

THE DISTANCE TO LOVE

Written by

Quentil Pompey

Based on True events

FADE IN

INT. JAVARD'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

JAVARD HAMMOND, (30's), with his eye pressed on the MINIDV CAMCORDER VIEWER and around the kitchen he films until...

FROM CAMCORDER
(Javard's voice)
So you like to cook?

BAM! He runs into cooking, MONICA GRIER (30's), short and petite but can bring a-lot of heat.

MONICA
Shit! Javard. Move.

JAVARD
Sorry about that boo-boo.

MONICA
If you gonna to be a movie producer
you need to know how not to run
into your actresses.

Javard smiles off the statement and returns to videoing Monica's cooking show.

JAVARD
First I'm a writer.

MONICA
Well, same thing.

A FRYING PAN

Sizzles on the stove. Monica gulfs something from a CUP and lowers the gas to the frying pan aisle.

JAVARD
So you love cooking different
things?

MONICA
That's why I do it.

INT. JAVARD'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Javard straightens the bed but when he reaches Monica side and pulls the skirt down, he feels something.

UNDER THE BED

Are multiple empty BOTTLES of LIQUOR. But from the BATHROOM we hear...

MONICA (O.S.)
EEEEUEUEUEUEUEU!

Javard inhales and exhales heavy. He moves to...

THE BATHROOM

And Monica is heaving in the toilet stool.

JAVARD
Towel.

MONICA
You'll think.

Like it's Javard's fought, he snatches her a towel, wets it and hands it to her. Monica smiles.

MONICA (CONT'D)
But you care. That's why I love
you.

Monica goes to kiss Javard, but he deters. They laugh.

INT. JAVARD'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - LATER

OFF THE LABTOP

Javard and Monica read Javard's screenplay; character to character.

JAVARD
(in character)
"I haven't been doing anything."

MONICA
(in character)
'But from what I saw. You were
doin' a bit more than I saw'

Javard falls on the bed with laughter.

MONICA (CONT'D)
What?

JAVARD
This starting to sound scary. Like
some past life crisis.

Monica smiles at his memory.

MONICA
Don't start.

JAVARD
You had the brace's thing going on.
(sings)
'I am fa real'.

MONICA
That's so lame.

JAVARD
Maybe now.

Monica plops on the end of the bed. She opens the NIGHT STAND drawer for her pack of cigarettes.

JAVARD (CONT'D)
(reminiscing)
That's when things were realistic.
It was accepted to be different.

Monica lights cigarette.

MONICA
(concludes)
Almost twenty years ago.

JAVARD
Sydney Rays.

MONICA
And Miss Candace. NorthEast!

JAVARD
Nobody hearing all of that.

MONICA
You just mad because we put
performance in your writing.

Javard's side table phone RINGS.

JAVARD
Yeah whatever.

Javard answers the blaring PHONE.

JAVARD (CONT'D)
(to receiver)
Javard. Uh-huh. Ok?
No. It's not a problem. I'll be
there.

Javard hangs up the receiver. Deflated.

MONICA
Guess you need to get in the bed.

Javard cuts the lights. He slides in the bed next to Monica.

MONICA (CONT'D)
At least they're giving you hours.

Javard doesn't care for however. So Monica raises her upper body to view Javard.

MONICA (CONT'D)
Be grateful. We have all of these bills. Let alone the last apartment bills.

Javard turns over dismissive.

FLASHBACK

INT. BLACK AMERICAN'S CULTURE CENTER - NIGHT

Eighteen years earlier.

ON STAGE

We walk through a young Actor and young Actress under a TREE PROP on a BENCH going over their lines.

ACTOR
I should say 'go for it'!

ACTRESS
Why? That's so lame. Be more un-realistic.

The Actor understands. But up in

THE SEATS

ON: JAVARD'S PLAY SCRIPT

Javard (18) reads over the last words he just heard. He crosses out the Male part and writes 'Be more un-realistic.'

And coming from the LIGHTING AND SOUND ROOM down the steps and seats...

SYDNEY RAYS (30s) effeminate A-type fellow and so happy to see Javard, he sits down two seats from him.

SYDNEY

I got in touch with an old friend.
A local jazz musician. And he's
volunteering to add something.

Javard slaps the play script on his thigh obliged but after a moment frowns.

JAVARD

It's a few errors I saw. But I'll
fix them.

SYDNEY

An artist never finishes fixing.

Sydney stands.

SYDNEY (CONT'D)

Come with me.

INT. BLACK AMERICAN'S CULTURE CENTER - LOBBY

Javard and Sydney walk down a stair way.

OUTKAST: "SORRY MISS JACKSON" plays from a radio

SYDNEY

(to Javard)

When it comes to choreography there
is no other I can trust.

As they reach the door Sydney eases it open.

INSIDE THE ROOM

We see choreographer MISS CANDANCE, (30's), directing a handful of High School age GIRLS, moving to the beat.

But what grips Javard's eyes is

Monica at (14) singing the hit, and landing all her moves though outside of direction.

MONICA

(sings)

'I am fa real'

Javard grimaces at her sparkling BRACES.

MISS CANDANCE

(stops music)

Monica.

MONICA
Sorry miss Jack- Candance.

The other girls giggle.

MISS CANDANCE
And you know I watch the news.

Oooo. Monica's caught. And the others girls know it too.

MONICA
But for real though, they caught me
at the wrong time.

MISS CANDANCE
It may seem funny now. But life
isn't full of jokes. Break time.

The girls disperse.

EXT. BLACK AMERICAN'S CULTURE CENTER - STEPS - LATER

Javard still groveling over his play script, puffs on a black-
in-mild CIGAR when...

COMING OUT THE BUILDING

Monica totes her duffel bag. She's angry.

MONICA
(to Javard)
Can I hit that?

Javard exhales and cocks a 'no' frown.

MONICA (CONT'D)
Don't fuck with me about my age.
Can I hit it or not?

JAVARD
I don't think that'll be the wisest
choice.

MONICA
Whatever.

Monica moves on her way, and mumbles under her breath
derogatory epithets. Javard gets up and follows her down the
steps.

JAVARD
Hey.

MONICA

What?

JAVARD

You're a great dancer.

MONICA

Well this is the last day you'll be seeing me.

JAVARD

The last time I'll be seeing you?

MONICA

What's your name?

JAVARD

Javard.

MONICA

So Javard, are you questioning me now?

Totally not what Javard meant.

JAVARD

No. No. No.

MONICA

I thought this high school ensemble thing was a good move. Considering I was kicked off the cheerleading squad.

JAVARD

Maybe it is.

MONICA

That's already been answered.

Javard hands her the Cigar. Monica pulls and exhales smoke like a pro.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Dealing with Sydney and Miss Candance it'll be packed. And too bad for me I want be apart of it.

A Car pulls up and Monica is familiar. She sneaks the cigar back to Javard.

MONICA (CONT'D)
 I read your script...Javard
 Hammond. You're a better writer in
 person.

Javard accepts the compliment. So

Monica opens the Car door and hops inside and not leaving
 without a 'I'll see you again' wave at Javard through the
 passenger window.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - LATE NIGHT

At the entrance, CONCRETE TRUCKS line behind each other.

A truck finishes it's load of concrete into a PUMP guided by
 a few construction workers.

INT. JAVARD'S - TRUCK

ON JAVARD'S CELL PHONE

Is a VIDEO-PODCAST.

HOST
And this brings us back to the big
question. Does a writer need to
move to Los Angeles?

SPEAKER
Uh- Honestly that's a questioned
for the individual.

Javard doesn't let the interview go unnoticed. But

A LIGHT through his windshield alerts Javard. So he nods

Javard puts truck in gear and maneuvers the leveler to
 release his

CONCRETE CHUTES

The mechanical fold out SQUEAKS and BOOMS!

At the signal from the Construction worker to move, Javard
 closely follows his position of the Concrete Chute over the
 Pump Operator.

SPEAKER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
The real reason most people gripe
at the fact of moving to L.A is to
be amongst connections.

HOST (O.S.)
We know Hollywood is much more than
that.

The AUDIENCE laughs.

Javard parks and sets AIRBREAKS.

The Construction worker hand signals. And Javard CLICKS a BUTTON on his leveler. He looks behind.

JAVARD POV: His DRUM is slowly turning. We hear a mix of rocks and mud churning.

Javard lightly steps on the ACCELERATOR to speed up the drum!

HOST (CONT'D)
But what would be your advice? What
would you do if you were someone
enthused about the business - and
believe you have what takes?

Javard studies the Interviewer eyes as he collects his thoughts.

INTERVIEWER
Make the move.

HOST
So you say, defy gravity? Test the
unknown. Go for it.

BANG! BANG! BANG!

Javard attention is turned to the Construction Worker hands flailing.

He is unclear why his Concrete mix is too fast. So Javard panics, taking his foot off the accelerator, clicking leveler button.

INT. TRUCK YARD - LOCKER ROOM - EVENING

INSIDE JAVARD'S LOCKER

On the CREATIVE door are POSTINGS OF FILM DATA and INSPIRATIONAL QUOTES.

Javard hangs his fresh uniforms on the bar. His Phone Vibrates. A Notification. "WHY WAIT! RELOCATE!"

PLANT MANAGER (O.S.)

Hammond!

Javard shuts his locker to the Plant Manager (50's) buckling his safety vest.

JAVARD

It's my second occurrence. I know.

PLANT MANAGER

Where did you get your license?

JAVARD

There's no excuse.

PLANT MANAGER

Honestly I'd hoped.

JAVARD

I didn't checked my mirrors properly.

PLANT MANAGER

Listen.

Javard and the Plant Manager sit down at a nearby BENCH.

PLANT MANAGER (CONT'D)

I can't keep covering. It's one thing when the upper is up my ass about insurance issues another when I know it's really *personal*.

JAVARD

Lesson learned.

PLANT MANAGER

Beside the point.

The Plant Manager pulls from his pocket Javard's oil stick from his Truck. Javard lowers his head.

PLANT MANAGER (CONT'D)

You're a good man. But I can say, I know this isn't what you wanna be doing. So whatever it is, that's your choice and only your choice to make. If you need any recommendations, references, or anyone needing to confirm you, give them my contact.

Javard shakes the Plant Managers hand.

INT. JAVARD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Javard covered in Concrete dust. He enters the apartment, tired and aggravated.

ON THE COUCH

Monica with a drink of spirits and cigarette, rants in the phone's receiver.

MONICA

(on phone)

I don't give a damn! I'm not here
to be nice.

Javard shuts the door behind him.

MONICA (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Everybody think I'm stupid!

Javard is accustom to Monica's tears, tantrums, alcohol, weed and cigarette smoke, so he relaxes on the couch next to her.

MONICA (CONT'D)

My entire life y'all have always
tried to control me. I don't need
any more treatment! I need a job.
And it's hard. Whatever aunty.
What ever. If it wasn't for y'all
being my family all of you would be
dead.

Monica hangs up the phone.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Fuck this shit! Fuck this shit!

After a moment of sobs, Monica turns the volume back up on the Television. Looks at Javard exhausted and irritated.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Why do you come home from working
with an attitude?

And just like that Monica wipes her tears, sips and croons to the familiar HIT on the television.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Aren't you gonna take a shower.

Javard, no reply. Only disappointment.

MONICA (CONT'D)

And don't start complaining about your job. At least you can get one.

JAVARD

You ever thought about moving some where else?

MONICA

Please Javard. Like always. All the ideas but no plans. You're almost 40. Most men your age have careers.

Javard upset, stands and starts unbuttoning his shirt.

JAVARD

Writing is my career.

MONICA

Well as soon as you get paid let's try to keep something.

Javard enters the

BATHROOM

And looks at him self in the mirror. The Concrete settled on his arms, hair and dusty face.

DISSOLVE TO

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY (FLASHBACK)

14 years earlier

Javard (22) with a long glittery chain, a diamond watch and bracelet to match with earrings dazzling, on an office chair in front of an apartment unit with his militant partner in crime CLAY SALBERT (21).

CLAY

Ya boy hit me with the entail on the next jux. And you know I'm still not sure if -

JAVARD

I'm already involved.

Clay can't argue with that. And Javard knows.

JAVARD (CONT'D)

I found this performing arts school in Florida. Thinking after this robbery thing, make that move.

CLAY

Smart shit. That's what I'm talking about. No kids. Why not. It's psychological warfare. Against all odds. We all trying to escape time clocks.

JAVARD

It's no honor in working for someone.

CLAY

Everything you doing now -- right or wrong -- you go survive this shit and be able to tell it one day. Watch.

Clay nods and smiles at a text message.

JAVARD

Like you finding another prospect? The sun goes down and your phone becomes disconnected.

CLAY

You right. You right. I met this shorty at my job. Phone time and pillow talk is like mother nature.

JAVARD

Damn, if it's that nice - she have a friend who wants to meet a stranger?

CLAY

She turning the corner right now with her peoples.

And a Car slides to a stop.

So Clay smiles meeting the passenger window roll down.

ON PASSENGER SIDE

Monica (at 18) wearing her GRADUATION CAP, sees Javard and hops out car, bypassing Clay's hug for one from Javard.

JAVARD
The Black-American cultural
center

MONICA
The Black-American cultural
center

MONICA (CONT'D)
Javard.

JAVARD
What's up with you, Monica - the
dancer.

Monica holding her cap and tassel does a dance. Javard likes.

JAVARD (CONT'D)
(convinced)
Class of 04' from that bum ass
school.

MONICA
Whatever.

Monica grabs Javard's chain and examines the rest of his
jewelry.

MONICA (CONT'D)
I know you're a big stage writer by
now.

Javard forces a weak smile. He looks to see Clay is
flabbergasted.

JAVARD
(to clay)
I didn't know you were talking
about Monica.

CLAY
Ya'll know each other I see.

MONICA
We go back.

Clay grabs Monica in an intense embrace.

CLAY
(kisses her)
Well I guess my high school
graduate was still caught up with
their-story - to even introduce her
friend.

Monica wipes his kiss away.

MONICA
(sassy)
Oh I didn't forget.

Javard forces a smile at the girl in the driver seat who obviously is looking to meet him.

END FLASHBACK

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Javard aligns products on the self nicely.

Javard sweeps and cleans the warehouse to proficiency.

ANGLE ON: MANAGEMENT

Examining Javard's progress with impressive looks on their faces. They approach Javard.

MANAGER 1
Hammond? You're done an excellent
job around here.

MANAGER 2
I've never seen the warehouse look
so good. In such great condition.
Great job.

MANAGER 1
We know that you are through a
temp, but like to offer you a
position.

Javard face shows no interest but for the sake of it.

JAVARD
Okay.

MANAGER 2
How does eleven dollars an hour
sound?

MANAGER 1
And in ninety days - after the
probationary period of course -
you'll be eligible for benefits
such as healthcare and 401k.

Javard takes a moment to consider.

JAVARD
Sounds interesting.

INT. WAREHOUSE -- LATER

Javard continues to preform a superb job, this time on a assembly line with other workers.

His CELL PHONE RINGS. It's Monica.

JAVARD
(to phone)
Yeah, babe.

MONICA (ON PHONE)
Do you have any money on you?

JAVARD
A few dollars. Why?

MONICA
Bring me home a bottle of Jack Daniels please. It's been a horrible day. Another turn down.

JAVARD
But I thought you had the job secure.

MONICA
The bitch lied! She said my background wouldn't matter but when I interviewed with the hiring manager he brought up my assault charge from three years ago.

Javard just shakes his head.

JAVARD
Okay. Well they offered me a position.

MONICA
Good for you. And I hope you accepted it.

JAVARD
Eleven dollars an hour.

MONICA
Well at least we can get these bills paid up. You don't sound to convinced.

JAVARD
It's just -

MONICA

Just what?

ON: A SUPERVISOR (30s) hard-nose checking out Javard on his phone.

JAVARD

I guess. But sometimes I wonder when all of this dead shit will be over.

MONICA

Stay positive. Javard you have to start thinking about what's relevant and important.

The Supervisor makes her way to Javard with nothing nice to say.

SUPERVISOR

(to Javard)

Hey! Off the phone.

JAVARD

I'm talking to my -

SUPERVISOR

- I can care less. There's no phone use.

JAVARD

(to phone)

I got you baby. Let me talk with you when I get home.

Javard ends call.

SUPERVISOR

There's work to be done around here. Focus on that.

Javard doesn't take it too kindly of her attitude.

JAVARD

(mumbles under breath)

You don't have to talk to me like I'm a kid.

And the Supervisor heard it while walking away.

SUPERVISOR

Excuse me?

JAVARD
I'm not a robot.

SUPERVISOR
How would you like having all the
phone time you need in the
unemployment circuit?

JAVARD
I'd rather be there than dealing
with your attitude.

SUPERVISOR
Oh yeah.

JAVARD
It's a way to speak to people.

SUPERVISOR
When an employee isn't performing
up to standard or violating rules
then they get what they get.

JAVARD
Oh yeah?

SUPERVISOR
Yeah. You have a problem with that?

Javard doesn't have time for this. Forget this job. Drops
what he's doing and exits the assembly line.

JAVARD
I'll show you better than I can
tell you.

Javard walks off job.

EXT. JAVARD'S APARTMENT COMPLEX PARKING LOT - DAWN

The sun dries up the morning dew off the Vehicles and the
grassy

ISLANDS

That splits the TENANT PARKING SPOTS.

INT. JAVARD'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM

ON: COMPUTER SCREEN

A script editor. Words are typed but Monica enters.

So, Javard - on his laptop - shifts the screen-window - so that it is a JOB APPLICATION - for construction - but his screen goes black.

JAVARD

Ahhh c'mon!

He finds his charger. And plugs it in. And Monica plops to her TV, drink and cigarette

MONICA

Why are you up this early?

JAVARD

Thought I might seek a job since god-forbid I go against the social order.

MONICA

Today's the last day for the cable. What are we gonna do?

So Javard presses the "on button" to the laptop and it pops back on -- job application as is.

JAVARD

(under breath)

Tired of playing survival.

MONICA

(slurs)

You should of thought of that before walking off a good job.

Javard submits application, but overwhelmed shuts down the lab-top.

MONICA (CONT'D)

And I know you're not still thinking about moving out of state.

JAVARD

I am.

MONICA

How?

Javard's mute. Monica needs answers.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Excuse me? They're evicting us. And you think the answer is going 3,000 miles away.

JAVARD
No one saying you have to go.

MONICA
I don't have to go! What that
suppose to mean!

JAVARD
Look, I don't mean it like that. I
love you. But -

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK.

Javard gets up to answer the door, and first glances through
the peep hole he frowns. He opens door.

MONICA (O.C.)
You don't even make sense. Neither
of us have family there.

JAVARD
(out the door)
I already know.

Javard steps aside for the two MEN dressed in RENTAL COMPANY
OUTFITS walk to the Sectional Couch and start disassembling.

But Monica jumps up protesting and Javard gets to her before
she assaults the Movers.

MONICA
Hold up! What the fuck! We paid
ya'll. Javard?

ON: Javard powerless.

INT. LIGHT RAIL - SEAT - DAY

Javard holds a tired Monica in his arms. But his
concentration is

ON PHONE SCRIPT EDITOR

He types gibberish on a screenplay. Delete. Delete. He closes
the screen.

EXT. PLASMA CENTER - DAY

Many Returning and new clients wait in a line irritated.

Javard and Monica shiver even with there big coats, and pass a cigarette back and forth to one another impatient with the process.

MONICA
 (looks at phone clock)
 It's been thirty minutes. For 75
 dollars? Shit it's cold out here.

Javard denies the cigarette from Monica and she pulls him forward as the line moves forward. And it's promising that they will be able to enter.

INT. PLASMA CENTER - BED - LATER

Javard's Plasma tech, hooks him up to a machine. The Nurse (20s) aggravated with her job, pulls a needle out. Javard eyes grow

On a Bed across from him is Monica who is already prick and donating. She's fine.

NURSE
 Make a fist.

Javard makes a fist and grimaces for the needle coming toward his arm.

EXT. PRISON - DAY (12 YEARS EARLIER)

The sun does shine over a manicured lawn bordered by GATES with the top wrapped in BARBWIRE. And a few acres in the distance a

GLOOMY PRISON BUILDING

That stands twelve stories tall and stretches wide, with barred small windows.

INT. PRISON - AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

GUARD and Rehabilitation STAFF MEMBERS are engaged in a play

ON A STAGE

By Performing INMATES ending a performance. Then comes an APPLAUSE and standing OVATION.

EXT. PRISON - REC-YARD - TRACK - DAY

Javard walks around the track getting love for his play from Inmates. But it is only fate that helps him recognize...

CLAY (O.S)

Aye Javard!

Javard sees a figure blocked by the setting sun's glare, jogging through the grassy field towards him.

It's Clay with a KUFU on his head and hand made beads around his neck.

JAVARD

Surprisedly it didn't raise flags.
What's up, man.

CLAY

After Fort Dix, and a few politics
from a few good brothers praise to
Allah. I'm just glad to be back
close to familiarity.

They embrace.

CLAY (CONT'D)

And it's good to hear great things.

JAVARD

And what that might be?

CLAY

They say the ethers are always at
work. What we do in the dark soon
comes to light.

JAVARD

I'm still shock how something I
wrote assembled an ensemble of so-
call social misfits.

CLAY

I arrive exactly twenty-one hours
and eight minutes ago and first
thing I hear is about the cult-
classic prison play by an inmate
name 'Hammond.'

Javard waves for a walk around the track.

JAVARD
 18677-058.
 (off Clays chuckle)
 Why did we do it, Clay?

Clays face quinces for clarity.

CLAY
 We were in need of income. And the
 day gigs weren't cutting it. But
 I'm where you at today.

JAVARD
 I passed my time.

CLAY
 Peace be to Allah. But yo, guess
 who sent me a few pics. Pregnant.

Javard's clueless.

CLAY (CONT'D)
 Monica.

JAVARD
 Monica? Lil sis?

CLAY
 Well you know it was more than lil
 sis with me. I wrote her. And just
 recently gotta letter. She's
 happily engaged with baby daddy.

JAVARD
 That's a good thing.

CLAY
 C'mon, Javard. Monica doesn't want
 no one else but me. Why write back?
 And send a picture.

JAVARD
 (unconvinced)
 Yeah. Aight.

CLAY
 Last time we kicked it -- we were
 at my peoples crib -- right before
 we got knocked. I think you were
 going through some things, M-I-A as
 you do. But it was me, my mother
 and my sister. We all had a few
 drinks -- Monica a few extras.

News to Javard.

CLAY (CONT'D)

It started with her and my sister,
on some she say she say escort
gossip. Next thing, I'm holding her
back from fighting my mom's. I
settled the conflict. But 3 days
later she lying saying I gave her
something.

Javard looks at Clay. So Clay assures him.

CLAY (CONT'D)

I provided my test results but the
one that issued the claim had an
argument, if you get what I'm
saying.

JAVARD

Buffoonery.

FLASHBACK ENDS

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE -- DAY

A BOB CAT dumps dirt - into a ditch - over connected PVC
PIPES.

Javard totes a heavy GROUND TAMPER into the ditch. He cuts it
ON! The BOBCAT OPERATION and other CONSTRUCTION WORKERS
prepare for the show.

As Javard begins things look okay. But just as so quickly,
what can go wrong, goes wrong. Instead of Javard controlling
the ground tamper, it controls him - slinging him all over
the place - giving the construction workers and bobcat
operator a comedy show.

EXT. JAVARD'S APARTMENT UNIT - NIGHT

COMING UP STEPS

Javard and Monica juggling groceries around their arms, but

ON: DOOR

A NOTE FROM THE COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT

WRIT OF POSSESSION 72 hours

Javard rips down the paper.

MONICA
More bad news?

Javard inserts key and unlocks door.

INT. JAVARD'S APARTMENT -

The living room is packed with open boxes ready for all their personals to be packed.

Javard and Monica maneuver around the mess and find places to drop the grocery.

MONICA
So what are we're going to do?

JAVARD
I don't know, Monica. Figure it out.

Monica walks into the kitchen area and we hear the echo of a cabinet door opening and the sound of a CUP SLAMMED on a counter top.

MONICA (O.S.)
Told you what I can do. \$1000 a night.

JAVARD
That's silly. And absurd. You know, you're very disrespectful.

Monica enters back into the Living room with a bottle of WINE.

MONICA
(pops the wine cork)
Told you this was going to happen. You were better off just taking that opportunity driving OTR.

JAVARD POV: Monica fills her cup.

MONICA (CONT'D)
You don't wanna listen to me.

JAVARD
When do I begin listening to myself?

MONICA

Please enlighten me on, what it is
you wanna do. You're not saying
much.

Gesturing the total chaos around them.

JAVARD

It's time...

MONICA

That part.

Monica can gulp down her drink on that. Shaking her head.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Get out the clouds, Javard. Just
know if you make that decision we
mind as well cancel our
relationship.

Javard walks out the room to Monica's dismay. She stalks
right behind him.

INT. BEDROOM -

Javard cuts on the lights and braces his hands on the wall.

Monica storms in.

MONICA

Did you hear what I just said. You
want that?

JAVARD

Look, we have enough shit going on.

MONICA

Your so fucking selfish. All you
think about is yourself.

JAVARD

(to himself)

I know, I have to survive.

MONICA

You're missing the point.

JAVARD

You said you not going. So why
worry? Remember you launching sex
sites.

Monica gasps. Her eyes water. Monica SLAPS Javard and exits the Bedroom.

ON: JAVARD CELL PHONE

BANKING ACCOUNT 6737 balance -\$535.00

RECENT TRANSACTION HISTORY

Overdraft fee - 35.00

BUS TICKETS EXPRESS - NORTH CAROLINA to CALIFORNIA - \$400.00

SAVE AND SHOP - \$134.45

DIRECT DEPOSIT - BROTHERS CONSTRUCTION + \$300.15

INT. PLASMA CENTER - LOBBY - DAY

RECEPTIONIST (O.S.)

Thank you for calling plasma-plus
can you please hold?

Javard steps up to the RECEPTIONIST.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

New donor or returning?

JAVARD

Returning.

Javard places his index finger on a scanner. The Receptionist tatters on the computers keyboard.

RECEPTIONIST

Okay. It's your fifth and final
visit for the \$75 bonus, so that
will be added on top of your twenty
five dollars.

JAVARD

25? I thought it was 50 being my
second donation of the week.

RECEPTIONIST

It's been recently changed. We go
by the weight now. You being just
under one-fifty gives you the
twenty - five dollar payment. Are
you're still interested in
donating?

Javard frowns but nods yes.

INT. BUS - NIGHT (MOVING)

Javard cradles an exhausted Monica on his chest. Stares

OUT THE WINDOW

At the illumination from the BUS HEADLIGHTS, incoming HIGHWAY INTERSTATE SIGNS diverging: I-40 EAST NORTH CAROLINA and I-40 WEST TENNESSEE.

He feels Monica shifting. He pulls her in tighter kisses her on the forehead, and turns off the overhead LIGHTS.

EXT. TRAILER - PATIO - DAY (FLASHBACK)

6 years earlier

A CASTING CALL

Three Actors read from a script.

MALE ACTOR 1
What's up, Manny Mac.

MALE ACTOR 2
Save yourself a few stacks.

MALE ACTOR 3
C'mon, bruh, we don't have time for
the still shit, where the PACK!

Javard from Director's CHAIR video tapes. And mumbling the script word for word, Javard's assistant and GIRL FREIND (30s).

GIRL FRIEND
(whispers to javard)
They fit that part. See, at all
times you can depend on me.

Javard shrugs more attentive to the Actors...But in

THE GRAVEL DRIVE WAY

A car slides to an abrupt stop. And a muffled argument seeps from the rolled up windows disturbing the Actors and a hand full of CASTING CALL MEMBERS.

ON: DRIVER SIDE

Hops out Clay. He wipes mustard off his clothes.

CLAY
(to Car)
Look what you've done!

Monica pops out the passenger side fiery.

MONICA
I've told you about your fucking
mouth! Wear it nigga!

The Girl friend, Actors and other Casting PARTICIPATES all look uncomfortable so Javard makes light of disruption.

JAVARD
(to All)
Before we carry on, I would like to
welcome very close and special
people in my life and long time
friends of mine. Monica and Clay.

Clays caught off guard. But Monica drunk and goes immediately into character, dancing, but is a bit off beat. Everyone loves it anyway.

And Monica adds to the accolade.

MONICA
(slurs)
I was his dancer a few years back
for one of his plays, ya'll.

Chuckles. Not Clay however. Instead receives Monica's slaps away of his hands trying help up the steps.

MONICA (CONT'D)
I got it. Move. You're messing up
Javard's casting call.

CLAY
(to Monica)
You're drunk.

MONICA
Instead of embarrassing me why
don't you ask him for something to
clean up with or another shirt.
He's your brother remember.
(to Javard)
Sorry for his rudeness, Javard.

Javard's Girl friend speaks up alerting Monica of her presence.

GIRL FRIEND
 (to Monica)
 I'll get it for him.

MONICA
 (to girl friend, rude)
 Yeah. That part.

ON: Girlfriend bothered by Monica's rudeness.

EXT. PATIO - LATER THAT NIGHT

Torch lights give enough of a spill for CHEERS.

MONICA
 From stage to Film. You are one
 stubborn but dedicated, nigga. To
 Javard. And as much success that's
 to come.

Both Clay and the Girl Friend looks are uncomfortable because
 Javard is over-appreciative of Monica's intoxicated
 confidence.

JAVARD
 (to Monica)
 We are a long way from the Black
 African American Culture Center.
 With your flawless dance moves.
 Bet you still got it.

Monica stumbles as she stands and begins to dances in front
 of Javard that is considered flirtatious from the looks of
 Clay and the Girl Friend. But it was only meant to be taking
 to prove a point.

Monica has the rhythm. But she stumbles and drops her drink
 on Javard.

MONICA
 I had it. But now I'm entertain by
 the drinking game.

Javard not bother gets up to change.

JAVARD
 Clay, what are you teaching her?

CLAY
 (curt)
 The way back then.

That stops Javard who doesn't want him to take it the wrong way and

Monica stare at Clay could slice him. So thankfully

The Girl Friend picks up on the tension stands to follow Javard.

GIRL FRIEND

Well, to add to that. Refills?

Monica holds up her spilled glass but grilles the Girl friend.

MONICA

Do you have my friends back?

GIRL FRIEND

I don't follow you.

MONICA

Do-you-have-my-big brother's back?
Do you?

The Girl friend looks to Javard for help. Clay tries defusing.

CLAY

(to Monica)

Leave her alone.

But Monica ignores him.

MONICA

(focus is girlfriend)

He shouldn't have to help you answered my question.

GIRL FRIEND

Yes. Of course. I'm the script supervisor.

MONICA

You can name yourself whatever. But you better understand how much this movie means to him. I do. We do this. And I hope you're on board maam.

INT. TRAILER - BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Javard on the LAPTOP looking over the CASTING PARTICIPANTS auditions.

The Girl Friend still flustered about Monica's question sits on the couch drinking.

GIRL FRIEND
I don't like her.

JAVARD
Who?

GIRL FRIEND
Monica. She's rude.

JAVARD
Alright ya'll got off rough.
Monica's really a good person,
though.

GIRL FRIEND
Or is it something more I need to
know? Look, I respect ya'll have
history but, I'm the one here now.

JAVARD
It's not a competition.

GIRL FRIEND
I think to her it is. She wants
you.

Javard turns to her a look of shame.

JAVARD
It's not even like that. That's my
lil sis.

GIRL FRIEND
Even your friend Clay thinks the
same thing. She's too flirty.

JAVARD
Well if he said that you both are
insane. Look, be my script
supervisor. Nothing else.

Javard leaves the room.

EXT. COMMERCIAL BUILDING - EVENING

It's raining. A gush of Females rush through the doors and
rush to there cars.

INT. JAVARD'S CAR -

Javard parks.

Javard sees Monica - the last out - pull her coat over her head to block the rain - and skip to his passenger door - and hops in.

MONICA

Thanks Javard. Your stupid ass friend know my shits in the shop and want come get me.

JAVARD

It's not a problem.

Javard drives off.

INT. JAVARD'S CAR - (MOVING)

Monica pulls out her purse a small bottle of liquor and sips it. She offers to Javard.

Javard takes a sip.

MONICA

The boy mad because my aunt screamed on him. He call himself - speaking on my behalf about 'my kids'.

JAVARD

Crazy shit.

MONICA

I can't go to his apartment, Javard. I swear it won't be pretty.

Javard hands Monica back the bottle of liquor.

JAVARD

Ol girl is taking care of her peoples for a few days. You can lay on the couch.

MONICA

My families tripping too. Just need Just one night. I swear. Maybe clear my head.

INT. TRAILER - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Javard wakes to MUSIC, water RUNNING and DISHES. Javard gets out bed.

INT. TRAILER - KITCHEN AREA -

Monica dances to the Music at the same time cleansing the kitchen.

Javard watches her dance for a moment. Smiles. That's until Monica turns a move and realizes he's watching her.

JAVARD

Told you, you still got it.

Javard wipes his finger across the kitchen cabinet.

JAVARD (CONT'D)

And look like you've picked up some other skills along the way.

MONICA

Oh I'm real woman. And it looks like you need one around here. How do she allow ya'll to live like this?

JAVARD

I take the blame.

MONICA

I don't know what you see in her.

JAVARD

She has her positions I'll say.

MONICA

Oh so you're not that serious about her?

Javard doesn't answer. So Monica cuts the Faucet and lays the dish rag on the sink.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Art breeds love I guess.

Monica grabs her near by glass of spirits off counter top and walks to the

RADIO

And lowers the music to a more intimate vibe. But Javard in the

LIVING ROOM

Drops on the COUCH.

JAVARD

We have our pros and cons. But she has a genuine heart.

MONICA

How long we've known each other?

JAVARD

Over a decade at least.

MONICA

And you've never had any thoughts?

Javard looks at Monica green.

JAVARD

(clueless)

About what?

MONICA

Javard, I'm grown now. That fourteen year old dancer you met way back when, is a decade and some today.

JAVARD

What are you asking me?

MONICA

I know you and Clay have that brothers keeper shit, but let's forget about him. Do you find me attractive?

Easy for Javard to answer.

JAVARD

Of course. And I've always considered you an amazing person.

Monica re-lives.

MONICA

You don't know how much I hate my family for taking me away during that pivotal time in your life.

JAVARD
Doesn't mean it's over.

MONICA
I turned out like this. Having
kids. Messing wit fuck nigga'z!
Drinking. Losing my children. Not
caring.

Monica breaks down in tears. Javard consoles her.

JAVARD
C'mon lil sis. Everything will
get better. No matter our failures
doesn't mean we give up.

Monica looks into Javard's eyes. To Javard it's awkward but
not forbidding.

Javard watches Monica sip down her drink, stand and walks as
if leaving the room, but stop at door frame. Her look beckons
him.

MONICA
If you don't follow suit, I do
understand. Maybe I'm over stepping
boundaries. But if you have any
doubt or even shame. Know I don't.

Javard knows what she's indicating and allows his desires to
follow as much as she wills.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. BUS STATION - NEW MEXICO - DAY

BILL BOARD: "WHERE YOUR DREAMS ARE PAID FORWARD"

Windy. Snow flurries. Javard struggles to light his
cigarette.

Looks off at a distance. MOUNTAINS surrounding.

INT. BUS STATION - NEW MEXICO CASINO -

Monica pulls Javard to COMPUTERIZE SOUNDS of money dropping
and people CHEERING.

MONICA

I feel I can win us some extra
coins, babe.

Monica sits behind a COMPUTER SLOT GAME that has NINE SLOTS
OF DUCK PICTURES.

JAVARD

How much you gonna play?

MONICA

\$40. You're not the only risk
taker.

Monica confidently slides two TWENTY DOALLAR BILLS in the
machine. And taps the button.

She wins! And gets excited. But it's only 30 cents

JAVARD

Turn your bet up.

MONICA

No that's how you lose.

JAVARD

At 30 cent, we'll be good if the
bus doesn't leave us.

MONICA

You with little faith.

Monica presses the button again. Loses. Again. Losses. Again
wins, but only 30 cent. She turns to Javard and roll his
eyes. So Monica cranks her bet up to \$5.00.

JAVARD

Whoa. Not that high.

MONICA

You said let's crank it up.

Monica presses the button and she wins! Javard eyes stare at
the money numbers turning and
rising...10000...12000...13000...14000...14100...14200
points.

They jump around hugging and kissing.

MONICA (CONT'D)

(press claim button)

How much is fourteen-thousand and
two hundred points?

JAVARD

A hundred and forty-two extra
dollars we didn't have.

INT. BUS - SEAT - DAY

Javard secures two BACK PACKS in the overhead COMPARTMENT.

Monica discreetly pours liquor in a Coffee CUP. Re corks it
and slides the bottle on the side of her.

MONICA

You want some?

Javard takes the Coffee cup looking in the unaware Drivers
eyes, he sips handing it back to Monica.

A Young Couple in front of them argue. And when the young boy
sits, he tilts his seat so far back, it's literally on top of
Javard.

Monica nearly spits out her drink.

MONICA (CONT'D)

(to young boy)

Hey! Bruh. C'mon.

The young boy looks back at Monica with nothing nice to say.

YOUNG BOY

Shawty we paid our fare too.

YOUNG GIRL

Got that right.

Monica slaps the chair, enraged and her and the young girl
declare brawl over it, drawing attention from the other
passengers and Driver.

DRIVER

(from rearview mirror)

What's the problem?

Javard pulls Monica back down in her seat, And speaks to the
young boy calmly.

JAVARD

Just a little bit, my man. I get it
you wanna kick back. Me too.

YOUNG GIRL

Nah Fuck that!

MONICA

How about we make it about that.

Javard has to pend Monica inside their seating area.

JAVARD

(to young boy)

We have a ride. And I see ya'll making moves too.

YOUNG BOY

What that got to do wit it, bruh?

The Driver unlocks his belt.

DRIVER

(from rearview mirror)

Aight. If I come back their somebody is missing this ride.

JAVARD

I'm saying, just give me some space. It'll make it easier for everybody.

A truce is made. The young boy lifts his seat with hopes it will defuse Monica and the young girl feud.

EXT. JAVARD'S APARTMENT - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

3 years earlier

Monica upset, dashes to her Car. Javard follows behind, trying to stop her.

JAVARD

Monica. It's not worth it.

MONICA

The bitch ass nigga wanna run his mouth.

Monica fiddles with her keys to open her CAR door.

Javard surrenders and pulls the passenger door, but it's locked.

MONICA (CONT'D)

I don't want you going.

JAVARD

C'mon Monica open up the door.

MONICA

No.

Monica jumps in, CRANKS, but mysteriously Javard's able to open the back door.

And Monica tries to pull off SCREECH! Almost causes Javard to fall but he is able to lay across the back seat.

INT. MONICA'S CAR - (MOVING)

Monica sipping from a cup and speeding.

JAVARD

Are you crazy! You could've killed me.

MONICA

Should of listened. I told you I didn't want you coming. This beef is between him and I.

JAVARD

I'm his friend. And we have history. Plus a play a role in the madness.

MONICA

He's not your friend. Believe me I know. 'We' have history. Our circle. He was let in.

JAVARD

Your unbelievable. Monica turn the car around.

MONICA

No.

Javard squiggles his way into the front seat while blocking slaps from Monica's free hand.

JAVARD

Stop!

MONICA

I told you not to come.

JAVARD

Well if tonights the night to clear the air, than I need to be there.

MONICA

This is not one of your movies,
Javard.

JAVARD

No, this is too stupid to write.

EXT. CLAY'S APARTMENT COMPLEX PARKING LOT -

Monica car SCREECHES to a halt in the middle of the street.

Clay is on the porch with a Girl - and on site of Monica - he hops up but is relieved Javard is keeping her from reaching him.

CLAY

(to javard)

Why you let her come over her
causing a scene?

JAVARD

This thing bigger than us, Clay.
You know that.

Monica tries getting away from Javard.

MONICA

(to clay)

Yeah mother fucker. You have a
bitch over here and still worried
about me. Tend to your shit.

Clays girl steps up in her defense of being called out her name.

GIRL

Hold up, Clay, I thought you and
this trash was done.

MONICA

Trash. Bitch. I'll break you in
pieces all around this complex.

CLAY

Aye, Javard, take her drunk ass
home.

MONICA

Drunk?

Monica slips away from Javard and charges toward Clay with fury.

But Javard manages to grab Monica inches from attacking Clay and they fall on the ground.

MONICA (CONT'D)
 (to Javard)
 Get off me, asshole! Let me get him!

Monica's screams causes neighbors to open doors.

EXT. THE HAVEN FOR HOPE - DAY

A RESIDENTIAL CENTER for recovering Addicts.

INT. THE HAVEN FOR HOPE - COURT YARD --

Javard holds Monica hands from across a table. Her smile is beautiful. Sober. Looking good.

Javard pulls out his COMMERCIAL DRIVERS LICENSE.

MONICA
 Oh----it's own now. Look at you.

JAVARD
 I was thinking, you know, put down on this new apartment. And all I'm going to buy is a camera. To film your crazy ass.

MONICA
 (touched)
 You're ready for me to come home?
 Aw...

Monica kisses Javard.

MONICA (CONT'D)
 These 9 months been hell. But I'm confident.

JAVARD
 And 3 more to go.

Not if Monica's going to have it her way.

MONICA
 Yeah. My family think I should stay the full twelve. But I'm ready. I haven't had a drink in months. Don't even crave anymore.

INT. CLAY'S APARTMENT COMPLEX - DAY

ON: GRILLE

Chicken quarters, Turkey burgers and Steaks cook.

Javard flips the food.

INT. CLAY'S APARTMENT UNIT - LIVING ROOM

It's the Super Bowl halftime show and with her home-team pride, and assistance from the loud music, Monica's dance performance, livens up the PARTY!

INT. CLAY'S APARTMENT UNIT - KITCHEN

Javard enters with trays of Meat.

Clay prepares the side dishes. Javard drops the meat on the counter, satisfied.

JAVARD

Hungry?

Clay takes a huge sniffs of the tray of meat.

CLAY

Ooo-wee! I see you've turned into a real fine gentlemen.

JAVARD

This concrete company offered a three-week school and an automatic hire on. Builds a man.

CLAY

That's cool. For a foundation.

JAVARD

Exactly. You know me. I'm intertwined and working on a script as we speak for production.

Javard watches Clay shut the lid on a pot of beans.

CLAY

What's really been going on, J?

JAVARD

Well you know, it's not easy. Sobriety lasted until we got the apartment.

CLAY

Well...you know how that go. Took me sometime to get over the fact that my best friend and ex were actually making a life.

JAVARD

Monica and I's history stretch back.

CLAY

And ya'll seem to always let that be known.

JAVARD

It was never my intent to hurt you.

CLAY

I know. Why would you.

They hug in brotherly love.

Monica - with her cup in hand - stumbles into the kitchen.

MONICA

Aye!!! Smells good.

Monica kisses Javard.

JAVARD

(boasting)

You know me and Clay in here doing our numbers.

MONICA

Isn't that Clay and I?

Javard can see Clay still is uneasy. But Monica speaks too soon.

MONICA (CONT'D)

(to clay)

Even-though we had our differences, I really like your new girl friend. She's really cool.

CLAY

Well, not everyone has ulterior motives.

Monica taking as offense and ready to quarrel, but immediately Javard prevents.

JAVARD
 (yells)
 Anyone ready to eat!

END FLASHBACK

INT. BUS - UNION STATION TUNNEL -- MORNING (LOS ANGELES CALIFORNIA)

JAVARDS POV: Passing images of the CITY SKYLINE, but are
whoosh

Into the BUS TERMINAL. And Javard wakes Monica.

TRAIN CONDUCTOR (ON INTERCOM)
 The time is 8:00am - that is
 pacific time, and we have
 successfully arrived in Los Angeles
 California. For all passengers
 departing please check under your
 seats and make sure that all of
 your belongings and trash is
 removed. Again we have arrived in
 Los Angeles California, Union
 Station.

Javard hops out his seat and reaches in the above compartment while Monica sips and conceals her last of 'drink' in a purse.

MONICA
 Have you at least figured out
 anything?

Javard pulls down another book-bag and places his lose items like his and Monica's phone chargers, plus any snacks inside the front pockets.

JAVARD
 We'll figure it out.

MONICA
 We don't know anyone out here.
 Meaning no family. So what are your
 plans Javard? This is your dream.
 I'm relying on you.

Javard lifts the book-bag on his shoulder and opens the aisle for Monica to come out.

INT. UNION STATION - HALL

Javard roles a LARGE TRAVELING CASE behind him through the crowd of riders and deportees in the food court and seating area

A LIVE HOMELESS VOCALIST expresses her lyrics that echos over the busy chatter.

MONICA
(to javard)
This where you wanna be.

Monica frowns at the low battery on her phone.

EXT. UNION STATION - COURT YARD

About two hundred feet from the entrance is seating. Two TEENAGERS (20s), finish rolling separate BLUNTS.

MONICA
I'm literally two-thousand-five-hundred miles away from family. I need something to smoke.

Javard notices the seating area in the court yard has outside ELECTRICAL SOCKETS RECEPTICALS next to an open BENCH.

JAVARD
Guess we can go over there. I got the cigarettes.

MONICA
(interrupting)
Not cigarettes.

As Javard and Monica approach the two teens on an adjacent bench lighting their fat blunts, and Monica sniffing the air, he catches on. Duh?

MONICA (CONT'D)
You don't smell that?

They find a nearby bench and Monica relieves the book-bag off her back and sits.

Javard drops his book bag beside her and sits on top of the traveling case. He takes in the glaring sunshine and begins to disrobe from his jacket.

JAVARD
Seventy-five degrees in January.
Wow!

A SECURITY GUARD and LAPD OFFICER are walking toward the smoking area. Javard panics for

The two teens enjoying their smoking session.

But Monica - on the other hand - more interested in what the two teens are smoking - grabs the teens attention..

MONICA

(whispers)

Hey? Ya'll have trees for sale?

The two teens look at each other confused. Monica clarifies.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Trees, reefer, marijuana, herb down south, you may even here us call it that buck, you ain't heard?

Javard however, stands and taps Monica.

MONICA (CONT'D)

What? I trying to get us -

Javard nods discreetly toward the 'law enforcement officers' draw nearer - but they pay them nor the two teens any mind.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Boy they not paying us any attention. It's legal. We're in CalifornIA. Duh.

Monica turns her attention back to the two teens who get a kick out of Monica and her accent.

One of the Teens hands Monica a bud.

Javard reaches in his pocket and pulls out his last few dollars.

The Teens laugh.

YOUNG TEEN 1

Consider that a gift, OG.

YOUNG TEEN 2

Welcome to Cali.

INT. LYFT CAR - DAY (MOVING)

High, Javard - out the back seat window - takes in the PALM TREES, STOCCO HOUSING, side street VENDORS and the RESIDENTS with HUGE SPEAKERS playing *soul music* from the 70's.

But as the car continues to move down the street things become more and more urban, concrete, disturbing: inhabited TENTS, TRASH, WASTE - thrown on side walks - and occupied soliciting in ABANDON BUILDINGS by ADDICTS and HOMELESSNESS.

Javard can see the worry growing on Monica's face.

MONICA

Where is he taking us?

JAVARD

The co-ed shelter supposedly is five minutes away.

MONICA

You better not ever say I don't love you.

JAVARD

Because you came all the way out here?

MONICA

Yeah. And willing to go through this shit with you.

Javard bites his tongue. The Driver stops at the next Red light.

DRIVER

The place is our next right, but it's no parking so I will drop you here.

Javard nods. Opens the door.

EXT. SKID ROW - SIDE WALKS - CONTINUOUS

A Mentally Challenged Man (60's) passes by talking to himself.

Javard and Monica gather their luggage from the trunk.

Monica grimaces and covers her nose.

MONICA

Oh God!

JAVARD

(grimacing)
We are two minutes away.

EXT. THE DAYLIGHT MISSION - COURT YARD - MOMENTS LATER

Javard and Monica travel through a homeless community. Many are relaxed on the concrete ground.

Regardless of the curious gawks, comments and weird activity, Javard and Monica reach the entrance door and open to...

INT. THE DAYLIGHT MISSION - LOBBY

Which is full of desperate ones seeking a bed. All of the seating is taken. Luckily...

THE RECEPTIONIST BOOTHE

Line is short. And the irritated one inquiring in front of Javard and Monica argument is shut down by the SECURITY who moves her on.

Javard walks up to the booth.

JAVARD

We found you on the internet. Any co-ed rooms available?

RECEPTIONIST

There beds. It'll be you and hundreds of other men, and for her - the same - but with women. That's only to say if we have any available.

MONICA

Available! Javard, I'm not sleeping on the street.

JAVARD

(to the receptionist)
When will we know -

RECEPTIONIST

If you can find a seat, they are about to do a role call for the night. Maybe you'll get lucky.

Javard and Monica are able to find a place by the wall that is less cramp near an ELDERLY GENTLEMAN who offers Monica his seat.

HOMELESS GENTLEMAN

A seat for the lady.

Monica proudly accepts.

IN THE CENTER OF THE LOBBY

Two husky WHITE MEN (40s) take a seat behind a fold out table and open up a Log book.

HUSKY MAN 1

Alright! Listen up! When I call your name you should be either going east or west. We have only 3 men beds and 3 women.

Monica is without faith.

HUSKY MAN 2

Molly Lester. Terry Bentley.

Each, depending on the gender grab their belonging and goes either eastward or westward down a hallway.

MONICA

What are we going to do if we don't get a bed?

JAVARD

I don't know.

MONICA

You don't know. Javard we are all the way out here on your call and you don't have a plan.

JAVARD

I'll make sure you at least get a bed.

MONICA

I at least?

Javard doesn't reply back to Monica. Just has hope in his eyes.

EXT. SIDE-WALK - LATER THAT NIGHT

Javard and Monica boogie down the side-walk.

MONICA

I gotta hand it to you, you said it. And it happened.

JAVARD

My priority is your well-being. I'll be okay.

MONICA

Well, what you can do for me is make it. You're here now. All that procrastination you be doing needs to come to an end.

JAVARD

I never procrastinate.

MONICA

It's time to start getting out and mingling; meeting folks.

They reach a

LIQUOR STORE

And Monica scrambles through her purse, taking the lead inside.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

JAVARD

The weather's different. I can survive the night.

MONICA

Than what about tomorrow?

JAVARD

Figure it out.

Monica stops. And Javard takes in her enchantment with the multiple SPIRIT bottles behind the CASHIER'S counter. Monica two steps with joy.

MONICA

That's what's up. You mean to tell me that I can get a buzz right now.

JAVARD

They do have rules.

MONICA

The last thing I'm worried about are rules.

Monica leans on the cashier's counter, and in her innocent voice.

MONICA (CONT'D)

(to cashier)

Excuse me, sir. How much for your
small bottle of brandy.

The cashier (30s) of Asian decent, follows Monica's hand signal to the bottle of her choice. He sets it on the counter.

CASHIER

4 dollar, fifty-five.

Monica pulls out a twenty but looks at Javard with her puppy dog eyes.

MONICA

Do you have any change left?

Javard reaches in his pocket and hands her his last and Monica puts her money back and uses Javard's.

EXT. DAY LIGHT MISSION - BRICK WALL - NIGHT

At the entrance a few have found a space for their hang out or resting place.

Javard with the traveling case close to him and his book-bag, leans on the brick wall and absorbs in all the late night activity:

- A GROUP of once upon a time OLD HEADS harmonizing.
- A Woman squatting and urinating openly.
- A Man break dancing in the front of traffic. HONK!
- And a Guy leaned on a building shooting up.

Javard pulls his arms in his shirt and with the intent to protect the traveling case and his book-bag. But a HISPANIC LADY (50s) next to him speaks.

HISPANIC LADY

Hace calor esta noche. Y me
gustaria una traga. Hay mucha gente
aqui abaja. Nosotras estaremos
bien? Okay?

Only interpreting the last word she said and her comforting smile, Javard nods and positions himself for sleep.

INT. DAY LIGHT MISSION - BRICK WALL - MORNING

Javard is awoken by a Elderly homeless Men.

ELDER MEN

Hey, young men. They'll be serving
breakfast in a few minutes.

The Homeless Man excitedly gestures for him to get in line
for the breakfast call.

Javard gets up and gathers his belongings and follows to the
back of the line.

INT. DAY LIGHT MISSION - CAFETERIA -

Javard follows down the chow line like the others and grabs
his half washed tray of portions. But a HOMELESS THUG behind
him doesn't take to kindly in the way Javard is dressed.

HOMELESS THUG

(at Javard)

Amazin' how people work the system.
You ain't even homeless.

But the Elder who woke Javard up protects him

ELDER

Aye. Don't start that shit this
morning. You don't know this man's
situation.

(to Javard)

Don't pay that idiot no mine.
Worthless ass negro.

Javard smiles a thank you at the Elder. Grabs his tray of -
what looks like slop - and leaves the line for a seat in
the...

CROWDED SEATING TABLES

Javard locates Monica seated with a few Women, one playing in
Monica's hair.

MONICA

I need my hair done.

YOUNGER WOMAN

(to Monica)

I can braid.

MONICA
 (to young women)
 If that's the case. I need my hair
 done now.

Monica follows her eyes to Javard walking up.

MONICA (CONT'D)
 Hey baby.
 (to the women)
 This is my husband who I was
 telling ya'll about. The writer.

JAVARD
 (to Monica)
 You okay.

MONICA
 Me. I'm fine. You the one who had
 to sleep outside.

Javard shrugs off.

OLDER WOMAN
 They have programs here. Help you
 get a job and housing, for both
 ya'll - together.

Monica looks over Javard's shoulder.

MONICA
 And there he is now.

A Gentleman with a VEST on walks over to the table.

VEST GENTLEMEN
 (to Javard)
 Sir. You can't be in this section.
 Women only. Men over there.

He gestures to the tables of Men. So Monica intervenes.

MONICA
 This is my husband. The one we were
 talking about earlier.

The Vest gentleman lightens with some bit of respect.

VEST GENTLEMEN
 Yeah. She was telling me you came
 out here for the movies. Smart
 move. But as you can see, it's not
 all Hollywood.
 (MORE)

VEST GENTLEMEN (CONT'D)

What you do is you and your girl,
go down to county and put that
paper work in. Get you started with
some assistance. I got you on a
bed.

MONICA

(to Javard)

It's not so bad after all.

INT. COUNTY SERVICES - DAY

BEHIND A CUBICLE

A CASE WORKER fumbles through documents and refers back and forth to a computer screen.

Javard twiddles his fingers.

CASE WORKER

Okay. You qualify for Food
assistance in the amount of \$196
and cash assistance in the amount
of \$221. Monthly.

Javard relaxes to even that.

CASE WORKER (CONT'D)

Are you available for work?

Against his will Javard.

JAVARD

Yes.

CASE WORKER

Okay. Are there any specific
industries you have skills or
certifications. I do see you
possess a CDL's-class B.

JAVARD

Yeah, but I'm not interested in
anything driving related.

The Case worker takes her head away from the computer as if Javard had committed verbal sin.

CASE WORKER

I also see that you're from out of
state. Los Angeles is a rough
place. Expensive. And competitive.
I hope you have a plan.

JAVARD
 (to Case worker)
 I wouldn't be here.

From the printer, the Case worker hands Javard a few documents to sign.

CASE WORKER
 Many people on a daily basis come here undermining the job's skill training course - I recommend you be there.

EXT. COUNTY SERVICES - DAY

Javard exits the doors scanning his paperwork. But

ON THE SIDEWALK

Monica laughs with a well-dressed COLLEGE SCOUT in his (20s). That until she sees Javard.

MONICA
 There he is. Mister Javard Hammond.

The college scout extends his hand for a shake from Javard.

COLLEGE SCOUT
 Your 'wife' told me you may be interested in furthering your education.

MONICA
 All that shit you like. The cameras and shit. They have.

COLLEGE SCOUT
 She also stated something about you being into technology.

Javard nods confused.

COLLEGE SCOUT (CONT'D)
 If you like, we can go to our campus and almost guarantee both you'll be enrolled today and have a starting date as early as Monday.

INT. JAVARD'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - LATE NIGHT
(FLASHBACK)

2 DAYS AGO

ON JAVARD'S LAPTOP

He scrolls through different deals on bus tickets to LOS ANGELES CALIFORNIA. In between, he highlights the lay over in New Mexico.

JAVARD
Albuquerque. Reminds me of some
cops show.

Monica sips her SPIRITS, smokes cigarette and empty.

MONICA
You really wanna do this?

JAVARD
Forget what I want out of life.

MONICA
I'm not saying that.

JAVARD
Other than that...that's between me
and my will.

MONICA
There you go with that code shit.
Be clear with me. I need to know if
it's safe.

Javard ad scrolling, is stopped at a halt

ON: DEAL: North Carolina to Los Angeles \$200/person.

Javard grimaces. But clicks. While the page loads, he gulps a Beer.

MONICA (CONT'D)
I can't believe they only gave you
a hundred. Plasma be on bullshit.

JAVARD
We both were on the bonus - fifth
donation. But...guess - minus the
bus fare - the hundred, we'll have
that to eat with.

Monica closes the box of silverware and tapes it.

MONICA
Have you paid for the tickets yet?

JAVARD
I'm on a deal now.

Javard pulls out his wallet and retrieves his BANK CARD.

Monica is more interested in Javard entering his Card information on the computer and taking the leap of faith.

MONICA
You better not.

JAVARD
I can take you off.

MONICA
Javard you're not thinking logical.

JAVARD
Logical to me Monica is looking at all our belongings boxed up -

KNOCK AT THE DOOR

Javard and Monica freeze. They know what time it is before the voice behind the door announces...

PROPERTY MANAGER (O.S.)
Hello. This is Malissa Smart the property manager. I'm here with the County Sheriff.

Javard presses SUBMIT, for the tickets, gets his confirmation then gets up and opens the door

A COUNTY SHERIFF (50s) and the PROPERTY MANAGER (40s) stand on the other side.

END FLASHBACK

INT. CITY BUS - DAY (MOVING)

Slides through DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES. CARS. TRUCKS. TRANSIT BUSES move along like

ON THE SIDE WALKS

The PREDESTRIANS stride to and fro.

Javard face brightens when he sees in a

PARKING LOT

Men and Women handling cables from a GENERATOR nodding off

Two MEN with HEAD SETS and CLIP BOARDS - speaking while walking back towards an adjacent Restaurant.

And Javard gets a good look on the inside and what's going on. A scene is being shot.

MONICA (O.S.)
I hope that's a sign.

Javard smiles and tries to get a better view before the passing.

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - BROADWAY - DAY

THE BUS stops at a STOP.

Javard and Monica hop off.

ON THE CURVE

Near the intersection of 7th street, two ASIAN HIP HOP dancers abide by the directions of a CAMERAMAN.

COMING OUT WESTON UNION

Javard and Monica stop at the Video shoot.

JAVARD
You can show them up, boo-boo.

And Javard is surprised when on his word, Monica hands him her bag and steps to the edge of the curb with a gesture that gets the attention of the Asian hip hop dancers.

To the same beat Monica cuts a few moves that wet the

Asian dancers appetite rallying them to return a few text book moves back to Monica.

But it doesn't faze her. Monica next moves draws surrounding attention.

A JEWELRY DEALER (50s) seated at the entrance of his store claps his hands.

JEWELRY DEALER

(to javard)

We need more your woman! No more of those camera babies.

Monica out of breath, and salutes the Asian dancers. The Camera Man is aggravated.

MONICA

(to camera man)

You can have them back, now.

Javard and Monica continued down Broadway.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Whew! I haven't done that in years.

JAVARD

Whose to say you want own one of these building out here. Monica's dance hall.

MONICA

That's so corny. But interesting. You still think I got it?

INT. DAY LIGHT MISSION - CAFETERIA - NIGHT

SECURITY GUARDS step around the boisterous and famished bunch.

Javard follows behind Monica who follows other Homeless residents sliding trays down a metal ledge connected to a HOT BAR hosted by a few Homeless MEN.

MONICA

Within nine months I will be certified as a nurse. Can you believe that.

JAVARD

If that's what you wanna do.

MONICA

Do? Javard, I don't know about you but money and security is on my mind.

Javard studies the moment of the line and his surroundings.

JAVARD

I guess.

MONICA

You should be proud. Who'd of said we would come to LA and in three days receive benefits, beds (until housings available) and be enrolled in school.

Both Javard and Monica take a deep breath.

MONICA (CONT'D)

We can get on our feet, and possibly buy a house.

JAVARD

(sordid)
From technical school.

MONICA

Precisely.

Monica lifts her tray to the Top METAL LEVER for
BEHIND THE BAR

A Guy over the Chicken.

CHICKEN GUY

(to Monica)
What you like pretty lady?

Monica blushes and looks back at Javard who pays it no mine.

MONICA

(North Carolina accent)
Well see I ain't from here, but know what that is right there. Let me get 'bout two of them thangs.

CHICKEN GUY

You wanna see what LA cooking is about huh? Taste my cooking.

The Chicken Guy stabs two chickens and evenly lays both of them on Monica's tray.

CHICKEN GUY (CONT'D)

Where you from?

Monica takes her tray down eyeing the chicken. Smiles at Javard.

MONICA

(nudges javard)
Tell'em where we're from, babe.

The Chicken Guy attitude changes (now knowing Monica and are a couple)

Monica slides onward to the endless SIDES, DESERTS and BEVERAGES.

So Javard lifts his tray on the top Lever of the Bar.

JAVARD
 (to Chicken Guy)
 Out east. South East that is.

The Chicken Guy at first seems hesitant, playing over what pieces he wants to give Javard - but reluctant - places on Javard's tray two nice pieces of chicken.

EXT. MEN'S DORM - SHOWER - LATER THAT NIGHT

Javard cuts the squeaky shower faucet. Grabs off a nearby hook a dry towel and dries himself.

Int. Men's dorm - BATHROOM - MIRROR

After a shave, Javard grabs his dirty laundry, and SLIPPERS CLACKS through bathroom passing by multiple URINALS, STALLS and incoming MEN.

INT. DAY LIGHT MISSION - MEN'S BEDDING AREA -- CONTINUOUS

BUNK BEDS of Homeless Men fill the capacity of a warehouse.

Javard irons his SCHOOL UNIFORM.

A FEW BUNKS AWAY

The Chicken Guy on a lower bunk speaks to a BUNK MATE.

CHICKEN GUY
 Yeah, blood. I had them on fire
 tonight with my entree.

BUNK MATE
 Everybody was talking about it. But
 you were stingy with me, blood.

CHICKEN GUY
 Stingy?

Javard gets the last crest out his shirt and disengages the iron, unplugs, wraps and sets it on a SHELF with the others.

Javard throws his pressed JEANS and SCHOOL UNIFORM SHIRT over his shoulder and on his way to his bunk passes by

The Chicken guy and his BUNKY. They nod at each other with slick information in there eyes.

CHICKEN GUY (CONT'D)
Say your boy from out east.

BUNK MATE
New York?

CHICKEN GUY
Nah. Some country ass nigga. South east. Ain't no such thing.

Javard hears the whole conversation, but says nothing. Places his things away in his locker, secures it and prepares for bed.

BUNK MATE (O.S.)
Blood came out here looking for dreams huh?

CHICKEN GUY (O.S.)
Better watch his lil girl friend. She'll play. Like we say, be-aware of a nigga with the right pockets.

BUNK MATE
You ain't never lying. It's a different flow than what it seem like on t.v., blood.

INT. DAY LIGHT MISSION - LOBBY - MORNING

Javard edgy. Looking at the ticking...

CLOCK

On the wall; tick away from 7:00.

A Homeless Woman (50s) in a motorized wheel chair, toting a BIG DOG by a lease, stops at the Reception booth and argues with the Security that's behind the glass.

HOMELESS WOMAN
I've came here everyday and finally get in your program, but ya'll still hassling me about my dog. He's cleared. I've given all his paper work.

Javard stares at the Dog panting and drooling, looking at him.

SECURITY (O.S.)
 (from behind glass)
 It's out of my control. Some of the girls are complaining.

HOMELESS WOMAN
 That's not my problem. He's prescribe to me by my doctor. If I stay he does too.

The homeless woman leaves the Security replies and heads towards a corridor, and to Javard's relief, Monica strides pass into the Lobby with a new hair do.

MONICA
 (models fresh braids)
 You like.

Javard nods. But his agenda is different.

JAVARD
 We have no money for the bus or train...It's a forty-five minute walk.

MONICA
 School starts at eight.

Monica sucks her teeth at Javard and he opens the GLASS exit door and she just has to take a good loving of her hair and self in the glass door before she exits.

MONICA (CONT'D)
 (posing)
 No way do I like being homeless, but it's has its perks.

Javard frowns but follows Monica out the glass door.

EXT. ALL TRADES TECHNICAL SCHOOL -- DAY

Stands three stories high. But the gate - at this hour - is locked around a full Staff and Student Parking lot.

INT. ALL TRADES TECHNICAL SCHOOL - CLASS -

An INSTRUCTOR, EAST INDIAN (60s) drags on referencing a video projector image that's on a white board with binary numbers, and explains how it relates to a circuit board.

INSTRUCTOR
Zero. Off. One. On.

So while the class of EX-CONS and YOUNGSTERS try to stay awake...

Javard interest is only on his laptop where their lies his
SCRIPT EDITOR APPLICATION

And he chips away at a screenplay.

INSTRUCTOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Some of you are new. And the way
this works. Every week is a new
class. It is a nine month program.
Meaning, if you started this week
than what you missed you'll take it
before graduation. And you will.

EXT. ALL TRADES TECHNICAL SCHOOL -- LATER

Javard exits the building...

In the parking lot Monica loud talking to a CLASSMATE (20s) -
showing off. And receives looks from

Other Students, STAFF MEMBERS - including parking ATTENDANTS.

MONICA
(daps up classmate)
Know what I'm talkin' 'bout. It's
how it goes down in the south. You
make me feel better about my
husband's decision to move here. My
new distant sister.

Monica and the Classmate hug as if known each other.

MONICA (CONT'D)
And uh- thanks for the trees.

Javard walks up.

MONICA (CONT'D)
(to Javard)
Hey baby? How was your first class
day?

Javard looks around at the Classmate. Not to welcoming. And
then everyone watching him or him and Monica.

JAVARD
It's cool. You ready?

INT. DAY LIGHT MISSION - JAVARD'S BUNK - NIGHT

Let alone the boisterous group of Homeless man, in and out the dorm Javard sleeps through it.

CHICKEN GUY (O.S.)
Carolina!

Javard rises from his pillow to a familiar name.

CHICKEN GUY (CONT'D)
Aye. Carolina. Your wife down there calling you, homey.

Javard jumps off his bunk in a hurry and to the room getting a bit silent for those noisy - he pays no mind - dashes out followed by the Chicken Guy.

A STAIRWAY

And down they go.

CHICKEN GUY (CONT'D)
She wasn't in the wrong. I'll vouch.

JAVARD
What happen?

CHICKEN GUY
Told her, in here you can't take the small gestures.

Javard cuts his eyes at Chicken Guy as they reach the bottom of the steps. Javard opens the

STEEL DOUBLE DOORS

And to his attention sees Monica, intoxicated, screaming in the Lobby at the top of her lungs.

MONICA
(to the entire staff and lobby)
And ya'll know she wrong!

Javard rushes over to her. Monica calms somewhat but still makes her point.

MONICA (CONT'D)
These bitches -

Javard looks back at Chicken Guy who mysteriously has disappeared.

JAVARD
(to Monica)
What's wrong?

MONICA
(stops him there)
It's not my fault this time,
Javard. Just because the bitch did
my hair a few times, and wanted to
fuck the chicken man...

Javard back up from Monica. Shaming her off balance self.
Drunk.

MONICA (CONT'D)
So you know me, I confronted her
about it and now they threatening
to kick us out. Well... me.
(to security staff)
We ain't going no where in this
bitch!

Javard grips Monica's arm and leads her...

EXT. DAY LIGHT MISSION COURT YARD - OUTSIDE DOORS

JAVARD
Why can't you just like...chill.

MONICA
It's not my fault!

JAVARD
You keep entertaining all this
chaos around here!

MONICA
Well you brought me here.

JAVARD
Corrections you chose to follow.

MONICA

It doesn't make any differences,
you wouldn't of made it with out
me.

Javard look at her could deter.

MONICA (CONT'D)

You barely even come out your
comfort zone.

JAVARD

I'm not here to make a bunch of
friends.

MONICA

So how you expect to network?

JAVARD

What's down here for me to network?

MONICA

See, I told you, you've changed on
me.

JAVARD

No, you need to stop making it hard
for us.

MONICA

(raises her voice)

There ain't no us. If I don't send
for you, then don't come for me!

A Security Guard comes outside and intercedes. Monica is
ready to pounce.

SECURITY

(to Monica)

Please don't yell at me.

Monica fights back her laugh.

MONICA

(to Security)

Depends on what you're about to
say.

SECURITY

(to Monica)

Good news and bad news.

MONICA
 (to Security)
 Good news first.

SECURITY
 (to Monica)
 Staff won't be able to view your
 case until tomorrow, so you stay
 here tonight.

MONICA
 And the bad news.

SECURITY
 You get to lay in first class.

The Security Guard - points to a few homeless people - in the
 lobby - through the glass - divided - Men one side and Women
 on other - making their beds out of TUBS.

Monica's not as brave anymore.

MONICA
 (to Javard)
 Javard.

JAVARD
 (to Security Guard)
 Can I stay down here with her?

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

Javard bothered all night.

From the women section, Monica tries whispering Javard's
 name. Javard hears it. But doesn't respond on purpose, even
 when the Guard checks Monica.

GUARD
 (to Monica)
 No talking.

MONICA
 (last words)
 Well-damn.

EXT. DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES STREETS - MORNING

Javard pulls a cigarette hard with a glare at Monica as they
 walk. But Monica is idle with other things on her mind.

MONICA

After class, we need to go down to the County building.

JAVARD

Why?

And out her backpack Monica hands Javard

ON DOCUMENTS: HOUSING VOUCHER APPLICATIONS

MONICA (O.C.)

That bitch thought she had me. We are about to be leaving here real soon.

Monica also pulls out a corner of a bottle of liquor she gulps down. Javard shakes his head.

INT. COUNTY SERVICES - AFTERNOON

Monica has alligator tears and pleads her case to the COUNTY WORKER - aware of her intoxication and the least empathetic to Monica's concerns.

MONICA

We didn't know. They told us to fill out the paper work and come to you.

COUNTY WORKER

(to Javard)

Do you have two forms of ID. From your home state -

Before she can finish Javard opens his folder and produces his birth certificate but from his pocket, his commercial drivers license and social security card.

The County Worker grabs his documents. But Monica isn't finish with her monologue.

MONICA

I can't keep living like that. We can't keep living like that. Both of us are in school. Looking for jobs.

COUNTY WORKER

This is California. Jobs are plentiful.

Javard can read the true subtext behind the County worker's said comment.

COUNTY WORKER (CONT'D)
 Okay. Now I do have a lead. Not far.

All the tears on Monica's face evaporate.

Javard watches the County Worker scribble down TINY, and address and phone number.

COUNTY WORKER (CONT'D)
 It's a house. I believe it's rooms for rent.

Javard takes the paper.

MONICA
 But what about our voucher deadline? It's already too late.

COUNTY WORKER
 This is just a shot. Go check out the house. Both you have a voucher. There is always next month.

INT. METRO RAIL LINE - TUNNEL - DAY

The TRAIN zooms and SQUEAKS to it halt. The DOORS slide open and passengers dash out.

INT. METRO RAIL LINE - TRAIN CAR

Javard with questions grilles Monica.

JAVARD
 So nothing happened?

MONICA
 What are you talking about?

JAVARD
 You and the Chicken guy?

MONICA
 Are you serious?

Javard doesn't know how to answer that. As the train stops

INTERCOM SPEAKER
Bus arriving at San Pedro station.

But a HOMELESS MAN with a SHOPPING BASKET full of his VALUABLES, blocks the exit DOOR, going back and forth with some-one staying on the TRAIN.

HOMELESS MAN

You're not going to talk to me like that.

So already upset by Javard's questioning, Monica yanks Javard - by the shirt and rushes him and her through the Homeless Man knocking his shopping basket and valuables off the TRAIN.

EXT. SAN PEDRO STREET - BUS STOP - EVENING

Javard and Monica in conversation travel down side walk.

MONICA

I can't believe you would ask me that.

JAVARD

It's been on my mind.

MONICA

Look at you being jealous. What you should look into, is those jobs all the guys at school referred you to.

JAVARD

If I wanted a 9 to 5 I would of stayed home.

MONICA

(dry)

Yeah, we know stubborn ass. How far? I need to pee.

Javard points straight across the TRAFFIC

Monica takes in the fast pace of the Traffic. And the CROSSWALK blinking out of order. She takes a chance in a gap of traffic, Javard following behind.

Against the passing by vehicle HORNS, they make it across SAN PEDRO STREET to the intersected

24TH STREET SIDE-WALK

Huffing and puffing in laughter.

MONICA (CONT'D)
I needed that.

So did Javard. Monica catches her breath and is amazed at the HOUSES in the neighborhood.

MONICA (CONT'D)
So far I'm impressed.

A Homeless Guy lays on an abandoned building surrounded in trash and broken furniture.

So Monica moves to the opposite side of Javard away from the Homeless Guy.

JAVARD
The house is on the next block.

EXT. 24TH STREET & STANFORD FOUR WAY INTERSECTION -- MINUTES LATER

And as a passing car stops at the STOP SIGN.

Javard and Monica cross the sidewalk. And Monica waves...

ACROSS THE STREET

At a TRICEY (50s), come out to sit on her porch.

TRICEY
(yells to the front storm door)
Barry. We have some new neighbors moving in.

BARRY (O.S.)
There's always new neighbors, Tricey.

TRICEY
But they're black.

With a voice that sounds like he doesn't wanna talk and can careless.

BARRY (O.S.)
Okay, Tricey.

Javard and Monica walk up to - surrounded by a GATE - A TWO STORY - NEWLY RENOVATED - HOUSE.

With a small yard consisting of rocks, and a walkway that extends and leads to the back.

MONICA
 (in awe)
 Is this it?

Javard dials in his cellular phone - the digits given to them from the Case worker.

JAVARD
 (to phone)
 Hello. Yes. I was given a lead for your rooms for rent. Yes. I'm at the home now. Hello.

After a sip from a small pint, Monica snatches the phone away from Javard. Swallows.

MONICA
 (to Javard's phone)
 Hello. Hello. Yeah, we are at -- the address? 9000 24th street. No ma'am. We haven't went in. Which house is it?

Monica opens the gate and Javard follows her inside.

MONICA (CONT'D)
 One room. We're a couple. We was given your number about a room for rent from our case-worker. Yes. County services. Okay. Alright.

Monica ends call, hands Javard his phone back.

MONICA (CONT'D)
 They definitely have space. It's supposedly two houses. Guess the other's in the back.

And approaching them down the WALKWAY pressing her end call phone button is TWANDA a classy (40s) and beside her, DENNIS conservative but with a youthful step for (70s) - ol' sugar daddy.

MONICA (CONT'D)
 (to twanda)
 Tiny?

TWANDA
 It's actually Twanda and Dennis. So you are looking for a room?

Everyone shakes hands and introduces self.

MONICA

Yeah. We moved here about two months ago - in school and ready to be on our feet.

DENNIS

Fair enough.

Dennis hops up the steps jingling the keys.

Monica follows behind.

And Javard gentlemanly steps aside for Twanda to follow. She admires and winks an eye at him.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Inside we enter. A Small circle table with four chairs, a recliner,

And HACKAVELLI a salt and pepper (60s), ex junky but on the verge of relapse, if not - eating cereal, on the COUCH enjoying CARTOONS on a 70inch TELEVISION

TWANDA

(to Hackavelli)

What have I told you about that?

HACKAVELLI

But see you ain't hear me.

TWANDA

Hear what?

Hackavelli looks to Dennis to save but denies drops his head ushering in Javard and Monica.

HACKAVELLI

I gave you my card. 1100 hundred dollars a month. Paid by the state -

TWANDA

We don't have time for this.

And Dennis reluctant but steps up.

DENNIS

(to Hackavelli)

W-We'll look into what's going on. I'll call the bank. Okay.

THE KITCHEN

Annex and large with a COUNTER TOP that stretches around in almost a v-shape accenting the above CABINETRY, MICROWAVE over a STOVE AND OVEN.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

(to Javard)

We just opened this place a month ago.

Javard watches Monica step around in awe.

DENNIS (CONT'D)

There's two houses -

TWANDA

(corrects him)

- facilities.

DENNIS

Yeah. Facilities. One in front and one in the back. 5 bedrooms and 3 baths. The models are similar just reversed.

MONICA

(to Javard)

You already thinking about the meals I'll be cooking ain't you.

TWANDA

(to Monica)

You're a foodie?

MONICA

I'm a cook. We from the South so you already know. Right babe?

Monica nudges Javard with his elbow.

TWANDA

I ask that because we can use a cook. We house for the elderly and disabled. So most of them are incapable.

DENNIS

(under-breath)

Or capable at all.

Twanda shoots Dennis a look for him to be quiet.

TWANDA

I don't know your financial situation.

Monica rips out the voucher. Hands it to Twanda.

MONICA

The only problem is our deadline to be paid for the next month has past. So, we don't know.

Javard follows with his voucher.

TWANDA

So both of you get this amount?
(off Javard and Monica's nod)
And it's just you two? No kids,
pets...

JAVARD

Just us.

Twanda hands Dennis vouchers.

INT. DAY LIGHT MISSION - MEN'S UNIT - LATER

Javard cleans the last out his LOCKER and moves to his bunk and stuffs it in his SUIT-CASE, but draws attention from

The Chicken guy who drops his reading.

CHICKEN GUY

You outta here Carolina?

Javard nods zipping with pride. So

The Chicken Guy leaves his bunk and makes his way to Javard's.

CHICKEN GUY (CONT'D)

I know your wife happy.

JAVARD

She's ecstatic.

Javard yanks suit-case off the bunk. Releases the handle and it's on wheels.

CHICKEN GUY

As a man I can say I'm glad you're on your way. A lot of people come out to L.A with a dream. But get caught up in the bullshit. Don't let that be you. As far as your girl... ya'll made for each other, blood.

On Javard critical look at him but like a real man shakes his extended handshake.

INT. ALL TRADES TECHNICAL SCHOOL - CLASSROOM -- DAY

Javard allows his muse to tackle a screenplay during class but an EMAIL NOTIFICATION has heads turn his way. Even...

The Instructor skips a beat to look at him.

ON: EMAIL

THE CALIFORNIA FILM SCHOOL OPEN FOR ENROLLMENT

Are you ready to make magic? Enrolling is easy and our trusted team with the mixture of alumni will have you ready to start.

But the cool voice from behind Javard brings his attention to the curious stares from the class and instructor.

TATOED CLASSMATE (O.C.)

I thank god for given me a second chance.

INSTRUCTOR

Mister Hammond? Like always entertained by your computer, unlike some of your fellow classmates I have check on, after four months of classes... What is your ideal career plan? Upon graduating, how do you see yourself?

EXT. ALL TRADES TECHNICAL SCHOOL -- COMING OUT THE GATE - LATER

Javard and a few of his Classmates skip through the Gate on to

THE SIDE WALK

Which goes down hill.

TATOED CLASSMATE

(to Javard)

I know you got the homework for tonight.

JAVARD

Yeah.

Javard hands his copy.

TATOED CLASSMATE
 (Classmate 2)
 What about you?

CLASSMATE 2
 I need that. I'll get it when you
 finish.
 (to Javard)
 Hey, homey. You smart ass hell.

TATOED CLASSMATE
 He bigger than this shit. Bro from
 another world.

CLASSMATE 2
 So what are your plans being in LA?

JAVARD
 I'm thinking about enrolling in -
 why I came to this city in the
 first place.

TATOED CLASSMATE
 You should.

JAVARD
 My girl created this technical
 school thing. I'm not trying to
 pull no cables.

CLASSMATE 2
 I say play with it. So that you can
 keep your housing, and financial
 aid.

TATOED CLASSMATE
 Dumb ass he still gonna to be able
 to keep it. All he's doing is
 switching schools. To his interest.

And as they reach the bottom of the hill on the side of a
 BRICK WALL we hear...

HIP HOP MUSIC

And see Monica inhaling a blunt and partying with a hand full
 of young MEN and young Women from 'her' class, dressed in
 HOSPITAL SCRUBS.

Monica's eyes are glossy as she rushes over to Javard and
 extends him the blunt. But

Javard denies, assessing the crowd with scorn.

JAVARD
(to Monica)
Let's go.

MONICA
Why? We chilling.

JAVARD
You can do this later.

MONICA
So you come to L.A and turned
bougie on me?

JAVARD
Let's go.

Monica reluctant gives the blunt to one of Javard's classmates.

MONICA
My husband's not comfortable. But
thank ya'll.

They exit.

MONICA (CONT'D)
Why are you so anti-social?

JAVARD
I didn't come out here to do what I
can do at home.

MONICA
So. We have to meet people. How do
you expect to get any where?

JAVARD
Not with those people.

MONICA
Don't act like you're better than
anyone.

JAVARD
I'm not saying that. But we have
to be careful - and focus on what's
right.

MONICA
You have to focus. I didn't wanna
be here, remember.

Javard shakes his head, mute.

INT. 24TH STREET LIQUOR STORE --

Javard grabs a bag of CHIPS and SODA. And him and Monica walk into the checkout line.

MONICA

I missed two classes this week
because she needed two meals
prepared for two houses.

JAVARD

You asked for it.

MONICA

They are bringing in too many
people. And Dennis lives in one of
those rooms. The other night I
walked pass his room - it was open.
And guess what I saw?

Javard clueless.

MONICA (CONT'D)

A crack pipe.

Javard not believing that.

JAVARD

Going back to why she keeps you in
the kitchen. Can't be in and out of
everything. Sometimes you have to
miss something.

AT CASHIERS WINDOW

An Asian male, (60s) finishes the last customer transaction.

MONICA

(to asian man)

Hey, baby.

The Asian man smiles and nods at Javard. Javard sighs. He knows what Monica is after.

MONICA (CONT'D)

You know what I'm here for. What's
your cheapest?

As the Asian guy tip-toes like to the lower self and grabs the cheapest LIQUOR Monica turns to Javard.

MONICA (CONT'D)

I'm a tell you like this, she's not going to keep handling me. I will not miss one more class until I see cash - agreed. And you need to be on my side.

JAVARD

I am on your side.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - BACK-YARD PATIO - EVENING

ON JAVARD'S CELLULAR PHONE

Is a FILM SCHOOL WEBSITE

AN APPLICATION FOR ENROLLMENT

Completed.

Javard signs with his index finger and hits the submit button. A confirmation appears with an appointment date.

The back house front door squeaks open. Javard glances at an unshaven frustrated (obviously high) speaking to himself - Hackavelli.

He finds a seat a few feet from Javard.

HACKAVELLI

(to Javard)

A bro. You have a light?

Javard digs in his pocket.

HACKAVELLI (CONT'D)

Better yet. Give me a cigarette?

I'll pay you back.

Javard pulls out his pack of cigarettes and lighter. Hands Hackavelli his lighter and two cigarettes.

HACKAVELLI (CONT'D)

Things aren't what they seem around here, bro. And I see you and your wife - that's your girl right...

(off Javard shrug)

I see ya'll trying to help out. That's cool. Ya'll must be into that type of thing.

Monica comes dashing from the side of the house walk-way.

MONICA
 (to Javard)
 Babe! Come look!

And before Javard leaves...

HACKAVELLI
 Aye, bro?

MONICA
 (to Hackavelli)
 Look, we don't have time for your
 dope feign shit!

HACKAVELLI
 I-I'm sorry Miss lady. Damn, can I
 giv'em his lighter back?

Hackavelli hands Javard his lighter back.

MONICA
 (to Javard)
 I don't know why you're back here
 entertaining his high ass.

Javard follows her stuffing his phone and cigarettes where
 each will fit in back his pants pockets.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - FRONT - GATE

Javard runs into LAPD OFFICERS following a boisterous Dennis
 out the Gate...

ON THE PORCH

Twanda disheveled, arms folded.

TWANDA
 I can't keep supporting you Dennis.
 We were supposed to be building a
 business.

Javard quirks a brow at Monica's confirming nod.

As Dennis pulls off so does the Cops.

TWANDA (CONT'D)
 I can't trust what he'll do.

MONICA

Smoke it up. That's bad
business, girl.

TWANDA

Which means, I am dependent upon
ya'll. I know you're in school.
But listen, we can get this to a
point where...it's no rent - work
something out with your check.

MONICA

We need some cash.

TWANDA

Monica -

MONICA

(corrects)

Mo- you can call me Mo. Cause
that's what I do.

TWANDA

Okay-Mo. I got you. Please just
continue your cooking. And
Javard... I need you.

Javard can see it's something more behind Twanda's smile
entering back in the house, and he quickly cuts his eyes to
Monica suspicion.

INT. TRAIN TUNNEL - DAY

A Train slows to a halt. And many passengers including Javard
depart.

EXT. TRAIN TUNNEL -

Javard with his hand on the escalator railing, invite the
rays of the sun on his face. And as he rises to the ledge of,
we see the HOLLYWOOD SIGN on the MOUNTAIN.

EXT. SUNSET BLVD -

Javard follows the GPS on his phone.

INT. CALIFORNIA FILM SCHOOL - DAY

Javard smiles through the doors and is welcomed by a youthful
receptionist.

RECEPTIONIST
Are you here for the tour?

JAVARD
Yes.

RECEPTIONIST
Name?

JAVARD
Javard Hammond.

RECEPTIONIST
You're here for the tour early.
And I see your interest is our
Writing for film and Television
program. You may wait in the
lobby if you like.

Javard considers and finds a seat. He scans

The STUDENTS around tables discussing: shots, angles, or
script touch up's.

Javard pulls his phone out, and opens a website for the LOS
ANGLES DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS.

EXT. TRAIN STATION ESCALATOR - AFTERNOON (FLASHBACK)

1 day and night earlier

Javard moves past a rider trying to keep up with Monica's
pace and the escalator's floor level release.

JAVARD
Are you okay.

MONICA
Professor Wixk was wrong and he
knows it! All the other girls do
worse than me. But I'm the ring
leader.

Javard quirks his brow.

MONICA (CONT'D)
You don't believe me. And you
suppose to have my back.

Javard again has to keep up with Monica dart to and through
the line of ready passengers as the train comes to a halt.

EXT. 24TH STREET - LATER

Javard and Monica step down the street in an argument.

JAVARD

I do have your back. But...

MONICA

- But nothing! I'm really getting tired of this fakery out here. And out of all people that I would think could never turn on me.

JAVARD

Stop drawing so much attention.

MONICA

Attention. Oh. Listen to the one that should be drawing attention!

A few BICYCLE COPS just so happen to be alert rolling pass. But Javard plays it cool.

JAVARD

I tour tomorrow.

MONICA

Than what?

JAVARD

Go to school. Network. Write. The business works like an everyday job, Monica.

MONICA

Excuses Javard. You forget I know you.

JAVARD

This whole tantrum you having turned out to be about me.

MONICA

Fuck that school. Fuck what you talking about and if ya'll don't like me for saying it, fuck ya'll too.

Javard and Monica reach the gate to the Boarding house. Javard lifts the latch.

Twanda comes outside with a young girl(20s) with a shaved-head tattoos, an attitude.

TWANDA

Right on time. Javard...and Monica.
This is our newest house member.

But Javard finds Twanda's attention relaxes on him.

TWANDA (CONT'D)

(to javard)
And, thanks for cleaning the rooms -
in both houses.

JAVARD

I see you're improving things.

Twanda hands Javard \$40..

TWANDA

And Monica? I don't know the
quality, but I'm sure you'll let me
know.

Twanda gives Monica a nice size bag of WEED. Monica eyes glow.

YOUNG GIRL

Ah-shyt! Look like we turning up.

MONICA

(to young girl)
What I get from you, you're a down
to earth person.

YOUNG GIRL

Better say it.

Monica and the Young Girl high-five. But Twanda's attention sneaky - undresses Javard.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - JAVARD AND MONICA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Javard waken by BARRY (50s) ex gang member, double OG.

BARRY

Javard! The police just took ya
girl to jail.

Javard jumps up and follows Barry out the room into

THE COMMON AREA

BARRY (CONT'D)
She's on her way to jail.

They exit...

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The back of the LAPD CAR too far down the block. Damn.

BARRY
Her and that new girl got into a
fight. Right in the middle of the
street.

JAVARD
Where are they taking her?

BARRY
Probably newton street?

Javard follows Barry...

ACROSS THE STREET TO HIS PORCH

And they take a seat on TWO CHAIRS

Tricey comes out the door to meet them on the porch and she
hands Javard the arresting officers CARD.

TRICEY
(to Javard)
They were out here drunk. Hollin'
back and forth.

BARRY
She was over here, Tricey. That
girl wasn't bothering no body.

TRICEY
Shit. She was bothering me.

BARRY
Go back in the house. Ain't nothin'
but men out here.

TRICEY
So! Whatever going down on my porch
I have a right to be out here.

BARRY
You think I'm going to let
something happen at my house. If I
can't run it - I'll just leave.

TRICEY

See, Barry. That's all you do is entertain bullshit.

BARRY

Well it's over now, Tricey.

TRICEY

Your dumb ass mess around and get kicked out this place. Stupid shit!

Tricey enters back inside and SLAMS the door behind her.

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

Need to come check your food before it burn up.

BARRY

(speaks through door)

You don't have to tell me shit! I'm a chef. I know when my food done.

And Javard doesn't even know what to say. Just stares at the card.

END FLASHBACK

INT. CALIFORNIA FILM - CORRIDOR - DAY

The GUIDE (30s) and much enthusiasm moves the tourist including Javard down a hallway of PLATES and GOLDEN RECORDS of artist on the WALL.

GUIDE

And so as we encounter the beginning of our tour...

The Guide opens a discreet door to

A STUDIO SET

Javard smiles at the Student production in progress and their studio model of the interior of a house.

GUIDE (CONT'D)

As you can see there are students engaged in a project for a particular assignment. All of our students are welcome to rent out not only the equipment but also the studios - pending availability.

Javard stops to marvel at

The Director and Script Supervisor bicker.

DIRECTOR

It'll be fine.

SCRIPT SUPERVISOR

Discontinuity is never fine.

And Javard chuckles at the student behind the camera pan his angle while being pushed by two other students down dolly tracks.

INT. CALIFORNIA FILM SCHOOL - ADMISSIONS OFFICE - LATER

ON: Javard staring at the School's logo.

ADMISSIONS AGENT (O.S.)

Alright! Mister Hammond. You're all set up.

Javard dazzles at the Admissions agent (40s) enter the office carrying a thick folder.

ADMISSIONS AGENT (CONT'D)

I've submitted the necessary documents to move forward in the admissions process. Am I'm right you are determined to withdraw?

JAVARD

Yes. It's a technical college.

ADMISSIONS AGENT

The problem isn't getting you out or in Mister Hammond. I guess the question is, is this something you really wanna do as a career?

Javard smiles hard staring in the eyes of the Admission Agent's admirable stare.

ADMISSIONS AGENT (CONT'D)

What made you at the age 37?

JAVARD

This isn't the beginning.

Javard shuts up the Admissions Agents mouth.

EXT. SUNSET BLVD - SIDEWALK - EVENING

Javard on the phone, stops with a few PREDESTRIANS at the cross walk.

JAVARD
You're out?

ON THE SIDE WALK

Javard's shadow image appears

MONICA (O.S.)
Where are you!

JAVARD (O.C.)
I'm at the film school. Leaving. I just enrolled.

MONICA (O.S.)
(sour)
You finally find time when I'm locked up to live your dream. Well congratulations.

AT THE LIGHT RAIL STATION

Javard appears, and the Pedestrians line-up for the coming train.

JAVARD
So...you talked to Twanda?

Monica surely is not paying attention.

MONICA (O.S.)
Damn Javard. You smoked all the cigarettes and then leave an empty pack. You know, you're so pathetic.

JAVARD
I'll pick up -

But before Javard can finish...

He looks at his PHONE and see's Monica's call vanishing.

EXT. TRAIN - SAN PEDRO STATION - LATER

Javard exits the train flipping through the California Film School student package.

EXT. STANFORD STREET - SIDE WALK --

Strolling to his familiar corner the sound of

SWITCH *"I'll call your name"*

Spills from the metal doors of his Barry and Tricey's home.

ON THE PORCH

Barry and an irritated Tricey, and Monica singing off-key.

MONICA

(sings)

"I call your name girl..."

TRICEY

Shut up! Damn!

MONICA

You know I can sing.

Javard walks up catching all them off guard, mostly Barry.

BARRY

Don't be sneaking up like that,
cuz! This the bottoms.

Not that Javard needs Monica to protect him there is no real threat.

MONICA

(to Javard)

Baby I just finish telling them how
we met.

Monica steps down the porch in a different mood then earlier.
Javard catches Monica from stumbling.

MONICA (CONT'D)

Remember?

(sings)

"I am for real"

TRICEY

Please shut her up.

BARRY

Let her enjoy herself; fresh outta
of jail. She happy. I would be too.

Tricey pours a shot in a shot GLASS.

TRICEY
 (to Javard)
 Look like you need a shot.

Javard denies.

MONICA
 He don't drink like I do. I'll take
 it.

TRICEY
 Not with out payment.

BARRY
 (to Tricey)
 If he don't want it give it to her.

TRICEY
 She just sat here and drank the
 whole bottle up, Barry.

BARRY
 That what we do.
 (struck with memory)
 Qua-tre and moving team! Fo-thirty
 homey! It use to go down in these
 bottoms, cuz!

Tricey puts some moves in to the groove.

TRICEY
 (having fun)
 Hey!!! Memeba Teen Post, Barry.

BARRY
 Of course I remember Teen Post.
 What you talkin' bout. Just be
 gone before them swines get there.

TRICEY
 That's what you was worried about.

BARRY
 Right!

Something about Barry bouncing and throwing up gang signs and
 Tricey quick change of mood - to the now - FUNK SONG -
 tickles Javard's curiosity.

JAVARD
 (to Monica)
 You spoke to Twanda?

MONICA

Fuck that bitch! She's foul
Javard. If it wasn't for her I
wouldn't of got locked up.

JAVARD

Wait. What -

BARRY

Told you I saw the whole thing,
homey. The lil white girl hopped
off the porch poppin off. And your
girl met her in the street.

MONICA

She hopped off that porch, Javard.
Y'know how we get down back-way.

This is not a time Javard praises.

TRICEY

(to Monica)

You better stay close to your man.
These California hoes can be
scandalous.

BARRY

(to Tricey)

You from Cali.

TRICEY

But I'm a princess.

Tricey laughs to herself as Barry roles his eyes.

MONICA

(to Tricey)

What you mean stay close?

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Javard examines his finish SCREENPLAY slide out the printer,
sheet by sheet while

IN THE KITCHEN

Monica retrieving a POT - from the upper cabinet - a PAN -
from under the cabinet, and SLAMS them on the countertop.

MONICA

That bitch is foul!

Monica yanks the knob off the drawer.

MONICA (CONT'D)

See. Cheap. - No, you need to call that bitch and tell her I wanna see her now!

JAVARD

Why does this have to be so hard?

MONICA

Because you make it that way.

The last sheet from the printer falls in place and Javard stacks them.

MONICA (CONT'D)

From the moment we came here she has been trying to split us up.

JAVARD

So you're going off theories?

Javard finds a folder to slide his fresh Screenplay inside.

MONICA

You're so naive, and too caught up in your bullshit -

JAVARD

What I'm not going to do is continue with your nonsense.

MONICA

Than don't nigga. I don't need you. And thank you for showing me who you are.

Javard clutches the folder and walks into the room.

EXT. BOARDING HOUSE - PORCH - LATER

Javard enjoys a cigarette and sees just over

THE ENTRANCE GATE

A gleeful Hackavelli crutched over pushing a grocery cart full of recyclables down the side walk.

Javard meets eye contact delivering a respectful nod.

So Hackavelli stops his cart near the entrance of the gate.

HACKAVELLI

Javard? Outlaws live on! It was seven of us. Now it's only four of us.

Javard chuckles for the rest.

JAVARD

What happen? Why you don't live here no more, Hackavelli?

Hackavelli pulls a limp cigarette out his back pocket, posture becomes erect but then he leans on the fence. Yeah, he's high out his mine.

HACKAVELLI

That bitch took all my money for the month and told me I had two days to stay because the county cut my check.

Javard gasps. But Hackavelli doesn't seem as bothered.

HACKAVELLI (CONT'D)

(unsober raps)

'Tell me if you feel me. The Shadow-do-doe for a real G. So now do you really feel me. Living on the shadow- of real G's. But, you do all feel me. Hail Mary come, quick, see... Do you take me now... Aha Aha aha ahaaaa.

Turns Javard's head to

TWANDA'S CAR

Park.

Hackavelli stops his song and bows to Twanda's car and almost loses his footing when she BLOWS the horn. He says some inaudible curse words as he stumbles back to his grocery cart - then moves up the street.

MONICA (O.S.)

Javard? I need a drink.

Before Javard can respond to Monica or meet Twanda at the gate.

TWANDA

I see you have it looking nice out here. When did you cut the lawn?

The question and way she winks at Javard mid-section makes him crack an uncomfortable smile.

But Monica comes out the house, and leaps from the porch on the pursuit of Twanda.

MONICA

Oh yeah, bitch, I owe you an ass whipping.

Javard steps in to block what's to come.

MONICA (CONT'D)

(pass Javard)

- And whatever fantasy you think you have with my man. Bitch this is twenty-years of something you will never know about.

JAVARD

(to Monica)

Chill.

MONICA

No you chill!

Twanda dialing 9-1-1.

TWANDA

(to Monica)

If you really wanna bring drama. I can have you removed.

MONICA

Bring it bitch! Where we from ain't nobody scared of police.

Javard fights to keep Monica from jumping off the porch.

TWANDA

(to Javard)

You need to check your girl.

MONICA

And I will have a reason this time for them taking me.

And Twanda turns to the gate in a haste with her phone to her ear.

TWANDA (O.S.)
 (on phone)
 Yes. I need the police at my
 residence.

And Monica is not letting up.

MONICA
 (yells)
 Why you keep calling the police
 scary bitch!

JAVARD
 Why did you come out side?

MONICA
 Javard's she's bluffin'.

JAVARD
 What if she's not?

MONICA
 Listen Javard if you wanna fuck the
 bitch go right ahead.

ACROSS THE STREET

Barry and Tricey come out the door nosily.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - JAVARD AND MONICA'S ROOM - EARLY
 MORNING

The half open WINDOW BLIND allows a transient of moon light
 that competes with the glow of

ON THE BED

Monica nestled in the blankets and snoring to her pillow.

Javard stares at the ceiling.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE - LIVING ROOM TABLE - LATER

Javard is on the phone talking to Twanda.

TWANDA (ON PHONE)
 I'm sorry, but she has to go.

JAVARD
 (to phone)
 Yeah. That's...that's in progress.

TWANDA (ON PHONE)

And I have no beef with you. I think you are a great person. Someone who knows Jesus. Living here either going to make you or break you.

JAVARD

We've been using our food stamps...

TWANDA

I get that. But no one told you to do it. All you had to do is call us. You think I'll let twenty elderly and sickly people starve.

Javard covers Twanda voice coming from the speaker but is unsuccessful when Monica stumps into the living room throwing all her clothes in...

A SUIT-CASE

Opened in the middle of the floor.

MONICA

(for Twanda to hear it)
Let the bitch know my flight doesn't leave until tonight.

TWANDA (ON PHONE)

God bless her. Do we need to end this phone call?

JAVARD

(to phone)
Yeah.

MONICA

Yes! Yes! Sneaky bitch!

TWANDA

We'll talk later about me reimbursing you for feeding the clients. The Lord knows your heart.

MONICA

Pay you! Pay you!. Bitch that was my food stamps too. Where's my --

Javard ends the call.

JAVARD

Can you please stop screaming?
Other people stay here.

MONICA

Oh-yeah, L.A has changed you. I can't believe you will sit there and entertain anything that bitch has to say. Since we've been in LA it's like you haven't cared a bit about me.

JAVARD

(to self)

I can't keep doing this.

MONICA

That's the problem. You don't do anything, Javard!

JAVARD

Do you need help packing?

Javard disappears in the room.

Monica breaks. Falls to her knees. So when Javard re enters. He surrenders emotions, and to his knees in tears. They grab each other. Hold each other. Twenty years of friendship, three years of love, loyalty, ending.

Some Tenants come down the stairs. Watch them.

INT. LAX AIRPORT -- LOBBY SEATS -- NIGHT

Javard secures Monica's bag and with the rest of him and her sniffs.

MONICA

Don't forget...when you write the scene about the love-interest leaving the protagonist, twist the plot.

Javard pulls Monica in even closer fighting to stay strong.

MONICA (CONT'D)

I keep hoping this is just one of those moments in our life. We always seem to make it work.

JAVARD

Yeah.

MONICA

But it's not.

INTERCOM SPEAKER

Flight 577 to Bismarck North Dakota and flight 407 to Denver Colorado are boarding. All passengers this is an important reminder -- flights 577 to Bismarck North Dakota -- terminal 4B -- and flight 407 Denver Colorado, terminal 6A, are boarding. Please be advise.

Both Javard and Monica struggle to stand. They can't look at each other. So

Javard with the advantage hooks Monica's book-bag.

JAVARD

It's good to know that you'll be around your kids.

MONICA

Two weeks. I can stay with my aunt... until they find an institution to put me in. I'm not - I'll prove all of them wrong. Watch me.

Javard stops and performs.

JAVARD

(dramatic)

I'm sorry miss Smith. Ooo

And Monica cheeses her white teeth to the sky, kicks a fantastic dance routine and loud enough for the Airport to also hear it.

MONICA

(sings)

"I am for real!"

At least the friendship is save. All because of the held memory. They hug.

EXT. CALIFORNIA - MORNING

The SUN wakes the CITY BELOW.

INT. CALIFORNIA FILM SCHOOL -- CONFERENCE ROOM -- DAY

STAFF AND ALUMNI sit around a long table and a charismatic ex-film student speaks.

EX-FILM STUDENT

And since graduating five years ago, I have worked on films for Netflix, Disney, Paramount - many others including a few international companies and also independent production studios. I've won a few film awards and became the one with the ability to accept or deny jobs. You could catch my million dollar shot in many magazines.

The ROOM laughs.

EX-FILM STUDENT (CONT'D)

But on the behalf of my working Alumni and LA film school staff, I can say, what you'll learn in the pursuit of what ever major you've chosen, it's not about the big names, accolades or money... Seriously, what you will learn as you grow in your craft, is that everything you've been through matters. Because that something -- forced you -- to find a way -- so you could be here today. What ever it is fellow students, *that* which is inside us -- I know today I can account for when all else seems gray. *That* which is in side of us, when I open my eyes for the day, it shows me the way. And I will tell you -- that which is inside of me, is also inside of you. And it is the greatest gift outside of morning dew. Determination! Pursuit! Deliverance! Keep those in mind. And hope to see all of you on the other side.

IN THE SEATS

Javard is one with the STANDING OVATION. But his

CELL PHONE

...vibrates a call from Barry. So Javard excuses himself through the applause.

BARRY (O.C.)

They got ambulances over here cuz. May need to come check it out.

TRICEY (O.C)
 (in the background)
 That bitch ain't feeding them over
 their. Yeah. Slum bitch. Yeah.
 Stupid shit, Barry. Yeah.

EXT. 24TH STREET/BOARDING HOUSE -- NIGHT

An AMBULANCE PARKED in the middle of the street, lights up
 the neighborhood.

At the gate a group of PARAMEDICS attend to a FEEBLE ELDER
 pushed out on a GURNEY.

MEDIC
 Your blood pressure is a little
 high. What medications do you take?

FEEBLE ELDER
 (delirious)
 A lot.

As they reach the gate Dennis appears.

DENNIS
 (to Feeble elder)
 Have you taken any medication since
 you've been here?

The Feeble elder looks through Denise like he doesn't know
 who he is.

DENISE
 (to Feeble Elder)
 You'll be okay. I'm here for you.

ELDER
 (to Medic)
 I don't need that mess. Medications-
 Poisoning me.

A LYFT CAR halts.

Javard hops out on his cell phone.

JAVARD
 (to phone)
 Yeah I just pulled up. They're
 with him at the gate.

Dennis steps over to Javard and shakes his hand. He points to
 Javard's phone with a sly smile knowing it's Twanda.

JAVARD (CONT'D)

(to phone)

Checking his vitals. Looks like
their taking him to the hospital

Javard moves to the gurney. The Feeble Elder smiles up at
Javard as if he is a God.

FEEBLE ELDER

There my friend.

(to Medic)

Javard helps me all the time.

JAVARD

(to Feeble Elder)

I see you not in the best of
spirits. What's wrong?

FEEBLE ELDER

That lady brings no food like she
say.

DENNIS

It figures.

(to Medic)

You see, I'm part owner of these
two facilities who keeps the
medical things together, but due to
circumstances between me and my
partner - on the phone with him -
things are a mess.

MEDIC

(to Javard)

His blood pressure is high and I do
believe that's from alcohol
consumption but he's also very
weak.

Javard is alerted back to the phone.

JAVARD

(to phone)

Yeah. He's here. Something about
you were suppose to bring food...I
had orientation for school. My
friend across the street called me.
- You can't expect me to hold all
of this responsibil- Yeah, Dennis
is right here.

DENNIS

She's crazy.

Javard ends call as they lift the Feeble Elder into the MEDIC VAN.

So Javard and Dennis stand in the street and watch the Medics depart.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
Thanks for showing up.

JAVARD
No question.

DENNIS
Sh-she working you hard? I see.

JAVARD
I'm managing.

Dennis will set the records straight.

DENNIS
I know you've heard some things.
And I'm not going to say it's all
false. We all have skeletons. But
that didn't have anything to do
with...

Javard gets it. Shrugs.

DENNIS (CONT'D)
You're dealing with a conniving and
greedy woman. - So I see Monica's
gone.

JAVARD
Yeah, well...

Clearly Dennis can sense Javard's unwelcoming attitude.

DENNIS
(like a threat)
Hey - know my people are all around
here. I grew up down here, homey.

Javard knows what he means by that. Ups and down him and
moves to the HOUSE.

INT. BOARDING HOUSE -- LIVING ROOM -- LATER THAT NIGHT

Javard watches television alone in a quiet house, though the
lights are on.

KNOCK KNOCK

Javard as if expected leaps to answer the DOOR.

ON THE OTHER SIDE

He stares at Twanda with an attire and smile that speaks more than business.

TWANDA

We need to talk.

Javard steps aside to let her in and observes how Twanda looks up the stairs which is dark.

TWANDA (CONT'D)

As agreed upon, if you assisted me in the duties around both houses in return I will not only charge no rent, eventually repay you - But due to Dennis mis-dealings - The nerve of him to show up here... Forgive me. Javard once we're out of this legal stuff - I promise to compensate you.

JAVARD

You do know why I came to LA.

TWANDA

A hustle city. Everyone is doing something. You have to get in where you fit in.

Twanda's not listening body coming closer's to Javard.

TWANDA (CONT'D)

I like to write your movie.

Javard face to face with Twanda and her agenda to unbutton his shirt. He stops her.

JAVARD

For real?

TWANDA

Yeah.

JAVARD

This doesn't even look right.

TWANDA

I thought you wanted her gone.

JAVARD

Regardless of whether she's here or gone, I've known that woman for twenty years.

TWANDA

I know all about post-relationship feelings.

JAVARD

That's beside the point. Just business.

Twanda backs off with a smile to hide her disappointment.

TWANDA

Well...uh, business it will be. So what's the update on houses?

JAVARD

I used the last of my food stamps and made a meal.

Twanda can careless. Checks her phone and now, like in a rush to the door.

TWANDA

Keep me posted. I may need your help tomorrow morning if your available. Supposedly two more clients have been cleared and will be arriving.

JAVARD

We're out of beds.

Twanda stops at the door. Turns back around looking pass Javard, who follows her eyes.

TWANDA

We'll move the couch out and set up two more or so beds -- in both houses.

That's it for Javard. And before Twanda exits.

JAVARD

I'm moving out.

Twanda face hits the floor.

JAVARD (CONT'D)

I didn't come here for this. And want be involved in your...

(MORE)

JAVARD (CONT'D)

I already contact the county. My
check will be stopping. I'll be out
of here on the 30th.

Twanda stalks out the house.

ON: Javard, vindicated.

EXT. AMUSEMENT PARK -- WATER SLIDE -- DAY (FLASHBACK)

3 years ago

A line of children and adults, starting from the concrete
bottom - anticipate to reach the top of a 10-STORY STAIRWAY.
All except

ON THE STEPS

Javard, holding tightly to the stair rail. Him and Monica --
at the very top - next in line.

MONICA

Relax. You're gonna be immersed in
water.

JAVARD

I don't like heights.

Monica yanks his arm from the railing.

MONICA

Boy. Relax. Have faith.

JAVARD

I do.

MONICA

Stop thinking like...a script.
Better yet - be in it.

Javard breaks a weak smile, but eyes grow huge witnessing the
ADMINISTRATORS gesture for him and Monica...

ADMINISTRATORS

Next.

INSIDE THE CYLINDER TUBE

A cut out with water gushing down the base.

The Administrators position Javard and Monica -- on flooring -
arc at a forty-five degree angle with small back support --
crossing Javard and Monica arms over their chest.

ADMINISTRATOR

Count down!

A speaker from somewhere inside the cylinder counts from 5. Javard blinks his eyes...4 -- a nervous smile...3 -- and he looks over at Monica grinning at him...2

MONICA

But brace your self.

The floor opens from under them. WHOOSH!

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BOARDING HOUSE -- JAVARD'S BEDROOM -- DAY

ON: JAVARD'S LAPTOP SCREEN

A SCRIPT on page two: The written scene of the *AMUSMENT PARK*
Javard stops in the moment.

ON: CELL PHONE MESSENGER

After vibrating.

MONICA: Call me.

Javard takes a deep breath hits the call button.

MONICA (ON PHONE)

Hello.

JAVARD

(to phone)

Hey.

MONICA (ON PHONE)

Hey.

We hear kids argue in Monica's background.

JAVARD

I hear you with the kids.

MONICA (ON PHONE)

Yeah...For now. My aunt letting me stay here the weekend. Early Monday morning is my due date.

JAVARD

S-So their still talking --

MONICA (ON PHONE)
Yeah Javard I'm still being forced
against my will. I haven't drank
anything since I left LA.

Javard POV: in the corner a see-through PLASTIC BAG full of
his recycled BEER CANS.

JAVARD
T-that's a good thing. Isn't it?

MONICA (ON PHONE)
Maybe for you. Still in LA. And I
bet Twanda's happy.

JAVARD
I can careless what makes her
happy.

MONICA (ON PHONE)
Oh so now you're seeing what I
tried to tell you. But it's too
late now Javard. Too late.

JAVARD
(to phone)
I don't know what you mean by too
late but...Twanda doesn't even
factor in why I'm here.

MONICA (ON PHONE)
Well you're living your dream.

JAVARD
And believe it or not -- you've
play - and will always play - a
lead role in it.

MONICA (ON PHONE)
(crying)
I miss you. I miss you. I miss you.
Everything is fucked up. My family
wanna put me in a mental
institution. I'm not crazy Javard.

JAVARD
No. You're not. And their not
putting you in a mental
institution.

MONICA
I have to Monday, Javard.

JAVARD
Well...maybe -

MONICA (ON PHONE)
You don't wanna talk to me no more!

Silence -- though we know Monica is still on the other line -- we hear her sniffing. And Javard closes his eyes to fight back his tears. Then...

JAVARD
Want me to tell you a story about
twenty-years ago.

MONICA (ON PHONE)
I can probably tell it better
anyway.

Javard smile is wide. And both him and Monica laugh.

THE END

FADE TO BLACK.

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)

(CONT'D)