

The background of the cover is a dark grey color with a subtle, repeating diamond-shaped grid pattern. Overlaid on this are several concentric white circles of varying diameters, centered on the page. The text is white and centered within the innermost circle.

URBAN REDEMPTION

**THE MEMOIRS OF AN INNER CITY YOUTH WITH A
FELONY CONVICTION**

BY BILL WALLACE

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CHAPTER 02 FAMILY MATTERS

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Despite the sneaking around and the petty stealing, my childhood up to this point was as wholesome as can be. My mother and family showered me with lots of love and attention. Prayer and God were an intricate part of our household. We prayed before we ate and prayed before going to bed at night. My mom kept a King James Version of the Bible on her nightstand and would admonish me, my brother, and sister with Bible sayings regularly. From the Church of the New Testament to Rosewood Avenue Baptist Church, we always had a place of worship to call home. Being that we didn't have much family in Austin made us extremely close to one another and my uncle Floyd's wife and kids. Matter-of-fact, my uncle's wife's (aunt Mata's) family and our church friends became our de facto kith and kin. Besides our new extended family in Austin, my mother still had 11 more brothers and sisters scattered about Texas from Dallas, Ft. Worth, Waco, Temple, Lott, Nacogdoches, and San Antonio. After my grandmother's passing, my Uncle Floyd assumed a patriarchal role whereas my aunt Autra assumed the head of the family as the matriarch. Because all of my aunts and uncles were raised in rural, small-town Texas, they were very close. We always shared holidays and family reunions. Honestly, our family reunions were where I learned the power of black love and kindred spirit. These yearly weekend gatherings always concluded after church and Sunday dinner with a big prayer circle. I literally have dozens and dozens of cousins and 2nd cousins and it meant the world to see all of these people, who traced their spirit to that of my great-grandparents. I can't state enough how much it helped my self-esteem knowing that I was a part of the great big family of people. All of the hugs and picture taking made everyone a celebrity. The feeling is just surreal to have an endless amount of attention. I must have kissed a hundred cheeks, and said my age and what grade I was in, a million times.