

THE BRAZIES

Episode One: "THE GET BACK"

Television Drama

Created by Donte Carter

FADE IN:

TEASER

EXT. SOUTHEAST SAN DIEGO – NIGHT

The city doesn't sleep.

It just changes shifts.

Police helicopters move slowly across the black sky.

Bass rattles the windows of passing cars.

Corner stores glow under fluorescent lights.

Young men stand outside liquor stores pretending they aren't watching everybody who passes.

They are.

A BLACK DODGE CHARGER cruises down the street.

Inside sits TYRONE "TYE" JOHNSON, mid-20s.

Tall.

Dark.

Handsome.

Relaxed.

The kind of man who smiles like he already knows something you don't.

Tye drives with one hand.

The other rests calmly against his thigh.

His eyes move constantly.

Rearview mirror.

Side street.

Car behind him.

Pedestrian.

Escape route.

Tye's phone RINGS.

He glances down.

MALAKAI.

Tye answers.

TYE

What's happening?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX – NIGHT

MALAKAI JOHNSON, early 20s, walks through a dimly lit parking lot.

Tall like his brother.

Handsome like his brother.

But where Tye carries himself like a predator—

Malakai carries himself like a king who hasn't gotten his throne yet.

MALAKAI

What you doing?

TYE

Driving.

MALAKAI

I know that.

TYE

Then why you ask?

MALAKAI

Man, you always gotta be a smart-ass?

TYE

I learned from you.

Malakai smiles.

MALAKAI

I need to holler at you.

TYE

You need money?

MALAKAI

Damn.

TYE

You calling at night.

That's usually one of three things.

You need money.

You got a woman problem.

Or somebody about to die.

MALAKAI

Why somebody gotta die?

TYE

See?

That's why I said it.

Malakai looks across the parking lot.

Two YOUNG MEN stand near a car.

Watching him.

Malakai's smile disappears.

MALAKAI

I'm serious, though.

TYE

What's going on?

MALAKAI

I got a situation.

Tye sits forward.

TYE

What kind of situation?

MALAKAI

Nothing I can't handle.

TYE

Malakai.

MALAKAI

I'm handling it.

TYE

You always say that.

MALAKAI

Because I always handle it.

TYE

No.

You start it.

I handle it.

A beat.

Malakai looks toward the two young men again.

MALAKAI

You ever get tired of people thinking you only somebody because of somebody else?

TYE

Every day.

MALAKAI

For real?

TYE

Yeah.

MALAKAI

What you do about it?

TYE smiles.

TYE

Stopped caring what people thought.

Malakai doesn't laugh.

MALAKAI

That don't work where we from.

TYE

It works everywhere.

You just gotta survive long enough to see it.

Malakai looks at the two men.

MALAKAI

Aight.

I'll holler at you.

TYE

Malakai—

CLICK.

Malakai hangs up.

Tye stares at the phone.

TYE

Motherfucker.

Tye makes a hard U-turn.

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX – CONTINUOUS

Malakai walks toward his car.

The two young men approach.

JUNE.

RICO.

Both unpredictable.

Both hungry.

Both tired of being nobodies.

JUNE

There he go.

Malakai stops.

MALAKAI

What's up?

RICO

We been looking for you.

MALAKAI

That's funny.

I ain't been hiding.

June looks around the parking lot.

JUNE

We need to talk.

Malakai leans against his car.

MALAKAI

Then talk.

RICO

It's about Tye.

Malakai's expression changes.

MALAKAI

What about him?

JUNE

You know what happened.

MALAKAI

Yeah.

RICO

So what we doing?

Malakai looks between them.

MALAKAI

Who said we doing anything?

JUNE

Man, come on.

RICO

We all know what time it is.

Malakai slowly smiles.

MALAKAI

No.

Y'all know what y'all want time to be.

June steps closer.

JUNE

You always talking about getting your own name.

Your own respect.

Your own position.

MALAKAI

Yeah.

JUNE

Then this is how you get it.

A beat.

Malakai studies them.

MALAKAI

You think doing something stupid automatically make you powerful?

RICO

We ain't saying stupid.

MALAKAI

That's exactly what you're saying.

RICO

I'm saying we got an opportunity.

Malakai laughs.

MALAKAI

An opportunity to do what?

June answers.

JUNE

Prove we down.

Silence.

Malakai looks at them.

Something about those words lands.

PROVE WE DOWN.

Malakai looks away.

Thinking.

Calculating.

MALAKAI

Everybody wanna prove something.

JUNE

And?

MALAKAI

The smartest people I know?

They ain't got nothing to prove.

RICO

You scared?

Malakai turns slowly.

MALAKAI

Say that again.

RICO

You heard me.

The tension becomes dangerous.

June steps between them.

JUNE

Nobody saying nobody scared.

MALAKAI

Nah.

Let him talk.

Rico looks Malakai directly in his eyes.

RICO

I said...

You scared.

A long beat.

Malakai smiles.

MALAKAI

That's the problem with y'all.

RICO

What's that?

MALAKAI

You think bravery means you don't think.

Malakai opens his car door.

MALAKAI

I think.

That's why I'm still alive.

He gets inside.

JUNE

So that's it?

Malakai starts the engine.

MALAKAI

For tonight.

He drives away.

June and Rico watch.

RICO

He ain't gonna do nothing.

June watches the disappearing car.

JUNE

Yeah, he is.

RICO

How you know?

June smiles.

JUNE

Because I know Malakai.

CUT TO BLACK.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

THREE WEEKS EARLIER

EXT. LUXURY HOTEL - NIGHT

AZALEA exits through the lobby doors.

Mid-20s.

Beautiful.

Hazel eyes.

The confidence of a woman who knows exactly what happens when she walks into a room.

She wears elegance like armor.

Behind her—

A BUSINESSMAN hurries out.

BUSINESSMAN

Azalea!

She keeps walking.

BUSINESSMAN

Azalea, wait!

She stops.

Turns around.

AZALEA

What?

BUSINESSMAN

You forgot something.

AZALEA

No.

I don't think I did.

BUSINESSMAN

My watch.

Azalea looks at his wrist.

AZALEA

You're wearing one.

BUSINESSMAN

The other one.

Azalea thinks.

AZALEA

Oh.

That watch.

BUSINESSMAN

Yeah.

That watch.

Azalea walks closer.

AZALEA

You paid me to stay another hour.

BUSINESSMAN

And?

AZALEA

You fell asleep.

BUSINESSMAN

So?

AZALEA

So technically...

You wasted my time.

BUSINESSMAN

You stole my watch.

Azalea smiles.

AZALEA

I prefer...

relocated.

She turns and walks away.

BUSINESSMAN

Azalea!

She raises her hand without looking back.

AZALEA

Goodnight, baby.

INT. AZALEA'S CAR – MOMENTS LATER

Azalea gets inside.

The confident expression disappears immediately.

Her hands shake slightly.

Her phone BUZZES.

She looks down.

UNKNOWN NUMBER.

YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN KEEP RUNNING?

Azalea freezes.

Another message.

EVERYBODY GOTTA GO HOME EVENTUALLY.

Azalea locks her doors.

Looks around the parking lot.

Nothing.

Nobody.

But Azalea knows better.

She starts the car.

Drives away.

INT. SMALL APARTMENT – DAY

Malakai sits across from DRE, late 30s.

Dre doesn't look dangerous.

That's the trick.

Clean clothes.

Calm voice.

Educated.

The type of man who understands the difference between making money—

And looking like you make money.

DRE

You know what your problem is?

MALAKAI

I don't got enough money?

DRE

No.

You think you're smarter than everybody.

Malakai smiles.

MALAKAI

I am smarter than most people.

Dre laughs.

DRE

See?

That's your problem right there.

MALAKAI

What's yours?

DRE

I used to think like you.

Malakai leans forward.

MALAKAI

And what happened?

DRE

I learned intelligence don't mean shit without discipline.

Malakai thinks about that.

DRE

You want money?

MALAKAI

Everybody want money.

DRE

No.

Some people want money.

You want what money represents.

Malakai looks at him.

DRE

Freedom.

Power.

Respect.

A house nobody can kick you out of.

Food in your refrigerator because you put it there.

Malakai goes quiet.

Dre knows he hit something.

DRE

You ever been broke enough...

that you promised yourself you would never feel that shit again?

Malakai looks directly at Dre.

MALAKAI

Every day.

Dre nods.

DRE

That's why you're dangerous.

Malakai smiles.

MALAKAI

So you gonna teach me?

DRE

Maybe.

MALAKAI

Maybe?

DRE

First...

I gotta see if you're capable of listening.

Malakai leans back.

MALAKAI

That's gonna be hard.

DRE

I figured.

EXT. SOUTHEAST SAN DIEGO BLOCK PARTY – DAY

Music.

Smoke from barbecue grills.

Kids run through sprinklers.

Old-school cars line the street.

Women laugh.

Men talk business disguised as conversation.

This is community.

This is family.

This is also a place where everybody knows everybody's business.

Tye walks through the crowd.

Handshakes.

Fist bumps.

Respect.

People notice him.

Tye acknowledges everyone.

Then—

He sees AZALEA.

Standing near a fence.

Alone.

Watching the entire party.

Not participating.

Observing.

Azalea notices Tye looking.

She walks toward him.

AZALEA

You been staring at me.

TYE

Thirty-seven seconds.

AZALEA

You counted?

TYE

I count things worth counting.

Azalea rolls her eyes.

AZALEA

That was terrible.

TYE

You still came over here.

AZALEA

I came over here to tell you to stop staring.

TYE

And now we talking.

Azalea smiles despite herself.

AZALEA

You got a lot of confidence.

TYE

No.

I pay attention.

AZALEA

Same thing.

TYE

Not even close.

Azalea studies him.

AZALEA

What's your name?

Tye smiles.

TYE

I thought I wasn't allowed to stare.

AZALEA

You're still staring.

TYE

Tye.

AZALEA

Tye?

TYE

Yeah.

AZALEA

That's it?

TYE

You asked my name.

Not my biography.

Azalea laughs.

AZALEA

You always answer questions with questions?

TYE

Only when the person asking is interesting.

AZALEA

You don't know me.

TYE

That's what makes you interesting.

A beat.

Azalea begins walking away.

TYE

You gonna tell me your name eventually.

She stops.

Turns around.

AZALEA

How you know?

TYE

Because you're curious.

AZALEA

About what?

TYE

Why I'm not chasing you.

Azalea stares at him.

Then smiles.

AZALEA

You are chasing me.

Tye smiles.

TYE

Damn.

You got me.

She walks away.

Tye watches her disappear into the crowd.

MALAKAI approaches.

MALAKAI

Who that?

TYE

Don't know.

MALAKAI

You talking to strangers now?

TYE

Everybody a stranger until they ain't.

Malakai watches Azalea.

MALAKAI

Something about her.

TYE

Yeah.

MALAKAI

I don't know if it's good.

TYE

Didn't ask you.

Malakai laughs.

MALAKAI

Just saying.

Tye continues watching Azalea.

TYE

I know.

INT. RESTAURANT – NIGHT

Tye sits across from Azalea.

Their first date.

Neither of them calls it that.

AZALEA

So...

What do you do?

TYE

Depends who's asking.

AZALEA

Me.

TYE

Why you wanna know?

AZALEA

Because I'm sitting across from you.

TYE

That's not a reason.

AZALEA

Fine.

Because I wanna know if you're broke.

Tye laughs.

TYE

That's honest.

AZALEA

I'm always honest.

TYE

That's a lie.

Azalea smiles.

AZALEA

How you know?

TYE

Because nobody always honest.

AZALEA

Maybe I'm different.

TYE

Everybody thinks they different.

AZALEA

You don't?

TYE

No.

I know I'm different.

Azalea laughs.

AZALEA

You're full of yourself.

TYE

No.

I'm full of experience.

AZALEA

What's the difference?

Tye looks directly into her eyes.

TYE

Confidence.

And insecurity.

Azalea's smile fades.

Tye notices.

TYE

What?

AZALEA

Nothing.

TYE

You don't like being analyzed?

AZALEA

I don't like people thinking they know me.

TYE

I don't know you.

AZALEA

Good.

Tye leans back.

TYE

Then why you here?

Azalea looks away.

For the first time—

She doesn't have an answer.

ACT TWO

INT. MALAKAI'S APARTMENT – NIGHT

Malakai sits with KAYLA, early 20s.

Beautiful.

Funny.

She is completely comfortable around him.

Which means she trusts him.

Malakai studies his phone.

KAYLA

You ain't listening to me.

MALAKAI

I am.

KAYLA

What did I just say?

Malakai looks at her.

MALAKAI

You said your friend don't like me.

KAYLA

Before that.

MALAKAI

You said your mama don't like me.

KAYLA

Before that.

Malakai thinks.

MALAKAI

You said...

Malakai smiles.

MALAKAI

I got a nice dick.

Kayla throws a pillow at him.

KAYLA

Boy!

Malakai laughs.

MALAKAI

What?

KAYLA

You stupid.

MALAKAI

Nah.

I'm gifted.

Kayla smiles.

MALAKAI

Let me ask you something.

KAYLA

What?

MALAKAI

You trust me?

Kayla looks at him.

KAYLA

Why?

MALAKAI

Just answer the question.

KAYLA

Yeah.

Malakai looks down.

MALAKAI

How much?

KAYLA

What?

MALAKAI

How much do you trust me?

Kayla studies him.

KAYLA

Enough to know you about to ask me to do something.

Malakai smiles.

MALAKAI

See?

That's why I like you.

KAYLA

What you need, Malakai?

Malakai looks toward the window.

Thinking.

Calculating.

MALAKAI

I got an opportunity.

KAYLA

I don't like how that sounds.

MALAKAI

You ain't even heard it.

KAYLA

I know you.

Malakai looks back at her.

MALAKAI

Exactly.

EXT. CORNER STORE – NIGHT

Tye exits.

Azalea waits near his Charger.

TYE

You following me?

AZALEA

You wish.

TYE

Then why you standing next to my car?

AZALEA

Because I needed somewhere to stand.

TYE

Whole city...

and you picked my car.

AZALEA

Coincidence.

Tye opens the driver's door.

TYE

I don't believe in coincidences.

AZALEA

That's because you're paranoid.

TYE

I'm alive.

Azalea smiles.

TYE

You need something?

AZALEA

Maybe.

TYE

What?

AZALEA

A ride.

TYE

Where?

AZALEA

Somewhere safe.

Tye looks at her.

The playful conversation disappears.

TYE

You in trouble?

AZALEA

Everybody's in trouble.

TYE

That's not what I asked.

Azalea looks around.

AZALEA

Are you gonna give me a ride or not?

Tye studies her.

Then unlocks the passenger door.

TYE

Get in.

Azalea gets inside.

INT. TYE'S CHARGER – NIGHT

Silence.

Tye drives.

Azalea watches the streets.

AZALEA

You always trust strangers?

TYE

No.

AZALEA

Then why'd you pick me up?

TYE

I didn't trust you.

AZALEA

Then what?

TYE

I wanted to know what you're running from.

Azalea looks at him.

AZALEA

Who said I'm running?

TYE

Your eyes.

AZALEA

My eyes?

TYE

Yeah.

AZALEA

What they say?

TYE

That you don't look behind you because you're scared.

Azalea looks forward.

TYE

You look behind you because somebody taught you what happens when you don't.

Azalea turns toward him.

Tye keeps driving.

AZALEA

You don't know anything about me.

TYE

You're right.

AZALEA

Then stop acting like you do.

TYE

Aight.

Silence.

AZALEA

I grew up in group homes.

Tye looks at her.

AZALEA

You happy now?

TYE

No.

AZALEA

Why?

TYE

Because now I know something about you.

Azalea studies him.

TYE

And I don't think you're gonna like what comes next.

AZALEA

What's that?

TYE

Eventually...

you're gonna have to tell me the rest.

Azalea looks away.

For the first time, she smiles without calculation.

AZALEA

Maybe.

ACT THREE

INT. DRE'S APARTMENT – NIGHT

Malakai sits across from Dre.

Dre slides a phone across the table.

DRE

There's money out here everywhere.

Malakai looks at the phone.

DRE

The problem is...

Most people too stupid to see it.

MALAKAI

And I'm not?

DRE

I haven't decided yet.

Malakai picks up the phone.

MALAKAI

What I gotta do?

DRE

You always ask that question too fast.

MALAKAI

Why?

DRE

Because eventually...

you're gonna ask somebody that question...

And they're gonna give you an answer that ruins your life.

Malakai puts the phone down.

MALAKAI

You gonna ruin my life?

Dre smiles.

DRE

No.

I'm gonna give you an opportunity.

What you do with it—

That's on you.

EXT. SHOPPING DISTRICT – DAY

Malakai and Kayla walk through expensive stores.

Shopping bags.

Clothes.

Shoes.

Kayla is happy.

KAYLA

I knew you wasn't broke.

MALAKAI

I never said I was.

KAYLA

You definitely acted like it.

MALAKAI

That's called budgeting.

Kayla laughs.

KAYLA

So we really made all that money?

Malakai looks at her.

MALAKAI

Yeah.

KAYLA

We're splitting it?

Malakai smiles.

MALAKAI

Of course.

Kayla smiles.

Malakai looks away.

The smile slowly disappears.

He knows something she doesn't.

EXT. PARKING LOT – NIGHT

June and Rico wait.

Malakai arrives.

JUNE

You been ducking us.

MALAKAI

I've been working.

RICO

We working too.

Malakai laughs.

MALAKAI

Doing what?

Rico steps forward.

RICO

Finding out where we need to be.

Malakai's face changes.

JUNE

It's time.

Malakai looks at both of them.

MALAKAI

Y'all really wanna do this?

RICO

You don't?

Malakai looks away.

He thinks about Tye.

His childhood.

Being broke.

Being overlooked.

Being called Tye's little brother.

MALAKAI

Yeah.

Rico smiles.

MALAKAI

But we do it my way.

June and Rico exchange looks.

JUNE

What's your way?

Malakai looks directly at them.

MALAKAI

We don't move because somebody dared us.

We move because we decided.

A beat.

RICO

So you in?

Malakai looks toward the street.

MALAKAI

I'm in.

ACT FOUR

INT. TYE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Azalea sits on Tye's couch.

Comfortable.

Almost too comfortable.

Tye comes from the kitchen.

TYE

You hungry?

AZALEA

No.

TYE

You sure?

AZALEA

Yeah.

TYE

You lying.

AZALEA

Why do you always accuse me of lying?

TYE

Because you're bad at it.

AZALEA

I'm excellent at it.

TYE

Exactly.

Azalea laughs.

Tye sits beside her.

AZALEA

You ever think about leaving?

TYE

Leaving where?

AZALEA

Here.

Everything.

The streets.

The people.

Your reputation.

Tye looks at her.

AZALEA

Starting over.

TYE

This my home.

AZALEA

That's not what I asked.

Silence.

TYE

Yeah.

Azalea looks surprised.

TYE

Sometimes.

AZALEA

Where would you go?

TYE

Somewhere nobody knows me.

AZALEA

And do what?

TYE

Whatever I want.

Azalea smiles.

AZALEA

You already do whatever you want.

Tye looks at her.

TYE

That's what you think.

A long beat.

AZALEA

I want a family.

Tye looks surprised.

AZALEA

Don't laugh.

TYE

I'm not.

AZALEA

Everybody thinks I'm joking when I say that.

TYE

Why?

AZALEA

Because of who I am.

TYE

Who are you?

Azalea looks at him.

AZALEA

You tell me.

TYE

I don't know you.

Azalea nods.

AZALEA

Exactly.

She looks away.

AZALEA

I don't think I know me either.

Tye studies her.

TYE

Maybe that's what we're supposed to figure out.

Azalea looks back at him.

AZALEA

Who's we?

Tye smiles.

TYE

You tell me.

EXT. INDUSTRIAL AREA – NIGHT

Malakai.

June.

Rico.

The three walk toward a vehicle parked in darkness.

Malakai stops.

MALAKAI

Hold up.

June looks at him.

JUNE

What?

Malakai looks around.

His instincts are screaming.

MALAKAI

Something don't feel right.

RICO

You getting cold feet?

Malakai turns.

MALAKAI

Man, shut the fuck up.

Rico laughs.

MALAKAI

I'm serious.

Malakai looks down the street.

Nothing.

MALAKAI

Y'all ever notice...

The biggest decisions in your life?

JUNE

What about them?

MALAKAI

You usually don't know they big...

until after you make them.

June looks at him.

JUNE

You backing out?

Malakai thinks.

Then shakes his head.

MALAKAI

No.

He moves forward.

MALAKAI

I'm done being scared of becoming who I'm supposed to be.

END OF ACT FOUR

TAG

INT. TY'E'S HOUSE – NIGHT

Tye and Azalea sit in silence.

Azalea's phone BUZZES.

She looks down.

Her expression changes.

Tye notices.

TYE

Who is it?

AZALEA

Nobody.

TYE

You sure?

AZALEA

Yeah.

Tye studies her.

AZALEA

What?

TYE

Nothing.

Azalea puts the phone in her purse.

Tye's phone RINGS.

He looks down.

MALAKAI.

Tye answers.

TYE

What's up?

Silence.

TYE

Malakai?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. UNKNOWN LOCATION – NIGHT

Malakai stands in darkness.

Breathing heavily.

His face is different.

Something happened.

Something changed.

MALAKAI

Big bro...

Tye sits forward.

TYE

What happened?

Malakai looks behind him.

MALAKAI

I think I fucked up.

Tye stands.

TYE

Where are you?

Malakai closes his eyes.

MALAKAI

I need you.

Tye grabs his keys.

Azalea watches him.

AZALEA

What's wrong?

Tye looks at her.

TYE

My little brother.

Azalea immediately stands.

TYE

Stay here.

AZALEA

I'm coming with you.

TYE

No.

AZALEA

You don't even know where you're going.

TYE

Exactly.

Azalea grabs her purse.

AZALEA

Then you definitely shouldn't go alone.

Tye looks at her.

A long beat.

TYE

You don't know what you're getting yourself into.

Azalea looks directly into his eyes.

AZALEA

Neither do you.

Tye looks at the phone.

Malakai is still breathing.

Waiting.

Tye heads toward the door.

Azalea follows.

EXT. UNKNOWN LOCATION - NIGHT

Malakai stands alone.

June and Rico are nowhere to be seen.

Malakai looks down.

His hands shake.

A distant SIREN grows louder.

MALAKAI

(into phone)

Big bro...

Hurry up.

Malakai looks toward the approaching darkness.

MALAKAI

I think they coming.

Tye's voice comes through the phone.

TYE (V.O.)

Malakai?

Malakai backs away.

MALAKAI

Big bro—

The phone goes DEAD.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE ONE