



The
FREEDOM
of the
Black '90s

Written and Illustrated by Tafari Diop Robertson

What has Fresh Prince done for class consciousness?



**Enter Will, a young, street-wise, smart talking, low class, no money, hip hop, Black
An every man youth, a comic relief**

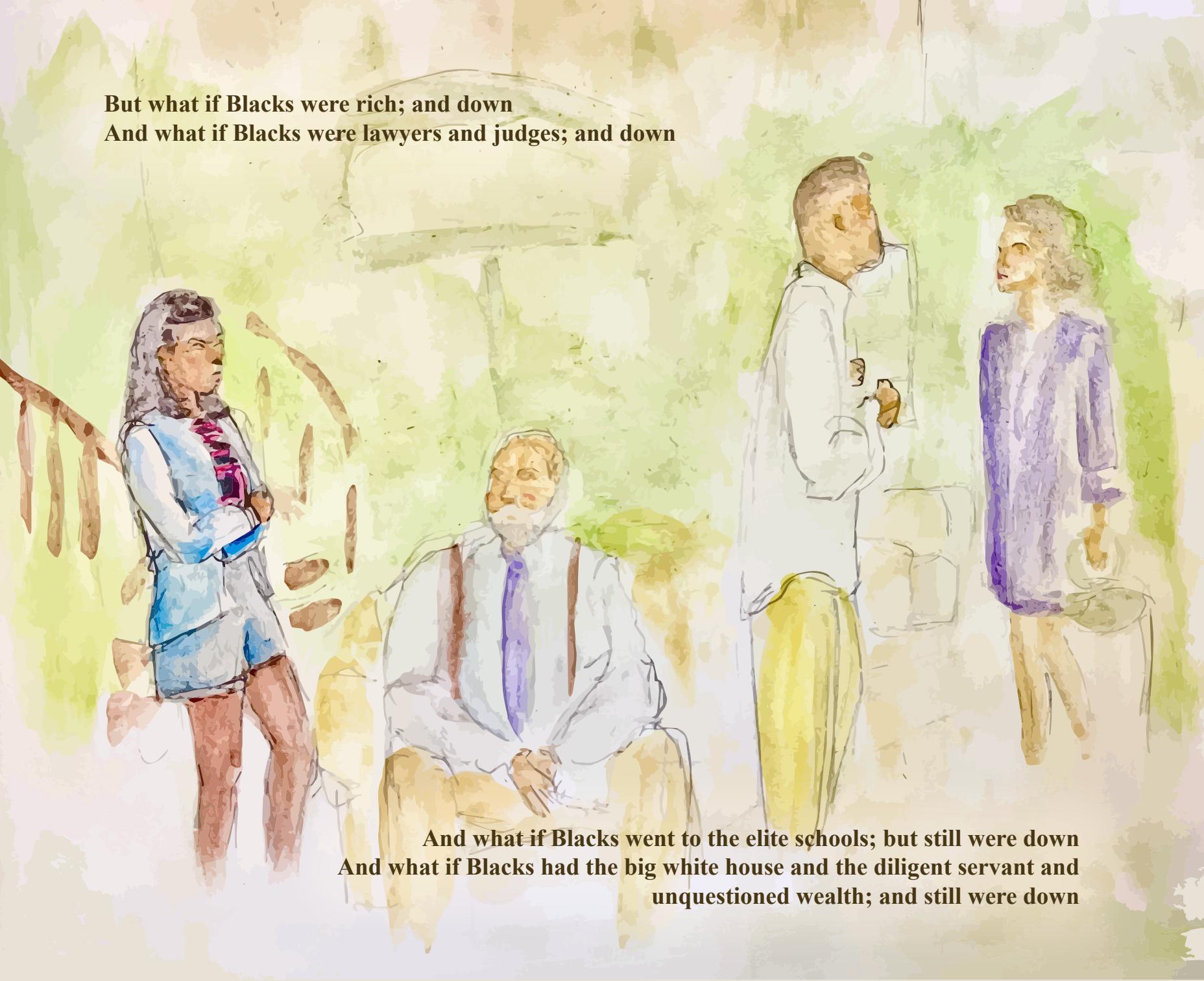
Thrust into the world of Black Banks

**A structured family, a system around him, a gate kept promise, a possibility;
once learned, once groomed**



A begrudgingly but dutifully earned answer to the shortcomings of an unstructured Black life

A reprieve from played out stereotypes... we know the ones



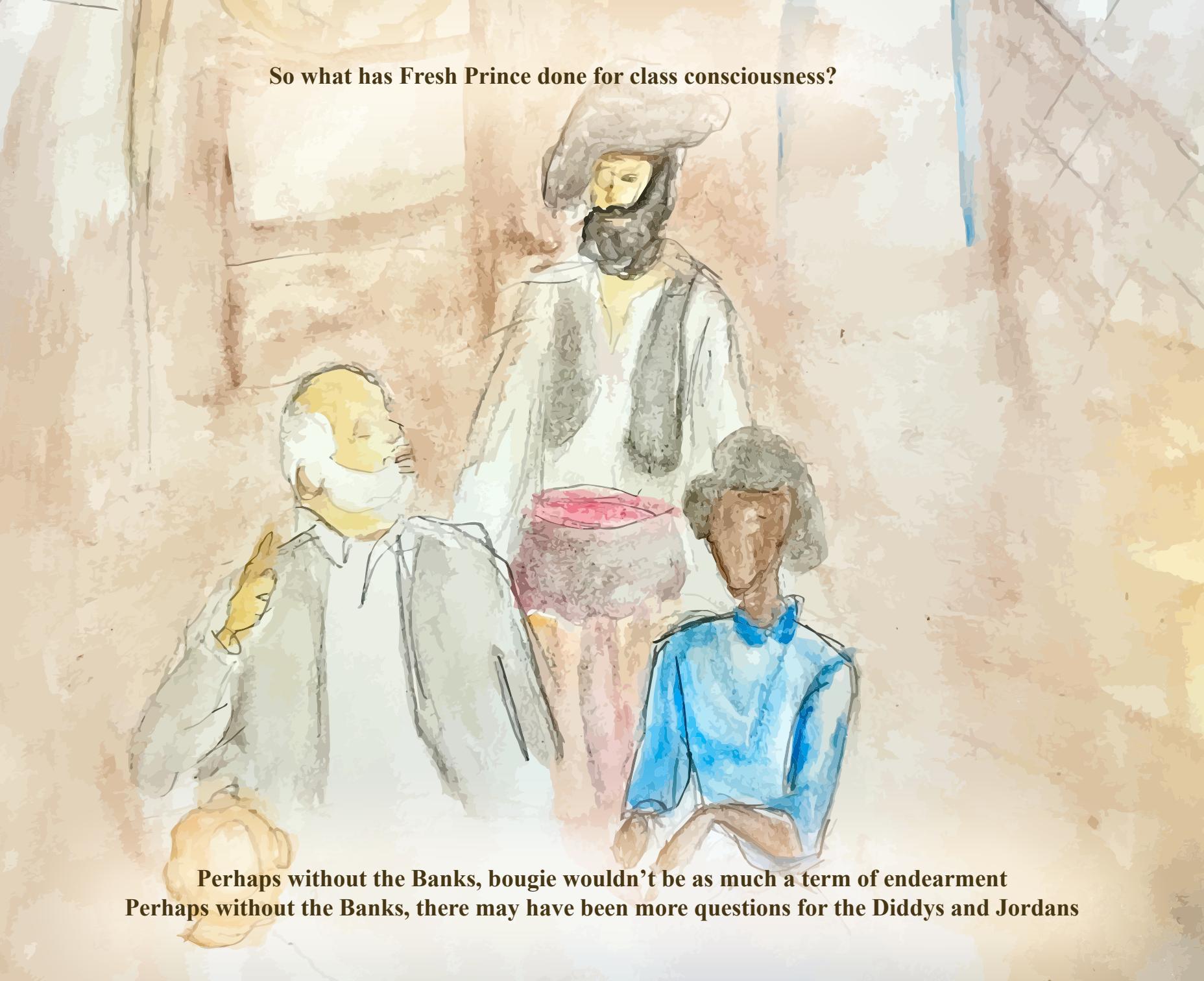
**But what if Blacks were rich; and down
And what if Blacks were lawyers and judges; and down**

**And what if Blacks went to the elite schools; but still were down
And what if Blacks had the big white house and the diligent servant and
unquestioned wealth; and still were down**



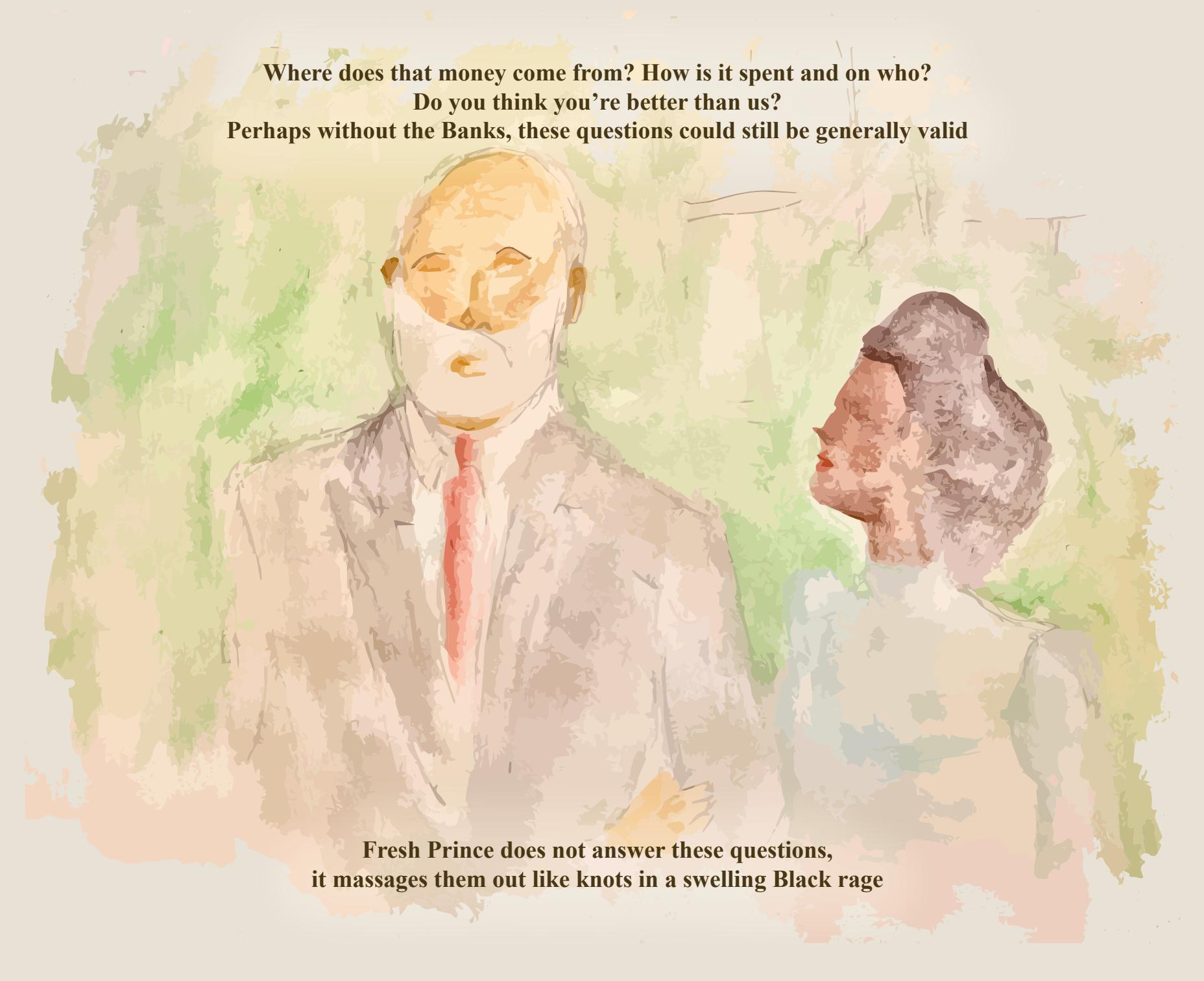
**It's an imaginative exercise
A game we've been playing since the last 90's (the 1890's)**

**Every good sitcom has a fifth wall it never breaks
The unasked questions shielded by societal implications**



So what has Fresh Prince done for class consciousness?

**Perhaps without the Banks, bougie wouldn't be as much a term of endearment
Perhaps without the Banks, there may have been more questions for the Diddys and Jordans**



**Where does that money come from? How is it spent and on who?
Do you think you're better than us?
Perhaps without the Banks, these questions could still be generally valid**

**Fresh Prince does not answer these questions,
it massages them out like knots in a swelling Black rage**



Where would we be without the Banks and this country,
if Will was allowed to be angry?

If the 90s were allowed to be angry
If the 80s were allowed to be angry
If the 70s were allowed to be angry
If the 60s were allowed to be angry
And so on

There's a circumstance that allows for a child, in need of support, estranged and up to no good, to be shipped cross country to a rich new world of disjointed but suddenly accessible possibility as a preventative measure, a preemptive lesson, a premeditated resolve?



What's being prevented, what happens to the Wills in Philly?

No, the Banks family is not the evil hand that creates that circumstance, but they are the preventative measure, a preemptive lesson, a premeditated resolve.

**We can't burn down a world with Black Banks in it,
can we?**