

WRITTEN

By

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1 **EXT. THEATER-DAY**

A wide view of an old theater.

2 **INT. THEATER AUDITORIUM-DAY CONT.**

JAMES (blk male 30) is standing on stage negotiating a deal with four middle-aged white men sitting in the auditorium.

JAMES

Mr. Vanderbilt all I ask is that you give me two months, I promise you I will find a lead actress to play this role.

JAMES stood with his hands to his chest, hoping for a favorable response from MR. VANDERBILT (white male late 50's).

MR. VANDERBILT

You have two months ...

JAMES exhales.

JAMES

(smiling)
Thank you sir.

MR. VANDERBILT

Don't thank me just yet, I expect to see a full preview of the show as well, I have bigger and better things in the making and if you can sell me on this, I'm willing to invest in the tour and the movie.

JAMES

(excited)
You got a deal sir, I promise I won't let you down.

3 **EXT. STREET-DAY**

STELLA ROSE a middle-aged black woman wearing a worn-out baseball cap walks over behind a vacant building and pulls her pants down to take a leak, she notices that her period is on.

STELLA

(upset)
Shit.

She pulls her pants up.

TEENAGER 1 (O.S.)
 (giggling)
 You aint gonna wipe lady?

STELLA is startled, she didn't see the two boys sitting beside the building, we see her on his cell phone as he records the entire incident.

TEENAGER 1 (CONT'D)
 Looks like it's that time of the month.

STELLA walks away.

TEENAGER 1 (CONT'D)
 I'm puttin her ass on facebook and youtube, AYE YOU ABOUT TO GO VIRAL BABY!!!

4 **EXT. STREET-DAY CONT.**

STELLA walks into a convenience store.

5 **INT. CONVENIENCE STORE-DAY**

STELLA enters the convenience store, she goes over to the personal hygiene aisle, then proceeds to walk out of the store before being approached by the manager RAMIRO (Hispanic male 55 yr. old).

RAMIRO
 Excuse me ma'am.

STELLA stops in her tracks, making no eye contact as the man speaks.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)
 I'm going to need you to give me the item that you're concealing underneath your shirt.

The CASHIER behind the counter is talking on the phone while never taking his eyes off of STELLA.

STELLA pulls the item from underneath her shirt, RAMIRO sees that it's a box of menstrual pads, he looks away in shame then he takes the box of pads.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)
 Were these for you?

STELLA

(whisper)

Yes.

RAMIRO

Would you come with me please?

STELLA and RAMIRO walk towards the back of the store, they stop at the restroom door.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)

Here you go.

He hands STELLA the box of pads she takes them then enters the restroom.

RAMIRO runs his hand through his hair and exhales.

Two OFFICERS walks into the store, they approach the CASHIER he points to RAMIRO.

The OFFICERS walks to the back of the store.

STELLA comes out of the restroom.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)

Evening officers.

OFFICER 1

Hi, we had a call about a shoplifter is this her?

RAMIRO

Ah yes but we've taken care of it there's no charges.

STELLA eases the box of pads behind her back.

OFFICER 1

So you recovered your property?

RAMIRO

Yes I got the item back, everything is fine.

OFFICER

Alright sir, but we'll have to run her name to make sure there's no warrants.

RAMIRO

(stepping aside)

Um, alright, sure.

The OFFICER notices STELLA giving RAMIRO the pads.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)

No ma'am they're yours, you can keep them.

OFFICER

Come with us ma'am, we just want to run your name to see if you have any warrants.

OFFICER 1

I'll take those.

The OFFICER takes the box of pads and hands them back RAMIRO.

They begin escorting STELLA to the front of the store, RAMIRO walks behind the counter to the CASHIER.

RAMIRO

Did you call them?

CASHIER

Yes, I didn't know what else to do.

RAMIRO

Jesus the woman was on her period she didn't have money for pads.

CASHIER

That's still theft right?

RAMIRO gives the CASHIER an unsettling stare then he looks out of the window to see if they would release her.

RAMIRO

(to self)

I hope she doesn't have warrants.

The CASHIER rings up a customer.

CASHIER

(smirk)

They always have warrants.

RAMIRO doesn't say a word but we can see that the statement bothers him.

CASHIER (CONT'D)

Look at that see what I tell ya
(shaking his head)
... that's all they know.

One of the OFFICERS is putting STELLA in the patrol car while the other OFFICER walks back into the store.

OFFICER 1

She has a warrant, so we're taking her in, are you sure don't want to press any charges?

RAMIRO

Yes I'm sure.

OFFICER 1

Ok sir you have a nice day.

The OFFICER exits the store, the CASHIER goes and stands beside the RAMIRO as he looks out of the window.

CASHIER

(calm)

I'm willing to bet you my tax return that crack-head is wanted for theft.

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EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE-DAY CONT.

RAMIRO walks from behind the counter disgusted with the CASHIER'S statements he hurries out front to catch up with the OFFICER.

RAMIRO

Excuse me officer, um, the lady, what was her name if you don't mind me asking?

The OFFICER opens his note pad.

OFFICER

(searching the pad)

Ahh let me see here, Stella Rose.

RAMIRO

(repeat)

Stella Rose.

OFFICER

Yeah like the actress.

RAMIRO

Alright, thanks.

OFFICER

Anytime.

7

RAMIRO observes as the OFFICER gets into his patrol car and drive away.

8

INT. THEATER AUDITORIUM-DAY

A wide view of JAMES sitting in the middle of the theater with his back to the camera.

LOLA (O.S.)

(elderly blk female)

I thought it was very gutsy of you to take on such a task from ole Vanderbilt.

JAMES would continue to stare at the stage.

JAMES

I had no choice, without him there's no show.

LOLA (O.S.)

Yeah but don't let it worry you child, if it's meant to be it will be.

I've seen plenty in your position over the years, some try and fail, others just give up walk away, It's funny how I always end up finding them sitting right where you sit

(beat)

You know Cab Callaway and Moms Mabley use to sit in here for hours before their shows, alone, just meditating I guess,

(beat)

I've been here for over forty some years and I may have seen everybody who was a somebody fail every now and again, but they got up, so find your peace child, this suppose to be fun

(beat)

Well I'm about to finish up in here, you be sure to turn off those lights backstage.

JAMES

Alright, thanks Lola.

LOLA (O.S.)

You're welcome.

9 **INT. THEATER LOBBY-DAY**

JAMES walks past the wall of fame carrying a bag, he stops and focus on a picture of STELLA ROSE.

Flashback

10 **INT. THEATER AUDITORIUM-DAY**

The auditorium is filled with people applauding as the host stands center stage.

A young JAMES is sitting next to his mother and father with a huge smile on his face, anticipating the one-woman show.

ANNOUNCER

So without further ado, Ladies and gentlemen please stand and help me bid farewell to my dear friend and yours, the queen of Broadway Ms. Stella Rose.

STELLA graces the stage in slow motion, a young JAMES is standing in his seat clapping, as the entire auditorium erupts into cheers.

STELLA

Thank you, please be seated.

The audience continues to stand and applaud her.

STELLA (CONT'D)

(smiling)

Thank you, thank you, please be seated.

End flashback

11 **INT. THEATER LOBBY-DAY**

JAMES staring directly into the camera, he sets the alarm then he turns off the light.

12 **EXT. JAMES HOME-DAY**

JAMES pulls into his driveway and park.

13 **INT. JAMES HOME-DAY CONT.**

JAMES enters the living room wearing his pajamas and slipper, he turns the TV on to the local news, then leaves the room.

14 **INT. JAMES HOME KITCHEN - DAY**

JAMES comes into the kitchen, he opens the refrigerator and takes out some cold cuts, lettuce, cheese, and mayonnaise.

15 **INT. JAMES HOME LIVING-ROOM - DAY**

Camera pan to a close-up of a news REPORTER on TV.

REPORTER

(blk male 33 yrs. old)
 ... and now for a local story that
 has since gone viral thanks to a
 post on social media
 (beat)
 apparently the Broadway legend
 Stella Rose was shamed by a
 teenager recording her as she
 urinates in public

An old photo of STELLA is shown.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

... but that's not the only reason
 the once crowned Queen of Broadway
 has made headlines
 (beat)

Earlier today the former actress
 was arrested for shoplifting at a
 local convenience store, sources
 say she appears to be homeless and
 emotionally detached from reality,
 I think I speak for everyone here
 at the station when I say that we
 hope she receives the proper care
 that she needs, and we wish her the
 best

(beat)
 Stay tuned for the latest updates
 in sports, and be prepared for this
 wet weekend as a thunderstorm seems
 to be headed our way, more after
 this...

JAMES enters the room with his plate of sandwiches and a beer he turns the volume up on the TV before taking a seat.

Cut to

A half-eaten sandwich and an empty bottle of beer are sitting on the table while JAMES sleeps.

Cell phone rings, JAMES wakes up and answers.

JAMES

(phone)

Hey.

BRIDGET (O.S.)

(early 30's, blk female)

Why didn't you call me about this Vanderbilt meeting, we have to celebrate.

JAMES

(sleepy)

I was going to call you when I woke up.

BRIDGET (O.S.)

(excited)

You don't have time to sleep, I'll be by there to pick you up in about thirty minutes so be ready.

JAMES

Where are we going?

BRIDGET (O.S.)

"The Bitch Cave" where else.

JAMES sits up in his seat.

JAMES

(alert)

Now you talking my language bye trick.

(ends call)

16

INT. THE BITCH CAVE-NIGHT

JAMES and BRIDGET are sitting at a table .

BRIDGET

So you're telling me that you're going to get Stella Rose to play the part, have you lost your damn mind?

JAMES is slowly stirring his drink with a cocktail straw.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Haven't you been watching the news?

JAMES

(curious)

No, why?

BRIDGET

Your Broadway queen, she was arrested today, it was all over the news and social media, (J) the lady is a methhead, a has been, I'm not going to waste my time and energy on that broad and neither should you.

JAMES

Who else is there to choose from?

(beat)

They stare at each other.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(shaking his head)

No, hell no ...

BRIDGET

Just give her another chance (J).

JAMES

That broad is too Hollywood for me
Bridget I can't digest her.

BRIDGET

Look, you said it yourself, who else is there?
I mean we both know she's no Stella Rose, but hell at this moment neither is Stella,
Besides, the woman is locked up anyways and there's no telling for how long.

JAMES

(beat)

If I can't get Stella than I guess Angelic will have to do but you will be responsible for her.

BRIDGET

Well alright, cheers.

BRIDGET holds up her glass smiling expecting a toast, JAMES flips her off, BRIDGET taps his glass with hers anyway.

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INT. POLICE STATION-DAY

JAMES enters the station with BRIDGET trailing close behind, they approach the front desk.

OFFICER

Can I help you?

JAMES

Yes, I want to know if there's a bond for Ms. Stella Rose?

OFFICER

Stella Rose, oh yes the actress, she was released about an hour ago.

JAMES

Could you tell me who posted her bond?

OFFICER

That information is confidential.

JAMES

Oh ok um, alright thanks.

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INT. JAMES CAR-DAY

JAMES is driving.

BRIDGET

Look I have Angelic's number.

JAMES roles his eyes.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Alright than, if you want to ride around searching for a needle in a needle stack then feel free.

JAMES

(to self)

This broad has got to have a paper trail or something.

BRIDGET

Have you tried Google?

JAMES looks over at BRIDGET as she scrolls through her phone.

JAMES

What can Google tell us about a crack-head?

BRIDGET laugh, then suddenly her laughter stops.

BRIDGET

No fucking way ...

James looks over at BRIDGET, then back to the road, then back at BRIDGET.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

NO FUCKING WAY!

JAMES

What?

BRIDGET

EWWW, NO SHE DIDN'T!

BRIDGET looking at her cell phone.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

PULL OVER YOU GOT TO SEE THIS!

JAMES

What is it?

JAMES pulls the car over and BRIDGET hands him the phone.

BRIDGET

(excited)

I can't believe this, look at this video and tell me who do you see.

JAMES begin watching the video, we can hear the dialogue from the teenagers recording of STELLA urinating outside.

JAMES

(whisper)

Stella?

BRIDGET

(smiling)

Yep, the crack head done went viral.

19

INT. JAMES HOME KITCHEN-DAY

JAMES and BRIDGET are sitting at his kitchen table with his laptop watching the video of STELLA, BRIDGET goes to the refrigerator and opens the door.

BRIDGET

Boy you aint got nothing in here
but memories, oh wait a minute,
never mind, it was just my echo ...

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

... hello in there.

JAMES

You got jokes.

BRIDGET

... and a beer.

BRIDGET takes a beer then closes the refrigerator.

JAMES

I'm going to send this kid a
friend's request.

BRIDGET

Is he cute?

JAMES

He's alright ...
I just hope he knows her
personally.

BRIDGET

(whisper)
This is crazy dude.

JAMES lights cigarette.

JAMES

(whisper)
I know right.

BRIDGET

(excited)
He accepted you, check his profile.

JAMES begin to type.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Dam you just get right to the point
huh?

Message

James: do you know the lady in your video?

DD: No, just some crack-head pissin.

James: can you tell me where I can find her?

DD: I always see her in the downtown area by the old ROWE furniture building.

James: alright thanks.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

(to James)

Downtown?

JAMES

Downtown.

21

INT. JAMES CAR-DAY

JAMES and BRIDGET are sitting in the car observing the people, JAMES lights a cigarette.

JAMES

You know girl, I got so many ideas inside of me, I'm afraid I'm going to die before I get the chance to bring them to fruition.

BRIDGET

Boy you aint going no where stop saying that.

BRIDGET scrolls through her phone, JAMES puffs his cigarette once again.

JAMES

You never know, that's why I believe in living in the moment, making today count, the now, this instant.

BRIDGET

(looking in her phone)

You sounding like a Tupac song.

JAMES puff his cigarette.

JAMES

(exhales smoke)

Look at this.

JAMES is staring at a homeless woman who appears to be panhandling.

BRIDGET

What, that's not her.

BRIDGET continue to scroll through her phone.

JAMES

That's the same ball cap.

BRIDGET

Yeah but that's not her.

JAMES

If that's not her then that raggedy
ass ball cap is the new trend in
the homeless community.

JAMES gets out of the car and puffs his cigarette once more
before thumping it away.

BRIDGET

Wait for me dude.

BRIDGET gets out of the car and rushes to keep up with him,
JAMES takes a \$5 bill from his wallet.

JAMES

Excuse me ma'am.

The woman turns to James in slow motion.

BRIDGET (O.S.)

It's her.

JAMES is star struck, he's unable to move or say anything.

STELLA

Yes?

BRIDGET, snatches the \$5 from JAMES'S and gives it to STELLA.

BRIDGET

(smiling)

Here you go ma'am.

STELLA

Thank you.

STELLA begins to walk away, BRIDGET notice that JAMES IS
still inactive, she follows behind STELLA.

BRIDGET

Ma'am.

STELLA turns to BRIDGET.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

(nervous)

Um ...

BRIDGET looks back at JAMES still frozen in disbelief.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

You wouldn't by any chance be
Stella Rose would you?

STELLA

(no eye contact)

Yes.

JAMES comes and stands by BRIDGET'S side.

JAMES

Ms. Rose, I have admired you for
years, my parents took me to see
your very last show over at the
Liberty theater, and ma'am, I have
this production that I'm working on
there and I would love to have you
as the lead.

STELLA

I'm sorry.

STELLA walks away.

BRIDGET looks at JAMES, JAMES begins to follow STELLA,
BRIDGET looks around before following JAMES.

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EXT. STREET-DAY

BRIDGET and JAMES peeks around a building as STELLA walks
into a grocery store.

Cut to

JAMES and BRIDGET are walking behind STELLA very discreetly,
as she makes her way to an abandoned building.

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INT. PENTAGON-DAY

STELLA enters the room, it's decorated with a few chairs, a
table, and three worn mattresses.

Sitting at the table is MOSES (black male late '30s) and
OTHELLO (white male early '30s) arguing while playing cards,
they've yet to acknowledge STELLA'S presence as she quietly
observes.

MOSES

You know you re-nig right?

OTHELLO

No I didn't.

MOSES

Dude you was cutting hearts, check
yo books I aint gotta lie.

There's a knock at the door.

OTHELLO

(notices Stella)
Oh hi Stella.

STELLA goes to answer the door, she sits the bag down on the floor then kneels to look underneath at the visitor's shoes, she stands to her feet, there's another knock at the door.

STELLA

Who is it?

JAMES

It's James and Bridget, we spoke to
you a few minutes ago about the
Liberty theater.

STELLA rolling her eyes.

STELLA

I thought I made myself clear ...

MOSES

Hey Stella who is that?

JAMES

We just need about fifteen minutes
of your time ma'am, then we'll be
on our way.

MOSES

(talking to Stella)
Go on let them in.

STELLA opens the door, then she takes the bags to the table,
MOSES and OTHELLO stands and greets their visitors.

MOSES (CONT'D)

Hey what's happening, damn, who
dis?
(admiring bridget)

BRIDGET frowns at MOSES outburst, MOSES circles BRIDGET
staring her up and down.

JAMES

Hi I'm James and this is my friend
Bridget.

MOSES

I'm Moses and this is Othello,
welcome to the Pentagon, make
yourselves comfortable.

STELLA sits at the table making sandwiches, JAMES and BRIDGET
walks over to the table.

JAMES

Ma'am if you would just hear us
out.

The door swings open, two people enters the room arguing,
LARYN a (white female 48 yrs. old) and PANDA a (white female
16 yrs. old).

PANDA

(yelling)

I DON'T CARE SOMEONE NEED TO LOOK
AFTER YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE TOO
FREAKING RECKLESS!

LARYN

(yelling)

JUST WHO THE HELL DO YOU THINK
YOU'RE TALKING TO THAT WAY YOU'RE
NOT MY MOTHER LITTLE GIRL SO STAY
IN YOUR FUCKING PLACE BEFORE I
KNOCK YOU THERE!

PANDA

(calm)

I dare you to lay one finger on me
Laryn, if I don't beat you down God
has turned off.

MOSES steps in between them.

MOSES

Hey, whoa ladies please we have
company.

PANDA

(calm)

She gets on my nerves.

MOSES

Chill alright.

LARYN walks over to one of the mattress and sits, OTHELLO joins her, STELLA goes over and grabs PANDA by the arm while JAMES and BRIDGET looks on.

STELLA

Come here.

They go to the corner of the room.

STELLA (CONT'D)

What's going on with you two?

PANDA

Ma she was about to get arrested out there and if it wasn't for me she'd be behind bars.

LARYN

(yelling)

I DON'T NEED A SHITTY ASS BABY
SITTER TRYING TO MANAGE MY VAGINA!

STELLA

HEY!

STELLA (CONT'D)

(talking to Panda)

Don't let me hear you speak to another adult that way you hear me?

PANDA

(whisper)

I'm sorry.

STELLA

(whisper)

Go over to the table, it's time for supper.

STELLA looks over at LARYN.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Come here.

LARYN gets up and goes over to STELLA.

STELLA (CONT'D)

(calm)

Never let me hear you speak to her that way again.

LARYN

Ok I'm sorry.

STELLA

Go to the table.

STELLA looks over at JAMES and BRIDGET whose standing against the wall.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Will you two be joining us?

BRIDGET

(whisper to James)

Fuck no.

JAMES

Um, no ma'am we've eaten already thanks.

OTHELLO

There's plenty, besides Stella makes the best cold cuts on this side of the equator.

BRIDGET

(to self)

What the ...

JAMES

Thanks but no thanks, we're fine.

BRIDGET looks away to laugh, STELLA continues to make the sandwiches, she serves everyone at the table.

STELLA

Bow ya heads.

PANDA

Father god we ask that you forgive each and every one of us at this table for our sins and lord I ask that you smile down on those that's less fortunate than us. I love you.

Everyone repeats, "I love you".

STELLA

(to James & Bridget)

You two come with me.

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EXT. PENTAGON-DAY

STELLA comes outside the building with JAMES and BRIDGET trailing her.

STELLA

Look I appreciate the offer but I'm never returning to show business, so if you would please leave and never comeback.

BRIDGET

(looks at James)
Yes ma'am.
Let's go, come on.

BRIDGET takes JAMES by the arm and pulls him away, STELLA looks on.

BRIDGET (O.S.) (CONT'D)

So, Angelic it is.

JAMES (O.S.)

(frustrated)
Shit.

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INT. PENTAGON-DAY

STELLA comes back into the room then she goes over and sits on one of the mattresses, MOSES comes over and joins her.

MOSES

So what's this talk about a theater?

STELLA looks at MOSES, then she reaches into her pocket and pulls out a small bag.

MOSES (CONT'D)

(smile)
Well alright.

STELLA

(no eye contact)
Panda.

PANDA takes a book "Gone with the wind" from a small collection, then exits the room.

LARYN and OTHELLO comes over and sits down in front of them. OTHELLO passes MOSES the pipe.

STELLA (CONT'D)

(searching the bag)
Years ago I was somebody.

MOSES

What you talking bout, you somebody now.

STELLA

No I mean I was really someone important.

OTHELLO

What are you getting at Stella?

LARYN

Yeah what's all this about?

STELLA takes the pipe from MOSES and places the rock in it.

STELLA

(no eye contact)
So you guys haven't heard?

STELLA lights the pipe.

MOSES

Heard what, spit it out.

STELLA puffs the pipe then closes her eyes, she passes it to LARYN.

STELLA

(exhales)
I was arrested yesterday, for shoplifting.

LARYN

No I haven't heard anything.

STELLA

My last name is Rose.

OTHELLO

Wait a minute ...

MOSES

The Broadway queen?

OTHELLO

"The" Stella Rose?

LARYN puffs the pipe, then passes it to MOSES

LARYN

Um, I'm sorry but who is Stella Rose, I'm lost here.

MOSES hesitates to pass STELLA the pipe, she snatches it.

STELLA

Give me that.

OTHELLO

She was this great actress on Broadway back in the day, some say she was the greatest, she's also known as the Queen.

LARYN looks on as if she was sitting with royalty.

LARYN

Un - fucking - believable.

MOSES

(to Stella)
What happened?

STELLA

I traded my dream in for someone else's.

(beat)

I found out he didn't really have a dream at all.

LARYN

Wow, what was it like to have thousands cheering for you like that?

STELLA

It was beautiful.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Seeing the fans connect to the characters and the story, there's no substitute for that.

MOSES

So what did you tell them?

STELLA

Who?

MOSES

The guy and the girl ...

STELLA

Oh, I told them no.

LARYN

I don't get it, if you loved it so much why would you not go back.

OTHELLO

(blank stare)

Because she's afraid.
 She's afraid that if she return it wouldn't be the same.
 The fire isn't there anymore, that emotional attachment that made it worth while, it's all gone.
 It's like having to start all over again, which isn't bad but in this case the name on the marquee is what sells the tickets, and that's like saying look at me, watch, me, fail.

LARYN looks at OTHELLO amazed then she glances at the pipe.

LARYN

(to Othello)

Damn where did that come from?

26

INT. JAMES CAR-DAY**BRIDGET**

Look, just for the record I would love to see Stella play this role, but I don't think that you're looking at the big picture here (J).

JAMES

What do you mean?

BRIDGET

Look at the state that she's in, her environment.
 She's a city lost, homeless, a heavy drug user, and we stepped to her not offering any help, yet we told her how she could help us, and to add insult to injury we gave the woman \$5, \$5 (J), now that's that bullshit.

JAMES

(realization)

Damn.
 I didn't look at it that way.

BRIDGET

Yep, and to think that poor lady
still offered us a meal.

JAMES

(thinking)
We aint shit.
We need our asses whooped for real.

BRIDGET starts to laugh.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Girl why didn't you say anything?

BRIDGET still laughing.

BRIDGET

Hell after the \$5 I felt it was too
late, she had already formed an
opinion about us by then.

JAMES

Damn.
(beat)
I noticed the little girl called
her Ma, it was like they all
respect her.
(thinking)
You think we should try again?

BRIDGET

Give it a couple of days, then pay
her another visit, but try a
different approach this time, show
the woman you care I mean, she is
your idol for crying out loud.

JAMES

You're the one who gave the lady
\$5.

BRIDGET

That was fucked up.

27

INT. PENTAGON-DAY

STELLA is making a sandwich, while everyone is asleep.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE-DAY

STELLA is walking to the convenience store.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE-DAY CONT.

The CASHIER recognizes STELLA as she enters the store.
 He keeps his eye on her as he finishes with his only
 customer.
 He makes a call on the phone.
 The manager RAMIRO comes out of his office, STELLA goes over
 to meet him.

RAMIRO

Oh, hi Stella how are you?

STELLA

(uneased)

I'm fine, I um, I wanted to thank
 you for posting my bail, you left
 before I had the chance, so thank
 you.

(looks down)

RAMIRO

(try to make eye contact)

Oh it was no problem, no problem at
 all Ms. ROSE.

(beat)

Are you ok Ms. Rose?

STELLA

(looking down)

Can you tell me why, you would post
 my bail?

RAMIRO

Lets step in my office.

28

INT. CONVENIENT STORE OFFICE-DAY CONT.

STELLA walks in slowly taking in the environment, RAMIRO goes
 over and stands behind his desk.

RAMIRO

Please have a seat.

STELLA sits.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)

(sitting)

Ms. Rose, my wife and I are huge
 fans of your work, we've seen all
 of your shows including the ones at
 the Cotton Club in New York

(beat)

You hold a special place in our
 hearts, and that was our way of
 saying thank you.

STELLA

(beat)

Well, I also want to thank you for being kind to me even before you knew who I was.

RAMIRO

(caring)

Ms. Rose you was someone in need, and if I had to do it again I would.

RAMIRO reaches into his wallet and hands her \$40.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)

It's not much but it's enough to get yourself a hot meal or two.

STELLA

Sir after all you've done for me I can't take your money I'm sorry.

RAMIRO stands and walks around his desk. He hands STELLA the money once again.

RAMIRO

(sincere)

Please Ms. Rose, give me the honor to say that I once bought Ms. Stella Rose a dinner, please.

STELLA takes the money from his hand.

STELLA

(no eye contact)

I better get going.

STELLA stands and walks towards the door.

RAMIRO

If you ever need a meal, to talk, prayer, I'm here.

STELLA reaches for the door but she doesn't open it.

STELLA

You will pray for me?

RAMIRO

I've been praying for you since the day you got arrested ma'am.

STELLA

Thank you.

STELLA exits the room.

29 **EXT. RESTAURANT-DAY**

A view of the restaurant.

30 **INT. RESTAURANT-DAY CONT.**

JAMES and BRIDGET are sitting at a table eating.

BRIDGET

(chewing)

You know this being single...

(beat)

It isn't as bad as I thought it would be. I leave when I want, come as I please, don't have to answer to nothing but my cell phone and hell I can just put it on silence

(beat)

Momma can wait.

JAMES sips his drink.

JAMES

Girl you crazy.

BRIDGET

So, what's plan (B)?

JAMES

I don't have one, if I can't get Vanderbilt on board it's over.

BRIDGET

Well you know I'm going to ride with you to the end right?

JAMES

You better.

BRIDGET

It's going to be alright, so about this audition.

JAMES

Go ahead set it up.

BRIDGET

Alright it's done.

BRIDGET makes a call, JAMES looks on.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

(on phone)
Hey lady,
Not much, just sitting here having
dinner with my boyfriend.

JAMES flips BRIDGET the finger.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

So look the audition is still on
for next Saturday at the Liberty
ok, alright smooches.
(end call)

JAMES stare at BRIDGET.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

(smiling)
What ?

JAMES shaking his head.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

I knew that Stella would say no and
you would say yes, so...
(continues to eat)

JAMES

You are somethin else.

31

EXT. STREET-DAY

STELLA stands in front of the shopping plaza she notices
PANDA talking with friends, they make eye contact.

PANDA

HEY MA!

PANDA runs over to greet her while clutching her book.

STELLA

Hey.

PANDA

(smiling)
Where you headed?

STELLA

Moma just need some alone time ok.

PANDA

(clingy)
I can wait for you.

STELLA

I'll be alright just go home.

PANDA

I don't judge you Ma.

STELLA looks away.

STELLA

I know
(beat)
Come on.

32

EXT. CRACK HOUSE-EVENING

STELLA and PANDA approach the porch of the house.

STELLA

You wait here on the porch, I'll only be a minute.

PANDA

Alright.

PANDA sits on the porch, we can hear music playing from the house, STELLA knocks on the door, the door opens.

33

INT. CRACK HOUSE-EVENING CONT.

STELLA enters the house, a young teenager stands as the doorman.

TEENAGER 2

Sup old school.

STELLA

Hey, is Keon around?

TEENAGER 2

Yeah he's back there.

STELLA begin walking down the hall passing several rooms without doors, we see people doing drugs, performing sexual acts, one room after the other, she comes to a room filled with people playing video games and getting high.

YOUNG GIRL

(to Keon)
You have company.

KEON, (blk male mid '30s), is sitting over in a corner with a teenaged girl in his lap, he lifts the girl from his lap then zips his pants.

KEON

Stella baby, what it do?

STELLA

Hey.

KEON

What you need?

STELLA

The usual.

KEON

Alright

(to guy)

Playboy, hook her up.

KEON takes a seat.

STELLA

I um, I forgot I have some money.

KEON

Well alright, pay the man.

STELLA pulls out the \$40 that RAMIRO had given her.

34

EXT. CRACK HOUSE- EVENING.

PANDA sits quietly on the porch she's approached by a ragged old man struggling to keep his balance, he stands in front of her chewing.

OLD MAN

(very high)

You, you are a perty gal, yes you are.

(he staggers)

PANDA looks away as if she doesn't see him, the old man points at her crotch.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

I bet, I bet you got some good wet stuff.

PANDA closes her legs tighter.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

(nods his head)

Yes you do, yes sir I heard it
squish just then, like a puddle of
water.

PANDA goes to the other side of the porch.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

They say you never miss yo water
til ya well runs dry.

(looking at Panda)

I'll dry it up, I'll dry ya up gal.

The door opens we see STELLA passing him on her way out.

STELLA

(rushing)

Let's go Panda.

35

EXT. STREET-EVENING

STELLA and PANDA are walking through the neighborhood.

STELLA

You hungry?

PANDA

You have money?

STELLA gives PANDA an unsettling look.

STELLA

Yes I have money but are you
hungry?

PANDA

Yes.

STELLA

(looks ahead)

I may not be Clair Huxtable, but I
still have priorities.

PANDA

I didn't mean it like that I was
just ...

STELLA

I know what you meant.

PANDA

I just worry about you a lot that's all.

STELLA

I'm going to be alright.
(beat)
I'm trying Panda.

STELLA continues to look ahead as she speaks.

STELLA (CONT'D)

Everyday is a struggle but I am trying, you might not see it at times, but I'm trying.

STELLA picks a cigarette butt off the ground, then she takes her lighter from her pocket and lights it.

PANDA

Do you ever think about Loraine?

STELLA puffs the cigarette and exhales.

STELLA

Sometimes, why you ask?

PANDA

Well, I was thinking maybe you can do what she did and we can move out of the Pentagon and into our own home.

STELLA

(Stella glances back)
If the opportunity presents itself child you can bet your last dollar ole Stella would grasp it.

Three men walk out of the darkness, and begin following STELLA and PANDA.

PANDA

Well I over heard Moses talking to Othello about you having a chance to perform again what was that about?

STELLA whispers to PANDA.

STELLA

Panda I'm going to need you to run ok, no matter what happens don't stop get some help now GO!!

At that moment the three men grabs STELLA and drags her behind a house.

36 **EXT. STREET-NIGHT**

PANDA is running down the street as fast as she can to the sound of STELLA'S voice screaming for help.

37 **EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT**

The men have STELLA behind a house they're struggling to get her on the ground.

38 **EXT. STREET-NIGHT**

PANDA comes to a stop, she looks back at the haunting view of the dark street, she could hear STELLA'S screams from a distance.

39 **EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT**

The men have STELLA lying face down screaming, trying desperately to get away.

PANDA
LEAVE HER ALONE!

The men look up and notice PANDA standing a few feet away.

MAN 1
(to man 2)
GET THE GIRL!

MAN 2 attempts to go after PANDA but STELLA grabs hold of him by the waist of his pants.

STELLA
(screams)
RUN PANDA... RUN!!

PANDA drops her book as she runs out of the yard screaming.

PANDA
HELP, SOMEBODY HELP US!!

MAN 2 falls to the ground unable to break free of STELLA'S tight grasp.

40 **EXT. STREET-NIGHT**

MOSES and the group are marching up the streets with PANDA pointing in the directions to STELLA'S whereabouts.

PANDA

(crying)

She was behind that house over there.

They all begin running towards the house.

41 **EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT**

The group come running into the backyard.

MOSES

STELLA!

LARYN

STELLA!

PANDA picks her book up off the ground.

PANDA

(emotional)

They were right here.
MA!!

LARYN hugs PANDA, MOSES picks up STELLA'S ball cap and storms out of the yard.

MOSES

Come on.

They all follow MOSES.

42 **EXT. STREET-NIGHT**

The group is on the streets calling for STELLA.

43 **EXT. STREET-NIGHT CONT.**

STELLA is walking alone under the street lights holding up her sweatpants with one hand and wiping her nose with the other.

44 **EXT. GROCERY STORE- NIGHT**

A view of the grocery store.

45 **INT. GROCERY STORE- NIGHT CONT.**

STELLA is standing at the register, she pays for her groceries with the same \$40 that RAMIRO had given her.

46 **INT. PENTAGON-NIGHT**

The group enters the room, PANDA notices STELLA lying on the mattress asleep, she gets excited and starts towards her but MOSES stops her.

He notices the groceries on the table, then he walks over to her and kneel, he checks her vital signs, then places her ball cap underneath her hand.

MOSES

(whisper)

She's alright, let her sleep,
Come on.

They all go over to the table and sit, LARYN remains to stand and begin preparing a meal for everyone.

A close-up of PANDA watching STELLA sleep.

LARYN

(whisper)

Bow ya heads.

PANDA

Father god we ask that you forgive
each and every one of us at this
table for our sins and lord I ask
that you smile down on those that's
less fortunate than us. I love you.

Everyone at the table repeats "I love you".

They begin eating, PANDA gets up and walks over to STELLA and lie down beside her.

47 **INT. JAMES HOME-NIGHT**

A cigarette is burning in an ashtray, JAMES is sitting on his recliner working from his laptop.

EXT. BRIDGET'S HOUSE-NIGHT

BRIDGET is sitting on her couch watching one of STELLA'S performances while caressing a teddy bear.

BRIDGET

(smiling)
Get it Stella ...
You better sing that song girl.

48

INT. PENTAGON-MORNING

STELLA awakens to the group staring at her.

MOSES

You alright?

STELLA

I'm ok.
(beat)
Where's Panda?

MOSES

She's ok, she went out to the
plaza.

LARYN

I'm going to join her, I just
wanted to make sure that everything
was alright with you.

STELLA

I'm alright, just go be with her.

LARYN

Ok ...

LARYN stands.

LARYN (CONT'D)

Do we need to get anything while
we're out.

STELLA

No just do your rounds and get her
back here before it gets dark.

LARYN

Ok, hey Moses could you do a few
rounds with me tonight?

MOSES

Yeah I'll roll with ya.

LARYN

Alright I'm leaving, love you guys.

They all reply "love you" as LARYN exits the room.

OTHELLO

I could stay if you want to mosey
on ahead
(smiling)
No point intended.

STELLA

(eyes closed)
It's ok you both can leave.

OTHELLO

You go ahead Mo I'll be on shortly.

MOSES

Alright.

MOSES rubs STELLA on the shoulder.

MOSES (CONT'D)

Are you sure you're ok?

STELLA

I'm alright.

She puts on her ball cap on.

MOSES

Alright well I'll check-in in a
couple of hours.
You good (O)?

OTHELLO

Yeah we'll be alright.

MOSES leaves the room.

OTHELLO is sitting in a chair backward, resting his head on
his arms staring at STELLA.

STELLA

Is Panda really ok?

OTHELLO

Yeah, she's ok, she's just
concerned about you that's all, we
all are.
(beat)
Care to talk about what happened?

STELLA stare at the ceiling.

STELLA

They tried to rape me,
(beat)

(MORE)

STELLA (CONT'D)

just when they were about to I
yelled, "I have aids", they climbed
off of me and left me lying there.

OTHELLO

(disturbed)
Jesus.

STELLA staring at the ceiling.

OTHELLO (CONT'D)

Do you?

49

EXT. STREET-MORNING

LARYN is walking near the plaza she spots PANDA in a distance
sitting on the curb alone, she approaches her.

LARYN

Hey, you alright?

PANDA looks up, then she looks away.

PANDA

I'll be alright.

LARYN

Well, Stella is ok, I spoke to her
before I left.

PANDA looks at LARYN.

LARYN (CONT'D)

She was worried about you.

PANDA stare in silence, LARYN looks away, then she takes a
seat next to PANDA.

LARYN (CONT'D)

Why wouldn't you wait for her to
wake up, you knew she'd be worried
about you.

PANDA

(no eye contact)
I feel like I let her down.

LARYN

You're talking crazy, you did what
you were suppose to do.

A business owner comes running out towards them.

BUSINESS OWNER

(angry)
GET AWAY YOU BAD FOR BUSINESS, GET
OUT OF HERE!

PANDA and LARYN jumps to their feet and begin walking away.

LARYN

(looking back)
He'll need another favor one day,
NOODLE DICK IN THE ASS SON OF A
BITCH! Ooh I hate him,
(glances up)
For give me farther but he's a
defect.

PANDA

Laryn .

LARYN

Sorry.

PANDA

(beat)
Can you take me to see Loraine.

LARYN looks on sceptical.

LARYN

What for? I mean the answer is yes
but what's going on?

PANDA

You promise not to tell Ma?

LARYN stops in her tracks.

LARYN

So Stella doesn't know about this?

PANDA

Well, I sort of mentioned it but.

LARYN started walking.

LARYN

Alright, I'll show you the house
but I am not going inside, and if
anyone asks you went alone.

PANDA

(smiling)
Ok.

LARYN

Alright, so when do you want to go?

PANDA

(smiling)

Right now.

They both stop almost simultaneously and stare at one another.

50

INT. THEATER-DAY

JAMES and BRIDGET are sitting at the casting table while an actress delivers her monologue.

JAMES hides behind BRIDGET to keep from laughing.

BRIDGET

Ok thanks, that's enough, we've,
we've seen enough, um
We will call you, thanks.

The actress leaves the room, JAMES'S continue to hide behind BRIDGET.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

(to James)

You need to quit.
(smiling)

JAMES

(laughing)

Oh shit, girl you and yo folks.

BRIDGET

(fighting a smile)

You need to stop.

JAMES

(gains composure)

I'm done, I can't do this with you.

BRIDGET

SEND IN THE NEXT ONE PLEASE!

ANGELIC walks in, JAMES rolls his eyes.

JAMES

(whisper)

This broad.

ANGELIC walks over to the table.

ANGELIC

(smiling)
Hey girl, how are you.

BRIDGET

(smile)
Divaaaaa ...

ANGELIC hugs BRIDGET then she takes her place.

ANGELIC

(smiling)
James.

JAMES

(attitude)
Angelic.

BRIDGET

(looking at James)
Ok, alright Angelic you can begin
when you're ready.

ANGELIC looks down and checks her marker then she twirls her hair from her face.

JAMES looks away with disapproval.

ANGELIC

My name is Angelic Dejour'e and I
will be doing a monologue from the
theatrical stage play "THE REHAB"
starring my idol, the great Queen
Stella Rose.

JAMES looks over at BRIDGET.

JAMES

Coincidence?

BRIDGET smiles and sticks her tongue out at JAMES.

BRIDGET

(to Angelic)
Great choice.

ANGELIC

(clears throat)
I started abusing Meth so I could
feel beautiful, when I'm high I
don't see this ugly person staring
back at me in the mirror.

(MORE)

ANGELIC (CONT'D)

I don't feel the pain from my baby
girl drowning in the tub cause I
forgot I left her there.

(bows)

End scene.

BRIDGET stands to her feet and applaud, JAMES looks up at
BRIDGET and frowns.

BRIDGET

That was awesome girl you're the
best.

JAMES

(not impressed)

We will call you.

(rolling his eyes)

BRIDGET looks at JAMES then back to ANGELIC.

BRIDGET

(pantomimes)

You got this.

ANGELIC

(pantomimes)

Thank you.

ANGELIC exits the room, BRIDGET takes a seat.

BRIDGET

That was awesome, so, we have our
girl.

JAMES

That's your girl, I'm headed to the
Pentagon, you rollin?

BRIDGET

Are you serious? Angelic was ...

JAMES exits the room, BRIDGET jumps out of her seat.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

HEY WAIT FOR ME!

51

INT. PENTAGON-DAY

OTHELLO is sitting at the table preparing to eat.

OTHELLO

I'm eating the last Vienna sausage,
so I fixed you a sandwich, it's not
how you do it but it's eatable.

STELLA walks over to the table and joins him.

STELLA

(aggravated)
Its only cold cuts give it a rest
would you.

OTHELLO

(smiling)
No no no, you make the best and you
know it.

He points at STELLA and lets it linger, STELLA stare with a
killer look on her face.

STELLA

(aggravated)
Boy say grace.

OTHELLO

Ok ok, Father god we ask that you
forgive each and every one of us at
this table for our sins and lord I
ask that you smile down on those
that's less fortunate than us. I
love you.

STELLA doesn't say anything.
We can see Othello peeking with one eye from his prayers
hands as STELLA picks up her sandwich.

OTHELLO (CONT'D)

(whisper)
Um, Stella.

STELLA

What?

OTHELLO

God is waiting?
(beat)
I love you.

STELLA

(eye roll)
I love you.

OTHELLO

(chewing)

You know it wouldn't matter to me
if you had aids or not, I mean
you'll still be the same ole Stella
to me.

Stella looks up.

STELLA

I don't have aids Othello, alright.

OTHELLO

I'm just saying, not that it
matters or anything I'll still love
you, In fact, I'll still love you
if you decide not to perform again
because personally, I didn't know
that Stella.

STELLA

(mad)

I can't do this, you know what, can
you just sit there and eat without
talking please.

OTHELLO

Ok alright.

OTHELLO takes a bag of chips and opens them, the bag makes
lots of noise, STELLA gets aggravated again.

OTHELLO bites into the chips, STELLA grows even more
aggravated.

There's a knock on the door. OTHELLO goes to the door and
kneel while looking underneath for the visitors shoes, then
he hops to his feet.

OTHELLO (CONT'D)

Who is it?

JAMES (O.S.)

It's James and Bridget.

We see STELLA quietly getting OTHELLO'S attention.

STELLA

(pantomimes)

I'm not here.

OTHELLO

She's not here.

STELLA rolls her eyes.

JAMES (O.S.)

Ok well can I leave my business
card with you?

OTHELLO is looking at STELLA for the ok, STELLA ignores them
both.

OTHELLO

(looking at Stella)
Sure slide it under the door.

At that moment we can hear Moses talking to JAMES and
Bridget.

MOSES (O.S.)

Hey, how's it going?

JAMES (O.S.)

Oh hey how's it going.

MOSES (O.S.)

Good, good, good, and how you doing
Ms. Lady?
(to Bridget)

BRIDGET

I'm fine.

MOSES

Oh yes, yall just step right on in
here.

STELLA frowns at the sight of the door opening.

OTHELLO

(smiling)
How yall doing this evening?
(to James)
Um the card sir?

JAMES hands OTHELLO the business card. He walks over to the
table then hands it to STELLA, she snatches it from his hand
while staring at the table.

MOSES

So what brings you guys back to the
Pentagon?

JAMES speaks without taking his eyes off of STELLA.

JAMES

Well I was hoping that we could
change Stella's mind about doing
the show.

MOSES

Well, there she is, start changing.

MOSES goes over to the table and begin to fix himself a sandwich, OTHELLO joins him.

JAMES

Well, it would benefit you greatly to reconsider, I mean we're talking a 12 month tour and a possible movie deal if all goes well.

Then suddenly the door swings open, it's the CODE ENFORCER with the MARSHAL.

MARSHAL

EVERYONE VACATE THE PREMISES
IMMEDIATELY OR GO TO JAIL!

STELLA starts grabbing PANDA'S books while OTHELLO bags what little food they have.

The code enforcer continues to yell forcefully for everyone to leave.

JAMES

(to Bridget)

Lets help them with their things.

BRIDGET

What?

JAMES started grabbing as many items of clothing as possible, BRIDGET comes over and extends her arms, JAMES hands BRIDGET his load then continues to grab more.

52

EXT. PENTAGON - DAY

The group is sitting in front of the PENTAGON with their items.

In the background, we can see the CODE ENFORCER taping the area off with no trespassing tape and boarding the door up as well.

53

EXT. STREET-DAY

LARYN is peeking around a tree pointing to LORAINES house.

LARYN

(to Panda)

Yes it's that one.

PANDA points and nod, she turns and walks towards the house, she knocks on the door several times before someone answers.

The door opens.

LORAINÉ

Can I help you?

PANDA

(excited)

Hi Loraine.

LORAINÉ doesn't recognize PANDA right away.

LORAINÉ

Excuse me do I, Panda?

LORAINÉ steps out onto the porch and hugs her.

LORAINÉ (CONT'D)

What are you doing here, is everything ok?

PANDA

Not really.

LORAINÉ

Come inside.

54

INT. LORAINÉ'S HOUSE- DAY

LORAINÉ

Have a seat, you thirsty?

PANDA looking around the room.

PANDA

Yes.

LORAINÉ

(yells to the kitchen)

BABY BRING ME A LEMONADE.

LORAINÉ stare at PANDA with sympathy.

LORAINÉ (CONT'D)

What's going on Panda?

PANDA

It's Ma, I think that she's given up.

LORAINÉ takes a seat across from PANDA.

ELIJAH (African mid-'40s) walks in carrying the lemonade, he hands it to LORAINÉ.

LORAINÉ

It's for Panda, Panda this is my husband Elijah.

ELIJAH gives PANDA the lemonade.

ELIJAH

Nice to meet you PANDA.

PANDA takes the lemonade.

PANDA

(smiles)
Thank you sir.

ELIJAH

You're welcome.

ELIJAH leaves the room.

LORAINÉ

Is it the drugs?

PANDA

Yes, she was arrested last week for shop lifting and yesterday she was attack by three men while we were walking home.

I ran for help and when we return she was gone, we found her back at the Pentagon later that morning sleeping as though nothing ever happened.

LORAINÉ

So how did you find me?

PANDA

Laryn.

LORAINÉ smirks.

LORAINÉ

I should've known, she's out there isn't she?

LORAINÉ goes to the front door, she opens it and sticks her head out.

LORAIN (CONT'D)
HEY LARYN!

We see a view of the tree that LARYN is hiding behind, she answers while remaining hidden.

LARYN (O.S.)
YEAH!

LORAIN
HOW YOU BEEN?

Still hiding behind the tree.

LARYN (O.S.)
FINE AND YOU?

LORAIN
NEVER BETTER, LOOK WE'RE ABOUT TO
HAVE DINNER WHY DON'T YOU JOIN US.

LARYN (O.S.)
OK I'LL BE IN IN A MINUTE.

LORAIN
ALRIGHT.

LORAIN closes the door.

LARYN (O.S.)
(whisper)
Shit!

55

INT. LORAINES HOUSE- DAY

LORAIN walks back in with a slight giggle.

LORAIN
That woman will never change, HEY
BAE.

ELIJAH answers from the other room.

ELIJAH (O.S.)
YEAH.

LORAIN
PREPARE THE TABLE FOR THREE WE'RE
HAVING GUESTS.

ELIJAH (O.S.)
OK.

LORAIN

(to Panda)

You know I tried reaching out to Stella several times and she consistently refuses my offer, for whatever reason it's beyond me, but that pride of hers aint gonna get her nowhere.

There's a knock at the door.

LORAIN (CONT'D)

Come in.

LORAIN and PANDA observes as the door creeps open slowly, LARYN walks in.

LARYN

(fake smile)

Hey girl how are you?

LORAIN smile, LARYN takes a seat next to PANDA.

LARYN (CONT'D)

(to Panda)

Snitch.

LORAIN

You know STELLA is gonna kill you if she finds out you brought her here.

LARYN

Well she was determine to see you so, (shrugs her shoulders)

LORAIN

How is she?

LARYN

She's ok.

LORAIN

(looking at Laryn)

Panda why don't you go and wash up for dinner, the bathroom is the second door on the left.

PANDA gets up and leave.

LORAIN (CONT'D)

I see the fashion bug is still alive.

LARYN

(no eye contact)
I guess I'm still dreaming.

LORAIN

Someday huh?

LARYN

Yep, some day.

LORAIN

So you're gonna trick till it happens?

LARYN

I'm not trying to hear this...

LARYN jumps to her feet and starts towards the door.

LORAIN

(yells)
SIT... DOWN!

LARYN stops in her track, facing the door.

LORAIN (CONT'D)

That's always been your fucking problem, running and hiding when you should be facing your situations head on.

PANDA returns to the room.

LARYN

Well everyone isn't as lucky as you.

LORAIN

(upset)
Lucky?
Oh so it was luck that got me raped when I was thirteen, it was luck that took my mother and left me homeless, don't you talk to me about no god damn luck!

ELIJAH walks into the room carrying a plate, he gets PANDA'S attention and takes her into the kitchen. LARYN turn and faces LORAIN with tears in her eyes.

LORAINÉ (CONT'D)

(emotional)

LUCK DIDN'T WAKE ME UP ON THOSE
 DAMN STREETS EVERY MORNING, LUCK
 DIDN'T KEEP ME FED WHEN MY FUCKING
 STOMACH WAS ABOUT TO TOUCH MY BACK,
 PEOPLE LOOKING AT ME LIKE I'M A
 PIECE OF SHIT, WALKING OVER YOU AND
 CALLING YOU OUT YOUR NAME, HELL
 NALL IT AINT LUCK,
 (Lorraine stands)
 talk that luck shit to me.

LORAINÉ walks out of the room, LARYN is left standing.

56

INT. LORAINÉ'S KITCHEN - DAY

ELIJAH and PANDA are sitting at the table eating, LORAINÉ is at the stove fixing a plate, LARYN walks into the kitchen, slowly she makes her way over to LORAINÉ, LORAINÉ hands her the plate.

LARYN

Thank you.

LORAINÉ and LARYN goes to sit at the table.

LORAINÉ

Before yall come Elijah and I was arguing about leftovers, I'm sorry but I just can't throw away any food to save my life.

(beat)

Funny how a temporary situation could change your outlook on things.

(reflecting)

Bow your heads, Panda.

PANDA**PANDA (CONT'D)**

Father god we ask that you forgive each and every one of us at this table for our sins and lord I ask that you smile down on those that's less fortunate than us. I love you.

They all reply, "I love you," then begin eating, except for PANDA she sits with her head down, teasing her food with her fork.

PANDA (CONT'D)

One Christmas eve I was out at the plaza, watching everyone do their last minute shopping... everybody seemed so happy, laughing and spending time with their families ...then right before sun set the stores would close and people would get into their cars and go home ...
 (emotional)
 I wanted to... I wanted to go home.

LARYN

Oh Panda.

LARYN gets up and comforts PANDA, LORAINNE walks over and hugs them both.

LORAINNE

It's going to be alright, we're going to get through this.

The camera pans to a close-up of ELIJAH looking on as LORAINNE consoles them.

57

EXT. PENTAGON-DAY

STELLA and the group are sitting on the ground next to their belongings in deep thought.
 BRIDGET looks on at JAMES, waiting for him to get off the phone.

JAMES ends the call.

BRIDGET

(to James)
 So what now?

JAMES

I got an idea.

JAMES walk past BRIDGET to address the group.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Look guys I hear there's a storm heading this way so, I was thinking that maybe we could offer you shelter and food for tonight, or at least until the storm passes over.

OTHELLO

(happy)
 Oh that would be great.

MOSES

Preshate that dude.

STELLA remains quiet, looking in the opposite direction.

JAMES

Ok, well then it's settle, lets get your things loaded into the car, it's gonna take two trips so...

STELLA

(no eye contact)
I'm not going anywhere without Panda.

OTHELLO

(raises his hand)
I'll go.

JAMES

Alright um, Moses we'll be back for you guys shortly.

BRIDGET

(whisper)
You have lost your mind.

JAMES

(whisper)
I know.

JAMES grabs a hand full of clothes and heads towards the car, Othello and BRIDGET follow suit.

MOSES

(to Stella)
You ok?

STELLA

I don't even know anymore.

MOSES

(beat)
Were you as good as they say?

STELLA

I imagine I was.

MOSES

Was any of that true, what Othello was saying about you being scared and all?

STELLA looks away.

STELLA

It aint that easy Mo, people really don't understand the mind set of an artist.

From the beginning we prep and discipline ourselves to create from this zone, this enchanted world of spiritual expression.

It becomes you, your thoughts, your prayers, your purpose, and unfortunately, you'll lose it if you don't nurture it, cause there's no substitute and no fix, just a void, and once that void sets in there's no return to greatness. They say that only a hardship of equal value can put you back in that place, that zone, that genius, my heart can't take another hardship.

MOSES

Damn.

STELLA points to a cigarette butt on the ground near MOSES foot.

STELLA

Give me that short over there.

He retrieves it then hands it to her, she lights it up.

MOSES

You know, given all that we've been through, I think you should at least look into what they have to offer.

STELLA

(exhales smoke)

You aint heard nothing I said.

MOSES

Oh I heard you, but I also know that sometimes we as artist, we tend to put more on ourselves than what God has intended. Now somewhere inside you is that final woman, yeah, that little girl who screamed until she was heard, that same broken lady that's filled with fear who can't see pass the next hour,

(MORE)

MOSES (CONT'D)

I want to see her blossom, I want to see what all these trials and tribulations are gonna add up to, the final woman, I can't wait to meet her.

MOSES stands and walks away, STELLA sits in deep thought.

58

EXT. LORAINÉ'S CAR- DAY

LORAINÉ drops LARYN and PANDA off near the Pentagon.

LORAINÉ

Here's a few dollars to get you through the week for food, Panda you have my number, activate that phone and keep in touch.

PANDA takes the phone.

LARYN

Why would you give her the phone and the money as if she's the adult here?

LORAINÉ

Cause I know you, now get out of here.

LARYN

That's not fair.

PANDA and LARYN gets out of the car.

LORAINÉ

Call me Panda, love you Laryn.

LARYN

No you don't.

LORAINÉ drives away.

59

EXT. PENTAGON-DAY CONT.

STELLA turn and sees PANDA and LARYN approaching.

LARYN

(curious)
What's all this, what's going on?

MOSES

They boarded the Pentagon.

STELLA hugs PANDA.

LARYN

(upset)
SHIT!

MOSES walks over to the ladies.

MOSES

It's not that bad, Stella's friend
the director is going to put us up
until the storm passes.

STELLA fidgets with PANDA'S hair.

STELLA

You hungry?

PANDA

No we, yes, yes I'm hungry.

STELLA sits down and begins to pull items from a bag to make sandwiches.

60

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING-DAY

STELLA and the others are sitting around after their meal chatting when BRIDGET pulls up.

BRIDGET

Alright so you guys ready?

MOSES

(to Bridget)
Yep, where's Othello?

BRIDGET

He stayed behind to give James a hand.

MOSES

Well alright, ladies lets do it.

They all gather their things and heads towards the car.

61

EXT. THEATER-DAY

BRIDGET and the others pulls up to the front of the theater.

BRIDGET

Alright guys we're here.

A close-up of STELLA sitting in the front seat, her eyes are locked on the building as the group exit the car with excitement.

BRIDGET remains sitting observing STELLA'S reaction.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

You need a minute?

STELLA doesn't respond, BRIDGET exits the car, then escorts the others inside.

62

INT. THEATER LOBBY-DAY CONT.

PANDA leads the crew as they enter the lobby.

MOSES makes his way over to the wall of fame, LARYN and PANDA joins him, they slowly scroll down the wall observing each photo and stopping once they reach that familiar face, "STELLA ROSE."

PANDA

(confused)

Ma?

STELLA enters the lobby, PANDA points to the picture of her on the wall.

PANDA (CONT'D)

You're on the wall... next to Lena Horne.

Moses hugs PANDA.

MOSES

(whisper)

Shhh, I'll explain it to you later, just give her a minute.

STELLA walks over to the wall, everyone gets silent as she observes the photos and memorabilia.

She gets emotional, the group comforts her, BRIDGET and JAMES looks on.

JAMES

(to Bridget)

What you crying for?

BRIDGET

(wiping tear)

Shut up.

JAMES walks over to the group.

JAMES

If I could get you guys to come
with me, we put together some
living quarters backstage.

63

INT. THEATER AUDITORIUM-DAY

We can here the rain falling as the group enters the
auditorium.

PANDA

(excited)
WOW!

MOSES

(smiling)
Ahh I can get use to this.

LARYN is hugging STELLA as they slowly walks down the aisle
towards backstage trailing the rest of the group.

PANDA gets excited and runs towards the stage.

PANDA

(excited)
COME ON OTHELLO!

OTHELLO runs and joins PANDA on stage.

BRIDGET

(observing Panda)
What's this?

BRIDGET takes a seat near the front row while JAMES usher the
others backstage.

PANDA

(center stage)
Ladies and Gentlemen will you
please give a warm welcome for the
one and only "THE GREAT OTHELLO and
the beautiful Panda Rose."

OTHELLO walks out to center stage.

OTHELLO

(in character)
My darling you're such a child, you
think that by saying "I'm sorry"
all the past can be corrected.
Here, take my handkerchief.

OTHELLO turns to leave.

PANDA

(in character)
Rhett, Rhett where are you going?

OTHELLO

I'm going back to Charleston, back where I belong.

PANDA

Please, please take me with you!

BRIDGET

(engaged)
Gone Scarlet!

OTHELLO

No, I'm through with everything here. I want peace. I want to see if somewhere there isn't something left in life of charm and grace. Do you know what I'm talking about?

PANDA

No! I only know that I love you.

OTHELLO

That's your misfortune.

PANDA

Oh Rhett!

OTHELLO turns to walk away.

PANDA (CONT'D)

Rhett!
Rhett, Rhett!
(beat)

OTHELLO stops and turns to PANDA.

PANDA (CONT'D)

Rhett... if you go, where shall I go, what shall I do?

BRIDGET

(engaged)
GO ON TELL HER RHETT!

OTHELLO

Frankly my dear, I don't give a damn.

BRIDGET

(excited)

YES!! WOOOOOO!!

BRIDGET beats on the arms of her seat while cheering for them as they make their way to the edge of the stage and take a bow.

64 **INT. THEATER BACKSTAGE - DAY**

JAMES and the others enters a dressing room that he'd prepared for them.

JAMES

This is where the women will
reside, come with me.

LARYN and MOSES follows JAMES, STELLA stays behind.

65 **INT. THEATER BACKSTAGE - DAY CONT.**

JAMES, MOSES and LARYN passes the props area, Immediately LARYN rushes over to the wardrobes and begin looking through the racks.

MOSES

Laryn!

JAMES

(smiling)
It's ok.

JAMES and MOSES walks away.

66 **INT. THEATER CONTROL BOOTH - DAY**

JAMES and MOSES enters the control room overlooking the auditorium.

PANDA and OTHELLO continues to play around on stage.

JAMES

Well I see that you're in your
elements, I'm going to go down and
check on Stella.

MOSES

(observing equipment)
Is it ok if I hang out up here for
awhile?

JAMES

Sure, just don't jump.

67 **INT. AUDITORIUM-DAY CONT.**

68 JAMES comes down the aisle, he smiles while MOSES plays a love ballad, then he looks over at BRIDGET as he passes.

JAMES

(smiling)
Cupid is in the building.

BRIDGET rolls her eyes.

69 **INT. THEATER BACKSTAGE - DAY**

JAMES makes his way through the wardrobe area and notices LARYN talking to LOLA.

JAMES

Hey Lola, I thought you weren't coming by until tomorrow.

LOLA

Well, after I got off the phone with you I thought your new friends could use a home cooked meal, so I went to the kitchen and through something together.

JAMES

Well alright,
(looking around)
So where is it?

LOLA

Hell I brought it this far I'm sure yall can get it out of the car, besides it's raining, here take my umbrella.

She tosses JAMES the umbrella.

JAMES

(laugh)
You a mess, Laryn give me a hand please.

70

INT. THEATER AUDITORIUM-DAY

LOLA walks out to the stage and catches PANDA and OTHELLO acting silly.

They stop immediately when she casually walks out center stage, MOSES quickly shuts the music down, the auditorium gets quiet except for the sound of the rain.

LOLA

(to Panda)

Well hello there, I'm Lola and you are?

PANDA walks over to LOLA and extends her hand.

PANDA

Hi I'm Panda, and this is Othello.

OTHELLO

Hi, nice to meet you.

PANDA

...and that's Moses.

PANDA points up to the control booth.

MOSES

(from the booth)

Hi Ms. Lola.

LOLA

(smiling)

Hi Moses.

BRIDGET

What's up mama Lo.

LOLA

Oh hi girl, I brought some of them greens and fried chicken you like so much.

BRIDGET

(excited)

OH SHIT!

BRIDGET leaps out of her seat and rushes backstage.

MOSES

Shout out to mama Lo!

LOLA giggles.

71

INT. THEATER AUDITORIUM-NIGHT CONT.

The group is sitting in the front row of the auditorium listening to LOLA as she sits in a chair at the edge of the stage telling stories about the old days.

Their empty plates and cups are neatly stacked on the edge of the stage.

LARYN and PANDA share a blanket while OTHELLO and MOSES sit on each end, and in the back of the last row sits JAMES and BRIDGET.

BRIDGET

How's Stella?

JAMES

She's ok, she turned in early.

BRIDGET

You know tomorrow the sun is going to shine, and these poor people will be back out on the streets.

JAMES

Don't remind me.

BRIDGET

I'm just saying time is ticking, and you need to make your move tonight, cause if you let her get back out there, there's no telling where she might end up.

JAMES gives BRIDGET a look.

JAMES

What's all this?

BRIDGET

(shrugs her shoulders)
They're cool people.

JAMES

(beat)
Yeah, you know I was thinking, maybe we can let them sit in on the rehearsal tomorrow, see if that would motivate Stella, I mean it's worth a try.

BRIDGET raises an eyebrow.

BRIDGET

Just might work, well I'll see you
in the morning.

JAMES

Alright, be safe.

72 **EXT. THEATER-MORNING**

A wide view of the theater.

73 **INT. THEATER AUDITORIUM-MORNING**

LARYN is sitting in the auditorium alone, JAMES walks in with
a cup of coffee, he notices her.

JAMES

Good morning.

LARYN looks over her shoulders at JAMES.

LARYN

Oh hey.

JAMES

There's coffee in the front office
feel free.

LARYN

Thanks but I'm so not a coffee
drinker.

JAMES

Where's the crew, still asleep?

LARYN

Yeah, I'm usually the rooster's
crow but Stella beat me to it this
morning.

JAMES

Mind if I sit?

LARYN

Oh no I don't mind.

JAMES

You know I was thinking about
letting you guys sit in on
rehearsals today.

LARYN

Oh that would be great, I'm sure Panda and Othello would love it.

JAMES

Yeah, I'm sort of hoping that it would change Stella's mind about doing the show.

JAMES takes a sip of his coffee.

LARYN

This means an awful lot to you huh?

JAMES

Yes it does.

LARYN

Was she really that big of a star?

JAMES looks at LARYN in disbelief.

JAMES

Child yes, that woman was the truth.

LARYN

(smile)

Wow, that must have been something.

JAMES

Yes it was.

(beat)

Well, I'm going to go back here and see if I can win her over by sweetening the pot a little.

LARYN

Oh she's not back there, I heard her tell Panda that she was going to make her rounds and that she'll meet her at the plaza by lunch time.

JAMES reclines in his seat.

JAMES

This isn't good ...

(beat)

So what's this "making her rounds" thing?

LARYN

Well it's, it's like our jobs
you see each of us have a way of
making a few dollars throughout the
day, for Stella it's panhandling,
for Panda it's helping people with
their bags at the plaza, Othello
and Moses hangs around the handyman
pickup spots.

JAMES

Ah, so what is it that you do?

JAMES sips his coffee.

LARYN

I prostitute.

JAMES almost spits up.

JAMES

Damn um, ok.

LARYN

I'm sorry.

JAMES wipes his mouth.

JAMES

No I'm good it's alright.

LARYN

I take it you were looking for me
to say something more civil.

JAMES

Yeah I was.

LARYN

Well it's true, I sells the pussy.

JAMES

(frown)
Just like that huh?

LARYN

Yep.

JAMES

You better be careful out there.

LARYN

Ahh I'm a pro at it, been at it for
years.

JAMES

Really...

LARYN

Yep.

JAMES

So, how long have you all known each other?

LARYN

Well, originally it was six of us. Stella's best friend Loraine, she made it back to civilization somehow, she and Stella have known each other the longest, they met about 15 years ago. Then there's Moses, now Moses came along when Panda was about 8 years old, his story is the classic case of boy meets girl, they fall in love, gets married, girl has an affair with boys manager, boy files for divorce, loses gig, no proof of infidelity, a female judge presides the case and the rest is a city lost.

JAMES

Gig, so Moses was an artist or something?

LARYN

Yes he was a singer.

JAMES

Wow.

LARYN

Now Othello, well, Othello is my baby, and I'm pretty sure by now you've noticed that he has a few screws loose.

JAMES

(sympathetic)
Don't say that.

LARYN

Well it's true, as much as I hate to admit that, but he is my little brother and I love him

(beat)

(MORE)

LARYN (CONT'D)

We never knew our father, our mother died when I was 17, Othello was 9 at the time.

She had this rare form of bacteria, it didn't waste no time with her, it consumed her in a matter of days after she was diagnosed.

We didn't have any family that was willing to take us both in. They tried sending me to my aunt and uncle for a while but my uncle kept sleep walking into my room every other night, so auntie gave him an ultimatum. So back to the fosters care I went, It didn't bother me none because it reunited me back with the only true family that I have.

Until I met Stella and the others about 5 years ago. We hit it off right away, well not all of us, since day one that damn Panda somehow thinks she's my mother and that she knows what's best for me, but that's another story.

Anywho, Stella took us in from the cold, at the time they were living in an abandoned building they called the Kremlin, then later we all moved to the Pentagon, and that brings us here to the Liberty.

74

EXT. STREET-MORNING

A close-up of a city bus as it drives away, leaving STELLA standing looking both ways before crossing the street.

75

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE-MORNING

STELLA enters the store, she's greeted by RAMIRO standing at the register conversing with the cashier.

RAMIRO

(smiling)

Ah Stella, good morning.

STELLA

Hi.

RAMIRO

How you been?

STELLA

Not good, um can I talk to you in your office.

RAMIRO

(concern)

Sure.

They walk to the rear of the store.

76

INT. CONVENIENT STORE OFFICE-DAY CONT.

RAMIRO enters the office with STELLA, he takes a seat at his desk.

RAMIRO

Please have a seat.

STELLA takes a seat.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)

So what's going on?

STELLA

I um, I have this friend, she's really like my daughter, Well, she's at that age now and she's beginning to think about her future and I was wondering if you had anything around here that she could do to earn a few dollars. She's a very bright girl and she won't give you any problems, she's mature, kind and a very quick learner.

RAMIRO

How old is she?

STELLA

She's 16.

RAMIRO

...and her name?

STELLA

Panda.

RAMIRO

Can you have her here tomorrow
around lunch?

STELLA sits with her head down in silence.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)

Ms. Rose ... Stella.

STELLA

I'm sorry, Thank you,
Thank you so much.

RAMIRO

It's gonna be alright, I'm gonna
let you get a few things off the
shelf to take with you ok.

STELLA nods.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)

Takes some food, some personal
hygiene products and some beauty
supplies, make sure she's
presentable and ready for work.

STELLA

I will.

STELLA fidgets with her hands.

RAMIRO

Is there anything else,
Ms. Rose.

STELLA

(still looking down)
Do you have an HIV test?

RAMIRO

(sympathy)
No, but I can get one.

STELLA

Ok.

RAMIRO stands and reaches into his pocket for his wallet, he
pulls out \$40 once again and extends his hand.

RAMIRO

It's an honor.

STELLA reaches across the desk and takes the money.

STELLA

Thank you.

RAMIRO

Don't mention it.

RAMIRO goes over to the door.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)

Feel free to take anything else you
might need ok.

He opens the door, STELLA nods then gets up and exits the office.

77

INT. THEATER OFFICE-MORNING

BRIDGET walks into the front office and notices JAMES working at his Laptop.

BRIDGET

Morning.

JAMES

Hey.

BRIDGET takes a seat.

BRIDGET

So how did it go last night?

JAMES

Ok I guess.

BRIDGET

Did you talk with Stella?

JAMES

Nah, I'm taking Panda to meet with her today at 12, I figured I'll do it then.

BRIDGET adjusts in her seat.

BRIDGET

Have you given it any thought to her actually saying yes, given the responsibilities that she has and her present situations?

JAMES

Yes I have, and she will make
enough money to take care of ...
(Bridget interrupts)

BRIDGET

It's not the money that I'm
concerned with (J), see before it
was just Stella, a strong-minded
woman with only herself and her
career, but those people back
there, they're her family, Panda is
her child, Stella has an addiction
and lots of mental roadblocks
that's keeping her at idle, and
James, what if she can't bring it
then what, you're just gonna put
them back out onto the streets?

JAMES sits back in his seat.

JAMES

I guess I haven't looked at it that
way.
(beat)
So what do you suggest?

BRIDGET

I say we go with Angelic, our
chances are better, she's
constantly working and as much as
you hate to admit it the girl is
good, besides the storm has passed,
they know that it's time to move on
anyway, it's better now than later.

78 **INT. THEATER CONTROL BOOTH - DAY**

MOSES and OTHELLO sits in the control room listening to
music.

79 **INT. THEATER BACKSTAGE - DAY**

LARYN is organizing the wardrobe racks, PANDA testing her new
cell phone.

She sits on the counter and makes a call.

80 **INT. THEATER OFFICE - DAY**

The phone rings in the front office where JAMES and BRIDGET are sitting, JAMES answers.

JAMES

Liberty theater this is James how
can I help you?

PANDA doesn't say anything she just ends the call.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Hello, hello.

JAMES hangs up the phone.

BRIDGET

Who was that?

JAMES

They didn't say anything.

81 **INT. THEATER BACKSTAGE - DAY**

PANDA smiles as she hops off the counter and exits the room.

82 **EXT. STREET-DAY**

JAMES is taking PANDA to meet with STELLA, PANDA looks over at JAMES.

PANDA

Have you had any luck with Ma?

JAMES glances at PANDA then back to the road.

JAMES

No.

PANDA looks straight ahead.

PANDA

Oh.

(beat)

I was hoping that she'd say yes.

JAMES glances at PANDA then back to the road.

JAMES

She has her reasons I guess.

PANDA

Have you given up on her?

JAMES

No, No I haven't given up on her.

PANDA smile, then she looks out of the window and sees Stella in a distance sitting on the curb with a bag.

PANDA

(pointing)

There she is.

JAMES pulls over to the curb.

PANDA (CONT'D)

(to Stella)

Hey shawty you need a ride?

STELLA smiles.

83

INT. JAMES CAR-DAY

STELLA sits in the back seat as they make their way back to the theater.

JAMES

(to Stella)

Will you stick around for today's rehearsal?

STELLA

(looking out the window)

We really should be getting a spot at the shelter before it gets too late.

JAMES

Ah you'll have plenty of time, we start at 3 and it will only last for two hours.

(beat)

I tell you what, why don't you guys just hang around until tomorrow and then I'll take you to the shelter.

PANDA turns to STELLA as she awaits her decision.

STELLA

(to James)

Under two conditions.

PANDA smiles.

JAMES

What's that?

STELLA

No one is to make a big fuss about Stella Rose, in fact don't even mention it.

JAMES

Alright it's done, what else?

STELLA

Have Panda at the Quick Mart by lunch time for her first day at work.

PANDA looks at STELLA with her mouth wide open.

STELLA (CONT'D)

(to Panda)

What you looking at?

PANDA

(exited)

You're the bestest.

PANDA stretches across the seat to hug her while screaming with excitement.

84

INT. THEATER LOBBY-DAY

The actors comes into the ballroom, STELLA and her crew are sitting at a table to themselves.

JAMES and BRIDGET enters the room.

BRIDGET

Well well, you guys surely are a good looking group.

JAMES

So how's everybody doing?

The actors replies.

BRIDGET

Today we have some guests siting in with us, when I call your name raise your hand please.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Othello...

OTHELLO raises his hand.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
Panda...

PANDA raises her hand.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
Moses...

MOSES raises his hand.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
Laryn...

LARYN raises her hand.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
...and Ms. Williams.

STELLA slowly raises her hand.

OTHELLO
(frowns, whispers)
Ms. Williams?

BRIDGET
(to the actors)
Say hi guys.

The actors replies.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
Alright before we make our way over
to the auditorium does anyone have
any questions about the scenes that
we're rehearsing today?

ANGELIC raises her hand.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)
Angelic.

ANGELIC stands and flips her hair from her face.

ANGELIC

Being that I'm playing the character that was made popular by Ms. Stella Rose, I think that we should jazz her up a bit, you know make her more current, I mean not to disrespect the writer or Ms. Rose but even Stella's performances in her last few show's was a bit flat and mediocre if I must say.

BRIDGET

(to self)

Ooh.

MOSES

Ouch.

Everyone at STELLA'S table tenses up as they anticipate a response from her, STELLA remains quiet.

ANGELIC

I mean really you guys seen the video it should've been more like ...you know what I'll just show you.

ANGELIC takes her script from the table then walks around to the center of the room.

ANGELIC (CONT'D)

Can I get someone to read with me?

LARYN starts to stand but then STELLA grabs her arm, LARYN sits back down, STELLA stands to her feet, we see a close-up of JAMES.

JAMES

(whisper)

Oh this is epic.

STELLA walks up to ANGELIC and squares off with her arms to her side like a boxer would do at their weigh-in.

ANGELIC

(to Stella)

Lets create a little space here ma'am.

ANGELIC takes STELLA by each arm and places her a few steps back to create space between them.

JAMES

(whisper to Bridget)
She has no idea who she's dealing
with.

ANGELIC

(to actors)
Can we get a script for Ms.
Williams please?

An actor brings STELLA a script.

ANGELIC (CONT'D)

Now lets see here.

Angelic flips through the pages for a suitable scene.

ANGELIC (CONT'D)

(to Stella)
Alright, page 54 scene 17, let me
know when you're ready.

STELLA

I'm ready.

Angelic begin reading.

ANGELIC

Ok um, some of you may have heard
that I will be retiring this year,
and for those of you whom I had the
privilege to know, just know that I
love you and remember to be true to
yourself, even if you have to
sacrifice a lie to better a life,
just don't sacrifice that life for
a lie, show value, honor, and
respect God's gift to each other,
you never know whose carrying your
blessings, or whose willing to
shoulder your burdens. I'm going to
miss you all. Now Renae, we're
going to let you start the
intervention, you can start
whenever you're ready.

STELLA takes a chair from the table and sits in it.

STELLA

(in character)
My name is Renae Porters,
(beat)
I started using meth so I could
cope.

(MORE)

STELLA (CONT'D)

When I'm high, I don't see this ugly person staring back at me in the mirror. I don't feel the pain from my baby girl drowning in the bathtub because I forgot I left her there.

I don't see the countless men that I lay with night after night, just so I can keep a roof over my head.

MOSES and the others are focussed on STELLA'S performance, she tosses the script to the floor, JAMES and BRIDGET glance at each other.

STELLA (CONT'D)

I hate who I am sober, I'm a corpse walking, just waiting for my number to be called, at least then I wouldn't have to worry about my weight, or this guilty conscience eating at me every time I hear a little girls voice.

(emotional)

I have to be doped up just to get in that tub, I'm tired of being lonely, lord knows I'm tired of being by myself, I'm tired of hurting, I just want it all to end.

With a straight face STELLA looks up to ANGELIC, a tear fall from ANGELIC'S eye.

STELLA (CONT'D)

End scene.

Stella gets up and walks out of the room, PANDA and LARYN goes after her, BRIDGET wipes a tear from her eye.

BRIDGET

Wow.

ANGELIC

(wipes her tears)

Who was that?

JAMES goes after STELLA as well.

EXT. THEATER-DAY CONT.

JAMES opens the door to find PANDA and LARYN standing with STELLA a few yards away.

JAMES

Is she alright?

PANDA

Yeah she's ok.

Office phone rings.

JAMES

Alright.

JAMES goes back inside.

86

INT. THEATER OFFICE-DAY CONT.

JAMES

(on the phone)

Hello.

Mr. Vanderbilt how are you?

(beat)

... yes we're rehearsing as we speak

(beat)

... Mr. Vanderbilt please, Mr. Vanderbilt! SHIT!!

STELLA, PANDA, and LARYN walk into the Lobby as JAMES'S voice echoes off the walls, He looks up and notices them, then slowly he makes his way out to the lobby.

JAMES (CONT'D)

(disappointed)

Let me speak with you all in the ball room.

Quietly they trail him into the ballroom.

87

INT. THEATER BALLROOM- DAY

JAMES and the group enter back into the ballroom and immediately everyone stands and applause STELLA for her performance.

JAMES notions for the group to be seated as he walks to the center of the room and stands next to BRIDGET, the applause subsides.

BRIDGET

(whispers)

Is she ok?

JAMES

(whisper)

Yeah but I got some terrible news.

BRIDGET

Shit.

JAMES

Um I don't know how to say this no other way but to just come right out and say it, um, Mr. Vanderbilt the investor has decided to not move forward with the project.

At that moment two of the actors stands and exits the room upset, JAMES watches them as they leave yet he continues to speak.

JAMES (CONT'D)

I really don't know what the future holds, but at the moment it's back to pitching the idea to other investors.

Three other actors leave the room, JAMES continues to speak.

JAMES (CONT'D)

It's not certain that if and when we get another investor that the agreements will be the same as before.

One of the remaining actors stands.

GIP

Excuse me, um, James but I don't want to be disrespectful and just walk out on you during your speech like the others and I apologize on their behalf, but you've made it clear that the show is a no go, so I don't see why we should continue this conversation amongst a group that's not willing to listen or to offer a remedy.

Gip turns to the other actors in the room, one of the actors being ANGELIC.

GIP (CONT'D)

Do either of you care to stay or are you just waiting for someone else to take the initiative to leave first?

The other actor stands.

ACTOR 1

I um, I'm sorry that things didn't work out. I wish you the best.

She walks out of the room with her head down, leaving all eyes on ANGELIC.

ANGELIC

I'm standing with James.

JAMES looks at ANGELIC.

BRIDGET

(pantomimes to Angelic)
Thank you.

Suddenly, the door opens, LOLA walks in with lunch for all the actors.

LOLA

(upbeat, loud)
Hey, how's everybody doing?
(she pause)
...where is every body?

BRIDGET

Mr. Vanderbilt pulled out of the deal so they all left.

LOLA

(shakes her head)
Well get it together James you can't quit now, amongst a million no's there's a yes, you just have to find it, now get up and get the rest of that food out the car, Moses yall help him, GET UP!

MOSES and OTHELLO jumps up.

MOSES

Yes ma'am.

LOLA looks over at STELLA, STELLA looks away, LARYN observes the exchange between the two.

INT. THEATER BACKSTAGE - DAY

LOLA is backstage looking through a pile of old props while humming a song, STELLA walks in, LOLA notices her immediately, but continues to observe the props.

STELLA

(hesitant)

Hi.

LOLA

(nonchalant)

Hey.

LOLA continues to look hum.

STELLA

I'm sorry if I've been a bit
distant the last few days it's just
been tough for me lately.

LOLA turns to STELLA.

LOLA

Distant, you call a couple of days
distant, child I haven't seen you
in twenty some years, and to know
that you're in the next room last
night and you didn't have the
descents to come out and speak to
me.

STELLA

I'm sorry.

LOLA

(smiles)

I know.

STELLA

You still putting your foot in them
greens.

LOLA

I know.

STELLA

(self pity)

Can I get a hug.

LOLA looks at STELLA with a blank stare for a moment before
answering.

LOLA

Come here child.

STELLA gets emotional as she walks into LOLA'S arms.

89

EXT. THEATER-NIGHT

STELLA and MOSES are sitting on the theater loading dock smoking crack.

MOSES

Our baby girl is growing up huh?

STELLA

(exhales)

Too fast, and I'm not ready.

MOSES

You know seeing you perform really shocked us, you're awesome.

MOSES re-lights the pipe then puffs it.

MOSES (CONT'D)

(exhale)

Look um, I think you should talk with that kid James, I mean who knows.

MOSES hands STELLA the pipe and the lighter, then stands to his feet.

MOSES (CONT'D)

See you on the inside.

90

INT. THEATER BACKSTAGE-NIGHT

PANDA sits in front of a mirror looking at her reflection while LARYN brushes her hair.

OTHELLO

So Panda, what you wearing on your big day tomorrow?

PANDA

I'm leaving that up to Laryn.

LARYN

Well you know I was thinking maybe Prada or Vera Wang.

OTHELLO

What?

PANDA

(whisper to Laryn)
Stop teasing him.

LARYN

Well he asked.
So, what ya think?

PANDA and LARYN are looking in the mirror.

PANDA

I like it, thanks.

LARYN

You're welcome.

OTHELLO

You look exquisite Ms. Rose.

PANDA

Thanks Othello, I'm so excited.

LARYN

You should be.

PANDA

What was your first job Laryn?

LARYN

Prostitution.

PANDA

Never-mind Laryn.

OTHELLO laughs.

LARYN

Well it's the truth, I started
selling the pussy at an early
age...

PANDA

Never-mind Laryn.

Othello continues to laugh.

LARYN

Like my granny used to say, if it's
old enough to bleed...

PANDA

Ok Laryn we get it.

LARYN

You asked.

91 **EXT. THEATER-NIGHT CONT.**

MOSES walks out onto the dock, STELLA is lying on her back motionless.

MOSES

 Shit!

He checks for a pulse, then he relaxes.

MOSES (CONT'D)

 Damn it Stella.

92 **INT. THEATER BACKSTAGE - MORNING**

JAMES walks backstage and notices LARYN standing at the wardrobe rack.

JAMES

 Good morning.

LARYN

 Good morning.

JAMES

 I brought breakfast, it's in the ballroom.

LARYN

 Alright thanks.

JAMES watches as LARYN organize the racks by style and color.

JAMES

 You have a passion for fashion I see.

LARYN continue to sort through the garments.

LARYN

 You feel good when you look good I always say.

LARYN holds a dress up to her thin frame and looks down at herself.

JAMES

 Looks nice.

LARYN

 Yes it does.

JAMES

You want it, it's yours.

LARYN looks up with a huge smile on her face.

LARYN

Are you sure, wow thank you so much.

JAMES

You're welcome.

JAMES turn to walk away.

LARYN

(concern)

Hey James

(beat)

Where ya gonna go from here?

JAMES

Probably get a job, go back to school or something I don't know.

LARYN

Have you exhausted all of your resources for funds?

JAMES

Vanderbilt was my last resort.

JAMES walks away leaving LARYN standing in her thoughts.

93

INT. THEATER LADIES DRESSING-ROOM - MORNING

PANDA stands in the mirror with STELLA as they put the finishing touches on her hair and outfit.

JAMES stands at the door observing in silence.

STELLA

Remember to be polite and courteous to everyone, and ask questions when you don't understand, don't assume anything, you got me?

PANDA

Yes ma'am.

JAMES

Excuse me, um, I have breakfast in the ballroom.

STELLA

Thanks, we're almost done .

JAMES

You look nice Panda.

PANDA

Thank you.

JAMES

Alright don't be long I want you
guys to eat before we leave.

STELLA

Ok we'll be right out.

JAMES walks away from the doorway.

PANDA

I feel sorry for James.

STELLA

It's the business.

PANDA

Well if I had the money I would
give it to him.

STELLA

He will be ok.

Close-up of STELLA looking to the doorway.

94

EXT. THEATER-MORNING CONT.

The group gets into two separate cars, PANDA and STELLA go
with JAMES, OTHELLO, MOSES, and LARYN go with BRIDGET.

95

EXT. STREET-MORNING

BRIDGET brings her group to the plaza and parks the car,
OTHELLO and LARYN exit from the backseat with their bags.

LARYN

Thanks for everything Bridget.

BRIDGET

You're welcome, and you be safe out
there ok?

LARYN

Ok.

BRIDGET

You take care of her Othello.

OTHELLO

Yes ma'am.

MOSES continues to sit in the car on the passenger's side, BRIDGET looks at him and smile.

BRIDGET

Well, this is goodbye.

MOSES

Yeah
(beat)

Moses is looking at LARYN and OTHELLO as they walk away from the car.

MOSES (CONT'D)

If things were different...

BRIDGET

(interrupts)
Look Moses, I really don't see...

MOSES

(interrupts)
Roderick, my name is Roderick
Malone.

BRIDGET

Oh, so Moses is just a basketball
reference, all this time I thought
it had some spiritual connotation.

MOSES looks away to avoid eye contact, BRIDGET realizes that MOSES is really into her.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Look, Roderick um ...

MOSES gets out of the car and the stand.

MOSES

You know, throughout this entire
time you've never acknowledged my
existence.

(beat)
My situation isn't contagious you
know, it's just a set back, you
have a bless day Bridget.

MOSES walks away.

96 **EXT. STREET-MORNING CONT.**

LARYN walks into a gas station carrying her bag.

97 **INT. GAS STATION-DAY**

LARYN enters the station and goes over to the CASHIER, he hands her a key, she goes to the restroom in the back of the store.

EXT. STREET-MORNING

LARYN exits the gas station, wearing the dress that JAMES had given her.

She walks for about 20 yards before a guy (white-male mid-'40s) pulls up to her side in a luxury sedan.

DRIVER

Excuse me.

LARYN

Yes.

DRIVER

I was about to grab a bite to eat
would you care to join me?

LARYN continues to walk as she glances over at the guy.

LARYN

I must warn you I have a huge
appetite.

The car creeps alone side LARYN as she speaks.

DRIVER

Money is no object, how much do you
eat?

LARYN

On an average, 50.

DRIVER

That's not bad.

He stops the car as LARYN takes a few more steps before coming to a stop.
She turns and smiles, then she starts walking back towards the vehicle, running her hand along the top of the fender as she approaches.

98 **EXT. HAIR SALON-DAY**

BRIDGET'S hair salon.

99 **INT. HAIR SALON-DAY CONT.**

JAMES is sitting in deep thought, fidgeting with an ink pen.

BRIDGET

(exhales)

You know Moses said something to me
when I dropped them off this
morning and it's been heavy on my
mind all day.

JAMES

(looks up)

What did he say?

BRIDGET

I sensed him coming on to me like
always, so I immediately attempted
to shut him down, but he went on to
say that, I've never acknowledge
his existence.

JAMES

(disappointed)

Bridget.

BRIDGET

I know, I know,
Then he goes on to say that his
situation isn't contagious and that
it's only a setback.

JAMES

(in thought)

Damn.

BRIDGET

(beat)

You know his real name isn't Moses.

JAMES looks on curious.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

It's Roderick, Roderick Malone.

JAMES

Oh.

BRIDGET

(beat)

What are we going to do James?

JAMES

I don't know, I don't know.

BRIDGET

You know if I had the money I would invest in Stella, just for who she is and what she's endured over the years.

JAMES

Now you're looking at the big picture.

BRIDGET

Oh yeah?

JAMES

Look um, I'm going to have Stella and her crew at the theater this evening, have the others to be there around six, oh and grab some pizza or something for lunch.

JAMES starts to leave.

BRIDGET

What's the plan?

JAMES

I don't know.

BRIDGET

(confused)

Ok.

100

INT. GENTLEMAN'S CAR-DAY

The DRIVER is sitting with his head resting upwards and breathing heavy, he hands LARYN \$50.

LARYN

Thanks.

LARYN gets out of the car and walks away.

101

EXT. CRACK HOUSE- EVENING

A view of the crack house.

102

INT. CRACK HOUSE- EVENING- CONT.

LARYN is sitting on the floor with her bag near her side while smoking crack.
KEON walks into the room.

KEON

Damn, they told me you was looking like Julia Roberts back here, what's going on?

LARYN forces a smile, then puffs the pipe.
KEON comes over to her and kneels.

KEON (CONT'D)

Laryn.

She doesn't reply, she just grins with her eyes closed, he lightly slaps her face to alert her.

KEON (CONT'D)

L-Boogie, hey ...

KEON looks at LARYN'S cleavage.

KEON (CONT'D)

Shit yeah, Julia bout to get some dick.

He takes her bag then he helps her to her feet.

KEON (CONT'D)

I got you Julia, it's alright, we just gonna go lay ya down for a while, let big daddy tuck you in a lil bit.

103

EXT. CRACK HOUSE- EVENING- CONT.

KEON sits on the edge of the bed shirtless smoking a blunt. He looks over his shoulder at LARYN while she sleeps, then he reaches under the bed and retrieves a bag filled with money.
He takes money from the nightstand and stuffs it into the bag then he puts it back underneath the bed.

KEON

(smacks her butt)
L-boogie.

LARYN

(sleepy)
What?

KEON

It's time to go, I'm getting ready to get out of here.

LARYN

I'm up.

KEON

I'm going to clear out the rest of the house, get ya shit and meet me up front.

He leaves the room, we hear him telling everyone it's time to go as he walks down the hall.

104 **EXT. STREET-EVENING**

LARYN is walking down the street with her bag on her side heading towards the plaza.

105 **INT. CRACK HOUSE- EVENING**

KEON enters the room he puts on a shirt then he reaches under the bed and takes the bag of money.

106 **INT. CONVENIENT STORE-EVENING**

STELLA enters the store, it's being robbed by a homeless man (white male mid-'40s), he has one hand under his shirt pointing it at the cashier.

STELLA

(to homeless man)

JUNE!

What the hell?

The robber notices STELLA.

JUNE

(nervous)

Mind ya business Stella.

(to the cashier)

EMPTY THE REGISTER NOW!!

RAMIRO and PANDA are walking from the rear of the store carrying boxes, they stop in their tracks. STELLA approaches JUNE.

STELLA

(to June)

Here take this, get out of here
before you get into trouble.

STELLA hands June \$10, he takes it and makes I eye contact
with PANDA before leaving.

CASHIER

(hands still raised)

Thank you so much, oh my God.

RAMIRO

Thanks Ms. Rose.

STELLA

You're welcome.

RAMIRO

(to cashier)

You can put your hands down now.

The CASHIER lowers his hands, he's visibly shaken by what
just happened.

STELLA

So how was her first day?

RAMIRO continues to stare at the front door.

STELLA (CONT'D)

You don't have to worry about him,
he won't be back.

RAMIRO

Oh, she was everything you said
she'd be and then some.

PANDA smiles, then she takes the boxes to an aisle.

STELLA

That's great.

RAMIRO

Yep, oh Ms. Rose can I see you in
my office for a second?

STELLA

Sure.

INT. CONVENIENT STORE OFFICE-DAY CONT.

They enter the office.

RAMIRO

You know I can use you around here
as well.

He reaches into his desk drawer and pulls out a small bag and
hands it to STELLA.

STELLA

What's this?

RAMIRO

The test you requested.

STELLA

Thanks.

RAMIRO

I could really use your help.

STELLA

Mr. Ramiro, I don't know the first
thing about retail.

RAMIRO

I'll teach you everything there is
to know.

STELLA focuses on the bag.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)

(beat)

Just say you'll give it some
thought?

STELLA

I will.

RAMIRO

Alright.

108

EXT. STREET-EVENING

STELLA and PANDA walks out of the store, a horn sounds, it's
JAMES sitting in his car.

PANDA

It's James.

PANDA and STELLA walks over to the car.

PANDA (CONT'D)

Hey James.

JAMES

Heey, so how was your first day?

PANDA

It was great.

JAMES

That's good, look I need to talk to you guys.

STELLA

What about?

JAMES

I just have a few ideas that I need to run by you.

LARYN walking up the street towards them with her shoes in her hand.

STELLA

Well there's Laryn, Moses and Othello are over on 17th street.

JAMES

Well alright, hop in.

STELLA

(to Laryn)

YOU'RE GONNA GET LEFT IF YOU DON'T HURRY.

LARYN starts to run towards the car.

109

INT. THEATER BALLROOM-EVENING

The group is sitting in the ballroom eating pizza with ANGELIC and GIP.
JAMES and BRIDGET are standing in the center of the room.

JAMES

(addressing the group)

Where's ...

He catches himself before continuing.

JAMES (CONT'D)

... where is Ms. Williams?

PANDA

She's in the rest room, I'll get her.

110 **INT. THEATER BACKSTAGE - EVENING**

PANDA knocks on the bathroom door.

PANDA

Ma, we're about to start the meeting.

111 **INT. THEATER BATHROOM - EVENING**

STELLA is sitting on the toilet holding the HIV test results.

STELLA

(crying)
Ok Ill be right out.

Flashback

112 **EXT. STREET BACKYARD-NIGHT**

STELLA is being held on the ground by three men, one of them attempts to penetrate her.

STELLA

(screams)
I HAVE HIV!

The guy pause for a moment.

GUY 1

(to Stella)
I do too.

Then he penetrates her.

End flashback

113 **INT. THEATER BALLROOM- EVENING**

STELLA walks into the ballroom and sits.

JAMES

Alright now that we have everyone here, Um, I was thinking about the show and I thought maybe we should continue to move forward but with a smaller budget, that being said I was hoping that I could get you guys to step in as stage hands.

BRIDGET raises her hand.

BRIDGET

If I may speak, I um, I happen to know that we have two actors sitting here other than Angelic and Gip, who would be ideal for this show.

JAMES

(curious)
Who?

BRIDGET

Ms. Panda.

PANDA smiles.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

... and Mr. Othello.

JAMES looks confused.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

I happened to partake in a beautiful monologue the other day from the epic film "Gone With The Wind," starring yours truly.

JAMES

(looking at Panda)
You don't say.

LARYN

I think they can do it.

ANGELIC

(to Bridget)
So, Ms. Williams isn't going to be a part of the cast?

BRIDGET

I'm afraid not.

ANGELIC

Ahh that sucks.

BRIDGET

(whisper to James)
So um, just how do you plan on financing this show?

JAMES responds to BRIDGET like a ventriloquist.

JAMES

(smiling)

I haven't gotten that far yet.

BRIDGET replies back in the same manner, while starring at the group.

BRIDGET

(smiling)

You full of shit.

JAMES

(to group)

I will be contacting each of you at the top of the week with more details.

GIP

Well alright that's what I want to hear.

JAMES

Ok, so I guess this meeting is adjourned.

GIP and ANGELIC exits the room.

JAMES (CONT'D)

So I'm thinking, what if you guys hung around here for awhile until we get the show going, I mean who knows.

MOSES

I have no problem with that... Stella?

STELLA doesn't answer.

MOSES (CONT'D)

That's a yes, Laryn...

LARYN

I'm in.

OTHELLO and PANDA jumps to there feet celebrating, a close-up of LARYN watching PANDA and OTHELLO celebrate.

114

EXT. KEON'S HOME-DAY CONT.

A view of the house.

115 **INT. KEON'S BEDROOM-DAY CONT.**

Keon enters a room and locks the door, he takes his bag from the closet and sits it on the bed.

116 **INT. THEATER OFFICE - EVENING**

LARYN steps in the doorway.

LARYN

I don't mean to disturb you guys
but I have a question.

JAMES

It's no problem what is it?

LARYN

I was just wondering if you found
another investor that's all.

JAMES looks at BRIDGET.

JAMES

Well we're working that out as we
speak, what, you have someone in
mind?

117 **INT. KEON'S HOME-EVENING**

KEON opens the bag to find LARYN'S clothes.

118 **INT. THEATER CONFERENCE ROOM-EVENING**

LARYN walks to the desk and turns her bag upside down and
bands of money fall out onto the desk top.

BRIDGET

(calm)
This is such a turn on.

JAMES

(calm)
Tell me about.

BRIDGET

Where did you get this?

JAMES

Let's take this in the conference
room guys.

119

INT. THEATER CONFERENCE ROOM-EVENING

The money is stacked neatly on the table.
BRIDGET and JAMES are sitting back in their seats staring at it while LARYN paces the floor at the end of the table.

BRIDGET

I don't know, I mean even for 47 thousand dollars it's still a huge risk to take.

LARYN

I took that into consideration but I was hoping that it would be enough for your show, and Othello and I would take what's left and go out west.

BRIDGET

Even with the full amount Laryn it wouldn't last but for so long.

LARYN

Well, I was hoping that I'd land a job before then.

BRIDGET

I don't know about this, the way you explained it, this guy knows that you have his money beyond the shadow of a doubt, and that puts you all at risk.

LARYN

(doubt)
I guess I shouldn't of taken it huh?

BRIDGET

(looks at James)
James.

JAMES

(exhales)
As much as I hate to agree with Bridget, I'm afraid you must give this money back,
I mean you could've skipped town the minute you took it but it still would've brought heat on the group and that's not right, there's nothing right about this Laryn.

BRIDGET

(gazed look)

Dam I was hoping she was gonna say she found it.

LARYN

Now I have to think of some clever way to take it back, hey guys can we not mention this to the others.

JAMES

Our secret.

LARYN

Thanks.

LARYN starts putting the money back into the bag.

JAMES

This needs to be taken care of first thing in the morning.

BRIDGET

I agree, but I don't think that it would be safe for her to do it.

JAMES

Damn I hate it when you think.

BRIDGET

One of us have to.

120

EXT. THEATER-EVENING.

MOSES and OTHELLO are standing out behind the theater smoking crack.

STELLA is pacing around in the field.

PANDA peeks out the back door, immediately MOSES conceals the pipe, PANDA notices STELLA and approaches her.

PANDA

Hey.

STELLA

Hey.

STELLA continue to search.

PANDA

Can I ask you a question?

STELLA

Go ahead.

PANDA

Why didn't you leave me for the system?

STELLA

(unease)
What's this?

PANDA

Nothing, I've sometimes wondered why you didn't just, leave me, being that you had problems of your own that's all.

STELLA

I don't know I panic, who knows maybe I was high and why are you bringing this to me now?

PANDA looks up to the sky briefly for that statement stung her a bit.

STELLA (CONT'D)

I've had 16 years to put you into the system, taking you from that house, that was a moment that I have never regretted, and here you are speaking to me as though I've taken the silver spoon from your mouth.

PANDA

I didn't mean it that way Ma, but that's just it, you didn't have to, but you did, and I don't have regrets either, but I would be lying if I say that I've never thought, what if I had been in the system, will I be getting ready for my Jr. Prom or would I've gotten a car for my 16th birthday and what it feel like to have a sleep over, a social life
...a boyfriend.

STELLA

(emotional)
I admit there's a lot of things that I wasn't able to do for you, But then there were those things I wasn't able to do for myself and maybe that's why I took you.

PANDA wipes the tear from STELLA'S eyes.

PANDA

(soft)
God makes no mistakes right?

STELLA

(soft)
That's right.

PANDA starts to nod her head repeatedly.

PANDA

Ok ...ok.

121 **EXT. THEATER-NIGHT CONT.**

A view of the theater .

122 **INT. THEATER AUDITORIUM-NIGHT CONT.**

STELLA is sitting alone in the middle of the auditorium.

123 **INT. THEATER-MORNING CONT.**

JAMES is walking backstage to greet everyone, he meets MOSES and OTHELLO coming out of the dressing room.

MOSES

Good morning.

JAMES

Good morning.

JAMES walks over to the ladies dressing room and taps on the door.

OTHELLO

(to James)
I think their out back.

JAMES

Ok thanks.

124 **EXT. THEATER-MORNING CONT.**

STELLA and PANDA sitting on the loading dock, JAMES approaches.

JAMES

Good morning ladies.

STELLA, PANDA

Good morning.

JAMES

(looking around)
Where's Laryn?

STELLA

She caught the bus this morning.

JAMES

Did she say where she was going?

STELLA

No, but I'm sure will find her over
by the plaza.

JAMES

(whisper)
Shit.

125

EXT. STREET-EVENING

A Time-lapse of the towns skyline during the golden hour of
the day.

126

EXT. CONVENIENT STORE-EVENING

RAMIRO, STELLA and PANDA steps outside.

RAMIRO

Same time tomorrow Panda, you
ladies be safe.

PANDA

Yes sir.

Suddenly JUNE, the crack head that attempted to rob the
store, runs up to them.

JUNE

(breathless)
STELLA WE FOUND LARYN BACK IN THE
ALLEY I BELIEVE SHE'S DEAD!

STELLA and PANDA begin running in the direction towards the
alley.

A wide shot of them running through the plaza as the sirens sounds.

127 **EXT. STREET-EVENING- CONT.**

PANDA and STELLA bursts through the small crowd that has formed around Laryn's body, we see their painful reaction in slow motion.

128 **EXT. THEATER-LATE EVENING**

JAMES and BRIDGET are standing on the dock behind the theater looking out at the group as they console OTHELLO.

129 **INT. THEATER MENS DRESSING ROOM-NIGHT CONT.**

The group is sitting quietly on the floor, OTHELLO is lying down on a blanket facing the wall.

130 **INT. THEATER-NIGHT CONT.**

PANDA is peeking out of the lady's dressing room then closes the door partially.

PANDA dials a number on her cell phone.

PANDA

(on phone)

Hey Loraine,

PANDA gets very emotional.

PANDA (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Someone killed Laryn this morning.

PANDA falls against the dressing room door forcing it to slam, she slides down the door to a squatting position and breaks down even more.

PANDA (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Ok.

(end call)

131 **INT. THEATER-NIGHT CONT.**

MOSES comes out of the mens dressing room and crosses over to the ladies dressing room, he taps on the door.

MOSES

(concern)

Panda you alright?

She doesn't respond but we can hear her crying through the door.

MOSES (CONT'D)

Step aside I'm coming in.

132

INT. THEATER-NIGHT CONT.

MOSES walks into the room and sits next to PANDA, he puts his arm around her, she rests her head on his chest and continues to cry.

He bangs his head against the wall, trying to cope with the pain.

INT. THEATER BALLROOM-MORNING

PANDA is entering the conference room, LOLA, BRIDGET, and JAMES are preparing the tables for breakfast.

LOLA

Morning.

PANDA

Morning.

LOLA walks over and hugs PANDA.

PANDA (CONT'D)

(to James)

Ma want to talk to you.

BRIDGET looks at JAMES.

133

INT. THEATER MENS DRESSING ROOM - MORNING

OTHELLO, STELLA and MOSES are sitting on the floor against the wall shoulder to shoulder with their arms locked.

JAMES peeks in.

JAMES

Hey you wanted to me?

STELLA

I've decided to do the show.

JAMES looks at BRIDGET.

STELLA (CONT'D)

But first we're going to need to detox.

JAMES

Alright.

STELLA

...and we want to do it here.

JAMES

Ok, but we don't know anything about detox.

BRIDGET continue to look at JAMES while they speak.

STELLA

I'll coach you.

JAMES

Ok so, when do you wanna get started?

STELLA

As soon as possible.

JAMES

Alright, ok um breakfast is served in the ball room.

BRIDGET continues to look at JAMES as he walks away.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Go ahead and say it.

BRIDGET

I ain't sayin nothin.

134

INT. THEATER BALLROOM- MORNING .

JAMES and BRIDGET enters the ballroom and notices LORAINÉ.

LOLA

This is Loraine, Loraine, James and Bridget.

JAMES and BRIDGET shakes LORAINÉ'S hand.

OTHELLO runs over to LORAINÉ and hugs her.

OTHELLO

LORAINÉ, someone killed Laryn.

LORAIN

I know, I know shh it's gonna be
ok?

LORAIN and STELLA locks eyes, as MOSES comes over to speak.

MOSES

(hugs Loraine)
Hey.

LORAIN

Mo, you alright?

MOSES

I'll be alright, how you been?

LORAIN doesn't take her eyes off of STELLA.

LORAIN

Maintaining.

LORAIN walks away from MOSES and makes her way over to
STELLA, they hug.

135

INT. THEATER OFFICE-DAY .

JAMES, BRIDGET, and LORAIN are sitting in the office quietly
in their thoughts.

LORAIN

This is a lot to take in.

LORAIN wipes her tears.

LORAIN (CONT'D)

I'm gonna take care of the funeral
arrangements,
I would also like to stick around
and help with the other's detox, if
it's ok with you.

JAMES nods.

136

INT. MENS DRESSING ROOM - DAY

A grieving STELLA is resting with her head on BRIDGET'S lap.

STELLA

Do you have kids?

BRIDGET

No.

STELLA

Is it by choice?

BRIDGET

Yes.

STELLA

Do you want kids?

BRIDGET

Yes, just haven't met that special guy.

STELLA

What will make him special?

BRIDGET

His reasons for loving me.

STELLA

Great answer.

BRIDGET

... and you?

STELLA

No kids, by choice.

(beat)

... and my special guy is the reason I'm here.

(beat)

Moses is a good man, he's damaged but who isn't.

137

INT. THEATER LOBBY-DAY CONT.

JAMES and LORAINÉ enters the lobby carrying bags of food.

JAMES

The kitchen is in the ballroom.

LORAINÉ

Ok.

LORAINÉ stops to admire STELLA'S photo, JAMES approaches.

JAMES

Did she keep this from you too?

LORAINÉ

(staring at photo)

You mean Panda?

JAMES

Everything.

LORAIN

Nah, she told me the day we met, of course it was the dope that drove it out of her, although we never spoke of it since.

(beat)

Can we go for a walk?

JAMES

(curious)

Sure.

138

EXT. STREET-MORNING

JAMES and LORAIN are walking down the street.

LORAIN

I take it that you don't know the story of Panda.

JAMES

Laryn had mentioned something about it.

LORAIN

That Stella took her from her dead mother's arm during a raid.

JAMES heavily engaged, they stopped walking.

LORAIN (CONT'D)

Word on the street had it that Panda's father came looking for her after a couple of years had passed, Stella promised me she'd return that child if someone would claim her, but by that time Stella had grown attached to her, that's when she cut ties with everyone, I haven't seen her in years until now.

JAMES

(confused)

Are you saying that Stella kidnapped Panda?

LORAIN

I'm saying that Stella should have given that child back to her father.

139

INT. LADIES DRESSING ROOM-MORNING

PANDA is sitting in the ladies dressing room, there's a knock at the door.

PANDA

Come in.

BRIDGET walks in with a smile on her face.

BRIDGET

Hey.

PANDA

Hey.

BRIDGET

I was thinking until all of this is over maybe you would like to come and give me a hand at the salon.

PANDA

That would be great, but I don't think Ma would go for it.

BRIDGET

It's her idea.

PANDA'S face lights up.

PANDA

Really?

BRIDGET

Yeah the convenience store is too much of a risk so ...

PANDA

Thank you so much.

BRIDGET

Don't mention it.
Hey, how bout if we get out of here and grab some ice cream or something?

PANDA

(smile)

Alright.

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE OFFICE-DAY

STELLA is sitting in RAMIRO'S office having a deep conversation.

INT. BRIDGET'S CAR- EVENING

PANDA sits at the steering wheel, looking very nervous as BRIDGET looks on from the passenger side even more nervous. She attempts to drive off but the car jerks, snapping their heads back and forth.

Montage begins

140 **INT. THEATER BATHROOM-MORNING**

STELLA is in the bathroom on her knees in front of the toilet vomiting, LORAINÉ stands in the doorway looking on.

141 **INT. THEATER-MORNING**

JAMES is sitting next to OTHELLO, wiping the sweat from his forehead with a washcloth.

BRIDGET enters carrying a sandwich, and a bottle of water, she sits next to MOSES and gives him the sandwich.

BRIDGET wipes sweat from MOSES forehead as he bites into the sandwich, he begins to choke, she sits him forward and pats him on the back to clear his passage. She gives him water, then she would break small pieces of the sandwich and feed it to him slowly, while JAMES looks on.

142 **INT. THEATER CONFERENCE ROOM-DAY**

LORAINÉ, JAMES, BRIDGET, STELLA, RAMIRO and his wife, are all sitting at the table in the conference room.

RAMIRO is looking over contracts while everyone looks on.

He reaches inside his coat pocket and takes an ink pen then signs the document, we see his wife smile at STELLA.

Montage end

143

INT. THEATER-DAY

All the actors sits in the auditorium while JAMES and BRIDGET takes the stage.

BRIDGET

Good evening, once again James and I appreciate your patience and your dedication to this project, It's been a tireless week for all of us but we still manage to move forward, Now that's not to give us reason to relax, if anything we should want to work harder, ok, Now for those of you who hasn't been formally introduced to your newest cast mates, I will present them to you at this time, Panda Rose

The CAST walks out onto the stage and stand quietly until their names are called.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

Othello Brinkley

(beat)

... and last but not least, one of the greatest theatrical performers in the history of Broadway, you may know her as Ms. Williams but to the world she's known as "The Queen", ladies and gentlemen I give you MS. STELLA ROSE!

We see a close-up of ANGELIC as her eyes keen in on STELLA as she walks out on the stage, ANGELIC'S mouth hangs wide open as the other actors jump to their feet cheering.

144

INT. BEAUTY SALON-DAY

PANDA arranges products on the counter-top. BRIDGET finishes with a client as JAMES looks on in admiration.

BRIDGET

Panda bear, come tell me what you think.

PANDA approaches, BRIDGET turns the client around revealing STELLA.

PANDA

(excited)

OH MY GOD SHE'S BEAUTIFUL!

Panda hugs her.

JAMES

(to Bridget)

You're going to heaven for this.

LORAINNE enters the salon with a well groomed OTHELLO and everyone goes wild as he takes the catwalk.

MOSES enters the salon in slow motion, looking like a model. BRIDGET notices him as her facial expression goes from excited to bliss.

PANDA

(amazed)

Oh my God you guys look wonderful
look at you.

BRIDGET

You look nice Roderick.

JAMES

(teasing)

Hup, hup ...

JAMES looks away smiling for he knew cupid had struck.

OTHELLO

Whose Roderick?

JAMES

(picks his nails)

Ask Bridget.

LORAINNE

(to Moses)

Hm, all these years...

MOSES

(smiling)

You never asked.

JAMES

Neither did she but you told her.
(sarcastic look away)

MOSES lowers his head and smile.

STELLA

You look nice, the both of you.

MOSES

... and so do you.

OTHELLO

Yeah Stella you look great.

JAMES

I say this calls for a celebration.

BRIDGET

Sounds good to me.

145 **EXT. RESTAURANT-DAY**

A View of the RESTAURANT.

146 **INT. RESTAURANT-DAY**

BRIDGET is standing at the table, thumping her glass to get the others attention.

BRIDGET

I would like to propose a toast to you guys if I may.

The group gets quiet.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

I must admit when I first met you all I thought, "WHAT THE HELL".

They all laugh.

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

... but then as time went on I saw a family, structure, faith and love.
The only thing that was missing was opportunity, and I don't know a more deserving group than you guys, and to our dearest Laryn, you've made the ultimate sacrifice my sister, we love you and we miss you so much, so lets raise them high.

They all raise their glasses

BRIDGET (CONT'D)

To Laryn.

They all repeat "To LARYN" before drinking.

147

INT. THEATER BATHROOM-NIGHT

STELLA is sitting on the floor in the bathroom crying, there's a knock at the door.

JAMES (O.S.)

Stella it's me James I'm about to leave

(beat)

... are you ok?

STELLA

(crying)

I'll be alright.

JAMES (O.S.)

I know you just saying that open the door.

(beat)

Stella...

STELLA unlocks the door and remains sitting on the floor. JAMES walks in and sits down on the toilet, he gives her a moment.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You know, seeing your very last show as a kid changed my life.

STELLA is staring to the ceiling as her tears run from her eyes.

JAMES (CONT'D)

... since that moment on I've sacrificed everything that I had to get to this point, to get to the "Queen" Ms. Stella Rose, and here I am, experiencing the biggest moment of my life. I don't know exactly what it is that you're feeling at this moment but...

Stella look to the floor and speaks.

STELLA

(calm)

I have HIV.

JAMES pause, STELLA looks back up to the ceiling.

JAMES

(calm)

So do I, but I don't let that stop me.

STELLA looks at JAMES.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Ten years ago my soul mate left me
with that and a broken heart, you
wanna know which one feels worse?

(beat)

We're gonna be ok.

STELLA breaks down, JAMES goes over and takes her in his
arms.

JAMES (CONT'D)

It's alright.

148 **EXT. DOCTORS OFFICE- MORNING**

A view of the Doctors office.

149 **INT. DOCTORS OFFICE- MORNING**

JAMES and STELLA are sitting in an office talking to the
DOCTOR.

150 **EXT. THEATER-NIGHT**

A view of the theater.

151 **INT. THEATER AUDITORIUM - NIGHT**

MOSES sits quietly watching from the control booth as STELLA
walks out on stage interrupting rehearsal.

STELLA

I um, I have HIV.
You all being my family, I just
thought you should know.

They give her a group hug.

152 **INT. THEATER-NIGHT.**

We see a montage of the group rehearsing and doing shows at
sold out venues.

153 **EXT. LARYN'S GRAVESITE - DAY**

They all visit LARYN'S grave as we pan to her headstone that reads Laryn Brinkley, Once upon a time.

154 **EXT. OFFICE BUILDING - DAY**

A view of the office building.

155 **INT. MR. VANDERBILT'S OFFICE - DAY**

MR. VANDERBILT enters the office where STELLA, JAMES and BRIDGET are sitting at his desk.

MR. VANDERBILT

Alright so I'll just get right to the point and say that I'm not interested in developing a movie adaptation of your stage play.

(beat)

JAMES and BRIDGET lowers their heads in disappointment, STELLA continues to make eye contact with him.

MR. VANDERBILT (CONT'D)

Instead, Ms. Stella Rose I'm willing to offer you seven figures for the movie rights to your life story at this very moment.

JAMES and BRIDGET looks to STELLA for a response.

STELLA

How much?

MR. VANDERBILT

5.

STELLA

Make it 8, 4 to sign on.

MR. VANDERBILT

Only if you agree to work with the production until completion.

STELLA

Travel and living arrangements first class for me and my family, on your expense.

MR. VANDERBILT

You drive a hard bargain, but for you I wouldn't have it any other way, it's a deal.

He reaches for a hand shake.

STELLA

Paper work please.

MR. VANDERBILT

(retracts)

She's a pro, here you go.

He slides her two separate contracts covering what they've agreed upon, she carefully reads them page by page.

Time lapse

MR. VANDERBILT is sitting back in his chair impatiently, waiting for STELLA to finish reading the contracts. She takes a pen from his desk and signs them both. MR. VANDERBILT sits up relieved, as STELLA extends her hand, they shake.

MR. VANDERBILT (CONT'D)

Congratulations.

JAMES and BRIDGET screams and hugs STELLA.

156 **INT. GROUPS HOUSE-DAY**

The group enter their new home for the first time.

157 **INT. GROUPS HOUSE-DAY**

PANDA walks into her room, she sits on the bed and have a moment.

158 **INT. DOCTORS OFFICE- MORNING**

STELLA is talking to the DR. (53 yr. old white male) in his office.

DR.

(viewing notes)

Well Ms. Rose it seems that you've been keeping to your regiment, everything checks out just fine, you have a beautiful life ahead of you and let me just say as an admirer of your work that it's wonderful having you back.

(beat)

Oh and one other thing

(looking over his glasses)

You be sure to get that Brad Pitt to play me in your movie.

(he smiles)

STELLA smiles.

159

INT. LIMO-MORNING

JAMES and LORRAINE are sitting in the limo, STELLA enters.

JAMES

So how did it go?

STELLA

(smiles)

God is good.

JAMES

All the time.

LORRAINE raises her champagne glass.

LORRAINE

(happy)

Here here...

STELLA

(beat)

Watch this... shhh.

STELLA makes a phone call, she puts it on speaker, it rings.

160

INT. BRIDGET'S CAR- MORNING

PANDA is driving while singing along to the music blasting with OTHELLO by her side, BRIDGET and MOSES are in the backseat hyping her performance.

The camera pans to PANDA'S phone sitting on the console flashing.

161 INT. LIMO-MORNING CONT.

STELLA

She's not answering.

Phone continue to ring.

JAMES

Knowing Bridget she got that child
turnt up somewhere with that music
blasting.

STELLA

...and Moses isn't any better.

Suddenly we hear PANDA'S voice mail.

VOICE MAIL

Helloooo you reached Panda...

(Laryn's voice)

...and Laryn

(they sing in unison)

HEY, HOW YOU DOIN

SORRY YOU CAN'T GET THROUGH

WHY DON'T YOU LEAVE YOUR NAME AND

YOUR NUMBER AND WE'LL GET BACK TO

YOU...

(Laryn goes off script)

YEAH IT'S YOUR GIRL LARYN AKA (L)

BOOGIE YOU ALREADY KNOW.

PANDA (O.S.)

You always gotta shine that's why I
don't like to do nothin with you.

LARYN (O.S.)

Hell I can't help it if I'm doper
then your average MC.

PANDA (O.S.)

Get out the way...

(the voice mail ends)

They sit staring at the phone.

LORAINÉ

(emotional)

Play it again.

162

EXT. GROUPS HOUSE-DAY

JAMES, LOLA, LORAINÉ, and her husband, all gather in the yard when, BRIDGET, MOSES, PANDA, and OTHELLO pulls up, they get out of the car looking curious.

OTHELLO

Why is everybody out here?

PANDA

Yeah what's going on where's Ma?

STELLA drives up in a new convertible BMW with a huge red ribbon on it.

STELLA

(to Panda)

Merry Christmas baby, I know that Christmas is days away but I couldn't wait.

PANDA screams at the top of her lungs, she starts to run around the yard hugging everyone.

PANDA

I sort-a feel like Dorothy in "The Wizard of Oz"
 (slight giggle)
 You were there and you and you and you were all there...

They all laughed.

PANDA (CONT'D)

(serious)

But instead of a good witch, I have a Queen.

She hugs STELLA.

PANDA (CONT'D)

Thanks Ma.

163

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE-DAY

The CASHIER is leaning on the counter with his cell phone as STELLA enters with MOSES accompanying her.

The CASHIER looks over at them and back to his phone, then he sits up once recognizing STELLA.

RAMIRO

Ahh Stella how are you?

He hurries over to hug her.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)

It's sure is good to see you.

STELLA

I want to thank you again for all that you've done, heres a gift from us to you, take the misses to see the world ok.

He takes the envelope.

RAMIRO

Thank you, that's very nice of you.

STELLA

You're welcome, you take care.

RAMIRO

I will, thanks again.

She exits the store.

RAMIRO (CONT'D)

(opens envelope)

Holy shit...

(to the cashier)

Clock out and go home kid.

164

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE-DAY CONT.

STELLA and MOSES look on as JAMES, BRIDGET, PANDA and OTHELLO, hand out gifts to the homeless from the trunk of there cars.

Flashback

165

INT. CRACK HOUSE-EVENING

The door bursts open in slow motion with ten task force officers heavily armed, demanding everyone to get on the ground, people are crawling down the hall on all fours, trying to escape.

STELLA runs into a room and notice JUNE searching the pockets of an unconscious woman holding an infant child.

The woman's eyes are opened and she has a syringe dangling from her forearm.

STELLA takes the child and climbs out of the window before the cops enter the room, she runs from the house carrying the infant child as bystanders look on.

166 **EXT. STREET-DAY**

STELLA is feeding 3 year old PANDA while sitting on the curb.

167 **EXT. STREET-DAY**

STELLA is digging in a dumpster behind a school for books, she find several.

168 **EXT. STREET-DAY**

STELLA is teaching young PANDA to read and write at a park.

169 **EXT. STREET-DAY**

STELLA is asleep with PANDA in her arms in an alley.

Flashback ends

170 **EXT. STREET-DAY**

BRIDGET comes over and stands beside MOSES.

BRIDGET

(no eye contact)

Hey.

MOSES

(no eye contact)

Hey.

BRIDGET

You um, you never thanked me for saving your life.

MOSES

Saving my life?

STELLA cuts her eyes at them and smile before walking away.

BRIDGET

Yeah dude, that sandwich was giving you hell, and if it wasn't for me you wouldn't be standing here now, sooo.

MOSES

(giggles)
Thank you Bridget, for saving my
life.

BRIDGET

You're welcome.
(beat)
Look um, it wasn't that I didn't
acknowledge your existence it's
just that, you had too much
presence you know, it, it felt too
familiar to me.

MOSES

Is that a bad thing?

BRIDGET

(serious)
Yes and no, yes because I fell in
love, and no because he broke my
heart.

MOSES

What are you trying to say Bridget?

They make eye contact for the first time ever.

BRIDGET

Can we like, hang out and become
best friends first?

MOSES takes BRIDGET by the hand.

MOSES

Yeah let's do that.

STELLA looking on smiling, she turns and notices JUNE.

JUNE

(pantomime)
Thank you.

STELLA

(pantomime)
You're welcome.

PANDA walks over to JUNE and hands him an envelope.

PANDA

Merry Christmas.

He takes it.

JUNE

Thank you, and Merry Christmas to you too.

PANDA

I know who you are.

JUNE looks away.

PANDA (CONT'D)

It's ok.

JUNE

I knew Stella would do a better job.

PANDA

Thank you,
(beat)
We have room at the house, the group welcomes you, you're family.

JUNE

Thank you.

PANDA

You're welcome, can I ask you a question?

JUNE

Yeah.

PANDA

What's my birth name?

JUNE

We never named you.

They stare for a moment, then PANDA begins to smile.

PANDA

Thanks, because I'm loving Panda Rose.

A close-up of STELLA smiling.