

BLOOD'S THICKER THAN WATER

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ISBN: 978-0-9860782-0-0

Library of Congress Control Number: 2014939185

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Printed in the United States by Mira Digital Publishing Chesterfield, Missouri 63005

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Watchful Eyes

Keisha became a member of C-crew back in 1994. She was only sixteen years old with shapes and curves like a Beyoncé and a smooth chocolate complexion like Kelly. But don't get it fucked up, though; Keisha was no slouch when it came time to put in work.

Keisha had been a full-time hustler since the age of twelve. See, Keisha had grown up in a household of eight people in a house with only two bedrooms, overseen by a stepfather who would physically explore her body and rob her of her innocence and childhood every chance he got. Keisha's mother worked full-time in the dietary department of the Christiana hospital. She was on her feet 24-7, slaving for those white people on the job, so she rarely had enough time to stop and listen to her two daughters and four sons or to sit back and observe how Mr. Gemini would watch Keisha and Karen when they walked around the house in their nightgowns.

How he would sit on that funky-ass couch in that dirty-ass mechanic outfit, his Dickie's oiled and greased up, and drink his Mad Dog 20/20 with lust filling his eyes and a grin on his unshaved face—watching Ms. Whitney's two young princesses like the big bad wolf ready to attack the unmindful sheep or a fox getting ready to slide into the unlocked henhouse when the farmer is asleep.

Mr. Gemini, aka Mr. Fix-it, was the neighborhood handyman. He would fix cars, bikes, and plumbing; paint houses; repair roofs; hang drywall; rewire a whole buildings electrical wiring. He was a poor excuse for a man. He had the complexion of a dirty penny and a receding hairline, a "cap off," where he had hair around the sides and the back of the head. If he took a baseball cap off, there's no hair on the top. He would always seem to sweat for no apparent reason. And the Laser Beers he drank along with his Madd Dog 20/20 didn't make him smell like roses either. He stood about 6 feet 3 inches with his boots on and weighed in around 270 pounds, with a belly like a woman in her ninth month of pregnancy. Every shirt he wore seemed to sit on top of his belly, never quite able to cover his entire stomach. The pants that he owned always seemed to be too small for him because every time he sat down, they would hike up on his shins, and sometimes damn near up on his knee caps.

Ms. Whitney and Gemini had hooked up a couple years after her first and only love, Bernard Brown, "Big Black," had been murdered during a robbery. Big Black had been the leader of an old Wilmington, Delaware, South Bridge gang called "Black Stallions." His brother Larry was the leader of an old North Side gang called "The Yayo Boyz." Big Black was five years Larry's senior. And being the senior he had more leadership ability and possessed more experience in the street aspect of things.

Big Black admired his little brother's ambition to follow in his footsteps,so he shielded and protected him from rival gangs like the West Side "Mongol Nation" and the

NewCastle "Lot Boyz," just to name a few.

Big Black didn't look at his organization as a gang. Oh no! He considered his organization as some sort of offshoot of the Panthers or the Organization of Afro-American Unity. He loved Huey P. Newton and Malcolm X. He strongly believed in the betterment of the black race or, better yet, the defeated Moors of America. He hated to be called "Nigga" or "negro" or any name that was subliminally imperative to the African race.

He studied the teachings of brother Martin Luther King Jr.; Noble Drew Ali; Na'im Akbar; The Honorable Elijah Muhammad, The Prophet Muhammadan Rasool Allah Sallallahu Alaihi Wasallam; Harriet Tubman; The Russian anarchist Bakunin; and the European investigator of the "conspiracy" Norman Dodd.

Big Black believed that the only way to defeat the enemy was to study the enemy. He believed in Huey P. Newton's 10-point platform and program. He honored the program every Tuesday and Thursday; Big Black and about 50 other Black Stallions would march up to Rodney Square in downtown Wilmington wearing long black leather trench coats, black steel-toe boots, and black army fatigues accompanied along with black leather gloves and signs reading

FUCK THE GOVERNMENT ...

WE WANT EQUAL RIGHTS ...

EVERY MAN WAS CREATED EQUAL ...

WE WILL DEFEND OURSELVES ...

WE WILL DEFEND OUR COMMUNITIES ...

GOD WILL JUDGE ALL!

Every Stallion, holding a sign, would stand side by side at parade rest while BIG BLACK stood at a podium in the middle of Rodney Square reciting Huey P. Newton's 10-point platform and program:

WHAT WE WANT ...

WHAT WE BELIEVE ...

1.WE WANT: Freedom, we want power to determine the destiny of our black community.

WE BELIEVE: That black people will not be free until we are able to determine our destiny.

2.WE WANT: Full employment for our people.

WE BELIEVE: That the federal government is responsible in obligated to give every man employment or a guaranteed income. We believe that if the white American businessmen will not give full employment, then the means of production should be taken from the businessmen and placed in the community so that the people of the community can organize and employ all of its people and give a high standard of living.

3. WE WANT: An end to robbery by the capitalist of our black community.

WE BELIEVE: That this racist government had robbed us and now we are demanding the overdue debt of forty acres and two mules. Forty acres and two mules was promised 100 fucking years ago as restitution for slave labor and mass murder of black people. We will accept the payment in currency, which will be distributed to our many communities. The Germans are now aiding the Jews in Israel for the genocide of the Jewish people. The Germans murdered six million Jews. The American racist have taken part in the slaughter of over fifty million black people; therefore, we feel that this is a very fucking modest demand that we make.

4.WE WANT: Decent housing fit for the shelter of human beings.

WE BELIEVE: That if the "NO GOOD" white landlords will not give decent housing to our black community, then the housing and land should be made into cooperatives so that our community, with government aide, can build and make decent housing for its people.

5.WE WANT: Education for our people that exposes the true nature of this rotten ass decadent American society. We want education that teaches us our true history and our role in the present day society!

WE BELIEVE: In an education system that will give to our people knowledge of self. If a man does not have knowledge of himself and his position in society and the world, then he has very little chance to relate to anything else!

6. WE WANT: All black men to be exempt from that devil orchestrated military service.

WE BELIEVE: That black people should not be forced to fight in the devil orchestrated military service to defend a racist government that does not protect us. We will not fight and kill other people of color in the world who, like black people are being victimized by a white racist government of America. We will protect ourselves from the force and violence of the racist police and the racist military, by whatever means necessary!

7. WE WANT: An immediate end to police brutality and murder of black people!

WE BELIEVE: We can end police brutality in our black community by organizing black self defense groups that are dedicated to defending our black community from racist police oppression and brutality. The second Amendment to the constitution of the United States gives a right to bear arms., We therefore believe that all black people should arm themselves for self defense!

8. WE WANT: Freedom for all black men held in Federal, State, County, and City prisons and jails!

WE BELIEVE: That all black people should be released from the many jails and prisons, because they have not received a fair and impartial trial!

9. WE WANT: All black people when brought to trial to be tried in court by a jury of their peer group or people from their black communities, as defined by the constitution of the United States!

WE BELIEVE: That the courts should follow the United States constitution; so that

black people will receive fair trials. The Fourteenth Amendment of the United States constitution gives a man a right to be tried by his peer group. A peer is a person from a similar economic, social, religious, geographical, environmental, historical and racial background. To do this the court will be forced to select a jury from the black community from which the black defendant came!

We have been, and are being tried by all white jurors that have "NO" understanding of the "Average Reasoning Man" of the black community!

10. WE WANT: Land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace! And as our major political objective, a United Nations—supervised plebiscite to be held throughout the black colony in which only black colonial subjects will be allowed to participate, for the purpose of determining the will of black people as to their national destiny!

WHEN: In the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bonds, which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, A decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation!

WE HOLD: These truths to be self-evident, that "ALL" men are created equal; that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security!

The last time Ms. Whitney saw her lover and the father of her five children was November 8, 1984. It was a cold winter afternoon, and Jack Frost was punishing Wilmington in the ring called temperature.

"Damn it's colder than a mothafucka out there," Black exclaimed.

"Watch ya mouth! Don't you see these kids on the couch covered up in ya jacket trying to keep warm?" Ms. Whitney replied to her unmindful partner.

"I'm sorry kids, but that weather a'int fit for a sinner begging to get out of hell. I wouldn't advise Santa Claus to bring his fat white ass to South Bridge in this shit!"

"Boy, watch that sailor, preaching mouth around my babies!"

"And you think I'm playing with you!"

"It's bad enough that li'l Bernie has become accustomed to saying the 'F' word

whenever he gets frustrated. And that darn Keisha thinks that all white people are devils, demons, ghost and god only knows what else," Whitney said.

"I'm sorry, baby, but I've been out there working on that station wagon for hours in that crap. And I'm telling you baby I've never felt ice that cold!"

"Well is it fixed?" Whitney asked, genuinely concerned.

"Yeah it's running for now. I had to pay Charlie to run me over to Pep Boys to pick up some Quick Start Spray and a bottle of fuel injector cleaner—that shit cost a arm and a leg! I put the Quick Start into the air cleaner; and the bottle of fuel injector cleaner inside the gas tank. And that son of a bitch clicked right over!" Black smiled as he stared in his children's mother's eyes.

"Well, either I punch you in ya mouth for cursing or you run over to G&P's over North side. And grab me and ya soon-to-be baby boy a large cheese stake. He's been kicking all day long. I ate two bowls of Cheerios and a lettuce and mustard sandwich and drank some orange juice mixed with ginger ale, and he still aint happy." Whitney sighed, placing both hands on her belly as she sat on the arm of the chair.

Black got down on one knee placing his right hand on Whitney's stomach rubbing her belly in a circular motion. Trying his best to calm down a soon to be Michael Dryden aka "Li'l Mike." Black held his wool hat in his left hand, only to have it snatched away from him by his nine-year-old son Bernard Jr., "Li'l Bernie Mack."

"Daddy!" An overly excited Bernard Jr. placed his father's hat on his head and danced around the house like a member of the Jackson Five. "Can I go?"

"Yeah, Tito, or Germaine, or whoever the hell you suppose to be you can go! Grab ya socks, sneakers and jacket and let's get it!" Black remarked.

Six-year-old Keisha whined. "Daddy, I wanna go toooooo! It's not fair. I wanna go just like Bernie!" She crossed her arms over her chest while jutting out her bottom lip, on the verge of flooding the entire house with tears if her father says no.

"Sure, baby girl, you can ride with Daddy! Tell Mommy put you socks, sneakers, jacket and hat on, and you can ride to the store with Daddy," Black said in a childlike voice.

"Yeeeaaa!

I'm going with Daddy!

I'm going with Daddy!

I'm going with Daddy!"

"You stupid, yo!"

spat an angry Bernard Jr. through clenched teeth.

"You a stupid girl who always wanna do what I do!"

"Stop calling ya sister stupid, boy, before ya little self won't be going nowhere!

And go get you and ya sister's stuff like ya dad said before I make him leave y'all!"

Whitney replied, moving her head in a snake like motion.

"Daddy told me get my own stuff, and you get Keisha stuff!" Li'l Bernie muttered under his breath while stomping in the room to follow his mother's order.

"Oooo, I'm gonna choke and kill that damn boy one of these days if it's the last thing I do!"

"Baby, calm down!

He's just a boy; he knows not what he does," Black said.

"Like hell, he don't know!" Whitney replied.

"He a boy smelling his own piss, and I'm gonna put his nose all the way down in it if he keep running that smart-ass mouth."

"Look at ya self, baby!

All worked up and cursing and you talk about me wit my mouth, huh?" Grimacing, Black stood and pulled his wallet from his back pocket.

He reached in his wallet, pulled out five crisp 20-dollar bills, and handed them to Whitney.

"Here take this and call that fucking Donald's oil company back one more time.

If he can't be here in the next fifteen to twenty minutes, call Randy's oil service off Kirkwood highway.

I would rather give my hard-earned dollars to the black man any way."

"Well, I called right before you came in the door, and the secretary or whoever she was said we were up next on the truck drivers route.

So it's probably just a little while longer, baby.

We just have to be patient, I guess?" Whitney batted her eyes at her partner, indicating to just relax a little.

"Patience hell!

When my babies are covered up in a fucking jacket with snotty noses and shaking from head to toe, somebody gonna do something!"

Black bent over to kiss four-year-old Karen and two-year-old Raeon on the forehead and cheek.

Between coughs, Karen asked,

"Daddy, can I go?"

"No, baby, because you sick and Daddy don't want you to get any sicker.

The oil man will be here shortly.

And Daddy wants you and Raeon to stay in the house so y'all can get all the heat okay?"

"Yes, Daddy, okay."

"Daddy, we ready!" Li'l Bernie announced.

"No y'all not," Whitney said to her irresponsibly acting children.

"Boy, come here so I can fix your hat on ya head!

And, Keisha, you better put ya boots on the right feet!

You know better than that!"

"I told him they was on the wrong feet, Mommy!

He made me put them on like this!"

"Why'd you make her put those boots on the wrong feet for, boy?" Whitney pinched Li'l Bernie's right arm.

"Owww, man, I didn't even do nuffin!" Li'l Bernie smirked when away from his mother.

"Call me another man!"

Whitney tried to regain her grip on Li'l Bernie's arm, but her reflex was no match for his young cheetah like legs as he darted behind his father holding on with all his might to the waist band of the man whom always protected him.

"Calm da hell down, boy, and get ya knucklehead self out in that car and put ya seatbelt on you and Keisha!" Black turned to Whitney.

"Baby so what you want from the store again?"

"Get me a large cheesesteak with extra cheese, fried onions, pickles, mustard, lettuce, mayonnaise, ketchup, black pepper, and a li'l bit of salt and a big bag of potato chips.

Make sure it's those homegirl chips, because those the only ones I can eat.

And get whatever you gonna get.

Those kids can eat the rest of that spaghetti in the refrigerator or some oodles and noodles or something!" Whitney flashed a devilish smile.

"They don't want no left over spaghetti or no damn oodles and noodles.I'm gonna get them a couple of cheeseburgers, because if I don't, they gonna be up in ya face begging for ya cheesesteak. So Ibetter get them their own food."

"Yeah, you right.

I'll just call Paulie and place the order and tell him you on ya way to pick up an order for Ms. Brown."

"I don't know why you saying, 'Ms. Brown.' We a'int married yet," Black teased.

"That's the problem you need to put a ring on me instead of kids in me!" Whitney stood and, extending her finger toward his face, wobbled toward Black.

"I don't know why you scared to get on your sorry ass knee and commit."

"Baby, stop the madness and order that food!

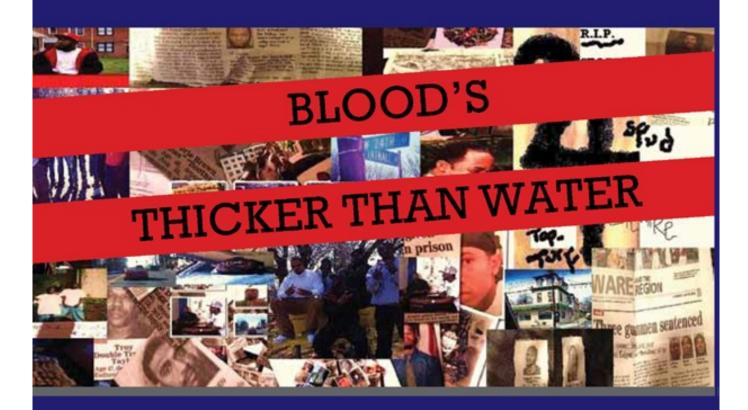
You know I brought you all kinds of rings and necklaces and earrings and stuff.

I brought you so many rings you got a ring for each finger." Snickering, Black ran out of the house, anticipating Whitney trying to wrap her hands around his neck and squeeze the breath out of his foolish-talking ass.

"They not the right rings, you no good ... ooooll!" Whitney replied, frustrated.

Between Bernard Sr. and Bernard Jr., Whitney had her hands full, and she knew it too. Still and all, she loved them both with every fiber of her soul and would walk through the desert with a snowsuit on with temperatures ranging near hell to fetch a glass of water if need be for her two men.

She tried to be tough with them, but deep down, she knew that they had her wrapped around their fingers, and she loved every second of it.



Blood's Thicker Than Water is a story of murder, gunplay, sex, money and family ties in the heart of the city, told for the first time. Raymond E. Blake paints this untold tale like no other—a story about how disrespect caused two families to collide with each other and leave blood and limbs on many streets—

The Yayo Boyz and the M.O.B. Boyz clash in a rain of bullets that leave news reporters speechless and local on lookers in a silent terror. "Guerrilla," aka "Real," runs his Mob family like no other, while the Browns show that true family is like no other. And through it all, no matter what—BLOOD'S always THICKER THAN WATER!!

Read along as Raymond E. Blake masterfully takes you on a journey from scene to scene, painting pictures in graphic detail of a story almost forgotten.

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