

THE BROTHERS TEXAS

Written By

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1. EXT. MANHATTANVILLE HOUSING - EARLY MORNING

Establishing shot of Manhattanville Projects.

2. INT. HOUSTON'S ROOM - MORNING

HOUSTON (13), African American, dressed in basketball shorts and a wife beater. His room is adorned with sports posters, books, and the latest technologies. He stands and plays a superhero fighting video game. HOUSTON wears a headset and talks to the screen. An alert on his iPad sounds. "VDABXGIRL likes your photo on Instagram" HOUSTON checks the pic and profile. HOUSTON while checking loses track of game and gets killed.

CUT TO:

3. INT. AUSTIN'S ROOM - MORNING

AUSTIN (29), African American, dressed in basketball shorts, a Knicks t-shirt, and wears a headset. Junk food bags and dirty dishes line the room. He sits in a chair and plays the same video game.

HOUSTON
(through headset)
That's bullshit..

AUSTIN
Watch your mouth! Just cause you
13, don't make you a man!

HOUSTON
More of a man than you!

AUSTIN
You don't even got no pubes..

AUSTIN plays game with ease. TIFFANY (28), Caucasian, wakes up from the bed behind him.

CUT TO:

4. INT. HOUSTON'S ROOM - MORNING

HOUSTON
Man whatever!!

HOUSTON plays game with force.

AUSTIN
(through headset)
You can't beat me!

HOUSTON
We'll see about that..

AUSTIN and HOUSTON battle back and forth.

CUT TO:

5. INT. AUSTIN'S ROOM - MORNING

TIFFANY kicks through trash on the floor as AUSTIN continues to play. AUSTIN's eyes never leave the screen.

CUT TO:

6. INT. HOUSTON'S ROOM - MORNING

AUSTIN
(through headset)
Morning.. That's bullshit..

DALLAS (O.S.)
Watch your mouth!

CUT TO:

7. INT. AUSTIN'S ROOM - MORNING

TIFFANY exits AUSTIN's room with an attitude. DALLAS (24), African American, dressed in colorful medical scrubs. DALLAS reacts to TIFFANY's attitude. DALLAS is holding a pile of dirty laundry. AUSTIN stares at the TV screen. XAVIER (29) Hispanic, give DALLAS some laundry. XAVIER is half dressed.

AUSTIN
Make sure you grab mines too?

DALLAS
Who I look like?

AUSTIN
Nurse Jackie..

DALLAS
When was the last time you cleaned your room?

AUSTIN
The last time I saw your mother..

DALLAS
No wonder why she hasn't come home.. Have the rent money when I get home..

AUSTIN
Tiffany will give it to you..

DALLAS walks away.

8. INT. HOUSTON'S ROOM - MORNING

DALLAS knocks and opens HOUSTON's door. DALLAS dumps clothes in empty hamper and takes out the hamper.

DALLAS
Come on birthday boy.. We're
running late.

AUSTIN
(through headset)
Better hurry up before he throws a
sissy fit..

HOUSTON
Keep talking junk about my brother
and I'll punch you..

AUSTIN
He was my brother first..

HOUSTON
So! I'm his favorite.. OOOOOO.

HOUSTON beats AUSTIN.

AUSTIN
I let you win. That was my birthday
present..

HOUSTON
Yeah okay!.

HOUSTON wraps up game system and grabs towel to shower.

CUT TO:

9. INT. BATHROOM - DAY

TIFFANY sits on toilet. TIFFANY is flushed.

TIFFANY
Don't you know how to knock!

HOUSTON
Sorry. Tiff, are you okay?

TIFFANY is silent.

TIFFANY
 You gotta keep this a secret,
 okay?..

HOUSTON and TIFFANY pinky promise.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
 I'm pregnant..

HOUSTON
 "Hi baby, this is your Uncle
 Houston"

TIFFANY
 SHHHHH!!

HOUSTON
 Your secret is safe with me..

TIFFANY
 Happy Birthday kid..

HOUSTON seals his lips. TIFFANY holds HOUSTON's hand on her belly and exits bathroom. HOUSTON runs shower.

10. INT. KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

AUSTIN at washer machine. AUSTIN closes the top.

11. INT. HALLWAY - DAY

HOUSTON comes out of his bedroom dressed in pressed school uniform. XAVIER fully dressed in shirt, tie and lab coat. XAVIER has a small wrapped gift.

XAVIER
 Happy birthday, Sir..

HOUSTON
 Thanks Dr. X. You know what would
 be an even better gift?

XAVIER
 What?

HOUSTON
 Seeing some carats on my brother's
 finger.

XAVIER chuckles.

XAVIER
 There's enough on our plates right
 now, but soon. I promise.

12. INT. KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - DAY

DALLAS at sink and finishes the dishes. DALLAS takes out frozen steaks from freezer.

XAVIER and HOUSTON reach kitchen area. HOUSTON puts a flag pin on his uniform. DALLAS straightens HOUSTON out. Kisses XAVIER. AUSTIN enters.

AUSTIN
Ugh, get a room..

DALLAS
Get a job.

HOUSTON unwraps the gift. It's the latest Playstation game.

DALLAS
You couldn't wait til later, babe..

AUSTIN
You got him Battlefield!!

AUSTIN tries to take game from HOUSTON. DALLAS give XAVIER lunch bag.

HOUSTON
And you can't play! Thanks X!

HOUSTON gives XAVIER pound. XAVIER kisses DALLAS on forehead and exits.

AUSTIN drops dishes in the sink. AUSTIN raids the cabinet and grabs a big bag of Salt & Vinegar chips and a full bottle of apple juice.

AUSTIN
It's your night to do dishes..

HOUSTON
But it's my birthday..

AUSTIN
What's that got to do with the dishes?

HOUSTON
So I have to cook and clean on my birthday?

AUSTIN
You a man now! Men in this house do dishes.

HOUSTON
Tiff does the dishes for you!

AUSTIN
Well when you have a girl to do
girly things then holla at me..

Beat.

HOUSTON
Dallas, how should I ask a girl
out?

AUSTIN
Like he would know! Who is this
girl?

HOUSTON
Forget I asked..

AUSTIN
Come on bro talk to me, you know I
got game..

DALLAS
Only game you got is Call of Duty.

HOUSTON
OOOOOO..

AUSTIN approaches DALLAS to fight. DALLAS pushes him away.

DALLAS
Nobody got time to play with you..

AUSTIN
You too gay to fight anyway..

HOUSTON steps up to AUSTIN. AUSTIN laughs.

DALLAS
Come on before we're late..

DALLAS pulls HOUSTON back. HOUSTON and DALLAS exit.

CUT TO:

13. INT. HOUSING ELEVATOR - DAY

DALLAS and HOUSTON enter the elevator. Elevator doors close.

CUT TO:

14. EXT. MANHATTANVILLE HOUSING - DAY

DALLAS and HOUSTON briskly walking through the courtyard of the Manhattanville Projects.

CUT TO:

15. EXT. NYC STREET - DAY

DALLAS and HOUSTON walking. HOUSTON folds up letter as they approach the school. VANESSA, (14) AFRICAN AMERICAN, and a group of 3 other girlfriends of various races stand around with other students. Everybody is dressed in school uniforms.

HOUSTON
That's her..

DALLAS
Oh she's cute..

HOUSTON
Nah bro, she's banging!

VANESSA sees HOUSTON and GIRLFRIENDS snicker.

HOUSTON
OMG, she's coming this way. What do I do?

DALLAS
Just be you.

VANESSA reaches HOUSTON and DALLAS. VANESSA has a small gift.

VANESSA
Happy Birthday Mr. President.

HOUSTON is frozen. DALLAS hits him.

HOUSTON
Oh thank you..

HOUSTON looks at DALLAS to leave and DALLAS obliges. DALLAS watches HOUSTON and VANESSA from afar and exits.

HOUSTON
I wanted to give this to you..

VANESSA takes letter and opens it. VANESSA smiles.

VANESSA
I thought you'd never ask.

VANESSA hugs HOUSTON who awkwardly hugs her back.

TIMOTHY (14) WHITE, approaches HOUSTON and VANESSA. TIMOTHY is the school bully.

TIMOTHY
What you hugging this faggot for?
You still my girl!

TIMOTHY pushes HOUSTON down. TIMOTHY hugs VANESSA who pushes him off. Kids chant "Fight, Fight, Fight" HOUSTON quickly gets up and punches TIMOTHY. Bell rings.

16. INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

The Principal's Office is decorated with awards and degrees. MR. PINTO (50s), AFRICAN AMERICAN, sits behind his desk. He is dressed in a nice business suit. TIMOTHY, VANESSA, and HOUSTON sit across from Principal's desk. TIMOTHY with a bloody nose and HOUSTON has scratches. His uniform has some dirt, rips, and is missing his flag pin.

KIDS react. HOUSTON's first time in trouble.

HOUSTON
Suspended!?. Will I get impeached?

MRS. PINTO
No..

ASSISTANT knocks on door.

ASSISTANT
Timothy's parents are here.
Vanessa's dad and Houston's brother
are en route.

ASSISTANT mispronounces Houston's name.

HOUSTON
It's Houston!

MR. PINTO
Any luck reaching Houston's mom?

ASSISTANT shakes head 'no' as TIMOTHY leaves with MRS. PINTO.

VANESSA and HOUSTON sit quietly in office. VANESSA holds HOUSTON hand.

HOUSTON
V, I'm sorry for getting you in
trouble.

VANESSA

It wasn't your fault. You know I'm your girl, right?

HOUSTON

I know! (beat) Its just my brother is going to kill me...

VANESSA

If your brother is going to kill you, your mom must be the one to bury you.

HOUSTON doesn't say anything but uncomfortably laughs.
HOUSTON pulls his hand away.

VANESSA

Your mom's not dead, right?

HOUSTON

No, she's alive..

VANESSA

So why haven't I seen her around?

HOUSTON

She.. Just works.. Alot.

VANESSA

Mines too!

HOUSTON

My one birthday wish would be for her to come home -

VANESSA

You're not supposed to share your birthday wish with anyone..

HOUSTON

You're not anyone, you're my girl..

HOUSTON and VANESSA share a moment.

VANESSA

Where does your mom work?

HOUSTON

Bronx Courthouse by day. Harlem Hospital by night.

VANESSA

And your dad?

HOUSTON
I don't have a dad. My mom said I
was a mistake..

VANESSA
That's not true!

DALLAS enters office and HOUSTON attempts to hide his face.

MR. PINTO
Vanessa, wait outside please.

VANESSA leaves. DALLAS reacts to HOUSTON's face.

DALLAS
Houston! What happened?

MR. PINTO
There was an altercation..

DALLAS
There aren't supposed to be any
altercations..

HOUSTON
The boy called me a faggot..

MRS. PINTO shocked and DALLAS looks to HOUSTON.

MR. PINTO
I'm going to have to suspend him.

DALLAS
Suspend? This is the first time
Houston's been in trouble.

MR. PINTO
I must meet with your mom before he
can be readmitted.

DALLAS
Can you just meet with me?

MR. PINTO
No, you're not a parent or legal
guardian.

HOUSTON
She's at work. She's always at
work..

MR. PINTO
If she can't make time to meet with
(MORE)

MR. PINTO (CONT'D)
me, social services will have to
intervene.

DALLAS and HOUSTON look to each other. ASSISTANT opens door.

CUT TO:

17. INT. SCHOOL FRONT OFFICE - DAY

DALLAS and HOUSTON exit MR. PINTO's office. TIMOTHY sits
with his MOTHER and FATHER. VANESSA with her FATHER.

CUT TO:

18. INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

HOUSTON and DALLAS walk down school hallway.

CUT TO:

19. INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

HOUSTON takes steaks out of oven and turns off oven timer.
AUSTIN in FRIDGE and TIFFANY, DALLAS, and XAVIER sit at
table. There's a big 13 birthday cake.

DALLAS
What we going to do?

HOUSTON brings the bowl over and places it on the table.

HOUSTON
We could tell the truth.

DALLAS
So they can take you away.

XAVIER
They're not going to take him away.

DALLAS
She's doesn't care what happens to
us..

HOUSTON
You don't know that..

DALLAS
It's been 8 years, don't you think
she would've come home if she did?

DALLAS looks to his brothers. Door bell rings and family
reacts.

AUSTIN
Who the hell is that?

HOUSTON
I'll get it.

AUSTIN
Sit down boy and eat. I'll get it.

AUSTIN exits dining room. GROUP sits in silence.

20. INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

AUSTIN at front door to apartment.

AUSTIN
Little girl can I help you with something?

VANESSA
Is Houston here?.

AUSTIN
We're in the middle of dinner and he's punished..

VANESSA
There's something important I need to tell him.

HOUSTON comes out.

AUSTIN
Make it quick. You know you punished.

AUSTIN leaves. HOUSTON and VANESSA at door.

VANESSA
Can I come in?

HOUSTON
I'm not allowed to have company..

VANESSA
I'm not company, I'm your girl.

HOUSTON
How'd you find out where I live?

VANESSA
Your photomap on Instagram..

CUT TO:

21. INT. KITCHEN - EVENING

GROUP greets VANESSA. DALLAS is being shady.

HOUSTON
Can Vanessa stay for dinner? Pretty
please..?

DALLAS
You know the rules..

HOUSTON
But it's my birthday!

DALLAS
But they're the rules..

HOUSTON
I'm tired of the damn rules!

DALLAS
Little boy, who you taking to?

VANESSA
It's getting late, maybe another
time..

VANESSA sadly walks away. HOUSTON is saddened.

TIFFANY
Let the girl join us..

XAVIER
It's his birthday, babe. Don't be
like that..

DALLAS scoffs. HOUSTON sets table for VANESSA.

HOUSTON
V, this is my oldest brother Austin
and his girlfriend Tiff. Dallas and
this is his boyfriend Dr. X.

VANESSA
Thank you for having me. Houston
you cooked all this?

HOUSTON
Yea, Dallas taught me..

VANESSA
The Texas Brothers.

HOUSTON

Our mom was in love with Texas.

VANESSA

We'll maybe your one birthday wish
will come true..

HOUSTON

No it wont. My mom ain't coming
home..

DALLAS

She's working late..

AUSTIN

Real late..

GROUP awkwardly sits around quietly eating their food.

22. INT. KITCHEN - 20 MINUTES LATER

GROUP finishes eating there food and feeling stuffed.

VANESSA

That was good! May I use the
bathroom?

HOUSTON

Down the hall on the left..

VANESSA leaves. HOUSTON begins to clean up.

AUSTIN

She's a banging lil chick, bro..

HOUSTON

I want to tell her.

DALLAS

Tell her what..

HOUSTON

The truth about mom..

AUSTIN

Never share all your secrets lil
bro..

HOUSTON

She needs to know the truth.

DALLAS

Kid, you don't know the truth.

HOUSTON
Mom left us because of me..

DALLAS
Shut up! It wasn't your fault.

HOUSTON
I almost killed her..

DALLAS
You've been holding onto that all these years?

HOUSTON
She hates me..

DALLAS
She hates me! She's a homophobic bitch

XAVIER
Watch your mouth.

AUSTIN
Everybody shut up! Mom had real mental problems. She never wanted to be a mother to us.

VANESSA is standing shocked. GROUP settles down.

HOUSTON
At least now she knows.

VANESSA
She'll be home tonight.

DALLAS
Little girl, mind your business..

HOUSTON
This is her business! She's as much apart of this family now as Xavier and Tiffany..

AUSTIN
That's different..

HOUSTON
How's it different?!

TIFFANY
I'm pregnant..

AUSTIN
You're what?

TIFFANY
Pregnant..

AUSTIN
How..

HOUSTON
By having unprotected sex..

VANESSA hits HOUSTON.

AUSTIN
It's just..

AUSTIN is silenced.

TIFFANY
Just what Austin. You don't want
it..

AUSTIN
No. I mean yes I want it. It's
just, I'm not ready to be a
father..

Doorbell rings. GROUP reacts and DALLAS gets up to get it.

DALLAS
Ugh! Who is it, now?

23. INT. FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

MR. PINTO is at the door. DALLAS reacts.

CUT TO:

24. INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

GROUP awkwardly sits around living room in silence. MR.
PINTO looks at her watch.

MR. PINTO
What time does she usually get
home?

HOUSTON
Usually?.

AUSTIN
Late..

DALLAS

Real late..

Awkward silence.

XAVIER

Should we cut the cake while we
wait?

TIFFANY

There's ice cream..

The sounds of bracelets ring. Keys jiggle at front door.
Each brother reacts differently to the door. VANESSA smiles.

HOUSTON

Mom...

The room is still.

FADE TO BLACK.