I had a bad feeling.  
I just did. I don’t know why. 
Everybody was having fun. The kids down the street 
were having a birthday party. But I had a bad feeling. I looked 
at my watch and said, 
“Nikky, it’s 8:22. You need to get these kids outta here.”

And she said, “Okay, in a minute, Ma.” She kept talking. I could hear 
people laughing and playing. But I had a bad feeling. 
A dog stopped barking somewhere down the block. I turned, said, 
“Nikky, it’s 8:38. You need to get these kids outta here.” Why 
did the ground beneath me seem to sink? I looked 
at the spot where my grandson, Antwan used to lean. Down the street

my granddaughter dragged the sky behind her. The street, 
plain and pothole-black, looked jealous. I could hear 
someone ask the time, again. I realized it was me. I looked 
at my watch. I had a bad feeling. 
I wondered if Antwan could see us out there missing him. I don’t know why. 
I kept repeating myself. I just did. Then Nikky said,

“I’m a let the balloons go at 9 o’clock.” I said,  
“I don’t give a fuck. It’s dark, Nikky. It’s 8:48. Get these kids off the street.”

She said, “Okay, Ma. Okay,” and I turned to go inside. Why 
did it seem so late? Seems like the sun crouches lower here 
where instead of men, bullets speak. My legs lost their feeling. 
I had a bad feeling. I didn’t want to see, but I looked

anyway, and watched my granddaughter fall. She was hit. I looked 
at my legs and told them to run to her, but somebody said, 
“No,” and yanked me. That fall was the strangest feeling. 
Slow and silent. I bowed down near the street. 
It’s like, everybody I ever loved lives and dies here. 
Why?

Why fight over a little bit of nothing? Why 
shoot at a vigil? Two years after taking Antwan? Looked 
like they wanted to kill him all over again. Here 
death ain’t enough for misery. And can you believe I said, 
“Today let’s have peace”? But the ones who shot? No love for this street. 
I grew up here. It used to be beautiful. My feeling
was simple: No feeling scared to walk your own street.
Why fear your own neighborhood? Looked like those shooters
failed, understand? I said, “As long as I live here, Antwan lives in me.”