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Crossover book summary

Best summary PDF, themes, and quotes. More books than SparkNotes. HomeStudy GuidesThe CrossoverCharacter List The Crossover Josh is the 12-year-old narrator of The Crossover. His two loves are family and basketball, and his life is full of opportunities to combine them. For example, his dad, a former college player, has trained Josh ever since he could hold a basketball. Along with his brother Jordan, Josh plays on a highly competitive team with the potential to dominate the championships. Josh's confidence shines through when he describes his basketball skills. He's a forward with a fantastic crossover, and his skills earn him the nickname "Filthy McNasty" (a moniker he hates at first but eventually embraces.) His confidence translates into success on the court, and he anticipates a college and NBA career. However, Josh isn't just a basketball player. He's passionate about music, particularly his dad's oldies and contemporary rap artists, particularly Lil Wayne. His love for rhythm is evident in his poems, which often mimic the fast and frenetic pace of a basketball game. He's dedicated to school, even though some classes, especially math, give him a bit of trouble. Above all, Josh's defining characteristic is his love for his family. Josh enjoys his brother's company more than anyone else's, even though Jordan can be too much of a joker/some times. He's close with both his mom and dad, and he treasures his time with them. Josh can be insecure. At the beginning of the novel, he's proud of his looks, particularly his dreadlocks. After he loses them because of a bad bet with Jordan, he's devastated. He's also not as suave and self-assured as Jordan, who's more able to talk with girls and branch out from his family circle. Josh can also be temperamental. During a regular game, he lets his temper get the best of him and viciously whips the ball at Jordan's face. This estranges the two boys for a long time. Jordan is Josh's twin brother. Though the boys share some similarities, Jordan is definitely his own person, and he's committed to making sure Josh knows that. Jordan and Josh have a strong bond on and off the court; however, Jordan is comfortable striking out on his own. While Josh values family time over everything else, Jordan often prioritizes his own fun. For example, Jordan loves making bets, particularly high-stakes ones. Though he's passionate about basketball, he's not as committed to improving his game as his twin brother. When given the chance, he'd prefer to hang out with his new girlfriend, "Miss Sweet Tea." He refuses to speak to Josh for a long time after Josh's aggression, but the two reconcile after Dad's death. Dad is a former superstar basketball player who now works as a stay-at-home dad. He was a phenom in college, played exceptionally well in the Olympics, and led his European League team to victory as a rookie. He was invited to try out for the LA Lakers. However, he declined the opportunity because, in order to keep playing basketball, he would have needed to have knee surgery. Mr. Bell is deathly afraid of doctors. Despite not trying out for the Lakers, he's semi-famous, particularly amongst the basketball aficionados who pester him for autographs. He is a dedicated father who believes strongly in his sons' potential. Like Dr. Bell, he comes to every game and cheers vociferously for his sons. He's as much of a factor in their basketball careers as their coaches. He texts them inspiration and basketball tips, and every day, he makes time to play with them in their backyard, their community center, or the gym at the rec center. Mr. Bell does not prioritize his own needs. Because of past negative experiences with doctors, he refuses to make a medical appointment even when he begins experiencing worrisome dizzy spells. Furthermore, he's stubborn. Even though his family has a history of hypertension, he continues to eat unhealthily despite his wife's best efforts to improve his diet. Dr. Crystal Bell is Jordan and Josh's mom. Dr. Bell is a caring mother who encourages her sons and keeps them on the right track. She comes to every game, even though she doesn't have the same passion for basketball as her husband and sons. She's an assistant principal at her sons' school. This makes her a strict disciplinarian, particularly when Josh ends up in her office. Dr. Bell shows her love for her husband through her increasing concern for his health. Though he brushes off her worries, she tries her best to make him realize the seriousness of his medical scares. Alexis is Jordan's first girlfriend. She captures his attention on the first day of school, and their relationship fuels the conflict between the Bell brothers for most of the novel. Josh describes her as "pulchritudinous," a sophisticated word for attractive. He also dubs her "Miss Sweet Tea," a dismissive nickname that shows how much he dislikes her new power over his brother. She's a new student at the brothers' school, she is good at basketball, her parents are divorced, and she always wears pink Reeboks. After Chuck dies, she reaches out to Josh and it is presumed they might be friends. The boys' close friend and team member on the Wildcats, Vondie is friendly and funny. He also gets a girlfriend, which makes Josh jealous. The Wildcats' coach. He is stern but kind, and he encourages Josh to make amends with his brother because when he was younger he had a falling-out with his own brother. Dad's mother. She normally cooks Thanksgiving dinner but she was injured falling off her porch; so, this year, Uncle Bob takes over. Dad's brother who "smokes cigars" and "thinks he is a chef" because he watches Food TV. Thanks a Thanksgiving dinner for the family that turns out disastrously. Next Section Glossary Previous Section The Crossover Summary Buy Study Guide Cite this page The Question and Answer section for The Crossover is a great resource to ask questions, find answers, and discuss the novel. Asked by julesamm #1357724 Answered by jill d #170087 on 4/9/2025 1:36 PM View All Answers Asked by Mario H #1361695 Answered by jill d #170087 on 4/4/2025 10:46 AM View All Answers Asked by Landon M #1358670 Answered by jill d #170087 on 3/28/2025 6:04 PM View All Answers Ask Your Own Question Estimated read time: 5 min readTwin basketball stars face challenges on and off the court in this novel-in-verse."The Crossover" by Kwame Alexander is a captivating young adult novel written in verse, making it a unique and engaging read. The story revolves around themes of family, basketball, and the challenges of growing up. The book's format and compelling narrative make it a popular choice for readers of all ages.Brief Synopsis"The Crossover" is set in a contemporary urban environment and follows the life of Josh Bell, a young basketball prodigy, and his twin brother Jordan. Their father, a former professional basketball player, guides them in their passion for the sport. As the twins navigate adolescence, they encounter various trials and tribulations, including family dynamics, friendship, and the complexities of young love.Plot Overview and SettingThe story unfolds in a modern urban setting, primarily revolving around the Bell family's home and the basketball court. The backdrop of the novel provides a realistic portrayal of inner-city life, with the basketball court serving as a focal point for the characters' experiences.Main CharactersThe main characters in "The Crossover" play pivotal roles in shaping the narrative and its themes.CharacterDescriptionJosh BellA talented young basketball player, navigating the challenges of adolescence and family dynamics.Jordan BellJosh's twin brother, equally passionate about basketball, and facing his own set of challenges.Chuck "Da Man" BellThe twins' father, a former professional basketball player, who provides guidance and inspiration.Crystal BellThe boys' mother, a strong and supportive presence in their lives.Story Points Over ChaptersChapters 1-5: Introducing the Bell FamilyThe opening chapters establish the close-knit relationship between the Bell family members while highlighting their shared love for basketball. The brothers' bond is central to the narrative, and readers gain insight into the dynamic and individual personalities.Chapters 6-10: Growing Pains and New ChallengesAs the story progresses, the twins face new challenges both on and off the basketball court. They navigate the complexities of relationships, including sibling rivalry and young love, while also contending with personal growth and the evolving dynamics within their family.Chapters 11-15: Triumphs and TribulationsThe middle section of the book delves into the highs and lows of the brothers' basketball journey. Their experiences on the court parallel their emotional and personal development, adding depth to the narrative and showcasing the impact of their choices and actions.Chapters 16-20: Facing Adversity and Finding StrengthIn this section, the characters confront significant challenges that test their resilience and fortitude. The story delves into themes of perseverance, loss, and the power of familial support, offering a poignant exploration of the human experience.Chapters 21-25: Resilience and RedemptionThe final chapters bring the narrative to a compelling conclusion, highlighting the characters' growth and the enduring bonds that define their relationships. The story's resolution offers a satisfying and thought-provoking culmination of the Bell family's journey.Main EventsThe novel encompasses various significant events that shape the characters' experiences and contribute to the overarching themes of the story.EventDescriptionThe Basketball TournamentThe brothers' participation in a high-stakes basketball tournament serves as a pivotal moment in the narrative, testing their skills and resolve.Family DynamicsThe evolving dynamics within the Bell family, including moments of tension, support, and understanding, play a crucial role in shaping the characters' experiences.Personal Triumphs and SetbacksFrom individual achievements to personal setbacks, the story explores the range of emotions and challenges that the characters face on their respective journeys.Themes and Insights"The Crossover" delves into several thought-provoking themes and offers insightful observations on the human experience.Family and RelationshipsThe novel explores the complexities of family dynamics, sibling relationships, and the enduring impact of parental guidance.Through moments of conflict and connection, the story emphasizes the significance of familial bonds in shaping one's identity.Resilience and PerseveranceThe characters' experiences highlight the resilience required to overcome adversity, both on and off the basketball court.The novel underscores the value of perseverance and the strength found in facing challenges head-on.Coming of Age and Self-DiscoveryAs the protagonists navigate adolescence, the story delves into themes of self-discovery, identity, and the formative experiences that shape their growth. Readers are offered a compelling portrayal of the journey from childhood to young adulthood.Reader's Takeaway"The Crossover" offers readers a poignant and relatable portrayal of family, passion, and the transformative power of resilience. Through its evocative verse and compelling characters, the book provides an immersive reading experience that resonates with audiences of all ages.ConclusionIn conclusion, "The Crossover" by Kwame Alexander stands out as a compelling and emotionally resonant novel that skillfully combines themes of family, basketball, and personal growth. The book's unique format and relatable narrative make it a standout choice for readers seeking a thought-provoking and engaging literary experience. Student Activities for The Crossover How is the theme of family explored in this book? How does Josh, the main character, change throughout the story? How are Josh and his brother similar? How are they different? What is the purpose of the 10 Basketball Rules? Josh introduces himself as the tall, "older" brother with dreadlocks like wings, whose nickname is "Filthy McNasty". An unusual nickname for sure, but it was given to him by his dad after one of his favorite jazz musicians. His twin brother, Jordan, whose nickname is JB, is nothing like him, except for one thing: they both crush it on the court. During halftime of a basketball game, the boys are messing around and JB bets Josh on the outcome of the game: if Josh wins, JB has to walk around the cafeteria in his underwear, but if JB wins, he gets to cut off one of Josh's locks. Deciding that there is no way for JB to win the bet, Josh agrees. To his complete surprise, JB wins the bet and is giddy with excitement at the thought of cutting his brother's hair. During all of this excitement, JB accidentally cuts off 5 big dreadlocks, leaving Josh partially bald and having to cut off all of his hair. Josh feels like his identity has been taken. While Josh is looking for a box to put his precious locks in, he finds a box of his dad's old things. It includes a letter that invites him to try out for the LA Lakers, which he denies due to a foot surgery that he refuses to have. Josh doesn't understand why his father wouldn't jump at the chance to play in the NBA and wonders about it for a long time. Meanwhile, JB has met a new girl named Alexis, who Josh calls "Miss Sweet Tea." Josh sees his brother changing; only interested in girls, not around as much, and not as focused on basketball. Josh also overhears his parents discussing his dad's health. His mom wants his dad to see a doctor about something called hypertension, which is hereditary and dangerous. With a lot on his mind, Josh is grateful for basketball and practicing with his dad. As JB and Miss Sweet Tea spend more time together, Josh finds himself alone a lot, and feels like everything is changing and going wrong. Josh is late to the next game because he saw his doctor got pulled over, and has to sit out the first half. When he finally gets to play, he gets angry and throws the ball at JB's face, sending him to the hospital and nearly breaking his nose. Josh is suspended from the team, and JB is not talking to him. Just when he thinks things couldn't get any worse, Dad's nose starts randomly bleeding and Mom all but forces him to go to the doctor. He seems to be getting worse, and when Josh finds him on the bathroom floor, he knows something is really wrong. During the next basketball game, Josh sits with the team even though he isn't allowed to play. He and JB notice that their parents are not in the stands and exchange worried glances. Mom assures the boys that all is fine, and that Dad was just tired and they went home to rest. A few weeks later, before the holiday break, it seems that JB and Josh are on the mend, and Josh is excited to learn that he will be allowed to play in the championship tournament. However, when Josh and Dad are practicing with a warm-up game, Dad has a heart attack and collapses. Josh tries to perform CPR. With Dad in the hospital in a coma, the family learns that he has myocardial infarction, which means that he has a blockage in his heart that causes heart muscles to die. Josh is angry. He is angry at Dad, JB, and Miss Sweet Tea. He is angry that JB doesn't care about basketball or him. He is angry that Dad lied and said he'd be here forever. He's angry about his hair and that the family's backyard is splintered. He's just angry. When Dad wakes up on Christmas Eve, it seems like things are going to get better. Family visits the hospital from all over, and Josh and his Dad talk about all kinds of things. Josh's dad wants him to play in the championship game, and wants to hear all about it. As the boys are getting ready to leave the game, Mom gets a call that Dad had another heart attack. JB and Mom rush to the hospital, but Josh goes to the game; his father wanted him to play. As Josh makes the winning shot, he sees JB and Miss Sweet Tea sitting on the bench, JB with tears in his eyes. Dad has passed away at age 39. Devastated, Josh feels detached and alone. Later, Miss Sweet Tea calls to apologize for everything and invites Josh to a basketball game with her dad and JB. Josh feels happy that he will be included. When he goes outside to shoot the ball around, JB joins him and gives him dad's championship ring. They shoot the ball some more, and cry together. The Crossover is a story of family, love, dedication, and loss. It is about growing up and becoming a teenager, and all the trials and tribulations that go along with it. Readers will absolutely love the format of the writing, getting to know the characters, and the flow of Alexander's verse. It is truly an inspirational story that is perfect for class read alouds, small book groups, or independent reading.Buy Crossover on Amazon 1 Start by introducing students to the concept of literary conflict. Teachers can first give a general introduction such as defining the term conflict literally or asking the students if they had ever had a fight with their friends or their family. Build the rest of the lecture based on students' answers and use their experiences as examples while relating to the concept. 2 Explain the different types of conflicts that can be found in literature. The basic types are internal and external conflicts which are further divided into other categories. For instance, internal conflict can be with our own self and external conflict can be with another person, society as a whole or even with the forces of nature. 3 Josh's identity conflict serves as one of the novel's main sources of internal conflict. Encourage the students to analyze how Josh begins to have a sense of dislocation and a widening gap between himself and his brother, Jordan, as the plot develops. Ask the students to list down the struggles experienced by Josh and how he is trying to deal with them. 4 Since Josh and Jordan's fight is a recurring theme in the book, students can consider this as the main form of external conflict. Students can reflect on the brothers' escalating rivalry on the basketball floor and how disparities in interests cause conflict and strained relationships. 5 There are various other conflicts present throughout the story for students to analyze and discuss. Students can organize small and big group discussions to go through each conflict and enhance their understanding of the story and the characters. The story revolves around Josh's family which makes him the main character of the story. Besides Josh, his brother Jordan also known as JB, his dad and his mom also play an important role in the narrative. What are the main themes present in "The Crossover"? "The Crossover" is a novel-in-verse that focuses on the lives of twin brothers Josh and Jordan Bell, who are both skilled basketball players. Their connection, their family relationships, and the difficulties they encounter both on and off the basketball floor are all the main themes of the story. What does "The Crossover" mean in relation to its title? Crossover is a move in basketball where players make a fast direction shift. It serves as a metaphor for the developments and difficulties the protagonists experience in the story. The Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award is an annual award given to the author of the book voted most outstanding by students in grades four thr The Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award is an annual award given to the author of the book voted most outstanding by students in grades four through eight in participating Illinois schools. The award is named in honor of Rebecca Caudill who lived and wrote in Urbana, Illinois, for nearly 50 years. The award is given in recognition for her literary talent and the universal appeal of her books which have touched the hearts of many children and young adults. The purposes of the Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award are:To encourage children and young adults to read for personal satisfaction.To develop a statewide awareness of outstanding literature for children and young people and to promote a desire for literacy.To encourage cooperation among Illinois agencies providing educational and library service to young people.more The Inheritance Games (The Inheritance Games, #1) by 4.14 avg rating — 961,859 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2025) Alone by 4.14 avg rating — 17,634 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2024) When Stars Are Scattered by 4.60 avg rating — 30,645 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2023) The Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sunrise (Coyote Sunrise #1) by 4.45 avg rating — 30,198 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2022) Front Desk (Front Desk #1) by 4.37 avg rating — 42,877 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2021) Refugee by 4.37 avg rating — 77,053 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2020) Ghost (Track, #1) by 4.19 avg rating — 49,321 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2019) A Night Divided by 4.33 avg rating — 45,055 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2018) The Crossover by 4.23 avg rating — 67,278 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2017) The Prisoner of Cell 25 (Michael Vey, #1) by 4.22 avg rating — 48,461 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2016) Legend (Legend, #1) by 4.15 avg rating — 552,482 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2015) Wonder (Wonder, #1) by 4.36 avg rating — 1,159,299 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2014) Smile (Smile, #1) by 4.23 avg rating — 297,624 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2013) Powerless (Supers of Noble's Green, #1) by 4.02 avg rating — 4,314 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2012) The Hunger Games (The Hunger Games, #1) by 4.34 avg rating — 9,450,834 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2011) All the Lovely Bad Ones by 4.02 avg rating — 12,225 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2010) The Lightning Thief (Percy Jackson and the Olympians, #1) by 4.31 avg rating — 3,295,552 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2009) Drums, Girls & Dangerous Pie (Drums, Girls & Dangerous Pie #1) by 4.23 avg rating — 30,410 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2008) So B. It. #1) by 4.12 avg rating — 35,716 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2007) Eragon (The Inheritance Cycle #1) by 3.96 avg rating — 1,886,138 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2006) Hoot by 3.84 avg rating — 109,131 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2005) Stormbreaker (Alex Rider #1) by 3.98 avg rating — 106,396 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2004) Fever 1793 by 3.93 avg rating — 130,512 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2003) Holes (Holes, #1) by 4.01 avg rating — 1,315,788 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2002) Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone (Harry Potter, #1) by 4.47 avg rating — 10,934,224 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2001) Ella Enchanted (Ella Enchanted, #1) by 4.01 avg rating — 420,213 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (2000) Frindle by 3.85 avg rating — 123,128 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (1999) Mick Harte Was Here by 4.28 avg rating — 4,158 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (1998) The Best School Year Ever (The Herdmans, #2) by 3.90 avg rating — 4,719 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (1997) The Giver (The Giver, #1) by 4.12 avg rating — 2,701,459 ratings Rebecca Caudill Young Readers' Book Award (1996) « previous 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 . . . 14 15 next » Josh narrates a play-by play as he plays in a basketball game. He then introduces himself more fully; his name is Josh Bell, but people call him Filthy McNasty. He's tall, has long hair, and wants to be a basketball star. Josh got his nickname from one of Dad's favorite jazz artists, Horace Silver. When Josh expressed uninterest in Silver's work, Dad dedicated the next song, "Filthy McNasty," to Josh. At first Josh wasn't keen on the name, as others made fun of him for it. However, as he began to excel on the basketball court and as Dad praised him using that name, he started to like it. Josh also has a twin named Jordan who goes by the nickname JB. JB loves betting and Michael Jordan. Josh loves his locks more than anything. They differentiate him from JB, make him feel cool like his favorite rappers, and most importantly, Dad used to have them when he was a professional player. Dad's locks looked like wings. Sometimes, Josh asks Dad if he misses playing basketball and suggests that Dad could play again. Dad, however, insists that he's happy "coaching" the family. When Josh asks about Dad's championship ring, Dad tells Josh that when he becomes "Da Man," then he can wear the ring. Right before a game, JB tries to dunk the ball. Josh laughs and, to show off, dunks. During halftime, JB asks to bet. The terms of his bet have many variables, but if JB wins, he wants to cut off one of Josh's locks. Josh initially declines, but then agrees, believing the bet is too specific for JB to win. His head starts to hurt as he watches every variable fall into place. After the game, the team cheers and chants as JB grabs Coach's scissors and starts to cut. Vondie yells, "OH SNAP," and Josh realizes something is wrong; JB cut five locks. Mom refers to this as a calamity and insists that Josh cut off the rest of his locks. The family goes out for dinner a week later. At the Chinese restaurant, Mom removes the salt from the table while JB grabs Josh duck sauce and wonton soup. Though Josh didn't say anything, JB knew exactly what food what Josh wanted. Following his haircut, Josh mourns his locks. He eventually asks Mom for a box to put them in and she allows him to go into her and Dad's closet for a hatbox. Josh decides to open Dad's box of basketball memorabilia and JB joins him. The boys try on Dad's championship ring, flip through old articles, and then they find a folder containing two letters. One invites Dad to try out for the Los Angeles Lakers, while the other says that if Dad doesn't agree to surgery for patellar tendinitis, he won't play again. Josh wonders why Dad never got surgery. At school, kids joke that they won't be able to tell Josh and JB apart now that their hair is similar. A new girl, whom Josh calls Miss Sweet Tea, asks the boys if twins know what each other are thinking. Josh tells her that, given the lock on JB's face, a person doesn't need to be a twin to know what he's thinking. JB and Vondie discuss how beautiful Miss Sweet Tea is after she leaves. Josh, who's trying to do his vocabulary homework, refers to her as "pulchritudinous." He also wonders why Miss Sweet Tea. He calls wonders why Miss Sweet Tea. After dinner, Dad takes the boys to the rec center to practice shooting. They play a game with some local college guys who ask Dad for autographs and win the game. Dad takes them to Krispy Kreme after, insists that Mom doesn't have to know, and then tells the boys his favorite story of teaching them to play basketball. He tells them how, at three years old, the boys could shoot free throws like they were naturals. After the next game, Miss Sweet Tea compliments Josh on his performance and then gives JB some sweet iced tea. Because Josh missed free throws during the game, Dad makes him shoot fifteen in a row when they get home. Mom rescues Josh from this exercise to read before bed. JB reads while listening to music, so he doesn't hear Mom and Dad's fight in the next room, but Josh does hear. Mom wants Dad to see the doctor for hypertension, but Dad refuses. Josh realizes that this is why Mom watches Dad's salt intake and thinks that his grandfather must've died of hypertension. The week after Thanksgiving, JB asks Josh to pass Miss Sweet Tea a note for him during a test. The teacher catches Josh in the act and Josh chooses to take the fall for JB. At the office, Mom reprimands Josh and reminds him that he won't get into college if he cheats. Josh doesn't have the opportunity to explain himself. To make matters worse, gym class later is about CPR, not sports. Josh is forced to assist the teacher and jealously watches JB and Miss Sweet Tea pass notes. Josh tries to talk to JB about basketball, but JB looks like he's barely listening. Josh knows he's too caught up thinking about Miss Sweet Tea. He takes his problem to Dad, but Dad just laughs and suggests that they get donuts. At the game later, Josh starts to refer to JB as a shovoff. The team wins and later that evening, Mom calls Josh into the kitchen. She explains that they're going to have pita and hummus for dinner since Dad has hypertension and they need to eat better. Josh understands that this is important, but he feels victimized nonetheless. However, when Dad suggests he, Josh, and JB get barbecue after the next game, Josh lies that he's already eaten dinner. A few days later, Josh and JB are shooting free throws when Dad suddenly bends over. JB sprays him with the hose, which revives him, but Josh is worried. JB refuses to accept there's anything wrong, but Josh thinks he understands why Dad is afraid of hospitals. Dad's dad died there. Miss Sweet Tea calls and asks for Jordan. Josh tries to give JB the phone, but JB runs away and asks Josh to speak for him. Josh is able to pull off the feat and successfully agrees on JB's behalf to be Miss Sweet Tea's boyfriend. JB is ecstatic. The next day at lunch, JB and Miss Sweet Tea walk up to Josh's table. JB calls Josh "Filthy," but suddenly, it seems like a dirty joke. At practice after school, Josh and JB have a strange experience where it seems like they both see a ghost at the same time, but they don't discuss it. JB hangs out with Miss Sweet Tea after school, so Josh goes to the library alone to do homework. He feels sorry for himself and to make matters worse, he discovers JB and Miss Sweet Tea kissing. While Dad drives Josh to a basketball game, he gets pulled over. He doesn't have his license, so he and Josh are late to the game. Because Josh is late, Coach makes him sit out the first half. Rather than be a team player, however, Josh tries to act alone. When this doesn't work out, he throws the ball at JB so hard, he nearly breaks JB's nose. When Mom talks to Josh about his behavior later, Josh admits that he's afraid that JB doesn't love him anymore. Mom suspends him from the basketball team, so Josh spends the next week trying to make up for what he did. JB, however, ignores him. Josh watches games from the top of the bleachers with Mom and Dad and watches Dad yell at the ref. Inexplicably, Dad and Josh writes a letter to his brother, explaining that he feels lost and alone now that they're not speaking. Josh feels even lonelier when Vondie gets a girlfriend too. While Josh and Vondie are on the phone, Josh hears strange panting in his parents' room. He finds Dad there, cleaning up vomit and holding his chest. Dad brushes off Josh's concerns and shows him an offer of a coaching job. Josh is worried, but Dad insists that he and JB will be fine. During this conversation, Josh also asks Dad to call him "Josh," not "Filthy." Mom notices the look on Dad's face and looks panicked. They fight again and Dad continues to refuse to see the doctor. Soon after, Miss Sweet Tea comes for dinner. Josh decides to call her "the girl who stole my brother." She likes Mom's veggie lasagna and she also has a sister who attends Duke, the college Josh wants to attend. After dinner, Josh asks Mom if he can go with them to Dad's doctor's appointment the following week. For the next game, Josh sits with the team and suddenly notices that Mom and Dad aren't in the bleachers. He and JB meet each other's eyes and look like they've seen ghosts, but Mom texts Josh assuring him that things are fine. In the final week before the holiday break, Josh offers JB his list of vocabulary words to help him study, and JB thanks him for the help. At lunch the next day, Coach encourages Josh to make up with JB and shares that Mom will allow Josh to play in the championship game. Josh is ecstatic, but unsure how to make up with JB. He's not looking forward to the tournament he's supposed to be playing with Dad and JB, since he and JB are still feuding. However, the day before the tournament, JB starts to acknowledge Josh and laugh with him. Before the tournament, Josh and Dad play a warm-up game. Dad steals the ball from Josh's crossover and then collapses from a heart attack. Josh performs CPR. The doctor tries to comfort Josh, JB, and Mom as he explains that Dad had a myocardial infarction and is in a coma. He encourages them to talk to Dad, but Josh is angry and doesn't want to talk when it's unclear if Dad can hear him. Josh tells Mom all the reasons he's angry, which include Dad's promise to be here forever, Miss Sweet Tea's existence, and his missing locks. Dad finally wakes up on Christmas Eve. After a Christmas spent in the hospital with relatives, Dad tells his sons that they need to always love and look out for each other. Then, he and Josh speak privately. Dad mostly refuses to answer Josh's questions; he wants to know if Josh is going to play in the championship game. Just before the championship game, Mom gets the call that Dad had another heart attack and she leaves for the hospital. JB follows Mom on his bike, while Josh rides to the game with Vondie. In the last seconds of the game, Josh notices JB and Miss Sweet Tea sitting on the bench. JB is crying as Josh makes his final basket, winning the game. Dad's obituary in the paper offers the highlights of his career and says he died at age 39. Josh feels unmoored at the funeral without any riles or basketball rituals. At home afterwards, Josh takes a phone call from Miss Sweet Tea. She apologizes and invites him to attend a college basketball game with her and JB. Then, Josh heads outside to shoot free throws. Soon, he's making them with his eyes closed. As he gets close to Dad's record of 50 in a row, he thinks he hears Dad's voice. It's actually JB. JB gives Josh Dad's championship ring and says that he must be Da Man now. Josh cries; he doesn't want the ring or the title. He gives the ball to JB to make the fiftieth free throw.