DAMON: Put that red lipstick on. That's the color make you look the illest.

She puts the lipstick on slowly. DAMON watches her.

DAMON: You look real sexy when you do that shit. (Pause.)
Sorry I left the place in a mess. Was lookin' for some stuff in a rush.

NINA: (Calmly.) Where's my money?

DAMON: What?

NINA: In the box. Under the floor. Where'd you take my money?

DAMON: I don't know what you're --

NINA: Nigga do not fuck with me.

DAMON stops. Looks at NINA.

DAMON: Why you keepin' secrets from me, Nina?

NINA: Where's my money?

DAMON: We 'spose to be Bonnie and Clyde -- ain't that right?

Ice Cube and Yo Yo. Trena and Trick Daddy, right? Can't be my down ass bitch if you holdin' something back.

NINA: I'm gonna ask one more time.

DAMON: I took it. Box was fuckin' hard to open. Woulda shot that shit off, but was afraid I'd blow a hole in whatever was in it. Or maybe the bullet would ricochet off the metal. Whatever. So I had my dude Vinne clip it. Thought it mighta been somethin' else. But then saw that it was about seven stacks. Three stacks short of ten gs. And here I thought we was about five or six stacks short. My girl sittin' here on two thirds of our dream and didn't even tell me.

Whassup with that?

NINA: Damon, where'd you take my money?

DAMON: Relax, Nina. I got it. I had it counted. Official. And now it's back. Well...in my possession. I'm trying to figure out why our trust seems to be dissipating.

NINA: Trust? What trust? Nigga you ain't never been trustworthy. Not the whole time I been wastin' with you.

Nobody in this game is.

DAMON: Don't talk to me like that, Nina.

NINA: Trust? How you know there are letters, Damon?

DAMON: I'm asking the questions right now.

NINA: You trying to steal from me.

DAMON: I'm trying to build with you! But I can't do that when I feel like you keepin' secrets. Some real important secrets, Nina. How am I supposed to be your man and make plans for us when you can't even tell me that your Mama done left you a fortune?

NINA: She didn't leave me no fortune.

DAMON: She left you letters, Nina! Letters I figure is obviously worth a damn. Letters worth so much it'll bring your Daddy outta the woodworks to come lookin' for 'em.

That's worth somethin' alright.

NINA: You been talkin' to him behind my back, haven't you?

DAMON: He come lookin' for you. But he found me instead.

And he's gonna pay out for this stuff. We gonna go to Paris on this dude, Brazil. Or London. Wherever the hell you want.

NINA: He told you that?

DAMON: We had a talk.

NINA: He's lying to you, Damon. He's a broke ass has-been pseudo activist. That's what he is. Nothin' more. And you let him gas you up on some bullshit octane.

DAMON: How you know he bluffin'?

NINA: Cuz I know.

DAMON: You can at least see what he's talkin' about. Give him a price. See if he can meet it.

NINA: I'm not givin' him or nobody no price. Letters ain't for sale.

DAMON: Where they at, Nina?

NINA: I'm not telling you, Damon.

DAMON: What's with these secrets? What you got to hide?

What your Mama got to hide?
DOMINIQUE MORISSEAU

NINA: I'm not selling 'em.

DAMON: Why the hell not? What – you bein' sentimental? You kiddin' me right now?

NINA: This ain't between you and me. This is between me and her. She left 'em to me. They're mine now. And I ain't givin' that up. This the last piece...the only piece...all I got left. I ain't givin' it up...and you or that sperm donor motherfucker or the rest of the academic and activist world can go to hell if you think you gonna talk me out of it.

DAMON: You kiddin' me Nina? Ashanti X was a crack head. A fuckin' crack head!!! And you tryin' to get sentimental like it mean something to you now. What it mean to you, Nina? What the hell do you but keep you remembering a bunch of ghosts?!! What it do besides break your fuckin' heart again and again? You hated her. You remember that? You ain't even respect her.

NINA: She was sick.

DAMON: Sick on the goddamn pipe.

NINA: Don't talk about her like that. She wasn't one of those zombies walking around all skinny and wild eyed. She had a problem – yes. But she wasn't no zombie. She was my Mama, asshole. She was brilliant.

DAMON: When she wasn't doped up...which was close to never. And who'd you come cryin' to all them times, Nina? Who'd you come cryin' to when she stole your laptop and sold it for not even half of what you paid?

NINA: She was sick.

DAMON: Who was there for you, Nina? Who held you while you stayed up the whole night crying about how abandoned and lonely you are. Motherless/fatherless child. Nightmares about the devil comin' to claim your Mama and leave you by yourself. Who was down for you and brought you in this game? Gave you a stake in some shit so you wouldn't be nobody's prey no more. So you'd be the one in control and runnin' shit.

NINA: That was almost three years ago. It's different now.

DAMON: What's different about it? It's still you and me against the world. Why's it gotta be different? Cuz she's gone now. Cuz you tryin' to remember her in some different colored light?

NINA: She's my Mama.

DAMON: So the hell what?

NINA: 'Course it don't matter to you. You don't know shit that goes on between a mother and a child. You don't know shit about parenting.

DAMON: Don't bring my son into this.

NINA: What's his birthday?

DAMON: Don't quiz me on this, Nina.

NINA: What's his favorite color, Damond?

DAMON: I told you Rene don't hardly let me spend no time with him.

NINA: When a man wants to spend time with his child, shouldn't be not a goddamn thing that gets in his way.

DAMON: Really, Nina? Not even a court? Not even a judge? Not even the law, right? Cuz all I got to do is make problems for Rene and I'll never see my son again. Put me in a court, I'ma lose everytime. Judge see me and she ain't gonna care that I started hustlin' in the first place to feed my family. She ain't gonna see that I was tryin' to be the best father I could be by makin' sure Rene ain't have to worry cuz her b-s call center job didn't pay her for maternity. Ain't no judge gonna care that I couldn't get nothin' legit cuz of some time I spent locked up for stabbing some niggas tryin' to rob me. She gonna see me as one thing, Nina. The stain in my son's life. That's it.

NINA: That's bullshit, Damond! Make a effort - damn. Call him up sometime. So the hell what if you can't pay his Mama what she's askin' for. Why's he gotta suffer for that? Show up afterschool. Take him to the park. You can muscle and hustle niggas out there tryin' to steal our set and run our corner, but you can't stand up to your son's mother? Who you think you foolin' with that?