



0. WARD OF THE STATE - Story Preface

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Carl Stokes was the first African-American to be elected mayor of a major U.S. city when he took office in Cleveland, Ohio during early 1968. Not long after his first day in that position, a shoot-out between police and African-Americans in the Glenville area of Cleveland led to riots between the 23rd and 28th of July that same year. This image depicts a still shot from historical footage recorded during those riots. Antwone Fisher was living in a foster home, in the Glenville area of Cleveland, when the shootout and riots took place.

Antwone began his life at the Metzenbaum Children's Center in Cleveland. Since he could not live with his biological mother, Eva Mae Fisher, he was placed in foster care.

His first placement worked out well. By the time Antwone was two, he and his foster mother were very close, according to the state's records:

The foster mother was sitting with the child and she had him held in her arms as one would hold a 3 month old infant. Child is large for his age and is a very attractive baby. He has even brown coloring, fairly regular features, and is sturdily built, lying in her arms contentedly like an infant.

But Antwone could not stay in the foster home where he was loved:

Before the foster mother left the office, she was admonished about holding the child so close to her, making such a strong emotional tie between them...making it that much harder because the separation would have to be made regardless of her feelings for the child. (Finding Fish, pages 24-25.)

In the fall of 1961, Antwone Fisher's young life changed dramatically.

While still a toddler, he was sent to a foster home in the Glenville neighborhood of Cleveland (where a shootout, leading to riots, occurred during July of 1968). Although he remained in the Pritchett home nearly 14 years, it was a dreadful experience for him. Near the end of his tenure there, Antwone's case worker noted:

Foster mother is often difficult to deal with. She is likeable, but very manipulative and inconsistent. She will praise Antwone during one contact and ask for his removal at the next. Although Antwone is very used to her, he has become less willing to put up with her and is beginning to stand up for his rights and opinions. This is very irritating to Mrs. Pickett [the foster mother]...because she always wants her children to be grateful. (Finding Fish, page 189.)

Antwone left Glenville and the Pickett's home in late 1975. Within months, although he had done nothing wrong, the young teen was sent to reform school in Pennsylvania.

See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/WARD-OF-THE-STATE-Antwone-Fisher>

See Learning Tasks for this story online at:

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WARD OF THE STATE

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Glenville Riots of 1968

Video clip, by Garth Holman, online via Garth Holman's Channel at YouTube.

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