

INT/EXT. JOHNSON FAMILY HOUSE (DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY) - DAY

On a bright and shining beautiful day in the neighborhood, ANDRE "DRE" JOHNSON is looking out of a downstairs hallway window for a moment thinking about the privileged life that he has. As he is looking outside, JACK and DIANE JOHNSON are playing with mostly white friends casually doing tricks and stunts with skateboards, bikes, and rollerblades. Diane is very talented at doing the skateboard tricks while Jack does his best (which is not good) to keep up on his skates. Seeing this reminds Dre of his childhood in the streets of Compton.

ANDRE (V.O.)

It's easy to take for granted the success of an intelligent brother like yours truly, especially when a lot of what you have was unimaginable back when you were growing up. Living in the hood, you were just happy not to hear gunshots from the streets.

Dre is startled by the sounds of several gunshots and a police siren. This takes him back to some of the bad days he had as a child growing up. The sound puts him in a state of repressed fear until he hears a voice that jogs him out of his memory.

EARL (O.S.)

Yeah, get 'em. Shaft always gets his man.

EARL "POPS" JOHNSON is watching an old episode of Shaft in the living room nearby, with the speakers on full blast. Dre is mad that a loud TV was the cause of the noise (and embarrassed that it caused him to freak out).

ANDRE

Shaft don't need to be blasting through the house. I know you got good hearing.

Pops turns down the TV audio.

EARL (O.S.)

Only cause this is your house. You never disrupt Shaft.

Dre silently bemoans the fact that Pops still doesn't give him the full respect of his house as he had to when the roles were reversed. He quickly forgets about the issue once he sees Jack and Diane still playing with their friends outside, which urges him to continue his thought.

ANDRE (V.O.)

You try to do right for your kids
by raising them in the best area
possible so they have a chance at
being better than you.

During this thought, Diane lands a difficult skateboarding
trick with the other kids applauding.

ANDRE (V.O.)

Or at least a chance to try.

At this moment, Jack is struggling to stay upright while
rollerblading.

ANDRE

(looking at Jack falling)

Wow.

ANDRE (V.O.)

But the area you hail from will
just feel different than anywhere
else. The place where you was
raised, warts and all, will always
be a part of you. But what if
someone tried to take that away?

ANDRE

(still looking at Jack)

That's just sad.

BEGIN TITLES

Black-ish opening credits.

END TITLES

MONTAGE. PEOPLE, PLACES, AND CULTURE SEQUENCE

Stock footage of people from around the world happy and
representing where they are from through their everyday
lives.

ANDRE (V.O.)

No matter where you go, people will
have pride in where they are from.
It affects the way you talk, the
things you like, and even the food
you eat.

Stock footage of African Americans from different parts of
the country.

Episode Title: Homeward Bound

ANDRE (V.O.)

This is definitely true for black people, as we latch on to our hometowns and our family roots as firmly as our collective culture, because, to keep it real, we don't have much of a choice. We as a people have a lot of pride about where we are from ...

Stock footage of Tupac and Biggie Smalls. Also, stock footage of Bloods, Crips, and other gang activity.

ANDRE (V.O.)

... and at times, too much pride.

More stock footage of African Americans from different parts of the country.

ANDRE (V.O.)

For better or worse, it's a part of us, even when that place begins to change in ways we can't even recognize anymore.

INT. STEVENS & LIDO BUILDING (MEETING ROOM) - DAY

Dre, CHARLIE TELPHY, JOSH OPPENHOL are waiting for LESLIE STEVENS to enter the room to start the meeting. Leslie walks in with an assistant and the meeting begins.

LESLIE

Ok people, let's get cracking. We have a tight deadline for the marketing contract of the new Naturhall grocery stores.

ANDRE

Next ones on the list are ...
(pauses due to the shock
of what he's reading)
Inglewood? Compton? When did this happen?

JOEL

Couple days ago. They mentioned some of those stores would be in up-and-coming places.

CHARLIE

Yeah, I saw a few of those riding around. They got this one type called Peach Sandy Surprise.
(MORE)

Episode Title: Homeward Bound

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

The leaves smell divine ...
(realizes everyone is
staring at him confused)
... and I just realized the place
is called Naturgrow ... and I
probably shouldn't be talking about
that here.

ANDRE

Anyway, that can't be right. Must
be a typo or something.

JOEL

You better believe it. With them
moving in, those hoods can finally
get turned around. Get something
good out of those places and live
up to their potential.

Dre is visibly shaking his head. Leslie quickly notices it.

LESLIE

Come on, Andre. What is it this
time? Is this a Black Lives Matters
thing or something? I thought that
was over with. There's no way a
couple of stores could have
anything to do with race?

MONTAGE. GENTRIFICATION EXPLANATION

Stock footage and graphics supporting Dre's explanation of
what gentrification is.

ANDRE (V.O.)

That, Leslie, is where you're
wrong. It's called gentrification.
Gentrification is the buying of
houses and stores in urban
neighborhoods by folks with money.
It raises property values and
revitalizes neighborhoods, which is
why everyone with faces you'd see
on billboards loves it. But most of
the time, the losers are people of
low-income, mostly people of color,
who are forced to move their
families or close down their
businesses cause they can't afford
to stay.

(MORE)

ANDRE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

As a result, local cultures and communities disappear, replaced by artisanal coffee shops, brunch hotspots, and a slew of other cookie-cutter, white-washed places that only certain types of people adore. Don't believe me? Name me some communities with no black people that gentrification has ran through. And don't give me some backwater hill town in Mississippi, that's just ignorant.

INT. STEVENS & LIDO BUILDING (MEETING ROOM) - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Dre maintains his general mood from Leslie's comments, while Leslie continues on, aloof at how gentrification can be a divisive issue.

LESLIE

I just don't understand. You make it sound like you people don't like new stores, clean streets, and stuff that we all enjoy. Don't you like nice things?

ANDRE

I like nice things. WE ALL like nice things! We just don't like it when in order for us to get these things most of us are forced to leave. Every time a Whole Foods pops up, there goes the neighborhood. High-end stores, snobby pizza spots, luxury apartments, bye, bye, and bye. Out goes the black people, in comes the hipsters.

JOEL

You're right about one thing, I hate hipsters.

ANDRE

No one likes hipsters. Hipsters don't even like hipsters.

JOEL

The smugness.

LESLIE

The clothes.

CHARLIE

The smells. They really stick.

Dre looks at Charlie, confused at why that's the one thing that stands out negatively for him about hipsters. But as he does that, he sees the rest of the table nodding in agreement, so Dre begrudgingly agrees with them.

LESLIE

Ah, I got one. Chick-fil-a. They never kicked anyone out.

ANDRE

Really?! In a conversation about people of color, your best defense is a place that sells chicken?

LESLIE

But it's really good.

JOEL

Really good chicken.

Dre notices the rest of the room verbally salivating over the thought of having Chick-fil-a chicken. One female co-worker can even be heard in the background saying that her wife loves their chicken sandwiches, which perplexes Dre considering the company's past controversy.

LESLIE

You know what, let's end this meeting early. Anyone up for lunch?

Everyone in the meeting, including Charlie and Joel, follow Leslie running out of the room to Chick-fil-a for lunch. Dre remains in the room, blown away by what is happening.

ANDRE

What are you guys doing? ... We have a deadline!

Dre eventually throws his hands in the air in frustration realizing that the meeting is lost.

INTERCUT - INT. STEVENS & LIDO BUILDING (ANDRE'S OFFICE) /
INT. SHA'S MOM'S HOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - DAY

Dre sits in his office trying to continue his work that the others employees have for the moment ignored. However, Dre is distracted when he looks to his table and is reminded of the hypocritical act he recently committed. He eventually joined the office group and bought lunch from Chick-fil-a.

He's disgusted with himself, but can't stop himself from eating the delicious food.

ANDRE
(to himself)
I'll be strong ... tomorrow.

As he continues to eat, his cell phone rings. Dre sees who's calling and promptly answers. It's SHA, one of Dre's best friends since childhood. Sha is calling from his mother's house in Compton.

ANDRE (CONT'D)
What up, Sha. How you been?

SHA
Nothing much, man. Just trying to keep things together. Hey, gotta ask you something. You do marketing stuff, right?

ANDRE
Yeah, why?

SHA
Cool, need a favor from you. Remember how I got my ma's house after she passed about a month ago?

ANDRE
Uh huh.

SHA
Well, I'm trying to fix the place up to turn it into a rental spot and I need your help with getting the word out.

ANDRE
Sha, I don't really do that. You really need to ask someone does that type of work for a living.

SHA
Look man, I'm not asking you to swing deals for me. I just need some help with letting people know about the house. I don't do that, you do, and I need the favor. Besides, you owe me anyhow.

ANDRE
When?

SHA

Do I really need to bring something up?

ANDRE

Yes.

ANDRE (V.O.)

I already regretted that.

SHA

Aight then. Well, how about your wild night during JD's bachelor party.

ANDRE

What are you ... no.

SHA

I think I even have a pic of it on my phone.

(Sha looks at picture on phone)

Oh yeah, the thong was hot pink, I thought it was purple for some reason. Still a good color, I wonder if Bow agrees.

Dre begins to sweat thinking about Bow's reaction to the picture. Since he's not sure if Sha is serious or not, Dre relents.

ANDRE

Ok, ok. I'm in. Damn, why'd you have to go to blackmail?

SHA

Desperate times, my brother.
Desperate times. I'll send ya the info, see ya then.

Dre hangs up the phone. After thinking for a moment, he takes another bite of his chicken sandwich for some cheap comfort.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL (HALLWAY) - DAY

Meanwhile at the high school, ANDRE "JUNIOR" JOHNSON JR. is talking to his friend BEN WILLIAMS (Caucasian American; around 15) in the hallway between classes.

ANDRE (V.O.)

Even when one of your oldest friends extorts you for your services, you can't help but have at least some sort of pride for where you are from and the people that helped shape who you are. But what if those very things aren't worth being proud of? What if those factors make you a worse person?

As Junior and Ben are talking, an imposing figure starts to walk down the hallway they're in. The person is ZAEQUAN BARROWS (African American; around 17), a large, menacing looking student who is new to the area. He hasn't been at the high school that long, but in his short time he has cemented himself as a person to fear in the school, especially for Junior.

BEN

Red alert. Z's coming.

JUNIOR

Oh crap, I hate this guy. He's only been here for like 3 months and he's running this place.

BEN

It's like he was sent here just to torment us.

JUNIOR

Why couldn't the new kid have been a girl. A cute, attractive girl. Why!?

As Zaequan walks toward Junior's area, the warning bell for the next class period rings. A student in haste runs down the hallway, bumping into Junior and forcing him into the middle of the hallway. In the process, he runs into Zaequan and steps on his Timberland boots. This causes him to stare straight at Junior, putting fear in Junior's heart. Ben stands frozen on the side, fearing for Junior's safety.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)

I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to ...

ZAEQUAN

You stepped on my Tims, man.

JUNIOR

I can see that and I'm extremely sorry ...

ZAEQUAN

You stepped on my Tims. And you need to fix this.

JUNIOR

I apologize for my ignorance, and again I'm sorry for your Tims, but I don't know how else I can fix this.

Zaequan pulls out a can of polish and a rag out of his pant's pocket and gives it to Junior.

ZAEQUAN

You can clean them, now!

Junior, confused by the demand but fearing a beating from Zaequan, grabs the polish and rag from him and proceeds to clean the boots.

ZAEQUAN (CONT'D)

Do that spot again. Still got a smudge.

JUNIOR

You're very observant.

Junior continues cleaning the boots, embarrassed but eager to keep Zaequan from beating him up.

INT. JOHNSON FAMILY HOUSE (DRE/BOW BEDROOM) - NIGHT

Dre and RAINBOW "BOW" JOHNSON are in their bedroom preparing to go to sleep. Dre is sitting on the bed thinking about the situation with Sha while Bow is in the bathroom.

ANDRE

Hey Bow, just letting you know that I'll be heading to Sha's this weekend.

RAINBOW (O.S.)

Ok. What for?

ANDRE

He's trying to rent out his mom's house and for some reason he thinks I can help him with getting the word out.

RAINBOW (O.S.)

Well, can you?

ANDRE

That part's easy enough. Set him up on a few sites and that should be good, but he got me thinking about how much that area of Compton's changed. The few times I went back to visit, it seemed like everyone and everything that I used to know around there is just gone. Almost like they vanished.

RAINBOW (O.S.)

Is that a bad thing?

ANDRE

I don't know. It just doesn't feel right, to look at a place you claim to be from and not be able to even recognize it anymore. Almost like it doesn't exist. Or never existed at all.

Dre thinks about this point for a moment, then realizes that Bow is taking a while in the bathroom.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Bow, you ok? What's taking you so long?

Bow walks lustfully out of the bathroom.

RAINBOW

Got this while I was coming back home. I thought it was cute and I could use a pick-me-up.

She is wearing a hot pink thong that reminds Dre of the stripper at JD's bachelor party. This thought causes Dre to go into a panic.

ANDRE

No. No.

RAINBOW

What do you mean no!

ANDRE

I mean ... Not tonight. I'm a hard working man, I need my sleep.

Dre quickly turns over to the side of his bed facing away from Bow, trying to forget about the stripper. Bow marches back to the bathroom in a frustrated fit.

RAINBOW

ARGH!

Bow slams the door behind her as Dre tries to force himself to sleep.

INT. SHA'S MOM'S HOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - DAY

Dre and Sha are moving furniture around in the house's living room. Dre has already put up ads online, but Sha has also talked him into helping set up the house for his first potential tenant.

DRE

I didn't know my help also included physical labor.

SHA

I can't do this on my own. Got a bad back.

DRE

I'm gonna end up getting me one of those at this rate.

Dre and Sha stop working and take a break.

DRE (CONT'D)

Everything should be setup for you online. Your ads are up and any leftover info is in that email I sent.

SHA

Cool, thanks man. I'd have had a hard time getting that stuff together.

DRE

You can thank me by deleting that picture. I want no evidence of that night. None!

SHA

Ha! I can't believe you still mad about that.

DRE

That pic is a landmine waiting to go off. I won't be able to rest easy until it is gone forever.

Dre and Sha share a small laugh, knowing that what Dre is saying is true if Bow ever found out. Dre looks at his phone and sees that Bow tried to call him earlier.

DRE (CONT'D)
Speaking of hiding evidence, here's
the wife now. I'll be right back,
gotta make a call.
(to himself)
I never get good reception here.

Dre walks out of the house in order to make the call.

EXT. SHA'S MOM'S HOUSE (FRONT YARD) - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Dre towards the front yard with the expectation of having better reception to call back Bow. As he's walking and dialing Bow, he notices several changes to the neighborhood that would not have been seen when he was growing up. He sees several expensive smart cars, an artisan coffee shop that's advertising brunch, a park just for dogs, and other features that in his mind are only present in neighborhoods that have or are on their way to being gentrified.

ANDRE
(to himself)
The invasion ... is already here.

RAINBOW (V.O.)
Dre?

Bow was on the phone while Dre was having his fearful trance. Dre quickly comes back and responds to Bow.

ANDRE
Oh sorry ... I was daydreaming.

RAINBOW (V.O.)
About what?

ANDRE
Coming home and looking around.
Everything's ... different. And I
don't like it.

RAINBOW (V.O.)
Well, those so-called invaders need
a place to live too. I doubt
they're all doing it on purpose.

ANDRE

I know you're right, but we're
always the ones that get screwed
over when stuff like this happens.
(thinks for a moment)
I don't know.

RAINBOW (V.O.)

Just don't do anything crazy while
you're there. I know how you are
when you get worked up.

ANDRE

What? Me? No, I'm in complete
control. Emotions are in check. By
the way, I wanted to make it up to
you tonight. How about I get your
favorite pizza from Delano's and we
have a wild night in.

RAINBOW (V.O.)

Sorry Dre. I have to go in for work
tomorrow and I need my sleep!

ANDRE

Baby, baby. I said I was sorry! I
wasn't thinking!

Bow hangs up the phone.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

(unaware Bow hung up
phone)
Baby? Baby?
(realizes she's gone)
Damn.

As Dre is wallowing in his mistake, he notices that Sha is
talking to a group of young white people. The conversation
finishes and the group leaves, with Sha happily waving
goodbye to them. Dre walks to Sha to find out what's going
on.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Yo, Sha. Who were they?

SHA

Some potential clients. Talked to
them when they passed by a couple
days ago. They're looking for a
place to stay, so I gave them my
pitch.

ANDRE

What! Come on, man.

SHA

What's the problem?

ANDRE

I've been yelling this entire time about people kicking us out of our neighborhoods and here you go helping them out. You're a part of the problem.

SHA

They're just kids looking for a place to stay. They're a little weird and they dress funny, but they're not bad people. You need to calm down.

ANDRE

I don't need to calm down, ... I just need to go. I already have my wife to deal with. Later.

Dre leaves Sha's house, still upset at Sha for dealing with the hipster kids, but more upset that Bow was right and he just made things worse.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL (COMPUTER LAB) - DAY

Junior is in the school's computer lab trying frantically to finish Zaequan's classwork as continued punishment for stepping on his boots. Junior doesn't notice that ZOEY JOHNSON has entered the room, noticeably upset that Junior is still in the computer lab. Zoey is temporarily home from college and decided to visit the school. Since she was going to be there, Bow told her to pick up Junior as well.

ZOEY

I've been waiting for over an hour.
What are you still doing in here?

JUNIOR

Just give me ten more minutes.

ZOEY

It's already been an hour!

Junior doesn't respond, concentrating on his work.

ZOEY (CONT'D)

I knew I shouldn't have let Mom
talk me into driving you back home.
That's what I get for actually
wanting to see this place for once.

Zoey walks around to see what Junior is doing. He's working
on a website design, but the content tells Zoey that
something's wrong.

ZOEY (CONT'D)

Why are you working on this?

JUNIOR

It's for my ... web design class.
Extra credit, that's why I never
mentioned it.

ZOEY

Ok ... what's going on?

JUNIOR

What do you mean, I'm building a
website. Part of the foundation of
our present and future society. The
great internet.

ZOEY

Yeah, I'm pretty sure fantasy
football is not a part of your
vision.

JUNIOR

I've started to dabble in some more
... common forms of leisure.

ZOEY

(pointed at the letters
"RB" on the screen)
Tell me what this mean then?

JUNIOR

Uh ... raging boxer.

ZOEY

Wow, you're worse than me. Now, can
you tell me what's going on?

After a sigh, Junior relents.

JUNIOR

It's this new guy, Zaequan. Ever since he showed up, he's been terrorizing me. I don't know how much more I can take.

Zoey begins to laugh. She tries to cover her reaction, but she succumbs to the chuckling. Junior is not amused.

ZOEY

Wait ... his name is Zaequan? I've heard some made-up names, but that's amazing.

JUNIOR

I'm in emotional stress and the threat of pain, and the first thing you catch onto is the guy's name!?

ZOEY

(while trying to contain her giggling)
Ok, ok. You're right, I apologize. Please continue ... with Zaequan, your big bad bully.

Junior is still miffed at Zoey's dismissiveness, but continues venting.

JUNIOR

I just don't get it with this guy. He's been pummeling me with his work and his threats. All because of stepping on some boots. You would think polishing them with that Saphir stuff would've made him happy.

ZOEY

Wait, you have a can of Saphir?

JUNIOR

Not mine, never heard of it before that day. He insisted I use it, and while that moment surrounded me with fear, I could understand why. That polish really gave it an exquisite finish. Almost made me cry for the beauty of the boot and not for him towering over me.

ZOEY

I can't believe this. Get up right now! We're leaving!

Zoey walks over to Junior's computer and turns off the monitor.

JUNIOR
But what about his stuff? I'll die
out there!

ZOEY
Walk with me or I'm leaving you.

Zoey walks out of the computer lab and towards the school's exit. Junior panics but eventually throws his stuff in his back to follow her, but after turning back on the monitor to shut down the computer properly.

JUNIOR
You have to turn off computers
property. What are we, barbarians?

ZOEY (O.S.)
(from hallway)
I'm not waiting.

JUNIOR
Ok, wait up.

Satisfied that the shutdown process for the computer has started and worried about being left, Junior hurries out of the door to catch-up with Zoey.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL (PARKING LOT) - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Zoey and Junior are walking to the car. Zoey is walking calmly while Junior is frantically looking around for Zaequan while following her. They reach the parking lot, which gives Junior a sense of hope. But just when the car is in sight, Zaequan emerges and confront the two siblings.

ZAEQUAN
(to Junior)
Whoa, whoa. Hold up. I almost
missed you. You were supposed to
meet me 10 minutes ago so you could
give me what I asked for. So, where
is it?

Junior stammers in his response to the point that it sounds like gibberish.

ZOEY
I thought you'd be bigger.

Zaequan hears Zoey's comment and walks toward her.

ZAEQUAN

Who the hell are you?

ZOEY

Don't worry about it. What you should care about is what will happen to you if you don't get out of the way.

Zaequan laughs at the statement.

ZAEQUAN

What are you going to do about it?

ZOEY

Nothing, I don't fight children. Besides, you've already done the damage yourself.

ZAEQUAN

What are you talking about?

ZOEY

Isn't it obvious? The polish was a clue but just looking at you confirms it. The polish, the clothes, your car over there.

Zoey gestures towards a Maserati parked nearby. Zaequan is shocked that Zoey is able to pick out his car.

ZOEY (CONT'D)

What? You're not a ninja. You came from somewhere and your car sticks out. What you are is a fake gangster. Real gangsters don't drive years old Maseratis, use top-of-the-line shoe polish, or take web design class. I don't know where you came from, but all that smokescreen toughness you're doing needed to stay there. In fact, where are you from?

Zaequan is now completely flustered by Zoey's verbal attacks.

ZAEQUAN

Uh .. Uh ... I'm ...

ZOEY

See? So just please stop, you'll be better for it.

Zaequan's frustration at Zoey is now at the point of confused rage. He gestures towards her during the fit, but a voice stops him.

PRINCIPAL WALTERS

You three in my office, now!

PRINCIPAL TRACY WALTERS (African American; late 40s) has seen enough to know what was about to happen and makes sure that they follow her inside to her office. Both Zaequan and Junior show worried expressions with their new predicament while Zoey maintains her aura of confidence.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL (PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE) - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Junior and Zoey are sitting in Principal Walters' office waiting for her to make a statement about the situation with Zaequan outside. As the two siblings sit in the room across from the desk (Junior sits frantically while Zoey is calm and in control), Principal Walters is typing up a report. Eventually, she stops typing and looks at her watch. This causes Junior to go into a panic, frantically wanting to explain to Principal Walters the situation, but it comes out as a garbled mess.

PRINCIPAL WALTERS

(after looking at watch)

Andre, you can stop now. I saw everything.

JUNIOR

You did?

PRINCIPAL WALTERS

Yep. From start to finish, so I know what happened. Besides, I pretty much can't do anything to your sister anyhow. This was just for show, more paperwork if I don't go through the whole song and dance. Enough time should've passed by now, so you two can take off.

Junior and Zoey get up from there seats and begin to leave the office.

PRINCIPAL WALTERS (CONT'D)

Oh, and Zoey. It was nice for you to stop by and visit. Take care and good luck.

ZOEY

Thanks.

Junior and Zoey leave the room.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL (ADMIN. HALLWAY) - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Junior and Zoey are walking down the hallway from the principal's office heading outside to leave.

JUNIOR

Hey, I thought you hated her. And you couldn't wait to leave before. What changed?

ZOEY

I don't know. I guess when you leave home long enough you appreciate it more, even the bad stuff.

As Junior and Zoey head out of the administrative area, they see Zaequan sitting in a seat against the wall, with his head down and his mind elsewhere. A large man dressed in pristine business attire walks into the room. Zaequan is immediately filled with shame, as this is ZAEQUAN'S FATHER (African American; mid 30s). He walks toward the desk of the ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT, speaking in a manner fit for a Wall Street board meeting.

ZAEQUAN'S FATHER

Hello, I'm Mr. Barrows. I apologize in advance for any predicaments that my son committed.

The assistant begins to speak, but Zaequan protests before she has a chance to say a word.

ZAEQUAN

But Dad, I ...

ZAEQUAN'S FATHER

(to Zaequan)

Silence!

Hearing this causes Junior and Zoey to hang around the edges of the door to see what happens.

ZAEQUAN'S FATHER (CONT'D)

(to assistant)

Again, a thousand apologies. Please continue.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Your son was seen trying to
intimidate and fight other students
in the parking lot.

ZAEQUAN'S FATHER

(to Zaequan)

Zackary Quinn Barrows, ...

JUNIOR

(to himself)

Zackary?

ZAEQUAN'S FATHER

(to Zaequan)

... your actions are completely
unacceptable. You are supposed to
be in the middle of Mathlete
practice, not parading around as a
common hooligan. We will talk about
this further when we get home.
Let's go.

Zaequan and his father march out of the office and towards the exit of the building. Junior and Zoey stand nearby on the wall continuing to watch the event without drawing any attention to themselves. Junior is surprised at how easily Zaequan's tough exterior was broken down by his father. Zoey, however, is not surprised, knowing through one look that Zaequan's attitude was only weak mimicry of what the bully thought people should act like where he was from.

ANDRE (V.O.)

Our loyalty to where we are from
can cloud our judgement and distort
our actions. It can make us believe
in any hype or stereotypes that
suggest we must act a certain way,
even when an argument against it is
staring at you right in the face.

INT/EXT. DRE'S CAR PARKED NEAR SHA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dre is sitting in his car thinking about his actions with Sha a couple of days earlier. Realizing that he was wrong and remembering that he was going to print out some flyers for him, he drove over to give them to him and make amends. But he's still conflicted because of how strongly he feels about the gentrification issue.

ANDRE (V.O.)

It can blind us. Have us willing to hold fast to something that may not even exist anymore. A memory, an attachment. We want the acceptable parts of our past to live on forever, and push back anything that we feel may do harm to it, despite the costs. Which makes your past very powerful in good times and a hard thing to come to grips with in times of trouble.

While Dre continues to think about his situation with Sha, he notices a familiar face on the porch of a nearby house. This puts a smile on his face as he walks out of the car to greet her.

EXT. MRS. RILEY'S PORCH - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Dre walks out of the car towards the house of CONSTANCE RILEY (African American; early 70s). She is one of the neighbors that has been living in the area since Dre and Sha were kids. She is also one of the few older residents remaining in the neighborhood, so she has seen first hand the shift in the local population. Dre proceeds to greet Mrs. Riley warmly, happy to see a familiar from his past.

ANDRE

Mrs. Riley?

MRS. RILEY

Dre, is that you?

ANDRE

Yes, ma'am. It been a while.

MRS. RILEY

Oh yes, it has. It's good to see you. I remember back when you, Sha, and the rest of you children would be running around, heading to the court or wherever.

ANDRE

I thought you're best memory of us would've been you telling us to stay off of your flowers.

MRS. RILEY

That too.

(laughing)

(MORE)

MRS. RILEY (CONT'D)

I never figured out why you kids kept walking into my flower beds. And it was always when I planted sea hollies for some reason.

Dre and Mrs. Riley reflect on the past for a moment.

MRS. RILEY (CONT'D)

I do miss the flowers. Haven't been able to keep up with planting for a while. Tried to keep it up after Bill passed, but soon after my back gave out. Time has a way of changing things whether you like it or not.

ANDRE

Yeah, I'm learning that all to well myself.

MRS. RILEY

Not well enough based on the other day.

Dre is not shocked at Mrs. Riley's knowledge of the incident with Sha.

ANDRE

You heard all of that?

MRS. RILEY

Of course I did. You're pretty damn loud, you know.

ANDRE

(starts off loud)

I'm not ...

(realizes his volume)

... that loud.

MRS. RILEY

So, why those kids got you all riled up with Sha? You know whatever it is you're calling them out on is probably not their fault.

ANDRE

They didn't do anything, but I just don't like what they represent. I'm tired of seeing our neighborhoods being taken from us. It just seems like every time we start to setup something that's ours, white folks just take it from us.

(MORE)

Episode Title: Homeward Bound

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Kick us out and leave us in the dirt while they rake in the cash.

MRS. RILEY

You're right. It's funny how anyone not from here never cares about whether this place lives or dies until they start moving in. Then they can't wait to fix the schools or bring in the jobs. But you'd have to admit that we have to take some of the blame for it happening.

ANDRE

What do you mean by that?

Mrs. Riley looks towards a nearby intersection where a white couple with their newborn in a stroller is walking.

MRS. RILEY

You see that white family over there on the corner?

Dre nods his head in response.

MRS. RILEY (CONT'D)

This was probably before you and Sha were buddies, but I had a son. He was around 16 when he was coming home from work. Was walking past that corner when a couple of goons decided to rob and kill him for the money he had. The same corner that family is walking on without a care in the world is the one that my boy was murdered for 30 bucks that he earned sweeping at a car shop. Without a doubt, outside forces allowed that gang operate, until they needed the land as you can tell. You can say they set the table for us, to some sick dinner to trap us. But we still sat down, we still took a bite.

ANDRE

Even with all the mess we have to go through, if we took better care of the little bit we did have and looked out for our own, we'd be at least a little better off.

MRS. RILEY

That's a simple way to put it. It's a very hard issue to look at with a lot of moving parts, but the way I see it we have to seriously look at ourselves and what we're doing too when trying to answer this question.

ANDRE

That's a lot to think about.

MRS. RILEY

It is, but for your problem you need to also remember that what makes us black is not in the streets and avenues of neighborhoods like this but in here

...

(points to Dre's heart)

... and here.

(points to Dre's head)

If you let white folks take that, then you're already doomed to fail. Even if they drive us out to the corners of this country, we'll still be strong as long as we remember where our strength comes from. The only difference will be instead of Compton we'll be hailing from Montana.

Dre and Mrs. Riley share a laugh.

ANDRE

That would be something.

Dre begins to walk off the porch. Before he leaves, he stops to say something to Mrs. Riley.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Thanks, Mrs. Riley. I needed to hear that.

MRS. RILEY

Glad I could help. Tell Sha hello for me.

ANDRE

Yes ma'am, I will.

Dre walks away from the porch and towards Sha's mom's house.

EXT. SHA'S MOM'S HOUSE (FRONT DOOR) - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Dre walks toward the house with the flyers in his hand. He rings the doorbell, which Sha answers. Dre begins to apologize for his actions, hands Sha the flyers, and congratulates him for getting the tenants. After a moment, Sha forgives Dre and the two embrace each other as friends before Dre leaves for the night.

ANDRE (V.O.)

Because of how connected we are to our origins, where we're from can fill us with a range of emotions. Like family or close friends, they can shape a significant part of our lives. Which is why when it eventually changes, it's extremely hard to accept.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL (HALLWAY) - DAY - MONTAGE

Junior is in the hallway talking to Ben when Zaequan walks toward their area. After the situation involving his father, Zaequan started to dress more formally, a stark contrast to his previous wardrobe choices. With his forced change to his attitude and appearance, along with the last encounter, he doesn't seem imposing to Junior anymore, who looks at him from a distance with pity.

ANDRE (V.O.)

It can give us a sense of dignity and self-respect. But if you hold on to the wrong things, the stereotypes can consume you, convince you that you're something that you're not. And once the facade disappears and you're forced to see the truth, the emotional crash can be hard and swift.

INT/EXT. ZOEY'S CAR - DAY - MONTAGE

After finishing her visit home, Zoey heads back to college. As she is driving, she reflects on how being away from home made her appreciate it even more. Now the things that used to make her angry in her high school days don't anymore. This resolution gives her a new perspective on her high school days and the ability to take on her new college agenda with confidence.

ANDRE (V.O.)

You can gain an understanding of life through your pocket of the world. Through that lens, you can choose to completely accept or reject that outlook. Or like many people, you can get away from that pocket and gain an even greater understanding. Maybe even appreciate your past even more.

EXT. SHA'S MOM'S HOUSE (FRONT DOOR) - DAY - MONTAGE

Back in Compton, Sha opens the door for his new tenants, who have decided to move in. The primarily white group is very enthusiastic about moving into the area and Sha is relieved that his mother's house is being used for something positive, even though it's not exactly how he expected. As he's holding the door for the group moving in furniture, he sees Mrs. Riley across the street relaxing on her porch. Sha waves at her and Mrs. Riley returns the greeting.

ANDRE (V.O.)

Your origins can also give you a sense responsibility, for your community and those in it. It can give you the urge to protect it at all costs, to keep it from changing to something you can't recognize. Or in the face of that unstoppable change, it can give you the resolve to secure yourself in this new community. Embracing the new while maintaining as much of the old as possible, perhaps creating something positive in the process.

INT. JOHNSON FAMILY HOUSE (LIVING ROOM) - DAY - MONTAGE

At the Johnson home, Dre is watching a TV show that happens to have a black family living in the snowy rural section of a northern state. This makes Dre think about the conversation he had with Mrs. Riley.

ANDRE (V.O.)

It may seem shocking, but I don't have all of the answers. Yes, I know. I can't believe it myself. For black people, our communities are close to sacred, probably more so than other people because of our history.

(MORE)

Episode Title: Homeward Bound

ANDRE (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Having people from the outside systematically take your community from you is a terrible reality. However, our culture is not limited to the streets of our origins. I'm not less black because of where I live and no one else is either. This is one of those issues where I will have to admit to not having any answers for. But I do know that we as a people need to remember that regardless of the outcome, our culture will never fade away. No matter if they push us to the edges of this country, we will thrive as long as we know where our strength comes from - each other. Besides, Bozeman seems like a nice place to live.

EXT. JOHNSON FAMILY HOUSE - DAY - CREDITS SCENE

Dre is outside walking from getting the mail when he notices Jack still trying to skate with no success. He wants to let his son learn on his own, but after seeing him fall once more he feels the need to intervene.

ANDRE

Son, your form is all wrong. Let me show you how it's done, you can copy my style.

JACK

Are you sure about that, Dad?

ANDRE

(sarcastic)

Am I sure. Ha!

Dre is lined up on the street to show Jack how to skate with his old skates on. He begins to skate.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

See son? Just push off in rhythm.

As he's skating, a wheel falls off on one of his skates.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Uh oh!

Then, Andre's back gives out and he can't move.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Ah, my back! Dammit Sha.

JACK

Dad, look out! You're going towards
the hill.

Andre continues to head uncontrollably down a street with a
huge decline. Unable to move, he has no choice but to brace
himself for the inevitable crash.

ANDRE

AAAAHHHH!

END