

"FOR COLORED GIRLS"
By
Tyler Perry

Based on The Stage Play

"For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide
When The Rainbow Is Enuf"

By
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Goldenrod Revision - 8/03/10
Yellow Revisions - 7/02/10
Green Revisions - 6/30/10
Pink Revisions - 5/27/10
Blue Shoot Draft - 5/25/10

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OPENING:

1 INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - YASMINE'S DANCE STUDIO - DAY 1

The community center is an old run down building with two floors and several different rooms. Built in the 50's, it looks like it hasn't been kept up or painted in years. Water spots and old creaky floors line the hallway. The center is housed in a state funded facility with several other volunteer operations. Juanita's free clinic and Yasmine's Rhythms, a dance studio, are two of them. We enter the dance studio where Yasmine is dancing alone. We see soft shots of her hands and feet dancing about the room. The fabric from her yellow leotard move gracefully in the wind as she dances to the sound of a solo piano. The slow speed of the film catches her face in the light from the huge old dirty window. The entire scene is in a sepia tone with the yellow very noticeable.

YASMINE (V.O.)

Dark phrases of womanhood,
of never having been a girl.
Half-note scattered without
rhythm.

2 INT. JUANITA'S APARTMENT - DAY 2

JUANITA a nurse dressed in green and relentless volunteer stands in the kitchen of her modest apartment watering a plant. She goes back to her table where she has several hundred flyers printed. The flyers read, "Free Clinic Seminars on Thursday".

JUANITA (V.O.)

No tune distraught. Laughter
fallin' over a black girl's
shoulders. It's funny. It's
hysterical. The melodylessness of
her dance. Don't tell nobody,
don't tell a soul. She's dancing
on beer cans and shingles.

CUT TO:

3 INT. JOANNA'S APARTMENT - DAY 3

JOANNA a high powered business woman stands in her posh penthouse apartment high above Manhattan, she is getting ready for work. Dressed in red, she stands in her closet. Her husband CARL, in silhouette is in the shower. We see him in the distance.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

Joanna picks his pants up off the floor, a card falls out. She picks the card up and looks at it, then puts it back in his pocket.

JOANNA (V.O.)

This must be the spook house.
Another song with no singers,
lyrics no voices and uninterrupted
solos, unseen performances. Are
we ghouls? Children of horror?

CUT TO:

4 INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - DAY

4

ALICE a religious fanatic walks to a closet in her small run down apartment. She sits in her closet and starts praying. She's dressed in all white, lighting candles on a makeshift altar.

ALICE (V.O.)

The joke? Don't tell nobody, don't
tell a soul. Are we animals? Have
we gone crazy?

5 INT. KELLY'S APARTMENT - DAY

5

KELLY, an overworked social worker, is looking at a pregnancy test stick in the bathroom of her modest apartment. It's negative. She is dressed in blue. DONALD her husband enters. She quickly puts it in the trash can and tries to hide her frustration. He kisses her.

KELLY (V.O.)

I can't hear anything but
maddening screams and the soft
strains of death. And you
promised me. You promised
somebody. Anybody. Sing a black
girl's song.

CUT TO:

6 INT. HIGH SCHOOL - AUDITORIUM - DAY

6

A graduation is in full swing. We see NYLA dressed in purple, as she receives her diploma. Her mother ALICE beams with pride from the front row. Alice is dressed in all white with a cross on and a huge bible. Her older sister TANGIE dressed in orange looks uninterested as she looks at a one of the male teachers making eyes at her.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

NYLA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Bring her out to know herself. To
know you, but sing her rhythms
caring, struggle.

TANGIE (V.O.)
Hard times sing. Her song of life.
She's been dead so long, closed in
silence so long.

7 INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - DAY

7

CRYSTAL lays in the bed in a very run down apartment BEAU
WILLIE is having sex with her. Her brown dress is pushed
up above her thighs. A tear rolls down her face.

CRYSTAL (V.O.)
She doesn't know the sound of her
own voice, her infinite beauty.
She's half-note scattered without
rhythm, no tune. Sing her sighs...
Sing the song of her
possibilities. Sing a righteous
gospel. Let her be born. Let her
be born and handled warmly.

CRYSTAL/KELLY/NYLA/TANGIE/JOANNA/
ALICE/JUANITA (V.O.)
And this is for colored girls who
have considered suicide but moved
to the ends of their own rainbows.

CUT TO:

8 INT. TANGIE'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

8

Tangie sits at the kitchen table of her small urban
apartment. She is writing in her journal. She takes some
orange butterflies out of her hair and put them in a box.
A half-dressed man comes out of the bedroom. We realize
that it's the same man that she was making eyes with at
the graduation.

MAN #1
You got anything to eat?

TANGIE
You'll have to go now. I've got
lot of work to do and I can't with
a man around.

She walks over and gives him his pants.

(CONTINUED)

TANGIE (CONT'D)

Here are your pants. There's coffee on the stove. It's been very nice but I can't see you again.

MAN #1

What did you say to me?

TANGIE

You got what you came for. Didn't you?

He mumbles as he puts on his pants.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

I couldn't possibly wake up with a strange man in my bed.

MAN #1

Is that why you been out here all night.

TANGIE

Why don't you go home. I'm sure your wife is looking for you.

He glares at her for a second.

MAN #1

Yeah, okay.

He walks out and slams the door.

TANGIE

Yes, get your little dick, no fucking ass, out of here.

Man # 1 walks out the apartment building. Juanita opens the back door of her car. She is trying to remove a plant from her backseat. Kelly stands at the door on the intercom.

KELLY

Hello.

CRYSTAL(V.O.)

Yes.

KELLY

Hi, I'm Kelly Watkins from Child Welfare.

(CONTINUED)

CRYSTAL(V.O.)

What can I do for you?

KELLY

I'm looking for Crystal Wallace.

CRYSTAL(V.O.)

What do you want with her?

KELLY

I don't have time to play these games Ms. Wallace. Open the door or I'm coming back with the police.

CRYSTAL(V.O.)

512.

Kelly is buzzed into the apartment building.

JUANITA

Hold it please.

Kelly holds the door.

JUANITA (CONT'D)

Thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

Kelly enters. She looks for the elevator.

KELLY

Great.

Kelly walks to the stairway and looks up. Crystal looks down from the fifth floor.

KELLY (CONT'D)

No elevator?

CRYSTAL

It's a walk up.

Kelly starts the walk up the stairs. She passes Juanita holding the plant and standing at a doorway.

JUANITA

I know you're in there Frank. Open the door.

She looks down at the bottom of the door seal.

(CONTINUED)

JUANITA (CONT'D)

You got a woman in there?
Franklin. You know what...Fine
Frank. Fine, I've had enough of
this, I'm sick of your shit and
Without any assistance or guidance
from you I have loved you
assiduously for eight months, two
weeks and a day. I have been stood
up four times. I've left seven
packages on your doorstep, forty
poems, two plants and three
handmade note cards. And I left
town so I could send them. You
have been no help to me on my job.
You call at 3:00 in the morning on
weekdays. Charming, charming. But
you are of no assistance. I want
you to know this was an experiment
to see how selfish I could be. If
I could really carry on, to snare
a possible lover. If I was capable
of defacing myself for the love of
another. If I could stand not
being wanted when I wanted to be
wanted. And, I cannot so, with no
further assistance and no guidance
from you. I am ending this affair.

She reaches into her purse and takes a note card. She
sticks it into the plant.

JUANITA (CONT'D)

There's a note that is attached to
a plant I've been watering since
the day I met you. You may water
it your damn self.

Gilda comes out of her apartment.

GILDA

Good morning.

CRYSTAL

Good morning.

GILDA

Is somebody coming up?

CRYSTAL

You know somebody coming up Ms.
Gilda.

(CONTINUED)

GILDA

Who is it?

Crystal gives her a look. She hears a noise coming from her apartment.

GILDA (CONT'D)

Is that Beau Willie?

Crystal gives her a look.

GILDA (CONT'D)

Can you get my mail when you go downstairs?

CRYSTAL

Sure I'll get it.

Apartment 515 door opens Tangie sweeps dust into the hallway.

GILDA

You're gonna clean that up.

TANGIE

It's dust. It will blow away.

GILDA

Everything don't blow like you. You got a lot of men coming through your house.

TANGIE

Why you jealous cause you don't have no men COMING at all. Mind your business.

Tangie turns to go into her apartment.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

Your old ass better leave me alone. You have been the bane of my existence since they voted you apartment manager.

Tangie goes into the house and slams the door.

GILDA

I can't stand that girl. Just a tramp.

CRYSTAL

I'll talk to you later Ms. Gilda.

Kelly makes her way to the fifth floor.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

11

GILDA

Oh, okay.

Gilda goes into her apartment. She slowly closes the door.

KELLY

I gotta start exercising.

CRYSTAL

You just did.

Kelly is breathing hard.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

Can I get you some water?

KELLY

Please.

Crystal goes into her apartment. Kelly follows.

CUT TO:

12 INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - DAY

12

CRYSTAL

I told the doctor that she was fine. It's just a little bruise.

Kelly looks around the small but neat apartment. Crystal gives her a glass of water.

KELLY

Thank you. I understand that but, any time a child is repeatedly seen in an emergency room, we have to do a home visit. Where are your children?

Crystal goes into the small bedroom. Kelly sees cigarette smoke and feet hanging from a bed in the bedroom. She can hear a very loud TV. Crystal comes out with the kids and closes the door.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Is that the children's father?

CRYSTAL

Yes.

Kelly looks at the kids.

(CONTINUED)

KELLY

I'll need to speak to him.

CRYSTAL

He's asleep.

KELLY

You must be Kenya. Hello.

The kids don't respond.

KELLY (CONT'D)

My name is Kelly. I like your shirt. Can you talk to me for a second? Do you remember when you went to see the doctor the other day? How did you hurt yourself?

Beau Willie comes out of the room.

BEAU WILLIE

Who is this?

KELLY

I'm Kelly Watkins from Child Welfare.

BEAU WILLIE

Child welfare?

KELLY

Yes.

BEAU WILLIE

Damn Government. I called them months ago to get veterans benefits. I can't get a case worker. How the fuck the government gonna send you down here about some kids? I been asking them bastards. I defended this damn country, so you can have that job, and they send you down here with this bullshit. Get the fuck out of here. Coming here about some damn kids.

Sensing she is not safe Kelly quickly gathers her things to leave.

Crystal quickly closes the door. Kelly looks at the kids as the door is closing. Gilda opens the door.

(CONTINUED)

GILDA

(whispering)

It ain't her that's hurting them kids. It's him. I baby sit 'em, I know. I can hear everything through this wall. That's why I called you.

KELLY

You called.

GILDA

Yes. She can't protect them from him. Ever since he came back from the war he's been crazy. And he drinks like a fish. Do her a favor take them children. He came home crazy as hell and tried to get veterans benefits to go to school & they kept right on puttin' him in remedial classes. He couldn't read wortha damn, so Beau cussed the teachers of holdin him back & got himself a gypsy cab to drive, but his cab kept breakin down and the cops was always messin wit him. Crystal went and got pregnant again and Beau most beat her to death when she told him, she still gotta scar under her right tit where he cut her up. Still Crystal went right on and had the baby, so now Beau Willie has two children, a and there waz no air.

Beau Willie opens the door. Gilda quickly closes her door. Kelly walks down the stairs. She can almost feel Beau Willie staring at her. She looks back at Beau Willie. She hurries out.

Alice walks up the stairs past Kelly. She knocks on Tangie's door. Tangie opens it.

TANGIE

What?!

ALICE

I need some money.

TANGIE

For what?

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

Things.

TANGIE

I gave you money on the first.

ALICE

There are things I need.

TANGIE

Like what?

ALICE

Do you know how hard it is for me
to come over here and ask you for
anything?

(CONTINUED)

TANGIE

Then stop doing it.

ALICE

I wouldn't, if I didn't have to.

TANGIE

What do you need money for?

ALICE

You do this to taunt me. You are just as evil as my father was. Just evil.

TANGIE

Granddaddy put me in charge of his little will because he knew you would give all of it to that cult.

ALICE

It's not a cult. You would know that if you came and spent some time at the Temple of Elohim.

TANGIE

I'm not giving you any money.

ALICE

You will burn in hell child.

TANGIE

Why is it when I give you money I'm blessed of Elohim and when I don't I'm going to burn in hell?

ALICE

I pray for you that you find God through the mist of the distances that Satan has put in your heart. He has lured you to him through deception, through the dark forces. Don't let them take your body.

Tangie starts closing the door.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Repent! Repent!

TANGIE

Bla, Bla, Bla, Bye Alice.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (3) 14

She closes the door. Alice exits towards the stairs.

CUT TO:

15 EXT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY 15

Alice comes out of the apartment building and walks down the street handing out "Jesus Saves" tracks.

ALICE

Praise Elohim.

People ignore her. Yasmine and Bill pass her.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Repent children.

Yasmine takes a track.

ALICE (CONT'D)

God bless you.

YASMINE

Thank you.

Alice looks at her. Then she looks at Bill.

ALICE

Are you ready to meet Elohim.

BILL

I'm straight lady, thanks.

She looks at Yasmine.

ALICE

Be careful of the dark seekers.
He's darkness. Just evil.

She gives her a dollar.

ALICE (CONT'D)

The golden city awaits you.

Alice walks down the street.

BILL

You just bought your way out of
hell.

YASMINE

I guess I did.

(CONTINUED)

BILL

Anyway, go on you were talking about your girls.

YASMINE

It's so great. You should meet some of them they have so much hope. And they're getting that from dance.

BILL

Look how your face lights up when you talk about them.

YASMINE

I know, they excite me. You know most of my kids graduate from high school and go on to college.

BILL

That's great.

He looks at her for a second.

YASMINE

What?

BILL

Everyday since I met you two weeks ago we walk this route. I go to work, you go to your dance class and you never answer my question.

YASMINE

Bill I told you.

BILL

Do you know how much courage it took for me to step to you on a crowded subway. Come on.

YASMINE

I just got out of a bad relationship.

BILL

I'm not trying to marry you. I just want to take you out to dinner.

YASMINE

I'm going to be late for my class.

BILL

See. So that's how you are.

(CONTINUED)

15

CONTINUED: (2)

15

YASMINE

What?

BILL

You're one of those women that will only give. You won't let people give to you.

YASMINE

Ok, dinner tomorrow night.

BILL

8 o'clock tonight.

YASMINE

Ok. See ya tonight.

The two go in different directions on the street.

BILL

It's going to be great.

CUT TO:

16

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - YASMINE'S DANCE STUDIO - DAY

16

Nyla is in a dance class with eight other girls. The girls are doing their warm-ups.

NYLA

It was graduation night and I was the only virgin in the crowd. Bobby Mills, Martin, Jerome, Sammy Yates, Eddie Jones and Randy. All cousins. They pick me up in a black Buick. Smelling of alcohol and ladies in heat. We rambled from Camden to Mount Holly laughing at the afternoon's speeches. Our tassels dangling from the rear view mirror.

Nyla stretches.

NYLA (CONT'D)

Climbing different sort of project stairs. We went to a party and I got drunk and couldn't figure out whose hand was on my thigh. But it didn't matter because these cousins, Martin, Eddie, Sammy, Jerome and Bobby was my sweethearts alternately since the seventh grade.

(CONTINUED)

Nyla and the other girls stretch. And dance about. All the girls seem to be listening.

NYLA (CONT'D)

The party got crazy so me and Bobby left the party before the police came. We were in the backseat of his old Buick. And girl Bobby started looking at me. Yeah, he started looking at me real strange. Like I was a woman or something and started talking real soft in the backseat. By the time the sun was coming up I couldn't stop smiling.

Yasmine walks in.

GIRL #1

You gave it up in a Buick?

YASMINE

You better be talking about a ride to school.

NYLA

Yes we were.

YASMINE

Have you done your warm ups?

NYLA

Yes.

YASMINE

Great. Are you ready to begin.

The girls say yes.

YASMINE (CONT'D)

Positions, from one. And two, and three and again. Nyla and spin.

Nyla runs out of the room and onto the street.

YASMINE (CONT'D)

Keep doing your warm up girls.

She follows her out to the street.

YASMINE

Are you ok?

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

17

NYLA

Yeah, I'm just nauseous. I don't know what it is.

YASMINE

I think you're just nervous about college and being on your own. I've seen this before. You'll be fine. You're a smart girl. Come on I'll get you a ginger ale.

They walk and almost bump into Donald.

DONALD

Excuse me.

18 INT/EXT. POLICE CAR - DAY

18

He gets into his police car with Renee.

RENEE

Coffee.

DONALD

Thanks.

Donald drives off.

CUT TO:

19 INT. POLICE CAR - DAY

19

Renee sits next to him drinking coffee.

DONALD

Who can understand women?

RENEE

You tell me.

DONALD

But you're a woman.

RENEE

No, I'm a woman and I date women. And I don't have any answers.

DONALD

What good is having a lesbian to ride around with all day if you can't give me some insight on the female mind from a same sex point of view.

(CONTINUED)

19

CONTINUED:

19

RENEE

That's not fair I helped you get
out of the dog, house when you
forgot your anniversary didn't I?

Renee sees a car in an alley.

DONALD

Yes you did.

RENEE

Thank you. Hey stop, back up.

They see a BMW parked in an alleyway with the windows
steamed up.

DONALD

That's a really nice car for this
neighborhood.

RENEE

Yep.

CUT TO:

20

EXT. POLICE CAR - ALLEYWAY - DAY

20

The two officers walk up to the car on opposite sides and
tap the glass.

DONALD

Get out of the car.

Two men get out of the car buckling their pants.

RENEE

You're under arrest.

CARL

For what?

RENEE

Indecent exposure.

CARL

We weren't doing...

RENEE

I saw you sir.

DONALD

Yeah and unfortunately I did too.

(CONTINUED)

RENEE

You have the right to remain silent.

CARL

Wait, wait...Look I can't go to jail.

RENEE

Then, you should have gotten a room.

DONALD

Any needles in your pockets?

Donald walks Carl to the back seat of the squad car.

DONALD (CONT'D)

Children take this route home from school all the time.

CUT TO:

Juanita sits in the lobby waiting area of the very upscale building. It is very modern and very cold with lots of hard edges and upright uncomfortable furniture. Katina an assistant comes out of an office.

JUANITA

Is she ready to see me?

KATINA

I'm sorry, it'll be just a few more minutes.

She goes to a table and pours a cup of coffee.

JOANNA (V.O.)

Where is Crystal?

KATINA

She called. She's on her way.

JOANNA (V.O.)

Does it take this long to get tea?

Katina quickly pours the coffee out and quickly makes tea as Juanita looks on.

KATINA

I've got it right here. I'm sorry she'll be right with you.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

JUANITA

Honey, I'm the one that's sorry
for you.

Katina runs into the office.

CUT TO:

22 INT. BRADMORE PUBLICATIONS - JOANNA'S OFFICE - DAY 22

Joanna sits in a large office behind a glass desk it
seems as if all of Manhattan is the view from both sides
of the office windows. She sits talking to four people.

JOANNA

I don't understand this. This is
a magazine not a web-site.

Joanna clears her throat. Katina hands her some tea.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

The readers want texture. Look at
this ad, it says nothing. You all
need to go back to the drawing
board. Bring me something with
style, contour. Ok, thank you.

Four people exit the meeting. Joanna has a small cough.

Crystal runs in.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

Finally, you're here. What
happened this time? One of the
children had a fever, the baby-
sitter was late or you over slept.

CRYSTAL

I'm sorry.

JOANNA

I do have limits even for a very
good assistant.

CRYSTAL

Yes ma'am.

JOANNA

Where is the buy Katina?

CRYSTAL

It's here. I left it on your desk
I knew you would need it this
morning.

(CONTINUED)

JOANNA

And the st...

CRYSTAL

The stat report is attached.
Also your nine o'clock is here.

JOANNA

What nine o'clock?

She looks at her watch.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

It's ten.

CRYSTAL

Last week you agreed to meet with
Juanita Sims. She runs a nonprofit
organization. Shall I send her in.

JOANNA

Fine.

Katina goes out to get her.

JOANNA (CONT'D)

Oh, why do I take these beggar
meetings.

Juanita comes in as Katina and Crystal leave out.

JUANITA

Hi. Juanita Simms.

JOANNA

Hi. What can I do for you?

JUANITA

I'm so glad that you took this
meeting. I'll be quick because I
know you're really busy. I was
reading in your magazine about
your upbringing and I just knew...

Joanna seems to not be paying attention to her.

JUANITA (CONT'D)

You would respond to this program.
I'm a nurse and I started a free
health and wellness clinic in a
community center in one of the
poorest neighborhoods in this
city. As you know growing up poor
like so many of us.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JUANITA (CONT'D)

We never had health care or even talked about it. So I just wanted to educate women on their bodies and at the same time their mind and souls. You and me both were raised by single mothers so I know how that is.

JOANNA

That's great. Where do I come in?

Juanita hands Joanna a flyer, placing it on top of the document that she was distracted with. The two woman look at each other oddly for a second.

JUANITA

Well this is just a little nonprofit. And everything I've been doing, I've been doing on my own, out of my pocket, you know we get a small donation here and there.

JOANNA

Let me stop you, I give to Cancer, I give to Education, I give to Africa. Those are my charities of choice.

JUANITA

And those are all great causes but there is so much need right here in our own community.

JOANNA

Our community, I think that we've all been afforded the same opportunities in this country and if these women, these people didn't do anything with their opportunities, it's not my issue. I'm afraid I'm going to have to say no. Thank you.

JUANITA

Thank you?

Joanna leans into the intercom.

JOANNA

Crystal see Ms. Sims out please.

Crystal comes in.

22

CONTINUED: (3)

22

JUANITA

Did she just...

CRYSTAL

Right this way please.

JUANITA

No. I sat in this damn lobby waiting an hour for you. Cool, you don't want to give us any money I get that. But this attitude and disregard for people's time and feeling is ridiculous. Does it take all of this for you to be that? Cause if it does, you might be paying too much.

Juanita walks out.

CUT TO:

23

INT. DOCTORS OFFICE - DAY

23

Donald stands in the room Kelly paces a little.

DONALD

Babe will you stop pacing.

KELLY

I'm sorry.

DONALD

It's ok.

KELLY

What if he says we can't have children?

DONALD

Baby that wouldn't be the end of the world.

KELLY

I want to give you a child, Donald.

The doctor comes in.

DR. DAVIS

Hello.

DONALD

Hi.

(CONTINUED)

KELLY

Hi.

DR. DAVIS

Ok, so we got the lab results and the test results.

He puts up an x-ray.

DR. DAVIS (CONT'D)

This is why your haven't been able to conceive. Your fallopian tubes are scarred. We usually see this form when a pelvis infection that wasn't treated.

DONALD

What wasn't treated?

DR. DAVIS

Oh, should we speak alone.

KELLY

No, its fine.

DR. DAVIS

An untreated STD can cause this issue.

Donald looks at her.

KELLY

What about surgery?

DR. DAVIS

I honestly wouldn't recommend it. It's risky, you could end up needing to have a hysterotomy.

Kelly walks out of the room.

DR. DAVIS (CONT'D)

I'm sorry.

DONALD

Thank you.

CUT TO:

DONALD

Hey.

(CONTINUED)

KELLY

I'm sorry I just need to go to work.

DONALD

It's ok baby.

KELLY

You know how hard it is looking at all of these people who don't want children, I gotta go to work.

DONALD

Ok I'll see you at home later.

He kisses her.

DONALD (CONT'D)

I love you.

KELLY

I love you too.

The hotel is very trendy and new, likened to the W hotel franchise. The bar is a small area filled with people. Tangie is the bartender pouring drinks.

MAN #2

Let me have a double shot of vodka straight.

She smiles.

MAN #2 (CONT'D)

What?

TANGIE

You can tell a lot about a man by what he drinks.

MAN #2

Oh yeah?

TANGIE

Yeah, that man over there is drinking a beer. He's broke, now the guy over there is drinking champagne trying to impress the lady but he doesn't know what a good bottle is so he bought the most expensive.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TANGIE (CONT'D)

The two guys over there are drinking from glasses with umbrellas. They are so flaming if they walk past a sprinkler it will go off.

He laughs.

MAN #2

Oh yeah. What does my drink say about me?

TANGIE

It says you're married, here on business and want to get a buzz quickly so you can have a good time and forget about the wife at home.

MAN #2

Wow?

TANGIE

Am I right?

MAN #2

Dead on. So what are my chances.

TANGIE

For what?

MAN #2

Having a good time in your beautiful city.

TANGIE

Looking very good daddy.

MAN #2

And just where can I go to have a good time?

TANGIE

Tell you what, I'm off in a few hours I could show you around if you're up for it.

MAN #2

I'd like that very much.

WAITRESS

Tangie there is a black woman in the lobby who says she's your mother. She won't come in because this is a bar and of the devil.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (2)

25

TANGIE

Cover me.

She goes out to the lobby of the nice hotel.

CUT TO:

26 INT PATRICK IVY HOTEL - LOBBY - EVENING

26

TANGIE

What are you doing at my damn job?

ALICE

I need some money.

TANGIE

I told you I wasn't giving you any money now get out of here.

ALICE

I need three hundred and eighty five dollars.

TANGIE

For what?

ALICE

I just need it.

TANGIE

Get out of here Alice.

ALICE

I have to have the patience of Job to deal with you, my daughter. You're going to end up in the belly of the whale if you don't get your life right.

TANGIE

Security!

A security guard walks over.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

This customer has had too much to drink can you escort her out.

SECURITY GUARD

Ma'am would you come with us please.

(CONTINUED)

26

CONTINUED:

26

ALICE

You touch me I will bless you out
with this oil, child boy.

CUT TO:

27

INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

27

Crystal reads a bedtime story to the kids. Beau Willie
comes in.

BEAU WILLIE

Hey.

CRYSTAL

Hey. I kept the dinner warm for
you.

BEAU WILLIE

Yeah ok.

CRYSTAL

How did it go?

BEAU WILLIE

What are you talking about.

CRYSTAL

I thought you were going to try to
look for a job today.

BEAU WILLIE

Ain't nobody trying to hire a
veteran. Get me a drink.

She gets him some water. He knocks it out of her hand.

BEAU WILLIE (CONT'D)

What the shit is that?

CRYSTAL

Water.

BEAU WILLIE

I want a drink.

CRYSTAL

Beau maybe you shouldn't drink
tonight.

BEAU WILLIE

You trying to say I got a problem.

(CONTINUED)

CRYSTAL

No, I'm saying you shouldn't drink tonight.

BEAU WILLIE

So you telling me what I should do now.

CRYSTAL

I'm telling you what I think. I'm not accusing you of anything. Are you hungry?

BEAU WILLIE

I'm not an alcoholic.

CRYSTAL

I know that.

BEAU WILLIE

I'm trying Crystal.

CRYSTAL

I know that too, Beau. It's just that you get so mad sometimes. I know the army did you wrong. I saw it. I'm on your side. I know why you get mad but baby when you drink you get out of control. So don't drink tonight do it for me. Ok.

BEAU WILLIE

Ok. You know I love you?

CRYSTAL

I know.

BEAU WILLIE

You love me.

CRYSTAL

Of course I do.

BEAU WILLIE

Then why wont you marry me.

CRYSTAL

We got more things to worry about then getting married.

BEAU WILLIE

If you loved me you would.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED: (2)

27

CRYSTAL

I love you. Now come on and get
some dinner in you.

He gets up and goes to the kitchen.

CUT TO:

28 INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - JUANITA'S FREE CLINIC - DAY 28

Juanita is talking to several women.

JUANITA

Ladies, these condoms are free.
How many times have you heard your
man say, "It don't feel the same"
or "I ain't got nothing" when his
ass ain't even been to a doctor.
Make him use them. If you know how
many young beautiful faces I see
every day like yours at the
hospital cause they didn't want to
hurt the mans feelings. Shhhittt,
hurt his feelings or let him go
home hurting.

Frank taps on glass in the door. Juanita looks at him.

JUANITA (CONT'D)

Excuse me, I'll be right back.

Juanita goes out the hallway.

29 INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - HALLWAY - DAY

29

FRANK

Hey, baby.

JUANITA

I don't want to talk to you. I
haven't seen or heard from you in
four days.

FRANK

Baby, you know I drive that truck.

JUANITA

Don't give me that bullshit. I
know you. Were you with her?

FRANK

Baby, I miss you.

(CONTINUED)

JUANITA

You miss me when she get tired of you. I'm to old for this Frank.

FRANK

I love you.

JUANITA

No, you don't.

FRANK

Yes I do.

JUANITA

If you really love me, then leave me alone.

FRANK

Don't hurt me like this.

JUANITA

Hurt you. Get out of here Frank. I got these ladies to talk to.

Juanita goes back into the classroom as Frank looks at her.

JUANITA

When you use a condom it is important that you use a water based lubricant....

Joanna sits at the table dialing on the phone. There is no answer.

JOANNA

Look I know we had a fight the other night but this silent treatment is not good for me. You were suppose to meet me at dinner. Call me. I'm starting to worry.

We find Bill and Yasmine in the restaurant.

YASMINE

My papa thought he was Puerto Rican & we would have been except we were just regular Negros wit hints of Spanish.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

31

CONTINUED:

31

YASMINE (CONT'D)

So off I made it to this 36 hour
marathon dance con salsa con
Ricardo 'Sugggggggggggar' Ray on
southern boulevard. It was up up
up up up stairs and stairs and
lotsa hallway wit my colored New
Jersey self. Didn't know what
anybody was saying except if
dancin waz proof of origin I was
jibarita herself that nite. I kept
smilin and right on steppin. If he
could lead I waz ready to dance.
If he couldn't lead I caught this
attitude. I'd seen Rosa do and
would not be bothered I waz
twirlin hippin givin much quick
feet and bein a mute cute colored
Puerto Rican.

Bill laughs. As we pan over to Joanna.

WAITER

Are you ready to order?

JOANNA

You know Danny I think I'm going
to go home. Can you have my driver
pull around please.

WAITER

Sure.

JOANNA

Thank you.

32

INT. ALICE'S APARTMENT - EVENING

32

Nyla is cooking dinner. Alice walks in and sits down.

NYLA

Hey mamma.

ALICE

Angel.

NYLA

I know you're tired.

ALICE

I am.

NYLA

Come on.

(CONTINUED)

Nyla kneels down and takes off Alice's shoes.

ALICE

Thank you. My sweet baby. You are nothing like your sister. Here.

She gives her some money. Nyla looks at it.

NYLA

This is only thirty-eight dollars.

ALICE

I know. I tried to get more but your sister wouldn't give it to me.

NYLA

Maybe you shouldn't have told her it was for me.

ALICE

I didn't tell her what it was for, but you know I wasn't going to lie. You know she can't stand you. You've always been so much better than her. If she knew that it was for you to better yourself she would never give it to me. Your sister is so wicked. She holds that wallet like its Jacob holding on to an angel.

NYLA

Why did grandpa put her in charge of the money when he died?

ALICE

To nail me to the cross. That's why he only gives me a thousand dollars a month. He wants to keep his foot on my neck even in death. Don't you worry I'll figure out something. Can I talk to your dance teacher to see if I can pay it over time?

NYLA

No, don't. She won't do that. If I don't get that money Ms. Yasmine says she can't get me the application for the my scholarship

ALICE

I know. I know, Elohim will make a way.

33

EXT. YASMINE'S APARTMENT -NIGHT

33

Bill and Yasmine are walking down the street.

BILL

And that's how it started. I can tell you love dance.

YASMINE

I love dance more than I waz mad uh-huh, uh-huh, more than when I discovered Archie Shepp & subtle blues don't cha know I wore out the magic of juju heroically resisting being possessed. Ooooooooooooooh the sounds sneakin in under age to slug's to stare at'a real 'artiste' ans every word outta imamu's mouth waz gospel. And if Jesus couldn't play a horn like Shepp wazn't no need for colored folks to bear no cross at all and dance is my thank-you for music and I love you more than dance more than Aureliano Buendia loved macondo more than Hector Lavoe loved himself. More than the lady loved gardenias. More than Celia loves Cuba or Graciela loves el son more than the flamingoes love bein pretty. Te amo mas que te amo mas que, we're here. I had the best time.

BILL

See I told you.

YASMINE

Thank you.

BILL

Can I come in?

YASMINE

It's getting late.

BILL

Ok, good night.

He leans in and kisses her.

YASMINE

Good night.

(CONTINUED)

BILL

Maybe for our next date you can cook. Help a brother save some money.

YASMINE

You know what? I had such a good time I will do that.

BILL

Ok, go on in I want to make sure you're safe.

YASMINE

Ok. Such a gentlemen. That's a good thing. Bye.

BILL

Bye.

He turns and walks down the street.

CUT TO:

Tangie and MAN #3 burst through the door drunk.

MAN #3

No wait.

She is taking off his clothes and hers too.

TANGIE

Come on daddy.

MAN #3

Look I gotta to tell you something.

She is all over him.

TANGIE

What?

MAN #3

I only have about eighty dollars on me.

TANGIE

What are you talking about?

(CONTINUED)

MAN #3

That's all I have. If it's more we
can go to the ATM?

TANGIE

You think I'm a hooker?

MAN #3

Aren't you?

TANGIE

No

MAN #3

Damn I'm sorry, I'm drunk.

He starts to laugh.

TANGIE

What's funny?

MAN #3

I guess I'm just old fashion. What
kind of woman picks a man up in a
bar and takes him back to her
place, if she's not a hooker?

TANGIE

One that likes to fuck.

He starts to laugh even harder.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

Don't laugh at me.

He laughs harder.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

Don't laugh at me.

MAN #3

I'm sorry but this is some sick
shit. You pick me up bring me back
here to screw me. And you don't
think this is cool. Wow, women
have changed. I'm from the south,
sorry. I'm just used to a women
being...women. What kind of woman
does that?

TANGIE

You men have such a double
standard. You can do it but, a
woman can't. Get out. Get out.

(CONTINUED)

34

CONTINUED: (2)

34

MAN #3

That's a good idea. Maybe this is for the best, because it seems to me that you do this too often to be healthy.

TANGIE

You think I have some kind of disease?

MAN #3

If it ain't in your body, it's definitely in your head.

TANGIE

Mothafucka you got five seconds to be on the other side of that door.

Man #3 exits to the door.

CUT TO:

35

INT. CRYSTALS'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - NIGHT

35

Man #3 goes down the steps laughing. Gilda opens her door and looks at the man. Tangie stands at her doorway.

TANGIE

You ain't one to judge me you son of a bitch.

She looks at Gilda.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

Don't you say a word.

GILDA

A Word.

Gilda closes her door.

TANGIE

Bitch....

Tangie sees Nyla walking up the stairs.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

What do you want?

NYLA

Why won't you just give her some money.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED:

35

TANGIE

I make sure her rent is paid and that she has groceries. What more does she want? I'm not giving her money to give to them people.

Tangie and Nyla enter the apartment.

36 INT. TANGIE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

36

NYLA

She needs some money.

TANGIE

For what?

NYLA

Look, I have to pay my college application fees.

TANGIE

What?

NYLA

I got a scholarship to college but I have to pay the application fees. And she didn't want to tell you that, because she knew you wouldn't do it if you knew it was for me.

TANGIE

How much money?

NYLA

Three hundred dollars.

TANGIE

Girl, you think I'm Boo Boo the fool? That don't sound right at all.

NYLA

It's true.

TANGIE

I'm not giving you any money.

NYLA

Mamma was right about you. You're evil.

She walks away as Tangie looks at her.

(CONTINUED)

TANGIE

Hey hold up. You been fucking.

NYLA

What? No I haven't?

TANGIE

Yes, you have I can see it in your face. You're pregnant.

NYLA

Everybody is not like you Tangie.

TANGIE

Yeah, but you are little sister.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

Mama's so proud of you. Wait till she finds out you pregnant.

NYLA

I'm not pregnant.

TANGIE

I don't know how you gonna go to school like that. Mama is gonna die, I can't wait. I cannot wait.

Tangie starts to laugh.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

He didn't use a condom. Baby you have to use a condom. I remember the first time I got pregnant. I was so scared. I went to this apartment on 138th. It was a red building in the middle of the block. Down a back alley. Apartment 331. I couldn't afford to go to no clinic. I wasn't pregnant anymore.

Nyla walks out of the apartment.

CUT TO:

Joanna is getting ready for bed when Carl walks in.

CARL

Hi.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

JOANNA

I have been calling you all day.

CARL

Yeah I know. My battery died.

JOANNA

And you couldn't call me from another phone and tell me that. Do you know how worried I was. I was about to call the police.

CARL

I'm fine.

38 INT. CARL AND JOANNA'S APARMTENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

38

He goes straight to the shower. She follows him.

JOANNA

Is this about the fight we had the other night?

CARL

No, Joanna. I told you my battery was dead.

JOANNA

You're still angry with me. I can hear it in your voice.

CARL

I'm not angry.

JOANNA

Good, because you don't have a right to be.

CARL

Well you could have told me.

JOANNA

Excuse me, just as you should have told me that you were moving two hundred thousand dollars of my money into a stock that you didn't even check with me about.

CARL

It's always you and your money.

JOANNA

I earn it.

(CONTINUED)

CARL

I am a broker. Everyone at my firm knows who you are. It's embarrassing to me to not be able to make decision as the man of this house. So I did it. I said I was sorry and I'm not talking about this shit anymore.

JOANNA

Good, then don't talk, listen. We've only been married for three years. I know I have trust issues, but you making choices without checking with me is not helping.

CARL

You not only have trust issues, you have control issues.

He gets into the shower.

JOANNA

Don't walk away from me. Fine.

Joanna exits.

CUT TO:

Kelly sits in the apartment when Donald comes in.

KELLY

Hey.

DONALD

Hey, you're up late.

They kiss.

KELLY

I can't sleep. How was your day?

DONALD

My day was where I left it.

KELLY

I understand that. Are you hungry?

DONALD

No.

(CONTINUED)

KELLY

Don't you want to know what happened?

DONALD

Do you want to tell me?

KELLY

A boyfriend in college. Had gonorrhoea didn't tell me. I found out eight months later from having the worst cramps in my life. And now I can't give you a child.

DONALD

You give me way more than I need, baby.

Donald kisses her.

DONALD (CONT'D)

We'll figure this out. You know I love you.

KELLY

I do.

DONALD

Then let's keep building from that. Ok?

KELLY

Thank you.

CUT TO:

Juanita drives up to her place, she gets out of the car. Frank is sitting on the stoop.

FRANK

Hey.

JUANITA

Just leave me alone Frank.

FRANK

Can we just talk?

Juanita walks past him and goes into her apartment. Frank follows.

CUT TO:

41

INT. JUANITA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

41

JUANITA

Go home. Oh that's right, you don't have a home to go to.

FRANK

What?

JUANITA

Somebody told me you moved out of your apartment. What did you do, move back in with her?

FRANK

No.

JUANITA

I'm sick of all your lies and shit.

FRANK

I'm sorry baby. I don't know why I keep going back. But if you want to know the truth, this time, I felt different when I was there. I was thinking about you all the time. If I can't have you I don't know what I'm gonna do.

JUANITA

What would I look like letting you back in my life after all the advice I give to the women at my clinic.

FRANK

Baby.

JUANITA

No Frank, you listen, every time I let you move back in here you do the same thing. And every time I come home and you're not here. I check the closet to see if your things are gone. I gotta set an example for my women.

FRANK

This ain't got nothing to do with them. This is about me and you babe. You help them, now help me.

JUANITA

Help you do what?

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

FRANK

Get to a place in myself where I don't need nobody but you. You say you want honesty baby I'm giving you the truth.

He hugs her.

JUANITA

Why didn't you just say that in the first damn place?

He kisses her on her neck.

JUANITA (CONT'D)

I'm tired of trying to love you Frank. You ought to just leave.

FRANK

Let me stay, you gone let me stay.

JUANITA

No, go.

He kisses her.

JUANITA (CONT'D)

Frank, Frank.

He kisses her neck.

JUANITA (CONT'D)

You got some condoms?

42 INT. BRADMORE PUBLICATIONS - JOANNA'S OFFICE - DAY

42

Crystal is busy around the office.

CRYSTAL

Hey, I called Dr. Jackson and she can see you this afternoon.

JOANNA

Thanks.

KATINA

Your husband is here.

Carl comes in with flowers. Crystal leaves.

CARL

Hi.

(CONTINUED)

JOANNA

Hey. What a surprise.

CARL

I just came by to tell you that I'm sorry for the way I've been acting the last few days. You are so right, I shouldn't have taken that money without telling you. I really thought I was helping you...us. I thought it would earn a lot of interest and you would be proud of me. And I don't blame you for taking my name off the accounts. It's your money. I'm sorry. Baby, I really love you. And I'm going to do better.

JOANNA

Thank you.

CARL

And I got tickets to the opera tonight.

JOANNA

You're going to take me to the opera?

CARL

Yes.

JOANNA

Oh, you must really be sorry if you're going to sit through it. What did you call it the last time we were there? Chinese water torture?

CARL

For you I will.

He leans in to kiss her. She coughs.

JOANNA

Sorry.

They both laugh.

CUT TO:

Yasmine walks in and sees flowers.

(CONTINUED)

TANGIE

Who's that from?

YASMINE

Just a guy I had dinner with he's really nice. Can I help you with something.

TANGIE

Yeah, I'm here to pay for the college applications.

YASMINE

What are you talking about?

TANGIE

Sorry, I'm Tangie, Nyla's my sister. She said that there was three hundred dollars that she needed to pay for a application or something.

YASMINE

I don't know what you're talking about. The classes are free.

TANGIE

That little slut. Thank you.

Tangie turns and walks out.

CUT TO:

The apartment building is run down and dilapidated. Drunks and addicts fall out of apartment doors. We hear lots of yelling and noise as Nyla knocks on a door. A man opens the door as a pit bull barks in the doorway. He holds him tightly with a chain, as Nyla walks in. He looks at her and closes the door. Babies cry in the background.

NYLA

Hi, I'm Nyla.

ROSE

You don't have a name girl.

Nyla looked around the room. It doesn't look clean. She has great reservation.

(CONTINUED)

A44

CONTINUED:

A44

ROSE (CONT'D)

Come on. Sit there on the table.
Come on girl.

She stands there for a while as Rose goes on to something else. She pours bleach on the table and into a bucket.

ROSE (CONT'D)

What are you still standing here
for? Where's my money?

She hands her fifty dollars.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Get on the table.

She prepares her instruments. A train passes, seeming to be just outside the window. Nyla looks in the trash can and sees several empty vodka bottles. There are beer bottles on the counter and a half filled whiskey bottle sitting next to an empty glass with melting ice.

ROSE (CONT'D)

I've done this a million times
relax. Young girls get out there
in the world and they have to come
see me. That world is something.
I useta live in the world then I
moved to Harlem and my universe is
now six blocks.

Rose is pulling out all kinds of instruments that are not sterilized at all. She puts them in the bleach bucket.

ROSE (CONT'D)

A tunnel with a train I can ride
anywhere, remaining a stranger.

Nyla looks at her confused. Then at the instruments.

ROSE (CONT'D)

I could stay alone. A woman in
the world then, but I moved to
Harlem. I come in at dusk, stay
close to the curb. Round midnight
praying won't no young man think
I'm pretty. In a dark morning
wouldn't be good, not good at all
to meet a tall short black brown
young man fulla his power in the
dark, in my universe of six
blocks. Straight up brick walls
women hanging outta windows
like old silk stockings. Cats
crying, children giggling.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

A44 CONTINUED: (2)

A44

ROSE (CONT'D)

A tavern with red curtains.
 Bad smells, kissing ladies smiling
 and dirt sidewalks spitting. Men
 cursing. Come here bitch. Can't
 you see this five dollars.
 I usedta live in the world.
 Really be in the world free and
 sweet talking. Good morning and
 thank you and nice day. Uh-huh
 I can't now. I can't be nice to
 nobody. Nice is such a rip-off.
 I usedta be in the world. A woman
 in the world I hadda right to the
 world. Then I moved to Harlem for
 the set-up of a universe six
 blocks of cruelty piled up on
 itself. A tunnel closing. Open
 your legs.

CUT TO:

45 INT. YASMINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

45

Yasmine's apartment is very Afrocentric. Its small and colorful. There is a futon, coffee table, and lots of books on a book shelf. Lots of posters of famous African dancers Josephine Baker, Judith Jamison, Scheita, Alvin Ailey, and so on. Bill sits on the sofa. She stands in the kitchen.

BILL

Nice place.

YASMINE

Thanks.

BILL

What smells so good?

YASMINE

Me.

They both laugh.

BILL

Ok.

YASMINE

No, I'm cooking a Cuban feast for
 you my friend.

BILL

Let's skip the dinner and go right
 for the desert.

(CONTINUED)

He walks up to her and kisses her on her forehead.

YASMINE

Stop it.

BILL

Hug me.

She does.

BILL (CONT'D)

You do smell good.

YASMINE

Let me check the bread. You want wine?

BILL

You are all the wine I need.

He tries to kiss her. She pushes him away.

YASMINE

Bill come on, stop. We're suppose to be having dinner.

BILL

Come on, you want to.

He starts to take off his clothes.

YASMINE

Bill...

BILL

What?

YASMINE

Put your clothes on.

BILL

Why?

YASMINE

I...

BILL

What, we're both adults. I know why you asked me to come over here.

YASMINE

No, no you've got it wrong.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED: (2)

45

BILL

Oh I see, you're gonna put up a fight. So you can feel like a good girl in the morning.

YASMINE

That's not what I was thinking at all....

He grabs her and holds her around the waist tight.

YASMINE (CONT'D)

Stop it.

He tries to kiss her.

BILL

You know you want me. You know it.

YASMINE

Stop it.

He slams her against the wall holding her wrist over her head with one hand and kissing her on the neck, squarely on top of her.

CUT TO:

46 INT. THEATRE - NIGHT

46

Joanna and Carl sit and listen as The opera singers start to sing an opera called Pyramid. (Ntozoke's poem translated to an Italian Opera.)

CUT TO:

47 INT. YASMINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

47

Yasmine is fighting Bill off as. He is enjoying every violent moment.

CUT TO:

48 INT. THEATRE - NIGHT

48

Carl and Joanna watch the opera.

CUT TO:

49 INT. YASMINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 49

Yasmine has stopped fighting and seems to be in shock with tears falling from her face she has gone limp. She looks at the clock on the wall. It seems to tick loudly. It reads 8:25.

CUT TO:

50 INT. THEATRE - NIGHT 50

The opera singers get to the climax of the opera. Carl looks out of the corner of his eye at a man that is looking back at him.

CUT TO:

51 INT. YASMINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 51

Bill is having an orgasm as Yasmine lays there unaffected. She looks at the clock it's 8:28.

CUT TO:

52 INT. THEATRE - NIGHT 52

Joanna sits with a tear falling from her face. As the opera continues.

CUT TO:

53 INT. YASMINE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 53

Yasmine sits up completely in shock and removed from the situation. She sits void of emotion pulling up the strap on her bra. Bill is laughing. It's inaudible to her.

BILL

You want me to set the table.

Yasmine shakes her head no. He gets down on his knees in front of her.

BILL (CONT'D)

I knew you would enjoy it.

He kisses her.

BILL (CONT'D)

It was good, wasn't it?

(CONTINUED)

53

CONTINUED:

53

Yasmine nods yes.

BILL (CONT'D)

It's getting late, you still want
to have dinner?

She shakes her head no.

BILL (CONT'D)

Ok, I gotta work tomorrow anyway.
I better get home and get some
sleep. Lock the door behind me.
Ok.

Yasmine nods yes.

As he leaves she runs to the door and locks it falling to
the floor in tears.

CUT TO:

54

INT. BRADMORE PUBLICATIONS - DAY

54

Crystal walks over to Katina's.

CRYSTAL

Where are you going for lunch?

KATINA

I'm not sure.

Joanna comes out of the office she starts to cough.

KATINA (CONT'D)

Tea?

JOANNA

Yes Crystal. Where are the field
stats?

CRYSTAL

It's in the report page seven.

She slams the report on her desk.

JOANNA

Do you see it?

CRYSTAL

Oh no, I must have forgotten it at
home. I took it to make sure it
was right.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

JOANNA

I have a lunch meeting in forty five minutes. What do you propose I do?

CRYSTAL

I'll get on the train right now and go get it.

JOANNA

No, no, I'll be late, come on. I'll take you to your house.

CUT TO:

55 INT/EXT. JOANNA'S CAR - DAY

55

Crystal and Joanna pull up to the apartment. Crystal is reluctant to get out of the car. Joanna leans forward.

CRYSTAL

You're not getting out are you?

JOANNA

No, will you hurry please.

Joanna reaches into her purse. Crystal gets out of the car and looks around she quickly runs into the building.

CUT TO:

56 INT. JOANNA'S CAR - DAY

56

Joanna sits frustrated.

JOANNA

I hate coming to these kinds of neighborhoods. Are the doors locked?

DRIVER

Yes ma'am they are.

JOANNA

It's hard to believe I grew up this way.

57 INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - DAY

57

As she walks into the apartment it is dark. An episode of Bonanza plays on the television in black and white. Beau Willie stands in the window smoking a cigarette.

(CONTINUED)

He is looking down at the Mercedes and sees a man's form in the front seat.

CRYSTAL

Hi.

BEAU WILLIE

Did you pull up in that car?

CRYSTAL

Yeah, it's my boss.

BEAU WILLIE

I thought you worked for a woman.

CRYSTAL

I do.

BEAU WILLIE

Who's the dude in the front seat?

CRYSTAL

That's the driver.

BEAU WILLIE

You think I'm crazy don't you?

Crystal sees an empty vodka bottle on the table. Beau walks towards her.

Gilda sits with the children when she hears a noise. She hears a picture fall off the wall and crash on the floor.

KENYA

What is that noise?

GILDA

It'll be alright.

KWAME

Is that my mamma?

GILDA

Did I ever tell you how I met my husband. His name was Toussaint. I was eight years old. The library was right down from de trolley tracks cross from the laundry-mat thru the big shining floors and granite pillars. Old St. Louis is famous for. I found Toussaint.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

58

CONTINUED:

58

GILDA (CONT'D)

I knew I wasn't supposed to but I ran into the adult reading room and came across Toussaint my first black man.

They hear Beau Willie yelling. The kids look teary.

GILDA (CONT'D)

Toussaint was a black man. A Negro like my Mama say. Who refused to be a slave. He spoke French and didn't let no white man to tell him nothing. I was sick of white folks so my imaginary...

CUT TO:

59

INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - DAY

59

We see close up shots of Beau Willie raising his hand and Crystal trying to get away from him. He throws her against the wall.

GILDA (V.O.)

Toussaint said "Let's go to Haiti". I said awright. Then Toussaint and I took the Hodiament Streetcar to the river last stop. That Was where we was gonna stow away on a boat for New Orleans and catch a creole fishing rig for Port-Au-Prince.

60

INT. GILDA'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

60

They hear another picture fall from the wall. The children start to cry.

GILDA

Then some ole boy jumped out in front of me and said, "Where you going little gal?" I said, "Who are you?" He said I'm Toussaint Jones. I said, "I am on my way to see Toussaint L'Ouverture in Haiti." Are ya any kin to him? He don't take no stuff from no white folks. They gotta country all they own and they ain't no slaves. That silly ol' boy squinted his face all up. Looka heah girl, I am Toussaint Jones.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

60

GILDA (CONT'D)

I'm right heah lookin' at ya and I don't take no stuff from no white folks. Ya don't see non round heah, do ya?

CUT TO:

61 INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

61

Crystal is trying to shield herself from the blows, he is yelling at the top of his lungs.

CUT TO:

62 INT. GILDA'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

62

The children sit crying.

GILDA

And he sorta' pushed out his chest then he say, "Come on lets go on down to the docks and look at the boats." I was real puzzled going down to the docks with my paper bag and my books. I felt Toussaint L'Ouverture leave and this Toussaint was the same 'cept the ol' one was in Haiti and this one wid me speakin' English and eatin' apples. Yeah, Toussaint Jones waz awright wit me.

The noise stops, Gilda goes to the door and opens it. She is shocked to find Beau willie standing there, he grabs the children and takes them to the apartment and slams the door.

CUT TO:

63 INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - DAY

63

Crystal comes out of the bathroom shocked to see that he has the children.

BEAU WILLIE

Bitch you hear me, you gonna be a whore all your life.

CRYSTAL

Beau Willie Brown. Do you want the children to see you act the fool again?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

Do you want Kwame to be brain
damaged from you throwing him
around?

She grabs the kids and tries to protect them. She grabs a
knife. He tries to grab the children.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

Get out or I'll kill ya.
I swear I'll kill you

He reaches for Kenya and Crystal grabs the little girl
and holds her tight.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

Don't you touch my children,
muthafucker or I'll kill you.

Beau steps back humble.

BEAU WILLIE

I'm sorry, I don't wanna hurt em.
I just wanna hold em. I don't
wanna cause you no more trouble. I
wanted to marry you and give ya
things.

CRYSTAL

What are you gonna give, a broken
jaw. Niggah get outta here.

He sits down and tears up. He lights a cigarette. Then he
motioned for the children. Kenya pushes away and goes to
her daddy.

KENYA

"Daddy, Daddy, be nice to Mommy
cause, Mommy loves you and ya
gotta be nice.

He plays with the ribbons in her hair.

BEAU WILLIE

See Crystal, I can be a good
father now let me see my son. You
are still hot, so strong. Didn't
you get right up after that lil
fight we had and went back to
work. Come here Kwame.

She loosens her grip on Kwame, then he walks over to Beau
Willie. Crystal sits down and puts her hands in her head.

CRYSTAL

Beau, you gotta get some help....

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: (2)

63

Beau jumps up laughing holding both the children in his arms.

BEAU WILLIE

Awright bitch, awright bitch. You gonna marry me. You gonna marry me.

CRYSTAL

Damn it Beau, I not going to marry you. You're gonna be in jail. You gonna be under the jail for this. Now give me my kids.

He kicks the screen out of the window.

BEAU WILLIE

Your kids. What you trying to say they ain't mine..huh. You just a damn whore. Is that your man down there in the car? Are these his kids? Let me give him his kids...

CRYSTAL

Beau NO!

BEAU WILLIE

You won't marry me? They must be his.

CUT TO:

64 EXT. COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

64

Juanita walks to her car putting a box in the trunk. She is parked a few cars behind Joanna on the other side of the street.

65 INT. JOANNA'S CAR - DAY

65

JOANNA

Where is this girl?

66 EXT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - DAY

66

Tangie walks up the block headed home with another man.

TANGIE

But see, that's what I'm saying.

CUT TO:

67 EXT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - DAY 67

Gilda comes out of the building screaming.

GILDA
Help her, help her...

TANGIE
What is wrong with this crazy old
woman?

CUT TO:

68 INT. JOANNA'S CAR - DAY 68

Joanna sits looking at the commotion on the street.

JOANNA
What's going on? What is it?

Gilda points up to the fifth floor window. Juanita and Tangie look up to see Beau hanging the children from the window.

69 INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - DAY 69

BEAU WILLIE
You gone marry me bitch!

CRYSTAL
Beau, please, Beau!

He holds the children out of the window. Crystal is stunned.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)
I'll marry ya anything but, bring
the children back in the house.

70 INT./EXT. JOANNA'S CAR - DAY 70

Joanna gets out of the car to see what all the women are looking up at.

71 INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - DAY 71

CRYSTAL
No, please.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: 71

The children are screaming and crying for Crystal. She is reaching for them when Beau lets go of the children.
WINDOW POV of the women's faces as the children fall.

72 EXT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY 72

Juanita runs toward the children. As she is looking down into the camera all goes white.

CUT TO:

73 INT. HOSPITAL - EXAM ROOM - DAY 73

Yasmine sits on a bed with a white curtain pulled in a very busy hospital.

DONALD

Where?

YASMINE

In my apartment.

DONALD

In your apartment, A friend is hard to press charges against.

YASMINE

He's not a friend.

DONALD

You'll hear things like. If you know him, you must have wanted it. A misunderstanding. You know these things happen. Are you sure you didn't suggest?

YASMINE

No.

DONALD

Had you been drinking?

YASMINE

I don't drink. A rapist doesn't have to be a stranger to be legitimate. Someone you never saw. But, if you've been in public with him, danced one dance, kissed him good-bye lightly with closed mouth. Pressing charges will hard be as hard as trying to keep your legs closed while five fools try to run a train on you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

YASMINE (CONT'D)

These men friends of ours who smile nice stay employed and take us out to dinner. Lock the door behind you. And we are left with the scars being betrayed by men who know us. And expect like the stranger we always thought was coming that we will submit. We must have known. women relinquish all personal rights in the presence of a man who apparently could be considered a rapist especially if he has been considered a friend. And is no less worthy of being beat within an inch of his life. Being publicly ridiculed having two fists shoved up his ass. Then the stranger we always thought it would be who never showed up. Cause it turns out the nature of rape has changed. We can now meet them in circles we frequent for companionship. See them at the coffeehouse with someone else we know. We could even have them over for dinner. And get raped in our own houses by invitation..

Donald puts his pad and pen away and sits down. Renee stands near Donald.

DONALD

Ok we'll pick him up.

As he is walking out two stretchers pass by with the children on them. Juanita comes in with Joanna and Gilda not far behind. Crystal is in shock, in a daze.

CRYSTAL

I wanna go with them.

JUANITA

You have to wait.

JOANNA

Come on sit down.

Juanita looks at Joanna.

JUANITA

Are you ok?

JOANNA

Yeah.

Juanita hugs a very uncomfortable Joanna. She hugs her back. Joanna sits with Crystal who seems to be in shock. Alice comes into the emergency room. She goes up to the nurses station.

ALICE

I'm looking for my daughter.

NURSE

What's her name?

ALICE

Nyla Adrose.

NURSE

Come with me.

Kelly and a detective are talking to Nyla when the women walk in.

KELLY

What do you remember about the place?

Nyla turns away. Alice comes into the room.

NYLA

Mamma.

Alice looks at her.

NYLA (CONT'D)

Don't be mad at me.

ALICE

Rock of ages, let me hide myself in thee from this shame.

NYLA

I'm sorry Mamma.

KELLY

Nyla we need you to tell us what happened. We're here to help.

ALICE

Speak child.

NYLA

All I remember is, Tubes, tables
white washed windows, grime from
age wiped over. Once legs spread
anxious. Eyes crawling up on me,
eyes rolling in my thighs. Metal
horses gnawing. My womb dead.

Alice starts to mumble and pray. Alice bolts out of the room.

NYLA (CONT'D)

I really didn't mean to. I really
didn't think I could. Just one
day off. Get off of me. Alla
this blood, bones shattered like
soft ice-cream cones. I couldn't
have you looking at me pregnant.
I couldn't have my friends see
this dying, dangling 'tween my
legs. And I didn't say a thing not
a sigh or a fast scream, to get
those eyes offa me. Get them steel
rods outta me this hurts, this
hurts me and nobody came. Cause
nobody knew once I was pregnant
and shamed of myself.

Kelly gets up.

KELLY

Thanks for calling me.

NURSE

Sure.

The nurse walks out of the room.

At the counter we see a doctor talking to Crystal. The doctor gives Crystal the news that her children didn't make it. She screams. Kelly turns around.

KELLY

Is that? What happened?

NURSE

Crazy ass man dropped her children
out of the fifth story window.

(CONTINUED)

76

CONTINUED:

76

She walks closer to them as Donald and Renee in the process of questioning the women.

DONALD

Did you all see it?

The women nod.

DONALD (CONT'D)

I'm going to need to ask you all a few questions.

DONALD (CONT'D)

How do you all know each other?

JUANITA

We don't really.

JOANNA

She works for me.

GILDA

I'm her building manager.

DONALD

Crystal I know this is difficult but I need to know what happened.

CUT TO:

77

INT. TANGIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

77

Tangie is in her apartment there is a banging on the door. She sits with another man. The banging won't stop she opens it. Alice slaps her back into the apartment.

ALICE

Devil!

TANGIE

Mamma stop it.

ALICE

You sent her there. You sent her there.

A man comes out of the bedroom he looks on.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Evil lives in you. You are the child of darkness.

MAN #4

You alright baby.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

You get out of here. You don't even know her name do you?

TANGIE

Go.

The man leaves.

ALICE

What is wrong with you, all these men crawling inside of you. How can you be any relation to the God in me? She could have killed her.

TANGIE

She could have killed me.

ALICE

I was with you, watching her.

TANGIE

You think that made it ok.

ALICE

She has gone crazy now. She's an alcoholic demon.

She goes towards her and tries to hit her. Tangie moves. Alice falls on the floor and hits her head. She crawls to the wall and sits on the floor looking at her.

ALICE (CONT'D)

This pair of you couldn't have come from me. He wants you to have the money so you can control me like he did. When he put his hands up my dress, he didn't want me with anybody but him. He told me I was ugly. When I was fifteen he gave me to a white man. He told me he wanted a grand-girl that was beautiful not black like me, he told me not to sleep with the darkness, and then you came.

TANGIE

You stop lying.

ALICE

He touched you too.

TANGIE

Shut up.

(CONTINUED)

ALICE

He touched you too didn't he? I know it. Because of who you are.

TANGIE

You don't know me.

ALICE

You would always wear these orange butterflies and aqua sequins ensconced tween slight bosoms silk roses dartin from behind your ears. The passion flower of you meandered down hoover street past dark shuttered houses where women from Louisiana shelled peas round three o'clock and sent their sons whistlin to the store for fatback and black-eyed peas. You glittered in heat and seemed to be lookin for rides when you wazn't and absolutely eyed every man who wazn't lame, white, or noddin out. Look at you. You let your thigh slip from under your skirt crossin the street. You slowed to be examined. I saw you I watched you sullen. And the rhinestones etching the corners of your mouth suggested tears fresh kisses that had done no good. You always wore your stomach out lined with small iridescent feathers. The hairs round your navel seemed to dance and you didn't let on that you knew from behind your waist waz aching to be held.

TANGIE

You don't know me, I am not a deliberate coquette who never did without. What I want and I wanted to be unforgettable. I wanted to be a memory, a wound to every man arrogant enough to want me. I am the wrath of women in windows fingerin shades. Ol lace curtains camouflaging despair and stretch marks. I glittered honestly delighted I am desired and allowed those especially schemin tactful suitors to experience my body and spirit. Tearin so easily blending with theirs.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

77

CONTINUED: (3)

77

TANGIE (CONT'D)

And they were so happy and lay on
my lime sheets full and wet from
my tongue. I kissed
them reverently even ankles
edges of beards...

ALICE

You are darkness.

TANGIE

Get out.

Alice walks out.

78

INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY

78

As Alice goes into the hallway Tangie follows. Gilda
opens her door and looks at the two of them.

TANGIE

You think you're so holy. You're
just like me!

Tangie sees Gilda in her door.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

What the hell are you looking at
you old bitch?

Gilda stares at her.

She tries to go back into her apartment the door is
locked.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

Shit! Can you open the door.

GILDA

Not until you take back those foul
words you just said to me.

TANGIE

Damit old woman, open my door.

She goes into her apartment and gets her key then comes
and opens her door. Tangie goes in and slams the door.
Gilda opens the door and enters the apartment.

CUT TO:

79

INT. TANGIE'S APARTMENT - SAME DAY

79

TANGIE

What the hell are you doing in here?

Gilda ignores her and goes to the kitchen.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

Have you lost your damn mind. Get your ass out of my apartment.

Gilda gets some ice from the freezer and puts it in a dish towel.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

Gilda.

GILDA

Sit down and shut up.

TANGIE

I'm going to tell you one more time.

GILDA

If you don't put this ice on your face your going to be black and blue, do you want that?

Tangie snatches the ice from her and sits down. Gilda takes it from her and puts it on her face.

GILDA (CONT'D)

It makes sense you know.

TANGIE

What?

GILDA

You and your mother. Sleeping with all these men thinking it's just sex. It ain't just sex honey, it all has a root. And you have to find the root to pluck it. At 4:30 a.m. you rise movin the arms and legs that trapped you. You sighed affirming the sculptured man and make yourself a bath of dark musk oil Egyptian crystals and Florida water to remove his smell to wash away the glitter to watch the butterflies melt into suds.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GILDA (CONT'D)

And the rhinestones fall beneath
her buttocks like smooth pebbles
in a Missouri creek
layin in water. You become
yourself, ordinary brown braided
woman with big legs and full lips
regular. And the ones who fall
prey to the dazzle of hips painted
with orange blossoms and magnolia
scented wrists had wanted no more
than to lay between her sparklin
thighs. And had planned on leavin
before dawn. And you had been so
divine devastatingly bizarre the
way your mouth fit round. And now
you stand a regular colored girl
fulla the same malice livid
indifference as a sistah worn from
supportin a would-be horn player.
But then you gather your tinsel
and jewels from the tub. And laugh
gayly or vengeful you stored your
silk roses by your bed. And when
you finished writin the account of
her exploit in a diary embroidered
with lilies and moonstones. You
place the rose behind your ear and
cried yourself to sleep.

TANGIE

Damn you listening to all my
business through this wall.

GILDA

I used to be you.

Juanita walks in. She looks around the room.

JUANITA

Frank! Frank! No, not when I need
you the most. Why do I do this
shit to myself.

She goes into the closet and she sees his clothes still
hanging there she relaxes. Frank comes in the front door
with a bag of groceries.

FRANK

Hey.

JUANITA

Hey.

(CONTINUED)

80

CONTINUED:

80

FRANK

I got dinner.

She walks up to him and hugs him tight.

FRANK (CONT'D)

What's wrong? What's wrong?

JUANITA

Just hold me.

He puts the bag down and holds her tight.

FRANK

You alright.

JUANITA

Yeah. Just hold me.

FRANK

Ok.

CUT TO:

81

INT. JOANNA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

81

Joanna sits on the sofa with a drink in hand. Carl comes in.

CARL

Hi.

JOANNA

Where've you been?

CARL

Playing basketball with the fellas. What's wrong?

He looks at her dress.

JOANNA

My assistants children were murdered today. I saw it, I saw it. This woman works for me for eight years and I never knew she was being abused. What kind of person am I? She is in my office in my face everyday.

CARL

Come on lets get you cleaned up.

He stands her up. He hugs her.

(CONTINUED)

81 CONTINUED:

81

CARL (CONT'D)

You're ok. You're ok.

He wipes her face and kisses her.

CARL (CONT'D)

I'm here. I'm sorry I was out. You should have called me.

CUT TO:

82 INT. JOANNA'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

82

Carl runs bath water for her.

JOANNA

I was sitting here trying to think who can I call, who will talk to me. And I realized that these women that I met today were closer to me than anybody I've ever known.

CUT TO:

83 INT. DONALD AND KELLEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

83

Kelly is sitting in the living room when he gets up out of the bed and looks for her.

DONALD

Babe. Come on to bed.

KELLY

I was gonna have them removed but I went to the doctor. I said I'll do it after lunch. And I forgot. I was going to see why I can't have children, all the while leaving two in danger.

DONALD

Babe it's not your fault.

Donald's phone rings.

DONALD (CONT'D)

Babe.

KELLY

Get it.

He answers the phone.

(CONTINUED)

DONALD

Detective Watkins? Yeah ok, I got it. On my way. Babe, I gotta run to a scene, ok. We'll talk about this when I get back ok.

KELLY

Ok. Be careful.

DONALD

I will. I love you

KELLY

I love you too.

He runs out of the door. She gets up grabs her car keys and leaves after him.

CUT TO:

Alice walks in the house with Nyla.

NYLA

Mamma, I'm so sorry.

ALICE

That, that what was growing inside of you was sin. It had to be destroyed. Pray and repent. Talk to Elohim. Talk to him Child.

She takes several bottles of oil out of a cabinet and lights several candles.

ALICE (CONT'D)

I don't hear you praying.

NYLA

Elohim, God of the most high I pray that you hear me.

Alice pours oil in her head. She grabs her by the hair and slaps her.

ALICE

Come out of my daughter you demon. Come out by the power of Elohim. The graded son of man and the daughter of Jerusalem come out.

She's hugging Nyla around the neck tightly.

(CONTINUED)

84 CONTINUED:

84

NYLA

Mamma, stop it.

Nyla fights her off as Alice holds tighter.

ALICE

It's a spirit and it will come
out.She hits her again. Nyla fights with her off and runs out
of the house.

ALICE (CONT'D)

Come back child to the salvation
of the Elohim. Come BACK! Come
back.

85 INT. YASMINE'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

85

Yasmine is asleep, there is banging on her door. Yasmine
jumps up and grabs the knife that is on her bedside.

86 INT. YASMINE'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

86

She starts to shake as she goes to the door. There is a
chair at the door and several locks are on it. She looks
through the peephole and doesn't see anything. She then
sits in a chair in the living room with the knife in her
hand.

CUT TO:

87 EXT. YASMINE'S APARTMENT - SAME NIGHT

87

We come down from the window were Yasmine sits staring at
the front door to see Nyla running down the street.

CUT TO:

A88 EXT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

A88

Kelly sits in her car looking at the building on the
verge of tears. Crystal comes out of the apartment with a
bucket and starts cleaning the sidewalk. Kelly gets out
of the car and walks over to her.

88 EXT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

88

KELLY

Hi.

(CONTINUED)

CRYSTAL

I can't get this blood up. It's here and people are walking on the blood of my children. Spitting. They don't have no respect for my babies.

Kelly kneels down to help her.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

It's so quiet up there. There's a part of me that knows that this happened but most of me feels like I'm in a dream. Am I awake?

KELLY

Yes, you are.

CRYSTAL

I don't feel awake. This must be what death feels like.

Nyla walks up right through the two women.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

Have some respect! Have some respect.

NYLA

I'm sorry.

Nyla looks a fright she is sobbing and breathing hard.

KELLY

Nyla.

CUT TO:

Kelly is trying to clean Nyla up. Crystal looks on.

NYLA

And she started choking me.

KELLY

You're safe now. Crystal do you have a dry towel?

Crystal stares at the window.

KELLY (CONT'D)

Crystal, a dry towel.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED:

89

Crystal goes into the bathroom. They can hear a man's voice and Tangie's voice coming from the hallway. Nyla gets up and goes outside.

CUT TO:

90 INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT BUILDING- HALLWAY - NIGHT 90

NYLA

You happy now.

TANGIE

Hey, what the hell happened to you?

NYLA

You sent me to that woman and you knew.

TANGIE

You should have just told me that you needed three hundred dollars for an abortion. Instead of lying.

Nyla goes back into the apartment.

MAN #5

Who's that?

TANGIE

My sister.

MAN #5

Can she come over and join us?

TANGIE

She's sixteen.

MAN #5

And.

TANGIE

Mothafuka get your ass out of my apartment. And don't you let me see you again.

MAN #5

You crazy bitch.

The man leaves. Tangie goes into Crystal's apartment.

91 INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

91

TANGIE

What are you doing here?

KELLY

She had a fight with your mother.

Tangie starts to laugh.

NYLA

It's not funny.

TANGIE

Honey, with a mother like ours you better learn how to laugh to keep from crying. I got the oil too. I never thought she would do that to her favorite child.

Tangie laughs.

NYLA

Stop laughing at me!

Tangie stops suddenly.

TANGIE

I'm sorry. I know what it's like to be laughed at. I'm sorry.

NYLA

Why do you hate me so much?

TANGIE

I don't hate you.

NYLA

You sure act like it.

TANGIE

I know, I'm sorry, you need to know something. You can't love somebody who has that much hurt in them. I'm learning that more and more. I don't know what's wrong with me. I've lost touch with reality. I don't know who's doing it. I thought I was but I was so stupid. I was able to be hurt and that's not real. Not anymore. We should be immune. If we're still alive. How are we still live? My dependency on other living beings for love. I survive on intimacy?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

91

TANGIE (CONT'D)

And tomorrow, that's all I've got going. And it is all I have, being alive and being a woman. Being colored is a metaphysical dilemma I haven't conquered yet. Do you see the point? Our spirits are too close to understand separation.

NYLA

We're sisters. Let us love each other as we are.

CUT TO:

92 INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - YASMINE'S DANCE STUDIO - SAME NIGHT 92

Yasmine stands in front of the mirror and starts to dance. Her rhythm is off.

YASMINE

Once there were quadron balls. Elegance in St. Louis laced mulattoes gambling down the Mississippi to Memphis, New Orleans and okra crepes near the bayou where the poor, white-trash would sing. Moaning strange liquid tones thru the swamps.

She gets up and tries it again.

YASMINE (CONT'D)

Sechita had heard these things. She pushed the clinging delta dust with painted toes. The patch-work tent was polka-dotted. Stale lights snatched at the shadows. Creole Carnival waz playin Natchez. In ten minutes her splendid red garters gin-stained, became itchy on her thigh.

CUT TO:

93 INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - SAME NIGHT

93

Kelly pushes on the door to the bathroom. She pushes her way in with the help of Tangie. They find Crystal on the floor with a bottle of pills next to her.

(CONTINUED)

93 CONTINUED:

93

YASMINE (V.O.)

Black diamond stockings darned with yellow threads and starched taffeta can-can fell abundantly orange from her waist round the splintered chair.

CUT TO:

94 INT. YASMINE'S DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT

94

Yasmine dances alone in the studio.

YASMINE

Sechita Egyptian Goddess of creativity millennium threw her heavy hair in a coil over her neck. Sechita Goddess, the recording of history spread crimson oil on her cheeks, waxed her eyebrows and unconsciously slugged the last hard whiskey in the glass.

CUT TO:

95 EXT. HOSPITAL - SAME NIGHT

95

The ambulance stops and they get out rushing Crystal into the hospital.

YASMINE (V.O.)

The broken mirror she used to decorate her face made her forehead tilt backwards her cheeks appear sunken. Her sassy chin was just large enough to keep her full lower lip from growing into her neck.

CUT TO:

96 INT. YASMINE'S DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT

96

YASMINE

Sechita had learned to make allowances for distortions but the heavy dust of the delta left a tinge of grit and darkness on every one of her dresses. On her arms and her shoulders Sechita was anxious to get back to St. Louis.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED:

96

YASMINE (CONT'D)

The dirt there didn't crawl from the earth into your soul. At least in St. Louis the grime waz store bought, second-second hand. Here in Natchez god seemed to be wipin his feet in her face.

97 INT. HOSPITAL - EXAM ROOM - NIGHT

97

The doctors are looking into Crystals eyes. They start to pump her stomach.

YASMINE (V.O.)

Sechita could hear redneck whoops and slappin on the back. She gathered her sparsely sequined skirts tugged the waist cincher from under her greyin slips and made her face immobile. She made her face like Nefertiti approaching her own tomb.

CUT TO:

98 INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - YASMINE'S DANCE STUDIO - SAME NIGHT

98

Yasmine continues to dance.

YASMINE

She suddenly threw her leg full force thru the canvas curtain. A deceptive glass stone sparkled malignant on her ankle her calf was tauntin in the brazen carnie lights the full moon. Sechita goddess of love Egypt millenium performin the rites the conjuring of men, conjuring the spirit in Natchez the Mississippi spewed a heavy fume of barley. Movin waters Sechita's legs slashed furiously thru the cracker nite and gold pieces hittin the makeshift stage her thighs they were aimin coins tween her thighs. Sechita Egypt goddess harmony kicked viciously thru the nite catchin stars tween her toes.

There is a knock at the door. She stops cold and looks at it. She sees Donald flash his badge. She talks to him through the door.

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED:

98

DONALD

Hi.

YASMINE

Yes?

CUT TO:

99 INT. HOSPITAL - MORGUE - NIGHT

99

Yasmine stands in front of a glass window. Donald motions for the doctor to uncover the body. Renee stands with Yasmine.

DONALD

Is that him?

YASMINE

Yes. What happened to him?

DONALD

He raped a woman and she stabbed him. I guess he got what was coming to him huh?

YASMINE

I guess so.

CUT TO:

100 INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

100

Several of the women sit around the waiting room. Gilda, Joanna, Kelly, Nyla and Tangie. Juanita walks up.

JUANITA

They are pumping her stomach.

KELLY

Can we see her?

JUANITA

Not just yet.

Donald and Renee walk in with Yasmine. Donald sees Kelly.

DONALD

Hey, hey honey. What are you doing here?

KELLY

She tried to kill herself.

(CONTINUED)

DONALD

Oh baby, I'm sorry.

Carl and Joanna enter with coffee.

JOANNA

Hi, how is she?

Carl looks at Donald.

JUANITA

She's stable.

JOANNA

I'm sorry this is my husband Carl.

CARL

Hello.

KELLY

This is my husband Donald.

DONALD

Let's get some coffee. Good to meet all of you.

Donald and Kelly walk away.

DONALD (CONT'D)

How are you?

KELLY

I'm ok.

DONALD

Good. How well do you know Joanna?

KELLY

All I know is that she's Crystals boss.

DONALD

Oh.

KELLY

Why?

DONALD

I just asked? Babe you know that you do a great job with these kids right?

KELLY

Do I?

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED: (2)

100

DONALD

Yes, and I'm so glad that they
have you to fight for them. You're
going to be ok. I'm right here.
I'm going to be sure you're ok.

He looks back at Carl. Carl looks away.

CUT TO:

101 INT. JUANITA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

101

Juanita comes into the house with flowers and a cake. She sneaks in, puts the cake on the kitchen counter and lights the candles. It reads "Happy Birthday Frank". She takes the cake into the bedroom, where she can hear the TV on.

JUANITA

I know when I left this morning
you thought I forgot, but I
didn't.

102 INT. JUANITA'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

102

She opens the bedroom door.

JUANITA

Happy birthday Frank.

She turns the light on in the bedroom and no one is there. She sits the cake down on the dresser and turns off the TV. She notices that the dresser drawer is slightly opened. She opens it to see that it's empty. She goes into the closet to see his side of the clothes are gone. She exits the closet and throws the cake against the wall.

JUANITA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Somebody almost walked off with
all of my stuff and didn't care
enough to send a note home saying,
I was late for my solo
conversation or two sizes too
small for my own tacky skirts.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE:

103 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY 103

Kelly sits with Crystal feeding her.

JUANITA (V.O.)

What can anybody do with something of no value on a open market? Did you get a dime for my things? Hey man...

CUT TO:

104 INT. COMMUNITY CENTER- YASMINE'S DANCE STUDIO - 104

Yasmine is working with the girls in the dance class. They're all in unison dancing as one.

JUANITA (V.O.)

Where are you going with all my stuff? This is a woman's trip and I need my stuff to ooh and ahhhh about.

CUT TO:

105 INT. JOANNA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 105

Joanna has dinner with Carl. She coughs as he walks away from the table.

JUANITA (V.O.)

Honest to God, somebody almost run off with all of my stuff. And I didn't bring anything but the kick and sway of it. The perfect ass for my man and none of it is theirs. This is mine. Juanita's own things. That's my name. Now give me my stuff.

CUT TO:

106 INT. PSYCHOLOGIST OFFICE - DAY 106

Crystal lays on the sofa talking to the doctor. Juanita, Kelly and Nyla are there by her side.

(CONTINUED)

106 CONTINUED:

106

JUANITA (V.O.)

I see ya hidin' my laugh. And how
I sit with my legs open sometimes
to give my crotch some sunlight.

CUT TO:

107 INT. TANGIE'S APARTMENT - DAY

107

Nyla and Tangie sit laughing and talking.

JUANITA (V.O.)

This is some delicate leg and
whimsical kiss I gotta have to
give to my choice. No you can't
have me unless, I give me away.
And I was doin' all that, til ya
run off on a good thing.

CUT TO:

108 INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - JUANITA'S FREE CLINIC - DAY

108

Juanita is talking to a different group of women. Time
has passed. The women seem to be lighter, laughing
wearing different clothes.

JUANITA

And who is this you left me with?
Some simple bitch with a bad
attitude. I wants my things. I
want my arm with the hot iron scar
and my leg with the flea bite.

CUT TO:

109 INT. HOSPITAL - PSYCHOLOGIST OFFICE - DAY

109

Crystal sits with the doctor. They are discharging her.
Gilda takes her home.

JUANITA (V.O.)

I want my calloused feet and quick
language back in my mouth. I want
my own things. How I loved them.
Somebody almost run off with all
of my stuff. And I was standing
there, lookin at myself, the whole
time. It wasn't a spirit that ran

110 INT. BRADMORE PUBLICATIONS - DAY 110

Joanna gives Juanita a check for her clinic. The two ladies smile and talk.

JUANITA (V.O.)
Off with all my stuff. It was a man whose ego walked round like Rodan's shadow. It was a man faster than my innocence.

CUT TO:

111 INT. PRISON - DAY 111

Beau Willie sits in prison.

JUANITA (V.O.)
It was a lover, I made too much room for. Almost run off with all my stuff. And the one running with it. Don't know he got it. I'm shoutin this is mine.

CUT TO:

112 INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - JUANITA'S FREE CLINIC - DAY 112

Juanita sit with the women talking to them.

JUANITA
And he don't know he got it. My stuff is the anonymous ripped off treasure of the year. Did you know somebody almost got away with me... me in a plastic bag under their arm? Me...

CUT TO:

113 INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT BUILDING - HALLWAY - DAY 113

Tangie knocks on Crystal's door. Gilda opens her door.

TANGIE
Why is it that every time somebody knocks on this door that yours opens?

GILDA
What you want with her?

(CONTINUED)

TANGIE

Get your nosy ass back in your apartment.

Crystal opens the door.

CRYSTAL

Yes.

TANGIE

Hi.

CRYSTAL

Hi.

TANGIE

We're having a get together at the community center tonight and we would love for you to come.

CRYSTAL

I don't think so.

TANGIE

Please come, it will be good for you to get out. It's in honor of my little sister going off to college. And she loves you.

CRYSTAL

If I feel up to it.

TANGIE

Ok, you can bring somebody if you want to.

CRYSTAL

Ok, I'll think about it.

Crystal is about to close the door. Gilda looks on at Tangie.

TANGIE

Hey don't bring her.

Tangie walks down the stairs and then comes back up.

TANGIE (CONT'D)

I know you're looking old lady.

GILDA

What?

TANGIE

You can come too.

(CONTINUED)

113 CONTINUED: (2)

113

GILDA

Is that your way of apologizing to me?

Tangie turns to walk away.

GILDA (CONT'D)

I notice you haven't had any visitors lately.

TANGIE

Mind your business.

GILDA

I see you're starting to mind yours.

The two women exchange a look. Tangie walks away.

114 INT. JUANITA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

114

Juanita is getting ready to leave for a party. There's a knock at the door, she opens it.

JUANITA

What do you want?

FRANK

I tried to call you.

JUANITA

This is over Frank.

FRANK

Just like that?

JUANITA

Every since I realized there was someone called a colored girl, an evil woman, a bitch or a nag. I been trying not to be that and leave bitterness in somebody else's cup. Come to somebody to love me without deep and nasty smelling scars from lye or being left screaming in a street fulla lunatics, whispering slut, bitch, bitch. Niggah get outta here with alla that. I didn't have any of that for you. I brought you what joy I found. And I found joy. And then there's that woman who hurt you, who you left, three or four times.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JUANITA (CONT'D)

And you just went back after you put my heart in the bottom of your shoe. You just walked back to where you hurt. And I didn't have nothing. So I went to where somebody had something for me. But none of them were you. I was on the way back from her house. In the bottom of your shoe. A real dead loving is here for you now. Cause I don't know anymore, how to avoid my own face wet with my tears cause I had convinced myself Colored Girls had no right to sorrow. I lived for you, but I know I did it for myself. I couldn't stand it I couldn't stand being sorry and colored at the same time. It's so redundant in the modern world. You gotta go.

FRANK

I guess this is good bye.

JUANITA

Like you've never seen it before.

He walks out she closes the door she continues to get ready.

CUT TO:

A114 INT. CRYSTAL'S APARTMENT - DAY

A114

*

Crystal sits on the sofa, in the dark. Gilda knocks. She enters in with a plate of food. Gilda walks over to the window to open the curtains.

*

*

*

CRYSTAL

*

No.

*

Gilda stops and looks at her.

*

GILDA

*

Did you eat today?

*

Gilda looks at the kitchen. She sees the breakfast she brought earlier still covered.

*

*

GILDA (CONT'D)

*

No you didn't. What's your plan?
To lay here and die.

*

*

(CONTINUED)

A114 CONTINUED:

A114

CRYSTAL

How could he do it?

GILDA

How could you do it?

Crystal looks at her.

CRYSTAL

But I tried to stop him.

GILDA

You had to stop him long before he
got to that window.

CRYSTAL

Are you saying this is my fault?

GILDA

Some of it. You got to take some
responsibility in this. Now how
much of it you want to take.
It is up to you. But you have to
take some. And until you do;
you're going to live to die. Now I
know this hurts but, you got to
get up from here.

CRYSTAL

But I didn't save my babies.

GILDA

Then save some other woman's
babies. Help another woman who is
missing what you're missing. You
got to get up from here. There is
too much life wrapped in your
voice. You got to get up from
here.Gilda opens the curtains. She walks over to Crystal and
sits down. She hugs her. The two women cry together.

115 INT. JOANNA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

115

Joanna sits in a chair talking to Carl.

JOANNA

My last husband, I hired a private
detective to follow him. I looked
at myself in the mirror one day
and I said who are you? I wasn't
going to do that with you.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED:

115

JOANNA (CONT'D)

And even though I didn't I know I
ignored everything in me to have
you.

CARL

Will you just tell me what the
hell you're talking about?

JOANNA

I went to my gynecologist and
before I met you. Every level in
my body was fine.

(CONTINUED)

CARL

Wait are you sick? Baby talk to me.

JOANNA

Tell me the truth. Who have you been sleeping with?

CARL

I promise you since we've been together I have not slept with another woman.

JOANNA

What about a man?

CARL

What?

JOANNA

I see the way you look at them when you think I'm not paying attention.

CARL

You accusing me of this? You have no idea how much I hate coming in this damn house sometimes. Every day if you ain't trying to tell me what to wear or calling shots over my head, this is bullshit.

JOANNA

Bullshit?

CARL

Yes, I don't know what the hell you are talking about Joanna.

JOANNA

Are you gay?

CARL

What, how the hell you gonna ask me something like that.

JOANNA

Are you gay? Be a man for once and answer the damn question.

CARL

Be a man?

(CONTINUED)

JOANNA

Yes dammit, be a man instead of that fucking kid that I've been taking care of.

CARL

Joanna stop it.

JOANNA

What kind of man marry's a woman then sneaks around and around letting another man bend him over.

CARL

Nobody bends me over?

JOANNA

So you do the bending.

CARL

You wanna know what I am? I'm a man that is sick of your shit. I'm not going to wake up next to a man, kiss him and hold him. That ain't me, holding hands some mans hand walking down the street that's a gay man, that ain't me.

JOANNA

What are you saying?

CARL

I'm a man that can enjoy sex with a man. No attachments it's just sex. And I'm sorry if you can't handle my truth.

JOANNA

Save your sorry. One thing I don't need is any more apologies. I got sorry greeting me at my front door. You can keep yours. I don't know what to do with them. I'm gonna have to throw some away I can't get to the clothes in my closet for all the sorries. I'm gonna tack a sign on my door, leave a message by the phone. If you called to say you're sorry, call somebody else. I don't use 'em anymore. I let sorry, didn't mean to, and how could I know about that take a walk down a dark and musty street in Brooklyn.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

115 CONTINUED: (4)

115

JOANNA (CONT'D)

I'm gonna do exactly what I want to and I won't be sorry for none of it. Let a sorry soothe your soul. I'm gonna soothe mine. You were always inconsistent doing something and then being sorry. Beating my heart to death talking bout you sorry. Well I will not call, I'm not going to be nice. I will raise my voice, scream and holler, break things and race the engine and tell all your secrets bout yourself to your face. I won't be sorry for none of it. I loved you on purpose I was open on purpose. I still crave vulnerability and loose talk. I'm not even sorry bout you being sorry. You can carry all the guilt and grime ya wanna just don't give it to me. I can't use another sorry. Next time you should admit you're mean, down low and low down, trifling. And no count straight out. Instead of being sorry all the time, enjoy being yourself. When I get back I want you gone and take your HIV with you.

She puts her test results down in front of him and walks out the door.

CUT TO:

116 INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - YASMINE'S RHYTHMS - NIGHT

116

Yasmine is dancing with all of the girls, Nyla is dancing happy. There is a huge congratulations banner hanging above the DJ. Alice comes in. Tangie goes over to her, dancing up on her. Alice seems very uncomfortable.

TANGIE

What's up Alice?

ALICE

I bought you some things for her.

She gives her a box.

TANGIE

Is it ticking?

(CONTINUED)

116

CONTINUED:

116

ALICE

Where is she?

TANGIE

Come on.

Alice walks up to Nyla.

ALICE

I'm very proud of you. Elohim
blessed. Here?

NYLA

Yes he did.

ALICE

It's the temple bible.

NYLA

Thank you mamma. You want some
food?

ALICE

No, I'm fasting, I'm going to go
now. This music is of the devil.

She walks out.

TANGIE

Bye.

CUT TO:

117

EXT. COMMUNITY CENTER - ROOF TOP - SAME NIGHT

117

JOANNA

I don't know what's worse the
betrayal or the virus.

JUANITA

HIV is not a death sentence. I
have patients that have been on
their meds living a great life for
over twenty years. Its gonna be
ok.

JOANNA

I can't believe I was that stupid.

JUANITA

Honey, it could have been any of
us. You were not stupid you were
in love. We deal with emotion too
much.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JUANITA (CONT'D)

So why don't we go on ahead and be white then and make everything dry and abstract with no rhythm and no feeling for sheer sensual pleasure. Yes let's go on and be white. We're right in the middle of it. No use holding out holding onto ourselves. Let's think our way outta feeling. Let's abstract ourselves some families and maybe tonight. I'll find a way to make myself come without him. No fingers or other objects just thought, which isn't spiritual evolution.

JOANNA

Thinking won't do me a bit of good tonight. I need to be loved. And haven't the audacity to say where are you?

JUANITA

And don't know who to say it to.

The ladies come up the stairs.

NYLA

Look who's here.

Gilda and Crystal come in. The other women follow her up.

TANGIE

What are you doing up here?

JOANNA

There was no air.

KELLY

Are you having a good time?

JOANNA

Yes I am.

KELLY

How about you?

TANGIE

Surprisingly I am. I usually need a man around to have some fun.

JUANITA

No, let them stay where they are. My love is too beautiful to have thrown back on my face.

(CONTINUED)

YASMINE

Oh, I like that.

JUANITA

Try one.

YASMINE

What?

JUANITA

I do this with the class. We say my love is too..., you fill that part in.

GILDA

My love is too sanctified to have thrown back on my face.

KELLY

My love is too magic to have thrown back on my face.

TANGIE

My love is too Saturday night to have thrown back on my face.

JOANNA

My love is too complicated to have thrown back on my face.

YASMINE

My love is too music to have thrown back on my face.

JUANITA

And you remember that the next time some man tries to walk away with all your stuff.

TANGIE

I know that's right. Or says I'm sorry a million times.

KELLY

We all got I'm sorry stories don't we.

JUANITA

Get this, last week my ex came in saying, "I don't know how she got your number baby". I'm sorry.

TANGIE

No this one is it. "Oh, baby, ya know I was high. I'm sorry."

(CONTINUED)

KELLY

I'm only human, and inadequacy is what makes us human. And if we was perfect we wouldn't have nothing to strive for. So you might as well go on and forgive me cause I'm sorry.

GILDA

No this one is it. I do ya like I do ya cause I thought ya could take it. No, I'm sorry.

JOANNA

Now I know that you know I love ya, but I ain't ever gonna love ya like ya want me to love ya. I'm sorry.

CRYSTAL

Shut up bitch, I told you I was sorry.

All the women look at her and get serious for a second. This is the first time we notice that the women are wearing the same colors as they were in the beginning red, orange, purple, yellow, green and brown.

CRYSTAL (CONT'D)

It's ok. I asked myself how I could let that happen and I realized that I was missing something. Something so important. Something promised. A laying on of hands Fingers near my forehead Strong. Cool. Moving. Makin me whole. Sense. Pure. All of God coming into me laying me open to myself. I was missing something.

JOANNA

Something promised.

JUANITA

Something free.

CRYSTAL

A laying on hands.

TANGIE

I know bout' laying on bodies, laying outta man.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TANGIE (CONT'D)

Bringing him all of my fleshy self
and some of my pleasure being
taken full eager wet like I get
sometimes. I was missing
something.

CRYSTAL

A laying on of hands.

TANGIE

Not a man. Laying on.

NYLA

Not my Mama, holding me tight,
saying I'm always gonna be her
girl.

GILDA

Not a laying on of a bosom and
womb a laying on of hands the
holiness of myself released.

CRYSTAL

I sat up one night walking my
apartment floors screaming,
crying. The ghost of another
woman who was missing what I was
missing I wanted to jump outta my
bones and be done with myself.
Leave me alone and go on in the
wind. It was too much. I fell into
a numbness til the only tree I
could see took me up in her
branches held me in the breeze.
Made me dawn dew that chill at
daybreak the sun wrapped me up
swingin rose light everywhere the
sky laid over me like a million
men. I was cold. I was burnin up.
A child and endlessly weaving
garments for the moon with my
tears I found God in myself and I
loved her I loved her fiercely.

THE END

WRITTEN ON THE SCREEN IN ALL COLORS OF THE RAINBOW

And this is for colored girls who have considered suicide
but are moving to the ends of their own rainbows.