

SOMEONE CALL 911

It was a hot Sunday August afternoon, and Anacostia Park in Washington, D.C. was jumping as usual. Trae and his boys Kevin, Big Paul and Ice Man, were posted at the entrance with their Honda CBR street bikes lined up for everyone to see. Trae was especially proud of the new exhaust he'd just added to his metallic silver beauty.

"Yo', the bitches are out today," Kevin said, as he inhaled one last pull from his blunt.

"I can definitely agree," Trae said, his eyes following a girl's ass as she walked by. The girl turned around and flashed a sexy smile. "Hey gorgeous, what's yo' name?" he asked, licking his lips.

The girl stopped dead in her tracks when she saw Trae's tall and muscular physique. His dark complexion and bald head was an added bonus. "I'm Courtney," she replied, showing her pearly whites.

"Nice to meet you, Courtney. I'm Trae." He sized her up. "Give me those digits, so I can call you," he ordered.

All of Trae's boys laughed because as crazy as his pickup lines were, they always seemed to work.

Courtney didn't hesitate. She recited her digits like she was in a spelling bee, as Trae locked them in his cell phone.

"I'll call you later tonight, a'ight. Maybe we can go get something to eat."

"Oh absolutely," Courtney said, giving Trae a mischievous smile before she rushed off with her friend.

As Trae turned back to his crew, he noticed someone staring at him. The guy looked at him up and down, then clenched his jaw.

"What dat fool lookin' at?" Kevin asked, looking at Trae.

"I don't know. But that nigga better recognize," Trae responded, with an evil look. He tried to remain cool, but the stranger kept sizing him up.

“What’s up, nigga? You got somethin’ you wanna say?” Kevin asked boldly. He was known for not being able to hold his tongue.

The stranger walked over. “Yeah, I got somethin’ to say. Tell your man not to try and talk to my girl, if he wants to keep his life,” he said, gritting hard on Kevin.

“Your girl?” Kevin asked. “Nigga, obviously she ain’t your girl if she was just on my man’s dick!”

“Man, fuck you and the rest of your punk ass crew,” the stranger replied.

As Kevin and the rest of his boys jumped off their bikes, Trae quickly intervened. He was always the voice of reason and more of a lover and not a fighter. “Don’t pop off, shorty, keep your cool,” he said to Kevin, pushing him back.

“Yeah, shoortty...listen to yo’ man,” the stranger said, in an insulting tone.

Kevin made a slight turn toward Trae, then came full force with a punch that knocked the guy off his feet. “Nigga, you don’t know me,” he said, kicking the guy in his stomach as he tried to get up.

After letting out a hearty laugh, Trae stood over the stranger and shook his head. A few seconds later, the guy finally managed to stand up. As he brushed the dirt off his shirt, he tried to take a swing at Trae, but missed.

The calm temperament Trae displayed just minutes earlier quickly diminished as he hit the guy with a hard left. “Never fuck with a South Paw,” Trae said, referring to his boxing skills.

Spitting the blood that trickled from his mouth, the stranger looked up at Trae and smiled. “I’ll see y’all niggas in the streets,” he said, as he stood up for the second time and walked away.

“You better hope we don’t see your bitch ass first,” Kevin responded.

Trae and his crew watched as their newly acquired enemy walked away.

“That bitch you just met is startin’ trouble already. See what happens when you chase women,” Kevin added.

“Shit, I’m like Biggie. I don’t chase ‘em I replace ‘em,” Trae replied with a huge grin.

They all laughed and gave each other a pound before walking back to their bikes. Determined not to let the incident spoil the rest of their day, Trae and Kevin continued to shoot the shit with their boys.

Moments later, Trae noticed a group of unfamiliar bikers rolling up on them. “Yo’, you know them, Kev?” Trae asked, trying to get a better

look.

His question was never answered, because gunshots immediately rang out as the bikers drove by. Kevin and Trae took cover behind a car that was parked nearby. Big Paul, who was massive in size and covered in tattoos, decided that hiding wasn't an option. He took off running behind the last biker, shooting him in the back. He was like the bodyguard on the crew.

Not wanting to leave their friend behind, the bikers circled around busting mad shots at Trae and his friends long enough to get their injured friend onto one of the bikes before riding off. People were running for cover, and screaming like a scene from the movie *Godzilla*.

When the dust finally cleared, there were several people crying and trying their best to get the hell out of dodge. Mothers were also scrambling to gather their children, but one mother wasn't so lucky. Her eight year old daughter was lying on the ground bleeding uncontrollably.

"Someone call 911!" a man yelled, as the mother tried to comfort her child.

"Let's roll!" Trae yelled. He and the rest of his crew jumped on their bikes, started up the engines and left.

However, when Trae got a few feet away he stopped suddenly and looked back as Kevin and his boys kept going. He prayed that the little girl would make it. Minutes later, the paramedics arrived. They worked on the girl and tried to keep her conscious, but it was too late. She had already drifted off to sleep.

Trae felt sick. He shook his head as he watched the mother cry uncontrollably. *Damn, I hate that lil' shorty got caught up in this shit*, he thought. After watching the EMT's place a white sheet over the little girl's body, he drove off thinking how his love for women had caused the entire thing.

Getting to sleep that night was impossible for Trae. He laid in the bed, thinking about how a peaceful day with his boys had turned into another tragedy. D.C. was known to have one of the highest crime rates in the country. *I guess we're part of the problem*, he thought. Half asleep, he saw his grandmother out the corner of his right eye.

Those fools you hang around with are going to get you in more trouble than you can handle. You mark my words. They're gonna either land you in jail or six feet under one of these days.

Trae knew his grandmother was right. He hated the fact that a kid had to get caught in the line of fire, but the guy had disrespected him

and his crew, so he had to be dealt with. Besides, Trae wasn't about to give up everything he ever wanted in life. Money, power, and respect was something he'd worked hard for, and planned on keeping.



Trae woke the next morning and turned on the television. It didn't surprise him to see that every news channel in the area was covering the young girl's death. What did surprise him was the fact they made no mention of him or his crew. Instead, eyewitnesses concentrated on the biker crew that started the shooting. Usually whenever there was a murder in the city, the police always mentioned his name. The police had been trying to pin things on Trae for years, but luckily nothing ever stuck. He even knew all of the officers at the Fourth District Police Station on a first name basis.

Trae felt sick as the mother of the eight-year old wept during her interview. "This wave of crime must stop. Mothers, I call upon you to help me bring every ounce of pressure on the State Attorney's office to do something about the crimes that have taken over D.C.," she pleaded, wiping away her tears. "We need a plan to get rid of every pimp, drug lord and murderer in this city!"

The reporter signed off, saying the matter was under investigation and there were still no suspects in the case.

"Thank you," Trae whispered, as he picked up the picture of his grandmother, who'd passed away leaving him with no family. "You still watchin' out for me, huh?"

When Trae heard his cell phone ring, he put the picture down reluctantly. He was never in the mood to talk during his personal moments with his nana. He looked at the screen and the word, KEV displayed. "Yo', what's up?" he asked, answering his phone.

"Nothin', nigga. Just callin' to check up on you," Kevin responded.

"I'm cool. I was just sittin' here watchin' the news." Trae glanced at the TV again. "I can't believe that lil' girl died, man."

"So what? People die in these muthafuckin' streets everyday. She's probably better off anyway," Kevin replied coldly.

Trae stared at the phone for a few seconds. It was like he was talking to a stranger. He couldn't believe this was the dude he loved and grew up with all his life. *You're right. I'm gonna end up dead or in jail hangin' around this fool*, Trae thought, as he looked over at his grandmother's picture.