

THE UP SHAWNS

Episode #101

“Birthday B.S.”

Written by

Regina Y. Hicks

&

Wanda Sykes

COLD OPEN

INT. BENNIE'S GARAGE - RECEPTION AREA - DAY (D-1)
(BENNIE, LUCRETIA, TONY, DAVIS)

BENNIE UPSHAW STANDS BEHIND THE COUNTER GOING THROUGH RECEIPTS. DAVIS SITS IN A CHAIR FLIPPING THROUGH A MAGAZINE.

1 BENNIE

Davis, you an Uber driver. How you gonna get a fare sitting all day in my shop?

2 DAVIS

They come through.

SFX: DAVIS' PHONE DINGS.

3 DAVIS (CONT'D)

(REJECTING FARE) Oh uh uh. I'm not trying to go to the airport in all that traffic.

4 BENNIE

At least rotate chairs so they wear evenly.

*
*
*

BENNIE CROSSES TO THE BAY.

RESET TO:

INT. GARAGE -- CONTINUOUS

BENNIE ENTERS. TONY WORKS ON A CAR. A RADIO PLAYS SOFTLY IN THE BACKGROUND.

5 BENNIE

Tony! Hurry your ass up with that Ford.
Last thing I need is Lucretia up in here talking about how we play too much.

6 TONY

Why you let your sister-in-law run you
like that?

7 BENNIE

She loaned me the money for this shop.
And until I pay her back, she won't let
me forget it. So, we gotta focus.

MUSIC CUE: THE RADIO BEGINS PLAYING "BEFORE I LET GO" BY
FRANKIE BEVERLY.

8 BENNIE (CONT'D)

Aw shit! Let's do this.

BENNIE TURNS THE RADIO UP TO SING ALONG.

9 BENNIE (CONT'D)

*YOU MADE ME HAPPY / THIS YOU CAN BET
YOU STOOD RIGHT BESIDE ME, YEAH
AND I WON'T FORGET--*

DAVIS ENTERS FROM THE RECEPTION AREA, SINGING ALONG. *

10 BENNIE/TONY

*--AND I REALLY LOVE YOU / YOU SHOULD
REALLY KNOW / I WANT TO MAKE SURE I'M
RIGHT, GIRL / BEFORE I LET GO*

11 BENNIE/TONY/DAVIS *

*NOW WE'VE HAD OUR GOOD TIME / THAT'S
NOT THE SAME, NO / WE'RE HURTING EACH
OTHER / GIRL, IT'S A SHAME / I WON'T BE
FOOLISH--*

MUSIC CUE: THE SONG CUTS OUT. THE GUYS ALL TURN TO SEE
LUCRETIA TURNER STANDING AT THE RADIO.

THE UPSHAW'S Ep. #101
Shooting Draft

"Birthday B.S."
3-3-20

3.
C/O

12 BENNIE

Lucretia!

13 LUCRETIA

Y'all play too much!

LUCRETIA UNPLUGS THE RADIO AND CARRIES IT OFF AS SHE EXITS.

14 LUCRETIA (CONT'D)

*(AS SHE GOES, SINGING) BEFORE I LET YOU
GO, OH / I WOULD NEVER, NEVER, NEVER,
NEVER / NEVER, NEVER, NEVER / NEVER
LET...*

AND WE:

CUT TO:

MAIN TITLES

22 REGINA

And that's why Mommy has to re-make it.
We are too broke to pay for insulin
shots.

*

23 BENNIE

Forget coffee. I got something else hot
and black for you.

HE PULLS HER IN FOR A HUG.

24 REGINA

Awww. (THEN) What do you want?

25 BENNIE

Nothing. Why every time I'm nice you
think it's 'cause I want something?

*

*

LUCRETIA ENTERS FROM THE BACK DOOR.

26 LUCRETIA

Bennie Upshaw, you closing the shop to
go to Vegas Saturday?

27 BENNIE

Damn. (THEN) You're a hateful little
Chia Pet. (TO REGINA) Why your sister
always gotta be starting stuff?

*

*

*

28 REGINA

You trying to go to Vegas this
Saturday?

29 BENNIE

For sure. Tony wants to kick it at the
Golden Nugget.

*

30 REGINA

Aaliyah's birthday party is this
Saturday.

31 BENNIE

And that's why I told him "no." (THEN)
Excuse me.

*

HE PULLS OUT HIS PHONE AND STARTS TEXTING.

32 LUCRETIA

(TO REGINA) Explain to me again why you
hanging on to (RE: BENNIE) this?

AALIYAH UPSHAW ENTERS FROM THE LIVING ROOM.

33 AALIYAH

Okay, about my party. Wouldn't it be
cool if we have a photo booth?

34 REGINA

Sure would. But that's not the budget
we workin' with.

35 LUCRETIA

(TO AALIYAH) I can take pictures of
your little friends with my phone.

36 AALIYAH

Nobody wants to pose for a Jitterbug.

37 LUCRETIA

Then I guess nobody wants a present.

38 AALIYAH

I love you, Aunt Lucretia.

39 LUCRETIA

Mm-hmm. That'll get you a card.

40 REGINA

Aaliyah, take Maya and get ready for school.

AALIYAH AND MAYA EXIT.

41 REGINA (CONT'D)

(TO BENNIE) I got the last RSVP this morning. We're all set for the Lotus Room, right?

REGINA HEADS FOR THE LIVING ROOM. BENNIE FOLLOWS.

RESET TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY (D-2)

REGINA GATHERS HER STUFF FOR WORK.

42 BENNIE

That massage parlor by the Costco? They got shut down.

*

*

43 REGINA

No, fool. The party space downtown.

*

44 BENNIE

(COVERING) Yeah, yeah. I knew that. I'm just playing with y'all.

*

LUCRETIA ENTERS WITH COFFEE.

45 LUCRETIA

(TO REGINA) He ain't know shit. Regina, *
I told you he'd ruin Aaliyah's *
birthday. Why do you keep acting like *
he can do things? *

46 BENNIE

Shouldn't you be somewhere stomping on
Tokyo?

47 REGINA

Bennie, this is serious. *

SFX: THE DOORBELL RINGS.

48 REGINA (CONT'D) *

This is your daughter's thirteenth *
birthday. *

49 BENNIE

I know. When have I ever let you down?

REGINA OPENS THE DOOR TO REVEAL TASHA LEWIS.

50 REGINA

Bennie, it's your baby mama. (THEN)
Tasha.

BEFORE TASHA CAN RESPOND, REGINA EXITS TOWARD THE KITCHEN.
BENNIE STEPS OUTSIDE.

RESET TO:

EXT. FRONT PORCH - DAY (D-2)

BENNIE STEPS OUT ON THE PORCH TO TALK TO TASHA.

51 BENNIE

Tasha, the hell are you doing here? You can't pop up on Regina like that. You remember what happened last time?

52 TASHA

I never did get that bacon grease out my good wig. (THEN) I need you to talk to your son. (CALLING OFF) Damn it, Kelvin. Get out that mailbox, that ain't your shit.

KELVIN UPSHAW APPROACHES CARRYING MAIL.

53 KELVIN

Good news, Pops. You may already be a winner.

54 TASHA

(TO BENNIE) Your son got suspended. Mr. Sticky Fingers got caught with a teacher's wallet.

55 BENNIE

(TO KELVIN) A teacher? Boy, you know teachers ain't got no money.

56 KELVIN

Maybe I found that wallet.

57 BENNIE/TASHA

Boy please.

*

58 TASHA

(RE: KELVIN) Look, I got clients, so
you got him during the day. I'll get
him at your shop after I do this weave.

59 BENNIE

How long's that gonna take?

60 TASHA

Shouldn't be too late. Luckily, the
bitch gotta head like a golf ball.

TASHA AND KELVIN CROSS AWAY. BENNIE TURNS TO THE HOUSE WHERE
HE SEES LUCRETIA PEERING THROUGH THE WINDOW, HAVING WATCHED
ALL OF THIS. HE JUMPS, STARTLED.

61 BENNIE

Man. I wish I had some blinds on the
outside.

AND, WE:

CUT TO:

*
*
*
*
*

SCENE B

INT. BENNIE'S GARAGE - LATER (D-2)

(BENNIE, LUCRETIA, DUCK, TONY, DAVIS)

TONY IS WORKING ON A CAR. BENNIE ENTERS ON HIS PHONE.

62 BENNIE

(INTO PHONE) Come on, man. You don't
have any party rooms? A party closet?
Hello? (HANGS UP) Damn. The Lotus Room
is booked up. *

63 TONY

You know what's not booked up? Vegas. *
Aaliyah has a birthday every year. *
Rooms at the Golden Nugget aren't *
always half off with a continental *
breakfast. *

64 BENNIE

Nah, I gotta be there for my kid. My *
daddy was no good and that made me do
some messed up stuff back in the day.

LUCRETIA ENTERS FROM THE RECEPTION AREA.

65 LUCRETIA

Back in the day? Negro, you did some
ignorant shit this morning.

66 BENNIE

Damn, what are you doing here? No one
said your name three times.

67 LUCRETIA

I want my car. You said it'd be ready
weeks ago.

68 BENNIE

It's not like you're paying for it.

69 LUCRETIA

Oh, I'm paying for it, dearly! Never
should have fronted this place with my
hard earned money.

70 BENNIE

Hard earned? You fell through a jetway.

71 LUCRETIA

I fell hard. And I earned it.

72 BENNIE

You agreed to be a silent partner.
When's that silence gonna start?

73 LUCRETIA

You're a "mechanic." When's that shit
gonna start?

LUCRETIA EXITS TO THE RECEPTION AREA. BENNIE GOES BACK TO
WORKING ON A CAR. CHALMUS "DUCK" JEFFERSON AND DAVIS ENTER
FROM THE BAYS.

74 DUCK

Free man walking!

75 TONY

Duck. They finally sprung you? Welcome
home, playa.

76 BENNIE

(TO DUCK) I'm just glad to see you out
of prison. They know you out, right?

77 DUCK

Yeah, this time it's legit.

78 BENNIE

Why didn't you let me pick you up?

79 DUCK

You were supposed to pick me up.

80 BENNIE

I said that?

81 DUCK

It's cool. Davis got me.

82 DAVIS

Us vets take care of each other.

83 TONY

(RE: DUCK'S CLOTHES) You shoulda took
him to the mall.

84 DUCK

Man, this is what I was wearing when I
went in.

85 BENNIE

The judge probably gave you two extra
years just for that shirt.

DUCK WALKS TOWARD THE BAYS. BENNIE FOLLOWS.

86 DUCK

(LOOKING AROUND) Bennie, this is all
you?

87 BENNIE

Yeah. And hey, man, I haven't forgotten
what you did for me. I could've easily
been in there with you.

88 DUCK

Yeah, usually "the getaway driver"
isn't supposed to be the only one
gettin' away.

89 BENNIE

Well let me make it up to you. When
you're ready, you've got a job here.

DAVIS AND TONY APPROACH.

90 DUCK

I'm ready to work now.

91 DAVIS

Well don't work too hard. Me and the
fellas at the VFW are going all in for
your "fresh out" party.

92 DUCK

Nothing too crazy now. I'm a changed
man. I found Jesus inside.

93 BENNIE/DAVIS/TONY

(SKEPTICAL) Okay.

LUCRETIA ENTERS FROM RECEPTION.

THE UPSHAW'S Ep. #101
Shooting Draft

"Birthday B.S."
3-3-20

15.
I/B

94 LUCRETIA

Hey, Duck. Welcome back.

95 DUCK

Hey, Lucretia, you looking good.

96 BENNIE

Damn shame. Prison takes everything
from you.

*

AND WE:

CUT TO:

SCENE C

INT. KITCHEN - LATER (D-2)

(BENNIE, REGINA, LUCRETIA, MAYA) *

REGINA ICES CUPCAKES AS MAYA WATCHES. MAYA REACHES FOR ONE.

97 REGINA

(WITHOUT LOOKING) No.

MAYA REACHES AGAIN.

98 REGINA (CONT'D)

(WITHOUT LOOKING) No.

MAYA REACHES AGAIN. REGINA PUTS HER HAND ON MAYA'S HAND.

99 REGINA (CONT'D)

No! These are for your sister's party.

100 MAYA

Can I at least lick the spoon? This is
torture. *

101 REGINA

You'll live.

LUCRETIA ENTERS FROM THE BACK DOOR. *

102 LUCRETIA *

Is Bennie here yet? *

103 REGINA *

No. *

104 LUCRETIA *

Then let me catch my breath. (THEN) *

Now, you know how much it pains me to *

bring you bad news about Bennie, but *

your trifling-ass husband has hit a new *

low.

REGINA HANDS MAYA A SPOONFUL OF ICING.

105 REGINA

Here, sweetie. Take this into the
living room. Keep it out of your hair.

MAYA TAKES THE ICING AND RUNS INTO THE LIVING ROOM.

106 REGINA (CONT'D)

What did I tell you about shit-talking
Bennie in front the kids?

107 LUCRETIA

Not to do it. But girl, you need to
hear this shit.

*

*

108 REGINA

What did I just say? The only thing I
want you to do in this kitchen is help
me.

109 LUCRETIA

I been helping you all my life. When Bennie
got you pregnant in high school, Mama said,
"Lucretia, we gotta put our lives on hold
and help raise little baby Bernard while
your whore-ish sister goes off to college."
(OFF REGINA'S LOOK) Mama's words. (TAKES A
BITE OF CUPCAKE) Damn, these cupcakes are
good.

110 REGINA

Hey, hey, hey. Those are for the party
on Saturday.

*

111 LUCRETIA

There ain't gonna be a party on Saturday.
Bennie didn't book the Lotus room.

112 REGINA

What? How do you know?

113 LUCRETIA

Because I called. Like you should have.

114 REGINA

Well, maybe they made a mistake.

115 LUCRETIA

Unless he booked Aaliyah's party as
"the Kirshenbaum Bar Mitzvah," these
cupcakes aren't going anywhere. Mazel!

BENNIE ENTERS.

116 BENNIE

Hey.

117 REGINA

When were you gonna tell me you didn't
book the Lotus Room?

118 BENNIE

Damn, baby. Give a man a chance to
change the subject. (THEN) I'm sorry.
It was booked.

119 LUCRETIA

Oooh, Aaliyah's gonna be pissed at you.
I'm gonna go wait for her on the porch.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

120 REGINA

No, Bennie's gonna tell Aaliyah that he
screwed up.

121 BENNIE

I didn't screw nothing up. (RE:
KITCHEN) We could do the party here.
All her little friends can run around,
play with the fridge magnets, sweep,
check the mousetraps.

122 LUCRETIA

Damn, I'm late for a hair appointment,
but I really want Aaliyah to get home.

123 REGINA

(TO BENNIE) We promised Aaliyah a party
space. You have one day to find it.

124 BENNIE

I got this. (THEN, NOTICING) Oooh,
cupcakes. Who are these for?

AND, WE:

CUT TO:

SCENE D

INT. BENNIE'S GARAGE - RECEPTION AREA - LATER (D-3)
(BENNIE, KELVIN, DUCK, TASHA, BERNARD)

DUCK IS GRABBING SOME PARTS AS BENNIE ENTERS, HAVING JUST
FINISHED A PHONE CALL.

125 BENNIE

(RE: PHONE) Damn. I can't believe every
party room in town is booked.

126 DUCK

Same problem Mary and Joseph had.

127 BENNIE

Joseph forgot to book the Lotus Room
too?

128 DUCK

I'm gonna pray for you.

DUCK EXITS BACK TO THE GARAGE. BERNARD ENTERS AND THROWS A
PACKAGE ON THE COUNTER.

129 BERNARD

Here.

130 BENNIE

There's that friendly delivery service
I've come to love.

131 BERNARD

Stop ordering things just to see me,
Bennie.

132 BENNIE

Then let's kick it at a Pacers' game.
Come on, Bernard. You're my son. It'll
be fun. Whatcha doing Saturday?

*

133 BERNARD

Going to Aaliyah's birthday party.

134 BENNIE

Damn it. I knew I had something on
Saturday.

135 BERNARD

Let's hope you do. I heard you screwed
up her party.

136 BENNIE

How does everyone know about that?

137 BERNARD

We've got a family group chat.

138 BENNIE

I'm not on that.

139 BERNARD

'Cause it's mostly about you. (THEN)
Look, there's a space in my building.
Aaliyah can have her birthday there.

140 BENNIE

Don't nobody need your sad single man
meetin' slash laundry room.

141 BERNARD

The laundry room's adjacent! And we got board games now.

142 BENNIE

I'm her daddy, not you. I got this.

143 BERNARD

Now you wanna be a dad. Where were you when I was growing up?

144 BENNIE

Growing up too. I was in high school when you were born. If it wasn't for your mother pushing me, you and I might have ended up in the same class.

145 BERNARD

Just give me a signature so I can go.

146 BENNIE

I want a hug first.

147 BERNARD

I am not hugging you.

148 BENNIE

Then I'm not signing.

149 BERNARD

Then I guess you weren't here when I came by.

BERNARD PULLS OUT ONE OF THOSE "SORRY WE MISSED YOU" SLIPS.

150 BENNIE

Oh no, don't you do that, Bernard. *

Don't you pull out one of those slips.

Don't you fill out the top. Don't you
check that box-- this was not the third
of three attempts! Don't you stick that
on my door!

BERNARD POINTEDLY STICKS THE SLIP TO THE DOOR, GRABS THE
PACKAGE BACK, AND EXITS.

151 BENNIE (CONT'D)

Aw, man! Now I gotta go down there. *

That's my whole afternoon.

DUCK APPROACHES.

152 DUCK

Bennie, I prayed on it and it hit me. *

Why don't you take the VFW hall for *

Aaliyah's party? *

153 BENNIE

Why don't you want it? What's wrong
with it?

154 DUCK

Nothing. A party with booze and women *

would pull me back into my old ways.

Besides, "One who is gracious to a poor
man lends to the Lord."

155 BENNIE

Am I the poor man or the Lord? Either way I'll take it. I can't wait to tell Regina I got Saturday all set.

TASHA ENTERS.

156 TASHA

Kelvin ready?

157 BENNIE

Yea, he's in the back.

158 TASHA

(CALLING OFF) Come on, boy. I've gotta put them fish sticks in the oven.

(THEN) What time are you coming by on Saturday?

159 BENNIE

For what?

160 TASHA

Kelvin's birthday party. I told you last week. I need you to set up tables.

161 BENNIE

His birthday was three weeks ago.

162 TASHA

And his party is this Saturday. Although I should cancel it after that stunt he pulled at school.

163 BENNIE

I agree. Kelvin should not have a party
on Saturday.

164 TASHA

I know. But I already bought a cake,
liquor, and rib tips. So it's
happening.

*

KELVIN ENTERS FROM THE BACK.

165 TASHA (CONT'D)

There you are. Let's go.

166 KELVIN

Later, Pops. See you Saturday.

*

KELVIN EXITS, FOLLOWED BY TASHA.

167 BENNIE

Shit, now I gotta go. I love rib tips.

AND, WE:

CUT TO:

SCENE E

INT. VFW HALL - LATER (D-3)
(BENNIE, DUCK)

*

BENNIE AND DUCK LOOK AROUND. IT'S AN EMPTY SPACE WITH SOME TABLES AND CHAIRS (SET FOR VARIOUS MEETINGS).

168 DUCK

So... this is the place.

169 BENNIE

Oh this will be real cool. The kids can take a knee in front of the flag as they come in.

170 DUCK

You want it or not?

171 BENNIE

Naw, it's perfect. Best part is it's right by Tasha's, so I can just run back and forth.

172 DUCK

This place is big. Why don't you just ask Regina if you can combine the parties?

173 BENNIE

I don't know how a prison wife does it, but a wife on the street ain't gonna go for that. I'll just lie to everybody and be an amazing father to all three of my kids.

*

*

THE UPSHAW'S Ep. #101
Shooting Draft

"Birthday B.S."
3-3-20

27.
I/E

174 DUCK

You have four.

175 BENNIE

Damn it! I always forget Bernard. No
wonder he don't like my ass.

CUT TO:

SCENE H

INT. VFW HALL - PARTY LOOK - SATURDAY - LATE AFTERNOON (D-4) *
(BENNIE, REGINA, LUCRETIA, AALIYAH, BERNARD, MAYA)

BENNIE, REGINA, LUCRETIA, AND MAYA ARE STANDING IN THE MIDDLE *
OF THE ROOM HOLDING VARIOUS BALLOONS, DECORATIONS AND *
CUPCAKES FOR AALIYAH'S PARTY. THEY LOOK IN HORROR AT THE *
ROOM, WHICH IS NOW DECORATED LIKE A POP-UP STRIP CLUB. THERE *
ARE LOUNGE CHAIRS AROUND A POLE, LIGHTS... ETC.

176 BENNIE

(LIKE A MAGICIAN) Ta-daa!

177 LUCRETIA

You mean ta-tas. This is a bootleg *
strip club. *

178 REGINA *

Bennie, what the hell? Please tell me *
this is just where we stop to ask for *
directions to Aaliyah's party. *

179 BENNIE *

No, this is it. *

180 REGINA *

Then these poles better be for *
tetherball. *

181 BENNIE *

I don't know what happened. When Duck *
showed me this place it was empty. *
There was nothing in here but old man *
smell. Somebody screwed up. *

182 LUCRETIA

(HAND RAISED) Show of hands, who thinks
somebody is Bennie?

183 REGINA

Damn, Bennie. I asked you to do one
thing.

184 MAYA

Mommy, can I go swing on the pole?

185 REGINA

Not now. And not to pay for college.

REGINA STARTS RUSHING TO TEAR DOWN THE DECORATIONS.

186 REGINA (CONT'D)

Help me get this nasty stuff down!
Maya, close your eyes and throw these
streamers... everywhere.

BENNIE RUSHES OVER TO THE PANTY CUT-OUTS AS BERNARD AND
AALIYAH ENTER.

187 BENNIE

Let me take these panties down.

188 BERNARD

Whoa. What in the Hustlers?

189 AALIYAH

Wait. You gave me a stripper party?

AALIYAH WANDERS AROUND TAKING EVERYTHING IN.

190 REGINA

Your Daddy did. But Mommy's fixing it.
Your sister's doing streamers.

ANGLE ON MAYA BLINDLY THROWING STREAMERS IN THE AIR. MOST ARE
LANDING ON HER.

191 BERNARD

(TO REGINA) Mom, I told you Bennie'd
screw this up.

192 AALIYAH

This party's fire!

193 REGINA/BERNARD

What?

194 AALIYAH

OMG! Poles! Lit floors! And you got me
a photo booth?

195 REGINA

Oh, thank God that's what that tiny
room is for.

196 AALIYAH

I cannot believe this. My parents are
dope. Love you, Mom. Love you, Dad.

SHE RUNS OFF SNAPPING SELFIES.

197 REGINA

She loves it?

198 LUCRETIA

You're surprised? You see what kids are
watching now? Cardi B, Nicki Minaj,
Ariana Grande. You never saw Aretha
Franklin on a pole.

*
*
*

199 REGINA

I can't believe it.

200 BENNIE

Did you doubt me?

201 LUCRETIA

Every day in every way.

202 BERNARD

(TO BENNIE) Gettin' lucky doesn't make
you a good dad.

203 BENNIE

Man, I wish I had one of your door tags
to stick on your face. 'Cause you tried
to deliver an "L," but you missed me.

BENNIE LOOKS AT HIS WATCH.

204 BENNIE (CONT'D)

You know what this party needs?

205 REGINA

A black light.

206 BENNIE

Ice. I'm gonna run out and grab some. *
Probably take me like twenty, thirty *
minutes to an hour and a half. *

207 REGINA

It's a VFW, they don't have an ice *
maker?

THE UPSHAW'S Ep. #101
Shooting Draft

"Birthday B.S."
3-3-20

32.
I/H

208 BENNIE

No, that grinding sound sets off their
PTSD.

AS BENNIE EXITS, WE:

209 END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SCENE J

INT. TASHA'S HOUSE - MINUTES LATER (D-4) *
(BENNIE, KELVIN, TASHA, JAKE, EXTRAS)

KELVIN'S PARTY IS IN FULL SWING. THERE ARE A FEW HANDMADE DECORATIONS, BUT IT'S FAR FROM THE GLAMOR OF AALIYAH'S PARTY. THE PARTYGOERS ARE A MIX OF ADULTS AND A FEW KIDS. TASHA POURS ALCOHOL INTO A LARGE BOWL OF PUNCH, MAKING "HUNCH PUNCH." A FEW FOLK, INCLUDING KELVIN, ROLL DICE IN THE CORNER, WHILE A FEW MORE SMOKE WEED AND PLAY CARDS AT A CARD TABLE. BENNIE ENTERS AND CROSSES TO TASHA.

210 BENNIE

Hey, Tasha. I'm here. Where's Kelvin? *

211 TASHA *

Over by that table you didn't help me set up. *

212 BENNIE *

Damn, girl. Smile. It's a party. (SEES KELVIN) Hey, happy birthday, son! *

KELVIN CROSSES OVER TO HIM. *

213 KELVIN *

'Sup! You made it! *

214 BENNIE *

Man, of course I made it. It's your birthday. Where else I gotta be? *

JAKE, (40'S, SHIFTY) APPROACHES TO GET A DRINK AND NOTICES BENNIE. *

215 JAKE

Bennie's here? Aw, shit. Let me heat up these dice.

216 BENNIE

Jake, my man. I see you, boy! (TO
TASHA) Your cousin Jake's here, so I
know this ain't no kids party.

217 TASHA

We got Twister. Here, you want a cup?

TASHA HANDS BENNIE A GLASS OF PUNCH.

218 BENNIE

(SIPS DRINK, THEN COUGHS) You serving
hunch punch at a kids party?

219 TASHA

I put an 'adults only' sign on it.

(THEN) Where'd that go?

A KID WALKS BY WEARING THE "ADULTS ONLY" SIGN.

220 BENNIE

Where's all Kelvin's little friends?
There's more grown people than kids.

221 TASHA

(POINTING AT A PREGNANT WOMAN) Tamika's
due. Any minute that's gonna be a kid.
(OFF HIS LOOK) What am I supposed to
do, watch kids play for two hours then
eat cake? This is my Saturday, too.

222 BENNIE

I'm not saying you can't have fun, but
over at Aaliyah's party, we got soda,
games, and you know, kids.

223 TASHA

For somebody with no input, you sure
got a lot of output.

224 BENNIE

(CHECKS WATCH) Alright. You right. Let
me help out. You know what this party
needs? Ice. I'll be back in twenty,
thirty minutes to an hour and a half.

*
*

225 TASHA

We good. Jake brought six bags.

226 BENNIE

Oh, that's too much ice. I'm gonna take
one out. There's some bums down the
block drinking hot Pepsi.

BENNIE STARTS TO LEAVE, BUT THEN:

227 JAKE

(RE: DICE GAME) Come on, Bennie. Let me
take your money real quick.

228 KELVIN

Yeah, Pops, come and watch me break
these fools off.

229 BENNIE

What you know about shooting dice?

230 KELVIN

Come teach me something, then.

*

THE UPSHAW'S Ep. #101
Shooting Draft

"Birthday B.S."
3-3-20

36.
II/J

231 BENNIE

(CHECKS WATCH AGAIN) I guess I've got a
minute.

*
*

DISSOLVE TO:

240 JAKE

Relax. It's my store. Nobody's gonna
card him.

241 KELVIN

Hey, Jake. Since it's my birthday, can
I grab me a tall boy?

242 BENNIE

You better mean a basketball buddy.

243 KELVIN

Chill, I'm just playing.

244 BENNIE

That's the problem, y'all play too
much. (REALIZING WHAT HE JUST SAID)

Where'd that come from?

BENNIE SURVEYS THE PARTY. THE GOOD TIME HE WAS HAVING SLOWLY
FADES AWAY FROM THE EXPRESSION ON HIS FACE.

245 BENNIE (CONT'D)

(TO HIMSELF) This shit ain't right...

TASHA COMES OUT OF THE KITCHEN CARRYING A PLATE OF BROWNIES
IN EACH HAND.

246 TASHA

Weed brownies on the left. Regular
brownies on the right. (THEN, UNSURE)
Wait. Shit.

AND, WE:

CUT TO:

SCENE 1

INT. VFW HALL - PARTY LOOK/PHOTOBOOTH - LATER (D-4) *
(BENNIE, REGINA, LUCRETIA, AALIYAH, KELVIN, BERNARD, DAVIS,
TASHA, EXTRAS)

AALIYAH'S PARTY IS FULL OF GUESTS. REGINA AND LUCRETIA STAND
BY THE BAR. A KID APPROACHES THE BAR.

247 REGINA

No. This is not for kids. Party stuff
is over there.

THE KID CROSSES AWAY.

248 LUCRETIA

You sick of Bennie's shit yet?

249 REGINA

Hey, he came through. *

250 LUCRETIA

No, he got lucky these kids are nasty. *
You really gonna sit there and tell me *
Magic City Jr. is what you had in mind *
for your daughter's birthday? *

251 REGINA *

Shut up. *

LUCRETIA POURS LIQUOR INTO HER CUP. AALIYAH RUNS UP TO THEM. *

252 AALIYAH *

Some people mentioned my birthday on *
the gram. Everyone loves my stripper *
theme. (READING) Great party Alana. *

(THEN, EXCITED) That's almost my name! *

SHE CROSSES AWAY AS BENNIE ENTERS AND CROSSES TO REGINA. *

253 BENNIE

*

Regina!

*

254 REGINA

*

You've been gone over an hour. Where's
the ice?

*

*

255 BENNIE

*

It melted. Climate change is real.

*

Anyway, we need to talk.

*

DAVIS ENTERS CARRYING A CASE OF BEER.

*

256 DAVIS

What the hell is this? Who pulled down
my panties?

257 LUCRETIA

It'd take some Clydesdales to pull down
your panties.

258 BENNIE

*

Davis, what are you doing here? Duck
said he didn't want the party.

*

*

259 DAVIS

*

Yeah, but we did. And in about thirty
minutes, this place is gonna be
smelling like baby oil and booty.

*

*

*

DAVIS WALKS OFF.

*

260 REGINA

*

We better get right to the cupcakes.

*

261 BENNIE

*

But I need to talk to you.

*

262 REGINA

No time for talking. You heard Davis,
it's T minus titties.

*

263 BENNIE

But this is important, look-- (NOTICES)
Aw shit.

*

BENNIE SPOTS TASHA, KELVIN, AND A COUPLE KIDS FROM KELVIN'S PARTY ENTER.

264 TASHA

Oooh! This is nice.

265 REGINA

What the hell are they doing here?

*

266 BENNIE

I'll handle this.

BENNIE CROSSES TO TASHA. REGINA FOLLOWS.

267 BENNIE (CONT'D)

(TO TASHA) What the hell are y'all
doing here?

*

268 TASHA

After you ran out my house, Kelvin went
on Instagram and saw how lit this party
was. (LOOKING AROUND) Okay, I get it.
This is real kid-friendly.

*

*

269 REGINA

(TO BENNIE) You were over at Tasha's?
Oh hell no! (PULLING BENNIE) Come with
me. Now.

THEY CROSS TOWARD THE PHOTO BOOTH.

RESET TO:

INT. VFW HALL - PARTY LOOK/PHOTOBOOTH - MOMENTS LATER (D-4) *
(BENNIE, REGINA, TASHA) *

REGINA AND BENNIE SIT IN THE PHOTO BOOTH. THE FLASH FROM THE BOOTH HAPPENS WHILE THEY TALK. *

270 REGINA

Bennie, you lying--

271 BENNIE

(POINTING TO THE CAMERA) Smile baby,
they can see the photos out there.

THEY POSE FOR A PHOTO. SMILING THROUGH CINCHED TEETH. LIGHT CUE: PHOTO FLASH. *

272 REGINA

Lying. Sneaking. You just do what Bennie's
gonna do. And to hell with everybody else. *
How can you just run out of your *
daughter's birthday to go to Tasha's? *

THEY STOP AND TAKE ANOTHER PHOTO. ONE WITH THEIR HEADS CLOSE. LIGHT CUE: PHOTO FLASH. *

273 BENNIE

Kelvin was having a birthday party, *
too. And I didn't want to miss it. *

THEY STOP, BENNIE DOES A SILLY FACE, NOT REGINA. THEN:

274 REGINA *

And you shouldn't miss it. *

275 BENNIE *

Then why are you yelling at me? *

276 REGINA

Because the first time I'm hearing
about it is in a photo booth in a strip
club. Why didn't you just tell me?

277 BENNIE

'Cause you know how you are about
Kelvin.

278 REGINA

I don't have a problem with Kelvin. I
don't even have a problem with Tasha.
(OFF HIS LOOK) Okay, I have a little
problem with Tasha. Okay, she's a
trashy bitch.

279 BENNIE

See that's why I didn't tell you. So we
wouldn't be having this right here. I
was looking out for you.

LIGHT CUE: PHOTO FLASH.

280 REGINA

No, we're having this because you were
looking out for Bennie. You can't ever
be straight with me.

REGINA PAUSES. A PHOTO FLASHES WITHOUT THEM POSING. THIS IS
SERIOUS. LIGHT CUE: PHOTO FLASH.

281 BENNIE

Fine, I'll be straight with you. I have
to step up my daddy game.

(MORE)

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

BENNIE (CONT'D)

Kelvin's shooting dice, trying to drink
beer, getting suspended from school.

282 REGINA

Hunh. Apple. Tree. *

283 BENNIE

I know! I'm trying to fix that. But I
really need my wife to support that.

284 REGINA

What are you asking me?

285 BENNIE

I want to see more of Kelvin. I'd like
him to come over once a week for dinner. *

286 REGINA

Okay, I can do that. But you do not,
under any circumstances, ever take our
kids to Tasha's. *

287 BENNIE

Tasha ain't that bad.

THEN:

288 TASHA (O.C.)

I still got it, bitches!

THEY LOOK OUT THE PHOTO BOOTH TO SEE TASHA SWINGING ON A POLE
LIKE A PRO. THEN:

289 BENNIE

Yeah, okay, that's fair.

THEY SMILE. KISS. THEY'RE GOOD.

CUT TO:

SCENE M

INT. VFW HALL - PARTY LOOK - A FEW MINUTES LATER (D-4) *
(BENNIE, REGINA, LUCRETIA, AALIYAH, KELVIN, BERNARD, MAYA,
TASHA, DAVIS, EXTRAS)

BENNIE STANDS TALKING TO AALIYAH AND KELVIN.

290 BENNIE

First. You need to know how important
you both are to me. I love y'all.
That's why I tried to be in two places
at once.

291 AALIYAH

And not 'cause you're trifling.

292 BENNIE

Stop listening to your Aunt Lucretia!
She's the demon spawn. (THEN) Look, I
want to be a good dad. But being a good
dad means being one to "all my kids."
Even Bernard.

293 BERNARD (O.S.)

I am right here.

WE CAN SEE THAT BERNARD IS LISTENING TOO. JUST THEN, REGINA AND
LUCRETIA COME OUT WITH A TRAY OF CUPCAKES LIT WITH CANDLES.

294 REGINA/LUCRETIA

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU--

295 EVERYBODY

*-- HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU / HAPPY
BIRTHDAY DEAR AALIYAH...*

296 BENNIE

*

AND...

*

BENNIE LOOKS TO REGINA. REGINA LOOKS TO AALIYAH. AALIYAH
SHRUGS AS IF TO SAY, "SURE."

297 BENNIE (CONT'D)

And Kelvin!

EVERYBODY

BENNIE (CONT'D)

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO Y'ALL!

*

MUSIC CUE: STRIPPER MUSIC.

298 DAVIS

Here come the girls. Eat them cupcakes
in the parking lot.

299 BENNIE

I should stay and help clean up.

REGINA HUSTLES BENNIE AND THE CHILDREN OUT OF THE PARTY.
BEAT. REGINA COMES BACK IN.

300 REGINA

Lucretia!

WE SEE LUCRETIA HAS SETTLED IN BY THE STAGE AND PULLED OUT
SOME DOLLAR BILLS.

*

*

AND, WE:

*

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE