals. And since I was so eager to start recording so I could get something out there, while I searched for a way to come up on a recording device, I had my people get a digital recorder that connected to their phone line and I started spittin’ my vocals over the phone. It wasn’t the ideal way, but it was a way; and besides, I was certain they could be cleared up and improved at least a little bit.

I only dropped a couple of songs like this before an opportunity came up to purchase a boom box off somebody – one that could be modified to record. I was excited as shit. After it was modified, back in my cell, and I was actually able to record my vocals? I was stupid juiced. I mean, I felt like I was winnin’. It was like back in the day with the karaoke. I’m feelin’ this bidness. It wasn’t no real music studio or anything, but for a man sentenced to die in a prison cell, ya boy finna make it work.

I hustled up some cassette tapes off the yard and started recording all my rhymes. I was worried about the possibility of it getting took before I had an opportunity to drop everything, so I was staying up all night to record my vocals. See, I had to do it at night because it’s too loud during the day and my home-made mic would’ve
picked up all kinds of talking and yelling. So what I’d do is wait until program was completely shut down, then I’d cover my vent with cardboard and plug the spaces around my door by stuffing them with sheets and shit; I had to soundproof the cell. And not really so much to block out background noise, as there wasn’t much of that during the time I’d do it, but so that nobody would hear what I was doing. I had to be real secretive. If somebody found out, the entire yard would know in a day. If the entire yard knew, so would the cops. That obviously was not in my best interest.

The main thing I wanted to do is record as much shit as possible before I got caught, as I knew that, odds were I eventually would. So after I’d spit everything I’d written down (I Admire, Role Model), I started to record a bunch of freestyles. Eventually, a month or two later, the COs did confiscate the boom box. Not because it recorded, as they weren’t aware of that, but because they knew I wasn’t the original owner. In prison, that’s what the COs will do. If an asshole searches your cell and he knows something’s not on your property card, he can take it. That’s what happened. By this time, however, I had a couple albums worth of vocals so I wasn’t really trippin’. Now I just had to break the material out of prison, then go from there.

I found a way to get the recordings out. However, on December 17, 2005, while I was at a visit (and the tapes were elsewhere, on their way out the next week), a guy “confidentially informed” the prison’s crime squad that I had been recording, that the tapes were on their way out, that they may contain criminal information, and that I was conspiring to assault an officer. As soon as I was made aware of what I was being accused of I knew exactly who the informant was. It was my celly; the only person who knew the bidness. The tapes were intercepted, and I was thrown in the hole pending investigation. I knew I would not be in the hole forever, so while I waited for the investigation to take place, I wrote rhymes (The Hole, Persevere). As soon as I was let out of the hole my mission would be to find another recorder, so I wanted to stack up as much material as possible.

Four months after I was put in the hole, the officer investigating the situation came and told me that he didn’t believe I was involved in a conspiracy to assault any officers. He said the rat was full of shit and he deemed him unreliable. The officer was right. As much shit as I’ve done, I wasn’t involved in any kind of conspiracy to assault anybody. I was focused on hip-hop. After he reviewed the recordings, he also decided that they contained no criminal information, and in a crazy twist, put them back in my property and sent them out. However, I was not allowed back on the yard, so I would remain in the hole pending transfer. While I waited for a transfer, and after my people confirmed that they had received the tapes, I contacted my brother and asked him to produce my music. My brother has the ability to make slappin’-ass beats, but he didn’t have all the necessary equipment. So he told me that if I was able to provide him with the
pieces he was missing he would take the care of it for me. I told him about my mixtape plan, and that he can make whatever beats he wanted, but that I was cool with using instrumentals, too. I let him know that I needed him to learn how to time-stretch so that we could change the tempo of instrumentals without changing the pitch, and that what I really wanted him to focus on was giving me dope-ass, detailed, creative mixes. I explained that I just wanted to drop a freestyle mixtape first – something we can release to get a buzz and let people know we were coming. That way, we could get something out ASAP, and it’ll buy us time to produce a doper mixtape, album, or whatever. He, too, said that mixtapes are no good, but that he’d do it.

On June 12, 2006, I was finally transferred out of the hole and to another prison. As planned, my immediate mission was to find some kind of recording device so I could record all the raps I wrote while in the hole. Meanwhile, I was waiting on my brother to complete the freestyle mixtape. However, after a few months he finally told me he wasn’t able to figure out the mixing program, but that if I hired an engineer we’d met while purchasing the studio equipment, he’d work with him – manage the project, drop his features, etc. Now, I didn’t have access to much money, and I’d just spent most of what I had on equipment for my brother’s own, personal set-up, and I also didn’t want to pay for studio time to get something like a freestyle mixtape together, but, I really had no choice if I wanted to get it done. For me, getting it done was the only option; I gave the go-ahead to proceed.

My people connected with the engineer and got a few songs done, but they were done incorrectly. Despite giving very detailed instructions and information, they did not adjust the instrumentals to the same tempo as my vocals. Like I explained earlier, some of the instrumentals needed to be adjusted by way of time-stretching. Without adjusting the tempos of the instrumentals, my rhymes sounded offbeat. As a rapper, what I care most about is my vocals landing on/around the snares properly so my rhymes swag over the beat how I intend them to. I’m not sure why this was so difficult, and why people were unaware of the things I’d been explaining. One would think my information would be outdated because I am locked inside of a prison cell. However, I was studying hip-hop very closely; everybody’s CDs, the mixtapes I’d finally been able to get a hold of; magazines like XXL, and my personal favorite, Scratch; etc.

By this time, the engineer is requesting more money. However, I am refusing to give him another cent until he fixes what I’d already paid for. We go back and forth with this for a little bit and we end up getting nowhere. Eventually the conflict became too big for my people to continue working with him. Now we are back to square one, but with even less money. So, I decided it was time to contact my old-school potna: Riq-Roq. If anybody’s going to take care of me, it’ll be him.

I had someone contact Riq and bring him up-to-date with everything that was going on. See, I had plans to get at him and the rest of the old crew anyway, but I
wanted to complete my first record independent of them, so when I did get at them they’d see I was serious, and I wouldn’t just look like another muthafucka in prison with a great idea. I wanted to step to the table with something. Anyway, Riq agreed to help and he had a local producer who was living in the studio start putting the record together. Meanwhile, I had come up with another recorder, so I was dropping more vocals. In fact, I was watching Weezy, and since he was out there dropping music on such a rapid basis and releasing it via mixtapes, online, etc., in an effort to pattern myself after him to at least some extent (even in an underground, low-budget kind of way), I wrote and dropped 50 new songs in 25 days (Push, Pull, Strive; Street Credibility; Shhh; Home-Made Mic; Get Outta Jail; Suffering; Please Let Me Out; Slayer Tapes; Locked Up). After all, I was back in touch with Riq, so I knew I’d be able to get my songs done. And since people are unaware of whom I am, I was going to get my buzz by outworking and dropping more material than anybody. Especially the other MCs from my region.

Riq’s engineer was doing a great job on the songs he was given and things seemed to be going along well. But, before we were able to fix the stuff the last guy had done and get a copy of everything, Riq’s engineer was evicted from the studio, and all my material was locked inside his computer. Once again, another setback. Only now, I was completely out of money, and the person who was helping me had become tired, frustrated, and discouraged.

Shortly after that, a guy by the name of X-Raided arrived to the yard. About 2-3 months after he got there, a mutual friend introduced us. He has released some music from prison, so I assumed he may have some information and resources that could be beneficial to me. While we were talking he asked me if I had recording capability, and hesitantly, I told him I did. He told me that, in exchange for helping him record his vocals, he could provide resources that I’d had trouble with, as well as get my CDs distributed. I agreed, and about a month after that I moved him into my cell. We got to know each other a little bit and developed a mutual respect while we conducted our business. The end results were...well, you’re just going to have to wait and see.
HOME-MADE MIC

Thee Enemy of the State, the genesis of my scripture
With every rhyme I create, I verbally paint a picture
Y'all do it sick, yeah, but I do it sicker
I do it off of painkillers, Neurotins and liquor

All I have in this life is a home-made mic and a dream
A couple of people, I call 'em my team
A book or 2, a stack of rap magazines
A 13-inch and I escape through the screen, ugh
A bag of chips and 5 Ramens from canteen
A couple of pills, a half a jar of caffeine
A superior rhyme, a rhyme-style supreme
An original concept, an original theme
So much passion, dedication extreme
See what I mean? I just painted that scene

I spit for the D-boys, I spit for the fiends
I spit for the jar, the water and cream
I spit for my moms, I spit for my pops
I spit for the cons doin' life in cell blocks

I spit for the pimps, the players and hoe's
I spit for my riders, I hope y'all feelin' my flows
I'm spittin' the truth when I'm spittin' my game
I spit about my life so I spit about pain

I spit it with fire, I spit it with flame
I spit it so crazy, psycho, insane
I create greatness inside of my brain
Don't y'all wish you could do it the same?

I spit with precision, focus and aim
I spit so dope boy, I spit it cocaine
I'm a voice for the have-nots, I'm one myself
So I spit about struggle, hardly speak upon wealth
I’m a voice for the young kids who got bullied at school
Who thought their only chance was to pack a bigger tool
Pack a bigger tool so they could crack a bigger fool
Never wanted any trouble, now they doin’ life too

I spit for the ghettos, I spit for the slums
I spit for my people, look at what it’s become
They say life’s a gamble, a shake of the dice
I’m from the city of Sacrifice, and this is my price
They say I’m a Killer, put me in prison for life
And if I lived by the gun then will I die by the knife?

If I pray to the Lord, does he even hear what I pray?
’Cause why even say it if nobody hears what I say?
If there’s a way out, God, please show me the way
I can’t remain in this place for life and a day

I need a mental escape so I created my stage
I spit my story and I spit it with rage
I bleed out my pen and set flame to the page
Then I discovered a way to break my rhymes out this cage

All I got in this life is a home-made mic and a dream
So much frustration and pain I wanna scream
All I got in this life is a home-made mic and a dream
See what I mean? Man, I just painted that scene (x2)

ABOUT HOME-MADE MIC . . .

Home-made Mic was specifically written to be the first song of my first mixtape, Thee Enemy of the State; thus, starting off the song with, “Thee Enemy of the State, the genesis of my scripture.” It’s an introduction into what I’m doing, what and who I’m doing it for, and how I’m doing it.

The title Home-made Mic represents what I have to do in order to record my vocals. Whether it be over a prison phone; a smuggled-in cell phone; a tape player that has been altered to have recording capabilities; a real, actual recorder that has been smuggled into the prison; etc.; I am willing to do whatever it takes.
Some ways are better than others obviously, but I don’t always have a choice. I have to take advantage of opportunities that present themselves, when they present themselves, and, if and when possible, create my own opportunities. I think it’s very important for people to understand that I do not get to jump in my car, drive to the studio, and rap/drop my vocals over professional equipment made for the purpose of recording music. I would love to be able to do that again, but, unfortunately, it is not my reality. Instead, I have to create my own ways, and just about every one of those ways consist of doing something that’s not meant/designed for recording song vocals. For example, I recorded Home-made Mic by having a prisoner who was an electrician in his past life convert a tape-deck radio into a recordable device, installing an input out of a headphone jack, and recording my vocals over an old cassette tape. I made the actual microphone out of a pair of headphones, the best ones available to us at the time: Koss CL - 20. True story.

I AIN’T A KILLA

Now, it all started one day when I was chillin’ at the house
Cuttin’ up some A-l Yola, to sack it up, now check it out
I got a call from my cousin, about a lick, in the middle of my sack-up
So I told him I was busy, give me 15 then hit me back up
15 minutes passed and he called me back about the jack move
‘It’s 100 Gs worth of weed and nobody’s home, it’ll be that smooth’
I told him I might check it out, it could be somethin’ I’d like to peep
But first let me go talk to my folks, my folks who lives right up the street
My folks wasn’t home so I decided I’d have to pass
Just then I got a call from my bitch, she needed me to drop off shit at her mama’s pad
I told her, ‘yeah, I can do that, then I’ll stop by your work to get some food’
She said ‘OK, I’ll see you in a few; I love you, baby,’ I love you, too
When I got there I seen whoopity whoop and passed on the info I learned that day
He didn’t say much other than he was gettin’ together with his homies anyway
So now I’m off to the studio to drop these tracks that knock
When my folks who I tried to contact earlier showed up so we can talk
I mentioned the pot and all the 4-1-1 that I had found out about
We decided it wasn’t cool, we was tired, so maybe tomorrow we’d go and check it out
So we finished up our biz at the studio while BSin’ and gettin’ blown
My session was scheduled till 2, so about 2:20 we both headed home

I ain’t a Killa but don’t push me
Revenge is like the sweetest joy next to gettin’ pussy
Picture paragraphs unloaded, the false words that they quoted
Now this the truest shit I’ve ever fuckin’ spoken (x2)

The next mornin’ I got ready then head to my potna’s house about 9:30
We had plans to make some beats so we’d decided to start somewhat early
I walked into his crib wit’ my equipment so we can produce
Then we smoked a cigarette and he told me what he’d read in on the mornin’ news
Somebody had Kicked in a door, oh, ’cause they wanted to take some indo
Some things went wrong, people got shot—a resident and a couple of friends, so
The 2 intruders ran off into the night and got away
The girl survived, thank God, but the friend died later that day
I was surprised by the news, shocked, uh, I didn’t know what to say
My thoughts were cloudly, my mind was trippin’, my brain was in a daze
I told my folks I had some bidness to take care of and I had to go
I told him it was cool to make some beats and let him borrow the ASR-X PRO
I went to go holla at so- and- so, told him ’jump in, man, come on, let’s go
Get in the car, let’s go for a ride, I wanna go talk to my cousin Kelso’
When we got to Kelso’s house I walked up inside of there wit’ whoopty whoop
Then I had to go get somethin’ out my car and I guess he told Kelso the whole scoop
But that doesn’t necessarily mean he told Kelso the whole truth
But that doesn’t necessarily mean he told Kelso the whole truth!
We Kicked back a minute longer then I saw the news, the news for my own
They showed pictures of the victim’s home and what was goin’ on, man
It was time to go, so I got in my old-school and went on my way
And that was the end of events— the end of events, at least for the rest of that day
It was time to go, so I got in my old-school and went on my way
And that was the end of events— the end of events, at least for the rest of that day
I ain’t a Killa but don’t push me
Revenge is like the sweetest joy next to gettin’ pussy
Picture paragraphs unloaded, the false words that they quoted
Now this the truest shit I’ve ever fuckin’ spoken (x2)

February 23rd, 1999
I got a call from my folks Big Hollis, sayin’ that he would like to sign
Me to his label Out of Bounds, but he’s about to go out of town
So, go on and slide through to the studio if I agree to put it down
I did, but 10 minutes after I got home, the police, they did a raid
They found a gun in my closet and I ain’t been free since that day
I did my county time and then I was sent back to V.A.
To do a 1-year violation, but things didn’t happen quite that way
I was set to parole in 2000, May 22nd
But May 19th, they hit me wit’ a warrant for a 187
I’m like, what the fuck is this about, man, that’s what I’d like to know
I was soon to find out it was my ho, her bro, and my own cousin, Kelso
I was taken back to Sac County Jail to prepare for my trial
And you wouldn’t believe all the lies I saw when readin’ my fuckin’ file
My folks don’t have a lot of cash so I was forced to fuck wit’ a P.D.
He blew my defense; November 1st, ’02, the verdict came back as guilty
Now I’m stuck doin’ life without up in this shithole penitentiary
I’m innocent, I ain’t no Killa, just make sure that you don’t tempt me
Now I’m stuck doin’ life without up in this shithole penitentiary
I’m innocent, I ain’t a Killa, just make sure that you don’t tempt me

I ain’t a Killa but don’t push me
Revenge is like the sweetest joy next to gettin’ pussy
Picture paragraphs unloaded, the false words that they quoted
Now this the truest shit I’ve ever fuckin’ spoken (x2)

ABOUT I AIN’T A KILLA . . .

“I Ain’t A Killa” is a true story about the situation for why I am in prison. When it
comes to my case, every single person the D.A.’s investigators spoke to made a
statement about me. Every. Single. Person. The D.A. made whatever deal he could
with people in order to get them to implicate me in this murder. From giving a
self-professed “co-conspirator” county time on a capital murder, to giving another
self-professed “co-conspirator” 19 years for two murders and three attempted
murders (he was out on bail for another murder when arrested for the one I’m in
prison for); from erasing a couple of traffic tickets, to promising one girl that, if she would testify against me, she would not have to testify against her lover. Since I was the only one who did not assist the D.A. by giving him information he thought I should give him, he came at me full force and personally.

For the reasons above, the entire two and a half years I fought my case I was able to do nothing but endure this attack – these verbal slashings, if you will. I felt like a pale-ass Kunta Kinte; I was going to get whipped until I said what the master wanted me to say. However, instead of breaking down, I chose to get whipped. And I did; life without the possibility of parole, two 25-to-lifes, plus… 18 years (or something like that, I lost track).

Because I chose not to cooperate with the D.A., and because my attorney did not put me on the stand to testify in my own defense, I’ve never had an opportunity to explain what truly happened until I wrote this song. This song is my platform, my stand, my testimony; to this day, it is my one and only statement.


SHHH

These days, you gotta watch what you say 'cause mu'fuckas run quick, straight to the D.A. Tell the mu'fucka everything they know And have yo' ass in the county wit' a case fa sho' You'll be stressed out, sick, on the 8th flo' While dude's is fuckin' yo' bitch, straight bashin' ya ho mu'fuckas cold, mane, and that's fa real Have yo' ass in the pen for life so they can get a deal They wasn't facin' nothin' but 45 days But get ready fo' the joint 'cause, boy, you're on your way mu'fuckas act tough but they can't be trusted You told 'em too much and now yo' ass is busted You're mad at ya' self 'cause you should've knew better Your first piece of mail was a 'Dear John' letter Now you sit in a cell, pissed and fucked Like, ain't life a bitch? Man, just my luck
You gotta watch what you say, shhh...
‘Cause mu’fuckas will snitch
You gotta watch what you say, shhh...
‘Cause mu’fuckas will snitch (x2)

The game’s fucked up, trust me dude
I know firsthand, so believe me, it’s true
I got life wit’out parole, I’m a die in a cell
My own cousin lied, he was the first to tell
They hit us wit’ a murder, he was quick to rat
They sent me to the pen and they released him back
All he had to do? Get on the stand and run his trap
He did and he’s been free since, that was that
The story ain’t over, it gets much worse
My own wife turned and, man, that hurt
I thought she’s ridin’ wit’ me till the day we die
The next thing I know she’s on the stand tellin’ lies
I seen my mom at the court, look in her eyes and smiled
She ain’t afraid of shit now, she knows I’m gone for a while
I found out she did it for cash and bigger dicks
What the fuck? Ain’t that some shit

You gotta watch what you say, shhh...
‘Cause mu’fuckas will snitch
You gotta watch what you say, shhh...
‘Cause mu’fuckas will snitch (x2)

There’s a moral to this story; gotta keep your mouth closed
Don’t trust your boys and never trust those hoe’s
Tell either one ya bidness, you’ll be locked down stress’in’
Prayin’ to the lord that ya learned ya lesson
These days rats got a whole new breed
They got ‘em everywhere, like they grow ‘em from seeds
They got some new, improved shit; high tech rats
Believe what you want, player, that’s a fact
The cellblock.net could put you up on game
So log on now, and type in the name
It ain’t guaranteed, some lurk in the cuts
Gatherin’ info and can’t wait to give ya up
So if you ever do dirt, don’t tell a soul
Can’t nobody tell what nobody knows
But if you do tell someone and think they might snitch
Then take ‘em to the outskirts and kill that bitch

You gotta watch what you say, shhh...
‘Cause mu’fuckas will snitch
You gotta watch what you say, shhh...
‘Cause mu’fuckas will snitch (x2)

ABOUT SHHH . . .

I ordered an instrumental CD from a package company so I’d have some beats to write/rap to. One of the beats was that of the “Whisper Song” by Ying Yang Twins.
I’d only heard the actual song a few times before (on the radio), so I had to listen to about 8 bars worth of beat before I recognized it, and as soon as I did, I started whispering words to myself – more in a way to further recognize the beat than to create a song to it.

After whispering some nonsense over about another 8 bars, I started getting the feeling that I was conspiring about something I didn’t want others to hear me talk about – because off all the damn whispering, of course – and that is when it hit me; I immediately knew I was going to have to remix the song (at least for a mixtape or something), call it “Shhh,” and do it from the perspective of me warning those about the dangers of snitches. About 12-16 bars worth of instrumental later I had the hook. I laughed, wrote a note in my rhyme book, and put it up for another day. When I finally got to writing the song, I just told another piece of my story.

ROLE MODEL

Penitentiary life? I fuckin’ love it / If I ever get out, I’ll be sure to come right back ‘cause I could never get enough of it / Homo faggots stuff they dick between their legs and get tits from hormone pills / I’m gonna die in this bitch, a lonely old man with colon cancer. If I can only keep from gettin’ killed / ‘Get between the white lines you pieces of shit’: I hear it every mornin’, 6 AM, on the
way to break fast / And the loser in front of me got mornin’ breath and gas! God, I wish I could just smash and breakfast / I love when my family visits / ‘Cause when we’re done, I get stripped down by these pig sons-a-bitches / Where I lift my balls, bend over and spread my cheeks / I only get to see my people once every three months / But I wish they’d come every week so I can enjoy showin’ another man my saggy sack of nuts / I live in a tiny concrete cell that I share with another fuckin’ man / And every night, when he thinks I’m asleep, he touches himself in forbidden areas with his hand / And just when I come up a little and think just maybe, maybe I can make this work / Some C.O. jerk comes and takes all my shit in a cell search / This is a great life, y’all wanna live it and I can’t blame you / Hopeless, contemplatin’ suicide e’day ’cause of all the bullshit a mu’fucka gotta go through

I got life wit’out parole in CDC / Don’t you wanna grow up to be just like me? / I’m surrounded by homos wit’ HIV / Don’t you wanna grow up to be just like me? / 90% of this community got Hepatitis C / Don’t you wanna grow up to be just like me? / And these dope fiends still run around sharin’ their IVs / I bet you wanna grow up to be just like me!

Role model, number T-76-856 / A convicted Killa y’all look up to, but will never, ever fuck another bitch / Surrounded by rats, all they do is tell / Can’t ever get any sleep ’cause all my faggot-ass neighbor ever do is yell / No money, no pussy, no clothes, no cars / No family, no friends, no hoe’s, just bars / I hear gunshots, early mornin’, they practicin’ to shoot at us / So-called homies stab ya in the back, ain’t no one you can trust / Stanky muthafucks, smellin’ like boodi (fart sound), bologna and beans / Got a faggot eatin’ dinner next to me with titties, long hair, and tight jeans / I watch TV all day, ain’t shit else to do / The Spanish channel might sneak in a stroke or two / Constant disrespect and humiliation from pigs / Hurry! Come join me! Go commit crimes, Kids! / This place is dirty, disrespectful, depressing, and full of disease / I can’t think of a better life for me in my wildest dreams! / Surrounded by dope fiends who constantly try to burn ya / Disrespect and get stabbed in the neck, bitch, that I’ll learn ya / Everybody ‘round here plottin’ on yo’ ass like Big Brotha / Naw, I mean plottin’ on yo’ ass, yeah, just ask Big Bubba / Go steal from yo’ family, join a gang, don’t be a bitch / Hell, you can even have a girlfriend as long as you like her with a big, fat DICK!

I got life wit’out parole in CDC / Don’t you wanna grow up to be just like me? / I’m surrounded by homos wit’ HIV / Don’t you wanna grow up to be just like me? / 90% of this community got Hepatitis C / Don’t you wanna grow up to be just
The first time I heard Eminem’s single “My Name Is” on the radio was a couple of weeks before I was arrested in February of 1999. I was not able to hear the entire Slim Shady LP until years later; probably… early 2005, when I finally got to an institution where we could get CDs. So I was late when it came to hearing the entire record and the song Role Model.

However, when I did finally get to hear it, Role Model connected with me the second it came on. While I like the entire Slim Shady LP, something about the Role Model beat just grabbed me immediately. In fact, it’s still to this day one of my favorite beats of all time.

And my connection with the song didn’t stop there. As soon as Eminem started spittin’ that ridiculous-ass shit… man, I got a feeling I can’t really explain, but that I only get when a song completely has “it” – whatever the fuck “it” is. And then, when the hook came in? Oh, my god; as soon as I heard the hook play through one time, I immediately knew I would be remixing the song, I knew what the concept would be, and I had my entire hook figured out. Some things are just so right there’s nothing to even think about. I put the idea/hook in my arsenal knowing I’d surely get to it once time permitted itself.

Approximately 6 minutes later, when I was finally able to work on this song, when I had to work on this song because the concept consumed me to the point where my OCD was in full effect and it was driving me crazy to not write what my brain was formulating, the words basically wrote themselves. It’s truth, so it was very easy. There was nothing to really create or think too hard about, it’s just something I had to take the time out to do.

A lot of people in the streets look up to the prison culture, as even I did at one time; I was fooled by the illusion. However, once I learned the truth and saw how much of a joke it all is, I was very disappointed. That disappointment led me to become disgusted, and also disappointed in others who are still being fooled by the illusion, the fantasy, yet still have a chance to make certain adjustments before it’s too late – something I no longer have the ability to do – but choose not to because they’d rather be duped. I’ve had a strong desire for revealing the truth for quite some time, but the truth is so ridiculous I wasn’t sure how I was going to go about doing so. Then, Eminem provided me with a way, an opportunity, an idea I could not ignore, the second I heard Role Model.

like me? / And these dope fiends still run around sharin’ their IVs / I bet you wanna grow up to be just like me!

ABOUT ROLE MODEL . . .

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And my connection with the song didn’t stop there. As soon as Eminem started spittin’ that ridiculous-ass shit… man, I got a feeling I can’t really explain, but that I only get when a song completely has “it” – whatever the fuck “it” is. And then, when the hook came in? Oh, my god; as soon as I heard the hook play through one time, I immediately knew I would be remixing the song, I knew what the concept would be, and I had my entire hook figured out. Some things are just so right there’s nothing to even think about. I put the idea/hook in my arsenal knowing I’d surely get to it once time permitted itself.

Approximately 6 minutes later, when I was finally able to work on this song, when I had to work on this song because the concept consumed me to the point where my OCD was in full effect and it was driving me crazy to not write what my brain was formulating, the words basically wrote themselves. It’s truth, so it was very easy. There was nothing to really create or think too hard about, it’s just something I had to take the time out to do.

A lot of people in the streets look up to the prison culture, as even I did at one time; I was fooled by the illusion. However, once I learned the truth and saw how much of a joke it all is, I was very disappointed. That disappointment led me to become disgusted, and also disappointed in others who are still being fooled by the illusion, the fantasy, yet still have a chance to make certain adjustments before it’s too late – something I no longer have the ability to do – but choose not to because they’d rather be duped. I’ve had a strong desire for revealing the truth for quite some time, but the truth is so ridiculous I wasn’t sure how I was going to go about doing so. Then, Eminem provided me with a way, an opportunity, an idea I could not ignore, the second I heard Role Model.
DOG EAT DOG

It’s a dog eat dog when trapped up in a cage
Watch your neck when Thee Enemigo explodes up in a rage
You get stabbed in the back by the ones that you love
In a game purely motivated by money and drugs
Machiavellian techniques, deception in its best
Stab the Knife in your back so deep, the blade, it rips out your chest
You lived by the gun and now you’ll die by the Knife
If you provoke Thee Enemy to come then that is your life
Thou shall not fuck with me, ain’t no time for games
Me, myself, and I; the 3 bosses of the gang
Tamper with the tar and Thee Enemigo God will roam
Concentrate on my bars, the words ‘ll penetrate your dome
Thee Enemigo is Known to captivate you in zone
Now feel your face split as this pit crush bone
Thee Enemigo is Known to captivate you in a zone
Now feel your face split as this pit crush bone

It’s a dog eat dog and that’s the game in truth
You get stabbed in the back by your own fucking crew
Penitentiary condemned, confined to a cell
Trapped in a cage and doing life in hell (x2)

Last time I saw my mama she shot some game my way
She said, ‘Son, just remember every dog has their day
What goes around comes around; now, believe when I say
Those who tamper with the Piper, will in time pay
Nice guys finish last, so push, pull, strive
Show no weakness, only the strong survive
Grab the game by the balls if you expect to stay alive
Watch your front, watch your back, and watch your side
If you want to be at the top you got to take your spot
Be shrewd, hustle hard, can't stop, don't stop
I won't stop, mama, I'm taking over the game
Sabotaging my enemies, dog-eat-dog gone insane
It's the game of the cutthroat, I draw the shank and you get smoked
I keep a smile on my face but it's far from a joke
Backstabbers, toe taggers, and smiling faces
Get used as a stepping stone so I can get places

It's a dog-eat-dog and that's the game in truth
You get stabbed in the back by your own fucking crew
Penitentiary condemned, confined to a cell
Trapped in a cage and doing life in hell (x2)

I ain't going out punk, I stay strapped with crude steal
Scrap with fools or kill...
I'm living the shit I rap in my lyrics, dude, for real
... You muthafuckas know the deal
They say that paybacks are a bitch, now how does this feel?
When every drop of your blood, Thee Enemigo spill
It's a dog-eat-dog world, and this dog is quick to bite
Quick to run up on you poodles, draw and stick the knife
This dog is quick to fight, this dog is quick to fight
Lock jaws on your throat, shake and take your life
Never did love you cats, I'm a dog till I die
Never hesitate, and I never ask why
Never ever ask no questions when it's time to ride
I got a click of pits, and they're by my side
And we're gonna fight till the end of the war
Until you bitches don't want no more
Throw me in the pit and let me fight till death
And may the best dog take the last breath
I said, throw me in the pit and let me fight till death
And may the best dog take the last breath

ABOUT DOG EAT DOG . . .

Most people are aware that prison is a pretty dangerous place to be, but I'm not sure people understand — unless they've been here, of course — just how treacherous and cutthroat it actually is. There's a glorification of this culture, especially by younger men who look for support from a gang or somewhere in the
streets, but I promise you it is not what it’s made out to be. There is no loyalty; it’s not about “homies” or “family”; none of that is true. It is an illusion. It is a game, like chess, and when you’re able to serve a purpose in the game you will be used to serve that purpose. However, once you can no longer serve that purpose, you will be discarded. Do not be arrogant and think that this does not apply to you, because it does.

The way I usually explain the prison “game” to people who have not been here is by using the TV show “Big Brother.” Prison is exactly like Big Brother, only, when you get voted out, you don’t get to grab your bag and go have a chat with Julie Chen. Instead, you get whacked – stabbed, sliced, or whatever. You are only valuable to your “alliance” (gang, clique, crew, etc.) if, when, and while you can further their game, not yours.

To live in this dog-eat-dog society and play this game should never be one’s ambition. There is not a $500,000 prize at the end. A win in this game simply means you are not killed. There are better games to play than a game with no reward, only possible and likely consequence. That’s like playing Russian Roulette with only one of two outcomes: you shoot yourself and die; or, you don’t shoot yourself and that is your reward. And if you are wondering why I am playing this game; it is not because I want to, it is because I did not know everything I am telling you when I signed up. I was fooled by the illusion.

Along with the words I’ve written here, Dog Eat Dog is the most accurate depiction of the prison game you will ever get. And if anybody tells you differently, I promise it is only because they still see you as possibly being valuable to their game, and they want to block you from the truth so that you can continue to serve their purpose.

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**PLEASE LET ME OUT**

Locked in a prison cell, a rage inside me
Trapped in a cage within a cage - my body
Somebody get me out, fire and flame inside me
A blunt and a beat, release the pain inside me
I can only do so much, these walls make limits
I’m capable of more than what I can do up in it
Somebody please help me, I can’t take this shit
Lord set me free, if you even bother listenin’
All I wanna do, get out and make music
But jus’ like appeals, I’m pro’ly gonna lose it
They never came with a deal, plus I didn’t do it
This ain’t the life I wanna live, this part I didn’t choose it
Give me one mo’ chance, it’s all that I need
My grandma prays daily so, Lord, you Know me
Anxiety attacks, I suffocate and can’t breathe
I rap and I smoke trees till my lungs bleed

I’m sufferin’ inside, God I can’t take it
Give me a mic and a blunt, I swear to God I’ll blaze it
Put me on the streets, this rap game I’ll save it
Eat up any MC, jus’ point him out and name ‘im
I’ll do the shit you never seen, magical amazement
Everything that I bring, the others don’t contain it
I’m like a sleeping giant, and you don’t wanna wake it
I’ll go into ya studio, spit and blood stain it
I got so much to offer to the game, fa real
I’m one of the best ever, that’s how I truly feel
Look what I manage from a cell, independent, no deal
What’s the chances of this shit? My odds’re slim to nil!
I live off determination, hunger and will
I ain’t got no mill, in fact, very little skrill
I ain’t got no diamonds, no chain and no grill
All I got is a recorder, a beat tape and Neurotin pill

My head’s gonna explode, mama, they won’t let me out-a here
Been trapped inside a cell for over 14 years
I Know you mean well and I know your heart is pure
But I’m tired of fuckin’ hearin’ that my time is comin’ near
I’m realistic by nature so I see things clearer
And a man with no hope is the reflection in my mirror
A pen and a paper, that’s how I shed my tears
And to die without makin’ it, that’s my biggest fear
I don’t Know what to do, it’s Killin’ me inside
My purpose is a vocal booth, a beat and a mic
Instead they got me looked up, locked up for life
ABOUT PLEASE LET ME OUT . . .

My biggest fear is to die without ever having accomplished what I feel I must accomplish before I die. For the most part, I work on my rhymes, books and other, related projects, all day, every day, and I work harder than anybody I know. However, because I am locked inside of a prison cell, I have many, many, many restrictions and roadblocks, and sometimes being able to accomplish what should be the simplest of things – things people who are free do daily without even giving any thought to it – such as going on line and looking up a small piece of information or getting in touch with someone via phone call, can take me many weeks or months, sometimes even years. I have to work 1,000-times harder than those who are free, just to accomplish 1% of the same outcome. All of this causes an unbelievable amount of frustration, and sometimes even panic. I feel a constant sense of pressure to achieve and I am always anxious. All of these emotions combined take a physical toll on my body. I can literally feel it; it affects my health.

“Please Let Me Out” explains how I truly feel inside, each and every day, and how I plead to God for mercy, to relieve me of my constant feeling of frustration and panic, by way of setting me free from prison so I can feed my starving desire, or, if necessary, death. That’s how serious I am about this. For me, this is much deeper than rap.

PUSH, PULL, STRIVE

Have you ever heard - heard the word tenacious?
I won’t stop despite resistance I’m faced with
I won’t give up despite the prisons I’m placed in
Mike Enemigo and I’m havin’ my way, shit
I ain’t ever been one to fall off and quit, mane
I’m real, real serious when it comes to my spit, mane
I’m real, real serious when it comes to my shit, mane
Wha-d-y’all think, my ma’ ain’t raised no bitch, mane
And I ain’t rich, so ain’t no time to rest
There'll be enough of that shit upon my death
So I'm - a Keep on fightin', push on and press
Overcome any struggle, hardship or test
Y'all gives a fuck? I couldn't give a fuck less
So you can miss Enemigo wit' disruptive mess
And y'all know it's true, so it's time to confess
F*ck what you're goin' thorough, I ain't impressed, man
Against all odds in this life of mine
Me against the world in a life of crime
Life without parole, that's a life of time
Yet I still find ways to drop my rhymes

Push, pull, strive...
I do what I gotta do, just to survive
Push, pull, strive...
I'll never give up, man, I'll fight till I die (x2)

Have you ever heard - heard the word tenacious?
I won't stop despite resistance I'm faced with
I won't give up despite the prisons I'm placed in
Mike Enemigo and I'm havin' my way, shit
If there was a time to quit, the time is now
But I truly can't quit, 'cause I don't know how
I want it too bad, and that's the truth
And by any means needed I'm - a get it, too
All I got left in life are the words I spit
And I'm way too nice wit' the words I kick
When it comes to chasin' money, got a passion for it
So I would rather die before I quit
I'm way too determined to fail at this
So fuck the prison system, this cell ain't shit
I still find ways to reveal this shit
So until the day I die I'll prevail this shit
I'll never, ever give up, I'm loyal to the grind
I admit because of prison things can take a little time
But what can you expect from a man confined?
I just use the struggle to strengthen my mind

Push, pull, strive...
I do what I gotta do, just to survive
Push, pull, strive...
I’ll never give up, man, I’ll fight till I die (x2)

ABOUT PUSH, PULL, STRIVE . . .

I’m an extremely dedicated, determined, and tenacious man. I zero in on what I want to do and I do it. If one thing doesn’t work, I’ll try something else; if the front door’s closed, I’ll check the back door; if that doesn’t work, I’ll get in through a window – even if I gotta break it. I don’t give a fuck about prison cells, prison bars, concrete walls, razor wire, haters, bitch-asses, etc. – none of that. One way or another, ya boy finna get it. Period. Get rich or die tryin’ is a religion to me, I live by it faithfully, and that’s what this songs about; it’s my motivational anthem.

I Admire

As I bust this rap on a stolen Dre beat
And as I smoke this crack with DMX on a dark street
As I come up with a plan how I can make a hun’ed grand
I must take a stand and let y’al know who the fuck I am
So what I decide to do is use yo’ tactics against you
 ‘Cause just like you, Mike Enemigo do what he gotta do
So I went to the sto’e and ate up Eminem that I bought for 50 cent
Washed it down with my O.E. - 40, one - one sip and made a good dent
I Twista the cap off of my 40 Water
Now I’m off to the Crack House and I’m lookin’ for a slaughter
I got a verse from Ja Rule that I’ma put on a track
I Got with Curtis Jackson, and if you don’t like that
You can jack these, son; Beyonce got a big booty
And Jay got a big lips, and I wonder who’s better at workin’
A big . . .bowl of grits, and I’m an Outcast
And if I ever see 3 Thou I’ma knock ’im out fast
And I don’t be givin’ a fuck about all that goddamn Ludacris talk
I throw up the west coast and the east coast, put on my red chucks while I C-Walk
Brotha Lynch Hung is Siccomade and he makes me sick
I love the way his bitch is lickin’ on the zig-zag like a dick
Meanwhile, C-Bo, the bald head nut
...Stuck his finger in his butt
Kanye West was the Ref and in one corner was Dame Dash
In the other it was Jigga so we can see who can Kick whose ass
Pulled out my blade and put a scar on Brad’s face
Sold my guns to T.I., now he got a case
And I’m sorry y’all, I don’t mean to offend The Game
But hey, Snoop, what’s my mu’fuckin’ name?

This is what I got to say about those that I Admire
‘Cause I’m an asshole, a jerk, and a liar
I’m a loser, a lowlife, I’m broke and I need attention
So I get it at the expense of those that I mention (x2)

Hell naw, I don’t give a shit about nobody but myself
See, I’m Kurupt and I must get wealth
And A Milli ain’t no freestyle up off the top of the brain
I know ‘cause I wrote it, for I’m the ghostwriter for Lil Wayne
I went out the other night and I seen Suge Knight
Get up out - a his Jag, and he was dressed in drag
I heard he had a lil too much suge in his tank, get it?
Are you stupid? Why do you think Sugar Bear got Knocked on his ass?
Ciara looks so good but she won’t accept my collect calls
Pictures of her on my cell walls, stare and fondle on my balls
And Mariah, I’m obsessed, so please write me back
We got a whole lot in common; both depressed and I take Prozac
And who’s Mike Jones? Fuck Mike Jones
Who’s Mike Enemigo, that’s what you wanna know
And Aint I told you befo’e? I’m the one that took ya ho
Taught Drake how to mixtape and jacked Jeezy for his snow
And if you don’t like it, you can Jadakiss my ass
And Chris Bridges, blow it out yo’ ass
Took base rock from Mess, cooked crack from Fat Joe
Spoke about it in a rap, geah, and now I’m making dough

This is what I got to say about those that I Admire
‘Cause I’m an asshole, a jerk, and a liar
I’m a loser, a lowlife, I’m broke and I need attention
So I get it at the expense of those that I mention (x2)

1-1-1 Busta Rhymes, freestyle
‘Cause I’m too damn lazy to write my lines, meanwhile
Me Mike Enemy so me talk shit all the time
They like ‘oh- oh- oh no he di’n’t, is he said he is out of his goddamn mind?’
The answer is yes, and for the record I got some shit to say, see
I bonked Beyonce, Befo’e Jay-Z
I shacked Mariah way befo’e Em
So as far as I’m concerned, fuck her and fuck him
I shot 50 cent and I robbed Ja Rule
And what I wanna know is, what the fuck are you gonna do?
One of my favorite rappers, Hitman, got hit man
But what do you really think that I really give a goddamn?
I don’t give a shit about nobody
So fuck the radio, MTV, and magazines
‘Cause aint none of ’em gonna do shit for me
That’s the way it be when you’re Mike Enemy
Fuck the dummy recording this song – oh, wait, that’s me
Then fuck the engineer and this stupid CD
Jay can have Beyonce ‘cause I just want Sasha
And Bliz was takin’ about me, punk, ’cause I shot ya
Nas lied, hip-hop ain’t dead, just went to the pen
I am hip-hop, I give you my word like San Quinn
I’ve been strung out on thizz and herion
Smuggled in by the ass of my wife, Kim Kardashian
I hit below the belt ‘cause I’m Thee Enemigo
They like, ‘Not even Slim Shady gone this low befo’e!’
I break all the rules, no need to count sixteen bars
I write till I’m done then I freestyle from behind bars
If you wanna beef, punk, then go on and beef with me
‘Cause I’m your biggest fan and I need the publicity
How else do you expect me to sell a CD
From CD, you big dummy?
I’m runnin’ the underground just like I am my mouth, and I don’t care
I’m the King of the East and the South and I never even been there!

This is what I got to say about those that I Admire
“Cause I’m an asshole, a jerk, and a liar
I’m a loser, a lowlife, I’m broke and I need attention
So I get it at the expense of those that I mention (x2)

ABOUT I ADMIRE . . .

Believe it or not, I Admire was written all the way back in 2005. Like usual, I was paying real close attention to Hip-Hop and everything that was going on, and at the time it seemed that (not sure if they were real or not) everybody had some sort of beef. The industry would talk about how exciting Hip-Hop beefs are and how much publicity they bring to the artists involved, etc. While that’s true, I had started to see through it all and view it as nothing more than an overused gimmick that quickly became obvious and corny.

Personally, I didn’t have a beef with anybody, but I thought it would be fun to spoof the whole thing by openly creating (fake) beefs with those whom I actually like, respect and admire. I know it sounds like I’m talking a lot of shit, and it’s supposed to, but if you listen carefully to the details of what I’m saying in the chorus, you will see that it’s actually all a big play on words – a big spoof. This is the song I wanted to release first because: 1) my name Enemigo means enemy in Spanish and I felt a song that would be perceived as me talking/starting shit would be a good introduction; 2) although I am unknown and people are unfamiliar with me, the song is about people who most of those listening would likely be very familiar with, even fans of. Over time some of the things I mentioned were no longer relevant, so I had to re-edit and re-spit this song about 3-4 different times over the years.

Now, despite the fact that the things I say in this song may just seem like a bunch of basic shit talking, it’s actually very crafty; to the point where only true hip-hop and pop culture fans, as well as insiders and professionals, will fully understand. Because of that, I’m going to break everything down for you…

As I bust this rap on a stolen Dre beat: I was originally going to use the beat to Eminem’s Rainman song, which was produced by Dr. Dre.

As I smoke this crack with DMX on a dark street: DMX has had several public battles over the years, including one of alleged crack use.

As I come up with a plan how I can make a hun’ed grand / I must take a stand and let y’all know who the fuck I am / So what I decide to do is use yo’ own tactics against you / ‘Cause just like you, Mike Enemigo do what he gotta do: This
describes my thought/plot process on how I’m going to become successful and known, and how I’m willing to do whatever it takes to achieve my objectives.

So I went to the sto’e and ate up Eminem that I bought for 50 Cent: I knew that, because I am not black, and especially with the craziness of this song and the use of the Rainman beat, the first person people would likely try to compare me to, whether in a good or bad way, is Eminem. So I immediately wanted to eat him up (like a bag of M&Ms, and microphoncially) and get him out the way. I bought him for 50 Cent, which, as we all know, is also the name of his artist.

Washed it down with my O.E.–40, one-one sip and made a good dent: O.E.–40 is Old English liquor plus E-40. E-40 is a rapper from Nor Cal who I’ve admired and respected for many years.

I Twista the cap off of my 40 Water: Twista is one of my favorite rappers ever. Super dope. 40 Water is another name for E-40 goes by.

Now I’m off to the Crack House and I’m lookin for a slaughter: The Crack House is the name of Murder Inc.’s music studio. They call it “The Crack House” because it’s where they make “hits.”

I got a verse from Ja Rule that I’ma put on a track / I Got with Curtis Jackson, and if you don’t like that / You can jack these, son: Curtis Jackson is 50 Cent, whom we all know has had a very public beef with Ja Rule. I’m saying I got a verse from each of them and I’m going to feature them both on a song of mine. The same song.

Beyonce got a big booty / And Jay got a big lips, And I wonder who’s better at workin’ / A big… bowl of grits: I’ve been sprung on Beyoncé since day one – back when Destiny’s Child first came out and nobody was certain how to pronounce her name correctly. Jay? He’s one of my biggest influences of all time. All around, it don’t get much better than Jay-Z. I put a pause after “I wonder who’s better at workin’ a big…” because the obvious word most people would assume I’d say is dick. However, I wanted to fuck you all up by saying grits, instead.

I’m an Outcast / And if I ever see 3 Thou I’ma knock ‘im out fast: I’m saying that I’m an outcast, and if I ever see 3 Thou – Andre 3000, half of the rap duo Outcast, and one of the dopest MCs of all time – I’ma knock him out.

I don’t be givin’ a fuck about all that goddamn Ludacris talk / I throw up the west coast and the east coast, put on my red chucks while I C-Walk: Ludacris is dope, and throwing up the west coast and east coast while wearing red chucks and C-Waking is just a fuckin’ ludicrous thing to do.
Brotha Lynch Hung is Siccmade and he makes me sick / I love the way his bitch is lickin’ on the zig-zag like a dick: Lynch is a rapper out of my city, Sacramento, and his music has been very influential in me developing my own style over the years. Before I had my own “rap identity,” when I first started rapping, I tried to rap like him – as did everyone from Sacramento and the surrounding cities. Now he’s with Tech N9ne’s Strange Music and his label (Lynch’s) is called Made Sicc. However, his label used to be called Siccmade.

Meanwhile, C-Bo, the bald head nut / ...Stuck his finger in his butt: C-Bo is another factor out of Sacramento, and one of the oldest-known rappers from my city. He often refers to himself as “the bald head nut.” I don’t think he sticks his finger in his butt, but it sounds funny as hell, huh?

Kanye West was the ref and in one corner was Dame Dash / In the other it was Jigga so we can see who can kick whose ass: Dame Dash is one of the partners Jay-Z started Roc-a-fella Records with. They had a very public falling out years back; it was disappointing to Roc-a-fella fans. Kanye West was their artist – Roc-a-fella’s – but when Jay and Dame split he went with Jay, whom he was closer to.

Pulled out my blade and put a scar on Brad’s face: The rapper Scarface’s real name is Brad Jordan.

Sold my guns to T.I., now he got a case: T.I. got caught with heat and went to prison.

And I’m sorry y’all, I don’t mean to offend The Game: Rapper The Game is a west coast factor. I’m also saying the game as in “the rap game” – I don’t mean to disrespect it with this rhyme.

But hey, Snoop, what’s my mu’fuckin’ name?: One of Snoop’s hits from back in the day, a song I used to slap, (and still will), is called “What’s My Name?” And I’m saying “What’s my muthafuckin’ name” as in, I’m Mike Enemigo (Mike, your microphone enemy), what do you expect other that for me to go at everybody, ya know?

Hell naw, I don’t give a shit about nobody but myself / See, I’m Kurupt and I must get wealth: Kurupt was one of my favorite rappers back when The Chronic, Doggystyle, Dogg Food, and Kuruption came out. He was spittin’ some of the hardest shit ever, and it – especially the song “New York, New York,” which is still, even to this day one of the dopest songs ever made – influenced me to start spittin’ that “lyrical” shit.
And A Milli ain’t no freestyle up off the top of the brain / I know ‘cause I wrote it, for I’m the ghostwriter for Lil Wayne: It’s said Wheezy freestyles all his shit. However, Gillie the Kid claims to’ve written a large portion of his – Weezy’s – catalog. So, to settle the dispute, I’m letting you know that I’m Weezy’s ghostwriter – that all those dope punch lines come from my ink pen.

I went out the other night and I seen Suge Knight / Get up out-a his Jag, and he was dressed in drag / I heard he had a lil too much suge in his tank, get it? / Are you stupid? Why do you think Sugar Bear got knocked on his ass?: I’ve never seen Suge in drag, but it sounds funny. A big ol’ beast with a bald head and a beard in woman’s clothing? Funny shit, ya know? Anyway, in my opinion, Suge is a beast; one of the original bosses. For those of you who don’t know, Suge used to play football and “Sugar Bear” was/is his full nickname.

Ciara looks so good but she won’t accept my collect calls / Pictures of her on my cell walls, stare and fondle on my balls: I love Ciara, she’s super bad. What more needs to be said?

And Mariah, I’m obsessed, so please write me back / We got a whole lot in common; both depressed and take Prozac: Mariah is one of my original crushes from back in the day. She did the song about Eminem called “Obsessed,” remember? I’m saying I’m obsessed. We all know Mariah had a pretty bad emotional breakdown years ago. It’s said she was depressed, was taking Prozac, etc. Well, me too! Maybe we can get together and go to therapy or something, ya know?

And who’s Mike Jones? Fuck Mike Jones / Who’s Mike Enemigo, that’s what you wanna know: We all remember Mike Jones’ catchphrase “Who’s Mike Jones?” Well, since my name is Mike too, I’m saying that Who’s Mike Enemigo is the important question.

And aint I told you befo’e? I’m the one that took ya ho / Taught Drake how to mixtape and jacked Jeezy for his snow: I’m taking credit for taking your ho; teaching Drake how to mixtape, as he is known for catching his huge buzz by delivering an awesome mixtape; and jackin’ Jeezy for his “snow,” as the whole “Snowman” thing was/is Jeezy’s movement.

And if you don’t like it, you can Jadakiss my ass: Jadakiss is a dope rapper. I’m just playing with his name a little bit.

And Chris Bridges, blow it out yo’ ass: Chris Bridges is Ludacris’ real name and he has a song called “Blow It Out Yo’ Ass.”
Took base rock from Mess: Messy Marv has a song called “Base Rock Cavi” that’s super slappin’.

Cooked crack from Fat Joe: Fat Joe often refers to himself as Joey Crack.

Spoke about it in a rap, geah, and now I’m making dough: This is saying that my plan to speak on what I “did” to Messy Marv and Fat Joe, in a rap, was a good decision – I’m now successful and making money.

I-I-I Busta Rhymes, freestyle / ‘Cause I’m too damn lazy to write my lines, meanwhile: Busta Rhymes is one of the dopest rhyme spitters ever. His patterns are fuckin’ nuts; he’s definitely one of the most underrated MCs in the game. Anyway, I freestyled the third verse and did a little wordplay with Busta’s name.

Me Mike Enemy so me talk shit all the time / They like ‘oh-oh-oh no he di’n’t; is he said he is out of his goddamn mind?: This is referring to my “audacity” to even say the shit I’m saying in this song.

The answer is yes; and for the record, I got some shit to say / See, I boinked Beyonce befo’e Jay-Z: I’m just talking further shit by saying I was fucking Beyonce before Jay; which, in my mind, I was (lol).

I shacked Mariah way, way befo’ Em’ / So as far as I’m concerned, fuck her and fuck him: Eminem was doing a lot of talking a few years back about how he fucked Mariah, which is what her song “Obsessed” is actually a response to. I don’t know what’s true and what’s not, but I’m basically saying I’ve already been through Mariah, so fuck what both of ‘em are going through.

I shot 50 Cent and I robbed Ja Rule / And what I wanna know is, what the fuck are you gonna do?: As I mentioned earlier, we all know about Ja and 50’s very public beef. Well, there’s been a lot of speculation about what really started it all – Ja was shooting a video in New York and snubbed a then unknown 50 Cent who tried to talk to him; Ja and 50 fist-fought in a hotel lobby; somebody from 50’s camp robbed Ja; Ja’s connected with Supreme and them, who 50 accuses of being behind him being shot 9 times; etc., etc. Who knows what really happened; however, I’m sayin’ I’m the one that did it all – shot 50 and robbed Ja.

One of my favorite rappers, Hitman, got hit, man / But do you really think that I really give a goddamn?: I’ve always thought that Hitman, the one who’s on Dre’s Chronic 2001, is super dope. I could never understand why he hasn’t done much bigger things than what he has. His sound/style is the epitome of West Coast Gangsta Rap. He’s definitely another guy who’s underrated. But besides that,
here I’m just doing a little wordplay with his name, and acknowledging him as one of the MCs I respect.

I don’t give a shit about nobody / So fuck the radio, MTV and magazines / ‘Cause ain’t none of ‘em gonna do shit for me / That’s the way it be when you’re Mike Enemy / So fuck the dummy recording this song... Oh, wait, that’s me / Then fuck the engineer and this stupid CD: Here I’m just wildin’ out sayin’ fuck everybody since I know nobody’s going to help me anyway, because of who I am – a guy waiting to die in prison, etc. However, in truth, these are actually the people who can help me the most, I need help from them in order to really pull anything off.

Jay can have Beyonce, ‘cause I just want Sasha: Sasha is Beyonce’s alter ego – the freaky one she lets out on stage. If you pay attention to Beyonce in her interviews and things, she comes off real humble, and even a bit reserved. However, on stage she lets it all out – with the booty shakin’, grindin’, etc.; that’s Sasha. I’m saying Jay can have the humble, reserved Beyonce, I’ll take Sasha.

And BIG was talkin’ about me, punk, cause I shot ya: BIG did the song “Who shot ya?” remember?

Nas lied, hip-hop ain’t dead, just went to the pen / I am hip-hop, I give you my word like San Quinn: Nas has been a huge influence on me. He’s a dope-ass MC; one of the best of all time. Anyway, he had the whole “hip-hop is dead” thing going on, and I’m saying he lied; that I am hip-hop, I’m not dead, I’m just in prison. And San Quinn is easily one of my top 5 Northern Cali rappers. He’s raw. And a few years back he dropped the CD “I Give You My Word,” which is what solidified me as a Quinn fan.

I’ve been strung out on thizz and heroin / Smuggled in by the ass of my wife, Kim Karadashian: Let’s face it, Kim is bad. And it’s no secret that the booty is proper. Well, in prison, we often smuggle drugs and shit in through our assholes. That’s just what we gotta do. And who better to have as a smuggler, a mule, than Kim, with that big ol’ thang she’s workin’ wit’? I’m jus’ sayin’.

I hit below the belt ‘cause I’m Thee Enemigo / They like, ‘not even Slim Shady’s gone this low befo’e’: I’m the “Enemy,” so you should except me to get dirty. In fact, even Slim Shady, someone who’s known to hold no punches, don’t get as grimy as I do when I’m atcha.

I break all the rules, no need to count 16 bars / I write till I’m done then I freestyle from behind these bars: This is me saying I’m so out of control, so rebellious, that I don’t conform to the standard verse format of 16 bars, as demonstrated by this verse. Instead, I write a little bit and freestyle the rest, all from behind prison bars.
If you wanna beef, punk, then beef with me / 'Cause I’m your biggest fan and I
need the publicity / How else do you expect me to sell a CD / From CDC, you big
dummy?: This is almost the end of the song, so I wanted to start concluding my
point – that if anyone wants to beef, then to beef with me ‘cause I need all the help
I can get. I’m in prison; selling CDs would not be easy, so if people will beef with
me, cool; I need the help. I mean, if that’s what they wanna do anyway, ya know?

I’m runnin’ the underground like I am my mouth and I don’t care / ‘Cause I’m the
king of the East and the South and I never even been there: Most of the “beefs”
seem to be over who’s the king of the South, or who’s the king of the East, etc.,
etc. I conclude the song by saying, despite never having even been there, I’m the
king of both the South and the East.

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**THE HOLE**

The hole is so to’e up, man, mu’fuckas don’t even know
Sitting around all day hoping for a blemished pack of lunch cookies
With 5 instead of 4, but that ain’t the worst of it though
My razor sharp fade done somehow turned into a ‘fro
My beard is full-grown and I’m looking like the Taliban
’Cause these safety razors don’t work worth a god damn
Shirt and boxers so dingy, ya boy is lookin’ like a bum
Mattress so hard and lumpy, dude, my back is numb
Getting sent to the hole is like going to jail when you’re in jail
And by the time that you get out you’ll be looking sick, skinny and pale
24-hours-a-day wit’ another man, that ain’t the bidness
I’m about to go insane and lose my brain, God as my witness
There ain’t nothin’ to do but write and wait for the next meal
Looks like another rough night ‘cause the bologna’s only half killed
Fillin’ up on dirty water so my stomach don’t touch my spine
Stuck in the hole, man, it’s a fucked up way to do time
2 sheets of paper, a state envelope and I pen
Don’t even know if God exists but, Lord, I’m sorry for my sins
Freestylin’ all day, it’s a little exercise for the brain
Occasionally landing yourself in the hole is inevitable when you’re doing time in an upper-level security prison such as a California level 4. You only have so much control over what goes on around you, and if someone else decides to get things crackin’, often times you have little choice but to participate. I mean, if somebody decides to attack you personally, you obviously have to defend yourself. If someone decides to attack one of your boys, and especially if you’re there, you don’t have much choice but to assist him – as you should, because he would probably do the same for you. And if someone steals something you own, burns you in a deal you’ve made or disrespects you in a way that you cannot let slide, it is crucial – a must – that you deal with the situation in a way that’s appropriate according to the standards and expectations of prison’s society. If you don’t, and your fellow prisoners see that, they will consider you weak and continue to victimize you. Prisons are full of predators – especially when you get to the upper-levels, which are full of hopeless have-nots, most of whom will die in prison, and feel as if they have nothing to lose.
I am familiar with doing time in the hole. I have done just as much of my time in the hole as I have out of the hole. In fact, as I write these very words I am in the hole – CCI’s 4A SHU, to be specific. I am currently in here because I have been accused and found guilty of attempting to kill someone who was once my friend. I don’t want to get too deep into details at this time but, basically, a riot broke out on the yard and a one-time friend of mine was stabbed and sliced several times, then flown out in a helicopter. I am one of the two guys he said did it.

Anyway, I wrote the lyrics to this song back in 2006 while I was in the hole in a different prison, for an entirely different reason. I wanted to document what being in the hole is like, so I wrote about my experience, as I was living it. If you read the words I wrote, you will experience an accurate description of what it’s truly like to do time in the hole. In fact, I have the vocals of this song recorded, and if I am ever able to get it produced properly, I plan to have the beat made to where it sounds like someone’s making a drumbeat by banging on a cell door or locker and beatboxing the high-hats, bassline, melody, etc., as that’s how we make our beats in the hole – we beat on lockers or whatever else sounds like drums. I want to make it sound live; to give you a complete and authentic experience. Stay tuned.

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**SUFFERING (A LETTER TO MY MAMA)**

Prison poses a problem for my planted seed
More determined than ever for the growth of my tree
Depression, dirt, devastate; that there is 3 Ds
Lyrical disease, mama, bare with me please

I got a blueprint for over 500 Gs
Your son is a winner, I just need you to believe
I was born to do this till I d-i-e
So I be M.C. till the final breath of me

Scared to death for a minute, lost my inspiration
It made my stomach sick and gave me hesitation
My passion and me? Yeah, we had a separation
But I’m back in beast-mode ready to take on the nation

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The problem that we have, we lack communication
So I write what I feel to record a form of statement
I hit 'em quick and hard, malicious as Satan
50 songs in one month, yeah, lyric assassination

I'm on fire, I spit flame, now feel my fury
So much blood in my eye, mama, it makes my vision blurry
I feel rage inside and I need to let it out
So I bust through prison walls with these lyrics that I shout

I'm loco in Cabesa, like crazy in the brain
A madman murder tryin' to maintain
Crazy, schizo, psycho, insane
Any way you say it, mama, it all means the same

My whole life depends on my pen-to-paper game
The building of my empire to legendize my name
It's all that I have to release my inner pain
It's either that or heroin injected into my vein

No matter what I do, mama, it seems to no avail
I know the bible's true, mama, I'm livin' in this hell
I'm just tryna tell you, mama, I don't mean to yell
But it's the only way to hear your son from a jail cell

I'll fight for this even if it means death
I'll spit until I can't spit - my very last breath
My brain never sleeps, that means it don't rest
Constant fatigue but couldn't give a fuck less

My bones, they ache, consequences of the stress
My head, it hurts; my heath, it seems a mess
Get rich or die tryin', the motivation of my quest
So I yell it to the world just to get it off my chest!

ABOUT SUFFERING (A LETTER TO MY MAMA) . . .
Like most men in prison, for those of us who’re even fortunate enough, my biggest supporter has been my mother. I have been incarcerated since February of 1999, and throughout this time, my mother has been my #1 soldier. On one hand, I am very thankful because I recognize the blessing. On the other hand, being that I am a grown man, I am very embarrassed that I have had to count on her for so much.

One of the things my mother has put a lot of her time and energy into is in assisting me with my music-related projects. Not because she cares about hip-hop in even the slightest sense, but because she loves her son to the highest extent, and wants to help me achieve what I feel is so important, even crucial, for me to achieve.

Suffering (A Letter to my Mama) is a song where I am desperately trying to express and communicate to my mother how important all of this is to me, how passionate I am about what I, and occasionally we, are doing, and the various emotions I have bottled up inside as a result of such intense desire; despite it being difficult for her to understand to the fullest extent because she has no personal experience with what I am attempting to express and explain, nor with what my reality (life in prison) is. With that said, I think the words in the song pretty much speak for themselves.

**PERSE VERE**

It’s 3 o’clock in the mornin’ and I can’t sleep
I’m in a cell by myself, cold, with no heat
Sittin’ inside of my bed as I smear this ink
Thoughts come to my head as a plot and think

The free world don’t want me, society rejected
Like my mama slid my tape in but society ejected
I’m in a cell with no light, jottin’ these thoughts wit’ my pen
And I ain’t gonna lie, I feel depression kickin’ in

I start thinkin’ about my mama and all the pain that I gave
Will I ever see the streets, or will I parole to the grave?
Yo, life could be bad but maybe I got it worse
Maybe some things you never had, but my life’s trapped in a curse

Will you ever hear this verse? For me it’d be a blessin’
Snugglin’ tracks out from prison keeps me anxious and stressin’
When times get tough I’m forced to fight the fear
‘Cause by any means, man, I must persevere

Put a smile on ya face, be happy and cheer
We’re gonna make it through this shit, don’t be insecure
I’m right here with ya, so have no fear
We can make it through together, and persevere (x2)

ABOUT PERSEVERE . . .

When you’re in prison, all odds are truly against you and it’s difficult to accomplish even the smallest of things. Because of that, prison is a place that can easily cause, even the strongest of us, to become discouraged.

Like many of my rhymes, “Persevere” is just a true event/situation/story/experience that I documented, but in song format. I start off the song with, “It’s 3 o’clock in the morning, and I can’t sleep / I’m in a cell by myself, cold, with no heat / Sittin’ inside of my bed as I smear this ink / Thoughts come to my head as I plot and think.” All of that is exactly what was happening. I was in the hole, woke up in the middle of the night, grabbed my pen and paper, and documented what was going on and what I was thinking about, in real time.

As you can tell by the lyrics of Persevere, I was not in the happiest frame of mind at the moment I wrote it. I had a lot going on. I was anxious and depressed. I have a lot of experience with these emotions and know that they tend to come and go; however, despite my experience and knowledge they are still difficult, even for me, to deal with.

This is another one of my songs where the words just basically wrote themselves. It’s not a freestyle, but I wrote the words as fast as I could write, and without any real thought. Because I was in the hole I didn’t have a beat or anything. I wrote it to my internal metronome.

I think it’s important to remember that when faced with difficulties, no matter how bad they are, it is all about perseverance. And sometimes it helps to know that you aren’t alone. Somewhere, there is someone going through the exact same situation, possible even a more difficult one. We’re all in this bitch together; me included.
ABOUT SLAYER TAPES

I originally wrote this verse as a feature to give somebody, although nobody in particular. I had some information and material being delivered to a friend of mine in the music business, and so I decided to write and include a couple of verses and hooks that he could do what he wanted with (give to who he wanted, etc.), and Slayer Tapes was one of them. I’m not sure if anything was ever done with the vocals.

The message in Slayer Tapes is basically that I’m a dope-ass rhyme spitter, and that by any means necessary, in one way or another, I’m going to drop my rhymes. In this case – the case of the Slayer Tapes verse – I recorded my vocals by using an old Panasonic tape player that was converted into a recorder, and a pair of Koss CL-20 headphones as a mic. I recorded the actual vocals over an old Slayer tape that I was able to get from somebody; thus, the name of the song, Slayer Tapes.

I included the Slayer Tapes verse with this collection because, not only does it explain some of the things I have to do in order to record vocals from my prison cell, but it also shows a bit more of my lyrical ability than the other songs in this particular set. Most of the songs relevant to the theme of this collection have
points and stories that I intentionally made clear so that the massages and emotions would surely be understood and felt; if you read them, you will notice that most of the verses are almost like properly written paragraphs that just happen to rhyme. However, and you will see from the rhymes in my upcoming book, I often write in a way that’s more abstract and free.

**FLY FAR AWAY**

How did things come to this? Man, I don’t know
They got me trapped in the penitentiary doin’ life without parole
I thought I done knew some folks, but most of them cowards snitched
And the rest of the muthafuckas, done straight flipped the script
So now I’m ridin’ solo and I’m doing my own thang
And I declared a murderous war with a past-sympathized gang
Surviving day to day, it’s a constant uphill fight
Me surviving another day means I must carry my Knife
Prepare to fight to the death if you run up on Mike Enemigo
And to even consider success, bring no less than 3 amigos
Now I’m kicking back in my cell, they call my name, I’m like, what is it?
’T 76 - 856, you got a visit
Get yourself together we’ll crack your door in 15 minutes’
Now my mind is racing and I wonder just who is it
’Cause ain’t- ain’t no-nobody been showing me no love
Ain’t nobody sending money, or smuggling me in drugs
Ain’t no bitches sending jack flicks
Matter of fact, to tell you the truth, when it comes to mail I don’t get jack shit
I’m just another lost soul in the game (game)
Without a goddamn thing but my balls, word, and name
Mike Thee Enemigo, you know who the fuck I be
I wish I could fly like an eagle, till I’m free
Fly right over the walls of the penitentiary
Fly, fly far away and let my spirit carry me
I move with a slow pace, so say your grace, ‘cause it’s going down
A steel shank tucked in my waistband and a blade up in my mouth
I’ve always been a fan of various kinds of music, including classic rock, which has influenced several of my songs. One of my favorite classic rock songs, and the inspiration for “Fly Far Away,” is “Fly Like an Eagle” by the Steve Miller Band.

I was listening to the song one day – Fly Like an Eagle – and the catchiness of its chorus made me automatically start singing along. And in case you’re wondering; no, I cannot sing. However, with a song as great as this one, whether you can sing or not, you sing anyway, right? It’s just one of the rules. Anyhow, in singing along I started coming up with my own chorus – one similar to theirs, but that fit my reality. That was the start of this particular song, Fly Far Away.
Prison is an extremely… dark; depressing; energy-draining place. I know for me, regardless of how much rest I get, I’m still always exhausted. It’s just a heavy environment all the way around, full of negative energy and drama, as described by the lyrics of my song. Because of that, the hope, or even fantasy, of God someday turning me into an eagle so I can fly far away from this hell, is not unfamiliar. And that’s what the term “Fly Far Away” represents. I ask God for wings so I can escape this miserable place and fly to the land of the free.

GET OUTTA JAIL

Spit, my, rhymes
I’m on some get-money shit, I’m tryna floss and shine
Fuck, these, dimes
I’m tryna get my sex on, I did agang of time

Stack, this, dough
I’m on some boss ballin’ shit and I’m-a get it fa sho
Smash, my, foes
I’m on beast status, boy, I’m checkmatin’, you hoes

Y’all done peeped my shit, you know the flow is sick
Mike inemigo, mu’fucka, all you hoes on my dick
I’m-a smash around Sac in candy Chevs and ‘lacs
24, big wheels, major slap in the back

God, M.C.
The definition of me, I’m takin’ over the streets
I won’t, be, stopped
All you hatin’ mu’fuckas bow and give me my props

I run, this, shit
Sactown King, the playboy committee click
The crown’s, on my, dome
This the real in the flesh, ain’t no studio clone
Wounds healed in my bones and now I’m ready to roam
This shit feels so good, man, I’m high, in a zone
I done made it through the war, deflected sticks and stones
Dust off my throne, ma’, I made it home!

What-cha gonna do when you get outta jail?
Fuck hoe’s, buy clothes, stack dough, smoke ‘dro
What-cha gonna do when you get outta jail?
Spit rhymes, get mines, go back no mo’ (x2)

ABOUT GET OUTTA JAIL . . .

It’s no secret that I have been sentenced to die in prison. However, despite my reality, I still have to remain optimistic and keep some kind of faith that I may get out someday. If I lose that faith, I’ll die. Furthermore, sometimes I escape prison by mediating about life on the outside, and what I’d do if I ever did get out. “Get Outta Jail” is a result of one of my meditations.

I used X-Zibit’s “Get my Walk on” beat because the beat makes me feel good, and listening to his song is what inspired this train of thought; I listened to his song several times while zoned out in meditation, and when I was done, I wrote what words the beat made me think, see, and feel.

STREET CREDIBILITY

Now, we all know hip h-o-p
Relies heavily on street credibility
It’s my ability to spit this heat
Strictly for the streets and I know that you’re feeling me
I must admit though, most these dudes is Killing me
The audacity, the way they be grilling thee
Mic talking about what they’ll do
Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, blah, blah, whoopty whoop
A fact that is true, I got more cred than most
I’m a rider, man, I ain’t no mu fuckin’ joke
Some rappers claim cred just because they got a gun
But when push comes to shove, they’re so quick to run
Street cred ain’t about games, it ain’t about fun
It’s about real shit that some of us has done
So when I spit I spit the truth, I spit the real
But now I’m doing life in prison and can’t get no deal

They say street cred’s a must when it comes to hip-hop
And now I’m sentenced to die in the pen with an L-WOP
Despite all these imposters I can’t get no deal
You say you slang, bang and kill, man, keep it real\(x2\)

Now, I ain’t a killer, although I am locked up
For what most rappers just claim to do, come on now, playboy
Part of being credible is speaking the truth
Every time your make-believe ass steps into the booth
Hip-hop is also a street form of delivering news
And as MCs, we are strongly obligated to you
To give an accurate depiction when we construe
‘Cause the streets deserve to know what’s what and who’s who
However, this responsibility is practiced by few
Too many MCs lyin’ about the shit that they do
All they ever talk about is their money, chain and gold tooth
And the amount of how many people they’ve killed is through the roof
You can shoot at me all you want, my street cred is bulletproof
‘Cause I really did do dirt and I really paid my street dues
So when I spit I spit the truth, I spit the real
But now I’m doing life in prison and can’t get no deal

They say street cred’s a must when it comes to hip-hop
And now I’m sentenced to die in the pen with an L-WOP
Despite all these imposters I can’t get no deal
You say you slang, bang and kill, man, keep it real\(x2\)

Now, I want you to pay attention to me so listen close
This here ain’t no brag rap and it ain’t no boast
This is just the real shit, yeah, one that I spoke
Most rappers got their lips around assholes blowin’ smoke
To be perfectly honest, I don’t glorify how I live
If there’s any credible message, that’s the one that I give
You’re all impressed by the murder, whether I didn’t or I did
But what’s so fuckin’ cool about a lifelong bid?
I’ve lived as a gangster, that can’t be disputed
Don’t believe me? Check my G file; highly reputed
A lot you hear in songs isn’t credible or true
I fully understand that and you should too
It’s true MCs exaggerate to spice up their rhyme
Shit, I’m even guilty of stretchin’ out a line
But it’s foul to swear the truth in a statement if you’re lying
I mean, how are you a killer if you never did the crime?
How are you a D-boy if you never did the grind?
How are you a con if you never did the time?
So when I spit I spit the truth, I spit the real
But now I’m doing life in prison and can’t get a fuckin’ deal

ABOUT STREET CREDIBILITY . . .

It’s said that street credibility is an essential part of hop-hop and being an MC, and that, for an MC to be respected, he must possess it. However, and especially with what most rappers claim as their reasons for being street credible, which usually consists of being an authentic G, I’m not sure that’s entirely true. In truth, I think that what’s much more important is the illusion of having what we refer to as “street credibility.” I mean, let’s just be completely honest: one will probably get much further in hip-hop if he’s a slick illusionist and has the ability to make people think he has some form of street credibility, than actually living and participating in the things that would earn one the credential of being street credible. Many rappers rap about how many people they’ve shot or will shoot, how much dope they move, etc., but we all know that cannot possibly be entirely true. If it were, odds are they’d be my celly; or lil Boosie’s, or C-Murder’s, or max B’s, or G Dep’s, or Supreme’s, or Prince’s, or Fat Cat’s, or Big Meech’s, or whoever else has truly lived and participated in what we’re referring to as the streets. When it all boils down, you’re not going to get away with doing things that are necessary to do in order to truly be “street credible” for very long. You’re going to end up in prison like me, or you’re going to end up dead like Pac. Period.
I guess there are those who might argue that you don’t have to be an authentic “G” to have street cred, and I suppose that’s true. I guess you can be a firsthand observer of what happens in the streets and still have some type of credibility, at least credible knowledge, but that’s not good enough for most rappers; most claim actual participation.

However, just to expand on this a little further; personally, I don’t give a fuck if a rapper has street cred or not. Fuck street cred. I’ve been sentenced to die in prison for apparently participating in streetlife type of activities. I don’t glorify anything that promotes one to live as I’m living. My reality is horrible. I’m in prison surrounded by a bunch of dicks and balls while I wait to die in this fucking concrete tomb. I’d much rather have no “street cred,” and still be on the streets fuckin’ bad bitches and doin’ my thang. That’s real talk.

So, what’s my problem with this whole street credibility thing? My problem is one being an imposture and exploiting something that happens to be my reality, and the reality of many other men who are sacrificing greatly for truly being “street.” It’s like the ultimate copyright/trademark/patent infringement. It’s bootlegging, illegal downloading, and it makes me feel disrespected. I lived a certain way and upheld a certain code – one of the streets – and this is my reward; and trust me, it’s nothing to brag about. But with everything said, it’s disrespectful for one to use our reality – which happens to be one of pure misery, hell and sacrifice – to create their illusion.

Furthermore, not only is it disrespectful and irresponsible, and not only does it make one who attempts to play out such a fantasy look like a schmuck to those of us who live this as a reality, it’s unnecessary. It’s 2013; does anybody give a shit about street cred anymore? Two of the hottest rappers in the game right now, Kanye West and Drake, ain’t killin’ nobody or running drug empires. They don’t have to put up a certain façade to be hot and sell records. They’re just being themselves; and it’s obviously working, right? In addition to that, I don’t think hip-hop fans, even ones who’re actually in the streets, ran to the store, their computer, or wherever the fuck everyone’s buying their music, to cop the catalogs, latest material, or even greatest hits of Boosie, C-Murder, Max B, G. Dep, etc., when they were thrown in prison accused of doing something that really happens when you’re really living the street life. I mean, shit, I’m in prison, convicted of and actually living what most rappers just rap about rather than truly experience, can spit dope as fuck and have the vocals of over 100 songs that I recorded in my prison cell, yet, I ain’t got nothin’ coming. I can’t even get some real, raw, live-from-prison songs produced at the quality they deserve. So much for “street credibility.” I bet you if I never really participated in the “street life,” but instead, just created an illusion of being “street,” and was out right now, I’d be a very well-respected, hot, and paid MC; with options.
With that established, I think that what’s most important is honesty; truth. If you want to rap about drugs and guns and prison and killin’ for entertainment purposes, that’s cool; just say that that’s what you’re doing – “Yo, I ain’ tryna kill nobody or go to prison, I just like to rap about that kind of shit for fun. I look at myself as an entertainer, an artist; like, say… Al Pacino. I tell different stories and play different roles; in one I’m a drug lord, in another I’m the devil’s advocate, and in another I’m a bank robber. Straight up.” That’s all you have to do; it’s that simple.

So, yeah, all that is what basically inspired me to write this song; the misuse, abuse, exploitation, misrepresentation, etc., of this whole “street credibility” thing.

LOCKED UP

I’m trapped, ugh, back behind walls
Squattin’, catchin’, liftin’ my balls
Disloyal bitches denyin’ my calls
Pissed off attitude – fuck all y’all, man

Ain’t styles P, won’t catch me wit’ 2 toothbrush
I’m choppin’ them lockers up and packin’ that steel for the bone crush
A lot of cats ain’t been to the pen, they just talk about it
Act like they ain’t scared, but I doubt it

Styles P did a little time and so did Akon
But they out now, that’s how they make they song
Mike Enemigo, I break my rhymes up out the cell
It’s true when they said – said that controversy sells

I ain’t ever gettin’ out, man, I’ll die up in jail
Fuck all y’all pigs, I hope you die and go to hell
I still get mines, spit rhymes and stack mail
I dust myself off like I - I never fell
I keep my head up high when I-1-I bail
And I can do that, bitch, ’cause Enemigo never tell
I smah on my foes, that’s why them pussies 812
Another murder conviction will have my ass on the shelf, man, I’m trapped

ABOUT LOCKED UP...

The biggest prison anthem that I’m aware of is Akon’s Locked Up. And in prison, it’s extremely popular; when it comes on the radio, volumes increase. And understandably so, right? It’s relatable to us. It’s not a song about expensive cars, millions of dollars, fuckin’ bitches, clubs and crystal or … whatever the fuck y’all are drinkin’ out there these days. It’s a song about our current reality. And when it comes on, it becomes a soundtrack to our immediate experience.

Remixing this song was a no-brainer. I really like Akon’s version of Locked Up, but he recorded his song about being locked up while on the streets – probably in a pretty fancy music studio. I’m aware that Akon has done a little bit of time and all, but I wanted to lend a verse to it that was recorded while actually being locked up. My verse was recorded in my prison cell, smuggled out of prison, and mixed in with his song. I realize this will probably not get the radio play or attention that the original version did, but while I hope everyone can enjoy and appreciate it, including Akon himself if I am ever lucky enough for him to hear it, my remix is dedicated to those of us who’re actually locked up, in the cell blocks, right now.

Everything I say in my verse is the truth. And I talk a little bit about my situation – at the end of the song – because I want you to fully understand everything I have to go through in order to get this music to you, in hopes you can truly understand and appreciate what it is I’m actually pulling off. Or at least attempting to, anyway.

For more information on the author, go to facebook.com/thecellblock.net or to our website: thecellblock.net
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CHAPTER ONE

On November 22, 1996, as Chunky waited for his cell door to open, his mind spun with excitement. He would be paroling today. And not just from any prison, but from Pelican Bay's D-yard SHU; the maximum security prison that houses the most-powerful members of California's prison gangs, including that of La Eme – The Mexican Mafia.

Chunky's cellmate, Mike Lerma, a Pomona 12th Street gang member who was now a member of the notorious Mexican Mafia, was sending Chunky out with a mission: to run the Inland Empire and Pomona Mexican Street gangs under his – Lerma's – control, by way of collecting “taxes” from the various varrios and drug dealers, that were to then be kicked up to Lerma himself. Lerma had given Chunky very detailed orders on what he was to do, and was sending him out with “kites” (handwritten notes) verifying his authority. If Chunky was successful in his mission, as well as took care of a few other, specific requests Lerma'd asked of him, Lerma had promised Chunky he and his brothers would “make” him; he'd be an official “made” member of The Mexican Mafia. Finally; Chunky was being given an opportunity to prove himself to La Eme – the gang he idolized with his entire heart, mind and soul. He was 23.

For more information on the author, go to facebook.com/thecellblock.net or to our website: thecellblock.net

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THE CELL BLOCK PRESENTS

THE LEGEND OF

FAST EDDIE

A NOVEL BY

ANTHONY MURILLO
Chapter 9

It was just past nine when the brown Suburban pulled into the dark lot and extinguished its headlights. The driver, a quiet, swarthy guy with a jagged scar on his right cheek who went by the name Silent, looked over his shoulder at his boss. Salvador Moreno looked the place over and clenched the muscles in his jaw. (He always did this when he was nervous; it was an unconscious tick).

Larry's Auto Shop was a rectangular cinder-block building situated on one corner of Third and Ford. One side of the building, presumably the service bay, had a retractable aluminum door with a clearance of twenty or more feet; the other side had darkened store-front-type windows with painted advertisements, rates for various services. Out front, an out-dated gas pump stood alone on a cement island underneath a steel awning. Other than that the lot was empty. No lights on inside the building. No indications of life anywhere.

Sal stroked his thick mustache with one hand and told Silent, "Park alongside the building." He turned to the man in the seat behind him. "This dump got a back door?"

"Yeah. There's a junkyard back there." Mike Ledesma pointed to the back of the building and looked at his watch for the tenth time. "We're an hour early."

The Mafioso shot him a disdainful look and he turned away, his face suddenly hot.

Mike had met many Brothers in his lifetime. His Uncle Ronnie, though not a "made man" himself, had been running with the syndicate since the early 70s. Over the years, he'd introduced his nephew to a number of people.

Mike first met Black Lou, the eldest Moreno Brother, at one of the many gang summits organized by the Mexican Mafia in the early 90s. He also knew Pete, one of the "un-made" Morenos, and occasionally ran into him around town. He'd only heard of Sporty. Sporty was supposed to be the crazy one, the one who took care of the family's dirty work, the one who was in charge of sanctioning hits and making
people disappear. He was said to have a mean streak and very little tolerance for idiots.

Mike hoped Sal didn't view him as an idiot because Sal was Sporty and right now, the way the mobster kept flexing his jaw muscles like a pit bull and looking at him with those fierce brown eyes, well, it was giving him the jitters. *Just keep your mouth shut,* he thought. *Relax.*

A moment later, after the silence had stabbed at him one too many times, he heard himself say, "I can call 'em and tell 'em you changed the time of the meeting, that you want them over here now," then immediately regretted it. "Or we can just wait. Waiting is cool. I don't mind waiting." *Shut up!* "Want a smoke? I got smokes." He pulled a pack of Camel non-filters from his pocket, tapped one out, almost dropped the pack.

"No."
"Mind if I light up?"
"Yes."
"Yes you mind, or yes it's okay?"

Sal looked at the man through narrowed eyes and decided then and there that if anything went wrong, or if this whole thing was a waste of time, he was going to hurt Mike and his useless uncle. "Somebody passing by -- a cop, anyone might -- see a lit cigarette," he explained, exercising an extreme amount of patience. Should he really have to sit here and school some nobody from nowhere?

"Oh." The pack of Camels disappeared.
"You know if there's an alarm?"
"No."
"No you don't know or 'no' there's no alarm?"

The joke flew right over the idiot's head. "I, um... I don't know if there's an alarm."

Sal grunted, reached underneath the seat, and opened a secret compartment built into the Suburban's floorboards. He extracted two guns: a 9mm Beretta and a Tech-9 with an extended clip. He handed the Beretta to Silent and told him, "Wait here. I'll let you know when it's all clear."

Silent nodded.

Sal removed the bulb from the interior light socket on the roof and put it in his pants' pocket for safe keeping before opening the door and disembarking from the vehicle. He shoved the assault pistol into his waistband at the small of his back, told the idiot, "I'll be back," and closed the door.

A half-moon lay overhead, most of its reflected light lost in the smog which blanketed the metropolis day and night. Sal stuck to the dark shadows cast by the building and quickly approached the reception area, where the windows and front entrance were. A sign on the glass door read "Sorry We're Closed" and had the business hours listed as 6:00 am to 5:00 pm. He inspected the edges of the windows and door and saw no indication of an alarm system, so he cupped his hands on either
side of his head and pressed it against the cold glass. The interior, he saw, was dark, sparsely furnished, empty.

He glanced over his shoulder, to the street; traffic was light. He decided to round the building. A chain-link fence jutted several feet from the west wall and ran down the side of the building. He followed the fence and found that it continued about twenty yards past the building then cut to the left to form an enclosed area in the rear of the establishment. He could make out the vague silhouettes of run-down vehicles and various auto parts – heaps of scrap metal, fenders, rims, and tires but it was too dark to make out much else.

He shook the fence and let out a low whistle, waiting for a guard dog to spring out of the darkness and start barking up a storm.

No dog.
No alarm.

*Not too bright,* the mobster thought, and effortlessly scaled the fifteen foot fence. He landed lightly on the other side and pulled out the Tech-9, instinctively going into a crouch. He scanned the junkyard for any signs of sound or movement but all he detected was some crickets and the steady hum of an electric line.

This was the kind of stuff Salvador Moreno lived for. He loved the way his heart was beating faster than normal, the way his veins were flowing with adrenaline, the way his senses were on full alert. The excitement of the game is what kept him in it. It's what kept him coming back for more, kept him in the mix of things when other Brothers his age were already slowing down, delegating authority, calling the shots but choosing not to have any direct role in the syndicate's activities. Most of the old timers who were fortunate enough to still be breathing were like that; they didn't want anything to do with the specifics, with the day to day operations, with the blood and guts part of their profession.

But Sal was different.

He was the kind of man who liked to be in the field with his soldiers, who relished the danger and violence of his lifestyle, who could never be happy unless he was pulling the trigger himself (so to speak). It wasn't in him to sit back and give orders and direct traffic like some caricature of Marlon Brando in *The Godfather.* That wasn't a real gangster; that was a Hollywood gangster dreamed up in some studio by a bunch of lames who'd never stepped foot into the underworld. Real gangsters were out on the front lines, in the streets, constantly putting themselves in sticky situations, getting their hands bloody, living by the motto "have heart, have money," always but just barely staying one step ahead of their real nemesis: death.

Yeah. Sal knew the game. He understood it because he studied the moves, the characters, all the little tricks of the trade. Take, for example, the present situation. He had no way of knowing if this idiot Mike and his friends were for real or if they were either knowingly or unwittingly attempting to set him up. (It certainly wouldn't be the first time a Brother had used a third party to lure another Brother to a certain location in order to whack him.) Sal knew that anybody could be waiting inside the building – other gangsters, cops, even petty criminals looking to score big – but that
didn't stop him from confronting the situation head-on. It didn't pump fear into his heart like it would lesser men. No. Potentially dangerous situations like this were part of the game. And even if this was a set-up, if one of his own Brothers was attempting to take him out, well, that was okay, too, because an accomplished gangster understood (but never voiced) the reality that his friends were more dangerous than his enemies. He accepted that when the end came it would, in all likelihood, come from a man who smiled and embraced him warmly before sticking a knife into his gut or blowing off his head.

That was the nature of the game and Sal would have it no other way.

Of course, a lot could be said for instinct, too, and what the Mafioso's instincts told him about this particular deal, brokered by a nobody and involving other nobodies, was that it all seemed a bit amateurish for a mob set-up. Why would a Brother who wanted to kill him lure him down here when he could just as easily invite him over for dinner and put a bullet in him while he was eating a bowl of menudo? It didn't make sense.

But then, it also didn't make much sense that a couple of low-budget hoodlums who'd never been involved in the dope game would suddenly come up on a shit-load of smack. (Yeah, Sal had run a make on Big Larry from East Los and nobody had ever heard of him other than this idiot, Mike, whose only claim to ghetto fame was being related to a Mob associate.) Something definitely smelled fishy.

Shit wasn't adding up.

It was no sweat off Sal Moreno's back, though. The way he looked at it, either this guy Big Larry really had come into possession of a bunch of dope and didn't know how to get rid of it, or he had a death wish.

It was that simple.
Chapter 10

They arrived in the Impala a few minutes before ten. Eddie spotted the Suburban at once. "I think they're already here."

Bullet was in the backseat, hanging his head and arms over the backrest between Eddie and Big Larry. "It looks empty."

Eddie parked alongside the Suburban and shut off the engine; they got out of the car and looked around.

Bullet had the duffel bag. He said, "Where they at?" The lot was quiet. Almost spooky.

Eddie rounded the Impala and peered into one of the Suburban’s side windows; afterward, he laid a hand on the SUV’s hood. The engine was still warm. He looked toward the building.

Suddenly, a circle of light appeared in the shop. At the center of the light stood a man holding up a lighter. The man beckoned with a hand, then the light went out.

"Oh, hell no," Big Larry said. "I know these fools didn't break into my shop!"

Bullet: "Who the fuck is that?"

Larry: "I think it's... Mike. I'm gonna beat his ass!"

Eddie: "Kick back."

They started walking.

Larry: "They're in my shop!"

Eddie: "So fuckin' what! Just chill. Don't let 'em think they caught us off guard."

He lowered his voice. "And remember: Let me do the talking."

The veterano muttered something under his breath as they approached the building but Eddie ignored him. A short skinny man with salt-and-pepper hair and a big mustache met them at the entrance. He pushed open the door and said, "I'm Mike."

"Eddie." He shook the man's hand, "This is the homie, Bullet. You already know Larry."

Mike and Bullet shook hands then Mike tried to shake Larry's hand but the veterano left him hanging.
Larry said, "I see you vatos let yourselves in," then he looked around the dark room.

Mike shrugged his shoulders, gestured with his eyes to the back of the room. Eddie sensed tension.

He followed the older man's gaze to the back of the room, saw the vague outline of a human form sitting in a chair against the far wall.

The form said, "I'm Sal Moreno. I hope you fellas ain't wastin' my time."

Eddie said, "We're straight business," and glanced over his left shoulder, toward the garage. He thought he saw something move in there. "As a good will gesture, so you know we're not bullshittin', we brought you a gift." He summoned Bullet forward with a nod of his head.

"Maybe we should turn on the lights," Big Larry said, moving toward the switch by the door.

"No lights!" the Mafioso snapped.

Big Larry froze.

Eddie took the duffel bag from his homie and stepped forward. As he did so, a figure moved quickly out of the shadows and through the doorway that separated the garage from the office.

"It's okay," Sal Moreno said. "I think we're amongst friends." Eddie eyed the guy who'd come out of the shadows and wondered how many more people were in the room.

Was this another one of the Moreno Brothers? The guy returned Eddie's gaze but didn't move. He was tall and had a big build.

"Don't worry about him; he's with me. Let me see what you got."

Eddie stepped forward and the Mobster stood up, his features becoming more discernable. He was shorter than Eddie by a few inches but much bigger around the chest and shoulders. He had a thick black mustache and short black hair combed straight back. He was clad in black from head to toe.

The Mafioso stuck out his hand and Eddie took it. The hand was strong, vice-like. "What barrio you from, kid?"

"East Los Park."

"The Enanos?"

"Yeah."

"I know some of your older homies," the Mafioso said, and gave Eddie's hand a good squeeze. "You know your homeboy Smiley?"

Eddie said he didn't and pulled his hand back, thankful that it hadn't been crushed.

"Surely, you musta hearda him, though."

"Yeah, I hearda him."

"You happen to know where he's at? Cuz I know a few people who'd really like to rap to him."

Eddie almost laughed. Yeah, he was quite sure there were a lot of people who wanted to "rap" to Smiley, since the Mob had a twenty thousand dollar bounty on
his head. (Eddie didn't know the specifics – nobody seemed to know – but there were two stories circulating in the barrio: one was that Smiley had become disillusioned with Mob politics and, upon paroling, turned his back on the Brothers; the other was that Smiley and a handful of others at Pelican Bay had been involved in a failed plot to take out several very powerful and influential Brothers whom they deemed detrimental to the cause. Rumor had it that, to this day, Smiley and other like-minded dropouts were waging a silent war against the Mexican Mafia on the streets of Southern California. In the last three years, over a dozen of the syndicate's made members had been slain by unknown assailants. Many assumed that Smiley and his crew of drop-outs were behind the killings.)

Again, Eddie said, "I don't know the vato," and pushed the duffel bag into the mobster's midsection. "But like I said, this is a kick down, for you and yours. I figure you'll test it, see that it's good, then we'll set up the deal." The mobster looked like he was about to say something; then, apparently, thought better of it. He unzipped the bag and reached inside.

"We're gonna want twenty K per key for the rest."
"How many you got?"
"How many you gonna want?"
"I don't even know if it’s good yet."
"It's good."
"What's the cut?"

Eddie suddenly felt his face flush. "The cut? It's good, man. You don't believe me, check it yourself." His heart was pounding wildly in his chest. In the movies, the buyer always whipped out a knife, cut open the package, and tasted the product. But the mobster didn't produce a knife. Instead, he brought the package close to his face and seemed to examine it.

Finally, he said, "Who'd you steal this from?"

The question caught Eddie by surprise, threw him off. "We didn't steal it!" he said much too fast. "It's ours."

Sal Moreno chuckled. "Sure."

Silence.

Eddie took a deep breath. "Look, that's yours, on the house. Consider it a kick down. You want more, you know our price. You don't want more, cool. We'll bounce."

Once again, the Mafioso chuckled. "You got balls, kid. I like that. But I ain't paying twenty G's per key for hot shit and..."

"It ain't hot."
"Right."
"And, like I said, you ain't gotta buy, we got other people lined up, ready to go, so it's no big deal. We just thought we'd give the Brothers first dibs."

Eddie held his breath.

Silence consumed them once again and, for a few seconds, Eddie wondered if maybe he'd gone too far. He was trying to come across as savvy not foolish.
Finally, the Mobster said, "Fine. If its real good – and I mean real good – I'll give you twenty. Now, how much stuff we talkin'?")

"How much you want?"
"Say, twenty keys?"
"No problem."
"Thirty?"
"Sure,"
"Kid?"
"Yeah?"

"Don't fuck with me. How many damn keys do you got?"

Eddie decided he'd yanked Sal Moreno's chain enough for one day. He wasn't sure if he could trust the man, and he was definitely intimidated by him, but he was all they had. He was about to answer the question truthfully when, suddenly, he became aware of a steady hum coming from outside. It was getting louder. He turned to look out the window. The others turned, too. The hum became a roar.

The six men inside the shop watched as a troop of bikers approached from Third Street and, without hesitation, pulled into the lot occupied by Larry's Auto Shop.
Chapter 11

"What the...", Sal Moreno shielded his eyes as the beams from the motorcycles' headlamps cut across the lot and landed directly on them.

For a moment, everyone stood there with their hands to their eyes, blinded by the sudden explosion of light, deafened by the dim of seven Harley Davidsons; then the bikers killed their engines and extinguished all but one of the lights.

They had parked on the far side of the cement island, lining up their bikes side by side, facing the building. The bikers got off of their bikes and went into a huddle – a mass of fat, leather, and denim.

Sal moved quickly to one side of the office, taking cover behind a wall, and pulled out the machine pistol. "I don't suppose these guys are with you?"

Eddie said, "No," and looked at Big Larry.

Big Larry said, "Hell no. I don't know these fools."

Sal watched the bikers, illuminated by the remaining headlamp, then glanced at Silent. "Go out there and tell 'em we're closed. Tell 'em to get the fuck outta here."

Dutifully, without a word, Silent tucked his gun into the front of his pants, so that the handle was exposed, and walked out the door.

As soon as the bikers saw that somebody was coming out to meet them they broke their huddle and spread out. The skinniest one of the bunch, and the only one with short hair, stepped out from the others and came forward.

Sal and the others watched as he and the bodyguard exchanged a few words. Silent made a gesture with one hand, pointed down the street, and the other bikers formed a semi-circle around the two men.

Then one of them – a big guy, three-hundred-plus pounds with long hair and a funny walk – suddenly drew a sawed-off shotgun into his hands! He lowered the gun, waist high, and pointed it directly at Silent. The bodyguard caught the movement. He turned, at the same time reaching for his own gun –

BOOM!!!

– but it was a fraction of a second too late. The blast, at a range of three yards, blew Silent off his feet and propelled him backward. He landed hard on his back on the asphalt and didn't get up.
Bullet exclaimed, "Oh, shit!" and everybody in the shop scattered for cover as the bikers hurriedly reached into the saddle bags on their bikes and then began fanning out across the length of the lot. With his heart in his throat, Eddie ended up crouched behind the Mafioso. Sal asked him, "How many pieces you got in here?"

"Just this one," Eddie said, and held up his trusty Beretta. Sal cursed and turned his attention back to the bikers.

Corey was pissed.
The fire in his groin was there again and he needed a shot bad but right now his anger was greater than his pain.
They really hadn't planned on anyone coming out with a gun. They'd figured, if anything, the punks would be holed up somewhere else and they'd have to sit on the place until the morning. Doug had just wanted to check out the joint while it was still closed, maybe put a couple bros on surveillance duty until someone showed up. A half hour earlier the gang had parked down the street at a 7-Eleven and Doug had dispatched a scout to determine where the GPS transponder's last signal had come from. The scout had returned and reported that the Auto Shop was the only possible source. He'd also reported that the place was closed for the night, pitch black.

Understandably, Corey was quite irritated and not in the mood for any bullshit when the Mexican guy came out of the shop and walked right up to them like he was Billy Badass. He'd wanted them to see the gun in his waistband, thought they'd pee on themselves; then, to top it all off, the wetback had had the nerve to talk to Doug like he was some kind of cockroach. He'd said, "This is private property. Shop's closed. Get back on your bikes and beat it." Just like that!

Doug had responded: "Just tryin' to fill up the tanks, ya know?"

"There's a gas station down the street," the guy had said, puffing up his chest, moving his hand just a little too close to the butt of his gun. "You got five seconds to disappear. I'm not gonna say it again."

This guy was a regular class clown. Nonetheless, Doug had smiled, raised his hands and backed up a few steps, as if he were going back to his bike. That's when Corey said to himself, "Man, fuck this dude!" He pulled out his sawed-off Mossburg, squeezed the trigger and ripped the beaner a new asshole.

Man, it felt so good to blow that motherfucker away. It was just like the movies, only better.

Now Corey wanted to charge the building like a bull. He felt like a bull, a very hot pissed off bull, so he said to Doug, "Let's kill em!" and was surprised by how big and clumsy his tongue felt in his mouth. He was still sweating like a dog, sweating so much that it was running down his face and chest in streams, but right now that didn't matter. What mattered was the punks.
The punks in the shop.
Meanwhile, the other bros had already grabbed their guns and were awaiting Doug's order. Doug looked at Corey and said, "No more shootin' until I say." Then, to the others: "Fan out. Surround the building. Nobody moves until I give the okay."

The bros scattered. Doug was the only one without a gun. With Corey at his side he stood in the middle of the clearing, about fifteen feet from the building, and hollered out, "Nobody else has to get hurt. The building's surrounded. Whoever's in there, I want you to come out with your hands where we can see 'em. You have my personal word that as long as you cooperate there won't be any more trouble."

Doug's voice echoed through the night. Silence followed. "Look," he said, "all we want to do is talk. We're looking for a vehicle that belongs to us. Maybe somebody sold it to you or brought it by for repairs, whatever. We don't care how you came into possession of it. All we care about is getting the vehicle back. As a gesture of our gratitude we're even offering a reward. Say... a thousand bucks? No questions asked."

After a moment of silence, a voice from inside the building hollered out, "We don't know what the fuck you're talkin' about. But I advise you to get the hell outta here before shit really starts hittin' the fan."

Doug gazed toward the front door. The voice was coming from that general direction. "Who am I talking to?"

The reply came back quick, forceful: "The Mexican Mafia! That's who!"

Doug hesitated a moment, looked around, amused. Finally, he said, "I seriously doubt anyone in there belongs to the" –

A quick burst of gunshots rang out, followed by the shattering and collapse of glass.

Doug saw the muzzle flashes at about the same time he saw one of the bros paw at his stomach and drop to his knees.

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THE CELL BLOCK PRESENTS

BASIC FUNDAMENTALS OF

THE GAME

AN EPISTLE FROM...

MAURICE "MAC BAS" VASQUEZ
Personal Introduction

I am loyally devoted to The Game. So much so that it can even be considered an obsession. I have mastered my method, hence, becoming a mentor to many players whom aspire to conquer the difficulties which I’ve surmounted.

I am sought out by other players for the knowledge which I’ve acquired through practice and experience. I am properly placed on an elevated plateau among those who lead and serve The Game. However, one of many aspects that makes me extraordinarily unique, is that unlike my predecessors whom sat at the top of the hill strategically managing things from afar, out of harm’s way, I prefer being right here on the frontline of the battlefield, engaged in hand-to-hand combat, getting my hands dirty. The easy way of doing something has never been my way of getting the job done. That does not imply that I enjoy making things more difficult for myself than they already are. What I mean is that I am constantly faced with difficult situations which require hard work and dedication to resolve, and I have never been one who is willing to neglect doing whatever the fuck is necessary to fulfill my duties. I feel a deep responsibility for The Game. I often hear muthafuckers saying that It’s just business, it’s nothing personal. It’s a problem to think like that. My involvement in The Game has always been a very personal process, so to me, it’s all personal! How can it not be? Think about it. If something personally affects me or those I care for, how the fuck is it not personal?!

To me, that cliché is some of the stupidest shit I’ve ever heard. The Game is too complex for us to examine the evidence on every issue in which we need to make up our minds. We live in a world filled with “purported experts.” We are bombarded with many different judgments, opinions, clichés, and assumptions. We need the tools to judge among them, so we need to find the experts of The Game whom we can trust; players who have demonstrated that they have the knowledge and expertise, the objectivity and integrity to provide reliable guidance.

Most players I know are skeptics who insist on objective proof before something is believed; what to inculcate seems to be at the root of this problem. If each generation of up-and-coming players are being taught the same unsuccessful,
contradictory methods that he learned growing up in The Game before actually being able to evaluate them, then as a society we are contributing toward the catastrophe that has plagued The Game, hence, producing imposers who might have had a chance to become a factor had he been taught The BASic Fundamentals of The Game.

Although we are inclined to believe that our opinions and personal views of The Game are objective because it is generally consistent with that of our immediate surroundings, what our opinions actually contain is a perception that’s reflected by that of what we “believe” is accurate. So if we are surrounded by inaccuracies and inconsistencies, understandably we are susceptible to believing that it’s a representation of our reality (which is outlandish and couldn’t be further from the truth).

It is this fact that makes me look in bewilderment at the actions of others who identify themselves as players, yet conduct an image contrary to it. Many of us learned our general beliefs before we were able to evaluate them. The beliefs we hold today which were learned when we were kids are uninformed, unquestioned beliefs. We did not have the ability to examine what we were being taught, nor the capacity to reject or accept those teachings.

Those who influenced us when we were growing up are who reflect the beliefs of our culture. When we learn to “believe” before we learn to “think” we are vulnerable because an empty mind does not have the capacity to understand what it should nor shouldn’t believe. This conundrum is constantly epitomized in observing the going-ons of The Game. One of the many mistakes I see is the way that some people thrive on past experiences to the point they remain stuck in the past. Although your personal history is important, it can be detrimental if it hinders your ability to be productive. Past insights, past innovation, past creativity, past accomplishments are only relevant if you are still producing favorable results. What are you accomplishing now? What are you accumulating now? What is your repertoire of techniques? In what way are you contributing toward The Game now? You can’t keep doing the same thing and expect it to keep working. You have to do something different in order to progress; but the really hard question is what is it? Well, first of all you must have a goal; you must know what you want to be, where you want to go, and what you want to do. Part of my enormous responsibility as a Mac is helping players get the best from The Game and learn how to maximize their potential so that they are able to live with its arduous experiences and succeed in a way that is both effective and creative. In order for this to happen, however, a player has to have the intuitive insight and understanding concerning who he is, what he actually wants, and most importantly what he can do!

I’m fascinated by the amazing things a player can accomplish with the right guidance. There are certain principles involved in The Game that can release the potential to do something astounding. I have mentored many players in The Game who have become factors, and who are exemplary in all facets. Their strong
personal values have impelled them to always do right by the laws of The Game regardless of the circumstances. That’s not to say there haven’t been problems along the way. There will always be problems. If you don’t have any problems occurring, you have absolutely nothing going on in your life. When you have a problem, you are given an opportunity to solve it. Whether you realize it or not, opportunities give you the advantage. You will eventually realize that shit is not as complicated as you first speculated. Solving problems builds creativity and creativity is a key component to intellectual insight. Remember; without problems there would be no progress!

I felt that it was important for me to come forward with this work. I’m outlining the dynamics and principles to encourage all players to put them in perspective and incorporate them into their game plan. Its purpose is to persuade all participants of The Game to practice properly. I’ve been contemplating a plan on how best to get the word out to relate this very important message. What started out as an open letter, became this masterpiece of a book that I’m constructing for all those who aspire to put their player priorities in perspective.

My name is well-known in The Game and my reputation is revered. My priority has never been to be liked, but to speak the truth and maintain a strong level of consistency in my convictions. In doing so, inevitably I have often endured negative reactions, which at times resulted in violence. (In fact, as I’m writing this introduction, I’m here in CCI Tehachapi Security Housing Unit [solitary confinement] finishing up the final few months of a 3-year SHU term I received as a result of doing the paso doble on some schmuck’s face plate.) My approach is so powerfully effective that, although it has offended many, it has won me a loyal following of players whose lives I’ve changed dramatically.

I encourage all players to authentically express what you think and feel! Be willing to confront inconsistencies and be prepared to deal with whatever the fuck comes your way as a result of it. In order to do so you must know what the fuck you’re talking about. If you don’t know what you’re talking about then you’re not talking about anything. Know your strong points as well as your weak points so you know where best to apply your abilities. My mind is constantly working on ways of producing new ideas. I have innovation and imagination, and I’m progressive. The very fact that I’ve achieved the manifestation of this literary work from right here where I have no phone access, no internet services, and everything I do is highly scrutinized, attests to what I’m articulating in regards to what remarkable things can be achieved by thinking outside the block! And get this, the company that’s publishing this, “The Cell Block,” is owned and operated by Mike Enemigo; a certified player in The Game whom I’ve mentored for many years. I first encountered him over 15 years ago and I recognized then he had a gift that could be cultivated with the right influences. To see his success is a clear indication of what the fuck I’m conveying!

I’m giving all players an opportunity to ponder my ideas, familiarize themselves with my concepts, learn my language and perceive my logic. Upon grasping the
quintessential components of my character, I will establish a connection with my audience.

Before I begin, allow me to ask you this:
What does The Game mean to you?
What does the term “player” mean to you?
What do you believe in?
What do you stand for?
What are your goals and objectives?
What do you wish to accomplish in The Game?

Upon pondering these simple yet important questions, some may realize they know a lot less than they think they do. Rather than wasting time elaborating on the thinking of others, I’m addressing key questions by examining the problem and providing my concepts to assist you in dealing with it. I chose this approach as a way of encouraging you to take the time to evaluate my concepts and think about the problems yourself. I’m attempting to assemble and interrelate what I perceive to be essential information that will help all those who study my beliefs.

When a group of players interact and converses with one another on an intellectual level, you will recognize that something phenomenal occurs. While they are conversing, the atmosphere suddenly changes. As each player shares his insight and provides his input, the topic of discussion accumulates strength and becomes the motivating factor that inspires a higher level of understanding which could not have been achieved individually.

The vision that I’m eloquently describing for your mind to perceive is the epitome of what I have created for you. With that said; allow me to now present you with “the BASic Fundamentals of The Game,” an epistle from Mac BAS.

The game guru,
Lifestyle expert,
Mac BAS

For more information on the author, go to facebook.com/thecellblock.net or to our website: thecellblock.net

To purchase this book go to Amazon ISBN-10: 150575903X

Help an inmate turn his life around by purchasing books by inmate authors!
I was at home asleep on my futon when the phone rang.
“Hello,” I said drowsily.
“What up, man? Kevin.” Kevin is my cousin.
Our fathers are twins.
“Oh, what’s up?”
“What’re you doin’ right now?”
“Shit, I was knocked out,” I said.
“Oh, OK. Well, you want me to call you back?”
“Yeah, give me about 15 minutes, then hit me back up.”
“OK. I’ll be back at you in 15.”
I laid back down on my futon and closed my eyes while trying my best to shake off the sleepiness. Fifteen to twenty minutes quickly passed and the phone rang again.
“What up?” I asked a bit more alive than I had the first time around.
“What’s up, man, you up?”
“Yeah, I’m up. What’s going on?”
“Well, I’m calling because I got a lick, and I wanna know if you’re interested.”
“What kind of lick?” I asked.
“It’s about 75-100 Gs worth of weed, and it’ll be easy as fuck.”
“Oh yeah? Where’s it at?”
“It’s in a backyard, somewhere in Fair Oaks. I’m not sure exactly, I gotta talk to Bryan. But they got Christmas tree-size plants, a bunch of ‘em, and all you gotta do is hop over the fence, cut ‘em down, and be out. Plus, right now, nobody’s home,” he added.
“Nobody’s home?”
“Naw, they’re at the hospital.”
“For what?”

October 5, 1998

It’s about 75-100 Gs worth of weed and it’ll be easy as fuck. -- Kevin
“Well, earlier today a couple of guys I know tried to get the plants. They kicked the door in and ran up in there, and they ended up beating the guy’s son with a baseball bat or something. They made off with 1-2 plants but that’s it; the rest is still there and the family is at the hospital with the son.”

“OK. So all I gotta do is hop the fence, cut down the plants, and leave?” I asked semi-curious. It sounded like a pretty easy job.

“That’s it. But you’re gonna need 1-2 more people. You won’t be able to do it all yourself. You’re gonna need trash bags and some kind of hacksaw or something, too. It’s a ton of weed. Bomb.”

“OK, well, you ain’t got nobody else?” I asked.

“Naw, I tried a couple of guys buy they don’t wanna do it. So now I’m hittin’ you up. You interested?”

“Um…I guess I could holla at my boy and see if he wants to fuck with it. Let me hit him up and I’ll call you back in 30 minutes, maybe an hour. Is that cool?”

“Yeah, that’s cool. Hit me back.”

After we hung up I called my friend Loki, but he didn’t answer. He was like that sometimes, where he wouldn’t answer the phone even if he was home, so I decided to get in my 1970 Cougar and drive to his apartment, which was just a couple miles down the street.

When I got to Loki’s apartment I noticed his car was not parked in its usual spot. However, he and his girlfriend only had one car at the time, so just in case he was inside, I went up and knocked on his door.

No answer.

Well, I guess that’s that. I scribbled a note, stuck it on his door, then got in my car and went back home.

When I arrived at my apartment, I called Kevin back.

“Hello,” he said as he picked up the phone.

“It’s me,” I said.

“What’s the verdict?”

“Naw, it’s all bad. I went by my boy’s house but he wasn’t home. I left a note on his door to hit me up ASAP or to meet me at the studio. I ain’t really got nobody else. If I find someone, though, I’ll send ‘em your way.”

“All right. Let me know.”

“A’ight, fa sho,” I said as I hung up the phone.

I got up and started to gather the things I needed for my studio session which was scheduled for 10:00 PM. I was putting together a hip-hop CD and I needed to dump some of the beats I had from my ASR-X Pro onto DATs (digital audio tapes). I had recently started using two studios; Hitworks on Auburn Boulevard and Champion Sounds on Fruitridge. Hitworks was a little less expensive, so I used all the time I had there to dump all my beats and things. Then I’d record my vocals and get my mixes at Champion Sounds. Tonight I had to dump some beats so I was off to Hitworks.

The phone rang again.
“Hello?”
“Hey, babe, what’s up?” It was my girlfriend, Nicki.
“Shit, about to go to the studio. What’s crackin’?”
“Well, I’m glad I caught you before you left. Anyway, Ruben” – Ruben is her son – “wants to stay at my mom’s house tonight. Can you put some of his clothes, a pair of shoes, and a couple of his toys in his backpack and drop it off at her house?”
“Yeah, I can do that. And since we’re talking, go on and make me something to eat. After I drop the stuff off at your mom’s, I’ll swing by and pick up the food on my way to the studio.”
“OK, no problem. Chicken strips and fries?” she asked.
“Yeah.”
“All right. I’ll have it ready. See you soon, OK?”
“See you soon. Oh, call Jimmy and tell him to meet me out front.”
“OK. I love you.”
“I love you too,” I echoed before hanging up.
I went around the apartment and gathered the things I’d been asked to take over for Ruben. Then, after double checking to make sure I had everything I needed for both the studio session and Ruben’s sleepover, I got into my car and drove a couple of neighborhoods over to Becky’s house.
Becky is my girlfriend’s mom, Ruben’s grandmother. Becky and I were never on the best of terms – which I’ll explain a bit more to you later – but we did our best to remain polite with one another. Well, at least in front of each other. I’m certain I was the subject of many of Becky’s complaints when I wasn’t around. Nevertheless, I wanted to fit in with my girlfriend’s family and get along with her mother, so I tried to help out and be as cooperative as I could. Despite this, however, I wanted to avoid awkward dealings as much as possible, which is why I had my girlfriend tell her youngest brother, Jimmy, who out of her family liked me more than anybody else, meet me out front of Becky’s house.

As I pulled up to Becky’s house about 10 minutes later I saw Jimmy, waiting patiently.
“What’s up, Jimmy?”
“What’s up, what’s going on?” he asked.
“Oh, you know, ‘bout to go to the studio. Just droppin’ off Ruben’s backpack first. I guess he’s gonna stay with you guys tonight, huh?”
“Yeah, Nicki’s working pretty late tonight anyway, so instead of waking him up to take him home, he’ll just stay here.”
“Yeah, that’s cool. Well, here’s his backpack, OK? I gotta get going. I’m gonna stop by your sister’s job and get some food before heading off to the studio.”
“OK. Take care of yourself,” he said.
“You too,” I replied before driving off.
Jimmy’s a cool kid. I did my best to mentor him a little bit – encourage him to stay out of trouble and stuff like that. Shit, at this time he must’ve been about 12 years old. Even though he has two older brothers, they didn’t seem to pay him much attention or offer much guidance, and since he took a liking to me, I’d let him come around from time to time.

I arrived at my girlfriend’s job, which was Lyon’s restaurant, where she was a manager at, about 3 minutes after leaving Becky’s house. When I got there I saw her brother David, who also worked at Lyon’s, as a cook, out front smoking a cigarette...

I first met David (and his brother Dennis) in 1994 at a mutual friend’s house; sometime in the first or second month, if my calculations are correct. We were both 14 years old at the time and we clicked instantly.

The same day I met David is when I met the rest of his immediate family, a little later, when they came over to our mutual friend’s house to pick him and Dennis up. It was Becky, his mother; Charles, his stepfather; Jimmy, his youngest brother; Darlene, his older sister; and Nicki, who was pregnant at the time, the oldest of all the siblings at 18, and now, of course, my girlfriend.

I remember thinking that David’s family was pretty cool. Theirs was much different than mine; they were originally from East L.A. and had that whole East L.A. gangster style I thought was cool at the time. Shit, even Becky was an ex-chola who went by the nickname of Payasa. Being from Sac I had a different get-down, but respected theirs – something I’d only experienced before by watching movies, as I’d never been anywhere near East L.A.

Me and David quickly became best friends. We were inseparable. Either he’d be at my house where I lived with my father and stepmother, or I’d be at his. Usually I’d be at his, though, because while my dad is cool as hell, he had very little understanding of or experience with the lifestyle I thought was attractive as an adolescent, and where a few rough situations led me to believe was the answer.

A couple of months after I turned 15 in May of 1994, maybe in July or so, David and I started drifting apart a little bit and we stopped hanging out as much. Really it was probably only about 3-4 weeks, but at that age, that amount of time seems like a lifetime, right? Anyway, this separation allowed him time to start hanging out with other guys in the neighborhood, and apparently he started getting in a little bit of trouble with them – smoking weed, stealing, and shit like that. Soon after, his mother didn’t allow him to hang out with me anymore. She blamed me for the trouble he was getting into. I tried to explain to her that I hadn’t even been hanging out with him, and when he did whatever he did to get in trouble, I was nowhere around – I had absolutely no involvement, didn’t even know his other group of friends. And besides, he and I never got into any serious trouble when we were together; the biggest crime we did was smoke cigarettes on the platform that was right outside his bedroom window. She wasn’t trying to hear it, though. Despite my attempt to explain, she continued to blame me for her son’s problems.
A couple of months went by and I decided to call David to see if it was OK for him to hang out with me again. He told me it was, and to meet him at the park down the street from his house, a place where we’d often hung out together.

I was pretty happy to have my friend back, so I jumped on my dad’s mountain bike and headed straight there, which was about 3 miles or so away. When I got there, I saw him, Dennis, Nicki, Darlene, and a couple of neighborhood kids who lived on their street.

When I rode up to where the group was I remained sitting on my bike – one foot on the pedal, one foot on the ground. I was excited to see my friends and thought that they’d be equally excited, but I quickly noticed a different energy from the group as they began to surround me. They started to accuse me of “talking shit,” as they’d supposedly heard that I had been. I denied it of course, because it simply wasn’t true.

The “talking shit” accusations went on for a couple of minutes, as did a few challenges to fight. I was sure I could whip each one individually, but I also knew I couldn’t whip them as a group, which is how they were confronting me. Therefore, I did my best to avoid a physical fight from breaking out.

Eventually it turned out that another one of their grievances was that I had gotten a stain on one of Dennis’s shirts, and that I’d better replace it. The shirt wasn’t nothing but one of the 3-for-$10 T-shirts you get at the little Chinese fashion stores. It was a royal blue one, to be specific. My dad had the exact same shirt which he’d bought from the exact same place. I wore it all the time and I knew he didn’t care much about it. So, upon me agreeing to replace Dennis’s shirt, I rode my dad’s bike all the way home, grabbed his shirt from wherever it was, rode my bike back to the park, gave them the shirt, then rode my dad’s bike all the way back home again.

Never one to “steal” from my dad, the next day I told him the story of what had happened – about them surrounding me and me replacing Dennis’s shirt with his. He couldn’t care less about his cheap-ass T-shirt, but was pissed off they’d lured me into a setup where they surrounded and threatened me. He told me to “stay away from that family,” that “they’re all screwed up and nothing but trouble.” I told my dad I wouldn’t associate with them anymore. Though, to be honest, I was disappointed by the betrayal and the fact that it seemed I’d lost my friends – a family of sorts – for good. Nevertheless, this was the end of my friendship with David and I had no contact with him again until I got together with his sister in 1997. Now, 4 years later, David and I had completely different groups of friends and didn’t like each other much. Despite this, we did our best to show each other a mutual respect.

“David, what up?” I said as I stepped out of my car.
“What up, man; what’s crackin’?” he replied back before taking a drag off his cigarette.
“Oh, you know, on my way to the studio. Had to stop by and get something to eat first, though, feel me? What are you ‘bout to get into?’”
“I’m about to get together with a few homies tonight, you know, to celebrate my birthday.”
“Oh, shit, it’s your birthday? Today?”
“Naw; tomorrow. But you know how that goes; I’m a kick it with the homies tonight, and tomorrow spend time with the family.”
“Oh, OK. Well, happy birthday, homie,” I said as I gave him daps.
“Thanks. So, yeah, we’re just gonna get together, drink, smoke weed and shit, ya know?”

At the mention of “weed” I remembered the phone call I’d received earlier from my cousin. More for conversational purposes than really anything else, I told him about the information I’d learned a couple hours earlier.
“Yeah, yeah, I feel you. Hey, you know anyone who wants to hit a lick?” I asked.
“What kind of lick?”
“Well, my cousin called me up a couple of hours ago and said there’s 75-100 Gs worth of weed growin’ in a backyard in Fair Oaks. I guess it all just has to be cut and bagged. He asked me if I wanted to go get it, but said I’d need another person or two. I tried to get at Loki, but he wasn’t home. I really ain’t got nobody else to go, so if you and your homies wanna fuck with it, it’s all good.”
“Damn, 75-100 Gs?” he asked.
“Yeah; that’s what he said. Kinda decent, huh?”
“Hell yeah. I don’t know if anyone will wanna fuck with it, but I’ll ask.”
“OK, well, if you wanna do it, get at my cousin Kevin, he’ll give you the details. You got his number?”
“Naw, I ain’t got it.”
“OK, here.” I reached inside my briefcase full of pens, paper, A-DAT tapes, lyrics and studio notes, pulled out a pen and a piece of paper, wrote down Kevin’s number and handed it to him.

See, David’s known Kevin since back in the day, when we were friends. Kevin’s a few years older than us and had a separate group of friends, ones who’re closer to his age and into jackin’ – car stereos, rims, and speakers mostly – but occasionally he’d hang out with us. At the time Kevin had a 1984 or 1985 Thunderbird with a phantom top and rocker panels, and it sat on 14-inch Roadstar spokes. He also had a Clarion CD player, Boston Acoustic mids and highs, and two Lanzar 12s in the trunk that used to shake the neighborhood. Being in it used to make me feel like I was the shit. The three of us used to roll around slammin’ the “Above the Rim” soundtrack, which was new at the time. “Regulators” and “Pour out a Little Liquor” were our favorite songs. Anyway, David and Kevin knew each other well, so I knew it was OK to tell David about the lick and give him Kevin’s number.
“Hey, babe, your food’s almost ready,” my girlfriend said as she stuck her head out the door of the restaurant. Two-and-a-half sides of the restaurant has huge, glass windows. She must’ve seen me out there talking to David.

“OK, cool. Thank you.”

“Hey, babe, come in here for a minute. I wanna talk to you,” she said.

“A’ight,” I told her. Then I told David I’d be back in a few minutes, after I hollered at his sister.

When I got inside the restaurant and walked up to where my girlfriend was, she stood up on her tiptoes and kissed me on the lips.

“Your food will be ready right now. I had ‘em put extra chicken strips in there for you, too,” she said. My girlfriend was the manager so she was able to compensate certain meals. One of the perks of her job is that I always ate for free. And ever since I was a kid I’ve loved Lyon’s chicken strips and potato wedges with barbecue sauce.

“OK, thanks,” I replied.

“Babe, I need you to do me a favor,” she said.

I should’ve known there was going to be a catch to all this. “What’s that?”

“I need you to take David by my mom’s house so he can change, then drop him off at John’s for me. If not, he’s gonna have to wait till I get off work, and that’s still several hours away. He doesn’t wanna ask you himself, but would you do that for him, please?”

“I’ll take him home, but I ain’t tryna go to John’s house. That’s the opposite way from where I’m goin’.”

John Fjelstad was David’s best friend, and I didn’t really care for David’s crew. I didn’t really care for David, either, but in the interest of my relationship with his sister I tried to be cordial. Occasionally I’d drop David off at John’s house as a favor to his sister, but tonight, it really was the opposite way of my destination.

“Come on, babe. They’re gonna get together to celebrate his birthday.”

I did my best to come up with a solution – an alternative to me having to go out of my way; way out of my way. I only came up with one. I didn’t like it much, but it was all I had.

“Look, let him use your car” – her car was really my car, but the one I let her use, which was a primer grey 1979 Grand Prix that I didn’t care much about – “to go pick up John and take him to your mother’s house until you get off work. That way they can kick it. When you get off work, they can drive here to pick you up, and from there you can take ‘em wherever they wanna go.”

“All right, that sounds OK,” she said.

“But make sure he goes straight to John’s house and back home until he has to pick you up. I don’t want them driving around in my shit,” I said as I gave her one of my serious looks – the kind that says “I ain’t playin’.”

“All right, I will. Let me get your food for you.”
She went to the kitchen to get my food. Then she handed it to me and gave me another quick kiss on the lips.

“Have fun tonight, OK?” she said.

“I’ll try,” I said, a bit irritated that I felt sucked into a situation I really didn’t like.

“I’ll see you when you get home.”

“OK.”

I walked back out the restaurant towards my car, and when I got to David I gave him daps one more time, told him to have a happy birthday and that his sister wanted to talk to him, then jumped in my ride. I saw the look of disappointment on his face when he realized I wasn’t giving him a ride to John’s. He was unaware his sister and I had come up with an alternative plan.

I ate my food while driving to the studio. Brotha Lynch Hung’s “Loaded” album was pounding out of my speakers. By the time I arrived at the studio my food was gone, I was full and ready for my session to start, which would be doing so in about an hour. I walked up to the front door and rang the buzzer.

“Who is it?” said the voice through the speaker.

“Kokain.” My real name’s Ron, but my friends call me Kokain because I’m white and I rhyme dope; get it?

“A’ight, I’ll be right there.”

Hitworks – the studio I was at – was located on Auburn Boulevard between Manzanita and Garfield, but closer to Garfield. It was in a cluster of industrial-type buildings across the street from “Showgirls,” a strip club, next to a storage facility, and behind some other, small businesses. It wasn’t actually on the street front, you had to drive in between the small businesses and storage facility in order to access the industrial building cluster in the back, one of which was the studio.

The door opened; it was Riq-Roq, the owner.

“What up, Kain?”

“What up, man; what’s crackin’ around here?” I asked as I walked into the building.

“Oh, you know, business as usual. I see you’re early tonight.”

“Yeah, ain’t nothin’ else crackin’. Thought I’d just come through and see who’s here.”

Hitworks was a studio created by Riq-Roq for artists who’re trying to do something with hip-hop independently – artists who didn’t have the backing of a record company, and therefore, didn’t have the big bucks most music studios charged to use their facility. Instead of the usual $50-$75-an-hour rate that most places charged, Riq only charged $20 an hour. And if you bought a time block – paid for a decent-sized block of time upfront – the price would be even lower than that. For example, my cousin Kevin had purchased a block of 45 hours for $500,
which brings the price down to something like ... $11 and some change. And tonight, I was still using time from that 45-hour block.

Hitworks was also where a lot of people would hang out. Sometimes, even if one didn’t have a session, they’d be there kickin’ it, networking, whatever. And if you wanted to bring a friend or a couple of girls to kick it, that was all good, too – even if they had nothing to do with the production of hip-hop. That’s just the kind of environment it was. It was a place to mingle. You had your regulars, but you also had your visitors, as well. So it wasn’t unusual for me to be there an hour, or even several hours early.

Riq went back to the engineering room to tend to the ongoing session and I went to the kick-it room, which was actually the garage of the building. It had been converted into a little lounge with a couch, coffee table, soda machine, TV, Play Station, and a boom box. It was the only room where you could smoke and drink.

When I walked into the room there were two guys and a girl, sitting back, talking and smoking cigarettes. I didn’t know them, so I introduced myself and then lit up a cigarette of my own. I’m a rather quiet guy, especially amongst people I am unfamiliar with, so while they continued their conversation, I remained quiet while doing my best to not seem standoffish.

After about 10 minutes or so of me being there, one of the guys (I can’t remember his name) had decided he’d had enough of my silence.

“So what do you have going on tonight? Do you rap?”

“Yeah, I rap. I’m working on a CD, but tonight I just gotta dump a few beats,” I said, assuming he knew what I was talking about.

“Dump a few beats?” he asked, obviously unsure of what I meant.

“Yeah. I gotta dump some beats we made, from my ASR-X Pro,” I said as I pointed to my red beat machine, “to these A-DAT tapes. Each beat takes about an hour or so. I’m gonna dump four of ‘em tonight; that way, when I’m ready to drop my vocals, I can just get down to business – without having to wait for each beat to be dumped in between.”

“Oh, OK,” he said. “I understand.”

“Do you have any of your songs on you?” the girl asked curiously.

“Um… Yeah, I think I got a CD in my bag.” Actually, I knew I had a CD in my bag but I wanted to act nonchalant. I reached in my bag, pulled out a burned CD and handed it to her.

“Can we listen to it?” she asked.

“Yeah, go ‘head, I ain’t trippin’.”

The girl went to the boom box, opened the door to the CD player, put my CD in and pushed play. A few seconds later my song “Lyrical High” played through the speakers.

“Now you muthafuckas know that I be blowin’ brains / ‘Cause the shit that I spit is laced with cocain / Everybody knows I got my fans up in a trance / Throw my
vocals in ya Vega, take it to the head and dance / Advance to another level in this
game of the get you / If you fall off the train ain’t nobody gonna miss you / Inhale
my shit through the ears and trip too / I am Kokain, muthafucka, I’ll rip you / A
whole notha lung, to fill what I gotta say / Ha! Ha!, but anyway / I smoke a fat
bleezy, smell the bomb on my shirt? / Take a hit off this potent shit and make ya
lungs hurt / Now curtains get shifted, and skirts get lifted / My lyrical intoxication
got the nation twisted / Lyrical high, Kain got the bomb, baby / There ain’t no
competition, so bring it on, baby....”

The three people in the room were bobbing their heads. I could tell they had
underestimated me and were actually surprised and impressed by what they were
hearing.

“That’s you?” the girl asked.

“Yeah,” I said as calm as I could, but really feeling excited that it seemed I was
getting decent reviews.

“I like it,” she said.

“Hell, yeah,” said one of the guys. “This shit sounds tight.”

“Thanks,” I said.

We listened to the other two or three songs that were on the disc – Haters,
Sabotage, and maybe one other, I can’t really remember – and my crowd of three
all agreed they’d buy the CD. That made me even happier, of course, since selling
my CD was my ultimate go

We hung out a bit longer and I learned that they were there with their friend who
was in the current session. Their friend was another guy I didn’t know. However,
while we were talking, three more guys showed up at the studio, two of whom I
did know – G-Idez and Baby Regg. When they walked into the lounge room, I
shook their hands while briefly introducing myself to the guy I didn’t know. By
now the energy level was rising a little bit and becoming a little more chaotic. G-
Idez went to the back room, the engineering room, where Riq-Roq was working.

“What you finna do tonight; you got a session?” Regg asked as he gestured
towards my equipment.

“Yeah, I gotta dump the beats we made for “Why,” “Ain’t No Competition,”
“Worst Nightmare,” and “Back Up.”

Baby Regg knew what I was talking about. He was the one who’d been helping
me produce my beats.

“Oh, OK. You ain’t finna spit nothin’ tonight?” he asked.

“Naw, I’m a just dump the beats.”

“OK, well, next time you drop vocals bring me to the studio with you. I wanna
help you with a few things. And if you need any verses from me, let me know and
I got you,” said Regg.

Regg was known in the local scene. He’d been around for a while and was once
associated with Lynch. I was relatively new to recording, so I tried to get as much
advice from him as possible. I respected his input, and to have him along was an
honor.
“OK, fa sho’. I’m not sure when I ma drop vocals next, but I’ll be at you.”
Regg lived right down the street from me and we kicked it together a few days out of the week. Unless I dropped my vocals the next day, it’s likely we’d hang out before I did.

The artist who’d been recording came into the lounge room and mentioned that his session was over. That meant it was my up-to-bat. It was around 10:20 or so; nothing’s ever on time at the music studio. I grabbed my stuff and headed to the engineering room where Riq and G-Idez were at.
“What’s on the agenda tonight?” Riq asked.
“I just wanna dump 3 or 4 beats.”
“All right. You got all your shit?”
“Yeah.” I began to hook up my ASR-X Pro and upload the first beat.

Dumping beats is a simple, but long and boring process. See, each individual sound you hear in a beat – the drum kick, the snare, the high-hats, the bassline, the strings, whatever – has to be dumped onto an A-DAT (at least at this time, now it’s mostly all done via computer) one sound at a time, each on an individual track of its own. This way, you can tweak each sound/instrument individually. Typically, you’ll dump each sound/instrument for around five minutes to ensure you have enough for your three- to four-minute song.

Around three hours had went by, a few people had come and went, and it was somewhere in the area of 1:20 AM when we – me, Riq, and some guy I didn’t know – heard the buzzer ring, making us aware someone was at the door wanting to come in.
“Who is it?” Riq asked into a mic that allowed him to communicate from the engineering room through the speaker outside.
“Loki.”
“Loki?” Riq asked as he looked back at me and the other guy in a way that questioned if either of us knew who Loki was.
“Loki’s my boy, he’s here for me. He’s Kilo’s brother,” I told Riq. “I’ll go get him.”
Riq had never met Loki before, as the only other time Loki had been to the studio was with me, and he waited in the car while I dropped something off. However, Loki’s brother, Kilo, frequented the studio pretty often and Riq was well aware of who Kilo was.
I walked to the front door to let Loki in.
“Loki, what up, man?” I said as I opened the front door and he stepped into the building, giving me daps.
“Shit, I got your message. Everything all good?” he asked sounding a bit concerned.
“Yeah, yeah, everything’s all right.”
“I got your message and it seemed kind of urgent.”
I admit, I made it seem kind of urgent to increase my odds of getting a response. See, Loki did not like to come to the studio – which is why he’d only been there once before and stayed in the car.
“Naw, naw, naw. My cousin’s got a come-up and he’s urgent about getting it done. He called me earlier to see if I wanted to do it but said I’d need one or two more people. I called you to see if you wanted to do it with me and you didn’t answer, so I went by your place to see if you were there but you weren’t. That’s when I left the note.”
“Oh, yeah, I was at work,” Loki replied. Loki had some nighttime janitorial job and could basically come and go as he pleased as long as the work got done.
“What kind of come-up?” Loki asked a bit skeptically, as he wasn’t really into anything too crazy.
“Hold on,” I said.
I went to let Riq know I was going to smoke a cigarette and that I’d be back in a few minutes. Once Loki and I were outside I told him the details.
“Well, according to Kevin,” I said as I lit my cigarette, “there’s a house in Fair Oaks with about 75-100 Gs worth of weed growing in the backyard. Supposedly there ain’t nobody home right now and all we gotta do is hop the fence, cut it down, and be off. What do you think?”
“Man; it sounds tempting. 75-100 Gs and nobody’s home?” he asked.
“That’s what Kevin’s saying. I guess somebody tried to get it earlier and ended up beating on somebody who lives there with a bat. Kevin says they’re all at the hospital and the weed’s still in the back yard.”
“Damn, bro, somebody already tried to get it?”
“Yeah. Earlier today.”
“Man...it might not be a good idea to go back tonight. They might be on it, ya know? They might be waiting.”
“I know. And I ain’t even gonna lie, I ain’t tryna go up in nobody’s back yard without a vest. If somebody went up in my yard tryna steal my bushes, I’m dumpin’.”
“Hell yeah I’m dumpin,” Loki agreed as we both chuckled.
Loki had a bulletproof vest. I figured if I was going to go up in somebody’s yard, I’d want to wear it. Of course, he’d want to wear it too, but that’s something we’d have to figure out later.
I didn’t smoke weed. In fact, I didn’t use any drugs – not even alcohol. And I didn’t sell weed, either; I sold cocaine. But my boy Loki was a real weedhead, and I could see the gears in his mind turning. He was calculating shit; weighing out the pros and cons.
“Naw, man; I just got off work and I’m fuckin’ tired. We’d have to go all the way to my house, then get at Kevin for the details, then smash up to wherever in Fair Oaks... I think it’s too late. By the time we get there it’ll be 3:00 AM and I’m already runnin’ on fumes.”
“Yeah, I feel you. I’m pretty tired too,” I said. I was. Unless I was at the studio, most nights I’d be asleep by 10:00 PM. “You still comin’ through tomorrow, though, to make some beats, right?” “Yeah, fa sho. I’ll be there as soon as I wake up and shower,” I assured him. “Well, maybe when we get together tomorrow we’ll slide by and check it out, see if it’s doable,” he suggested. “Yeah, if Kevin will give us the directions to the place. I think a few people are plottin’ on it so he’s tryna keep the location close to the vest. We’ll try, though.” The idea sounded good to me. It’s better to be safe than sorry, and it’s never a good idea to go into something like this blind. “Well, what’re you gonna do right now?” I asked. “I’mma take my black-ass home and go to sleep.” “Why don’t you come kick it in the back for a minute? My session’s almost up, ain’t nobody you know here.” “Man, you know I ain’t tryna get caught up in no bullshit,” he said.

See, Loki wasn’t into gangbanging, but his brother Kilo was. And a few years prior to this, while Loki and Kilo were at a car audio shop on Arden Boulevard, a rival gang member had pulled a gun out on them. In return, Kilo pulled out his gun – a 357 – and plugged the guy three times, killing him. Before taking off, however, they grabbed the guy’s gun off the ground. They consulted the family attorney on the matter and he convinced Kilo to turn himself in and surrender the dead guy’s gun. He did, and after 18 months of fighting the case he was given a deal and released on time served. It was clearly self-defense. However, members of the dead guy’s gang wanted to retaliate by killing Kilo and Loki. Because of this, Loki didn’t like being anywhere where he might get into a situation, a place one of them might show up at, thus; he wasn’t trying to hang around a hip-hop studio where a lot of people went in and out of. Now, I wouldn’t say Loki’s scary, but he’s extremely cautious and careful.

“Naw, bro, I know. You’ll be straight. Ain’t nobody around here,” I assured him. We walked to the engineering room where Riq was dumping my beat and I introduced him to Loki. “Riq-Roq, this is Loki, Kilo’s older brother; Loki, this is Riq-Roq.” “Hey, Riq, what’s up, man?” Loki said as he extended his fist towards Riq to receive daps. “Hey, Loki, how you doin’?” Riq responded as he extended his fist to dap Loki’s. “So Kilo’s your brother, huh?” “Yeah,” said Loki. “OK, OK. So what you guys got goin’ on tonight?” Riq asked as he turned back towards the mixing board to tend to business. “Shit,” I said. “We’re gonna finish up this last beat and be out – call it a night.” “Yeah,” Riq replied, “it’s getting pretty late.” It was around 1:45 AM.
We finished up dumping the last beat I had planned for the night, then I gave Riq
my log sheet to sign off the hours. See, when you buy a block, Riq provides you
with a log sheet stating the amount of time you purchased. It also has individual
sections for you to write the date and time you used the studio, what you worked
on, as well as a place for both the artist’s and Riq’s signatures verifying that the
time was used. It helps Riq keep track of how much time he owes you, and it helps
you keep track of how much time you have left before you have to come out the
pocket for more.
In the parking lot of the studio, Loki and I gave daps, confirmed we’d get
together the next morning, then drove off toward our apartments; mine is on the
way to his.

As I pulled into the gates of my apartment I felt relieved to be home. It had been
a rather long night and I was looking forward to getting in my bed and going to
sleep. However, when I pulled around back to where my apartment was located,
something seemed wrong. It took about half a second before I realized what it was.
My other car was gone, which meant my girlfriend was not home. Where the fuck
could she be?

Once I pulled into my parking space and got out, I noticed the light from the TV
flashing in our bedroom window. This meant she must’ve been home, then went
back out. Hmm, I thought. Then I remembered it was her brother’s birthday and
figured she was either out with him, giving him a ride somewhere, or picking him
up. Shit, she might even be at her mom’s.
I gathered up my equipment, unlocked the front door and went inside. My arms
were full, so I shut the door with my foot and didn’t bother to lock it right away
like I usually do. I set my stuff down on the table we had set up in our dining
room, and then walked to our bedroom to kick off my shoes and empty all the
things from my pockets onto my side-of-the-bed’s end table. When I walked into
my room, I was startled by a surprise; my girlfriend was lying in bed, watching
TV.

“Oh, shit, you’re home?” I asked.
“Yeah, I got home about an hour ago,” she replied. It was then that I became
extremely irritated.
“Well, if you’re home, where the fuck is my car?”
“David’s got it.”
“Why the fuck does David got it?”
“’Cause he needed transportation and I didn’t think you’d mind,” she said as
innocently as she could. She knew she’d fucked up.
“What do you mean you didn’t think I’d mind?! Of course I mind! I don’t want
him out there runnin’ around in my shit! What the fuck are you thinking?!”
“Calm down. It’s his birthday and he needed transportation. You said he could
use it to go pick up John, what’s the difference?”
I was pissed. I try to do something nice for someone, someone I don’t even like, and this is my reward?

“I was very clear that he was to pick up John and go straight home until you got off work. Period.”

“Well, he called me and said he needed to do a few other things so I told him to go ahead. I got a ride home from my friend. Everything will be OK. Stop trippin’,” she said defensively.

“Man, I don’t even like your brother; or his little bitch-ass friends. The only reason I don’t beat his ass is because of you. If it wasn’t for that, I’d teach him how to respect somebody.”

On top of the bad blood from 1994, her brother had also said some things about me behind my back while I was in CYA; he and his best friend at the time, Marcus. He didn’t know I knew, but I did. The only reason why I didn’t give him one of those good old-fashioned ass kickin’s is because I didn’t want to deal with the drama that was sure to come afterwards; especially with his bipolar mother.

“Respect, respect, respect; that’s all you talk about. Quit trippin’,” she said.

At that moment, I heard my front door open. Not knowing who was invading my home, it startled the shit out of me. I stepped out of my bedroom to see what the hell was going on; it was David and John, barging into my spot. Once again, a huge form of disrespect. I was about to explode into a rage on these two disrespectful dirt-bags, but seeing the look of panic on their faces distracted me from my rage.

“It’s all bad,” David said.

“What do you mean it’s all bad?” I asked.

“It’s all bad, fool,” David repeated.

“What’s going on out there?” asked my girlfriend from the bedroom.

“Mind your own fuckin’ business,” I responded, still pissed off at her.

“We need you to give us a ride home,” David said. “We need to get home.”

I wasn’t sure what was going on, but the look of panic on David and John’s faces were convincing and outweighed my lack of desire to drive anywhere. “OK, I’ll take you guys home,” I said.

“What are you guys doing?” asked my girlfriend in an irritating, complaining-type tone as she came out the bedroom and saw David and John in our living room.

“Nothing,” I said. “Go to bed and mind your own fuckin’ business.”

Me, David and John got in my car and I began to drive out of my apartment complex.

“Where you guys going, your mom’s or John’s?” I asked, as the two places were in opposite directions.

“Take me to my girl’s,” David replied, referring to his girlfriend Cynthia who lived about two miles or so from my apartment.

“Take me home,” John said. John’s house was in the same direction as Cynthia’s, but just a little further.
“So what’s going on, man, you guys straight?” I asked, feeling a weird energy inside of my car.

“Naw, it’s all bad, fool,” David said again.

“Yeah, it’s all bad, man,” John confirmed.

I began to worry about what could’ve happened. About a year prior to this, John and their other best friend, Marcus, the guy who’d been talking shit about me along with David while I was in CYA, had caught a murder beef. They’d seen two brothers, both of whom were from a rival gang, and Marcus shot one in the head, blowing his brains out, then shot the other several times, but without killing him. Marcus went on the run and then ended up killing himself around three months later. John was arrested but let out on bail, since Marcus was the shooter and now dead. Anyway, this incident caused the neighborhood to be a bit funky, if you know what I mean. And I started to wonder if maybe they did something in my car that would now make my car and whoever’s in it – mostly me, my girlfriend, and her 4-year-old son – a target. I started to get irritated again. I told her I didn’t want nobody driving around in my shit!

It only took about three minutes to get to David’s girlfriend’s house. Once we got there he got out, and without saying a word to John or I, went to her front door. When it opened, he went in and I drove off.

John and I arrived at his house about a minute after that. The drive over there was a bit awkward, as we had no connection with each other other than David, which was already an awkward situation within itself. When he stepped out of my car he said, “OK, thanks, fool,” and that was that.

On my drive home I still felt a weird energy inside of my car. I wasn’t sure what was going on, but I admit I was curious. When I walked inside my apartment, there was my girlfriend, looking at me as if she had a right to be angry.

“What did you guys do?” she asked.

“Nothing; I took ‘em home; don’t fuckin’ worry about it,” I said, still angry with her.

I took off my clothes, washed up a bit, and then jumped into bed next to my girlfriend. We went to sleep without saying another word to each other.

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KANO'S STRUGGLE
a ratchet novel by
CA$CIOUS$ GREEN
CHAPTER 7:  
THE OGs

"Kano, another piece of advice is to always affiliate yourself with people you can learn from. See, you can't learn from people who're always looking to you for knowledge. In order to continue to do things you've never done before, you're gonna have to continue to learn how to do things differently than you've done them before. As they say, 'It's insane to keep doing the same things, the same exact way, yet expecting a different result.' Do you see where I'm coming from, Kano?" Willie D said while looking at Kano to see if he still had his attention.

"Yeah, I feel you, OG," Kano said as he absorbed Willie D's knowledge like a sponge. He began thinking how it all felt like the old days, when he used to run errands for Willie D as a youngster. Willie D had always fed him with little pieces of knowledge. It's a big part of why he's wiser than most others in his age group, and why he was the leader of his crew on the streets. He knew how to strategize and utilize his past mistakes as strength to acquire a desired position for not only himself, but also for his crew.

Suddenly they came upon a table of OGs playing dominoes.
"What's up, Fellas?" said Willie D. "I got somebody I want y'all to meet. This is a youngsta I practically raised. His name is Kano."

The OGs observed Kano skeptically at first, but finally one of the gentlemen introduced himself. "How you doin', Kano? My name is Pig. It's a pleasure to meet you," he said as he shook Kano's hand.

Another OG said, "My name is Mike, but everybody calls me Snake."
As Snake reached to shake Kano's hand, Pig murmured, "I wonder why."
Hearing Pig's comment, Snake said, "The same reason they call you Pig, grimy-ass muthafucka! Now shut up and play dominoes," he said as he slammed the domino on the board and yelled, "Fi'teen on yo' monkey ass for being all up in grown folk bidness!" causing the table to explode in laughter.
Then one of the other OGs said, "How you doin', Kano? They call me Cincinnati." He greeted Kano with an embrace: "Nice to meet you, youngsta," he added.

The last OG said, "My name is Goldie," as he grinned, revealing a mouth full of gold and diamonds. "Welcome to hell," he said as he gave Kano dap, and at the same time slammed the domino and yelled, "20, and domino!" as everybody cussed out Cincinnati for not blocking his play and letting him go out on them. "Oh, yeah; if you need anything, just let me know," Goldie added as he looked at Kano to see how he would respond.

Kano glanced at Willie D, gave him a smirk, then looked back at Goldie and said, "Nah, I'm good." The table suddenly burst into laughter at Goldie's failed attempt at trying to lure Kano into the deceptive contract.

Feeling proud of Kano, Willie D said, “You’re learning, my boy.” Then he patted him on the shoulder and added, “But this is only the tip of the iceberg, so let’s roll.”

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Chapter 25

“Get in the ride,” Davy said as he came out of the theater, bag in hand and a dark expression on his face.

“Wassup?” Rico asked. “I thought we were gonna.”

“Nah,” Davy said in a clipped tone. “It’s goin down, and using Sniper’s ride would just bring the placas down on this spot. Between here and county, we’ll spot another Toyota whatever-the-fuck and switch its plates, onto this one.”

Solo shrugged and nodded. “That’s cool. Sup with the bag?”

Davy barely acknowledged the question, then finally said, “We’ll be hot, so I got shit to lay low. Get in.”

Rico was content with that answer and planted himself in the back seat, but Solo paused at the driver’s side door. Solo grudgingly followed.

“Alright, so wassup?” Solo asked more insistently as he turned the ignition over.

Davy shrugged with a hard expression. “We’re up.”

Rico cheered. “Fuck ya!”

“Up for what, fool?” Solo kept on.

Davy turned with contempt. “What, you bitchin’ up, ese?” The look hid the workings of his mind while he invented the details of where he would be directing his anger.

“Whatcha homie!” Solo snapped. “You may be Diablo’s boy, and got a couple notches, but you don’t tell me.”

“I don’t motherfucker?” Davy snarled, and Rico was immediately quiet in the back seat. “I told you twice already we’re goin’ through White Fence, and shit was gonna pop. How much do I gotta spell shit out, homie?”

“A little more than that, homie,” Solo said impatiently, but kept on driving towards Whittier. “Wassup? You don’t trust me, or something?”

“Nah,” Davy assured. “Shit’s just gonna go down, and I’m trippin’ a little.”
“Well?” Solo demanded. “It’s obvious we’re in, fool, so? Wassup, Vipes? Hey, and it’s nice you finally stopped soundin’ like some rico gava, and learned to talk like a fuckin’ homie. Makes your shit a lot easier to take, eh.”

Davy snorted. “Mob Deep Pirus tried to roll two of our spots last week.”
“Yeah, no shit. They got handled,-”
“See, this is why I don’t try to tell you shit. You don’t listen, you babble,” Davy said.

“Oh, spensa, homie,“ Solo said, rolling his eyes.
“Them niggers weren’t east side nothin’. Mob Deep’s north; way north in Pacoima,“ Davy said, and then came the invention. “So, how’d they get here? Why’d they come to the east side in the first place?”
“They’re stupid niggers, who the hell knows? Probably got lost, or some shit,“ Solo said.

Davy shook his head. “Two crews come all the way down from Pacoima to roll two spots they shouldn’t even know about? And they rolled hot through White Fence goin’ and comin’? And none of them vatos out there busted a grape?”

“Huh?” Rico put in, wanting to be part of the conversation.

Solo leaned back and flexed his hands on the wheel. “No shit,” he said, almost to himself.

Davy nodded. ”That’s right. Now we’re gonna let them vatos know what time it is. We’ll show them bitches how Locos roll a spot.”

Solo was nodding slowly. “Yeah.”

Rico began cheering and waving his Mac-11 around. “Fuck yeah, we’re gonna come up big, homies!”

Solo swerved, and Davy snatched the flailing gun, aiming it and Rico towards the rear window. “Put that up, stupid! Don’t wave a gun around in the fucking car!” Davy barked, then shoved Rico back into his seat. “You better have the safety on, dumbass!”

“It is, eh!” Rico protested, calming down to sulk, and then flicking the safety switch to on.
Chapter 26

By the time they had gotten to a liquor store a few blocks from County, Davy had realized that he was probably sticking his nuts in a vise with this stunt, but it was also a little late to back out. He had to tell Diablo something before he kicked off a war really for no better reason than he was having a bad day. More than that, Solo was acting sketchy again. How long did it take to pick up a fifth and some smokes? Davy got out while Rico was sitting in the back and rolling weed. On impulse, he tapped on his phone and then tapped the autodial icon of a cartoon devil that was Diablo’s cell.

After a half dozen rings, it went to voice mail. At that, Davy pulled back and blinked. At this time of day, even if the vato was on Green Eyes, or Tiny, or Sleepy, he would have either answered, or the phone would have been off and it would not have taken six rings to go to voice mail. Paranoia set in; and it was not helped when Solo came out of the store ten seconds later looking even more sketchy as he carried a small paper sack.

“What took so long?” Davy asked, turning his phone off and stuffing it in his pocket. His .32 was in easy reach, and he knew he was a lot faster on the draw than Solo especially if the fool was going to try and pull something out of a paper sack.

“Huh? Nothin’ eh. Stupid gringo hassled me over my ID. I told him Lincoln don’t need no fuckin ID,” he said with a nervous laugh.

It sounded like bullshit, but Davy nodded anyway. “Let’s bounce, then, Menace is waiting.”

It was a tense forty-five second drive to the pickup area of County, and they had barely parked on the sidewalk when Solo was up and out of the car.

“I’ll go get him, don’t trip. Get your puff on, fool, and crack that thing, Rico. Get this party started,” he said.
Rico cheered, and Davy tossed him a lighter. While Rico was occupied, Davy slid the Glock and Mac-11 out from under the driver’s seat and popped out the clips.

“Want some?” Rico asked.

“Nah.”

“What’cha doin’, eh?”

“Just checkin’ them. Don’t trip. Get your puff on. You know Menace is gonna blow whatever’s left, and we still got shit to do,” Davy said as he emptied the clips and cleared the chambers of the weapons.

“Uh, don’t look like you’re checkin’ them,” Rico said in puzzlement even as he took another look.

“Homie,” Davy said, thinking quickly as he emptied the brown bag and dumped the bullets in it, then locked it in the glove box, “We are right outside County. If we get hassled cause there’s a gang of placas everywhere, there’s a big difference between a loaded gun, and one that ain’t got no bullets. Mentiéndes?”

“Oh, damn, hell yeah?” Rico said, quickly stubbing out the joint, then ejecting the clip from his personal .45 H&K pistol. “I didn’t even think a that. Here, homie.”

A few seconds later, Davy handed back the empty clip with a tight smile.

“And the chamber?”

“Uh, I don’t think I had one”

“Check, eh,” Davy said, keeping a watchful eye on the release area.

There was an empty clack. “Nah, eh. I’m careful,” he said with a smile, and Davy rolled his eyes. His stomach unknotted only slightly. He and Rico were tight, but Diablo was still Rico’s brother. Davy touched the phone in his pocket, but then decided against it.

“Solo’s takin’ his time,” Davy casually observed.

Rico shrugged. “Hey, what’s up with the drink?” He said about to crack it.

“Open container?” Davy said off handedly as scenarios flashed through his mind. Then an idea struck him - he could turn Rico here and now.

“Funny thing for a vato have suggested with all those placas around.”

“Huh?”

“Almost like the homie’s scared and wants us all to got popped so he ain’t gotta do shit.”

Rico scrunched his face at the thought, but then he swatted his hand and laid out across the back seat. “Nah, you’re trippin’.”

“Am I? That vato’s been acting funny,” Davy said, glancing back to make sure Rico was still relaxed.

“Bump some tunes, Vipes, and chilax. This is some good shit.”

Davy turned on the radio and scanned until he heard a satisfactory grunt from Rico. It could have been Kenny G for all Davy could care. The scenarios started
playing out again, and then Davy snapped alert; Solo had appeared by the release gate, but he was alone.

Davy said nothing as Solo approached, his mind was racing, and his mouth was dry, but he did everything he could to at least appear calm outwardly.

“What’s up?” he asked as Solo got in.

“Oh eh, it is gonna be a couple more hours. Some paperwork shit,” Solo assured.

“Let’s go kick it up at the wash, eh. Bein’ round all these placas ain’t cool.”

“Man, the hell with Ontario. It sucks out there,” Davy said, leaning back in his seat and gauging every word Solo said.

“Who gives a shit? It's like fifteen minutes away, eh! I ain’t really tryin’ to be runnin’ around out here. There’s all kinds a stupid vatos,” Solo complained.

Was there tension in his voice, or was Davy imagining it? Davy did some quick calculations. If Solo had called from the liquor store, and gotten a green light from Diablo that fast, the wash was a set up, but it would still take a half hour for anyone to get from their hood all the way to Ontario. Either that, or Solo was going to try to live up to his name - it would be a better story than the truth, since he had gotten Solo for gettin’ caught masturbating at a party when he was twelve. Davy laughed a little. The stupid fuck might actually try it, but too bad for him that Davy would have the only loaded gun at this party. Either way, Davy would only have a small window of advantage when they got to the wash, and he could not afford to hesitate: wrong meant dead.

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