

OUR KIND OF PEOPLE
EPISODE 101: "Pilot"

Written By

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"Our Kind of People"

ACT ONE

The camera flies us over the Atlantic Ocean as **Childish Gambino's "THIS IS AMERICA"** gets louder and louder, crashing us into our world --

1 EXT. FRANKLIN YACHT - NIGHT 1

-- THIS IS AMERICA, off the coast of Martha's Vineyard on a stunning yacht at the most exclusive party for miles around. This is the YOUNGER SET of the African American elite -- young, rich and Black --

The camera lands on a MYSTERY GIRL (whose face we won't see in this cold open) in "still on the runway" RED BOTTOMS. We stay with her as we snake through the party. She passes a POKER game being played on a raft in the pool. A male partygoer, JUSTIN, 19, sweeps the pot of jewelry and cash toward him as he calls out to Mystery Girl in the distance.

JUSTIN

Yo, Tay. You want in?

But Mystery Girl keeps going, stumbling. Oblivious and drunk.

2 INT. FRANKLIN YACHT - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT 2

Mystery Girl enters and immediately starts removing her couture until she is NAKED -- wearing only her Red Bottoms. She bumps into a nightstand, knocks over a FRAMED PHOTO of a PERFECT FAMILY, who we will come to know as the FRANKLIN-DUPONTS. She SMASHES the glass frame with the heel of her shoe.

The camera does quick jump cuts -- mimicking her emotional state as she rummages through the stuff on the floor and grabs a tube of lipstick. She opens the tube and writes on the wall in big, bold, unmistakable letters...

LIES.

Mystery Girl takes in her scrawl, satisfied. And then she feels it. Vomit rises in her throat. She rushes to the deck.

3 EXT. FRANKLIN YACHT - MAIN DECK - NIGHT 3

-- Back to the party. Dancing. Drinking. The beginnings of an amazing summer before... A PIERCING SCREAM breaks through the fun as we see Mystery Girl's naked body falling from the upper deck, into the water, and out of sight...

SMASH TO MAIN TITLES.

FADE UP ON OUR EPISODE THEME: "REPARATIONS"

CHYRON: 48 HOURS EARLIER

4 EXT. OAK BLUFFS - ESTABLISHING

4

The camera sweeps past Victorian summer homes as MAIDS and STAFF open them for the season in Oak Bluffs -- the subsection of Martha's Vineyard where elite African American families summer.

ANGELA (V.O.)
*Lies. Worlds have been built on
 them. And lifetimes. And families.
 Even mine...*

More HELP cleaning pools and removing tarps from luxury cars--

ANGELA (V.O.)
*I was five years old when I learned
 my family's secret. That there is a
 difference between Us and Them. They
 had money and big houses. And
 daughters that got tiaras at
 sixteen. We were the help. Mama was
 a maid.*

5 INT. ANGELA'S CAMRY - DAY

5

CLOSE ON A MANE OF NATURAL HAIR. This is ANGELA VAUGHN (36). Her big hair always arrives in the room before she does. Angela is "fashion-forward boho with a militant twist." She might rock an "I'm with Kap" tee with a vintage Dior skirt.

She's driving **AN OLDER MODEL TOYOTA CAMRY** convertible.

ANGELA (V.O.)
*And the only crown I've ever had is
 the one growing out of my head.*

Sitting next to Angela is her mother's sister, PATRICIA WILLIAMS aka "AUNT PIGGY" (60, working class, saucy). Piggy's hair is having a fight with the wind. Angela's daughter NIKKI VAUGHN (17, ebony-skinned, broody) sits in the back seat lost in thought, a SMALL WOODEN BOX on her lap.

The car whizzes past a sign: "**WELCOME TO OAK BLUFFS.**" Angela can't help but take in the beauty of the coast.

ANGELA
 Is this what heaven looks like?

PIGGY
 Angie, you got us riding around,
 hair blowing, like white women
 selling shampoo.

ANGELA
 We're selling more than shampoo.
 We're selling freedom and identity.

PIGGY

I swear if this wig falls off --

ANGELA

My wigs don't fall off. Whip that hair, Aunt Piggy.

Piggy whips it back and forth, having fun.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Told you. Tight as a virgin's legs.

The laughter is interrupted by POLICE SIRENS --

6

INT. ANGELA'S CAMRY - MOMENTS LATER

6

Two OFFICERS approach the car -- one white, one Black. Angela's hands are at ten and two. Piggy looks straight ahead. Nikki starts recording on her cell.

ANGELA

Afternoon, Officer.

BLACK OFFICER

License and registration.

Angela reaches for the documents. Nikki speaks up, annoyed --

NIKKI

Why are we being pulled over?

BLACK OFFICER

We ran your tags. Just routine this time of year. We get a lot of "help" coming over to the island to work.

NIKKI

This is some class profiling bull --

ANGELA

Nikki, stop it right now.

The White Officer's attention is on Nikki. He notices the WOODEN BOX on her lap and how tightly she's clutching it.

WHITE OFFICER

Out of the car. All of you. Leave the box.

The three women get out of the car. Nikki is still recording as the Black Officer reaches in for the box.

NIKKI

No, leave it alone.
(to Angela, pleading)
Mom--?

And without even thinking, Angela lunges and SLAPS the Black Officer's hand and the box falls to the ground. As soon as her hand makes contact with the cop, Piggy screams --

PIGGY

Angie, no!

The Black Officer SLAMS Angela's face on the hood of the car. The CAMERA PUSHES in on her. Piggy and Nikki are afraid, but Angela is strong, like an angel is watching over her.

ANGELA

It's my mother's ashes.

(then)

I always say grieving people need wristbands. A morgue should issue grief wristbands to let people know to stay the fuck out of our way because the only person whose judgment we cared about is gone. My mama raised me and she damn near raised my little girl over there. And she was one of "the help" in this town you probably would've pulled over.

(a beat)

Run my tags again. You'll see that I'm clean. Haven't ever even had a parking ticket. But what I do have is twenty three thousand IG followers who tune in every day to see me style this crown and give them some "Black girl magic."

She eyes his name tag, then motions over to Nikki who is still recording on her cell. Her eyes go back to the barrel of the White Officer's gun, daring him.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Say hi to the camera, Officers.

The tension is thick. Finally... the Black Officer is moved.

BLACK OFFICER

Let her go.

(gives box to Angela)

Sorry... for your loss.

They return to the cruiser, scared but relieved.

PIGGY

Yelling at an officer was stupid as hell.

ANGELA

I know. Grief can give a bitch balls.

(she looks at Nikki)

(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Never do what I just did, little girl.

Angela starts her car and they head into the Bluffs. Off this we PRELAP the sounds of a **CHOPPER LANDING** --

7 EXT. FRANKLIN SUMMER ESTATE - DAY

7

A HELICOPTER lands and out steps -- LAUREN DUPONT (17, Nikki's hair opposite, style on fleek, with an attitude that knows it). She's holding up her DIAMOND STUDED CELL.

LAUREN

(to followers)

Okay. We just got to the Vineyard.
Check out my whip.

Lauren swings her camera around to show the chopper. Her twin QUINCY DUPONT (17, athletic and charming AF) steps out.

LAUREN (CONT'D)

I'm live on IG. Okay, Kek4drake wants to know what I'm wearing. My double bag is Chanel. Skirt and shoes are Off-White.

QUINCY

(joking)

Personality all white.

LAUREN

And shade by Quincy.

LEAH FRANKLIN-DUPONT (40, strong, confident, and wakes up every day feeling the pressure of duty) and her husband RAYMOND DUPONT (40s, powerful, with Obama swag and presence) step out. Lauren grabs Raymond and takes a selfie. She posts it with a #DADDY'SGIRL --

LEAH

Enough. We don't flaunt our money. And we don't sell our bodies. We use our minds. There's a higher expectation for you both. You're Duponts. And Franklins. Don't ever forget that.

Raymond winks at his daughter with a softer tone.

RAYMOND

Put the phone away for now.

QUINCY

(a little nervous)

Hey, Dad I was hoping we could shoot some hoops later and talk --

RAYMOND

Yes, I was hoping we could talk too.

He pats Quincy on the back and then heads inside...

8

INT. FRANKLIN SUMMER ESTATE - CONTINUOUS

8

Leah and Raymond enter to find the staff readying the house for the opening party --

LEAH

You're too easy on Lauren.

RAYMOND

I'm not easy. I listen. There's a difference.

They are greeted by their maid, JACKIE (50's, Black, comfort dressed in an apron).

LEAH

Jackie, has the Krug arrived? We need to get it chilled before tonight.

OLIVIA STURGESS DUPONT (mid-60s, dripping in tradition) enters with her husband VERNON DUPONT (60s, all gravitas).

OLIVIA

-- The Krug arrived an hour ago. I was starting to think I was going to have to prep for this party alone.

RAYMOND

Hello, Mom.
(to Vernon)
Dad.

VERNON

Great second quarter, Son. Darmon Foods is on the way back.

LEAH

The Board at Franklin thinks so too. Darmon is turning out to be our most profitable acquisition.

Raymond's jaw tightens. It seems Leah never misses an opportunity to remind him that she's his boss. Olivia notices too, and gives Leah a withering glare.

OLIVIA

Maybe your focus should be on tonight. This gala sets the bar for the Links' summer fundraising efforts and all eyes will be on you as the new Chapter President --

VERNON

Leave her be, Liv. Let's go see the kids.

Leah gives Vernon an appreciative smile as they go. She turns to Raymond, grabbing his hand, trying to connect.

LEAH

I was hoping we could have lunch.

RAYMOND

I have some business to finish before the party --

He gives her an empty kiss and goes. Jackie approaches, envelope in hand, interrupting this vulnerable moment.

JACKIE

Sorry to interrupt, Mrs. Franklin-Dupont.

(proffers envelope)

This came from your office.

LEAH

Thank you...

It's marked CONFIDENTIAL. She opens it and reads the contents. And whatever is in there, makes her heart sink --

9 EXT. EVE'S CROWN - DAY

9

The Vaughn women pull up to A BRICK BUILDING on Main Street. A WORKER finishes putting up a sign: EVE'S CROWN. The sight makes Angela a little emotional. It's bittersweet.

10 INT. BOSTON APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY - FLASHBACK

10

The same smile on LITTLE ANGELA (5), dressed in her Sunday best getting her hair combed by her mother EVE (24).

LITTLE ANGELA

When's he gonna get here?

YOUNG EVE

Five minutes sooner than the last time you asked.

LITTLE ANGELA

Ow, mama.

Eve tames Angela's edges with homemade cream from a jar.

YOUNG EVE

Angie, I know you're excited to meet your daddy, but sit still.

LITTLE ANGELA

Why ain't I ever met him before?

Eve hesitates, then --

YOUNG EVE

He was getting everything ready for us. We're finally gonna live like a real family. In a castle right on the water --

LITTLE ANGELA

I wanna look real pretty, okay?

Angela gets up and whips her hair, silly and carefree. The doorbell rings. Eve checks herself in the mirror, then --

YOUNG EVE

You wait right here.

11

EXT. EVE'S CROWN - CONTINUOUS - BACK TO PRESENT

11

Angela gets out of the car and can hardly believe it. It's old and the building needs work, but it's all hers. She's in awe, though the grief sits in her throat.

ANGELA

Still can't believe she owned this and never said a word.

PIGGY

Neither can I. She said she'd never come back to this place, not after what happened with your father.

The mention of him makes Angela's heart ache...

ANGELA

She never even told you his name?

PIGGY

No, she died with the secret.

(then)

You could run into him and you wouldn't even know it.

ANGELA

He walked out on us. That chapter closed a long time ago.

Angela is saying the words, but Piggy knows the deep wound he left is still there. A caramel colored HANDYMAN comes from around the back. This is TYRIQUE (mid 30s, solid, the marrying kind).

TYRIQUE

You must be the Vaughns. I'm Tyrique.

ANGELA

The best handyman on the island.

PIGGY

So... what kind of handyman are we talking about? 'Cause I got a list of things that need work.

ANGELA

Please excuse my aunt --

PIGGY

Nobody has to excuse me. I'm sixty, sexy, and single.

ANGELA

Thank you for taking care of the place for my mama.

TYRIQUE

Your mama was good people. She wanted me to get this place ready for you. She said you'd probably come here after...

(then)

I'm sorry for your loss.

ANGELA

Her cancer finally won.

The talk of Eve is too much for Nikki. She grabs a few things, including the BOX OF ASHES, and pushes past Angela.

TYRIQUE

I'd better get back to it if you ever plan on opening this shop. But I'm here if you need anything.

She gives him a warm, appreciative smile and heads inside after Nikki. Piggy's eyes stay on Tyrique.

PIGGY

My chimney might be grey, but I still got a fire in the furnace.

12

INT. EVE'S CROWN - LOFT - MOMENTS LATER

12

Angela finds Nikki putting the box of ashes on a shelf. Angela looks out the window at the beautiful coast.

ANGELA

This place beats the community pool in Boston, huh?

NIKKI

Why didn't she tell us about this place?

ANGELA

Mama didn't tell me a lot of things.
(shaking the hurt)

(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)

All the time we were eating Spam and instant grits, we could've been dining on steak.

(a beat, remembering)

But I did love mama's Spam.

NIKKI

And she made the best instant grits.

Nikki looks at the box of ashes; still so full of grief.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

When are we going to spread her ashes?

ANGELA

I want us to get settled first. You've had a tough year --

NIKKI

-- I got expelled from school for fighting. I caught a case. You can say it, Mom.

The tension between the two is clear. Angela is walking on eggshells here...

ANGELA

I know you felt I wasn't there for you while mama was sick and I was trying to build my business...

She kicks off her shoes and jumps on the mattress.

NIKKI

What are you doing?

ANGELA

I want this summer to be a new start for both of us... and the business. It's gotta be God's grace that mama owned a building here in the mecca for Black excellence. I want to build some generational wealth up in here. And these people can help us. I want to give you the world, baby.

Angela pulls Nikki up with her. Angela finally stops and falls onto the bed as Piggy enters.

PIGGY

So how are we gonna get it?

ANGELA

Well... to start... I got us invited to a party...

13 INT. FRANKLIN SUMMER ESTATE - MAIN PARTY - NIGHT 13

We fly over the Franklin Estate and inside the party that starts the summer: THE LINKS AND BOULÉ OPENING SUMMER GALA.

ANGELA (V.O.)
... This isn't just a party...

Alvin Ailey dancers move their bodies to the sounds of Nina Simone, as a sea of brown faces sip cocktails and nosh on hors d'oeuvres, all served to them by MOSTLY BLACK servers.

ANGELA (V.O.)
*... This party is thrown by the
 HNIC's around here.*

14 INT. FRANKLIN SUMMER ESTATE - MASTER BATHROOM - NIGHT 14

Leah stares at the contents of a DOSSIER on the BOSTON INNER CITY PROJECT. She is on her cell, her voice is calm, but there's a panic underneath...

LEAH
 Double-check everything in the file.
 And then triple-check it. And don't
 tell my father.

ANGELA (V.O.)
*Leah Franklin-Dupont is the CEO of
 Franklin Holdings, and the President
 of the elite women's social club,
 the Links.*

INTERCUT WITH:

15 INT. FRANKLIN SUMMER ESTATE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT 15

Raymond clips a pair of expensive cufflinks to his sleeves.

ANGELA (V.O.)
*And her husband Raymond owns Darmon
 Foods, a subsidiary of Franklin.
 He's also the Grand Sire Archon of
 the men's club, the Boulé. That's
 Black bougie for "chairman."*

BACK INSIDE THE BATHROOM --

Leah places the CONFIDENTIAL FILE in her safe. She checks her lipstick, puts on a smile, then heads out --

ANGELA (V.O.)
*And tonight, they're going to meet
 the Vaughns. I'm going to make them
 fall in love with Eve's Crown and
 get a distribution deal by the end
 of the summer.*

(MORE)

ANGELA (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 (cocky, but aware of
 the challenge)
Easy like Sunday morning.

16 EXT. FRANKLIN SUMMER ESTATE - MAIN PARTY - NIGHT

16

Angela, hair laid, shakes off any nerves as the Vaughn women enter and take in the opulence.

ANGELA
 So this is old money and power.

PIGGY
 It's like the Niggerati on ten...

It's undeniably elegant and slightly intoxicating.

NIKKI
 Mama Eve used to work this party?

PIGGY
 Two years in a row.

Angela looks around the room, suddenly anxious as she takes in the OLDER MEN, including Vernon. Being in the room with men who could be her father is harder than she thought. Piggy senses Angela's anxiety and grabs her hand.

PIGGY (CONT'D)
 It's his loss. Always has been.

JOSEPHINE (36, curvy, fly professional) approaches with hugs.

JOSEPHINE
 Angie! Glad you got in. Sometimes those doormen act like the Gestapo with new guests.
 (then noticing Nikki)
 My God, is this...

ANGELA
 Nikki, this is my old college roomie, Josephine.

JOSEPHINE
 She looks just like you used to back when you were doing hair in our dorm.

ANGELA
 What do you mean used to? Werk.
 (laughing, then)
 Nik, why don't you try to have a little fun. You too, Aunt Piggy.

Piggy notices a muscular Alvin Ailey dancer in the distance.

PIGGY

From your mouth to God's ears.

ANGELA

This party is insane. Where I'm from we start the summer by throwing a couple of hot links on the grill.

Angela sets her eyes on Leah in the distance with Raymond.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I should say hello to the host.

JOSEPHINE

You want to wade into the deep end first? That's Leah Franklin-Dupont.

ANGELA

I know. Don't you remember, girl? I can charm a black dog white.

17

INT. FRANKLIN SUMMER ESTATE - BAR - NIGHT

17

Quincy is at the bar on his cell. He gets a text from his COACH: **"We need an answer by tomorrow."** Quincy responds: **"Talking with my Dad in the morning."** Nikki walks up. She stands there, unsure of what to do with herself.

NIKKI

Club soda, please.

QUINCY

These parties are boring as hell if you're not lit. Tito's for the lady.

BARTENDER

Coming right up, Mr. Dupont.

NIKKI

So, this is your party?

QUINCY

Nah, this is my parents' party. My parties are way better than this.

Suddenly, Lauren and TAYLOR WOODS, (17, fun-loving and open) walk up. Lauren stands right in front of Nikki.

LAUREN

We're about to take a #Summer2021 photo on the beach for my feed.

TAYLOR

Lo, you're being rude.

(to Nikki)

I'm Taylor and this is Lauren.

LAUREN

And you are...?

NIKKI

Nikki. My mom's opening a store on
Main. Eve's Crown.

The answer confirms that Nikki is not worth Lauren's time.

LAUREN

-- Are we taking this pic or not?

NIKKI

I guess they don't teach manners in
the sunken place.

Everyone stops. Nobody shades Lauren --

TAYLOR

I see you, new girl. We need some
new blood around here.

Lauren pulls Taylor away. Quincy smiles and walks off, too.
Off Nikki, what the hell was that?

18

INT. FRANKLIN SUMMER ESTATE - MAIN PARTY - NIGHT

18

Josephine and Angela approach Leah, Raymond and Vernon.

VERNON

... I gotta say, I was skeptical
that your father could move the
Celtics out of the Garden and into
the hood...

LEAH

-- Our plan is to build up that
community. We're breaking ground on
the Franklin Stadium next week.

VERNON

You know what I call that? Self-made
reparations. Teddy Franklin is a
great man.

Vernon laughs. Raymond studies Leah, clocks how uncomfortable
she is with this conversation. She seems off.

LEAH

Our privilege means we have a duty
to give back.

Angela claps, interrupting the conversation --

ANGELA

Well, you've certainly done that.
Franklin Holdings is the backbone of
Black business in America.
I'm Angela Vaughn.

JOSEPHINE

She's my guest. Angela and her
family are here for the summer.

LEAH

Lovely to meet you and your...
Husband? Is he here?

ANGELA

I stopped walking with a man as my
shield a while ago. I'm a single
mother. Speaking of reparations...
(she pulls out a
check)

I love that you are raising money
for the Single Mother Outreach.
Here's a donation on behalf of my
business, Eve's Crown.

Angela tries to hand Leah a check. Leah is offended --

LEAH

My fundraisers aren't usually so
transactional. The donation box is
at the front.

It's awkward. Raymond steps in to divert, knowing his wife is
not in the greatest mood tonight --

RAYMOND

Eve's Crown? I know that name...

ANGELA

I applied for the small business
incubator program at Franklin.

RAYMOND

Well, it's timely. Black hair care
is hot right now.

ANGELA

A Black woman's relationship with
her hair is not some fad. It's more
complicated than any marriage, any
man, any job she'll ever have. It's
a relationship that starts before
she can even walk, continues through
the moment her mother teaches her
how to do her hair... It's
generational and personal. It's more
than "hot right now" and I'd be a
great fit for the incubator program.

RAYMOND

Keep that passion and you just might
make the cut.

He smiles, impressed, before heading off with Vernon.

LEAH

You're a very savvy business woman.

ANGELA

My mama taught me early that the
world doesn't owe me anything. I've
always had to grind alone, but it'd
be nice to have a network of like-
minded business owners. Links
membership has always been a dream.

LEAH

I see. Well... we're very selective
about our members.

Angela clocks the shade and judgement. Eyes Josephine, who
gives her an "I told you so" look. Just then, we hear --

PIGGY (O.S.)

Okay, now -- Watch yourself!

Fuck. Piggy is "deep in her cup" on the dance floor.

LEAH

Get security.

ANGELA

That's my Aunt. She's having fun.

LEAH

This party sets the tone for the
summer and the organization you've
always dreamed of joining.

Piggy's foot catches in her dress. She falls. Partygoers
gasp. Security tries to pull her up. Angela pushes them off.

ANGELA

Get off of her! Don't touch her!

LEAH

She's an embarrassment --

Angela picks up her aunt and begins walking her to the door
as the entire party stares. Off this, Angela FLASHES BACK --

19

INT. BOSTON APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

19

Little Angela is still waiting when she hears Eve SCREAM --

20 INT. BOSTON APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS - FLASHBACK

Angela finds Eve with a MAN whose face she can't see. But she can hear hushed voices...

YOUNG EVE
I can't make a living. I can't get a loan. And you made me keep quiet --

MAN
Take this Eve. It's something.

He hands her an envelope. She throws it in his face.

EVE
You want to pay me off? Get out!
Before I slap the Black off you.

She throws the envelope in his face. He walks out. Angela gives chase, desperate to meet her father --

21 INT. BOSTON APARTMENT - STAIRWELL - MOMENTS LATER - FLASHBACK

She finally catches him at the building's entrance.

LITTLE ANGELA
Wait! I said wait. You're my Daddy.

He stops, then walks out, letting the DOOR SLAM IN HER FACE.

22 INT. FRANKLIN SUMMER ESTATE - MAIN PARTY - BACK TO PRESENT

Angela and Piggy reach the entrance. Nikki joins, confused.

NIKKI
Aunt Piggy, you okay?

PIGGY
I'm okay, baby --

LEAH
I'm not sure where you're from, but this is not a strip club.

Angela's desire to impress Leah is gone for now. She suddenly feels like that little girl begging for acceptance.

ANGELA
I'm from Bean Town. You think you're better cause you got money? 'Cause you have these folks up in here dancing for you like Kunta Kinte? You think you're Black Excellence? All this don't make you excellent. You got the same naps that I do under all that Gucci and glitter.

She grabs a BOTTLE OF KRUG and tips it, leaving a trail, as she goes.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Love Krug. Tastes just as good in a
Dixie Cup.

Leah slams the door on her back, just like Angela's father did.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO23 INT. EVE'S CROWN - RETAIL SPACE - EARLY MORNING

23

Angela, hair sopping wet and fresh from the shower, presses PLAY on her IG LIVE. Comments from followers fill the screen.

ANGELA

Hey y'all. I've been a ghost for a couple of days, but I told you I was moving to the Vineyard for the summer and you know what that means. HUMIDITY.

She picks up a jar of Eve's Crown CONDITIONER --

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Mama used to say that a sister who can't do her own hair is a slave to somebody else. Never give up your power to nobody.

Off this, Angela FLASHES BACK --

24 INT. BOSTON APARTMENT - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

24

Little Angela, still wet from the rain, sits looking out of the window at the street, waiting and watching. Eve enters --

LITTLE ANGELA

You think my daddy's coming back?

YOUNG EVE

We're not gonna talk about him again. Now, get away from that window. I want you to learn this --

Eve goes to the cabinets and pulls out ingredients and a bowl. She starts to make what will become Eve's Crown's signature product.

YOUNG EVE (CONT'D)

I had dreams, baby. I had a small salon and I was gonna turn it into something big. But...

Little Angela can see the pain in her Mama's eyes.

LITTLE ANGELA

But what... Mama don't cry...

YOUNG EVE

I'm done crying. It's on you now. You're still gonna be a Queen. Now, take one part honey and add it to this coconut oil. And then I want you to take this rose water...

Off Little Angela, letting this sink into her soul --

25

INT. EVE'S CROWN - BATHROOM - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT

25

Angela's natural hair is shiny and moisturized.

ANGELA

This is what it should look like
when you're done. But if it
doesn't...

(emotional from the
flashback)

Keep moving. Everyday we get up and
fix our hair. And depending on how
we slept, whether the satin cap
stayed on or fell off, whether the
wrap stayed wrapped, we let the
smallest things make us less than.
Don't ever go out like that. Never
give up your power for nobody.

Angela logs off. Wheels turning, she goes to Lauren Dupont's
profile and notices that she is live. She joins her in
progress.

LAUREN

(on IG)

*First brunch on the Bluffs. The sun
is shining and I'm hella hungry --*

Off Angela, forming a plan --

26

INT. FRANKLIN HOLDINGS - MAIN OFFICE - DAY

26

The flyest office we've ever seen. Leah walks through
clutching the CONFIDENTIAL DOSSIER in her manicured hands.
She passes by walls lined with tons of ENLARGED FORBES COVERS
touting the conquests of FRANKLIN HOLDINGS in FASHION,
AVIATION, NEW MEDIA, SPIRITS, and on every cover is...

27

INT. FRANKLIN HOLDINGS - BOARD ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

27

TEDDY FRANKLIN (60s, smooth as butter, smart as a whip) waxes
on in front of executives, including Raymond. Leah enters.

LEAH

Sorry I'm late, Dad.

(holding up folder)

A couple of things just came to my
attention.

And in that moment, he knows that she knows. He keeps going,
never one to be knocked off his game.

TEDDY

... Franklin Holdings has a deeply
rooted history here in the Bluffs
and in the African American
community.

(MORE)

TEDDY (CONT'D)

We are the largest holdings company with assets and shares to more than 150 companies. And you all know where we started --

She cuts him off.

LEAH

-- Sanitation. No one wanted to pick up Black folks' trash so Franklins did. No one wanted to give Black folks insurance so we did.

He cuts her off and pushes play and up pops a 3-D presentation titled: THE BOSTON INNER CITY PROJECT.

TEDDY

--- And now I'm in final talks to be majority owner of the Boston Celtics. Under this new deal, we'll build a new Franklin stadium and bring jobs into a depressed area. The synergy of business and community service. That's Franklin.

He puts his arm around Leah as the executives all applaud. Leah leans in, speaks quietly through gritted teeth.

LEAH

I know all your dirt. Now, get your damn hands off of me.

We stay close on Leah, LIVID --

28 EXT. OAK BLUFFS BEACH CLUB - DAY

28

Angela, Piggy and Nikki pull up to the valet in their CAMRY. Angela hands the keys to the VALET --

ANGELA

We'll be about thirty minutes.

29 INT. OAK BLUFFS BEACH CLUB - DAY

29

Angela, Piggy and Nikki walk through handing out samples of Eve's Crown products. Angela is on a mission, scanning the room for Lauren...

NIKKI

All these bougie people are staring.

PIGGY

I was the best thing at that party.

Two Links members pass by and give them all side-eye.

ANGELA

Maybe next week she'll teach y'all
the electric slide at one of your
galas.

Finally, Angela spots Lauren and she heads to her table and hands her a goodie bag. Angela smiles, and then makes Lauren eat out of the palm of her hand by complimenting what every teen holds most dear -- their IG account.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Lauren Dupont, right? I'm Angela Vaughn. I wanted to give one of my product bags to you personally since you're such an important influencer--

LAUREN

Not sure I've hit influencer status but --

ANGELA

I think so. Even I'm jealous of your following. You play your cards right you could be this generation's Kim Kardashian.

It's working. Lauren's ego has been fed.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Well, I just wanted to meet you and give you some freebies. It's the least I can do after how I acted last night...

TAYLOR

No apologies. We're fans for life. Lauren's mom almost peed in her LaPerla. It was everything.

Nikki laughs at Taylor's joke. Lauren clocks it as Angela, ever savvy, continues to work Lauren.

ANGELA

That is not how I intended last night to go. Any pointers on getting myself out of this hole with your mom? I really do admire her...

LAUREN

If you want her respect, play chess. It's how we're raised.

Angela nods. Lauren is about to go when Taylor chimes in...

TAYLOR

Nikki, a few of us are getting together tonight if you want to hang.

NIKKI

Thanks, but I'm good.

ANGELA

She'll be there.

TAYLOR

Cool. Meet on the dock at nine.

Taylor and Lauren leave.

ANGELA

This is supposed to be your new start, honey. And that means putting yourself out there. At least give it a chance, okay?

NIKKI

How's a party gonna bring Mama Eve back?

Nikki gets up and walks away. Off Angela --

30

INT. FRANKLIN HOLDINGS - BOARD ROOM - DAY

30

Teddy is there with a livid Leah. The contents of the CONFIDENTIAL FILE are spread out on the table.

LEAH

Explain to me what I'm reading here because it looks like while I was closing the deal on the stadium, you've been buying up property from the Black folks who have been in the community for years at a steal.

(re: documents)

You bribed local officials, interfered with zoning. We're supposed to be helping the community, not raping it.

TEDDY

I'm not raping anything. I'm building up that community. We're gonna have a new stadium. Put the Celtics and all the business that comes with that into a depressed area.

LEAH

You're a damn crook and a hypocrite.

TEDDY

It's what America owes me.

He walks to the head of the table and eyes her.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

Do you know why I bought this table? It's the biggest one I could find and I put it in this room because of the incline so that everyone sitting around it would have to raise their heads just to look up at me. A Black man in America holding the American dream in his Black hands. Everyone at this table knows it. And I do what I need to do to keep it. Don't tell me you don't like the dirt under my nails when that dirt built the road to your privilege. So find a seat at the end of my table, but don't forget I sit at the head of it, little girl.

He goes, leaving Leah feeling powerless and so very small --

31

EXT. OAK BLUFFS BEACH CLUB - DAY

31

QUICK SHOTS OF QUINCY PLAYING BASKETBALL, nothing short of LeBron. Raymond approaches and grabs the rock. He makes a shot, all net.

RAYMOND

I know I missed your games this season, but I hope we can spend time this summer while you intern with me...

QUINCY

I wanted to talk about that...

RAYMOND

You wanna talk or play some real D?

Raymond lobs the ball to Quincy. He's a good dad.

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

What do you think about going to a few Boulé meetings this summer? Your grandfather and I talked the members into making an exception to the rules.

(another shot)

I remember my first club meeting. The rest of America had to wait until Obama was elected to see a Black man in power, but I've seen every man in my family succeed as a king. I want that for you, Quincy. So... what did you want to talk about...?

QUINCY

I'm good, Dad...

Raymond nods and makes one last shot and goes. Off Quincy, feeling so much pressure --

32

INT. EVE'S CROWN - RETAIL SPACE - NIGHT

32

Angela is pouring two glasses of wine for her and Josephine when Nikki passes through on her way out for the night.

NIKKI

I'm heading out.

ANGELA

Have fun. Be back by midnight.

NIKKI

Are we really doing this?

ANGELA

Show me you can follow the rules and we can think about relaxing them.

With that, Nikki goes, frustrated with Angela.

JOSEPHINE

How is she doing?

ANGELA

Honestly, I don't know. Last year when Mama was sick, she struggled. She was so angry and ended up getting into a fight at school. The girl said she "jumped her" and her parents pressed charges.

JOSEPHINE

Let me talk to her. I hear I'm a pretty good therapist.

ANGELA

I'm hoping this place and some time can get her back on track.

Josephine nods then looks out the window at Tyrique.

JOSEPHINE

Maybe you're the one who needs a head check since you called me over to talk about Leah when you got all that out there to play with.

ANGELA

Getting in with the Franklins can help Eve's Crown.

(then, trepidatious)

I want you to nominate me for the Links membership. Lauren told me to play chess.

(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I need to show her that I'm a serious businesswoman, not some ratchet ass from Boston.

Josephine cracks a smile.

JOSEPHINE

But you are, bitch.

(then)

Ang, this is Leah's first Links class as Chapter President. This is her legacy. Wait a year.

ANGELA

I put all my savings and borrowed out my ass to get here this summer. If I don't make it, I'm gonna be drowning in debt. And selling product out the back of my Camry again.

Josephine can sense her determination and passion.

JOSEPHINE

Okay, I'll do it.

(eyeing Tyrique outside)

But this summer can't just be about work. Dust the cobwebs girl.

Angela knocks back the last of her wine and catches a glimpse of Tyrique too. Off Angela as we SMASH CUT TO:

33 INT. EVE'S CROWN - LOFT - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT 33

Angela enters and pulls her vibrator from the nightstand and climbs under her sheets. Over the PURR OF THAT BULLET:

34 EXT. OAK BLUFFS DOCKS - NIGHT 34

We hear the PURR OF A SPEED BOAT ENGINE as Nikki walks up to find... Quincy. She looks around at the empty dock --

NIKKI

Where's everybody?

Cocky, he points out to the ocean at an anchored SUPER YACHT.

QUINCY

Welcome to the Bluffs.

35 INT. FRANKLIN YACHT - NIGHT 35

We're at the party from the Teaser. Quincy and Nikki snake through the crowd. He takes her hand, surprising her.

QUINCY

Sorry. Just trying not to lose you.

Taylor and Lauren walk up, drunk. Taylor throws her arms around Nikki, dropping something into Nikki's bag.

TAYLOR

You can thank me for Q later. I set you up with quality dick on a boat.

And with that, Lauren pulls Taylor away.

QUINCY

You gonna just stand here, or dance?

NIKKI

What you got, son?

THE DANCE FLOOR

They start to dance. Nikki looks around, barely able to believe this fucking party. Nikki and Quincy keep dancing as... We do a TIME DISSOLVE of Nikki partying, forgetting her grief. Nikki keeps dancing just as Quincy's hand drops down to her waist. She can feel his breath on her neck.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

I... gotta go.

36

INT. FRANKLIN YACHT - HALL/MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

36

Nikki walks down the hall, steadying herself on the wall. Nikki enters the bedroom and sees Lauren on the balcony arguing with Taylor. Nikki takes in the room -- the knocked over makeup on the floor, the trail of clothes, the broken framed Dupont family photo and finally the scrawl on the wall in bright red lipstick: **LIES...**

Suddenly, she hears Lauren scream as Taylor's body falls.

NIKKI

Oh my God.

Lauren runs from the balcony, passing Nikki. Nikki rushes over to the ledge and peers into the dark water where there is no sign of Taylor anywhere. Off Nikki screaming for HELP.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE37 INT. FRANKLIN SUMMER ESTATE - LEAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

37

Leah is undressing as Raymond pores over the file of documents Leah has gathered on Teddy.

RAYMOND

I'm surprised you brought this to me.

LEAH

You're my husband. Who else would I go to?

RAYMOND

Nothing your father has done is illegal per se...

LEAH

But he's decimating the community. Our brand is about reaching back and pulling up. If people knew how he got the property to build that stadium...

(then)

I just wish my father could be as generous with everyone struggling as he was when we bailed out Darmon.

That rubs Raymond the wrong way. The small moment of connection they were sharing just evaporated.

RAYMOND

You never miss an opportunity to tell me that you own me and the company that my great grandfather spent generations building --

LEAH

You have to forgive yourself for what happened with Darmon, because it's been the elephant in this marriage for the last year.

Raymond stews in silence. Leah doesn't know what else to say. Then Raymond's phone suddenly BUZZES. He answers.

RAYMOND

Yes, Officer? Yes... Damn it.

Leah looks up scared. It's the call that no Black mother wants to get.

LEAH

Is it Quincy?

RAYMOND

No, but we need to go --

38

EXT. OAK BLUFFS DOCKS - NIGHT

38

Red and blue lights flash from parked police cruisers. Groups of kids are gradually released into parental custody. Lauren and Quincy huddle together with a police blanket. Nikki sits next to them. She stares out vacantly.

Raymond, Leah and a few other parents speak with OFFICER BARRY.

OFFICER BARRY

Taylor Woods was pulled out of the water. She's being rushed over to St. Mary's now.

LEAH

My God.

Angela approaches, silently acknowledging Officer Barry.

ANGELA

Is she going to be okay?

OFFICER BARRY

I'm sorry, Ms. Vaughn, but I can only release that information to family. A "Nikki Vaughn" says Lauren was with Taylor when this happened. We need to take both girls to the station for questioning.

LAUREN

I wasn't anywhere near her when it happened and Nikki is drunk as hell.

ANGELA

My daughter doesn't drink.

LAUREN

Smell her breath.

Angela looks over at Nikki, who has clearly been drinking.

LEAH

I'm Leah Franklin-Dupont. My daughter Lauren Dupont is not going anywhere.

ANGELA

Neither is Nikki.

Lauren looks to her father, her savior.

LAUREN

Daddy --

Raymond makes a call on his cell...

RAYMOND

Hello, Chief... It's Raymond Dupont.

Angela watches as the rules of the Bluffs start to unfold before her. Off this, SMASH TO --

39

INT. EVE'S CROWN - RETAIL SPACE - NIGHT

39

They're heated, not even noticing Piggy in the room at first.

NIKKI

I had one drink --

PIGGY

Whoa, whoa. What's going on -- ?

ANGELA

Nikki is lit. The cops almost arrested her for underage drinking. You smoking weed again, too?

NIKKI

What the -- no.

ANGELA

We had to beg and pray to get you a diversion program instead of jail time. A whiff of tonight's mess -- that judge can put you all the way behind bars. And I don't have the right skin color or bank account to pull you out.

(then)

You're grounded.

NIKKI

Oh, we trying to act like a mom now?

Nikki storms off...

ANGELA

(regret)

I left her with Mama Eve too much. My father turned his back on me, and I went and did the same thing to her.

PIGGY

You were trying to get your business off the ground. For her.

ANGELA

-- But she wanted basketball games and dance recitals. And I wanted this summer to make up for everything I missed.

(MORE)

ANGELA (CONT'D)

(breaking a little)

If I made the wrong decision coming
out here... if I end up hurting
Nikki...

Piggy moves to comfort her. Off Angela, lost and questioning
all of this --

40

INT. LINKS CLUBHOUSE - NIGHT

40

At the back of the room, Nikki sulks. Angela dragged her
here, "trying to act like a mom." They bicker, hushed.

NIKKI

The whole point of being grounded is
that I stay in my room. At home.

ANGELA

Sit up straight. And fix that face.
I'm trying to show you something.

Josephine approaches...

JOSEPHINE

When they call for noms, I'll say
your name. You'll get some shady
looks and then Leah will interview
you.

ANGELA

What is she looking for?

JOSEPHINE

Traci McAllister Glover over there.
Mother is a legacy. She's a Wall
Street lawyer. Her husband is
plugged into Washington.

Compared to Traci, Angela feels under-qualified. Olivia takes
the podium. Leah is seated next to her. The room quiets.

OLIVIA

As the outgoing Chapter President,
I'd like to call the meeting to
order and officially pass the torch
to our new President. Leah.

Leah takes the podium, stepping into her power.

LEAH

I'd like to start with a moment of
silence for Taylor's family. Our
hearts are with them as they pray
for her to wake, as our hearts will
be with any of the women today who
become part of this special
sisterhood. As we say: "Many are
called..."

MEMBERS

"... But few are chosen."

LEAH

If you're lucky enough to make it,
you will be inducted along with the
new brothers of the Boulé at the
Grand Illumination Gala at the end
of the summer.

(piercing Angela with
her eyes)

Our sisterhood is sacred.

Leah and Angela stare each other down as we CUT TO:

41

INT. EPISCOPAL CHURCH BASEMENT - SAME

41

Well-dressed, uber-successful men line the corridors of the
bowels of the church. Quincy sits next to Raymond and Vernon.
Raymond whispers to Quincy.

RAYMOND

The Boulé has the power to affect
change, to hold the line for the
African American community. When no
one appears to be watching, we
are...

The members of the Boulé stand as the initiates kneel before
them. Vernon leads them in reciting INVICTUS. It's haunting.

VERNON

*Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to
pole...*

BOULÉ MEMBERS

*I thank whatever gods may be for my
unconquerable soul...*

42

INT. LINKS CLUBHOUSE - NIGHT

42

We continue to hear the men as a LINKS MEMBER stands --

JOSEPHINE

I nominate Angela Vaughn.

Angela stands, along with the other prospects --

BOULÉ MEMBERS (O.S.)

*In the fell clutch of circumstance,
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeoning of chance my
head is bloody, but unbowed.*

43 INT. EPISCOPAL CHURCH BASEMENT - NIGHT 43

Quincy watches as new members are initiated, ending with a final sacred moment: the branding. Quincy stares as Vernon sears the ROMAN NUMERAL TEN onto a new inductee's back. The flesh on his back sizzles. His body jerks but remains still.

BOULÉ MEMBERS

*It matters not how straight the
gate, how charged with punishments
the scroll. I am the master of my
fate. I am the captain of my soul.*

Quincy runs out of the room. Raymond watches him go --

44 EXT. EPISCOPAL CHURCH - NIGHT 44

Quincy exits, trying to suck in air. Raymond is on his heels.

RAYMOND

Son, we don't walk out...

Quincy turns, it's now or never --

QUINCY

Coach says I'm good enough for the NBA. He secured a spot in a college prospect camp in Vegas this summer. And I want to take it.

RAYMOND

The NBA is the modern-day plantation. Making money with your body was something we did when we didn't have a choice. Playing professional ball is not what we do.

QUINCY

So we can own a team, but I can't play?

Frustrated, Raymond grabs Quincy by the collar.

RAYMOND

People died for this privilege. And you will not throw it away.

He lets Quincy loose. Quincy walks off. Off Raymond --

45 INT. LINKS CLUBHOUSE - NIGHT 45

Now that the moment is here, Angela is slightly intimidated. Leah sits smack dab in the center. Olivia is a breath away.

OLIVIA

Ms. Vaughn. I have to say I was surprised to hear your nomination. We don't really know much about you.

ANGELA

Boston. Inner City. My mother's name was Evelyn Vaughn. She was the smartest woman I've ever known. My business is built off her brain.

Olivia eyes her, listening closer now, recognition dawning --

OLIVIA

Evelyn Vaughn... What did your mother do... for a living?

ANGELA

She was...

Suddenly, Angela feels like that little girl who wasn't good enough for her Daddy and before she knows it, a lie slips --

ANGELA (CONT'D)

My mother was a businesswoman. She was the original creator of my haircare line. She actually used to summer here in the late eighties. But now she's in heaven and I am continuing to follow her dream, which has become my dream too. Membership in this organization would help with that. And I would be honored to be a part of this sisterhood.

Angela sits back down, hating that she lied about who her mother was. Olivia stands with gravitas.

OLIVIA

The ten women we interviewed tonight are officially our prospective class. Over the next twelve weeks, you'll be required to help us put on several events under the Links' name.

LEAH

We'll be watching to see who you are and what you bring. The first event you'll participate in will be our annual mother-daughter fashion show.
(softening, sincere)

Given what's happened to Taylor, we want to raise money for youth suicide prevention. As the prospective class, your task is to coordinate all glam. We will need a point person --

ANGELA

That feels like my lane. I can--

LEAH

Traci, you handle glam and Ms. Vaughn, you can join the food and beverage committee.

ANGELA

Snacks? You want me on snacks?

LEAH

There is no task too small for the sisterhood. Meeting adjourned.

Dismissed, Angela turns to see Nikki in the back, fuming --

46

EXT. LINKS CLUBHOUSE - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

46

-- They cross the parking lot.

NIKKI

You lied about Mama Eve. To what? Impress these saddity bitches and get in their little club?

(anger erupts)

The only thing you care about is your precious hair products. You missed every school play, every basketball game and for what? So we can move here and you can get your bougie crown?

ANGELA

I know this place feels different. I know the rules are different here, but I am trying, goddamnit --

NIKKI

By hiding the fact that your mama was a maid and you grew up without a daddy?

Frustrated, Angela hauls off and SLAPS her. A couple of LINKS MEMBERS, in the distance, look in her direction.

ANGELA

Get in the car, Nikki.

(a beat)

Get in the goddamn car.

NIKKI

I didn't have my daddy either. But my Blackness and my fierceness is all the way intact. Are yours?

Nikki walks off, not getting in the car. Angela glances toward the Links women across the lot, craning necks and whispering. Off Angela, mortified.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

47

INT. EVE'S CROWN - RETAIL SPACE - NIGHT

47

Angela is in the kitchen smoking a joint and listening to oldies and mixing something. She turns to see Piggy there.

ANGELA

Thought you were taking Nik to dinner to talk since she's not talking to me...

PIGGY

So you decided to invite your friend Reefer over?

ANGELA

I found it in Mama's stuff and put it in my bag to keep it away from Nikki.

Angela puts the joint out. Piggy takes in what she is doing.

PIGGY

You haven't made a homemade batch of conditioner in a hot minute.

ANGELA

Guess, I wanted to be close to Mama after that meeting. I lied about her.

PIGGY

Nikki told me.

Angela is ashamed that Nikki saw that.

ANGELA

I just want those women to see how special Eve's Crown can be. I've been dreaming about making it as big as Mama wanted it to be since I was a kid. Maybe I want it too bad.

Nikki crosses into the room. It's still tense from earlier --

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Can we talk?

NIKKI

(eyeing the stubbed
out joint)

About how you're getting faded in the kitchen after yelling at me for a few shots of Ciroc? Sure.

ANGELA

I'm grown. You're not.

She eyes Piggy, then changes tact and softens.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

I know you're mad as hell at me. And maybe you're right about how this place is making me feel. But all of this is still all about you. As soon as the last breath left my mother's body, I promised myself that I would be a better one to you. I'd really like you to attend the mother-daughter fundraiser with me tomorrow.

NIKKI

I'm still grounded, so it's not like I have a choice.

Nikki slams out of the room, angry --

48

INT. EVE'S CROWN - NIKKI'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

48

... But when she reaches the safety of her room, we see the vulnerability of a teenage girl. She picks up a photo of her with Mama Eve and cries. She sinks into a chair, knocking over the bag she was carrying the night of the accident. Taylor's phone tumbles out.

Nikki starts to look through it. There are a few selfies and then... A VIDEO OF TAYLOR. She presses play. It's Taylor and Lauren hanging out. But then... they kiss. The phone falls to the floor, and the girls are out of shot.

TAYLOR

And your mom thinks I'm the bad influence? I hate lying about us.

LAUREN

We'll tell everyone, okay? Now c'mere.

Off the sounds of sex and Nikki --

49

EXT. OAK BLUFFS BEACH CLUB - DAY

49

CLOSE ON A SIGN: **LINKS' MOTHER DAUGHTER FASHION SHOW**. A beautifully appointed runway is set up with the ocean as the backdrop. Servers pass champagne and serve beach-themed things to nosh. A quartet plays as the crowd mingles. Angela stands near the refreshment table.

JOSEPHINE

How is it in the land of food and beverage? I told you Leah was tough.

ANGELA

Trust me, I can hang.

Just then, Traci heads over in a panic. Angela doesn't seem surprised at all.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Girl, you okay?

TRACI

Leah's gonna kill me. I'm dead. The glam fell through. And the show starts in thirty minutes.

ANGELA

Traci, pick your lip up off the floor. Grab a drink. I'll figure it out. Just make sure everyone knows we're running on CP time.

TRACI

I don't understand...

ANGELA

Tell 'em we're gonna start late.

Off Angela, determined to make a good impression.

50

EXT. OAK BLUFFS BEACH CLUB - VERANDA - DAY

50

Raymond watches Quincy by the water, still stewing from his conversation with Leah, when JACK HARMON (40s, smells like sixty-year-old Scotch and white privilege) approaches.

JACK

Saw the quarterly numbers. We're coming back.

RAYMOND

Since when do you read the reports?

Jack laughs and claps Raymond on the back. Raymond's eyes remain fixed on Quincy.

JACK

Seriously though, great work. They say we're on track to recover what we lost last year.

Raymond finally directs his attention to Jack.

RAYMOND

We didn't lose anything last year. You did. With your recklessness. And now my wife owns the company that my great grandfather founded and I'm the joke who had to get bailed out.

(MORE)

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

Which, on top of everything else, has put my marriage in jeopardy. And I know you never cared about the business as much as I do, but I'd think you'd at least care about that. We're supposed to be family.

Jack takes this in, looking solemn and guilty. Raymond directs his attention back to Quincy --

RAYMOND (CONT'D)

I've been working so hard to save Darmon, to maintain its legacy so I could make sure there was something to pass down to Q. Turns he doesn't want anything to do with it...

JACK

So he finally told you about the NBA? He was nervous about that, thought I could help persuade you.

Raymond hides his annoyance that Jack knew before he did.

JACK (CONT'D)

He loves the game and he's good. What does he have to lose if he just tries? He's young. Remember when we were young?

RAYMOND

I remember that you never had to take life seriously. I remember me working my ass off while you used the corporate card like your personal bank. Quincy doesn't have your skin color so he doesn't have your options.

JACK

-- We both inherited this company.

RAYMOND

Money doesn't fix history. Do you know what I do two weeks before I move my family here every summer? I send a photo of my son down to the police station to let them know what he looks like this year so they don't pull him over and shoot him. My son does not have your privilege. We may have been raised as brothers, but we're not the same.

And with that, Raymond walks away.

Olivia takes the podium as the audience hushes.

OLIVIA

Welcome to the annual Mother Daughter Links' Fashion Show. In light of the tragedy that has befallen one of our sisters, all proceeds will go toward suicide prevention.

Backstage, Lauren's heart races at the mention of Taylor.

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

Research shows that girls exhibit more from interpersonal stress and social media messaging...

ANGLE ON Angela backstage with Nikki as she pulls another wig out of the box as Leah walks up.

NIKKI

That's all the wigs from the shop.

LEAH

What the hell is going on here? We wanted a top stylist.

ANGELA

Well, you got one. Me.

LEAH

This is a Links event. Don't embarrass me. Or yourself.

Angela feels the weight of that as she pats her salon chair for Leah to sit. Game on.

52

INT. OAK BLUFFS BEACH CLUB - LATER

52

The MUSIC BOOMS as the lights dim and Olivia steps aside. The LINKS' logo smashes across the backdrop of the stage as, one by one, our models come out. They look stunning, makeup and fashion on point. But the thing that steals the show --

The BIG BOLD NATURAL HAIRSTYLES. One by one, the mothers and daughters strut down the runway, empowered and strong and looking like Queens and Princesses of the Motherland.

ANGLE ON Angela, Piggy and Nikki backstage --

PIGGY

Looks like Wakanda came to the Bluffs.

ANGELA

It's not Wakanda. It's Eve's Crown. If they won't see my value, I'll put it in their faces... And on their heads.

BACK ON THE RUNWAY -- Finally, Leah and Lauren step out. The lights blare as Leah takes it all in. Leah walks with Lauren, passing Raymond and Jack in the audience. She smiles at them as she struts by, feeling beautiful and free for once...

Lauren, however, is not. Her eyes are fixated on the sign. SUICIDE PREVENTION. Lauren's eyes water as she keeps walking the runway. As Lauren and Leah finish the runway walk --

LEAH

Honey, this is for Taylor and I know this is hard --

LAUREN

I need some air.

Lauren goes. Leah tries to follow, but Olivia intercepts.

OLIVIA

Is this how you plan to lead the Links?

LEAH

You've never approved of me. I've upheld every tradition and every duty that comes with this life. What more do you want?

OLIVIA

For it to not all come crashing down under your watch. Your mother was one of my best friends. We guarded this community together until she couldn't anymore. And I expect you to pick up the damn mantle.

(eyeing Angela)

That woman is a disruptor to our community. I was there when someone called my father to write the check to bail Martin out of jail. I was there when we needed money to keep the bus boycott alive. We've worked too hard to earn that 40 acres that was promised but never delivered. And we will take down everything and anyone that threatens to ruin what we've built. Her family has a long history here.

(handing her an envelope)

Take care of it.

Leah opens it and reads. She looks up, sick to her stomach.

A clearly upset Lauren rushes toward the exit looking for air to breathe. She passes by Nikki.

NIKKI

I know we're not friends or anything, but are you okay?

LAUREN

I'm fine.

NIKKI

I was there. I heard you and Taylor yelling... I know how hard it must be to keep your secret with all these expectations about everything and --

LAUREN

My secret?

Nikki pulls Taylor's cell phone out of her pocket and hands it to her. If Black skin could go white, Lauren's would.

NIKKI

Taylor must've put it in my bag. Maybe she wanted someone to know the truth. You don't have to hide.

Lauren grabs the phone from Nikki. She's desperate.

LAUREN

You want me to hit the streets, slap pronouns on my chest and go to Pride? That's not how things work here.

NIKKI

I sat by my grandmother's bed waiting for her to wake up. She was the only one who really knew me... But lying to the cops about being with her that night is worse than lying about who you are.

LAUREN

I'm not one of your little causes. And keep your mouth shut.

Angela and Leah notice the fight. It's getting louder.

NIKKI

Excuse me? I'm trying to be real with your bougie ass.

LAUREN

Thought they didn't snitch in the hood, rat?

Angela and Leah approach, both in Mama Bear mode.

LEAH
What's going on?

LAUREN
Nikki is threatening me.

NIKKI
You're lying again.

Leah gets in Nikki's face as the crowd forms around them.

LEAH
You need to stop bothering my
daughter.

Angela steps to Leah. Now her "Boston" is all the way out.

ANGELA
And you better step the hell away
from mine.

Just then, Leah clocks Olivia in the distance.

LEAH
Before you start judging, why don't
we turn the mirror around on you?

ANGELA
Okay, what now? Ever since I got
here, you've been up my ass.

LEAH
Because you've been lying. Your
mother didn't summer here. She was a
MAID.

Caught in her lie, Angela turns to Leah. Checkmated, she unclips her dress, letting it fall to the floor. She stands there in her underwear, bare, vulnerable, but in her truth. All the bravado she mustered at the Gala is gone. This is more controlled, but the quietness of it makes it more powerful than we've seen Angela.

ANGELA
Is this what you want? You gotta
tear me down to feel tall. You want
me naked? I'm fucking naked. But I
ain't gonna bow down and say...
(slave dialect)
"Yes, Ms. Leah. Thank you Ms.
Leah... I sho is happy with yo
scraps, Ms. Leah..."

LEAH
Oh, you're showing your ass now?

ANGELA

Literally, bitch. My mama cleaned
toilets. She scrubbed the shit of
families on this island. And it
still stank.

LEAH

As obvious as your lack of manners
are right now, I'm more concerned
with your lies.

Leah pulls out the envelope Olivia gave her and holds up a
MUGSHOT of Angela's mother Eve from MARTHA'S VINEYARD POLICE
STATION in 1984. Angela is frozen, gutted by the mugshot.

LEAH (CONT'D)

She wasn't just a maid. She was
arrested for intent to distribute
over in Edgartown. She peddled it
out of her makeshift salon. That's
the truth.

(Leah's eyes pierce
Angela)

Now, clean this place up.

With that, Leah walks away. Off Angela, gutted by this new
information and public humiliation.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

54

INT. OAK BLUFFS POLICE STATION - NIGHT

54

Angela and Nikki sit quietly as Piggy crosses over with two coffees. She hands them to her girls.

PIGGY

Eve never touched a drug in her life. She damn near disowned me when I got hooked up with a dealer in the 80s. She wanted to beat my Black ass blue until I broke up with him.

Angela is quiet, almost too quiet.

ANGELA

Why didn't mama say any of this?

Nikki can't take it anymore --

NIKKI

'Cause this family doesn't talk about anything real. Mama Eve died holding all of this stuff in. For what?

ANGELA

We're gonna find out the truth, baby. I promise you that.

Angela sees OFFICER SARGETTI (white, 60s) come out from the back. She looks up to see Tyrique exiting a back office. He gives a BLACK OFFICER some dap. Then approaches Angela.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Were you able to get any information? They told me it was sealed.

TYRIQUE

My boy is gonna pull the files they do have. I told him you were good people.

Angela exhales, relieved.

ANGELA

Thank you. And thanks for coming when I called.

TYRIQUE

I didn't know your mama well, but she was nothing like what they are saying. Don't let this town change who you know your mother was.

He goes as an OFFICER waves Angela and family over...

55

INT. FRANKLIN HOLDINGS - BOARD ROOM - NIGHT

55

Leah is sitting at the head of Teddy's conference room table with her shoes kicked up, looking at the model of the new FRANKLIN STADIUM. The confidential file is on the table. Teddy enters.

TEDDY

I assume this request to meet means you're done with your tantrum.

LEAH

I got some really good advice today. Olivia reminded me that we need to take down everything and anyone that threatens to ruin what we have built. And that's you. I'm taking over the company. And you're retiring early.

TEDDY

And why would I agree to that?

LEAH

The only things bigger than this table are your ego and this family's name. If you're the reason it falters, you won't recover. And if that doesn't work, I'll call the feds.

A few men enter with ELECTRIC CHAINSAWS. Leah nods.

LEAH (CONT'D)

Cut the legs off first.

They start to saw the table. Teddy is stunned.

LEAH (CONT'D)

You asked me to find a seat at your table. I found one. Yours. I'm going to move to be named head of this company. It's not just about money, it's about building up Black folks.

TEDDY

You think you're different, but you're just as addicted to money and power as I am.

He approaches her, towering over her as she sits at the head of his table. She sits in his shadow.

TEDDY (CONT'D)

My blood runs through your veins.

LEAH

Enjoy the rest of your summer,
Daddy. But it won't be in this room.

She puts her feet up on the table --

LEAH (CONT'D)

Watch the incline on your way out.

TWO SECURITY GUARDS enter and escort Teddy out of the building. Off Leah, checkmate.

56

INT. OAK BLUFFS POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT 6

It's been a few hours. Documents etc are spread across the table as Angela, Piggy and Nikki are pore over the evidence. Piggy's heart stops when she spies a PHOTO of the drugs confiscated that night. There, in color, are piles of drugs in SMALL DISTINCT RED BAGGIES.

Piggy's heart stops as she zeroes in on the SYMBOL ON THE BAGGIE. She drops it back into the box like a hot potato, spooked by whatever memory the image jogged...

ANGELA

Oh, my God.

Angela pulls the OLD VIDEO TAPE from a marked box. Shaking, she puts it into the player and hits play. It's fuzzy at first but then... there she is... EVE.

Angela, Nikki and Piggy gasp, seeing her again is emotional for them. The date on screen: July 8th, 1984.

ON SCREEN: a young, scared Eve sits alone in the cold, empty room. She looks small, and the tears flood from her eyes. The door opens and she looks up to see someone she is clearly relieved to see. Emotion -- anger, fear, confusion -- spills.

EVE

Tell them I didn't do this...

The person who just entered remains obscured by the camera. We can't see his face, but we can hear his HUSHED VOICE...

MAN

Shhhh. It's going to be okay. But you have to listen to me...

Suddenly, the MAN's hand comes into frame to turn off the camera. But before the screen goes black, Angela can make out a VINTAGE GOLD WATCH.

BACK TO OUR TRIO:

A wave of emotion hits Angela, having just heard her mother's voice. The room sits silent. Tears are in Piggy's eyes as she watches her baby sister in pain.

ANGELA

That watch...

57 EXT. BOSTON STREET - NIGHT - FLASHBACK 57

Little Angela, wet from the rain, looks down to see something shiny. She stops and picks up a VINTAGE GOLD WATCH.

58 INT. EVE'S CROWN - NIGHT - BACK TO PRESENT 58

Angela starts riffling through the documents on the table, now with fresh eyes. She finds the photos are all from the night of Eve's arrest in 1984 at the GRAND ILLUMINATION BALL. She searches and searches and then, she stops when she sees THE WATCH. It's on the arm of...

TEDDY FRANKLIN. He is in the photo, smiling next to his wife, ROSE FRANKLIN.

Angela's heart is in her throat. She's six years old again. Nikki grabs her mother's hand in support. The blood drains from Piggy's face, enough to make us question what she knows.

ANGELA

Teddy Franklin is my father.

Angela's breath quickens as she takes in this piece of information that can finally fill that blank. Her mind spins. Piggy is equally thrown off-kilter.

PIGGY

What, no? She would've told me.

ANGELA

But she didn't, and you two were like white on rice. She didn't utter a word of this, and we gotta start asking why.

Nikki pulls out her phone and starts googling as Angela starts pacing the room, trying to think.

PIGGY

Teddy is a powerful man --

ANGELA

-- And we just watched him shut her up. She was only three years older than Nikki. She was scared to death and she believed he would help her.

Angela is spinning, trying to calm the fire that has started in her. Nikki looks up from her phone.

NIKKI

Mom... I think I know why. Mom --

Angela stops, trying not to go down the rabbit hole and listen to her daughter.

Nikki hands her phone over to Angela. Angela presses play on an old CHARLIE ROSE INTERVIEW...

59

INT. ND TELEVISION STUDIO - OUT OF TIME

59

CLOSE on A TEDDY FRANKLIN mid-interview with CHARLIE ROSE.

CHARLIE ROSE

Teddy Franklin, you've just been named one of 2016's Top Influencers.

Teddy's voice drips with swag, gravitas and... POWER.

TEDDY

Charlie, I'm just a Black man in America trying to do right for my family.

CHARLIE ROSE

And now Franklin Holdings is a major player in everything from venture capitalism, sports, fashion, spirits. And it all started with your first big real estate deal.

TEDDY

The Edgartown deal? Love it like my first born. A lot of people thought that was risky...

CHARLIE ROSE

Because of the crack epidemic. A lot of people questioned how that community even became caught up in the epidemic. The island is pretty insulated.

Teddy shifts just a bit, his eyes narrow, before he answers.

TEDDY

I don't know how it started, but I knew right away I wanted to save this community that is the backbone of the Bluffs. Many people who've worked for my family for years live there. Edgartown is a special place.

CHARLIE ROSE

It was more than community service. That deal was the start of the Franklin Real Estate company that became the crown jewel in the Franklin Holdings. That deal put made you a real power player...

TEDDY
(winking)
That deal made me King.

BACK TO THE SCENE: Angela replays the segment where Teddy shifted in his chair and narrowed his eyes. Angry tears fill her eyes --

ANGELA
Mama didn't get caught up, but she got set up?

Angela flashes back to moments with a bit more clarity...

FLASH POP of Eve's fight with Teddy --

YOUNG EVE
I can't make a living. I can't get a loan. And you made me keep quiet --

FLASH POP Angela with Eve the night Teddy left --

YOUNG EVE (CONT'D)
I had dreams, baby. I had a small salon and I was gonna turn it into something big. But...

Little Angela can see the pain in her Mama's eyes.

LITTLE ANGELA
But what... Mama don't cry...

END POPS. We're back with Angela, the knot in her throat growing as she tries to put it all together.

ANGELA
What if he did this? What if he depressed the value of property in Edgartown and profited off it? He used her shop --

PIGGY
Okay, we all need to calm down --

ANGELA
No, mama sent me here for a reason. She hid this building from me until right before she died because she wanted me to come here and find this. Find him. And fight for her.

Angela picks up the PHOTO OF TEDDY AND ROSE and eyes it before putting it into her purse.

Jackie lets Angela in --

JACKIE

Mrs. Franklin-Dupont will be right with you...

ANGELA

Thank you.

JACKIE

I knew your mom. She was not what they say... not when I knew her.

Angela gives Jackie a warm, thankful smile. Jackie goes, leaving Angela alone in the vast room. Now alone, the emotions rush in... This is the life she could have had. The life Eve wanted for her. The life that was stolen from Eve and Angela. The weight of it is too much. Angela heads to the well-appointed bar and opens a bottle of Scotch. She pours a glass and shoots it back, just as...

LEAH

I hear you wanted to pick the wig up yourself.

Leah holds a box containing the Eve's Crown wig she wore in the show. Now that the moment is here, the first moment alone with her sister, Angela's heart falls to her stomach. There she is. Flesh and blood. The would be the same, but for the path their father chose.

ANGELA

Those wigs are still prototypes. I paid a lot of money for them and I don't have money to just throw away.

Leah leaves the box on the table. Angela circles the room, picking up family photos.

ANGELA (CONT'D)

Beautiful family.

LEAH

Is that all?

ANGELA

I think I owe you an apology. I came here hoping you were going to be my answer. I mean, I didn't even know you. But now I do. I know exactly who you are. I get the rules around here. But to be honest, from my view, you're a slave to them.

LEAH

I'm not a slave to anything. I work hard to keep this community running because it matters. You turn on the news and all they show are gangbangs or welfare queens or single moms with baby daddies.

ANGELA

You see labels on those people, I see struggle.

LEAH

I see struggle too, that's why I live my life in a way that gives back.

ANGELA

But you still want to be just a little bit better. But I see you serving this lifestyle like you're wiping Jesus' feet. So maybe you're "the maid" up in here.

LEAH

Good night, Ms. Vaughn.

ANGELA

My mother left me the only thing she had, the building at 28 Main. You know it?

LEAH

My family used to own it.

Angela knocks back her Scotch as recognition dawns on Leah. But she is not yet ready to accept it.

ANGELA

Come see about me. Eve's Crown can hook your dry ends up. See you around the Bluffs.

Angela grabs the wig box and goes, letting the door slam --

ANGELA (V.O.)

Mama couldn't fight. But I can.

61 EXT. BOSTON STREET - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

61

Little Angela picks up the watch as the man gets in the car --

ANGELA (V.O.)

She died of a broken heart. A life un-lived. She had dreams and he took them...

62 INT. TEDDY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS - FLASHBACK

62

Rain falls on the windshield as a YOUNG TEDDY takes a moment to gather himself, clearly shaken. The camera reveals someone in the passenger seat -- a YOUNG GIRL, 9, neatly dressed.

LITTLE LEAH

Daddy, who is that?

She looks out the window, making eye contact with Little Angela as the car drives off.

63 INT. FRANKLIN SUMMER ESTATE - POOL HOUSE - NIGHT 63

Leah enters the dark room, after a beat Raymond's business partner, JACK, enters. She goes to him and kisses him like she needs his air to breath.

ANGELA (V.O.)
But he won't win, mama.

64 EXT. FRANKLIN SUMMER ESTATE - TEDDY'S OFFICE - NIGHT 64

Teddy sits in his office looking through some SURVEILLANCE PHOTOS: Angela pulling up to Eve's Crown. Nikki at the opening gala, etc. He puts them down, then considers his first chess move...

ANGELA (V.O.)
You sent me here to do what you couldn't. All of this should be yours. And I will get it all back. This is your reparations. Promise you that.

65 INT. EVE'S CROWN - LOFT - NIGHT 65

Angela opens up the wig box and plucks LEAH'S HAIR out of the wig she was wearing earlier. She puts it in a plastic bag, with a piece of her own. She sets it on the nightstand, before starting to wrap her hair for the night.

She looks at the box of ashes before turning off the light --

ANGELA
Gotta secure the crown, right mama?

END OF ACT FIVE