

Playing with fire

Ever since I could remember, growing up in Brooklyn was always a life of style. Being born at Anderson hospital at 7:38 pm July 4th, 1975 must have been a clear sign of how my life would begin and end. My parents were young when they met. My mom was a very young fourteen and my pops Moby was twenty-two. Apparently pops chased moms for about 8 months before they had their first date. According to Grandpa, pops wined and dined moms for about 10 months. On or around Halloween moms found out that she was pregnant with me and soon after mom and pops got married. Moby was humble to everyone that's probable why Grandpa allowed this marriage to his young daughter. That and the fact that she was fifteen and pregnant. They, people around the block, called pops Moby because he had always been a flashy, high powered individual and a great catch for any woman. My father was the smoothest;

coolest guy you could ever meet. He always found a way to solve problems while leaving people feeling like they got over on him. The only people he had a problem with were the ones who attempted to bother his money or his family. Pops was a tall, slender fellow with dark features and smooth skin. He always smiled and looked a person in the eye when he spoke with them. He was able to walk in a room and his stride alone demanded respect. Pops was not a forceful man nor did he argue with people. He never saw a need to raise his voice but when he did everyone would give him their undivided attention.

According to the stories grandpa tells, moms and pops had a beautiful spring wedding. There were about 200 guests, mostly Moby's friends and family. Moms spent most of he time seated at the head table watching Moby thank guests because she was seven months pregnant. "She was the most beautiful bride a father could ask for", grandpa would say. A few months after the spring

wedding, I came bustin out, ready to take on the world. I was their only child. My father repeatedly told me the story of the day I was born and how excited he was to have a son to carry on his name and legacy. Pops said, "The evening was warm and calm, you could smell the fresh tar from the newly paved streets. I was on my way to do one of my regular Saturday night runs, when yo' mom beeped me 800." 800 was the code specifically given to my moms for emergencies. My father protective of my moms because she was so small and soft spoken. It wasn't odd at all that pops had his two best men Marks and Stubbs to keep and eye on the house while he was out. "Man, pops said, I was handling my bizz when my beeper was going on like crazy son." Although I heard this story a millions times, I still got excited when pops told it. "Stubbs scooped her up and drove her over to Anderson. You know I was nervous as all hell that night. So when I got to the hospital I had cigars and flowers

in hand, ready for my first son to be born," he chuckled. "When I walked in Marks and Stubbs were standing outside the waiting room talking to the nurse who was helping your moms into a wheel chair. I walked over to her in the middle of one of those contraction things and she screamed so loud my heart jumped from my chest. I went over to her and gave her the flowers and she smiled as if they were the best thing since sliced bread. Then they wheeled her off to her room. It seemed like only minutes after, you were born. It was like everyone in the world knew you were coming that day cuz all the boys on the block began to come to the hospital to see you enter the world."

Little did pops know that I knew all those people didn't come to see me. They were only there to pay respect to the Man on the block, Moby. At about 6:30pm folks began to show up with toys, candies and flowers all for me and my family. My Uncles D and Neff came with balloons and all sorts of treats to help my mother feel

better and to welcome their
favorite nephew into the world.