YUSEF SIDES

CENTRAL PARK FIVE

YUSEF SALAAM (15) is nerdy-cool in a duster-type black trench coat. At 6'3", he's strikingly tall and beanpole thin. He affects a Big Daddy Kane flat top and an Africa medallion he made in art class.

KOREY
Yo, Kane. Whassup, baby boy?

YUSEF - PG 2 OF 9

EDDIE
You brung your kitchen knife?

Yusef pats his empty pockets, remembering with alarm, *Oh shit.* Korey slings his arm around Yusef, teasing -

SCENE 1

KOREY
Naw, c'mon now, you gonna hurt yourselves. 'Deondre shows up here, I'll fight him. Scare 'im, anyway.

START →

EDDIE
He's not scared. He got a posse.

He anxiously scans for Deondre. In Yusef, instant fear:

YUSEF
What kind of posse?

EDDIE
Eleventh graders. From King. Like ten, fifteen dudes. Big dudes.

Korey dismisses this, reassuring Yusef, joking -

KOREY
Shit, they messing with Schomburg now. They messing with Polo. You hungry?

YUSEF
Naw, I got, already.

Korey and Lisa push off to the chicken place. Eddie, covert, awkwardly removes a short metal pipe from his pants -

EDDIE
Kane. Hold this for me.

YUSEF
Whoa, man, what you got here?

Yusef uses the pipe to do some phony martial arts moves, quoting "Karate Kid" -

YUSEF (CONT'D)
"Fear does not exist in this dojo, does it?" "No, Sensei!"

EDDIE
Just put it in your pocket and hold on to it for me. Fuckin' Homer...

The teenagers arrive at Schomburg Plaza and begin to merge with the Schomburg kids milling there.

Yusef is still swinging Eddie's short pipe around, nerdishly doing fantasy martial arts. He notices the GROUP OF BOYS arriving and startles, whacking his own knee with the pipe. GIRLS laugh as Yusef hops in pain.

GIRL
Yo, Bruce Lee. I seen that.

Yusef limps toward Eddie, pointing out the group of boys -

YUSEF
Hey! Eddie. Is that Deondre?

Their panic is relieved when Yusef recognizes a school pal:

YUSEF (CONT'D)
Oh, naw, that's Al Morris, he cool.

AL MORRIS (17)
Yo, Kane! Little Kane! We're going t' the Park, c'mon.

Yusef and Eddie join the group of teenage boys, who are starting to cross 110th street, headed into the Central Park.

YUSEF
Yo, Polo! Let's go in the Park.

Korey hands Lisa the take-out box, Lisa protesting -

LISA
Thought you was hungry.

KOREY
I betta look after Kane. I be right back.

He joins Yusef and Eddie among the swelling group of kids.

sc 1
END

SCENE 2
START →

KOREY
A'ight, man, be easy.

He and Yusef walk on. Yusef is freaking out a little:

YUSEF
You don't think they're really looking for me? ...Do I just go find a cop and ask?

KOREY
You trippin'? Son, who raised you?

INT/EXT. YUSEF'S TOWER - SCHOMBURG PLAZA - NIGHT

As they arrive, they see TWO SQUAD CARS pull up. FOUR DETECTIVES spill out, head into Yusef & Korey's building.

Aisha is waiting in the lobby when Yusef and Korey come in. She's in a state of controlled panic.

AISHA
Yusef. I was coming to find you.

Yusef sees: At the back of the lobby, elevator doors slide closed on the detectives. Yusef watches the glowing floor numbers mounting as the elevator ascends. They stop at 21.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE SALAAM APARTMENT - ALMOST CONTINUOUS

Yusef and Aisha and Korey emerge from the elevator. As they round the corner they see: Shareef has answered the Salaams' door. DETECTIVES TAGLIONI, FRECK, BIER and HALL (African-American) have their badges out. Taglioni spots Yusef.

DET. TAGLIONI
Hey. What's your name?

HARD CUT, INTO:

INT. SALAAM APARTMENT - SHORTLY

YUSEF
Only ID I got is my bus pass.

To calm him, Korey helps Yusef with his backpack. Taglioni observes that relationship. Freck inspects Yusef's bus pass -

DET. FRECK
Sixteen. You're in 11th grade?

YUSEF
Yeah. I'm actually fifteen.

DET. FRECK
You graduate high school next year, and you telling me you're fifteen?

AISHA
Yusef skipped two grades.

YUSEF
I changed the birthdate on that. Trying to impress some girls.

DET. TAGLIONI
(pockets bus pass)
We'll go with sixteen.

Taglioni puts his hand on Yusef's shoulder and gives him a push toward the door. Shareef picks up the family phone:

SHAREEF
I'm calling Mom.

YUSEF
Don't call her, Shareef!

Taglioni walks Yusef to the door, sends Korey a look -

DET. TAGLIONI
You sixteen?
(when Korey nods Yes)
What's your name?

KOREY
Korey Wise.

DET. HALL
(clipboard)
I checked, he's not on the list.

DET. TAGLIONI
Wanna go downtown with your buddy? You'll be right back.

Yusef is looking to Korey, puppy eyes: *Please.*

KOREY
(to Aisha, half-joking)
Your mama'd never forgive me if I let baby boy go on his own.

Korey heads out with Yusef and the detectives; no handcuffs.

SC 2
END

YUSEF - PG 6 OF 9

SCENE 3

INT. YUSEF'S INTERROGATION ROOM - PRECINCT 20 - MIDNIGHT

Taglioni, McKenna and Hall interrogate Yusef, who seems unusually composed and confident.

START →A

DET. TAGLIONI
Tell us about the pipe you brought into the Park. Describe it.

YUSEF
It was about this long. Heavy.

DET. TAGLIONI
Lead? Steel?

YUSEF
It was wrapped with black tape.

DET. MCKENNA
So, you just like to carry a pipe around with you in the Park?

YUSEF
It wasn't mine. Eddie handed it to me.

DET. TAGLIONI
So the pipe belongs to Eddie?

YUSEF
Actually, I think Eddie might have gotten it from Korey's apartment. I've seen it there. Korey's mom uses to hold their door locked.

SC 3
CONTINUED

DET. TAGLIONI
You're trying to tell me you didn't see her? You didn't see the lady you *raped*??

DET. MCKENNA
We talked to the others, scumbag, they all saw you fucking her.

YUSEF
Man, that's bullshit. I didn't rape anyone.

DET. TAGLIONI
Then how come your fingerprints are on her satin panties?

YUSEF
(momentarily stopped)
How did you guys put my fingerprints on someone's panties?

SC 3
CONTINUED

INT. YUSEF'S INTERROGATION ROOM - PRECINCT 20 - CONTINUOUS

Yusef is bullied by Taglioni, McKenna and Hall and Bier -

DET. TAGLIONI
How many times did you hit her with the pipe? 3 times? Four?

YUSEF
I didn't hit her.

DET. HALL
Raymond saw you hit her!

YUSEF
That's not true.

DET. BIER
Was it Antron? When did you give the pipe to Antron?

YUSEF
I didn't have the pipe.

DET. MCKENNA
You said you went into the park with the pipe, you lying sack of shit!

SC 3
END