

HIP HOP DADDY
by
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FADE IN:

EXT. KASBAH - NIGHT

High Street, Columbus, Ohio. College kids are streaming into the Kasbah night club. Hip hop music SPILLS out into the street from a live act inside. ACE, a big guy with an even bigger smile greets people in line to get into the club. "Z" is working the other end of the line, decked out in name brand urban wear and Blue Tooth in his ear. He, has a bull horn. Multi-tasking, he chats up the ladies while speaking into his Blue Tooth.

Z

No, come on down. I'll get you in,
no fear.

(to WOMAN)

Um, um. You look so hot you
meltin' my corneas, girl.

WOMAN giggles at him, thrusts her breasts out further. At the other end of the line, Ace is passing out push cards while chatting with a woman.

ACE

Is that an emerald? The ancient
Egyptians prized emeralds. They
were a symbol of eternal life. Did
you know . . .

Z

Ace!

He frowns at Ace and hands him the bull horn.

ACE

I'll catch you later.
(in to bull horn)
I say, where the party at?

PEOPLE

Right here!

ACE

I say, *where* the party at?

PEOPLE

Right here!

ACE

Say, "party!"

He holds out a hand to the crowd.

PEOPLE

Par-ty!

ACE

Say, "party!"

PEOPLE

Par-ty!

ACE

A'ight, then!

He smiles and nods at Z who nods back.

Z

(on phone)

Get out! You ain't never seen Lil'
Mo and the Dawgs? You gotta come
down to the Kasbah, mother fucker.

A black BMW pulls up in front of the club, and the crowd ogles it, whispering to each other. YUSEF, a large man in a sharp suit gets out of the driver's side and opens the back door. A black shoe, polished until it can be used as a hand mirror, emerges, followed by AHMED TOPOL, a tall, handsome man of Middle-Eastern descent. He wears dark glasses in contrast to his pearly white smile. He turns and reaches a hand to help out a beautiful woman. Yusef clears the way and the bouncer stands a bit taller at the door. Both men and women check out Topol and his date; the crowd parts around them. As Topol passes Z, the two shake hands.

TOPOL

Nice crowd.

Z

Wait till you get inside.

Both men smile at each other, and Topol slips a roll of cash into Z's hand.

TOPOL

Thank you, my friend.

Topol continues through the crowd. As he passes Ace, Ace breaks out into an even bigger smile.

ACE

'sup, Mr. Topol?

TOPOL nods at him but continues into the club.

Ace rushes up to Z.

ACE (CONT' D)
I'll take my share.

Z
Say what?

ACE
I saw him slip you a roll.

Z
Oh, that.

Z divides the roll and hands half to Ace.

ACE
Right, that.

CHARICE, a pretty young woman in a skin tight dress comes up to them

Z
Hey, baby, how you doin'?

They kiss.

CHARICE
Hey, yourself.

Z
You look good enough to eat.

CHARICE
Later. We goin' in? I feel like dancing.

ACE
Me, too. I been working on some new moves.

He moves in with a seductive hip grind that causes his belly to do a slow Jello roll.

CHARICE
Save it for Latisha or she gonna make it so nothing moves again. Z, come on, you promised me a night out. With you.

She slides her eyes to Ace and back.

Z
Sure, baby, but I got a few people
I have to --

CHARICE
Puh-lease. You ain't gettin' one
more bitch in here tonight.

ACE
Our work is never done.

Z
That's right. There are contacts
to be made.

ACE
Deals to be done.

Z
Money to be made.

Ace's phone RINGS. He checks it.

ACE
Shit! It's Latisha.

CHARICE
Checking up on you? Uh-huh. Wise
woman.

She and Z LAUGH. Z shakes his head dismissively, but then his
eyes grow wide.

ACE
B-b-b-baby!

CHARICE
Don't you baby me!

ACE
No, my baby! It's -- it's coming!

Z
Tonight? I thought she had two
more weeks.

ACE
No, now! I gotta --

Z
Can't it wait?

Charice slugs him

CHARICE
No, it cannot wait.

ACE
Latisha's having the baby.
We're having a baby!

Ace starts backing up, running his hands through his hair, bouncing a bit in his fancy sneakers.

Z
But --

ACE
(into bullhorn)
I'm having a baby, everybody!

Crowd CHEERS.

CHARICE
Go! Go!

Z
Yeah, I guess you better --

Ace cuts across the street and darts traffic.

Z (CONT'D)
What time you gonna be back?

Charice drags him toward the entrance.

CHARICE
You crazy?

Z
It could be a quick delivery.
(She hits him)
You seen Latisha's hips? She gonna
slide that baby right out.
(Gestures)
Sloop! Right out.

The bouncer nods at Z and lifts the velvet rope, allowing them to enter the club. Charice shakes her head and goes in ahead of him.

INT. MATERNITY WARD, LATISHA'S ROOM - LATER

The sun is just beginning to lighten the sky beyond the room's window. LATISHA is in a delivery bed, sweaty and straining with pain.

Ace is seated at her side, wiping her forehead with a wash cloth. The DOCTOR is squatting down at the end of the bed, unseen.

LATISHA
Waaaa- AAAAAAAAAAAAAAH!

DOCTOR pops up.

DOCTOR
Eight centimeters.

ACE
That's good, right? Eight centimeters is good.

LATISHA
I need to be at 10, fool! Didn't you pay attention at Lamaze?

She whacks him hard.

ACE
Ow! Can't you give her something. She's gettin' nasty.

DOCTOR
Too late for that.

Latisha GROWLS at the doctor. The growl turns into a GROAN. Ace glances at the clock on the wall: 5:25.

ACE
But she's been at this since eleven. How much longer can it be?

DOCTOR
First babies take their time but not much longer.

ACE
You got a sauna? Cause I saw this show on TLC, where the woman had the baby in a sauna. The warm water softened the perrenium
(to Latisha)
That's the area between your --

LATISHA
What you think? I'm a whale, gonna have a baby in the water?!

Doctor leaves the room. Ace strokes Latisha's forehead with the wash cloth, but she flails at his hand.

LATISHA (CONT' D)
 Don't touch me! I don't ever want
 you to touch me again.

Z pokes his head in the room.

Z
 How y' all doin'?

ACE
 But, baby I --

LATISHA
 It's all that --
 (breathing)
 -- baby shit --
 (breathing)
 -- that got me here.
 (breathing)
 Don't ever touch me again --
 (breathing)
 -- mother fucker -- argh!!!

ACE
 We good.

Z
 I see that. I'll come back later.

ACE
 Don't leave me!

He grabs onto Z's leg.

LATISHA
 What the hell do you think
 (breathing)
 -- you're doing here, mother --

Z smiles.

Z
 Love you, too, Latisha.

Latisha grabs Ace's arm and yanks him back with a loud GROAN.

Z (CONT' D)
 (chuckles)
 I'll be in the waiting room.

Latisha is wracked with a contraction and lets the world know
 as Ace looks on in fear.

INT. MATERNITY WARD HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Z walks over to the nurses' stations and smiles at the NURSE on duty; she's in her 40s, somewhat plump.

Z
I like your uniform.

NURSE
(narrows her eyes)
Do you?

Z
Fits you just right.

NURSE
And which woman is having your baby?

Z
Me? No. I'm just here to support --

Latisha SCREAMS.

Z (CONT'D)
-- my man. *That was my friend's wife.*

NURSE
(smiling)
She's been swearing at him for hours.

Z
That's nothing new. You think I could get a couple cups of coffee?

NURSE
No problem.

She gets up and Z watches her walk over to the coffee machine.

Z
You make me want to check into the hospital.

She looks over her shoulder at him and smiles as she pours two cups of coffee.

NURSE
I am old enough to be your mother.

Z

And?

NURSE

If I were your mother, I might need to spank you.

Z

Oo, stop teasing me.

Nurse winks at him. Latisha lets out CHAIN of swear words. They both cringe.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Z starts to enter the room but stops short. Inside, Ace is hanging his head and Latisha is writhing on the bed.

LATISHA

I am gonna -- cut it off! You ain't never gonna --

Z starts walking backward with the two cups of coffee. He passes the room next to Latisha's. MARIA, a middle-aged, Hispanic woman is exiting. She stops when she sees Z.

MARIA

Now you show up?

Z

What?

Z looks into the room.

MIRABELLA'S ROOM

MIRABELLA, an attractive woman with a small belly is seated in a hospital gown and is tapping away at her Blackberry.

HALLWAY

MARIA

She doesn't need you now. Leave.

Z enters the room.

INT. MATERNITY WARD, MIRABELLA'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mirabella looks up from her Blackberry as Z enters.

MIRABELLA
What are you doing here?

Z
Mirabella?

Maria follows on his heels.

MARIA
I don't want you talking to my
daughter.
(in Spanish)
Send this asshole to hell!

MIRABELLA
It's okay, Mami.

Maria HUFFS and storms out.

Z
Are you having a baby?

Mirabella smooths her gown over her belly.

MIRABELLA
I had it, fool! Yesterday.

Z
I didn't know you were pregnant.

MIRABELLA
Because I didn't want you to know.
I been staying with my aunt in New
York.

Z
You were pregnant, and you didn't
want me to know? Why? Is it --

MIRABELLA
Don't worry about it.

Z looks relieved.

Z
Whew! For a second --

MIRABELLA
You don't want a baby any more than
me. You're focused on your career -
- such as it is. And I'm focused
on mine which is rising. That's why
I'm giving him up.

Z
You're giving up --

MIRABELLA
I got this producer, and he wants to record me. Z, everything I always dreamed about is about to come true!

Z
But you can't just walk away from your kid.

MIRABELLA
Right, like you wouldn't.

She rises, and begins packing some personal items in her overnight designer bag on the bed.

Z
If it was my kid? No way.

MIRABELLA
(LAUGHS)
Well, guess what? It is your kid. So, what's Mr. High and Mighty going to do now, huh?

Z
But -- you never -- after we broke up --

MIRABELLA
It's taken care of. I'm signing the papers at nine.

He turns her so she faces him.

Z
Are you saying -- you had my baby?

He sits.

MIRABELLA
I guess you could call it yours, but since we both know you don't want a kid I'm giving it up for adoption.

Z
How the hell do you know if I want a kid or not? Did you ever ask?

MIRABELLA

Please, you're not exactly
fatherhood material.

Z

The fuck I'm not.

MIRABELLA

I knew you'd act all noble and
shit, 'cause that's who you *think*
you are, but we both know you're
just a little boy pretending to be
a man.

Z

Like you pretend to be a woman?

MIRABELLA

Fuck you.

Z

Nice mouth on a new mother.

MIRABELLA

That's just it, I am nobody's
mother.

Z

You got that right.

Z walks out of the room and walks back passed Latisha's room.

LATISHA (O.C.)

I'm gonna kill you!!

Z keeps walking, stunned until he gets in front of the
nurses' station. He stands there with the two cups of
coffee still in his hands.

Nurse looks up from her computer.

NURSE

What is it, honey? You look lost.

He looks at her oddly.

Z

Where the new babies at?

NURSE

You mean the nursery? Right over
here, hon.

She gets up and shows him to the window that looks onto the newborn nursery.

Z scans the bassinets. He stops when he comes to a baby with skin the color of caramel and wrapped in a blue blanket. The other two babies have surnames on cards in front of their bassinets, but this one simply says, "Baby Boy."

Z stares at the baby and slowly the window blurs and reveals another scene.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

The room is dim, lit only from a small cow jumping over a moon night-light in a wall. A mobile softly spins, PLAYING "Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star." A toddler stands up in his crib. He is in footed pajamas and holds a bottle.

TODDLER'S P. O. V.

The silhouettes of a MAN and DEE argue beyond the ajar door to the room

The toddler drops his bottle, plops down on the mattress, and begins to CRY. A door SLAMS.

FADE TO:

INT. MATERNITY WARD, NURSERY - PRESENT DAY

The window looking into the nursery clears and returns to the present. The baby moves, and a small fist is thrust out of the blanket and into the air.

Z wipes a tear away and begins to smile, then raises his own fist on the glass. Z's eyes fill with tears.

Z

Nurse, I got a question for you.

She looks at him quizzically as he continues staring at the baby.

INT. MATERNITY WARD, LATISHA'S ROOM - LATER

Latisha looks like a peaceful madonna as she holds Gabriel to her breast. Ace looks exhausted but happy as he leans over them

LATISHA
I love you, honey bear.

ACE
Love you, too, bumblebee.

Z enters, also looking exhausted, and also carrying a baby swaddled in a blanket.

Z
Hey, y'all. Congratulations. He's beautiful.

LATISHA
Of course.

ACE
Gabriel, meet Z. He's like a brother to me, so I guess that makes him your uncle. We named him Gabriel after the angel Gabriel who -- Whoa, who you got there?

Z
I want you to meet -- Zacharia.

LATISHA
He's adorable. Who does he belong to?

Z
Me.

ACE AND LATISHA
What?

Z
Zacharia Walker, the third. My son.

ACE
What you been smoking?

LATISHA
Oh, my Lord! He's kidnapped a baby!

ACE
This ain't no store! Put him back before they call 5-0.

He starts to steer him out of the room, scouting out the hall.

ACE (CONT' D)

Come on -- we'll slip him back and nobody has to know.

Z

No. He's mine.

LATISHA

I told you this nigger was crazy.

Z

Mirabella. She's down the hall. She was pregnant but didn't tell me.

Latisha GASPS as Ace looks stunned. Z carries Zacharia over to Gabriel's bassinet, waving the baby's hand at Gabriel.

LATISHA

Are you saying Mirabella be your baby ~~momma~~?

Z

And I'm going to raise him. Aren't I, little man?

ACE

Z, be real. You don't know anything about raising a baby, even if she let you take him --

Z sits down in a rocker and carefully opens the baby blanket, examining Zacharia's feet and toes.

Z

She doesn't want him. Can you believe that? She was planning on giving him up for adoption.

LATISHA

Oh, my Lord. Is there a family waiting for him?

Z

Not yet. Not ever. I'm his family.

ACE

That's --

LATISHA

Crazy.

ACE

I was going to say dope.

Ace goes to stand by Z, and shakes the baby's little hand.

LATISHA

Dope? Z can barely take care of a plant, never mind himself.

ACE

Do you have plants?

Z shakes his head "no."

ACE (CONT' D)

He don't have no plants.

LATISHA

He don't even have plants. See?

Z

My moms will help. She loves kids. Then there's Charice. We been getting close.

LATISHA

Close?

Z

You don't know Charice. She's got a big heart, don't she Ace?

ACE

Big heart.

LATISHA

We'll see how big her heart is when you ask her to take care of some other woman's new born baby. Has he lost his mind?

ACE

Don't know. But it looks like he lost his heart.

Z is softly cooing to the baby in his arms.

INT. MATERNITY WARD, MIRABELLA'S ROOM - LATER

Mirabella is dressed and ready to leave, her bag is zipped and on her bed.

Maria stands next to her, glaring at Z who stands next to MS. GIBBONS, a woman in a suit carrying a brief case.

MS. GIBBONS

(glancing at forms in her hand)
Everything's in order. I just wished you'd informed us of Mr. Walker's interest before today. It would have saved a lot of paper work.

Z

I wish I'd been informed earlier, too.

MIRABELLA

Oh, well, it all worked out. Can I go now?

MS. GIBBONS

You understand that your signature on this form makes it final? If you change your mind later, you'll have to go through the courts.

MIRABELLA

And he understands that there are no give backs.

Z

You're disgusting.

MIRABELLA

Sticks and stones. Where do I sign?

Ms. Gibbons holds out a pen and the forms. Mirabella scribbles her signature.

Z

Do you even want to say good-bye to him?

MIRABELLA

What for? I didn't say hello. Come on, Mama. I have a hair appointment.

Mirabella CLICKS out of the room in her heels as Maria grabs the suitcase and follows, kissing her hand and placing the kiss on the baby's forehead.

MARIA
Buena suerte, nino.
(looks at Z)
You'll need it.

Maria follows Mirabella out of the room. Ms. Gibbons turns to Z and watches him cuddle the baby.

MS. GIBBONS
You'll need more than luck, Mr. Walker. You need to be prepared. Do you have supplies? Crib, bottles, diapers?

Z
Oh, Jesus, I --

Ms. Gibbons gently takes the baby from him.

MS. GIBBONS
You'll need a car seat or you won't be allowed to take him home. I'll make you a list. And here's your appointment for his first baby-well check-up.

Z
Check-up? Is he sick?

MS. GIBBONS
He's perfectly healthy. You'll want to take care of his circumcision, of course, but that usually heals in a few days.

Z
Circumcision?

MS. GIBBONS
The baby's mother didn't express a preference so we --

She starts to pull back the baby blanket. Z's eyes go wide and he holds up a hand.

Z
Snipped?

Z reaches for the wall to steady himself.

MS. GIBBONS
Not too much. I'll go make that list.

(MORE)

MS. GIBBONS (CONT' D)
 (starts to turn away)
 You are up to this, aren't you?
 I'm beginning to have my doubts but
 you are the father.

Z
 I am his father. I'll get
 everything he needs. No problem.

MS. GIBBONS
 Excellent.

She hands Z the baby and walks away. Z holds him stiffly,
 with a strange, frightened smile on his face.

INT. BABYS R US - LATER

Z is pushing a shopping cart down an aisle of diapers with
 Ace next to him.

Z
 Look at all this shit! I don't
 know where to begin.

ACE
 We're going to work our way from
 the inside out. Since you don't
 have no titties, you gotta buy
 formula.

He puts several cans of formula in the basket.

Z
 Whoa, he's 8 pounds!

ACE
 He's gonna need this and more.

Z
 Damn, this is expensive! Maybe I
 could find me some titties.

He smiles at a new mother walking by, she pulls her blouse
 closed and hurries away.

ACE
 Good luck with that. And what goes
 in, must come out.

He scoops up a large package of infant diapers.

Z looks at all the cans of formula and grabs another package.

ACE (CONT' D)

Then there's clothes. You need some of these --

He drops some pajamas into the basket.

Z

Wait a second, this one's cuter.

He takes a pajama out of the basket and replaces it with a different one. Ace looks at him funny.

ACE

Okay . . . And you'll need some of these --

He takes a little baby outfit off a rack, starts to put it in the basket but stops and holds it up for Z. Z shakes his head and picks a totally different one on the rack.

Z

How come they don't have any baby clothes in black? So what else?

Ace consults list.

ACE

According to this show on the TLC, babies see primary colors better than pastels. Of course, some studies may indicate that black and white --

Z

Let's get the car seat so I can take him home. How 'bout this one?

Ace holds up one of the more inexpensive models.

ACE

Consumer reports gives this one a high rating. Moderately priced yet does the job.

Z

I don't know.

Z walks around, as if sizing up new cars in a show room.

Z (CONT' D)

What about that one?

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