

P-VALLEY

EPISODE 201
"Pussyland"

Written by
Katori Hall

Directed by
Barbara Brown

Based on the play
"Pussy Valley"
By Katori Hall

WHITE PRODUCTION DRAFT: 05.07.21
BLUE REVISION PAGES: 06.16.21
PINK REVISION PAGES: 07.17.21
YELLOW REVISION PAGES: 07.29.21

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EPISODE 201

YELLOW REV. PRODUCTION DRAFT

07/29/21

REVISION HISTORY

| Revision | Date | Pages in Revision |
|------------------------------|-----------------|---|
| LAST REV. NETWORK DRAFT | 4/15/21 | |
| PRODUCTION DRAFT | 05/07/21 | FULL |
| BLUE REVISION PAGES | 06/16/21 | 1-15, 17-22, 24-31, 35-37, 39, 40, 42-43, 45-46, 49-50, 52, 54- 26, 58 |
| PINK REVISION PAGES | 07/17/21 | 10, 14, 18 |
| YELLOW REVISION PAGES | 07/29/21 | 2-2A |

SUMMARY OF MAJOR REVISIONS

(Pages refer to the latest released revision color)

P2-2A: Lil' Bad Cuzzin dialogue addition.

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CHARACTERS

CAST

UNCLE CLIFFORD
AUTUMN (aka AUTUMN NIGHT, aka HAILEY COLTON and LAKIESHA SAVAGE)
MERCEDES
KEYSHAWN "MISS MISSISSIPPI"
LIL' MURDA
ANDRE WATKINS
CORBIN KYLE
PASTOR WOODBINE
BIG L
DIAMOND
DERRICK
GIDGET

GUEST CAST

| | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| DJ NEVA SCARED | CHUCALISSA CHALLENGERS |
| MISS ERNESTINE | TAYLOR |
| WODDY | JELISSA |
| WAYNE KYLE | ANOTHER GIRL |
| TOY | ANOTHER 'NOTHER GIRL |
| EXTRA-EXTRA | NEWS ANCHOR |
| JUPITER | CUSTOMER |
| PEANUT BUTTER | CHIEF-FI-CHIEFS #1 |
| BRAZIL | CHESTER |
| ELOISE | TINY |
| BRITNEY WATKINS | TIGER |
| PICO* | TYDELL JR. |
| MOOKIE | TYDELL JR. JR. |
| JULIAN | PATAVIOUS* |
| LIL' BAD CUZZIN | TEACHER** |

FEATURED EXTRAS

JULIAN'S WIFE*
5 CHIRRUN (MINORS)*

*Denotes non-speaking role

**Denotes voiceover

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SETS

INTERIORS

THE PYNK
OFFICE
PARADISE ROOM
SECRET PASSAGEWAY
PUSSYLAND
ENTRANCE
CAR WASH
MAIN STAGE
JULIAN'S HOUSE
KITCHEN
JULIAN'S CAR
ANDRE & BRITNEY'S HOUSE
GARAGE
BASEMENT BATHROOM
BASEMENT APARTMENT
LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN
LIL' MURDA'S TRAPHOUSE
KITCHEN
MERCEDES' HOUSE
TERRICKA'S ROOM
LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN
HALLWAY
KEYSHAWN & DERRICK'S DUPLEX
KEYSHAWN'S ROOM
KITCHEN
KIDS' ROOM
BEDROOM
MERCEDES' GYM
F&G FUNERAL HOME
REPOSE ROOM
RECEPTION ROOM
SAYLES' HOUSE
LIVING ROOM
KEYSHAWN & DERRICK'S PRIUS
RUFFIN'S "TRAPHOUSE"
FRONT ROOM

EXTERIORS

CHUCALISSA (ESTABLISHING)
THE PYNK
PARKING LOT
PUSSYLAND
BREAK ROOM
JULIAN'S HOUSE
ANDRE & BRITNEY'S HOUSE
CHUCALISSA (ESTABLISHING)
BREATH OF LIFE FULL GOSPEL
BAPTIST TABERNACLE
PARKING LOT
LIL' MURDA'S TRAPHOUSE
PORCH
TYDELL RUFFIN PARK
DAIS
THE DOLLAH STO'
RUFFIN'S "TRAPHOUSE"
FRONT PORCH
I./E. JULIAN'S CAR
I./E. KEYSHAWN & DERRICK'S
PRIUS

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CHRONOLOGY

This episode spans three days, starting the night of Day One and ending the night of Day Three.

| | |
|---------|----------------|
| NIGHT 1 | Scenes 1 - 26 |
| DAY 2 | Scenes 27 - 42 |
| NIGHT 2 | Scenes 43 |
| DAY 3 | Scenes 44 - 53 |
| NIGHT 3 | Scenes 54 - 60 |

Notes :

IN THE BLACK: CHILDREN SCREAM at the top of their lungs.

1 INT. JULIAN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 1

1

QUICK CUTS: A sagging home-made cake with sippy buttercream. Falling balloons begging for helium. Cheap, crunchy crepe paper decor. It's another sad QUARANTINE BIRTHDAY.

SLOW PUSH IN on JULIAN (black, 40 and *phoine*) sitting center frame in front of his computer at a kitchen table surrounded by his WIFE and 50-leven cacophonous CHIRRUN (5 of them ages 5-13). One of the children is turning in circles, wrapping hisself up in the crepe paper. He turns to vomit on the carpet. Julian takes in this sad state of affairs as his wife rushes to go clean up the mess.

JULIAN

I'm finna go to the seven-'leven.

CUT TO:

JULIAN'S HAND sweeps into frame, grabbing his keys off of the kitchen counter.

2 EXT./INT. JULIAN'S HOUSE / JULIAN'S CAR - NIGHT 1

2

Julian wobbles down his carport and gets into his BLACK TOYOTA CAMRY. Sequestered in his cocoon, he takes a moment to drink in the silence. Finally, he lets out a pekid sigh before turning the ignition.

STEVE HARVEY (ON RADIO)

*We don't want you to shoot them,
we just want y'all not to shoot
us, like you don't shoot them...*

He backs out of the driveway...

3 EXT./INT. CHUCALISSA / JULIAN'S CAR - NIGHT 1

3

IMAGES of CHUCALISSA slide across his black car, reflected like neon in the night. A city under duress. There are boarded up BUILDINGS, worse than before. HOMELESS FOLX, PROSTITUTES, and GANG BANGERS protect their diminishing turf.

Julian pulls up to the empty Old Hacks Cross Rd. intersection and puts on his left blinker. A graffiti-tagged billboard of PASTOR PATRICE WOODBINE of THE BREATH OF LIFE FULL GOSPEL BAPTIST TABERNACLE towers over his car.

Woodbine on the sign is perfectly coiffed, like a modern-day Mary (J. Blige that is). She bores holes through him.

"The doors of the church are open..." taunt him in pink cursive. He's about to make the left turn, but something catches his eye to the right...

PINK SEQUINED BOOTY SHORTS twinkling like the North Star. A WOMAN holds a sign: "CAR WASH + FREE HOT WINGS + TITTIES--> THISAWAY". This is the neon Crossroads every Mississippi man encounters at midnight. Especially during a pandemic. Instead of the left, he hooks a right...

4

EXT. THE PYNK - PARKING LOT - NIGHT 1

4

CLOSE ON those shawt shawts. We PAN UP as LIL' BAD CUZZIN switches down the sidewalk towards THE PYNK's driveway.

LIL' BAD CUZZIN

The doors of the Pynk closed, but
our pussy open! Roll on up to the
winda, nanh...

*
*
*
*

She directs Julian's CAR to the PLEXIGLASS booth where AUTUMN (aka AUTUMN NIGHT, AKA HAILEY COLTON and LAKIESHA SAVAGE) stands with a SQUARE in her LATEX GLOVED HAND. PPE'ed out, she dons a glitter mask beneath a SPACE AGE VUE SHIELD VISOR and a SEE-THRU PLASTIC JUMPSUIT that fits her like snakeskin. She points to a neon sign: "CAR WASH SERVICES: HAND JOB \$30, DETAILING \$50, MERCEDES EXPERIENCE \$100."

*

JULIAN

Make my Camry feel like a
Mercedes.

CLOSE ON Autumn punching **\$150** into the SQUARE.

JULIAN (CONT'D)

You dancin' tonight?

BIG L, now security, chimes in with a souse sammich in his hand.

BIG L

(munching)

You'on wanna see her dance.

Autumn blinks at Big L rulllll slow. PING! The transaction goes through.

AUTUMN

Need a receipt?

JULIAN

Naw, I'on need no evidence.

BIG L

Smart man.

AUTUMN

You can pull on up. And make sure
you roll up your windows.

(MORE)

UNCLE CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
(laughing to her self)
'Least not yet.
(MORE)

UNCLE CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Keep your hands on the wheel.
Uncle Clifford girls finna take
you down to the valley, chile...

10 INT. PUSSYLAND - ENTRANCE - NIGHT 1 10

As the BEAT DROPS, Kool-Aid color floods the white walls of the tent. This must be what it feels like to be inside a woman...

JUPITER and TOY stand on pole platforms behind plexiglass, and they bounce their buttocks to the downbeat. PEANUT BUTTER, BRAZIL, and EXTRA-EXTRA start flying around like birds caught in a cage. Their sparkly face masks catch the kaleidoscopic lights and blind Julian with their stardust.

11 INT. PUSSYLAND - CAR WASH - NIGHT 1 11

Decked out in barely-thur floss, Extra-Extra and Brazil come to his car with a bucket and a hose. They start soaping each other up much to Julian's delight, and his nature can't help but to rise, like the water in that bucket...

12 INT. JULIAN'S CAR - NIGHT 1 12

SLO-MO as Extra-Extra, Brazil, Jupiter, Peanut Butter and Toy writhe on his car. The WOMEN pull aside their tops, exposing their BREASTS and rubbing them against the windowpane.

Julian's neck cranes, looking through all of his soapy windows. He's surrounded by a pussytopia on all sides...

BLAM! He looks up to see Toy doing a split on his sun-roof, exposing her valley. Julian's hand slowly descends from the wheel and heads into his pants...

13 INT. PUSSYLAND - CAR WASH - NIGHT 1 13

Suddenly, the LIGHTS shift from PINK to BLUE and water squirts onto the car, rinsing the suds away. The Beat STOPS as we hear the CLICK-CLACK of a BAWSE BITCH'S HEELS.

14 INT. PUSSYLAND - MAIN STAGE - NIGHT 1 14

CLOSE ON TWO PINK PATENT LEATHER BOOT LEGS standing akimbo, lit by HEADLIGHTS.

RAMP REVEAL MERCEDES, the Bad Bitch Baby of J-Lo and Bey, poured into custom-floss made of cowgirl fringe and flight. Stardust sprinkles her thong. Her burgundy KOOL-AID colored hair, looking wet and wild, is lifted by the tornado winds being whipt by an invisible fan.

She steps onto a pole platform that has a MERRY-GO-ROUND HORSE on it. She rides that pony like she's riding Julian. Or at least that what he thinking... Mercedes looks at him as she puts her finger in her mouth.

This is that "Mercedes Experience". She stands on top of her Merry Go Round, then flips herself upside down, and around and around she goes. Gravity doesn't exist right now, this ghetto astronaut/cowgirl takes us to the sky. Her fringe seems to float, ride, writhe in the wind. STAR FILTERS make her shine like the Milky Way. 'Fact, she is the Milky Way. She is Gawd. She is a Siren calling him to what the French call *la petite mort*...

15 INT. JULIAN'S CAR - NIGHT 1

15

The MUSIC climaxes just as he SHUDDERS into his hand.

There's a HEAVY KNOCK on the window. Julian jumps, snatching his hand out of his pants. Uncle Clifford leans down into the driver's side window. Julian rolls it down.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Here's some weed wings on da house. And some wipes for that dashboard righ' thur.

16 INT. PUSSYLAND - CAR WASH - NIGHT 1

16

There's been... an accident. Julian gratefully takes the weed wings and the Clorox wipes. Uncle Clifford turns around and winks at the camera. #DEAD

SMASH CUT TO:

MAIN TITLE

17 EXT. THE PYNK - PARKING LOT / PUSSYLAND - NIGHT 1

17

The MUSIC fades as our bad biyah, Mercedes, steps out of the side portal of Pussyland into the sweltering night. Sweaty and breathless, she collapses in a chair. She snatches the wig from her head, exposing a labyrinth of cornrows to a curious moon. Mercedes stretches her RIGHT arm. The movement pains her deeply.

OFF-SCREEN the CRUNCH of GRAVEL can be heard. A SHADOW lords over Mercedes.

REVEAL PPE-less Autumn with a ziplock bag of ICE. Concerned, she gingerly places the pack on Mercedes' RIGHT SHOULDER. Mercedes winces but doesn't meet her gaze.

AUTUMN

How's it--

MERCEDES

It's fine.

AUTUMN

It's been, like, five months now... I'm gonna make you a doctor's appoint--

MERCEDES

(drop it bitch)

I said. It's fine.

They sit beside each other, staring into the distance. Together but apart.

UNCLE CLIFFORD (O.S.)

Autumn! Mercedes! Where y'all heaux at?!?!? One mo! Places, bitches, places!!!

AUTUMN

Come on. Last dance.

Autumn holds out her hand, pulling a wobbly Mercedes up.

MERCEDES

Shiiiiiiiiit...

Autumn replaces her PPE shield and struts back to the front. The 808 RISES again as Mercedes pins down her wig, before stepping back into Pussyland.

SMASH CUT TO:

18

EXT. THE PYNK - BREAK ROOM - NIGHT 1

18

A showered and sneakered up Mercedes bursts out into the break room. Playing all the latest HOOD MUSIC VIDEOS, a cracked SMART TV hangs above the makeshift bar. Big L is at the BAR chomping down on wings.

Uncle Clifford is rocking Jupiter's BABY on her THRONE, THE GREEN LEATHER RECLINER.

JUPITER (O.S.)

Uncle Clifford, how you keep that baby so quiet? I can't keep him quiet fuh nuthin'.

BIG L

Thass cuz Uncle Clifford be putting bure (beer) in that baby bottle.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Niggah, I ain't put no bure in this baby bottle. I put whiskey. Cuz this baby teethin' early, heyell...

Jupiter takes the baby away from Uncle Clifford to REVEAL Autumn sitting at UNCLE CLIFFORD'S DESK surrounded by all the other dancers: Toy, Brazil, Peanut Butter, and Extra-Extra, who are staring into their phones.

AUTUMN

Don't leave here tonight without confirming your transfers, nanh. I don't want another re-run like last night. Brazil n' Toy?

BRAZIL

Got it.

TOY

I'm good.

AUTUMN

Extra-Extra n' Jupiter?

JUPITER

Yerp-yerp...

EXTRA-EXTRA

Confirmed!

AUTUMN

(to Mercedes)

You get yours?

Mercedes looks down at the BANK ACCOUNT BALANCE on her PHONE. She sees the latest transactions: cell phone, Kroger, beauty supply sto', pending house mortgage, pending gym mortgage. DESPITE a credit from the Pynk in the amount of \$300, her account is on E at -\$120. She pats her weave.

MERCEDES

You sho' you flipt me all my scrilla?

AUTUMN

Ugh, yeah...

MERCEDES

Fuh real?

Autumn shoots her a *don't-try-me-bitch* look.

AUTUMN

Big L, you get yours?

BIG L

Got it bawse.

Uncle Clifford looks at Big L, who shrugs as he pops another wing into his mouth. Mercedes slams down her drink on the counter.

MERCEDES

I'on even know why the heyell Big L gettin' a cut offa Pussyland. He ain't even got no pussy!

BIG L

But I got them wangs. Y'all betta respect my contribution.

MERCEDES

Well, yo' contribution be burnt!

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Now you know errrythang in Pussyland go to the same pot and then we split it.

MERCEDES

I'on see why fuh? These niggahs steady stay cummmmming for that Mercedes Experience, and yet a bitch be leaving hure wit' Lincolns.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Chile, you ain't leavin' hure wit' no Lincolns. Autumn zip-zoop the same scrilla to errybody at the end of the night.

MERCEDES

Should she be?

AUTUMN

What does that mean?

MERCEDES

I'm just sayin', *my* milkshake brings all the boys to the yard and with all I been doing a bitch need to be gettin' mo' panini than Toy non-poling ass.

MERCEDES

(sucking teeth)

Guuuh, what Toy do and what I do
ain't no kinda 'quivalent. That's
like comparin' a orange to a
barracuda--

TOY

I got yo' barracuda bitch--

Toy and Mercedes are about to head off, but Uncle Clifford
jumps up into the fray--

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Security! Security!!!!

Big L, slow to react (as usual), moves like a tortoise on
fire. Of course, Uncle Clifford gets there first.

UNCLE CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Big L, yo ass stay slow as
molasses! Y'all bitches must be on
y'all cycle or something.

PEANUT BUTTER

Or it's the moon.

MERCEDES

I'm just sayin', all y'all bets
appreciate what I been doin' these
past five months, cuz if it wun't
fuh me all y'all heaux wouldna
made nary a Tubman this whole
pandemy. Keep on and this booty
gone be gone...

TOY

So finally we'd get to see yo'
laaast daance, huh?

Everyone looks at Mercedes, watching... waiting... as she
blinks her shame down.

A SQUEAL comes from PEANUT BUTTER.

LIL' MURDA (O.S)

(rapping)

M-I-Crooked-Letter-Crooked-Letter-
I-Crooked-Letter-Crooked-Letter-I

PEANUT BUTTER

Come hure, y'all, look!!

They all crowd around the TV SCREEN.

TOY

Keyshawn on her glow-up like a
bitch ain't never seen!

KEYSHAWN AKA MISS MISSISSIPPI is prancing on screen in red,
white and blue hair. She flies like a bird on platform
poles around LIL' MURDA in his "MISSISSIPPI PRIDE" MUSIC
VIDEO.

BRAZIL

(tearing up a bit)
From the Pank to the Palace.

EXTRA-EXTRA

(clapping)
Our Keyshawn is a video heauuux.

CLOSE ON Mercedes looking at her former lil' stripper
sister. She all kinds of J... Autumn clocks it.

JUPITER

Ooooooo and look at that Lil'
Muuuurda.

MERCEDES

(wry)
My, my how thangs have changed...

EXTRA-EXTRA

He done got quarantine thick,
ain't it?

CLOSE ON Uncle Clifford, breathless, taking in the sight of
Lil' Murda ON THE TV SCREEN. For a moment she is struck by
his sinewy frame. He's shirtless, exposing tatts she knows
intimately, the memory of those succulent lips tatted on
her own tongue. Hurt and touch hunger rile into displaced
anger.

Uncle Clifford changes the television to the NEWS CHANNEL.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

(Shake-a-spurean yelling)
KEYSHAWN SHADOW SHAN'T NEVA CROSS
MY FRONT DO'!! I'on want not a
na'an 'nother night like Murda
Night in my life.
(MORE)

UNCLE CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

She forgot Uncle Clifford Rule
#45.22, "Leave yuh babydaddy drama
at home, especially if his ass
white." Jupiter, I hope you ain't
got no babydaddy drama we gone
haveta deal with.

JUPITER

I'on even know who he is so, we
good!

CUT TO:

19

INT. THE PYNK - OFFICE - NIGHT 1

19

Uncle Clifford comes in to find Autumn and Big L conferring
over a piece of paper.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Whuuuu nannnh?!?!?!?!?

BIG L

Got denied that relief loan UH-
gin.
Keep talkin' about we non-
essential.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

How we non-essential? Do they know
how many niggahs runnin' 'round
hure wit' blue balls?

AUTUMN

How much is left?

UNCLE CLIFFORD

From what?

AUTUMN

From what I gave you. How much is
left?

Uncle Clifford looks at Big L. A long-ass beat.

BIG L

25K

AUTUMN

25--fucking-K?!?!?!?

Autumn points to Uncle Clifford's expensive purse.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

How many Birkins did you buy,
heiffa??!

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Who you callin a heiffa, heiffa?

AUTUMN

I put 250 stacks down at the auction. 55 went to paying off that fucking predatory loan you went and got. That left 195K, which I gave all to youuuuu!!!

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Do you know how much it cost to keep these bitches afloat once everythang shut down? I made sho' they was fed so they ain't haveta give no head--

AUTUMN

So how much was *that* these past five months?

UNCLE CLIFFORD

About 55K?

AUTUMN

Okay, so how did all that become 25K??!?!?

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Look, they wouldn't let us dance inside, so I came up with Pussyland. *Then* we had to beg, borrow and steal PPE n' shit. Heyell, Maite had to go back home after she almost burnt her damn eyebrows off making jugs of home-made sanitizer outta tequila. And don't forget the Paradise Room. Which as you know, had to undergo a complete renovation, *partnah...*
(beat)

Don't know why I should even be calling you that since you steady stay screamin' and hollin' 'bout how you the owner.

AUTUMN

Oh quit it, I gave you 15% ownership--

BIG L

Is that what gettin' rid of bodies goin' fuh nowadays? I'm askin'... for a friend...

Big L nods to Uncle Clifford, who smiles. A tense beat.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Hmph. Hmph. I see why Mercedes
want a bigger cut. Heyell, I want
one too...

AUTUMN

I'm the one who makes sure she's
taken care of. *I'm* the one who
used her last dime to give her the
downpayment for her gym--

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Well, ain't no use of being the
richest bitch in the graveyard,
Hailey. 'Sides, it's the 'least
yo' *yellah* ass could do.

AUTUMN

You got one mo' time to call me--

Autumn and Uncle Clifford are squaring up for their usual
round two, when suddenly they hear SCREAMS and GLASS
SHATTERING outside.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Awww, heyell, what these heaux
fighting about nanh? What?

All three run out the office...

20

EXT. THE PYNK - BREAK ROOM - NIGHT 1

20

Big L, Autumn and Uncle Clifford spill back out into the
night.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Wha, the aliens done come? What!?!

Mercedes points to the TV SCREEN where a NEWS ANCHOR is
breaking news, as Jupiter, Toy, Brazil, Peanut Butter, and
Extra-Extra continue to SCREAM, WHISTLE, and TWERK.

NEWS ANCHOR (ON TV)

...the governor of Mississippi has
just announced that lockdown will
end next week. The executive order
allows indoor restaurants, salons
and churches to resume indoor
services at reduced capacities...

She hangs the mask on a clothesline to dry next to other N95 masks. She steps into the shower to slough off the day.

CLOSE ON a medicine cabinet stocked full of VITAMIN C, D and ZINC. She takes a dose. Closes the cabinet door revealing--

Britney, our frontline shero, mirrored back at herself after the storm. She stares at the tired shell of herself. Red-rimmed eyes and MASK SCARS on her cheeks. She presses them. Winces. She then begins to apply her LA MER cream worriedly to her abrasions.

CUT TO:

24 INT. ANDRE & BRITNEY'S HOUSE - BASEMENT APARTMENT - NIGHT 124

She goes into the fridge.

BRITNEY

Fuck.

She looks to the stairs. She grabs her phone. Calls...

25 INT. ANDRE & BRITNEY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - NIGHT 25
1

ANDRE WATKINS is on the couch playing a video game. He is in full gamer mode. With over-grown twists and a busy beard, he's giving us that pandemy scruff (It look cute on him tho!).

ANDRE

No, no, don't jump off the roof.
He's coming! He's commmmmming!

Britney walks in, hiding her face. Andre barely sees her.

BRITNEY

Just getting my milk...

ANDRE

Oh, babe. Hey. What are you--

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

I'll be quick.

ANDRE

How was work?

BRITNEY

(a beat)

Good.

She doesn't wanna fucking talk about it. Andre looks at her like he wants to hug her. He thinks better of it. Turns back to the TV instead. Britney goes to the fridge and opens it.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

You were supposed to stock the basement kitchen fridge with my almond milk.

ANDRE

Oh, shit! Sorry, babe. Day got away from me.

BRITNEY

What have you been doing all day?

Game console in his hand, he's about to lie--

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

Look, I don't wanna possibly get you sick by coming up on the main.

Britney picks up his phone on the kitchen island counter.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

I called, like, three times.
'Fact, I see a lot of people have been calling you. Hell, Eloise called you seven times and...
(reading his messages)
Who's Hailey?

Andre looks up at Britney with wide eyes. He quickly goes to her just as Britney starts sliding through the messages.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

(reading)
"My condolences..."

Andre snatches the phone from Britney. Then backs faaaaaar away. Britney stares as Andre reads the message...

ANDRE

Can't be...

He calls Eloise.

CLOSE ON Britney taking Andre in with concern.

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Eloise, sorry I missed your call, I just heard. When? I thought he was getting better... Last night? Wow... Okay uhmmm, yeah. Of course. Of course, I can drive to Mississippi tomo--

Andre looks over at Britney who *wuuuz* standing 10 feet away, but she condenses it down to 6...

BRITNEY
(sotto voce)
No. You cannot go.

ANDRE
(ignoring)
The wake will be at F & G?
What about the funeral?

BRITNEY (CONT'D)
It's not safe. It's not safe
for anybody. NO. NO.
(a primal scream)
NOOOOOO!

Stunned by his wife's sharp response--

ANDRE
Hey, Eloise, lemme call you back--

Andre hangs up. She is enraged. Shaking.

ANDRE (CONT'D)
Britney--babe--

BRITNEY
You really wanna know how my day was? I lost 7 patients today. That's why I said "Good." Because the day before it was 12. The look they have on their face when you have to tell them they're about to be intubated and that now, *now* is the time to say your goodbyes. You pull out your cellphone and you hope they know the number by heart. Thank God Carl knew. He called his only daughter. "When you comin' back home, Daddy?" "Soon." I held that phone and watched as that man lied to his only child...

Tears roll down Britney's face. Andre tries to go and console his wife. She steps back. The distance is killing them.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)
I know you think I'm overly cautious. OCD, even. But... I don't wish this on my worst enemy, Andre--

ANDRE
Babe, I'll take all the necessary precautions. '
(MORE)

ANDRE (CONT'D)

Fact, I won't even go to the
funeral, but I must--*I must*--pay
my respects.

Defiant, Andre eyes her. Britney is silent. A chasm grows.

BRITNEY

Go. But go to the wake early, not
late. You know how niggahs are.

She walks back downstairs, but before she closes the door--

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

Oh, and Andre, memorize my number,
will you?

The basement door shuts. Beat. Andre looks down to his
phone.

OFF Andre's face as he reads "Hailey"'s message...

The HORRORCORE INTRO of LIL' MURDA'S QUARANTINE SONG
rises...

26

EXT. CHUCALISSA - ESTABLISHING - DAY 2

26

DRONE shots of an emptied world. Slowed down. Mostly still.

EMPTY FOOTBALL STADIUMS... EMPTY CHURCH PARKING LOTS...
EMPTY BASEBALL DIAMONDS... EMPTY TATTOO PARLORS... EMPTY
BARBERSHOPS...

But then the SOUND of a CROWD going wild rises.

PASTOR WOODBINE (V.O.)

We all in the belly of the whale
nanh... Pressed up against the
ribs, chile. Trapped inside with
them dark feelings, them dark
tendencies festering like boils,
swarming your head like locusts.
When Moses raised his hand, God
blocked out the sun. These days
must be endured, felt, survived.
As there is no dawn without the
dark...

The CHURCH CROWD ROARS as we soar over...

27

EXT. BREATH OF LIFE FULL GOSPEL BAPTIST TABERNACLE -
PARKING LOT - DAY 2

27

...a line of CARS, CARS, and more CARS. PASTOR PATRICE WOODBINE walks past like a general, deploying her SOUL SOLDIERS to fill people's cars with FOOD BANK BOXES plastered with her face. She goes to every car and slides her SERMON CDs into the hands of the troubled...

And the BEAT DROPS HARD--

28

INT. LIL' MURDA'S TRAPHOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 2

28

CLOSE ON A heavily TATTED HAND dipping into Woodbine's FOOD BANK BOX.

REVEAL Lil' Murda is at the STOVE whipping it. Cooking a ghetto gourmet bologna sandwich, simmered in home-made BBQ sauce and flash-fried shishito peppers. He delicately plates it for DaQwan aka DJ NEVA SCARED, who has his computer out, playing LIL' MURDA'S TRACK (IN-PROGRESS SONG ONE).

LIL' MURDA

I'on know maine, it feeling a little too twinkly.

DJ NEVA SCARED

Cap! This beat got some tremolo like you ain't never felt...

DJ Neva Scared turns it up.

TEACHER (V.O.)

DaQwan! DaQwan! Put yourself on mute!

DJ NEVA SCARED

(code-switching)

My apologies, Mrs. Price.

He punches the mute button.

DJ NEVA SCARED (CONT'D)

Niggah, it's hard workin' on yo' mixes when I'm supposed to be in school. We done went over this mix, like, twenty-fo' times.

LIL' MURDA

Well, niggah, maybe we get to number 27 it'll be bussin'. It's just missing a liiiiittle...

Lil' Murda takes the FORK he was whipping with and then starts making a CLANGING SOUND on a METAL POT. He then gets a BUCKET that was by the stove turns it over.

LIL' MURDA (CONT'D)

Play it again.

DJ Neva Scared starts the track on it. And then Lil' Murda starts DRUMMING, adding in new HIGH HATS and BOTTOM to the beat. DJ Neva Scared closes his eyes and the track starts coming together.

LIL' MURDA (CONT'D)
Like so, like dat, like so, like
dat...

DJ NEVA SCARED
Let me find out a niggah might not
neeeed a niggah...

LIL' MURDA
Riiiiiiiiight? Right?!?!?

DJ NEVA SCARED (CONT'D)
That's fresh to death. On
god.

LIL' MURDA
Aight aight stir that on up in the
pot. They thought "Mississippi
Pride" slapped, wait 'til the
skreets get aholda this one.

Lil' Murda starts scrolling through his phone. He checks the messages under CLIFF. The latest one: Lil' Murda: "Niggah, really it's like that, you ain't gone hit a niggah back for months?!?!?!" 2 weeks back: "You knew what the business wuz?" 1 month ago: "Niggah, you act like I adjusted yo' wig and smashed yo' grandmama!!!!!!!!!" He scrolls baaaaaack until he hits 5 months ago... "Sorry." NO REPLIES. Lil' Murda throws down his phone. He eyes DJ Neva Scared for a beat.

LIL' MURDA (CONT'D)
Heard the Pynk openin' back up.
You goin' back?

DJ NEVA SCARED
Ain't gone kill me in no club.

LIL' MURDA
(laughing)
Punk ass.

DJ NEVA SCARED
You talk to Uncle Clifford?

LIL' MURDA
(defensive AF)
Why-- Why the fuck would that
niggah be talkin' to me fuh?

DJ NEVA SCARED

Daaamn niggah, I just thought
since the Pynk re-opening again,
they might have you back to pack
it out--

LIL' MURDA

Aw. Aw. Naw, I'm too swole for The
Pynk.

There is a KNOCK on the front door. Lil Murda puts on a red
and green GUCCI MASK...

DJ NEVA SCARED

Aw, you swole nanh? I might have
to get you a feature on this
secret joint I'm working on
then...

LIL' MURDA

Fuck a feature... What you need to
do is mix down my mursic. I'll
jump on another niggah shit
later...

Lil' Murda walks down the long shotgun house hallway.

CUT TO:

29

EXT. LIL' MURDA'S TRAPHOUSE - PORCH - DAY 2

29

A CUSTOMER stands there.

CUSTOMER

Want that good shit.

LIL' MURDA

I steady stay wit' that good-good.

He slaps it into the customer's hand. Suddenly, he hears
the RUMBLE of something familiar... He turns to see a CAR
detailed with GOLD and BLUE. It's the car of some bandana-
masked CHIEF-FI-CHIEFS.

CLOSE ON Lil' Murda's hand going to the GUN tucked in the
back of his pants.

They slowly roll down their window. Kush smoke and
"MISSISSIPPI PRIDE" floats out of the car. They look at him
for a beat. One takes down his bandanna and yells from
afar.

CHIEF-FI-CHIEF #1

Niggah, when you gone come out
with a new joint? We need some mo'
Lil' Murda in the quarantation...

LIL' MURDA
 (hesitant)
 Soon, niggah... soon.

They throw up their set. Lil' Murda throws his up, but it then morphs into a BLACK FIST salute. The Chief-fi-Chiefs do it right back. They ride off, but that's when Lil' Murda finally realizes who all up in the car.

CLOSE ON PICO, his long lost frenemy, smoking a blunt in the back looking salty AF. Deckerd out in that gold and blue, it's clear that he done crossed over to the other side...

30 INT. MERCEDES' HOUSE - TERRICKA'S ROOM - DAY 2 30

The SOUNDS of INTENSE ORGASMING can be heard coming through the walls.

PAN DOWN to REVEAL Autumn submerged in the crunchy, overly glittered comforter on Terricka's bed. She snatches the covers off her head, rolling out of bed to deal with the culprit.

31 INT. MERCEDES' HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY 2 31

She crosses the hallway and knocks hard on Mercedes' door. Mercedes cums LOUDER and HARDER.

32 INT. MERCEDES' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - DAY 2 32

WE TRACK Autumn, who comes into the kitchen to start cooking. She shakes her damn head as she turns on the RADIO to cover the SOUND.

CUT TO:

33 INT. MERCEDES' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - DAY 2 33

A refreshed Mercedes bounds out of her bedroom with her dog BLACKIE MILD to find Autumn has laid out a breakfast fit for a queen.

MERCEDES
 Call myself being celibate for a yure. Now Mane hemmed up in jail on some trumped up robbery charge and then Miss Rona call herself visiting with no plans of leavin', like somebody else I know...

AUTUMN

I'm looking... I just haven't found anything in Chucalissa I loooove.

MERCEDES

Well, maybe you should settle for something you liiiiiiike.

Autumn just blinks at her ruuuuull slow.

AUTUMN

You seemed to be *loudly* enjoying yourself this morning--

MERCEDES

Chile, I'on even know what a dick look like no mo' if it ain't purple and plastic. I'ma tell you tho, first thing I'ma do after this shit ova wit' is jump Mane dick on sight!

Mercedes jumps up from the table without taking a bite.

AUTUMN

Wait, are you not gonna eat?

MERCEDES

Had Henney, a blunt and a nut. I'on need nuthin' else.

Mercedes passes Blackie Mild her plate, which annoys Autumn.

AUTUMN

(a beat)

I was thinking... about what you said last night... You're right, you've been holding us down for a minute, so for the Grand Re-Re-RE Opening, I'm gonna negotiate a cut offa the door for you.

MERCEDES

Just the do'?

AUTUMN

Yes, just the door. I know you're holding down two mortgages, the house and the gym... so...

Mercedes just stares at her.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

...you welcome. You're doin' the
most, and we just can't be puttin'
allathis on your shoulders
anymore. Thass why I'm auditioning
for some new girls--

MERCEDES

Holdupholdupholdupholdupholdup
ain't nobody said nothin' 'bout
gettin some new girls--

AUTUMN

More girls in the rotation'll give
your shoulder a chance to heal--

MERCEDES

It's fine--

AUTUMN

Plus Beyoncé need her a Kelly n'
Michelle. The best we had are
gone. Soon as Gidget's mama
passed, she caught the first bus
up outta here. And, Keyshawn--

MERCEDES

Don't bring. that. bitch. name.
up. in. my. house.

AUTUMN

I don't get you and Uncle Clifford--
-

MERCEDES

She pult a gun--

AUTUMN

She was trying to stop--

MERCEDES

That bitch pult a gun on framily.
Where they do that at?

AUTUMN

You don't understand--

MERCEDES

Actually, I do.

A heavy beat. Autumn decides to be careful.

AUTUMN

All I'm saying is, we've lost two of the best...ish dancers the Pynk ever had. We're gonna have to get some new blood.

MERCEDES

Naw, we good on the blood. You see how I snatched up errybody for Pussyland? I'll whip Toy funky ass and 'nem into shape. Don't you worry yo' little head...
bosssssss.

With that, Mercedes walks out the door.

OFF Autumn's face, concerned.

"SPEND SUM CASH" by LIGHT SKIN KEISHA rises up...

34

INT. KEYSHAWN & DERRICK'S DUPLEX - KEYSHAWN'S ROOM - DAY 2 34

QUICK SLO-MO DISSOLVES of Keyshawn getting herself ready in an ALL WHITE ROOM. MACRO SHOTS of her succulent lips. Body Lava application. Baby hairs on swirl. Keyshawn's glow-up game is strong. Nails done, hair done, everything did.

She steps in front of her THREE RING LIGHT SET-UP. CLOSE ON her CLEAR TALONS flipping the switch as the PINK AND BLUE LED LIGHT STRIPS bring in the Pynk special...

She walks up to a SPINNING POLE then allasudden the world RAMPS into real time. The Pole Princess of the M-I-CROOKED LETTER-CROOKED LETTER is in rare form. She twirling on all them alligators. A storm of her own making. Her heels are made of wind and her body of water as she whips and flips, taking herself up to another universe. She dismounts and puts that pretty mug into the camera.

KEYSHAWN

It's yuh girl. Miss M-I-Crooked Letter-Crooked Letter in all yuh buildings.

She goes back to the pole and does her trademark dance move THE AIRWALK, walking with one arm around the pole, while jiggling those cakes. She then does a backwards flip and catches herself on the pole.

CUT TO:

35

INT. KEYSHAWN & DERRICK'S DUPLEX - KITCHEN - DAY 2

35

CLOSE ON a PHONE, clocking the COMMENT box beneath Keyshawn's carefully curated performance.

"Bitch did you just do a split on the mufuckin' pole?" "Can I use yo' floss to floss my teeth?" "Heaux is saving the yure!"

REVEAL DERRICK, Keyshawn's babydaddy, sitting at the kitchen table, feeding BABY REGAL (now 10 months) and JAYDEN (now 3). He has his phone, looking at Keyshawn's Insta live.

KEYSHAWN (ON PHONE SCREEN)

Don't forget to visit my website
in the chat to get yo' Miss Sipp
teas. Let me know if you like what
you Sip. Holllllllaaaaa!!

She logs off with her trademark kiss. Derrick spoons some more food into Regal's mouth. Seconds later, a huffing and puffing, sweaty-ass (but robed) Keyshawn opens the door, exiting her happy space and stepping into her humdrum existence. She goes straight towards the refrigerator and pulls out a gallon of water, starts chugging it.

DERRICK

Had more than 400K this Live.

KEYSHAWN

(breathy)

It's been unbelievable. You
watched the whole time?

DERRICK

I watch everything...

Stalker...

KEYSHAWN

Hey Regal, my Purty-purty! Look at
my bestie Jayden eating up his
peas. Yasss, YAAAASSSSSS!

DERRICK

I got another job interview at 3.

KEYSHAWN

(hesitant)

I got another Live at 3.

DERRICK

Keyshawn--

KEYSHAWN

Rome just set it up--

DERRICK

Well Rome needs to ask me before he sets shit up. He's got you doing this Zoom, this Live--

KEYSHAWN

Also *this* endorsement, *that* makeup line possibility...

Derrick looks at her sharply. She shifts.

KEYSHAWN (CONT'D)

It's work, Derrick.

DERRICK

Seems like the only one working is you...

A beat. Keyshawn leans into Derrick.

KEYSHAWN

This is all just temporary. This shit's gonna end. The day'll come when you'll be back at the shop and I'll be in front a crowd again...

Derrick's jaw clenches.

DERRICK

(softly)

Naw, that room's all you need.

He takes her face in his hands. She musters up a smile. He kisses her deeply, passionately. She tries to give him passion back. Thankfully, Regal starts CRYING. Derrick breaks from Keyshawn and picks the baby up and starts soothing her.

OFF Keyshawn's troubled face.

MERCEDES (PRE-LAP)

How my Chucalissa Challengers holdin' up?

Mercedes sits with her laptop in the middle of an incredibly RAW space. Exposed wires and concrete beams.

Potential and possibility. The CHUCALISSA ZOOM ROOM is
crunk as heyell.

CHUCALISSA CHALLENGERS

I hate my mama! / I hate my daddy!
/ I wanna see my boyfriend!!! / My
booty done got soooo fat!!!

MERCEDES

Ay-aye-ayyyyyyyyy, Y'all don't
need to be wurried 'bout how yo'
booty look, be wurried about what
yo' booty can do. I bet na'an one
of y'all been practicing yuh death
drops?

CHUCALISSA CHALLENGERS

No ma'am...

MERCEDES

Well, y'all bets gets to droppin'
cuz the first Challenger practice
comin' up next week. Y'all mamas
need to pay the subscription fee
by-

JELISSA

(interrupting)

Ms. Cedes, my mama said she ain't
gone let me come.

ANOTHER GIRL

Mine neither.

MERCEDES

But lockdown ending next week--

ANOTHER 'NOTHER GIRL

But my mama can't afford it, she
say.

MERCEDES

(a beat)

How many y'all mamas said that?

CUT TO the ZOOM. Nearly every girl has her hand raised.

JELISSA

My mama ain't say she can't afford
it, she just wanna wait until...
it's all over.

A heavy beat as the girls all look at Mercedes.

TAYLOR

Guess it's just gone be me,
Terricka and Ms. Cedes.

MERCEDES
(more to herself)
Naw... cuz Terricka mama ain't
gone let her come neither...

OFF Mercedes looking longingly at her Chucalissa
Challengers.

37

INT. THE PYNK - PARADISE ROOM - DAY 2

37

Plastic sheets hang, sectioning the in-progress room. The clouds have all been removed, revealing fluorescent tube-lighting above. The couches and rugs are gone, and the antebellum wallpaper is mostly peeled, revealing bare walls painted white.

Big L stands on a ladder, installing a FLOATING POLE that dangles from the ceiling.

UNCLE CLIFFORD
See, I told you we could re-
purpose these Pussyland poles. I
know how to remix me some shit.

BIG L
Hand me that hex key.

UNCLE CLIFFORD
Chile, what that is?

Uncle Clifford rummages through his TOOL BOX. Suddenly the plastic sheets start to move as if a gentle breeze has slipped beneath the door. Big L and Uncle Clifford freeze.

UNCLE CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Did you turn on the AC?

Big L shakes his head "no"... Uncle Clifford looks around. Heavy beat.

AUTUMN (O.S.)
You think it'll be done before the
week's out?

Uncle Clifford jumps and Big L almost falls off the ladder.

BIG L
Fuuuuck!

UNCLE CLIFFORD
Oooooo, sweet Baby Jesus!

REVEAL Autumn, leaning against the Paradise Room entrance.

AUTUMN

Sorry, didn't mean to scare y'all.
Just wanted to know if
everything'll be done for the re-
re- RE opening?

Big L climbs down off the ladder.

UNCLE CLIFFORD
Wait 'til you see the shit Big L
done did.

Uncle Clifford hits a switch and kaleidoscopic projections
start dancing along the WHITE WALLS.

AUTUMN
Impressive.

BIG L
(proud)
Shopping Network had a special.

The CAMERA carousels around, taking in the lights. We LAND
ON Autumn's face looking distressed.

AUTUMN
Turn the lights off.

Big L does. The room becomes a WHITE BOX again.

Autumn slowly walks over to the far wall to find a faint
maroon outline of BLOOD SPLATTER blooming on the surface.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)
You see that?

All three of them peer into our CAMERA.

BIG L
How the fuck that bleach ain't
work?

UNCLE CLIFFORD
(whispering)
Niggah, you was supposed to use
peroxide--

BIG L
Ain't find no peroxide--

AUTUMN
Nothing works. Blood stains always
bleed back thru...

Big L and Uncle Clifford look at her like, "*How the fuck
you know?*" A beat.

UNCLE CLIFFORD
I see I gotsta take care of shit
myself...

Uncle Clifford goes through the back door of the Paradise Room that connects to...

38

INT. THE PYNK - SECRET PASSAGEWAY - DAY 2

38

...a SECRET closet chockfull of cleaning supplies. Uncle Clifford starts rummaging through shelves looking for peroxide. Big L enters fast on her heels. Autumn follows.

BIG L
Aye, maine, let me look.

UNCLE CLIFFORD
Can't depend on yo' ass fuh noth--

Uncle Clifford lifts a box and out pours a PACK OF OXY PILLS. Beat.

UNCLE CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Trifling! Just tri-fuh-LIN'!

BIG L
I was just trying to help the white niggah out--

UNCLE CLIFFORD
You and Duffy know good and goddamn well, I ain't 'bout that plug life. I should stomp a cone in yo' ass--

BIG L
How else I was gone make some bank? I wun't gettin' nothin' but twanky dollars off Pussyland some nights--

UNCLE CLIFFORD
Well, niggah can you twerk?

BIG L
No, but a niggah gotsta eat.

Uncle Clifford looks at Big L, soooo disappointed.

BIG L (CONT'D)
Don't look at me like that maine.

UNCLE CLIFFORD
(quiet)
Big L, I'ma have to fire you.

BIG L
Fire me? FIRE. ME? Letting me
stash here the 'least both y'all
could do after what I did fuh
y'all that night. Fuh YOU,
Clifford.

A tense beat... Autumn and Uncle Clifford look at one
another.

AUTUMN
How much have you made already?

BIG L
I'on know, like, 45 maybe 50
stacks.

UNCLE CLIFFORD
And you ain't buy a bitch no
Birkin bag?

AUTUMN
You'll be giving the owners 50%
off of back earnings as penalty.
And 25% going forward--

UNCLE CLIFFORD
Excuse me--

AUTUMN
You're right, 35% going forward.
Are we clear?

BIG L
Copy.

AUTUMN
Good. Oh, and the walls. Paint 'em
red.

Autumn CLICK-CLACKS out of the room.

OFF Big L and Uncle Clifford staring each other down.

Dusk sho'll can make death look pretty. Coffins gleam
beneath the setting sun, piercing through the windows. Lil'
Murda ducks his head into one of the viewing rooms.

LIL' MURDA
Woddy? Woddy?

Just as he's turning around to go, one of the COFFINS opens and a BODY sits up!

Lil' Murda grabs his piece and cocks it in the direction of WODDY rising up out of the coffin.

WODDY
Niggah, you is interrupting my nap.

LIL' MURDA (CONT'D)
Woddy what the fuck niggah!!!
Goddamn!!!!!!

WODDY
What, you was gone shoot the dead
dead?

LIL' MURDA
Hell, mu'fuckin' yeah!

WODDY
(chuckling)
Well, it ain't the niggahs in the
graveyard you need to be scared
of...

LIL' MURDA
Niggah... I'm worried about you.

WODDY
We been working more all-nighters,
my dude.

Woddy steps out of his coffin and turns on the light, illuminating the coffins stacked. Some are steel, pine, others cardboard boxes. Rows and rows of DEAD BODIES.

LIL' MURDA
I see the Devil been busy.

WODDY
What YOU said.

Woddy opens a coffin and starts dressing a body in cufflinks and a LIME GREEN tie and hat...

LIL' MURDA
Well, we about to be busier. I
need you to book me on a tour.

WODDY
Niggah, a tour?

LIL' MURDA
We need to capitalize right nanh,
Woddy.

(MORE)

LIL' MURDA (CONT'D)

We need to roll with that same energy 'fo everything wit' sideways. Me and DJ Neva Scared done made beaucoup music--

WODDY

I hope it ain't no slaw--

LIL' MURDA

Niggah, ain't you seen my video got views on topa views.

WODDY

Yeah, but is that because of you or Keyshawn?

LIL' MURDA

Fuck you mean?

WODDY

Keyshawn been having bored-in-the-house-niggahs-in-the-house-bored slobbin' into they phones for months. Thass why Rome snatched her up quicker than a Snicker.

LIL' MURDA

Yeah well, wish I had a manager was bringin' me brand ambassador opps.

WODDY

Let me know, and I'll call the weave and lash company--

LIL' MURDA

Niggah, I ain't no hoe. If you my manager, I'ma need you to manage my shit.

WODDY

Say you go on tour, in the middle of this pandemy. What would be the draw?

LIL' MURDA

(begrudgingly)
Keyshawn.

WODDY

Good luck on that cause Rome say her babydaddy got her locked up in her room all day and all night.

LIL' MURDA
I can't believe that niggah white.

WODDY
Me neither.

Lil' Murda picks up his phone, starts dialing. Woddy stops him.

LIL' MURDA
Niggah, don't you wanna get outta
hure? Be out on the road, sleepin'
up in some pussy instead
mu'fuckin' coffin?

Woddy looks around at his given circumstances.

LIL' MURDA (CONT'D)
One thang niggahs know, life shawt
and if we don't get out now, when
we gone go?

WODDY
You ain't scared?

LIL' MURDA
Naw, I ain't scared of the livin'.

40

INT. KEYSHAWN & DERRICK'S DUPLEX - KIDS' ROOM - DUSK 2 -

40

INTERCUT

Keyshawn is hunched over the changing table, getting Regal cleaned up. Her phone RINGS. She answers.

LIL' MURDA
What up, guh--

KEYSHAWN
Ain't nobody heard nothin' from
you since that video--

LIL' MURDA
I'ma get you them stacks I owe you
and then some...

KEYSHAWN
Mmmhmmm, keep talkin'.

LIL' MURDA
Me and you headlining clubs all
'cross the Dirty South.
Mississippi's Pole Princess and
the Trap Prince reunite.

KEYSHAWN

You wanna go on tour in the middle
of a fuckin' pandemic?

LIL' MURDA

Hure me out tho, the skreets been
hangry fuh us. You done seen the
ticker on our video? We might
break a 400K views 'fo the week
out.

KEYSHAWN

I get that in a day.

LIL' MURDA

(seducing)

'Memba Murda Night, tho? 'Memba
how it felt to have all them eyes
on yo' skin. Alla them folks
makin' a memory of you...

KEYSHAWN

(a beat)

I think I'ma have to pass. Bye.
And run me my staaacksss, bwoy!!!

Keyshawn hangs up and finishes changing Regal.

KEYSHAWN (CONT'D)

Ooooooo, you lucky you so cute,
cuz you'se a stanky-panky a stanky-
pankkkkkyyy!

She throws the dirty diaper in the DIAPER GENIE... Stares
at it then stares and stares.

She opens the Genie, takes half of the CLEAN DIAPERS and
stuffs them into the bottom of the Genie.

41

INT. F & G FUNERAL HOME - RECEPTION ROOM - DUSK 2

41

A masked Andre enters exactly on time. No one else is
there. The chairs are distanced 10 feet apart. He strides
to the open coffin to peer inside. 'Neath the setting sun,
MAYOR TYDELL RUFFIN, pimped out in lime green, lays in
repose.

MACRO CLOSE ON Andre's eyes welling with tears...

ELOISE (O.S.)

Didn't know if you were gonna make
it.

Andre turns to find ELOISE, the Mayor's former secretary, standing 6 feet away from him.

ANDRE
How you holding up?

ELOISE
Not well. But who right now is?

ANDRE
Bet they got you busy showing
Wayne Kyle the ropes down at City
Hall.

ELOISE
Chile, they let me go fo' Ruffin
body was lukewarm.

Andre looks back down at the Mayor.

ANDRE
How's his sons taking it?

ELOISE
Done cried enough to flood the
Mississippi River twice over. They
know they looooved they daddy.

ANDRE
What he call 'em?

ANDRE (CONT'D)
The Trifling Five.

ELOISE
The Trifling Six.

ANDRE
Six?

ELOISE
He got back with the third baby
mama... in the end...

ANDRE
I feel like *I* should have been
there... at the end.

ELOISE
Well... still need one more
pallbearer. His youngest ain't
nothin' but one so we need one mo'
somebody to help carry him on
home...

ANDRE
Oh, I-I-I--I can't. My wife...
she... uh...

ELOISE
(nods, understanding)
I know y'all wun't on the best of
terms in the end, but you should
know... He loved you something
fierce. Like a son.

Eloise walks away as Andre continues to look into the coffin.

42

EXT. F & G FUNERAL HOME - NIGHT 2

42

Andre passes another masked WAKE-GOER. The line is starting to get long outside. He pulls off his mask as he walks towards his car on the street. He digs into his pocket, but instead of pulling out his keys, he pulls out a cigarette, leans against the car and lights up.

AUTUMN (O.S.)
Shawt me down?

Startled, Andre squints into the shadows...

REVEAL Autumn standing there in a glittering face mask and a black patent leather trench coat.

ANDRE
Whu?

AUTUMN
I said, shawt. me. down.

She steps closer to him, removing her mask and exposing those succulent lips he loved kissing so much. He finally recognizes her and hands her one from his suit pocket.

ANDRE
Well, ain't you sounding like a
Chucalissa native?
(mocking)
"Shawt me down?"

AUTUMN
Guess Chucalissa done crept up in
my veins just like a good vice.
(indicating the
cigarette)
Seems like you've developed one of
your own since...

ANDRE
I can only smoke far, faaaar away
from Atlanta.

AUTUMN

Well, that wife of yours probably
can smell it on you from here
tho...

She blows out smoke. They both LAUGH. Until there's only
frank staring between them. Beat.

ANDRE

Hailey, I thought if I saw you
again, I'd slap you.

AUTUMN

Is that right?

She comes closer and closer to him, wishing he would. He
seems to tighten up with her being so close. Beat.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

Don't worry, I won't kill you.

ANDRE

I could be the one to kill you.

AUTUMN

Naw. I've already gotten it. Whipt
thru the club just like a F5
tornado...

(taking in Andre)

I wish I could say that grief
gets better.

ANDRE

It doesn't get better?

THUNDER rolls. Autumn looks up to the sky.

AUTUMN

Naw, it just... changes. Kinda
like a cloud. Sometimes it's
cumulus, sometime stratus, cirrus
even and then sometimes it's...

(remembering her)

...a fucking hurricane.

ANDRE

(nodding, tearing up)

He was the father to me that my
father couldn't be. Always there
for me...

(breaking)

And I can't even help put him in
the ground...

Autumn comes close. Too close.

AUTUMN
(knowingly)
Funerals ain't for the dead:
they're for the livin'.

He nods. She sadly smiles, then turns to walk away. Just then a cloud breaks. Rain and shadow swallow Autumn back up.

"LAST MILE OF THE WAY" by SAM COOKE & THE SOUL STIRRERS rises up...

43

EXT. TYDELL RUFFIN PARK - DAY 3

43

SLOW-MOTION MOURNERS dressed in LIME GREEN walk towards the gate of the park. FLOATING PORTRAITS of our MASKED MOURNERS interrogate the camera. PIMPS, PROSTITUTES, COWBOYS, ELDERS and SAINTS have showed up and showed out for their Mayor.

GOD'S EYE VIEW of a tricked-out gold F & G HEARSE, replete with rims and flashing lights, rolling up to the wrought iron gates. REVELERS walk lock-step beside it, wearing GRAFFITTI-SPRAYED WHITE HOODIES with Mayor's Ruffin visage, his gold-tooth a' gleaming.

Mayor Ruffin's ragamuffin sons the TRIFLING SIX -- CHESTER (40s), TINY (40s), TIGER (30s), TYDELL JR (30s), TYDELL JR JR (18), and PATAVIOUS (1) -- get out of the FAMILY CAR. They are decked out in lime-green suits and matching masks. Eloise is trying to line them all up for the procession but then she sees someone in the distance and her eyes smile. In the crowd, Andre sticks out like a sore thumb in his all-black. Eloise walks up and tucks a lime-green handkerchief in his breast pocket.

OVERHEAD SHOT as Andre takes his place around the gold coffin with Mayor Ruffin's sons.

44

INT. SAYLES' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 3

44

Ernestine sits "watching" the LOCAL NEWS BROADCAST of the Mayor's funeral. The living room door has been covered in a PLASTIC SHEET, meatpacking plant style.

ERNESTINE
(yelling)
Clifford, come watch this shit fuh
me.

From the other side of the plastic sheet.

UNCLE CLIFFORD (O.S.)
What shit you need fuh me to
watch?

A masked Uncle Clifford switches on in.

ERNESTINE
Do you see Mookie 'nem on Wid-
Heaux Row behind the casket?

Uncle Clifford comes to the screen and squints. She sees
FOUR WIDHEAUXS decked out in lime green behind the casket.

UNCLE CLIFFORD
(mask-muffled)
I see "'nem" but I'on see
Mookie...

ERNESTINE
Niggah, take that shit off 'round
me.

Exasperated, Uncle Clifford snatches off her mask.

UNCLE CLIFFORD
I'ON SEE MOOKIE!

Ernestine starts jumping up and down.

ERNESTINE
You know what that mean, don'tcha?

Uncle Clifford starts walking out--

UNCLE CLIFFORD
Mmmunh! MMUNH! Nope-NOPE-NOPE!

ERNESTINE
Come on Clifford! You know Mookie
was Tydell third babymama. She the
mama of Tiger and Patavious, and I
know the only reason why her ass
ain't there is cuz she busy
breaking her foot off up in a pot
of chitlins for the repast--

UNCLE CLIFFORD
So you want Rona to run up on my
ass at a repast?

ERNESTINE
Chile, you young, you ain't gone
catch it--

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Almost 40 ain't young: it's
tragic.

ERNESTINE

I'ma go my goddamn self then.

Ernestine gets up and starts "looking" for the keys.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

You bets set yo' lil' dried up
coochie down somewhere.

ERNESTINE

You know this Rona shit just a
excuse for crackers to keep
niggahs at home...

UNCLE CLIFFORD

They talkin' 'bout these vaccines--

ERNESTINE

Unh-unh, I'aint gettin' no shots.
Talkin' 'bout dried up coochie
thass gone have my coochie fall
OFF. #Tuskegee

Uncle Clifford sucks her teeth and turns back to see Andre
Watkins on the TV SCREEN.

ANDRE (ON TV)

There is often an unresolved
tension between who we are, who we
say we are, and who we want to
be... But my godfather Tydell
Marcelous Ruffin, Sr. never told a
lie that wasn't the truth.

45 EXT. TYDELL RUFFIN PARK - DAIS - DAY 3

45

Andre looks out into the sea of lime-green. A WIDE SHOT of
hundreds of mourners spaced out, paying their respects.

46 INT. SAYLES' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 3

46

ANDRE (ON TV)

What you saw was what you got.
Y'all know he'd call you a "bald-
headed hoe in a minute.

Ernestine chuckles despite herself.

ERNESTINE

Sho'll did.

47

EXT. TYDELL RUFFIN PARK - DAIS - DAY 3

47

ANDRE

...and he'd end a compliment *and* a
insult with his favorite word...

ALL

"Niggggahhhh..."

The entire group LAUGHS.

ANDRE

Y'all know him! You didn't need to be his blood for him to be a father to you. That's why, despite the times, you all stand here today to honor not only his memory but his legacy...

48 INT. SAYLES' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 3

48

SLOW PUSH IN on Uncle Clifford taking in the oratory skill of Andre Watkins, Esquire.

ERNESTINE (O.S.)

Niggah, is you gone go steal me that plate of chitlins or what?!?!?

49 INT. KEYSHAWN & DERRICK'S DUPLEX - KIDS' ROOM - DAY 3

49

Derrick is changing Regal. He goes to the DIAPER CONTAINER. Comes up short. Just then Keyshawn pops her head in.

DERRICK

That's weird. I feel like I just bought some Pampers...

KEYSHAWN

Since Regal been weant, that Similac been making her runny. I'll go to the sto--

DERRICK

No, I'll go.

He starts to go get his keys. She starts thinking quickly.

KEYSHAWN

But... but... I need to go get some
(lowers her voice)
Tampons.

DERRICK

But it's not the fourth, yet.

Goddamnit, Derrick!

KEYSHAWN

It will be...

Derrick squints his eyes, she flashes her mega-watt smile.

DERRICK
(a smile)
Ok. Bring me back a pack of Coors
Lite, will yuh?

He exits the room. She breathes a sigh of relief.

GIDGET (PRE-LAP)
I miss my biiiiiiiitch.

50

INT./EXT. KEYSHAWN & DERRICK'S PRIUS - DAY 3

50

Keyshawn and Gidget are on FACETIME while Keyshawn is driving through traffic and pulling into a parking lot. Gidget's face wearing a pink ski mask fills the frame.

KEYSHAWN
Wait, why the fuck you gotta a ski mask on fuh? Ain't Arizona full of deserts?

GIDGET (ON FACETIME)
But it ain't dry biiiiitttch.
Keyshawn, the clubs are liiive out heeere.

KEYSHAWN
Who you go out there with?

GIDGET (ON FACETIME)
These bitches: Moon, Hennessy, and Charmin.

KEYSHAWN
What they real names?

GIDGET (ON FACETIME)
Keyshawn, stop. I'm too high to retain that type of information right now.

Keyshawn parks.

KEYSHAWN
So you really don't know these heaux do you?

GIDGET (ON FACETIME)
The one thing I do know is we copping baaaags! And you need to come.

51 EXT. THE DOLLAH STO' - PARKING LOT - DAY 3

51

Keyshawn gets out of her car. SLAMS the PRIUS door.

KEYSHAWN

You know I can't.

Keyshawn walks towards the entrance as she continues to talk. While Gidget speaks, Keyshawn remembers she forgot her mask. She pivots back to the car, then pivots back towards the entrance, then to the car again, until she decides: *Oh fuck it.* She moves towards the entrance.

GIDGET (ON FACETIME)

(rolling eyes)

Fuckin' Derrick...

KEYSHAWN

(defensive AF)

Uhhhhhhh, me and Derrick have actually been, like, good... *rulll* good.

Gidget bores holes in her from Arizona. Beat.

KEYSHAWN (CONT'D)

Bitch, whu? We have.

(lyin' ass)

Fact, he said he wanted to watch the kids while I go out and "get some air"--

GIDGET (ON FACETIME)

So a bitch headin' to the Dollah Sto'?

KEYSHAWN (ON FACETIME)

Yas cuz a bitch need them Moon Pies to get through this pandemy.

GIDGET (ON FACETIME)

(a beat)

My mama loved Moon Pies...

KEYSHAWN

(fuck!)

I'm so sorry about Deanna, Gidge.

GIDGET (ON FACETIME)
(crying)
It's all Duffy fault. That motherfucker said he was gone marry me. I was always like, "where my ring? Where my mu'fuckin' rinng?" Instead I find a bitch *NuvaRing* in the fucking cab of his truck--

DIAMOND (O.S.)
I said go and get your fucking mask. You can't come inside the Dollah Sto' without some kinda face covering--

KEYSHAWN
Wait, Gidge, I can't hear you...

GIDGET (ON FACETIME)
THAT'S WHERE HE GOT IT FROM! Then had the nerve to say he got it from me. The fuckin' nerve of this motherfucker! HE KILT MY MAMA!!

DIAMOND (O.S.)
I don't know how many times I got to tell y'all folks, put a fuckin' mask on before you come up in my mufuckin' sto'.

Keyshawn finally sees what all the commotion is about. It's DIAMOND working security. Suited up in a SPACE AGE VYZR air-purifying shield, he's got a MASK-LESS GUY hemmed up against the wall. Finally, Diamond sees her.

KEYSHAWN
Gidge, I'm hure-- I gotta go--

POOR GUY
Okay, okay, okay!!!

Stunned, Keyshawn hangs up. A surprised Diamond is staring right at Keyshawn.

KEYSHAWN
Diamond...

A long ass beat.

DIAMOND
Where's your mask?

KEYSHAWN
I... was just running into the store quickfast.

DIAMOND
Can't let you in without a mask. Dollah Sto' Rules.

He points to a sign. "NO Mask, No Entry."

KEYSHAWN
But I need Pampers for Regal and Moon Pies for... me...

CLOSE ON Diamond's dagger-heavy eyes. He stares her down.
Long... hard...

KEYSHAWN (CONT'D)
Diamond, it all happened so
fast...

DIAMOND
You know what--not hure.

KEYSHAWN
Then when? I haven't seen you
since...

A beat. He looks the other way. She tears up.

KEYSHAWN (CONT'D)
I can't tell you how much I think
about... that night...
I was just trying to make it all
stop, Diamond, I just wanted it
all...
(tears pouring)
...to fucking stop.

He looks at her pitifully. Like he wants to hold her.

DIAMOND
(softly)
Get outta here, Keyshawn.

KEYSHAWN
Diamond, I'm tryna 'pologize--

DIAMOND
Well, I'm straight...

A shift. Keyshawn, angrily wipes away her tears.

KEYSHAWN
Can you imagine if you woulda
killed Derrick that night, hmph?
Where you would be?

DIAMOND
(simmering)
Keyshawn, get the fuck outta here
and go back to yuh redneck
babydaddy.
(shdh remembering)
"Guttah niggers..." He call *me*
that, I wonder what he call *you*.

KEYSHAWN
(stunned)
He would never say THAT.

DIAMOND
Why you think I tried to kill him?
(yelling at a customer)
Ay, maine, say maine, where yuh
mask at maine?!?!??

Diamond walks off to accost yet another MASK-LESS CUSTOMER,
a bit too roughly.

DIAMOND (CONT'D)
Come on, foo'.

Diamond scares this guy off, too. Meanwhile, Keyshawn takes
the CARNELIAN NECKLACE off from around her neck.

KEYSHAWN
Diamond...

Keyshawn holds it out for him to take. Beat.

DIAMOND
Naw, ain't got no need fuh
something that don't work.

Diamond takes his place as a space age centurion at the
Dollah Sto'. An embarrassed Keyshawn then turns to walk
back towards her car.

52

EXT. RUFFIN'S "TRAPHOUSE" - FRONT PORCH - DAY 3

52

A smoking yet uncomfortable Andre, with a mask hugging his
chin, is out on the porch trying to keep his distance from
folks as they steady stay coming up to him. He is
surrounded by five of The Trifling Six, who are chomping
down on their repast plates.

TYDELL JR.
You 6'5" and you ain't play no
basketball?

ANDRE
I mean, I play NBA Live...

Tiny, who is really fucking short, looks up at him
disgusted.

TINY
All that tall. Wasted.

TYDELL JR. JR.

Mkay Morehouse/Georgetown what you doing nanh?

ANDRE

Uggggh, you know... waiting for the world to stop wobbling I suppose.

UNCLE CLIFFORD (O.S.)

Don't wait too long, cuz the world steady stay wobblin', chile.

ALL

AayyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyyeEEEE. Uncle Clifford!!!

CHESTER

Awww, heyell. This 'fit bussin', niggah.

They all turn to take in a second coming. Uncle Clifford has shown up and shown the fuck out. Her lime-green PIMP suit and FUR hat floats atop a wavy blonde concoction. But it's her designer lime-green face shield/sunglasses that are giving us LIFE!!!!

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Hey, Chester! Hey, Tydell Jr.! Tydell Jr. Jr. done got bigger than Tydell Jr. Hey, Tiny and Tiger. Where the baby at?

MOOKIE steps outside the kitchen door.

MOOKIE

Patavious in the back with his bitch-ass step-babymama.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

MOOKIE!

(digging into her purse)

Now, you know why I'm here fuh, heiffa.

Uncle Clifford passes Mookie some tupperware with some aluminum foil to cover.

MOOKIE

Fuck you, Clifford.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Condolences, bitch. I'll be right hure waiting for my tuppa-wure...

Uncle Clifford parks herself by Andre.

UNCLE CLIFFORD (CONT'D)
Is he really dead tho? Cuz that
casket on TV sho'll was closed--

ANDRE
Why are you really here, Clifford?

UNCLE CLIFFORD
I just wanted to make sho' I ain't
got nothin' to worry about no mo'.
You know since you and yo'
gawdaddy tried to push my club
into a early grave.

ANDRE
Is it *your* club or Hailey's?

UNCLE CLIFFORD
Me and huh... partnahs, nanh.

ANDRE
Well, then you ain't got nothing
to worry about. 'Sides I don't
even work for Promised Land
anymore. Got laid off soon as the
virus hit--

WAYNE KYLE (O.S.)
Good day, gentleman.

They all turn around to see a mask-less Wayne Muthafuckin'
Kyle standing there. They are stunned at the white boy
audacity on full display.

WAYNE KYLE (CONT'D)
I just wanted to stop by and
express my condolences about the
passing of y'all's father. He was
a great man.

TYDELL JR. JR.
He was aight.

Tydell Jr. hits Tydell Jr. Jr. upside the head. Wayne Kyle
shifts to Andre, who is mean-mugging the mess out of him.

WAYNE KYLE
That was one helluva speech you
gave back there. If I ain't know
it, I'd think you had Reverend
along with that Esquire title in
yuh name.

A PHOTOG SNAPS a picture just in time to capture the fake smiles.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Congratulations *Interim* Mayor Kyle. Who woulda thunk Lil' Wayne would someday become the Mayor of Chucalissa.

WAYNE KYLE

I do not wear this crown lightly. The people will have to, of course, confirm me in the upcoming special election.

(a chuckle)

Might be easy since I'm only running against myself.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Well, I might have to throw this hure hat up into the rang, cuz I know how to rock a heavy crown, chile. I got all them signatures to force this casino vote, I wonder how many votes I'd get if I put my name on that thur mayoral ballot?

WAYNE KYLE

That was truly some savvy organizing there, Clifford.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

Well the Mayor of Pussy Valley always gets thangs done. Word on the streets me and Pastor Woodbine's little-casinah-referendum-that-could gone be right under yo name. I wonder how the people gone vote on that?

WAYNE KYLE

Well, it's something that Mayor Ruffin wanted and I'm committed to honoring his legacy. 'Fact, I think the good folks of Chucalissa will show us that they too wanna bring prosperity back to this town.

UNCLE CLIFFORD

I'm all for branging prosperity, Interim Mayor Kyle, I just like it when that shit shared.

Just then, Mookie arrives back with the chitlins.

UNCLE CLIFFORD (CONT'D)

Oooop! Gotta go. Granmuva
Ernestine belly can't stand no
cold chitlins, nanh. Thank ya,
Mookie! Good day, y'all.

Uncle Clifford prances off, leaving Andre and Wayne alone
in front of the porch.

WAYNE KYLE

I meant what I said, Andre. I will
do everything in my power to honor
your godfather's legacy--

ANDRE

Or will you do everything within
your power to uphold your
supremacy?

WAYNE KYLE

Look... I know last time you were
here, tempers flared a bit. As I'm
sure you're well aware of, family
business can be a fraught affair.
I'll always be grateful that you
tried to help us Kyle boys put a
band-aid over some old wounds.

ANDRE

(with grit)

If that's what you call a band-aid
I don't wanna stand in front of
yo' bullets. Good day, Wayne.

Andre throws his cigarette down at Mayor Kyle's feet before
heading back inside the house.

53

INT. KEYSHAWN & DERRICK'S DUPLEX - BEDROOM - NIGHT 3

53

Moonlight spills in from them window, finding the face of a
troubled Keyshawn. She's in bed with Derrick. Even in his
sleep, he's overbearing. She tries to pull from his
embrace, but he wraps his arm tighter around her chest,
like a snake suffocating its prey. She angles her legs off
the bed and somehow slides out from under his embrace.
Trying not to wake him, she allows gravity to weigh down
her legs, sliding softly onto the ground. She peeks her
head up to check if he's still asleep. He continues to
snore softly.

CUT TO:

54 INT. KEYSHAWN & DERRICK'S DUPLEX - KEYSHAWN'S ROOM - NIGHT 54
 3

Eating Lucky Charms, Keyshawn scrolls through her posts on her phone. Seeing the likes and the comments. Good and bad. She stops on one in particular. "She aight for a dark bitch." It embeds itself into her self-esteem like a parasite. Suddenly, she hears a CRY...

55 INT. KEYSHAWN & DERRICK'S DUPLEX - KIDS' ROOM - NIGHT 3 55

Keyshawn shuffles in with a BOTTLE in her hand. She gives it to the baby, who throws it to the ground.

KEYSHAWN

You mad you can't get these
titties no mo'? You mad you can't
get this titty milk? You'll be
aight.

Keyshawn climbs into the crib with her babygirl, plops the bottle into her mouth, and she lays there staring into her baby's ocean eyes.

KEYSHAWN (CONT'D)

Once upon a time, there was a lil'
girl with rulll pretty hair. Long
hair, like yo' hair gone be,
Regal. But this lil' girl wanted
it longer. See, she was on
punishment and her mama had locked
her up in her room. She didn't
have time to let it grow. So she
had her sister go to the beauty
supply to get her some bundles.
She braided it up in her hair,
making it so long, it fell like
ropes to the ground...

As Keyshawn tells the story, Regal's eyes grow heavy as she falls asleep. The moonlight shines on both of their stunning faces like a spotlight from God.

MACRO CLOSE ON Regal reaching for Diamond's CARNELIAN NECKLACE, charged by the moonlight. Keyshawn is shaken. Tears start sliding from Keyshawn's eyes.

OVERHEAD SHOT as Keyshawn gently cries herself to sleep.

56

INT. RUFFIN'S "TRAPHOUSE" - FRONT ROOM - NIGHT 3

56

A HAND comes into frame to scoop the last paper plate of leftovers from a coffee table into a plastic bag.

MOOKIE

That should be all of it.

ANDRE

Thanks for the letting me stay. I feel so bad, but all the motels in town were shut down...

MOOKIE

Chile, don't worry 'bout all that. Don't na'an one of us stay over here in this house no mo'. Allus been done moved out of Pussy Valley. But something about this neighborhood just wouldn't let Tydell go...

Tiger comes into the front room with his little brother, Patavious, asleep, slung across his shoulder.

MOOKIE (CONT'D)

Tiger, gone put yo' lil' brother in his car seat.

GUNSHOTS pop-off. Andre stops while Mookie 'nem keep on moving towards the SCREEN DOOR.

ANDRE

Is that a--

TIGER

AR-15... makin' that midnight mursic.

ANDRE

(scared)
Good ear.

TIGER

Night-night, niggah.

And they're gone. Andre turns back to the living room and walks around. He goes to the OLD TV. He touches the antennae. It feels like a museum to the hood past. He goes to a bunch of VIDEO CASSETTE tapes. He picks one up. Goes to the TV and is about to put it in--

KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK. KNOCK.

Andre runs back to the door.

ANDRE
Y'all forgot...
(seeing)
...something...

57 EXT. RUFFIN'S "TRAPHOUSE" - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT 3

57

Andre looks down and clocks TWO STACKS of cash on the front porch. He looks to find a mask-less CORBIN KYLE, one of the Kyle brothers, standing at the bottom of the porch.

ANDRE
What is this?

CORBIN
A retainer.

ANDRE
A retainer? For...?

CORBIN
If this casino referendum go
through, Promised Land still gone
need them that waterfront property-
-

ANDRE
One: who's running to a casino in
the middle of a raging pandemic *if*
they build? And Two: Clifford
Sayles ain't selling.

CORBIN
But the *new* owner might.

Corbin puts on his hat and starts walking down the road.

CORBIN (CONT'D)
See you at the Pynk.

Andre bends down and picks up the money.

58 INT. MERCEDES' HOUSE - LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN - NIGHT 3

58

Mercedes and Autumn are on the couch side by side, watching "WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT" on TV. However, Mercedes is hate-scrolling on KEYSHAWN'S INSTA. Her life looks stunning, the frames are perfection...

ANGELA BASSETT (V.O.)
"Don't start with me Ike! I ain't
in the mood today, alright?"

AUTUMN

Put your phone down--this is the
best part!!

MERCEDES

Bitch, do you know how many times
we done seen't this shit?

Mercedes pops back to her Insta feed, continues to scroll
and stops on an ADVERTISEMENT: "AUDITIONS FOR THE PYNK."

CLOSE ON Mercedes eyes frozen.

LAURENCE FISHBURNE (V.O.)

"Don't ever! Talk! To me! Like
that! Again! You hear me?"

Mercedes contemplates what to do as she stares at the
phone.

AUTUMN (O.S.)

Here it comes, here it comes!

Mercedes looks at Autumn.

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

(reciting)

"That your best shot? You can't do
no better than that?"

Suddenly, Mercedes phone CRASHES behind Autumn's head--

AUTUMN (CONT'D)

What the fucccccckkk?!?!?!?

MERCEDES

Bitch, really? Really? You gone up
and have auditions after I told
you explicitly not to? Really,
bitch?

AUTUMN

I'm trying to make the best
decisions for the club--

MERCEDES

You already had six dancers
splitting the pot on a strip-thru
that burely got customers. Now
that it's time for us to get back
in the building you want us to be
jackin' over a pot of chitlins?

AUTUMN
We need more girls--

MERCEDES

We don't know where these bitches
gone be rollin' in from. We done
already boxed with Rona once, I
ain't doin' that shit again!

AUTUMN

We'll all just have to mask up.
Which we should be doing anyway.

MERCEDES

You know damn well, the only folks
we done been around is each other.

AUTUMN

We don't know where any of these
people lay their heads--

MERCEDES

You keep on, yo' ass ain't gone
have nowhere to lay yo' head--

AUTUMN

JESUS-FUCKING-CHRIST!!! I am
trying my best to keep the water
out of the fucking boat,
Mercedes!! When I bought this
club, I didn't plan on being hit
with a fucking PANDEMIC, so excuse
me for actually getting us this
far. For giving you ungrateful
bitches a place to fucking DANCE!

A breath.

MERCEDES

So what Uncle Clifford say 'bout
allathis?

AUTUMN

It doesn't matter. I'm the owner.
Not Uncle Clifford.

Mercedes nods and shuffles to the fridge for a snack.

MERCEDES

Asssarightsa bawse-uh. You wantsa
somes lemonades before you goes
to beds-uh?

Autumn blinks ruuuuuuull slow. Mercedes slurps her
lemonade.

MERCEDES (CONT'D)
Good-fucking-night.

Mercedes walks to her bedroom. Humming a Negro spiritual...

MERCEDES (O.S.) (CONT'D)
"Wade in the wattttteeeeer. Waaaade
in the water chirrrrunn. Wade..."

OFF Autumn's surly face.

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INT. LIL' MURDA'S TRAPHOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 3

59

A text from Keyshawn: "Let's call it the Dirty Dozen Tour.
12 cities, 12 nights..."

A smile spreads across Lil' Murda's face. He starts to text
her back, but decides to leave her on "Read."

Lil' Murda goes back to listening to his in-progress TRACK.
There's still something missing... He picks up his
cigarette lighter and taps out a beat, filling it, adding
the layers, stacking his dream up to the sky.

END OF EPISODE