

# Never take your family for granted

Growing up me and my family were so close we did everything together. The kids all went to the same school. We had family game night , family movie night. We even went to family gatherings and outings together. one gathering we had as a family was family beach day. It was so much fun spending the whole day at the beach from sunup to sundown. Me and my brother Hakeem would spend most time in the water to the point where our parents would have to come in and get us. He taught me how to swim and how to beat the fast big waves coming at us. He was also teaching me how to hold my breath under water so i can swim longer. We were in the water for so long we forgot to eat so when we came out we were starving from all the swimming we did and our fingers were so wrinkly. Growing up I was really close to my brother Hakeem . We were like twins. He was a couple of years older than me but I didn't care. He was like my biggest role model . We looked alike and dressed alike so we called ourselves twins.

When I got to like the 5th grade and my brother Hakeem got to highschool and started messing around with girls and making new friends we started to drift apart. He felt that because he was older and in high school and started hanging with the wrong crowd he didn't have to hang with me and that I was just a little kid. Our bond was completely broken when he met this girl from school and he started dating her. I didn't like her because her vibe and the energy she gave off was off. she was convincing him to do bad things such as drugs and alcohol. Despite everything I've told him about her he still stayed with her and ended up getting her pregnant . Once she became pregnant she had to move in with us because her mom kicked her out. Her moving in created a lot of problems for me and my brother. We argued and fought all the time because she would make up lies about me to my brother and he would believe her . They end up

having a baby boy named Jaden. By the time baby Jaden was one they ended up splitting up and tried to co-parent, and is super bad at it.

Fast forward to the September of 2021, Jaden was starting school and Gera (Jaden mom) asked Hakeem for some help getting him the things he needed such as school uniforms, sneakers, and school supplies and my brother agreed to help her. So my mom decided to take Jaden for the weekend so that Hakeem didn't have to deal with Gera. The weekend goes by and my brother never came by the house to get Jaden to take him shopping. So my mom ended up taking him and getting the stuff he needed for school that Sunday before dropping him off at home. My mom was gonna lie and tell her that Hakeem brought the stuff but didn't get the chance. When we walked into Gera's house she asked Jaden "how was your weekend with daddy and grandma." He replied "it was good but I didn't see daddy, I was just with grandma, grandpa and my aunties." Gera looked so confused and angry on why he didn't see his dad she then asked Jaden "so you didn't go school shopping this weekend with daddy". He then replied "yes I did go school shopping but just not with daddy. Grandma took me this morning and I had so much fun". She was so confused why my mom took him instead of my brother but she didn't say anything else to Jaden. She turned to my mom and said thank you and we left.

The next day I was at home alone because everyone was at work or school and my brother came over to the house but he was mad. He said to me, "Where's mommy and daddy?" I replied "they are still at work, can I help you with anything?" He then started yelling and cursing at me saying we needed to mind our business and how we treat him like s@%t and how we were never there for him when he needed us to. We started arguing because you not gonna come in to my house yelling and cursing at me when I didn't do anything. We argued for about thirty minutes and he threatened to slap me because he said I was disrespectful. I told him to do it then called

my parents to come get their son before we end up fighting. So my parents rushed home to deal with him. Turns out he was mad because my mom took my nephew shopping without telling him and because we didn't lie to Gera and tell her he bought the stuff. He feels because we are family we should have his back. My mom had to explain to him that she didn't say anything to her that Jaden told her. He argued with her for another ten minutes and then said “ yall wont hear from me or see me ever again, im changing my name and disowning this family because yall dont care about me anyways “ and then left.

About a week or two goes by and we didn't hear from him but he was writing on social media all crazy things about the family. My mom saw it and let it slide. She told everyone not to reply or react to his post so we didn't. Another week goes by and he called my mom for help. His girlfriend's daughter needed pampers. He didn't have the money at that moment to get her some and he knew my mom would be able to get a few cases from our church. My mom got them for the little girl because she had nothing to do with our family drama but when he came to get them she turned to him and said “ it's crazy how you can take care of her kid but you cant even take care of your own son..” He got mad and couldn't handle the truth. He took the cases and left. Weeks can go by without a word from him until he needs something and my mom seems to be ok with that. One time it's been like a month since we heard from him and he called my mom for money and I got mad. My mom was a little confused as to why I was mad. I told her “ you need to stop helping him. He only knows you when he needs help. He needs to learn you are not gonna always be there for him. If he wants to be grown then he needs to be grown and stop running to mommy for help” he got mad and told me to mind my business. I turned my attention back to my mom and said he's using you. He knows you're gonna feel sorry for him and drop to his every need no matter when he calls.” And my dad agreed with me and told her “ you

shouldn't send him no money and let him fend for himself. So my mom agreed and didn't send him money. About another month went by with no contact with him so my mom started to up on him and on building a relationship with him.

Fast forward to the present day. It's been about six months since we last spoke or seen my brother and he started a family with his girlfriend so now he has another son. So now he wants to come back and be part of the family but everyone dont know if they want to let him back in their life knowing everything he put the family through mainly put my mom through. This is important to me because seeing what my family had to go through with him for about two years and how he used us and thinking he can come back like nothing happened. you should never take your family for granted because when you gonna need them the most they won't be there for you.