

**Cornell Miller**

Age: 44 - Black Male

Cornell Miller, a 44-year-old Black man, is a central character defined by complexity and inner turmoil. He possesses a commanding presence and a brooding demeanor, engaging in philosophical discussions and occasionally displaying passive-aggressive tendencies. Cornell harbors deep family secrets from a traumatic past, which drive the story's central tensions.

His relationships with wife Niecy and stepson Phawnee are marked by power dynamics and unresolved issues. Cornell grapples with agoraphobia, rendering him unable to leave his home, and his submissive nature complicates his professional life.

His character encapsulates the story's exploration of complex family dynamics and personal demons, making him a multifaceted central figure.

**Phawnee Phillips (Fawn-E)**

Age: 16 - Black Male

Phawnee, pronounced "Fawn-E," is a dynamic, outspoken and complex 16-year-old African American male. His unique fashion sense and fearless attitude challenge authority at every turn. Passionate about music, he uses it as a refuge from life's chaos. However, beneath this defiance lies a hidden battle with his sexual identity, making love and trust rare commodities.

In his fragmented family, Phawnee's strained relationship with stepfather Cornell and distant connection with his mother, Niecy, amplify the story's exploration of family secrets and their consequences.

As a pivotal character, Phawnee's rebellious spirit, love for music, and inner turmoil add depth and relatability to the narrative.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Phawnee enters the kitchen, purposefully ignoring Cornell's presence in the living room.

He swiftly grabs a hot pocket from the freezer, prepares it, and places it inside the microwave.

With a can of soda in hand from the fridge, Phawnee positions himself at the kitchen island, deliberately turning his back to Cornell.

As the microwave reaches the end of its cycle, emitting a loud "DING," Phawnee springs up from his seat, eager to retrieve his snack.

As he rounds the island, Phawnee is taken aback to find himself face-to-face with Cornell, who has now positioned himself in front of the microwave.

CORNELL

How are you out past midnight when you  
got school in the morning?

PHAWNEE

Don't waste my time with bitch ass moves.

CORNELL

What?!

PHAWNEE

I expect that shit from my mother?

CORNELL

Your mother's not a bitch.

PHAWNEE

Not from you.

Phawnee's comment takes Cornell a moment to process.

PHAWNEE (CONT'D)

You're just being corny as fuck.  
Pretending like you don't know.

CORNELL

Know what?

PHAWNEE

That I dropped out of school.

CORNELL

So you aren't going to school?

In disgust, Phawnee exhales, slowly shakes his head, and pulls back from Cornell.

CORNELL (CONT'D)

What?

PHAWNEE

You already know I dropped out.

CORNELL

I was just-

PHAWNEE

-I just said I dropped out. And then here you go,

(mocking Cornell's voice)

"You ain't going to school?"

CORNELL

You know everything and nothing at the same time.

PHAWNEE

What-the-fuck-ever-nigga?

CORNELL

Listen, I'm not trying to be your father-

PHAWNEE

-You could never be my father.

CORNELL

Having a smart mouth doesn't mean you're smart.

PHAWNEE

And your elitist sarcasm doesn't make you profound.

CORNELL

I can't tell you shit.

PHAWNEE

(mimicking talking with his hands)

If you knew that, then why are you talking?

CORNELL

(resetting his tone)

So no high school? No college?

PHAWNEE

For what?

CORNELL

So you won't be ignorant.

PHAWNEE

Who you calling ignorant?!

CORNELL

You're knowledgable, not smart.

PHAWNEE

I'm far from ignorant.

CORNELL

Ignorance isn't a negative thing.

PHAWNEE

Yeah. Tell that-

CORNELL

(talking over Phawnee)

-It just means that you haven't been exposed to knowledge.

PHAWNEE

I don't need to be programmed into your failed white-washed system.

CORNELL

(using his hands to explain)

You just know everything at this level, but you won't ever be exposed to higher education or higher learning.

PHAWNEE

You're such a puppet.

CORNELL

Education, career path-

PHAWNEE

-And?

CORNELL

-I'm living high, and all you do is get HIGH.

PHAWNEE

You smoke and drink, too.

CORNELL

Yeah, but that's all you do.

PHAWNEE

I'm a creator. I make music. I'm supposed to.

CORNELL

You make noise - if anybody a puppet,  
it's you.

PHAWNEE

Fuck you.

Phawnee moves past Cornell to grab his food from the microwave.

CORNELL

No, no, cause if anybody is getting  
FUCKED, it's you.

Phawnee is caught off guard by Cornell's language and tone.

**Character Report for "CORNELL"**

CORNELL: How are you out past midnight when you got school in the morning?

CORNELL: What?!

CORNELL: Your mother's not a bitch.

CORNELL: Know what?

CORNELL: So you aren't going to school?

CORNELL: What?

CORNELL: I was just-

CORNELL: You know everything and nothing at the same time.

CORNELL: Listen, I'm not trying to be your father-

CORNELL: Having a smart mouth doesn't mean you're smart.

CORNELL: I can't tell you shit.

CORNELL: (resetting his tone)  
So no high school? No college?

CORNELL: So you won't be ignorant.

CORNELL: You're knowledgable, not smart.

CORNELL: Ignorance isn't a negative thing.

CORNELL: (talking over Phawnee)  
-It just means that you haven't been exposed to knowledge.

CORNELL: (using his hands to explain)  
You just know everything at this level, but you won't ever be exposed to higher education or higher learning.

CORNELL: Education, career path-

CORNELL: -I'm living high, and all you do is get HIGH.

CORNELL: Yeah, but that's all you do.

CORNELL: You make noise - if anybody a puppet, it's you.

CORNELL: No, no, cause if anybody is getting FUCKED, it's you.



**Character Report for "PHAWNEE"**

PHAWNEE: Don't waste my time with bitch ass moves.

PHAWNEE: I expect that shit from my mother?

PHAWNEE: Not from you.

PHAWNEE: You're just being corny as fuck. Pretending like you don't know.

PHAWNEE: That I dropped out of school.

PHAWNEE: You already know I dropped out.

PHAWNEE: -I just said I dropped out. And then here you go,  
(mocking Cornell's voice)  
"You ain't going to school?"

PHAWNEE: What-the-fuck-ever-nigga?

PHAWNEE: -You could never be my father.

PHAWNEE: And your elitist sarcasm doesn't make you profound.

PHAWNEE: (mimicking talking with his hands)  
If you knew that, then why are you talking?

PHAWNEE: For what?

PHAWNEE: Who you calling ignorant?!

PHAWNEE: I'm far from ignorant.

PHAWNEE: Yeah. Tell that-

PHAWNEE: I don't need to be programmed into your failed white-washed system.

PHAWNEE: You're such a puppet.

PHAWNEE: -And?

PHAWNEE: You smoke and drink, too.

PHAWNEE: I'm a creator. I make music. I'm supposed to.

PHAWNEE: Fuck you.



