

GORDON:

He never let us walk out the house on Sunday looking less than clean. We had to be in tip-top shape, every week. We didn't have much more than a loaf of bread and shared pairs of shoes, but you'd think we were living like some kind of cotton kings, the way he made us dress on those days. I don't even know where he got the clothes, probably a friend or uncle or something – a generous gift. He told us not to care about who called us nigger. People were gonna call us names no matter what we looked like. He told us it wasn't about what they call you, it's about what you answer to. That's what he said. That's what he meant. They can call you whatever they want, just don't walk out the house looking like the thing they're calling you. I knew how to tie a tie before I knew how to write my name, before I knew left from right or up from down.