

COPS AND ROBBERS by: Timothy Ware-Hill

I wanna go back to when we used milk crates for basketball hoops. When hands up don't shoot was for B-boys blocking jump shots. Now, brown boys blocking cop shots. Instead of hoop dreams, it's now cell blocks. Instead of hoop dreams, it's now grave plots. Give me shirts versus skins, instead of blue versus blacks.

I wanna go back to when hide and go seek became hide and get got. When kids played doctor and gave out coodie shots. Now kids get shot whether they hide their hands or not. Chalk outlined bodies instead of chalk for hopscotch.

I wanna go back to the day when Mother May I was the game we'd play. "Mother may I jump? May I crawl? May I walk this way?" Now May I's are the cries of a Mother's morn, asking "may I identify the body of my daughter, my son? May I understand why he's dead, when he was unarmed? May I fight for her name without slander or harm? May I assume she resisted, cause her body was twisted? May I believe he couldn't breathe, cause his throat was constricted? May I march in the streets without getting evicted? May I have a fair trial, get his killer convicted? May I rage for a moment for my baby who suffered? May I say, 'fuck the system?' Mother may — " I am his mother.

I wanna go back to when we played red light, green light. Now red light, blue light is my night light, where boogie men hide beneath beds, like ghosts in hooded white sheets to snuff out black lights in the streets. Cause no black light seems to convince others of what was always evident. Like a blue dress covered in President, a blacklight always sees what a dick does at night. But niggas is the absence of light, right? Our cries of injustice are yelled into a void. Our cries of injustice are yelled into a void. Our cries of injustice are yelled into a void, but it's just us they fail to avoid using excessive force with. Cause America condones it. Cause even when black is in the light, people still don't see shit.

Red light. Stop. Green light. Frisk. Red light. Stop. Green light. Frisk. Red light. Stop. Green light. Frisk. Red light. Stop. Blue light. Shit.

I just wanna go back to playing cops and robbers. Now black lives getting robbed by wannabe cops. You think cops remember being kids? When we used to just play together?