

Night Watchman
an excerpt by
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FADE IN:

EXT. GANG HIDEOUT -- AFTERNOON

The pitiful excuse for an abandoned building that they're in looks like a Beirut-style life-size Nintendo victim.

A smallish 2 room hideout.

One gang-banger pulls a lone key from his pocket and unlocks the heavy steel entry door.

INT. GANG HIDEOUT -- MOMENTS LATER

The front room is sparsely lit and decorated only with bullet holes and gang graffiti.

A hum accompanies the lights as they slowly get brighter.

The doorway to the back room is covered with a heavy black tarp.

When he pulls back the tarp and enters, he's staring down the barrel of a gun.

The four members of the gang are as follows:

TYRELL (black, the de facto leader of the group), C-NOTE (white and quite flashy), POOCH (short Mexican), and BOBO (mulatto).

C-NOTE

You're late, POOCH. Been helpin' some more of your homies sneak up here under the bushes 'n shit?

POOCH

Nah, I was at your mama's house, ese.

An illicit drug lab is haphazardly set up.

They work for a few minutes, but notice that some of their supplies are nearly out until TY speaks up.

TY

This should be the last of it, right?

C-NOTE

Yeah. That's it. We need to go shopping again.

BOBO

Yeah, this little bit o' meth ain't gonna last us through the night.

TY

Alright, POOCH, since you're the one who can't get your ass here on time, you get to go unload the rest of the merch we've got and meet us on the hill above the warehouse at 10.

POOCH

(to C-Note)

Your mom was worth it.

THE GANG closes up shop. Each gets in his car to drive away.

Ty is the last to leave. As he is locking up the door and preparing for the walk to his truck, he is stopped by a familiar voice; that of his brother, MALIQ.

EXT. GANG HIDEOUT -- CONTINUOUS

MALIQ

'Sup, TY?

Startled, Ty begins to reach behind his unbuttoned shirt for his gun until the voice registers in his brain as being that of his brother.

TY

Fuck, Maliq. You scared the shit out of me.

Beat.

TY (CONT'D)

How did you get here?

MALIQ

(Defiant)

I caught a ride. I knew where you was at. I wanted something to do.

TY

Well, I told you, what I do is dangerous, and I don't want this kind of life for you. That's why I try to keep you out of this shit.

Now, I'm getting ready to get out of here, anyway, so why don't you go wait in the truck, and I'll take you home. Mom probably wants to pester you about your homework before she leaves for work, anyway.

INT. MEDICAL SUPPLY WAREHOUSE -- AFTERNOON

A mix of voices comes from all around as they close up shop.

ANTHONY Stops sweeping and leans on his broom.

ANTHONY

By the way, Mike, did you hear that Green Bay picked up Selkirk yesterday?

MIKE

No, I didn't. Cool. It's about time they got somebody worth a shit as their backup. I'll bet that cost'em though.

ANTHONY

Yeah, Burnahm and a 2nd round pick next season.

MIKE

Ow. That's pretty stiff. He'd better be worth it.

ANTHONY

Yeah, they're gonna need him.

Philly's gonna be tough this year.

DENNY (black, built like a linebacker) Comes over and busts them for talking instead of working.

DENNY

Hey, you guys, they days not over yet. You need to finish up. If you got time to talk, you got time to clean up. The racks still need wiping down.

MIKE

Alright.

ANTHONY

Sorry, man.

Denny walks away, self-satisfied.

ANTHONY (CONT'D)

What the fuck is his problem?

MIKE

I don't know. He's an asshole?

ANTHONY

No, you think?

MIKE

Who knows. Maybe he's not getting any.

ANTHONY

Well, the way he acts around here,
I'm not fucking surprised.

INT. CADAVER FREEZER -- CONTINUOUS

WORKER (female) zips up a cadaver for shipment to a medical school.

She gets to the docks and leaves the body with a TRUCK DRIVER (white, redneck).

TRUCK DRIVER #1

Damn! Wasn't sure you were gonna get here before I took off. Y'know I do have a date tonight.

Looks down at the clipboard in his hands and shakes his head as he checks off a line.

WORKER

Yeah, well, here she is. Happy trails.

Worker exits.

INT. JERRY'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

A messy office.

JERRY (40, white, male) sits behind his desk, sipping his coffee.

WALT (42, white, male) sits on the corner of the desk.

WALT

You 'bout ready to close up for the night, Jer?

JERRY

Yeah. Just finishing up this last invoice. By the way, did Johnny ever check in?

WALT

No, not yet. He's usually here a little early. Must be running a few minutes behind tonight. I'm sure he'll be here directly. Listen, I'm gonna run to my office and make sure everything's good to go so I can get out of here. I'm taking the kids to their grandmother's and Sharon and I are going out tonight.

JERRY

Oh, yeah. That's right. Happy Anniversary.

WALT

(hint of sarcasm)
Thanks for remembering.

Waves over his shoulder and almost runs over JOHNNY (25, husky).

WALT (CONT'D)

Jeez, Johnny, there you are. We were wondering if you were gonna get here before everybody left for the day. You're almost late.

JOHNNY

In America, there's an expression for almost late - it's called 'on time.'

WALT

Cute.

JOHNNY

You like that? I heard that in a movie somewhere.

WALT

Listen, I'm headed to my office, but while you're here, poke your head in Jerry's office and just let him know you're here. He was askin' about you a few minutes ago.

Johnny leans in and knocks on the open door.

JERRY

Oh, hey Johnny, there you are. Come on in a minute. Walt and I were just talking about you.

Johnny enters carrying a book.

JERRY (CONT'D)

(Noticing the book)
Ah, new reading material for the night?

JOHNNY

Yeah.

JERRY

What's this one called?

JOHNNY

Its about a bunch of gangsters
fighting over control of the L.A.
docks in the 1920's. It's called
BOOTLEG SPIRITS.

JERRY

Sounds interesting. You'll have to
let me know how it is.

JOHNNY

Yeah, I will. I'm just starting it
tonight, though.

JERRY

Listen, Johnny, the reason I wanted
to talk to you before you got started
tonight was because we noticed a
little problem last week.

JOHNNY

What's that?

JERRY

We had some of our
(some drug)
Disappear from our storeroom. We
noticed it during last week's
inventory. Now, don't get me wrong,
I'm not accusing you of anything.
We've already gone over the security
camera tapes, and didn't notice
anything strange. We're not even
sure that it happened on your watch.
I'm just alerting you so that you'll
be extra careful. Like I said, we
don't know who's responsible for
this, but, I'm sure you've heard,
some people use that shit to make
designer drugs with, which is why we
keep it locked up, so just make sure
you keep an extra set of eyes on
things, alright?

JOHNNY

You got it, boss.

JERRY

Alright, well, I'll let you get on
with doing your thing, and I'm gonna
wrap my stuff up so I can go home.

Johnny gets up to leave. As he's ready to exit the room he
turns back toward Jerry.

JOHNNY
Have a good weekend, Jerry.

Looking back down at his papers.

JERRY
You too, Johnny.

EXT. MEDICAL SUPPLY WAREHOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Employees race for their cars and get out quick.

Walt and Jerry exit slower, each carrying homework with them.

WALT
Have a good night, Jerry, I'll see
you in the morning.

JERRY
Alright, you too, Walt, see you about
9-ish.

EXT. INNER CITY INDUSTRIAL GHETTO -- NIGHT

The gang stands around on an abandoned street in the warehouse district.

Two streetlights are in the area, but only one of them functions.

Trash litters the curbing of this cul-de-sac where 3 cars & a truck sit.

Over the hill sits the medical supply warehouse.

POOCH
Alright, you ready to do this?

BOBO
Let's go get some drugs.

Ty and C-Note nod their heads in agreement. Check their weapons as Maliq approaches them.

All 4 gang-bangers turn around to see the intruder, with guns drawn.

Looking toward his older brother.

MALIQ
'Sup Ty?

TY

Maliq, what the fuck are you doing here? I told ya black ass to stay at home, mom would be there in a coupl'a hours.

Gang-bangers begin putting their weapons away.

MALIQ

I know, but I wanted to see what you was up to, so I hid in the back of the truck.

TY

Well, get the fuck outta here. We got some shit goin' down and you don't need to be here.

MALIQ

C'mon, yo, I wanna help out.

TY

Look, I told you to get the fuck outta here. We into some serious shit, here, and I don't want to answer to mom for you getting fucked up. Now go on.

POOCH

Ty, wait a minute, now. This little motherfucker might come in handy. He could get in there and let us in.

TY

No. I told you, I don't want him getting involved in this mess. I promised my mother I would keep him out of this gangsta shit.

C-NOTE

Ty, give da little nigga a chance to show us what he's got.

BOBO

They're right, Ty. He's gonna do what he's gonna do. If you're around, at least you can watch out for him.

Ty reluctantly agrees to let his brother do the hard work.

TY

Alright, Maliq, we gonna see what you got. What we want is inside that building down there.

Ty points in the direction of their target warehouse just down the hill.

TY (CONT'D)

Now, we need you to go down to that building and find a way in. That's a medical supply warehouse. What we need you to get out of there for us is called

(same drug)

It ain't kept with the other chemicals in the locker room. It's kept just outside of the locked area in drums. Go open one of those drums and get us a few bags of that shit and bring it back here. That's all you got to do.

MALIQ

I gotcha, dog. I be back in a quick.

Maliq exits toward medical warehouse.

EXT. MEDICAL SUPPLY WAREHOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Maliq scales over the chain-link fence.

Typical warehouse exterior.

A window was carelessly left open by an employee.

The gang watches him go in, then back to the vehicles.

BOBO

So what we gonna do now?

POOCH

We can go hit the pool hall.

TY

Nah. We ain't doin' shit. You motherfuckers talked me into lettin' my brother do this. I was all ready for us to go in. If we're gonna let him do the hard shit, the least we're gonna do is be here to back him up and watch out for him his first time out.

BOBO

Ok, so like I said, what the fuck are we gonna do?

Ty walks over to his truck and opens up the door. He turns on his headlights and his CD player.

Loud rap music blares from all parts of the truck.

Ty leans in and opens his glove box. When he comes back out, he rolls down his window and shuts his door. He has dice in his hand.

C-NOTE

Cool. Dice. I got some Phillies in the car.

POOCH

Cool. Hook us up with a blunt, yo.

C-NOTE

I gotcha, dog.

C-Note opens his car door and produces a laptop case. When he opens it, there is not a laptop inside, but a sizable stash of marijuana and marijuana paraphernalia.

The other 3 gather under the streetlight and start up with the craps. C-Note joins them.

INT. MEDICAL SUPPLY WAREHOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Maliq comes through the window and climbs down.

Toward the back, there is a cadaver freezer.

From higher up, Maliq could see the locked gate area, so once on the floor, he heads toward it.

Once he gets to the drum, he reaches down to open it when Johnny grabs his hand.

Wearing a plum-colored security guard outfit, Johnny is large and imposing. He carries a .45 on his hip.

JOHNNY

What do you think you're doing?

MALIQ

What does it look like I'm doin'?

I'm helpin myself to some drugs.

What are you gonna do, rent-a-pig?

JOHNNY

You're a pretty young guy. You know stealing is wrong?

MALIQ

Arrest me.

JOHNNY

Why you want to do this? Don't you
have any dignity?

MALIQ

Look, thanks for your concern, and
all, but dignity don't pay da bills,
yo. This shit does.

Maliq holds up a bag of (same drug) that he has taken from
the drum.

JOHNNY

Well, come on.

Johnny carries Maliq off and throws him against a fence.

JOHNNY'S POV: ON MALIQ'S FOREHEAD IS A HOLOGRAM OF A GLOWING
WHITE OLIVE BRANCH.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

Now, maybe you'll listen to me.

Maliq looks up to Johnny, worried.