

THIS IS WORKING

Written by

K.C. Scott

kurt.c.scott@gmail.com
Twitter.com/BlackSitcomDad

FADE IN

INT. ELEGANT SAN FRANCISCO APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY

It's morning. BYRON (African-American, chubby, 30s) sits at a kitchen table in his bathrobe, sketching with COLORED PENCILS.

He's just begun a drawing of a HUMMINGBIRD. The detail is remarkable. He's very good at this.

His girlfriend, JANE (Chinese-American) sets a bowl of berries beside him.

Byron takes a long, sad look at the berries...

BYRON
Think I could have a waffle?

JANE
You had a waffle on Sunday.

BYRON
What if it's buckwheat?

JANE
Byron.

BYRON
What if I make it myself?

JANE
(more sternly)
Byron.

He goes back to drawing.

BYRON
I know. Sorry.

INT. JANE'S CAR - DAY

Jane drives. Byron's in the passenger seat, still drawing. They're both dressed for work.

JANE
Sure there's nothing you want me to take a peek at before later?

BYRON
No thanks.

They arrive at a TALL OFFICE BUILDING in DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO. Jane pulls over to the curb. They kiss goodbye. Byron hops out and heads over to the front of the building.

Before heading inside, he waves to Jane.

Jane waves back.

Byron enters the building.

Jane drives off.

Once she's gone, Byron exits the building and scampers up the street.

INT. BUSY DINER - DAY

Byron is now at a BOOTH, once again drawing.

In the next booth sits AMANDA (White, 30s), who is in her own world, until she catches a glimpse of Byron's drawing: a gory rendering of a PRAYING MANTIS removing a HUMMINGBIRD'S WING.

She recoils, disturbed. But can't help leaning in for another look.

Just then a WAITRESS (White, perky) arrives to take Byron's order.

WAITRESS

There he is!

BYRON

Hey Carol.

WAITRESS

What can I getcha?

BYRON

Um. A waffle please.

The Waitress casts a suspicious look.

WAITRESS

Hold on a sec'.

She steps out of earshot to confer with two other WAITRESSES. After a minute she returns to the booth.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

Chrissy says you had a waffle last Thursday?

BYRON

I guess so.

WAITRESS

We talked about this, honey.

BYRON

I know, I just have a big morning
at work and --

WAITRESS

Diabetes is the #1 killer of
African-American men in their
thirties. You gotta take this stuff
seriously.

BYRON

Sure but --

WAITRESS

I'll make you a nice low-fat yogurt
parfait.

BYRON

Okay.

Amanda decides to intervene. She has a thick BOSTON ACCENT.

AMANDA

Just give him the waffle.

WAITRESS

Excuse me?

AMANDA

He wants a waffle, so give him a
waffle.

WAITRESS

If you don't mind, I'm talking to
my friend here.

Amanda rolls her eyes.

AMANDA

You're not friends.

WAITRESS

(challenging)
Are we friends, Byron?

Byron isn't exactly convincing when put on the spot.

BYRON

Sure. When you see me, you say "Hey Byron." And then I say "Hey Carol."

WAITRESS

See?

AMANDA

Totally.

WAITRESS

As your friend, I think you should have a parfait.

BYRON

I'm not sure a parfait has anything to do with friendship.

AMANDA

Sure it does. I'm a stranger and I just undermined her. Now you have to order the parfait out of loyalty. That's what a "friend" would do.

WAITRESS

So can I get you that parfait?

AMANDA

Or do want the one fucking thing you came here for... a waffle.

After a tortured beat, Byron renders his decision.

BYRON

Thing is, Carol, I just have a really big morning at work.

DINER - LATER

Byron finishes his waffle. Leaves a twenty on the table, heads for the door.

Amanda, noticing Byron leave, follows him out onto the street.

EXT. BUSY DOWNTOWN SAN FRANCISCO STREET - DAY

Amanda chases Byron down.

AMANDA

Do you have diabetes?

BYRON

No...

AMANDA

Because I'm not responsible if you lose a foot or something.

BYRON

I'm not going to lose a foot.

AMANDA

Then why do you let Katy Perry ration your starches?

BYRON

I have a problem with impulse control, so people help me.

AMANDA

You have to be careful with giving people that kind of authority. They enjoy it, take it too far. It's the origin story of every dictator from Chiang Kai-shek to Papa Doc.

BYRON

Papa Doc?

AMANDA

Baby Doc's father. What were you drawing back there?

BYRON

That? Something for work.

AMANDA

You're an illustrator?

BYRON

I work in marketing for a eco-friendly pet supply start-up.

AMANDA

Why do they have you drawing bloody hummingbirds and shit?

BYRON

Well, my company sells hummingbird feeders...

AMANDA

Right.

BYRON

...And the problem with just about all commercial hummingbird feeders, ours included, is that they give safe harbor to predators...

AMANDA

Faster.

BYRON

Faster?

AMANDA

We're almost at my stop. Explain faster.

BYRON

...If a hummingbird feeder is left out long enough, praying mantii and rats and fire ants crawl into the feeders and lay in wait to attack the birds. So a disposable feeder is the only responsible feeder, ecologically speaking. Only problem is that they're prohibitively expensive, which is a challenge for us in marketing.

AMANDA

I'll ask again. Why are you drawing bloody hummingbirds?

BYRON

Consumers need to visualize what happens when you use a conventional feed--

AMANDA

This is me.

She points to a coffee shop.

BYRON

You work here?

AMANDA

I work in here. I'm a programmer. Freelance.

BYRON

Oh. How long have you been --

AMANDA

Nobody wants to see little birds
being torn to shreds, man. It's
unseemly. Scrap that idea.

BYRON

I can't exactly --

AMANDA

Just scrap it.
(ducking into coffee shop)
Good talking. Hope you enjoyed the
waffle.

She enters the coffee shop, leaving Byron feeling like he's
been hit by a tornado.

INT. PET CORP - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

In this swank conference room overlooking Market Street, we
join Byron's meeting with his team of THREE MARKETING
ANALYSTS, each roughly 25 years-old.

FEMALE ANALYST

The praying mantis angle's
fantastic, Byron.

BYRON

You don't think it's... unseemly?

FEMALE ANALYST

Seriously, dude? It's heart-
wrenching. My heart is wrenched
over here.

BYRON

Adam?

MALE ANALYST

Incredible. I'd use the B word, but
I'd feel silly stating the obvious.

BYRON

Rosa?

Rosa (Mexican-American, cute) is Byron's right hand. And
unlike these sycophants, her opinion carries weight, so the
long beat she takes to answer is agonizing.

ROSA

It's good.

BYRON
 (horrified)
 "Good?"

ROSA
 Yes. It's good.

BYRON
 What does "good" mean?

ROSA
 It's clear, it's impactful...

BYRON
 But...

ROSA
 It falls a tad short on appeal.

Byron buries his face in his hands, which sends the other analysts into damage control mode.

FEMALE ANALYST
 Byron, don't listen to her...

MALE ANALYST
 Fine. I'll say it. The B word is brilliant.

FEMALE ANALYST
 We got what the B word was. But thank you for clearing up that bit of mystery.

MALE ANALYST
 Some of us don't like throwing around superlatives!

FEMALE ANALYST
 You mean the S word?

BYRON
 (to Rosa)
 I need you to rate this campaign on a scale of 1 to 10.

ROSA
 Byron...

BYRON
 Just please. Rate it.

ROSA
 It's a solid 8.

How devastating. This immediately sets Byron into panic.

BYRON
We have to scrap it.

ROSA
We can't scrap it. The meeting's in four hours.

BYRON
So we'll postpone.

Rosa leans in. Time for some tough love.

ROSA
Byron. You've already postponed twice this quarter. It won't look good.

BYRON
Well I'm not going in there with an 8!

MALE ANALYST
Honestly? I'd give it a 9.6, and you know I'm loath to give out anything higher than a --

BYRON
(shrieking)
Shut the fuck up!

He's losing it. Time for a break.

ROSA
Why don't we take 10, guys?

That's the sycophants cue to leave the room, so they do.

BYRON
Sorry about that.

ROSA
It's OK.

BYRON
I know I'm a pill.

ROSA
You're not a pill, Byron. But the problem is, convincing Pete to let us postpone again would require a monumental feat of persuasion.

Byron nods. It hurts but she's right. But suddenly, he has an idea that drags him from the depths of artistic masochism.

He grabs his colored pencils and notebook, and begins to sketch.

BYRON

I need you to do me a favor.

INT. CROWDED COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Amid a sea of TIGHTLY PACKED TABLES sits Amanda, donning HEADPHONES and hammering out code on her LAPTOP.

She's listening to rap. Rick Ross specifically. We can hear the music. She raps along when Kanye's verse comes up.

MUSIC UP: Rick Ross' "Sanctified"

AMANDA AND KANYE

"Niggas be loving the old 'Ye,
They sayin' that 'Ye that nigga be
Spazzin,
But when Ali turn up and be Ali you
can't ever take that nigga back to
Cassius."

Now we get a WIDE SHOT of the coffee shop, WITHOUT MUSIC, where 30 PATRONS watch in horror as Amanda, white girl, drops multiple a capella n-bombs.

One of those present is Rosa. She glances at the SHEET OF PAPER in her hands. Shuts her eyes. Sighs deeply. Amanda is who she's been sent to find.

She approaches Amanda's table and waves to get her attention.

ROSA

Excuse me.

Amanda takes off the headphones.

AMANDA

Yo.

ROSA

Did you have breakfast at Al's
Diner this morning?

AMANDA

Who's asking?

ROSA
And did you meet a 34 year-old
black man? Looks like a scruffy
Colin Powell?

AMANDA
I'd have said a chubby Basquiat.
Who's asking?

ROSA
He'd like you to come to our office
at 26 Market Street.

AMANDA
Why?

ROSA
He needs your help.

AMANDA
With what?

ROSA
(exasperated)
I don't know.

AMANDA
This is how people get kidnapped on
"24." No thank you.

ROSA
Fine.

Rosa turns to leave.

AMANDA
Hold on. How did you know who I
was?

Rosa tosses her the sheet of paper, and departs.

With a scowl on her face, Amanda inspects the paper -- it's a
very detailed COLORED PENCIL DRAWING of her scowling face.

INT. 12TH FLOOR - CONFERENCE ROOM

SUPER: Pre-Meeting with V.P. of the Aviary Division

Byron, Rosa, and the analysts are huddled around a table,
meeting with the Divisional VP PETE - who is, absurdly, 22
years old.

In walks Amanda, escorted into the room by a SECURITY GUARD.

Byron quickly gets up from the table and meets her by the door. They speak in hushed tones as he gets her up to speed.

BYRON
Thanks for coming.

AMANDA
What is this?

BYRON
The Mary A. Delaney room. It's named after the inventor of the retractable leash.

AMANDA
I mean why am I here?

BYRON
Oh right.
(fast and nervous)
The hummingbird campaign that I described to you is in a delicate place. We can either move forward with a so-so idea at this afternoon's Director's meeting, which would gut me on as a professional and an artist... or we could ask for a postponement. The problem is that we don't have the cache to ask for a postponement because I postpone liberally.

AMANDA
So what do you want from me?

BYRON
I need you to get us that postponement.

AMANDA
How?

BYRON
By convincing Pete the campaign is terrible.

AMANDA
The campaign is terrible.

BYRON
Great. Tell Pete.

AMANDA
Why me?

BYRON

You don't have a filter. People respect that here.

AMANDA

Fuck you, I absolutely have a filter. My insights are more refined than most and I don't see why I should hide that.

BYRON

Great. Tell Pete.

AMANDA

Who's Pete?

BYRON

Our VP. Guy in the green shirt.

Amanda glances at Pete.

AMANDA

That pencil dick's a VP?!

BYRON

It's a start-up. I'm the oldest employee by ten years. Listen, here's your story: I brought you in as a consultant. You're here to put some meat on the campaign. What's your name?

AMANDA

Amanda.

BYRON

Help me Amanda. You're my only hope.

Byron drags a bewildered Amanda over to the table.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Everyone, this is Amanda. She's our consultant.

Pete rises to shake her hand.

PET

You hired a consultant. Smart.

AMANDA

Well you know Byron. He's a smart guy.

PETE
 Kidding me? Byron's awesome. Look
 at him, he's like a big-boned
 Drake. I love this guy!

He noogies Byron. How demeaning.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

As Pete inspects the POSTERBOARDS with Byron's drawings,
 Byron, Amanda, Rosa and the Analysts inspect Pete.

PETE
 So a part of me feels like this is
 great. And another part of me feels
 like it's... maybe not great. What
 do you guys think?

ROSA
 I think it's ready to go.

PETE
 Wonder twins?

FEMALE AND MALE ANALYST
 It's great.

PETE
 Amanda?

Byron shoots her a look. HELP ME.

AMANDA
 No.

PETE
 No?

AMANDA
 It's crap.

PETE
 You've run metrics on this?

AMANDA
 I could show you ten different
 metrics that prove it's crap, and
 half an hour later you'd know what
 I just told you: it's crap.

Rosa doesn't like where this is going, and she doesn't like
 Amanda.

ROSA
 Maybe we should see those numbers
 anyway.

PETE
 No, I believe her. She's spitting
 hot fire like a young Steve Jobs
 and I dig it. So what now?

BYRON
 We should probably postpone.

PETE
 Again? How many times would that be
 this quarter, Rosa?

ROSA
 Three times.

PETE
 That won't look good.
 (paces the room)
 Shit shit shit shit. I don't know
 what to do. It doesn't feel like
 there's a solution here. What do we
 do? I don't know what to do.

AMANDA
 Just come up with a new campaign
 this morning.

Rosa laughs, the analysts laugh, and so does Pete. Everyone
 but Byron, who knows enough about Amanda, at this point, to
 realize she isn't kidding -- which horrifies him.

PETE
 You're serious?

AMANDA
 Yep.

PETE
 Just come up with a new campaign
 today?

AMANDA
 Sure.

PETE
 What makes you think they can do
 that?

AMANDA
 I dunno. They look pretty smart.

Pete claps his hands.

PETE
Well I guess we're about to see.

BYRON
Pete, you honestly can't expect --

PETE
Duress is a great motivator. This
is how the iPod was invented!

As he departs...

PETE (CONT'D)
Three hours to save some
hummingbirds, folks!

The Creatives stare at Amanda like she's an alien. A
malicious, traitorous alien.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - DAY

As Byron PUKES his guts out beside a dumpster, Rosa rubs his
back in loving circles.

ROSA
It'll be fine, Byron.

BYRON
The meeting starts in two hours!

ROSA
Actually, one of the directors had
a conflict, so they bumped it up.
The meeting starts in 90 minutes.

Byron pukes again. Amanda bursts through the back door.

AMANDA
There you are. You realize the
meeting starts in two hours?

ROSA
What are you still doing here?

AMANDA
The security guard said you guys
get catered lunch from Panera.
Figured I'd stick around for that.

Byron pukes again.

ROSA
We have work to do. Please leave.

AMANDA
Why don't you head inside and let me try?

ROSA
Absolutely not.

AMANDA
No offense, but you're not a wartime consigliere.

ROSA
A wartime what?

AMANDA
Are you too young to have seen The Godfather?

ROSA
I've seen episodes...

AMANDA
For Christ's sake.

BYRON
I'm OK, Rosa. You should probably...
(vomits)
...get the team working.

ROSA
(to Byron)
In 10 minutes, I'm hosing you down and dragging you back into that conference room.

Rosa heads inside. Amanda crouches beside Byron and surveys the carnage.

AMANDA
So much for that waffle.

BYRON
What's wrong with you? You were supposed to help me in there!

AMANDA
I wasn't helpful?

BYRON
I asked you to get me a
postponement!

AMANDA
Right...

BYRON
This is the opposite of a
postponement!

Amanda sizes him up.

AMANDA
What do you want to do with your
life, Byron?

BYRON
Huh?

AMANDA
What's your thing? Because I don't
think it's selling pet toys and
working for teenagers.

BYRON
Jesus, I don't have time for--

AMANDA
Humor me.

Sigh. One more go-round on the Amanda-coaster.

BYRON
I like to paint.

AMANDA
See. Painting's cool.

BYRON
But I'm not going to up and become
a painter.

AMANDA
Become a painter? God no. That's
asinine.

Ouch.

BYRON
So what's your point?

AMANDA

Having something you love... means you get to care less about the stuff you don't love. You seem like you have a lot to offer. Just break them off a little piece of it.

She then heads inside, leaving Byron alone with his panic.

INT. BYRON'S OFFICE - LATER

Byron sits at his desk, head in hands.

No ideas. None at all. 40 minutes until the meeting.

He shuts his notebook. Shuts his eyes. Kicks his feet on his desk. The ship is sinking. May as well find a comfortable deck chair...

He reopens his eyes. He's ready to let the sea swallow him whole - when a gaggle of CANADIAN GEESE fly by the window. He watches them. Man, to travel so light...

Wait a minute. INSPIRATION. He pulls out a notebook and writes furiously, fueled by Amanda's advice: "You have a lot to offer... just break them off a piece..."

INT. EXECUTIVE BOARD ROOM - DAY

SUPER: THE DIRECTORS' MEETING

A gaggle of YOUNG, AMERICAN APPAREL-CLAD VPs file in around the meeting gable. THE MIDDLE MANAGERS sit in chairs on the outskirts of the room.

Byron takes a seat on the outskirts.

Amanda enters a moment later and takes the seat beside him.

BYRON

You're still here.

AMANDA

This whole thing has me hooked. It's like Basketball Wives... I know it's trash but I can't stop watching.

WOMAN (O.S.)

All right, everyone...

ANGLE ON the head of the table to reveal that The EXECUTIVE V.P., the one convening this meeting, is, Byron's girlfriend Jane.

JANE
Aviary Division, let's start with you.

Byron removes a hummingbird feeder from beneath his chair.

BYRON
This is a disposable hummingbird feeder.

JANE
How disposable?

BYRON
It lasts 5 days.

JANE
What's the price point?

BYRON
\$39.99.

Gasps from the room.

JANE
How many units are we bought into?

BYRON
4,500.

That's a big number. Not what Jane wanted to hear.

JANE
Let me get this straight. We're sitting on 4,500 units of a 40 dollar feeder that lasts 5 days?

BYRON
Yes.

Looks of discomfort exchanged all around the room.

PETE
Maybe we ought to move to the parakeet campaign. We have these wonderful cuttlebones made out of 100% beach debris --

BYRON

(interrupting)

Hummingbirds migrate. In autumn they travel from upstate New York to the Mid-Atlantic, all the way down to the Florida Keys. They only stay in one place for a few days, which means you only need a feeder for a few days.

JANE

That doesn't mean I want to throw the feeder away when they're gone. I'll put it in the garage until next year.

BYRON

Unless you're also migrating.

JANE

Sorry?

BYRON

What if you were travelling and needed to pack light?

JANE

Byron, I don't follow --

BYRON

Snowbirds. Canadians. Weather turns cold, they head South --

RANDOM DIRECTOR

You mean like this meeting?

More snickers.

BYRON

I mean like Canadians. But along the way they want to experience America. The food. The people. The wildlife. But they don't want souvenirs because the car's already packed with enough bathing suits and cabana shirts to last the winter.

JANE

So we give them a hummingbird feeder they can hang on the hotel balcony for a couple days, and then trash it?

BYRON

Exactly.

JANE

But you can't predict when and where migration's going to happen.

BYRON

No you can't.

JANE

So how do we get the product where it needs to be in time?

AMANADA

Rapid deployments.

All eyes turn to Amanda.

JANE

It's not worth the truck fuel to send a handful of feeders to a store.

AMANDA

It is if we package them with shit Canadians like.

Amanada seizes the projector, connects her laptop to it, and with a few key strokes, BAM! A glorious MAP of the EASTERN SEABOARD appears on the projector screen, complete with a lattice of TRUCKING ROUTES.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

We assemble rapid deployments of snowbird items. Souvenir shirts...

Byron catches on...

BYRON

Beef jerky...

AMANDA

Maple syrup...

BYRON

Ketchup chips...

AMANDA

You get the picture.

JANE

This sounds expensive.

BYRON

We're in the innovation business.
Sometimes the price to find out if
something's possible is the best
money you can spend.

The room holds its breath while Jane thinks it over.

She smiles.

JANE

Do it. OK, let's talk parakeets...

Byron and Amanda exchange a look of utter disbelief.

INT. HALLWAY - LATER

The meeting's over. Amanda waits outside the doorway as the attendees file out. She's waiting for Byron.

Byron steps out of the room. Their eyes light up, and they're about to come together to celebrate their triumph... when Jane steps out of the conference room and approaches Byron.

We watch them talk INAUDIBLY from Amanda's perspective. Jane's smiling. She's clearly happy with the meeting.

Her pinky and ring finger intertwine with Byron's pinky and ring finger. The gesture only lasts a second, but it's long enough for Amanda to get it: they're together.

Amanda nods to herself. So it goes.

Eventually, Jane moves on. Amanda approaches.

AMANDA

You're dating your boss.

BYRON

She's my boss's boss.

AMANDA

You are something else.

BYRON

I'll have you know we were dating
before that happened.

AMANDA

She got promoted above you?

BYRON

No, she hired me.

AMANDA

You are really something else.

(beat)

Anyway, we just rocked that meeting so hard that if she wasn't boning you before, she'd wanna bone you now. Grab your shit. We're cutting out early. And we're gonna get drunk.

BYRON

Yes!

AMANDA

And high.

But then he remembers...

BYRON

Oh no...

AMANDA

Ugh. Of course you're a square.

BYRON

No, I just remembered I have plans with Jane...

AMANDA

Your boss?

BYRON

My girlfriend, primarily.

AMANDA

Byron, as a friend... And after the trials we just faced, that's what I consider us... friends... I'm going to impart some advice... skip that shit.

BYRON

I have a better idea.

INT. A TRENDY MISSION DISTRICT LOUNGE - VIP SECTION - NIGHT

JANE and three of her younger, stiletto-clad COUSINS from the suburbs sip bottle-service champagne on a mock leather couch. The cousins look bored.

Byron, looks like a fish out of water, but is eager to make the best of it.

BYRON
Anyone wanna dance?

The Cousins are ambivalent.

COUSIN #1
It's kind of early.

COUSIN #2
Super early.

BYRON
It's 11:30...

JANE
They want to want to dance with
dudes their own age, Byron.

BYRON
I'm only four years older than they
are.

COUSINS #1
But you play older.

COUSIN #3
Not in a bad way.

COUSIN #1
No, in an adorable way. You're like
Alvin.

BYRON
The chipmunk?

COUSIN #1
The brother-in-law on the Cosby
Show.

As Byron absorbs that body blow, in walks Amanda, woefully under-dressed in jeans and an EAZY-E T-SHIRT. Byron is excited to see her.

BYRON
Amanda!

AMANDA
Hey buddy.

They don't know whether to hug or shake, so they pound fists. Awkwardly.

BYRON

Amanda, this is Jane and her
cousins Grace, Faith, and Yunjue.

AMANDA

They threw in a Yunjue. Cool.

BYRON

Jane, you remember Amanda.

JANE

The rock star from data!

AMANDA

Sorry, I was on time, but the
bouncer almost didn't let me in. I
didn't know there was a dress code.

JANE

Don't worry about it.
(mock whisper)
I didn't even want to come here.

COUSIN #1

Shut up. This place rocks.

JANE

It's very bridge and tunnel. Or
whatever they call bridge and
tunnel in SF. Bridge and bridge.

AMANDA

(to Jane)

Where are the big titty shot girls?
Places like this always have --

Right on cue, a SHOT GIRL happens by. Amanda snatches a
couple blue concoctions of her tray and hands one to Jane.
They raise glasses and drink.

EXT. CLUB - ALLEY - LATER

Our party smokes cigarettes, everyone a little drunker.

COUSIN #1

We should have gone out in Oakland.
These dudes act like they wanna
hook up, but they don't really
wanna hook up.

COUSIN #2

I thought tech guys liked Asians?

JANE

That's just Zuckerberg.

AMANDA

No, it's all of them. But they like a certain kind of Asian.

BYRON

(urging caution)

Amanda.

But there's no stopping her.

AMANDA

They like the "my parents are Hong Kong financiers so I can afford to live in a \$3,5000 a month studio in the Mission while I study visual arts at SF State and hit underground drum 'n' bass parties" kind of Asian. Not the "I grew up in Vallejo and work as a marketing assistant at Abercrombie & Fitch, and oh-my-God my 7 uncles would kill me if I dated a white boy, which is why I gotta date a white boy" kind of Asian.

Stunned silence from the cousins.

COUSIN #1

Did this bitch just call us Vallej-hoes?

COUSIN #3

You are totally Vallej-hoes.

This prompts playful bickering.

JANE

(to Byron)

Hon', I left my jacket inside. Mind grabbing it?

BYRON

Sure.

Once he leaves, Jane takes the opportunity to pull Amanda aside for a chat full of woozy, drunken honesty.

JANE

Byron said you gave him a big lift before the meeting today.

AMANDA

Oh I just --

JANE

His exact words were, "She was a Warrior Princess." That's what he said.

AMANDA

He's exaggerating.

JANE

He's not confident. You know? But he's passionate and smart and vulnerable...

AMANDA

Yeah he seems --

JANE

And so much work.

AMANDA

Oh.

JANE

I do my best to make him see he has the tools to do really do well for himself if he pulls it all together...

AMANDA

Well, it's obvious he adores you.

JANE

Is it obvious?

AMANDA

I mean. Sure.

Jane clasps Amanda's shoulder, a gesture that doesn't feel entirely genuine.

JANE

Thanks for helping him earlier. It was nice to have someone else tag in for a bit.

This strikes Amanda as a weird thing for her to say.

Fortunately, Byron returns with Jane's jacket.

JANE (CONT'D)

Let's go inside and dance, By'.

BYRON
I just waited in line for your
jacket...

COUSIN #1 (O.S.)
Are we dancing?

JANE
We're dancing.

BYRON
Gimme a minute, I'm right behind
you.

Jane and the Cousins head inside, leaving Byron and Amanda
alone.

AMANDA
I like her.

BYRON
That's a lie. You haven't made up
your mind, but you're leaning
thumbs down.

AMANDA
(busted)
Liking people is so much about
context. You know?

BYRON
So you meet someone at a cheesy Top
40s club...

AMANDA
Thumbs down, probably.

BYRON
But if you were to meet her at
say...

Amanda has to think about this one.

AMANDA
A Biggie & Tupac national tour...

BYRON
So if Biggie and Tupac were to come
back to life, bury the very feud
that was responsible for their
deaths in the first place, and then
put on a concert, you would like my
girlfriend if you met her in the
audience?

AMANDA
Definitely.

BYRON
That's nice...

AMANADA
Sorry, I don't mean to be a bitch.
If you vouch for her that's enough
for me.

BYRON
If I vouch for her? She's my
girlfriend!

AMANDA
Not the same thing. Definitely not
the same thing.

Byron fishes in his pocket for something...

BYRON
See, I had a treat for you.
(it's a joint)
But I don't know if I'm in the
sharing mood anymore.

AMANDA
Oh my God. Am I dreaming?

Lighting it, smoking it, passing it...

BYRON
We're gonna smoke this, and then go
inside and dance to Bruno Mars or
whatever the hell, because it's
Jane's birthday and I'm duty bound.
And as my guest you're duty bound
too.

AMANDA
Yes sir, captain sir!
(smoking)
This is fantastic, B.

BYRON
You like it?

Amanda pulls FEBREEZE from her pocket and sprays them both
down.

AMANDA
Oh yeah. My compliments to the
chef.

INT. CLUB - DANCE FLOOR

Jane, the Cousins, Amanda, and Byron have formed a dance circle. Everyone's drunk, everyone's happy. Byron enters the middle and starts to Pop 'N' Lock.

We didn't know Byron could Pop 'N' Lock.

INT. BYRON'S OFFICE - DAY

The following morning, Byron is leaned back in his chair, hungover, an ICE PACK over his eyes, when...

ROSA
(in doorway)
Knock knock.

BYRON
Hey Rosa.

ROSA
Pete wants to see you in his office.

BYRON
He does?

ROSA
Amanda too.

BYRON
I'll let her know.
(Rosa leaves)
You hear that?

Amanda emerges from under a blanket of POSTERBOARD on Byron's COUCH.

AMANDA
We're hitting the omelette bar first.

INT. PETE'S OFFICE

Amanda and Pete are in the two chairs opposite Pete. Amanda's eating an omelette. They have no idea what this is about, and Pete builds the suspense by just staring at them.

PETE
You're being promoted.

The news immediately throws Byron into a stupor.

BYRON
Promoted to what?

PETE
Director.

BYRON
Jesus.

PETE
And Amanda's getting hired on.

AMANDA
I am?

PETE
You are.

BYRON
Jesus.

PETE
You both you put on a show yesterday, and there's an appetite within the organization for fresh ideas, so here we are. Amanda, you're going to run a team here in San Francisco. Byron, you'll open an office in Oakland.

AMANDA
Sorry holmes. Traditional employment isn't my thing.

PETE
No?

Pete writes a figure on a notepad.

AMANDA
I'm strictly freelance. A free-range chicken if you will. So while I appreciate the---

He slides the notepad across his desk.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Holy... are we sharing... this is our salary to share?

PETE
Apiece.

She taps Byron on the shoulder, urging him to snap out of his stupor and look at the offer, to no avail.

BYRON
Oakland?

INT. BAR - AFTER WORK - DAY

Byron, Amanda and Rosa commiserate at a dive in the Mission. Byron is still in a stupor.

BYRON
I don't want to be a Director.

ROSA
This will be good for you, Byron.

AMANDA
Frankly, I don't think it's ethical to throw that kind of money at someone. Especially someone who's already happy doing what they do. I freelance. That's who I am.

BYRON
I really don't want to be a Director.

ROSA
Maybe it'd be easier if you two worked out of the same office?

AMANDA
How the fuck would that help?

ROSA
You obviously enjoy working together. I mean, you just met yesterday morning, how many hours have you spent apart since then?

Uncomfortable with this observation, Byron and Amanda lean ever so slightly away from one another.

ROSA (CONT'D)
Anyway, this is a huge vote of confidence. Take a night to think about it, and, you know, celebrate a little.

INT. TRAMPOLINE DODGEBALL ARENA - NIGHT

Byron and Amanda walk through the arena, which is lousy with 5TH GRADERS and their parent CHAPERONES.

BYRON

This is how you celebrate?

AMANDA

It'll be the perfect release. We'll have the perspective we need after we beat up on some kids for half an hour.

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER

A heated match rages. On one side are a cadre of 11 YEAR-OLD BOYS. On the other: Byron and Amanda, sweating through their work clothes, clutching their knees, on the brink of death.

AMANDA

Maybe... we shouldn't have done this after drinking.

BYRON

Maybe we shouldn't have done this after 30...

AMANDA

I'm dying, Byron. I'm really dying. Are you there? I can't see nothin'...

He takes her hand.

BYRON

I'm here.

AMANDA

Tell me what's happening.

BYRON

They're getting into some kind of attack formation.

The 5th graders are indeed circling.

AMANDA

Oh God. Listen. It's up to you now. If this is the end, make it glorious.

SLOW MOTION: A dodgeball rolls near Byron's feet. A chance for heroism. He picks it up. Eyes the fifth graders. Takes a RUNNING start. Cocks the ball. LEAPS for a final strike...

But once he's airborne, a 5th grader bullets a ball right into his gut, sending Byron CRASHING to the mat in REAL TIME, where he VOMITS on impact.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

ANGLE ON BACK SEAT

Where Byron is laid up and passed out drunk.

ANGLE ON FRONT SEAT

Where Jane is driving, visibly annoyed.

INT. BYRON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

An old episode of THUNDERCATS plays on the television.

ON BYRON

Asleep on the couch, a warm rag on his forehead. As Lion-O and Mumra clash, he stirs awake, disoriented.

ON THE COFFEE TABLE

A half-eaten bowl of chicken soup. Alka Seltzer. Glass of water. He's been well taken care of.

There's also a Thundercats Blu-Ray case. Not one of Byron's. He grabs it and stumbles into the

KITCHEN

Where Jane is julienning vegetables, her back to him. She hears Byron enter but doesn't turn around.

BYRON

Hi.

She ignores him.

BYRON (CONT'D)

I'm sorry I got sick.

JANE

People who get drunk and vomit at children's play facilities don't get to use that word.

Byron nods. Better to concede that one.

BYRON

When did you get this Thundercats disc? It was my favorite growing up.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Actually, your favorite was She-Ra, but they didn't have it at Best Buy.

Byron startles. He didn't realize someone was behind him. And it's not just anyone. It's...

BYRON

Mom.

URLINA BAILEY (60s) is Jamaican and stately - a woman who loves suits and shawls - with the carriage to make anywhere she sits, even this Ikea chair, look like a throne.

BYRON (CONT'D)

What are you doing here?

JANE

I asked her to come.

BYRON

Why?

URLINA

Please sit, Byron.

Byron reluctantly abides, and Jane takes the seat beside him.

JANE

We need to talk.

BYRON

About what?

JANE

About Amanda.

BYRON

Amanda my colleague?

JANE
Amanda the single woman in your
peer group with boundary issues.

BYRON
We just worked on a project
together...

JANE
And that project turned into
clubbing with my cousins, and then
happy hour, and then laser tag --

BYRON
Trampoline dodgeball...

JANE
Fine. Trampoline dodgeball.

URLINA
You're doing so well, Byron. We
just don't want to see you --

JANE
Distracted.

BYRON
I'm 35 years-old. I can handle
having a job and a friend!

URLINA
Of course you can...

BYRON
Thank you!

URLINA
Within the confines of certain
rules.

BYRON
Rules?

Jane takes a deep breath. She wishes this weren't necessary,
but alas...

JANE
For every time you and Amanda hang
out alone, we have to hang out as a
group. Her. You. Me. At minimum.

URLINA
Invite your brothers to the city,
Byron. They'd like that.

JANE

And no spontaneity. I need two hours' notice before you see her outside of work.

BYRON

This is oppressive. There's no other word for it.

JANE

This is an adult relationship.

She rises from the table, kisses him on the forehead.

JANE (CONT'D)

Go shower and put on sweatpants. Dinner's in fifteen.

INT. BAY AREA RAPID TRANSIT (BART) - MORNING

This eastbound car is sardined with morning commuters. Byron's one of them.

INT. OAKLAND LOCATION - BYRON'S OFFICE - DAY

Byron sits at his desk and surveys the room. Bare walls. BOXES yet to be unpacked. His first day in an office he didn't ask for, in a job he didn't want.

He rises, moves to the WINDOW. A view of an industrial West Oakland street. There isn't a soul about. It's tranquil. Appealing.

A HOMELESS WOMAN enters the frame. She's picking weeds from the cracks in the concrete. It's like an organic form of city beautification. The thought makes Byron smile.

He reaches for a pen and pad and begins to sketch her.

But no sooner than he begins does the woman pull down her pants and take a DOODOO in the middle of the sidewalk. Byron sets down his pen and pad. So much for that.

INT. SAN FRANCISCO OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Amanda sits at the head of a long table, hammering out code on her laptop, oblivious to the surrounding world.

ROSA (O.S.)

Amanda?

AMANDA

What?

WIDE SHOT of the table. Rosa and the Wonder Twins - Byron's old team - are also sitting at the table.

ROSA

We should start the meeting.

AMANDA

Don't let me stop you.

She goes back to typing, but soon realizes that they're still staring at her.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

What now?

ROSA

The agenda usually leads the meeting.

AMANDA

Fine.

(slams laptop shut)

What do you want to talk about?

ROSA

Well, this is our weekly check-in. We usually talk about what we worked on last week. After that, we talk about what we're going to work on next week.

After a long beat, Amanda freaks out and flees the table.

INT. BYRON'S OFFICE

Byron's cell rings. He picks up quickly, anxious for distraction.

INTERCUT TIGHT SHOTS ON BYRON AND AMANDA

BYRON

Hey.

AMANDA

They're so needy. It's like you've been feeding them Similac and now they're staring greedily at my tits.

BYRON
They'll learn you and you'll learn
them. How's Rosa?

AMANDA
She's like a fascist Dora the
Explorer.

BYRON
Tell her I said hi?

AMANDA
Ya sure whatever. Listen, I'm
coming out to Oakland and we're
having lunch.

He remembers Jane's rules.

BYRON
Lunch is bad today.

AMANDA
Fuck you. Happy hour?

BYRON
Maybe another time. Stuff's busy.
Hey, you should take your team out
for lunch.

AMANDA
Ew, they are such creatures, Byron!

BYRON
It'd be a nice gesture.

AMANDA
Fine!

She hangs up, frustrated, and turns to face the analysts,
whom we now see were privy to the entire conversation... and
are horrified.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
You guys have lunch plans?

INT. BYRON'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Byron and Jane are reading in bed.

JANE
Are you painting in the morning?

BYRON

I think so.

JANE

That's good. You should keep your schedule up even with everything going on at work.

A long silence as they continue reading.

JANE (CONT'D)

Should we call it a night then?

BYRON

Sure.

She clicks off her bedside lamp. He clicks off his.

BEDROOM - DAWN

The clock reads 5:30 am.

ON JANE

Asleep in bed.

ON BYRON'S SIDE OF THE BED

Which is empty.

INT. BYRON'S STUDIO

Byron's painting a desert landscape. He's putting the finishing touches on a PURPLE FLOWER, which grows on a CACTUS, which is surrounded by miles of dusty nothingness.

He reaches a point where he isn't finished, but halted. He stares at the painting for a long time. Puzzling over something.

INT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAWN

Amanda's asleep in bed when she hears a hard knock from somewhere in the apartment.

LIVING ROOM

She shuffles to the FRONT DOOR in her PJs, and opens it. It's Byron, wearing a dorky bicycle helmet.

BYRON

I was up and painting when I had these chest pains. At first I was gonna go to urgent care but I came here instead.

AMANDA

(confused)

I don't have any medical provisions.

BYRON

I know, I just -- can I come in?

He rolls his bicycle into the apartment before she can respond.

BYRON (CONT'D)

This is your place.

AMANDA

Yeah. How did --

BYRON

I had Rosa look it up.

AMANDA

Of course.

BYRON

Yeah.

Byron removes his helmet and sets it on the coffee table, then sits on the couch, settling in.

AMANDA

You want a glass of orange juice?

BYRON

Orange juice is good for your heart, right?

AMANDA

Probably not if you've already had a heart attack. But it's from the farmer's market, so it tastes good.

BYRON

OK.

She goes to the kitchen, and returns moments later with a glass of juice. She sits beside him on the couch.

AMANDA

Byron?

BYRON

You want to know why I'm here.

AMANDA

Kinda.

BYRON

I was painting this morning when my chest began to hurt.

AMANDA

You mentioned.

BYRON

And I took an inventory of the possible reasons. Was it something I ate? Jane was at book club last night, so I made PB&J for dinner. White bread, granted --

AMANDA

So it wasn't something you ate.

BYRON

And then I thought maybe it was stress. I have a new job...

AMANDA

More responsibility...

BYRON

A longer commute...

AMANDA

Sure.

BYRON

But I did some reading, and adding 20 minutes to your commute, in terms of impact to quality of life..

AMANDA

It's not much.

BYRON

No, it's not much. So finally I thought maybe...

Amanda's heard enough.

She GRABS him.

KISSES him.

HARD.

AMANDA
Maybe you missed me.

It takes a long time for Byron to answer. Thoughts swirling... So much to reconcile.

BYRON
It's only been two days since I saw you.

AMANDA
A long two days...

BYRON
And I've only known you for four!

AMANDA
Which should matter...

BYRON
It should!

Byron KISSES Amanda this time.

AMANDA
I don't have the stamina to do this conversation all at once.

BYRON
No.

AMANDA
We need a break.

BYRON
Yes.

AMANDA
Are you hungry?

INT. AL'S DINER - DAY

Amanda and Byron are in a booth, devouring two giant waffles.

Carol the Waitress arrives to top of their coffee. She gives them both a dirty look before moving on to another table.

Amanda and Byron eat in silence, unsure of what to say, until...

AMANDA

Can I propose something?

BYRON

Please.

AMANDA

We should just speak our minds. Lay it out. If we retreat from what happened at the apartment, we could spend weeks fighting our way back to a conversation about what we really want.

BYRON

I want us to live together. And quit our jobs.

AMANDA

(stunned)

Live together?

BYRON

And quit our jobs. Is that crazy?

AMANDA

Tell me more about the first thing.

BYRON

They're kinda tied together.

AMANDA

How?

BYRON

I want to see you all the time without any obligation to be apart.

AMANDA

Stop. I should know something about you. Anything. Tell me anything.

BYRON

My father passed away ten years ago. I have two older brothers who live at home with my mother. And until eight months ago I lived there too.

Amanda SLAPS the table as an expression of disbelief.

AMANDA
You lived at home until eight
months ago?!

BYRON
Yeah.

AMANDA
And then you went to work for your
girlfriend?

BYRON
Yeah.

AMANDA
Are you and your brothers
developmental?

BYRON
They're attorneys for the federal
government. I don't know what I am.
(beat)
What about you?

AMANDA
What about me?

BYRON
Do you have family?

AMANDA
No parents. Both dead.

BYRON
Siblings?

AMANDA
Nope.

A silence. Then Byron pivots...

BYRON
What's your favorite color?

AMANDA
What you said before... I think I
want that too.

BYRON
What did I say?

AMANDA

We would live together. And quit our jobs.

BYRON

Oh. Good.

AMANDA

Tell me about the quitting our jobs thing.

Byron gets excited.

BYRON

I haven't figured it out totally... I just feel like we activate each other... and it's an incredible feeling... and if we keep feeding it and feeding it we can do anything we want... and if we can do anything we want, why wouldn't we do exactly what we want?

AMANDA

I agree.

BYRON

You do?

AMANDA

Entirely.

BYRON

So what do we want to do?

The million dollar question. After a long silence, they realize neither has a clue.

AMANDA

We'll figure that out later. In the meantime we'll live off savings.

A conspicuous silence from Byron.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

You do have savings, right?

BYRON

Yes.

AMANDA

A lot or a little?

BYRON
I don't know.

AMANDA
You don't know how much you have saved?

BYRON
I find money intimidating, so I kinda just ignore it.

INT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Amanda and Byron sit before Amanda's state-of-the-art, three-monitor computer set-up. Amanda's at the controls.

AMANDA
What's your bank?

BYRON
(uncertain)
Bank of the US.

AMANDA
Bank of America or US Bank?

BYRON
I'm not sure.

AMANDA
Look at your debit card, hon'.

Byron peeks into his wallet.

BYRON
Bank of America.

Amanda navigates to the Bank of America website.

AMANDA
Password retrieval. Favorite food?

BYRON
Jamaican jerk chicken.

AMANDA
Favorite teacher?

BYRON
Ms. Ongena. 2nd grade.

AMANDA
Don't need the grade. City of
birth?

BYRON
Orinda.

AMANDA
OK we're in.
(a long beat)
Hey Byron?

BYRON
Yeah?

AMANDA
Why do you have six hundred and
eighty seven thousand dollars in a
savings account?

BYRON
(embarrassed)
Is it supposed to be somewhere
else?

AMANDA
No. I mean... Yes, probably... But
my question is, why do you have six
hundred and eighty seven thousand
dollars anywhere?

BYRON
My dad was a moderately successful
venture capitalist...

AMANADA
Wow.

BYRON
...And when he died, my mom used
the inheritance to become a wildly
successful venture capitalist.

This amuses Amanda.

AMANDA
So you're a trust fund kid.

BYRON
No... I just get a certain amount
of money from my family every five
years.

AMANDA

You just described a trust fund.

BYRON

OK fine. What does any of this mean? Like in real life?

AMANDA

I think it means you can afford to quit your job.

ON THE COUCH - LATER

Having downsized to an IPAD, Byron and Amanda scan apartment listings.

AMANDA

All these apartments are so expensive.

BYRON

But I have a lot of money. You just said.

AMANDA

We're creative upstarts with drive and scrap. We shouldn't dull our instincts by living like spoiled millennials.

BYRON

Maybe we should move to the country. Get a dog. And some olive trees.

AMANDA

Or...

(an epiphany!)

We could move to Oakland! Tell me about Oakland, Byron.

BYRON

I saw a woman doodoo in the street.

AMANDA

What else?

BYRON

It's nicer than I expected, actually. There's more space... Fewer people... Better weather..

(MORE)

BYRON (CONT'D)

I found a cafe up the street from
the office with fantastic
paninis... It's got everything.

Amanda digs it.

AMANDA

Oakland.

BYRON

Oakland!

INT. BART CAR - DAY

There's darkness just outside the train car window as we RUSH
through a tunnel.

Seconds later the train car BURSTS into a bright urban
landscape: A shipyard. Cranes. Old warehouses. Graffiti.

The sign above the approaching platform let's us know: This
is West Oakland.

Amanda and Byron rock contentedly in their seats. He reaches
for her hand. She allows it to be held.

INT. LOFT APARTMENT - DAY

An open house teaming with PROSPECTIVE TENANTS, mostly young
artsy types, white.

The apartment is airy, beautiful, with big bay windows
overlooking downtown Oakland. Amanda and Byron conference
quietly in the corner.

AMANDA

It's gorgeous. That's not even a
word I use.

(says again with funny
accent)

Gorgeous.

BYRON

I know.

AMANDA

Is this our place?

BYRON

I think this is our place.

AMANDA

Let me handle the agent.

BYRON

Try not to...

AMANDA

Overwhelm her?

BYRON

Yeah.

AMANDA

I know I can be rough. But right now I feel focused and powerful and just need to go with it.

Byron nods, releasing Amanda to her errand.

From where he stands, we watch her cross the room to the LEASING AGENT, who's chatting with another couple.

Amanda butts in and leads the Agent away by the arm. The agent is irked, at first, but she seems to soften as Amanda talks.

Finally, they shake hands.

The Agent immediately begins to funnel the other couples out of the loft. Open house is over.

Amanda returns to Byron, quite satisfied with herself.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Lease starts tomorrow.

BYRON

What?! What did you say to her?

AMANDA

I told her we'd pay two hundred more than she's asking, and that I'd replace her agency's crap website with something that looks like an adult designed it.

In a cloud of happiness, Byron drifts into non-sequitor.

BYRON

There's a lake nearby. Do you wanna go to the lake? I wanna go to the lake.

AMANDA

I would love to go to the lake with
you.

MUSIC UP: SOMETHING HAPPY

EXT. LAKE MERRIT - ABOARD PADDLE BOAT

Amanda paddles. Byron sits in the 'passenger seat', braiding
her hair, a JOINT hanging from his lips.

ON THE SHORE

Byron lays out in the grass as Amanda paces and talks
animatedly.

CRAB SHACK

They sit at an outdoor picnic bench peeling CRAWFISH and
drinking BEER.

ROUGH NEIGHBORHOOD

They walk and talk outside a crowded schoolyard, holding
hands.

ON THE SETTING SUN

Which fills us with melancholy as this perfect day winds to a
close, and we find

BYRON AND AMANDA

Waiting atop the

EXT. BART PLATFORM - WEST OAKLAND STOP

As a train bound for San Francisco - i.e. REAL LIFE -
approaches.

EXT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

They linger by her front door.

BYRON

I have to go home.

AMANDA

What if you stay here and I explain
it to her?

BYRON

Now there's an idea.

AMANDA

I'm afraid you won't do it. That
you'll realize this whole day has
been ridiculous and that --

He kisses her. More reassuring than sexy.

BYRON

Right now I feel focused and
powerful and just need to go with
it.

She nods, and goes inside her building. Byron heads off to
deal with the unenviable task ahead.

INT. BYRON'S APARTMENT - FOYER - NIGHT

Byron opens the door tentatively, not feeling so powerful
after all.

BYRON

(calling out)
Hello?

He proceeds cautiously into the

KITCHEN

There's a pot of food simmering on the stove. She's home. He
continues to the

BACK PATIO

Where he finds Jane sitting on a bench, reading a book.

BYRON

Hi.

JANE

How was work?

He sits beside her on the bench.

BYRON
I didn't go to work today.

JANE
Where did you go?

BYRON
I was with Amanda...

JANE
You played hookie with Amanda?

Byron takes a deep breath. Here comes the doozie:

BYRON
I... rented an apartment with
Amanda.

Jane sets her book down. Takes a moment to process.

JANE
You're really doing this.

BYRON
It's complicated, and I'll try my
best to explain --

JANE
You'll explain why the thing you
swore wouldn't happen is happening.

BYRON
I'm sorry. I just --

JANE
And it's happening with that woman.
My goodness, Byron. She's
obnoxious. And mildly racist.

BYRON
She's not racist. She's peculiar in
a way that masks itself as other
social defects, including racism.

She places her hand on his.

JANE
Listen to me. There will always be
someone to tell you that you're
special and quirky and deserve more
than you have, and that if you burn
your life to the ground, you'll
have something new and better in
its place.

(MORE)

JANE (CONT'D)

But there are only so many of us who'll tell you the truth: you're a child, and there's nothing rare or special about children.

BYRON

A big part of me knows you're right. But...

JANE

You're still going to do this.

BYRON

I am.

After reconciling all she's heard...

JANE

I want you to leave tonight.

With that, she heads into the house.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

As Byron settles into bed, he flips channels on the TV. Serendipitously, MTV is playing a Tupac documentary.

He decides to watch that.

INT. PETCO - LOBBY - THE FOLLOWING MORNING

Byron, wearing a t-shirt and jeans, enters through the LOBBY DOOR and joins the line of employees waiting for the elevators.

PETE'S OFFICE

Pete is reading a memo when Byron knocks.

PETE

Byron. Aren't you due in Oakland?

BYRON

Can we talk for a minute?

HALLWAY OUTSIDE PETE'S OFFICE

WIDE SHOT of Pete and Byron shaking hands. Rosa approaches. Byron gives her the news. She clasps her hands to her mouth, and hugs him.

EXT. AMANDA'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

A MOVING TRUCK is double-parked out front. Amanda supervises as MOVERS carry her furniture out of the building.

AERIAL SHOT

Of Amanda's HATCHBACK cruising over the BAY BRIDGE.

INT. LOFT APARTMENT BUILDING - STAIRCASE - DAY

Carrying a heavy box, Amanda climbs the staircase to the third floor and reaches the

APARTMENTS'S FRONT DOOR

Here it is. Just three inches of cherrywood separating her from her new life.

In a fit of courage she pushes her way into the

LOFT APARTMENT

It's already filled with dozens of OIL PAINTINGS and COLLAGES leaned against the walls. Strange art. Disturbing art. Some of it makes the bloody hummingbird look like Disney.

Seeing Byron's work, all at once, overwhelms her. This is who he is. This is who she's chosen. And she feels fortunate.

The moment is broken by the WOOSH of a toilet flushing, followed by the HISS of an air-freshening aerosol can.

As Byron emerges from the bathroom, and is startled to find Amanda surveying his work.

BYRON
(startled)
You're here.

AMANDA
I'm here.

BYRON
Sorry, I'm gonna move all this out of here. I just haven't found a storage facility in Oakland yet.

AMANDA
Hang them on the walls.

BYRON
All of them?

AMANDA
Storage is expensive.

BYRON
It's only 30 bucks a mon--

She kisses him quickly on the mouth - partly to shut him up, and partly because she just needed to - and walks away.

EXT. OAKLAND - TELEGRAPH AVENUE - ART FESTIVAL - NIGHT

The FIRST FRIDAY street fair, an Oakland institution.

Five city blocks lined with ART BOOTHS, ETHNIC FOOD VENDORS and COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS peddling leaflets and cause celebre t-shirts.

The two streams of foot traffic, flowing in opposite directions, bulb around the music stages in the middle of the street (DJs, funk, prog rock.)

Amanda and Byron are in one of the currents, eating burritos.

They pass a teenager selling tallboys out of a cooler.

TEENAGER
Beer?

AMANDA
How much?

TEENAGER
Three bucks.

They buy a couple and keep walking. Once they're a few feet past him.

BYRON
That kid must have been fifteen!

AMANDA
Try not to think about it.

They pass a stand-up COMEDIAN on a makeshift stage, surrounded by an audience in three rows of folding chairs. He's in the middle of a rambling joke.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
(shouting to comedian)
You've been on this bit too long!

COMEDIAN
Honey, where you from?

AMANDA
Boston!

The crowd boos.

COMEDIAN
Guess that's why you're dressed
like the cast of the Big Bang
Theory, sponsored by Gap!

The crowd laughs.

AMANDA
And you look like Hannibal Burress
with syphilis!

The crowd boos.

BYRON
OK, run.

AMANDA
What? I thought that was decent.

BYRON
It was. But still, run.

They walk away briskly.

ON AMANDA

Asleep in bed.

INT. LOFT APARTMENT

It's the following morning. She's roused awake by a light
SCRATCHING SOUND coming from the other side of the apartment.
She looks at the alarm clock. 6:17 am. Jesus.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Byron is listening to music and painting when a groggy Amanda
approaches.

BYRON
Did I wake you?

AMANDA
I have an idea.

BYRON
Yeah?

AMANDA
When you finish. We'll go for a walk.

EXT. DOWNTOWN OAKLAND - MORNING

BROADWAY AVENUE is a ghost town on weekend mornings, except for the HOMELESS camping in doorways and HIPSTERS bike-of-shaming back to West Oakland. And this morning, Byron and Amanda out on a walk.

BYRON
It's so...

AMANDA
Desolate.

BYRON
But I like it. It's like the city's under Marshall Law or something.

AMANDA
That's a good thing?

BYRON
It's quaint.

Amanda takes Byron by the arm and steers him onto 14TH STREET.

AMANDA
This way.

BYRON
Where we going?

AMANDA
It won't make sense until I show you.

EXT. OAKLAND COURTHOUSE - MORNING

The courthouse, a massive stone building, is closed on weekends, and SKATERS have free reign of the stairs and rails to practice tricks.

Byron and Amanda watch the wheeled gymnastics from across the street.

BYRON
Is this it?

AMANDA
Yes.

BYRON
I don't understand.

AMANDA
Sh. Keep your eyes on him.

BYRON
Who?

AMANDA
The one standing at the top of the stairs.

A BOY (17) is at the top of the staircase, skateboard in hand, ready to make his descent.

Amanda pulls out her phone and calls up the picture she snapped this morning: Byron at work on his canvass.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Keep looking at the kid.

On her phone screen, Amanda zooms in until the shot is tight on Byron's painting. She then moves her face close to Byron's so their sight lines are aligned. Finally, she raises the phone screen into their sightline, placing the image of Byron's over the skater's chest.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
You see it?

BYRON
I see it.

AMANDA
Now close your eyes.

BYRON
OK...

AMANDA
Keep seeing it.

BYRON
OK...

AMANDA
Now open them.

When Byron opens his eyes, his painting of a HUMMINGBIRD is emblazoned on the skater's shirt.

The skater grinds down the stairs, and the hummingbird billows -- an unlikely, but somehow perfect, counter-cultural icon.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
I think we figured out what we're going to do with ourselves.

INT. AMANDA'S CAR - DAY

Amanda drives through North Oakland as Byron whines from the passenger seat.

BYRON
Don't you think this is a little premature?

AMANDA
Nope.

BYRON
But we need more time to think it through and plan and --

AMANDA
Punk out?

BYRON
Your motivational tactics are distressing. Anyone ever tell you that?

AMANDA
That's just your AOC acting up.

BYRON
AOC?

AMANDA
Adult onset cryabetes. Find us parking, will ya?

She pulls over, double parks...

BYRON
Amanda!

She hops out, shuts door in his face...

BYRON (CONT'D)
 (so alone)
 I don't know how to drive.

INT. MARTY'S PRINTING SERVICES

Byron enters this small shop - think Kinko's, but independent - to find Amanda already in the middle of a heated argument with the clerk, EMEKA (black, 20s).

AMANDA
 Why do you care what kind of t-shirts we use?

EMEKEA
 I don't care. So long as it's not American Apparel.

AMANDA
 What's wrong with American Apparel?

EMEKEA
 The CEO sexually harasses his models.

AMANDA
 What's that got to do with you?

EMEKA
 I'm a human being. That's what it's got to do with me.

AMANDA
 Ya know, when you say stuff like that, you should make sure there are at least three vaginas in the room to appreciate it.

Byron inserts himself...

BYRON
 Let's calm down, please.

EMEKA
 (noticing Byron)
 Y'all together?

AMANDA
 Yeah. This is my boyfriend. Does that change things?

EMEKA

Why would it change things? I called you anti-woman, not racist.

BYRON

Let's just try to work this out.
(to Amanda)
You want this supplier because --

AMANDA

The cotton's the softest out there. It's like a butterfly's whisper.

BYRON

(to Emeka)
And you object to this supplier because of --

EMEKA

Social rape.

BYRON

Can you recommend a supplier with equally soft cotton that doesn't rape... socially?

EMEKA

I can recommend several.

BYRON

And will you accept his recommendations?

AMANDA

I'll have to do some research. And field tests.

BYRON

Maybe we should call this progress and reconvene at another time.
(to Emeka)
Thank you, sir.

As they turn to leave, Emeka shouts after Amanda.

EMEKA

The way you engage people is distressing!

EXT. MARTY'S PRINTING SERVICES - DAY

They exit the building and start walk to the car.

AMANDA
 I think that went well.
 (notices car)
 What the...

The car is parked "ass out" to the street, front two wheels on the curb.

INT. LOFT APARTMENT - DAY

A mess of wood planks across the living room. The SOUND OF HAMMERING.

ON AMANDA

Who is on her hands and knees, building an art festival booth.

Byron is also hammering but is predictably terrible at it. His nail twists to the side instead of going straight into the 2 X 4.

Amanda stops what she's doing to watch him, amazed at his awkwardness, until she can't take it anymore.

AMANDA
 How about you go on a supply run?

BYRON
 But I want to help build the booth.

She ushers him to the door.

AMANDA
 You can help build the booth by not building the booth. Bring me a bag of three-inch nails, some caulk, and a large slurpee no grape.

BYRON
 Who doesn't like grape?

She pushes him out the door.

EXT. GRAND AVENUE - DAY

It's a beautiful day. GRAND AVE, one of Oakland's posh shopping streets, is teeming with people.

Byron rides his bike to his errands, in a mood so good it's contagious.

INT. ACE HARDWARE - DAY

Byron's just bought the 3-inch nails and caulk. The CASHIER waves goodbye as he walks out the door.

CASHIER
Good luck with the t-shirts!

BYRON
Thanks you!

INT. 7-11 - DAY

ON BYRON

Filling a SLURPEE CUP with every flavor except...

BYRON
(to himself)
No grape.

AT CHECKOUT

Byron's in mid-conversation with the CLERK:

CLERK
What about the profit margins?

BYRON
(cheerily)
We found a fantastic local supplier! The margins are incredible!

EXT. CLAY STREET - DAY

Byron is back on his bike and headed home. Supplies in his backpack. Slurpee in the bicycle's drink holder.

He's cruising along without a care in world when a BLACK BMW SUV rolls to a stop beside him.

Byron knows this SUV.

BYRON
Oh God no.

The driver rolls down the window...

URLINA

Hello Byron. You can put your bicycle in the trunk.

INT. SUV - DAY

Urlina drives. Byron is in the passenger seat, looking every bit the prisoner.

URLINA

Oakland of all places...

BYRON

I meant to call you.

URLINA

You quit your job, abandon that loyal and deeply tolerant girl, and you move to Oakland with a woman you've hardly known a week...

BYRON

You spoke to Jane?

URLINA

We're Jamaican, Byron. Not Bohemian.

BYRON

How's Jane, Ma?

URLINA

She's not your concern anymore. And you aren't hers.

BYRON

Jesus Christ, do always have to lay it on so thick? You act like I'm living in a heroin house.

URLINA

We're about to see about that.

It takes Byron a second to catch up, but once he realizes what Urlina's getting at...

BYRON

You can't come over now!

URLINA

You know the rules of the audit.

BYRON

It wouldn't be representative of
my--

URLINA

The audit is concerned with truth,
Byron. Not representation.

CUT TO:

INT. LOFT APARTMENT

MUSIC UP: Mystikal's "Y'all Ain't Ready Yet", a mid-90s hip
hop anthem.

CLOSE ON Amanda's cell phone, sitting on the coffee table. An
incoming text: "I'm coming back to the apartment with MY
MOTHER!!! PUT PANTS ON!!! SO SORRY!!!"

That phone may as well be on Mars -- the music's too loud and
ON AMANDA

is busy rolling a fat one.

CUT TO:

INT. BMW SUV

Byron keeps typing desperate texts.

Meanwhile, Urlina surveys the West Oakland streets, faintly
disgusted by a group of YOUNG BLACK MEN parlaying outside a
bodega.

URLINA

So much loitering.

CUT TO:

INT. LOFT APARTMENT

Amanda's now smoking a BLUNT as she sands down a wooden
plank.

CUT TO:

EXT. LOFT APARTMENT BUILDING

Byron and Urlina walk toward the building. Urlina stops once she reaches the front door. That's Byron's cue to open the door for her as a good son should. He reluctantly abides.

CUT TO:

INT. LOFT APARTMENT

Amanda bobs her head, anticipating her favorite verse:

MYSTIKAL

I'm getting tired of getting sick
and tired. Nigga, you got a problem
with me getting high...

She sings for the next line... just as Byron and his mother walk through the front door.

MYSTIKAL AND AMANDA

...suck a dick and die.

On "die", Amanda turns and sees Byron and his mother. She leaps to her feet. Mortified.

URLINA

Hello. I'm --

AMANDA

Byron's mother.

URLINA

You must be Amanda.

Amanda nods, still stricken with fear. Though dismayed by the scene she's stumbled on, Urlina's regality shows now cracks.

URLINA (CONT'D)

Do you have any wine in the
apartment, Amanda?

AMANDA

In the fridge...

URLINA

I'm going to pour myself a glass.
Would you like one?

AMANDA

Sure... Is it OK if I put on pants
first?

Urlina nods...

Amanda dashes behind the CHINESE SCREEN to dress herself...

Byron cracks a window and frantically waves weed smoke out the window...

LIVING ROOM - 5 MINUTES LATER

Byron and Amanda and Urlina sit on the couch. Tense. Silent. Urlina and Amanda's are locked, a showdown imminent.

Byron tries to break the ice.

BYRON

So Ma, Amanda is a programmer. And we're thinking about launching a --

URLINA

Is there somewhere you can go, Byron?

BYRON

Somewhere I can go?

URLINA

A library... A sporting club... A place you can occupy yourself without imminent threat to your person. I'd like to talk to Amanda.

He looks at Amanda. She nods: "It's OK. Go."

BYRON

There's a coffee shop on the corner...

URLINA

Wonderful.

BYRON

Can I grab anyone a latte or a --

AMANDA

Bye, Byron.

He slinks out of the apartment. And then there were two.

URLINA

Maybe it would be best if I told you how this works.

AMANDA

Maybe it would.

URLINA

I'll ask some lifestyle questions. Then we'll tour the apartment. Later, if we get this far, I may follow-up with a request for documentation. But first the questions.

AMANDA

Hit me.

URLINA

What do you do for a living?

AMANDA

Depends on the day.

URLINA

Today, for instance.

AMANDA

Today my job is to get high and hammer nails into wood.

Mother is taken aback by Amanda's nerve, but doesn't want to let on and lose her advantage.

URLINA

And tomorrow?

AMANDA

I'm still developing my work plan for tomorrow, but I'm pretty sure it involves smoking a doob.

URLINA

You're being flip because you don't know what's at stake.

AMANDA

You mean your money?

URLINA

He talked to you about money. A woman he's known a week.

AMANDA

He did.

URLINA

You must really be... something.

AMANDA

You mean in bed? I am. Not that Byron would know.

URLINA

Oh I know my son better than that. Sex isn't what gets him.

AMANDA

Well I'll bite. What turns your son on?

URLINA

Never doing anything real in life, and feeling fine about it because a woman says..."it's OK." It's OK to quit your job. It's OK to live off your dead father's money. Bonus points if she's spirited enough to stand up to his mother while he takes a walk around the block.

Amanda will need a strong counter if she's going to last the round.

AMANDA

You have a talent for reducing people. I bet most mistake that for wisdom.

URLINA

But not you...

AMANDA

Not me.

URLINA

You're too smart...

AMANDA

Smart enough to know a bully when I see one.

If we're resorting to insults, Urlina will be on her way.

URLINA

I don't think I'll need that tour after all.

She stands to leave.

AMANDA

You already raised him, Mrs. Bailey.

(MORE)

AMANDA (CONT'D)

If he does well out here in world, it'll be because of you. And if he fucks up - well, that'll be because of you, too. There's nothing more you can do to change the outcome, aside from make him feel helpless with your rules and your money and your... shawls and what not.

URLINA

It's easy to dismiss money when you have lots of it.

AMANDA

I imagine it is. But we don't need it. So you'll have to find another way for him to need you.

Humbled, Urlina lets herself out of the apartment.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Byron is sipping a latte, doodling on a sketch pad, when, through the coffee shop window, he sees Urlina walk briskly to her car.

INT. LOFT APARTMENT - FRONT DOOR

Byron enters cautiously, anticipating Amanda's anger. He finds her on the couch, gazing ruefully at her slurpee.

AMANDA

It melted.

Byron sits beside her on the couch.

BYRON

Amanda, I'm so sorr--

AMANDA

Don't say sorry. I just need you to say one thing: "No more."

Byron understand the significance.

BYRON

No more.

AMANDA

Like you mean it.

He takes her hand and looks her in the eye -- he means it.

BYRON

No more.

AMANDA

Now hand me those three-inch nails,
will ya?

EXT. ART FESTIVAL - NIGHT

Behold -- the ART BOOTH. Assembled. Glorious. Amanda and Byron take it in.

BYRON

That's a good looking booth.

AMANDA

Look, now that we're here, don't
call it a booth. It's a pop-up.

BYRON

Got it.

AMANDA

And if someone asks who made the t-
shirts, you say, "I am the
designer."

BYRON

OK.

AMANDA

The festival opens in 10 minutes.
We ready to do this?

BYRON

I'm ready. The designer is ready.

AMANDA

This could get really crazy, really
fast, so remember the signal: if
either one of us gets overrun, we
just raise our arm and the other
one will come and help.

EXT. ART FESTIVAL - NIGHT - LATER

No one's buying t-shirts. ON AMANDA AND BYRON sitting in the
booth - pop up, rather - twiddling their figurative thumbs.

AMANDA

We just have to be patient. Let the
market come to us.

EXT. ART FESTIVAL - NIGHT - LATER YET

The festival's shutting down. Only a trickle of foot traffic remains. Amanda and Byron dejectedly break down the booth to load up and take home.

Using a HAMMER, Amanda tries to remove a tricky plank that just... won't... come... loose.

She kicks the plank once, which scratches her itch. Then she KICKS THE SHIT OUT OF IT. The day's frustration has caught up to her.

Byron surveys the splintered booth.

BYRON
We need a beer.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

Amanda and Byron gaze into the beer cooler.

AMANDA
Let's just grab some 40s.

BYRON
Which ones?

AMANDA
(reading)
Mad Dog, Crazy Dog, Red Dog... just
two of the dogs.

Byron grabs two 40s out of the cooler. They walk to checkout.

The CASHIER (male) scans the 40s and takes Byron's DEBIT CARD for payment.

BEEP-BEEP.

That heart-stopping sound of failed payment.

CASHIER
No good.

BYRON
That shouldn't be. Can you try
again?

The Cashier tries again.

BEEP-BEEP.

ON AMANDA, who shuts her eyes, filled with dread. She might just know what's going on here.

CASHIER
No good. Ya got cash?

BYRON
Sure.

Byron hands over cash and they complete the transaction. He then collects the 40s and heads for the door with Amanda.

BYRON (CONT'D)
We should look into that when we get back to the apartment.

AMANDA
(nervously)
Yep.

INT. LOFT APARTMENT - NIGHT

They enter the apartment. Byron sets the 40s on the table, and is about to settle onto the couch, when Amanda tries her best to steer him out of the apartment.

AMANDA
Let's go dancing.

BYRON
Really? Like tonight?

AMANDA
Like right now.

BYRON
I didn't know you liked to dance.

AMANDA
Well you know. When the mood strikes you gotta go with it.

BYRON
Then dance we shall!
(remembering...)
But let's check on my card situation first.

AMANDA
Oh, that can wait until the morning.

BYRON
 No, let's just do it now. I'm
 trying to be an...
 (affected pronunciation)
 A-dult.

AMANDA
 (gulp)
 OK...

BYRON
 Hear how I pronounced it with the
 hard "A"? That's how you know it's
 real.

AT AMANDA'S COMPUTER - CONTINUOUS

Amanda's seated in front of the keyboard. Byron's leaning
 over her shoulder.

We watch their faces as she navigates to the Bank of America
 website.

Once they get there, Byron's face falls.

BYRON (CONT'D)
 Amanda?

AMANDA
 Yeah?

BYRON
 Why are there four hundred and
 twenty seven dollars in my savings
 account?

Under duress, Amanda resorts to a lame call back.

AMANDA
 Should they be somewhere else?

BYRON
 Oh my God... I've been robbed.

AMANDA
 No, Byron...

BYRON
 I'm a victim of cyber crime.

AMANDA
 Byron...

BYRON

Who do you call when there's a cyber crime? The police? That doesn't sound right.

AMANDA

Byron...You weren't robbed. I may have encouraged your mother to... take back the money.

BYRON

What?!

AMANDA

I'm sorry...

BYRON

Why would you do that?

AMANDA

Because we were arguing, and she was winning, and I needed a rhetorical trump card... it was very Downton Abbey.

BYRON

You gave back all of my money... to win an argument?

AMANDA

Kinda.

BYRON

What are we going to live on?

AMANDA

We have a burgeoning t-shirt business...

BYRON

(at the top of his lungs)
We sold exactly zero t-shirts today!

A rare sheepish moment from Amanda:

AMANDA

I said burgeoning.

INT. NEW PARISH NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

An Oakland house music venue with a busy dance floor full of multi-racial hipsters roughly 10 years younger than

AMANDA AND BYRON

Who are just going through the motions, not into this at all. Byron's still upset. Amanda can tell. She can hardly make eye contact.

Byron realizes that she's beating herself up, and feels badly. He decides to throw her a life-preserver: he teasingly removes Amanda's hair tie.

Amanda's locks fall over her shoulders. It's as sexy as we've ever seen her.

DANCE FLOOR - LATER

They've loosened up. They're now dancing, smiling, locking eyes, working up a sweat.

Amanda kisses Byron. It's a tender kiss. A we're-going-to-be-OK kiss.

But the moment is interrupted when a strange WOMAN backs her ass into Byron, and GYRATES skillfully.

He looks at Amanda, who isn't threatened, but amused. She grins: "Go for it." All good fun.

Byron grinds back. Awkwardly, of course, because it's Byron.

The Woman reaches behind her back and places her hands on his hips. They go low. Then come up again. Finally, Byron turns to face her and she him.

Christ, it's:

BYRON AND AMANDA

Rosa!

ROSA

I saw you from the balcony! What are you guys doing here?

BYRON

We moved to Oakland!

ROSA

That's so awesome!

AMANDA

This is crazy!

ROSA

The craziest!

EXT. NEW PARISH - COURTYARD

Byron and Amanda and Rosa are sitting at a table. The joint they're passing is already half smoked. Everyone's the good kind of wasted. A sentimental wasted.

BYRON

(slurring, to Rosa)

Now that I'm not the boss of you anymore, there's something I gotta say.

ROSA

Yeah?

BYRON

(to Amanda)

You tell her. I don't wanna cry.

AMANDA

He loves you.

BYRON

He does?

AMANDA

Of course he does. You're like...

BYRON

A super lovely young woman.

Rosa's almost moved to tears.

ROSA

I gotta tell you something now...

BYRON

Don't say anything you don't mean.

ROSA

(to Amanda)

I didn't like you at first... But it was obvious right away that the two of you were gonna hit it... And you seemed so free when you were together... So I started daydreaming about the two of you having a life together... And how I would fit into that life... And found myself imagining that I was your daughter... And then I thought, no... That's messed up... I don't want to be your daughter...

(MORE)

ROSA (CONT'D)

I want to be, like, your daughter's best friend who's prettier and gets better grades and who you secretly wish was your daughter instead of your daughter...

It takes everyone a moment to soak up how profoundly touching and weird this is.

BYRON

Oh man.

ROSA

Oh man!

AMANDA

We need shots!

INT. DANCE FLOOR

Byron and Rosa are dancing. It's different from how Byron and Amanda danced. More playful. More familiar. They really missed each other.

Amanda watches from the bar. Fascinated, faintly jealous.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON AMANDA AND BYRON AND ROSA

Dancing. Only the lighting's different because they're no longer at the New Parish but at

INT. LOFT APARTMENT - NIGHT

Bouncing around the living room.

BYRON

I gotta take a leak.

We follow Byron to the

BATHROOM

He unzips and takes a long piss. Rezips. Washes up. Heads back out to

LIVING ROOM

Only now Amanda is gone. It's just Rosa. Dancing by herself.

ROSA
Amanda crashed.

BYRON
But we were dancing.

ROSA
Should we turn the music down?

LIVING ROOM - MINUTES LATER

MUSIC UP: Some mellow number like "Birthday" by the Sugar Cubes.

ON BYRON AND ROSA

Slow dancing. Laughing drunkenly. We SCALE BACK far enough that we only see their silhouettes against the lamp light.

And watch them kiss.

LOFT APARTMENT - MORNING

CLOSE ON Byron's face as he awakens.

His senses are staggered. First he feels the pain in his head. Christ, hangover. Then he hears voices. They're coming from the kitchen.

He peaks over the top of the couch to see Amanda and Rosa sitting at the breakfast table and chatting over coffee.

Now he remembers. He kissed Rosa last night. His friend. His protege. His fictional daughter's prettier best fri--

AMANDA (O.S.)
You awake B?

He shuts his eye and pretends he's asleep.

AMANDA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Come in here for a second.

Time to face the music. He drags himself off the couch and heads to the

KITCHEN

Where Amanda and Rosa are eating breakfast at the kitchen table.

AMANDA
Have a seat.

BYRON
Why?

AMANDA
What do you mean "why?" Come and have a cup of coffee with us.

BYRON
(to Amanda)
You think I could talk to you? On the balcony?

EXT. BALCONY

Byron's waiting, huddled in the morning chill. Amanda joins him a moment later.

AMANDA
What's your problem dude?

Deep breath.

BYRON
I kissed Rosa.

AMANDA
...I see.

BYRON
We were all so drunk.

AMANDA
Drunk. Right.

BYRON
(rambling)
We had such a hard day at the pop-up and I must have been clamoring for something familiar and reassuring --

AMANDA
I just have one question.

BYRON
Anything.

AMANDA
Have you taken a pregnancy test yet?

All right. Byron gets it. He's a melodramatic little bitch for making a big deal out of this.

BYRON
You don't care?

AMANDA
No dude. A, we were hella drunk, B, she's adorable, and C, you just kissed. I mean, you did just kiss, right?

BYRON
Yes!

AMANDA
You didn't grab a handful of tit or nothin'?

BYRON
No!

AMANDA
Weak. Well, come inside and have breakfast. Rosa has an idea for the t-shirts.

BYRON
No way, I'm waiting out here until she leaves.

AMANDA
I can respect that.

Amanda opens the balcony door and yells into the apartment:

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Rosa, you're gonna have to say goodbye to Byron from the kitchen because he's too embarrassed to face you!

BYRON
I hate you.

She drags him inside.

AMANDA
I know you do, hon'.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - OUTSIDE FRONT DOOR

Byron and Amanda and Rosa say their goodbyes.

ROSA
I'll tell everyone at the office
you said hello?

BYRON
Sure.

Rosa gives them both a big warm hug.

ROSA
Great seeing you guys.

AMANDA
Know how to get back to the BART,
sweetie?

ROSA
(walking away)
Yep!

INT. DINER - BOOTH - DAY

Amanda smiles as she watches Byron eat his breakfast. He's still out of sorts, and she's still amused by it.

BYRON
Don't look at me like that. I'm
angry with you.

She nearly chokes on her waffle.

AMANDA
You're angry with me? This I've got
to hear.

BYRON
I think you're being disingenuous.

AMANDA
About what?

BYRON

(mocking)

"Do you think you're pregnant?"
It's bullshit. You're not like
that.

AMANDA

You don't think I'm cool with you
kissing Rosa.

BYRON

Nope.

AMANDA

Well guess what? I'm about to flip
it on you.

BYRON

By all means. Flip.

AMANDA

Maybe you wanted to hurt me last
night.

BYRON

Oh stop.

AMANDA

Hey, I get it. We've had a rough 48
hours. I canceled your
inheritance... We didn't sell any t-
shirts... I smashed up the booth...

BYRON

I am a little annoyed you smashed
up the booth.

AMANDA

And then, just as you're feeling
wounded, along comes Rosa who's
perfect and nurturing and...

BYRON

So it did bother you.

AMANDA

Yeah fine. It bothered me.

BYRON

And I may have been acting passive
aggressively.

AMANDA

Why?

BYRON

I feel like I'm failing you. I'm not handy. My design bombed at the festival. I'm not contributing to this new life of ours.

Amanda smiles. She's touched by his vulnerability.

AMANDA

Is it OK if I move to your side of the booth?

BYRON

Sure.

She moves to his side of the booth. Grabs him by the front of his shirt and kisses him.

AMANDA

You need to hear Rosa's idea for the shirts.

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON A WHITE FEMALE TEENAGER'S FACE

TEENAGER

But I want one of the 15 dollar shirts.

EXT. ART FAIR - AMANDA AND BYRON'S BOOTH - DAY

The booth has been patched up with duct tape. Our duo is back in business.

AMANDA

We're out of the 15 dollar shirts.

TEENAGER

But I'm looking right at them. They're behind you.

ON THE T-SHIRT: The designed has changed.

Whereas before it was a hummingbird in flight, it is now a hummingbird flying just beyond the reach a dozen RAVENOUS PRAYING MANTII.

AMANDA

Those are the 25 dollar shirts.

TEENAGER

It's the same shirt my friend
bought for 15 bucks an hour ago!

AMANDA

And in the last half hour we've
sold 30 of them. Which means if we
continued to sell them for 15, we'd
sell out. So now they're 25.

TEENAGER

That's fucked up.

AMANDA

That's inventory management. You'll
learn about it in junior college.

TEENAGER

(under her breath)

Ho.

AMANDA

What's that?

TEENAGER

Just gimme a shirt.

ON BYRON

Sitting on a nearby BENCH and proselytizing to several
TEENAGE GIRLS about art and design.

BYRON

My influences? Music mostly. I'm
listening to a lot of O Lazzarus
and Garvey these days.

TEENAGER #1

I know them. They're good.

BYRON

(correcting her)

They're fantastic. Here's what you
do: Get up before 5 am and listen
to them with noise-cancelling
headphones while you paint in a
room with a small east-facing
window. Then you'll get it.

Amanda, who's swarmed with customers, catches his eye.

AMANDA

(silently mouthing)

Sell. Some fucking. Shirts.

That whips him into shape.

BYRON
(nervously, to teenagers)
So what are you girls? Smalls?
Extra smalls? I'll get you some
extra smalls.

INT. BOOTH

Byron searches the t-shirt boxes. They're all empty.

BYRON
Shit.

AMANDA
"Shit" what?

BYRON
We're out.

AMANDA
Of what size?

BYRON
Of all sizes.

Byron starts packing up.

AMANDA
What are you doing?

BYRON
We're out of shirts. I'm closing
down, let's get a beer.

Amanda takes him by the shoulders. Time for a serious talk.

AMANDA
Byron. Honey? These shirts are our
income. We use our income to buy
food and water and streaming iTunes
movies. Do you think there might be
a solution here aside from packing
up and drinking beer?

Byron has to think about that for a second.

BYRON
There are more shirts at home.

AMANDA

Bingo.
 (tosses him car keys)
 Grab 'em. I'll handle things here.

BYRON

Amanda...

AMANDA

What?

BYRON

I still can't drive.

She's quickly losing patience.

AMANDA

Fine. I'll go. You man the booth.

BYRON

All right, teach me how to use this thingy.

AMANDA

You mean the credit card machine?

EXT. BOOTH - LATER

A SMALL WOMAN wades through the crowd carrying a STACK OF T-SHIRT BOXES so high they conceal her face. When she sets them down beside the booth, we see it's Rosa.

AMANDA

(to Rosa)

You are the queen of everything.

ROSA

Holy shit, you guys are doing crazy business!

Byron mashes his fingers on the credit card machine senselessly.

BYRON

I think we're finally hitting our stride!

MONTAGE

-- INT. NEW PARISH - NIGHT -- Rosa, Byron and Amanda dancing to house music.

-- INT. LOFT APARTMENT - NIGHT -- Rosa, Byron and Amanda dancing to Paul Simon's Graceland. Amanda has a this-is-corny-but-oh-well smirk.

-- INT. LOFT APARTMENT - NIGHT - LATER -- Byron and Amanda playing VIDEO GAMES. Rosa brings them each a GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICH from the kitchen.

END MONTAGE

INT. LOFT APARTMENT - DAY

It's the following morning.

Amanda stirs awake. The first thing she sees is Byron. He's asleep on the living room floor. His face resting on a dirty plate.

Then Rosa enters the living room. She gently lifts Byron's head, removes the plate, and sets his head back down without waking him...

And carries the plate to the kitchen where she's doing last night's dishes.

Seeing this, Amanda has an idea. One she tucks away for later. For now it's back to sleep.

EXT. BART STATION - LATE MORNING

As Rosa climbs the stairs to the platform, Byron and Amanda wave goodbye.

INT. CANIBUS CLUB - DAY

We join them in line at their CANIBUS CLUB, where Amanda unveils her idea:

AMANDA

I think Rosa should move in with us.

BYRON

What?

A SLIM BLACK MAN takes their cash and hands them a quarter ounce of weed.

EXT. LAKE MERRIT - DAY

They're sitting on a blanket. Amanda's rolling a SWISHER.

AMANDA

We both like her. She's handy. She cooks. She smells good...

BYRON

No.

AMANDA

We could use help with the rent...

BYRON

Amanda, no, it'd be weird.

AMANDA

Because you felt her up?

BYRON

I did not --

(gathers himself)

You and I are a couple. You want someone to cook? I'll cook. You want someone to be handy...

(totally unconvincing)

I'll be handy.

INT. LOFT APARTMENT - DAY

Three MOVER GUYS carry boxes through the front door. Rosa is right behind them directing traffic.

Amanda sidles up beside Byron, who's sulking.

AMANDA

Are you going to be a sore loser?

BYRON

Yes.

AMANDA

Maybe we should have a housewarming party. What do you think?

BYRON

I think you've already made up your mind to have a housewarming party.

AMANDA

Good. I'll tell Rosa.

INT. LOFT APARTMENT - NIGHT

It's a party.

A segregated group of 30-somethings (Amanda and Byron's friends) and recent college grads (Rosa's friends). There's a keg in the corner. A small not-yet-peaked dance floor.

Emeka, the copy store clerk, approaches Byron, who's posted up on the BALCONY, not exactly into this.

EMEKA
Great party, man.

BYRON
Thanks.

Awkward silence, until curiosity gets the best of Emeka.

EMEKA
So you live with two chicks?

BYRON
Evidently.

EMEKA
That's very sex positive of you.

A quizzical look from Byron.

BYRON
I don't think that's what sex positive means.

EMEKA
Whatever. It's dope is what I'm trying to say.
(beat)
Why are you so turnt down? It's a party.

Byron decides to open up.

BYRON
Ever feel like no one trusts you to manage your own life?

EMEKA
It's 2015, and I work in a print shop, breh. I don't trust myself to run my life.

BYRON

There's never been a time when I haven't had a woman take care of me. Doesn't that strike you as weird?

EMEKA

It strikes me as very awesome, actually.

BYRON

At some point I have to be trusted to sink or swim.

EMEKA

Well, if you wanna switch places you can sink into my grandma's basement. I'll swim in here.

INT. ART FESTIVAL - DAY

We follow a FESTIVAL PLANNER (headset, clipboard) as she fights her way to the front of a long line of people.

Once she's through we see the line is for the t-shirt booth, where Byron, Amanda, and Rosa can hardly keep up with the demand.

PLANNER

Who's in charge here?

AMANDA

Who's asking?

PLANNER

You can't block the street with this crowd.

AMANDA

What can I say? The kids want their shirts.

PLANNER

Trim the crowd or I'm shutting you down.

The Planner storms off. Amanda pulls Rosa aside, slightly panicked.

AMANDA

We need a meeting.

Byron assumes said meeting includes him, but...

AMANDA (CONT'D)
 Byron, keep selling.
 (yelling to crowd)
 Folks, we are now cash only!

Groans from the crowd.

Resentful that he's being excluded, Byron goes back to selling shirts.

Amanda and Rosa conference feet away.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
 So we're at capacity here.

ROSA
 Right.

AMANDA
 Which means we need ...

ROSA
 Invest in some real estate.

MOMENTS LATER

Byron is still selling t-shirts, but out of the corner of his eye he can see Rosa talking to a AFRICAN WOMAN at a booth across the street.

The African Woman looks concerned at first, but the more Rosa talks, the more she softens. The conversation ends with Rosa handing the woman a wad of cash.

Rosa flashes a "thumbs up" in Byron's direction. Only it's not for Byron, it's for...

AMANDA
 OK, we're a go.

She starts packing t-shirts into boxes.

BYRON
 A go for what?

AMANDA
 We're opening a satellite booth.

Byron figures out what's happening, and it disturbs him.

BYRON
 We're displacing the Guyanese
 basket vendor?

AMANDA
Guyanese baskets ain't hot in these
streets, B. Your t-shirts are.

Amanda carries the shirts toward the new booth. Byron steps out from inside the original booth to block her path.

BYRON
Stop.

AMANDA
What are you doing?

BYRON
You can't just take that woman's
business.

AMANDA
We bought that woman's business.

BYRON
It's not right to gentrify her
corner of the festival like this.

AMANDA
Gentrify?

Sensing an argument brewing, Rosa comes over.

ROSA
What's going on?

AMANDA
Byron's having pangs of white
guilt.

The GUYANESE WOMAN passes by, carrying her merch to the car.

BYRON
Excuse me, ma'am?

GUYANESE WOMAN
Yes?

BYRON
We're not buying your booth.

AMANDA
For fuck's sake, Byron.

The Guyanese Woman is confused.

GUYANESE WOMAN
You want your money back?

BYRON

You can keep the money. Just go back over there and sell your baskets like before.

GUYANESE WOMAN

But I just made dinner plans with my husband...

BYRON

Go to dinner. I'll deal with your customers while you're gone.

AMANDA

He can't use a credit card machine.

GUYANESE WOMAN

But seventy percent of my business is credit...

Byron starts to lose it.

BYRON

I'm trying to help you hang on to a little piece of independence in the face of Mistress Epps over here!

AMANDA

Who?

GUYANESE WOMAN

Michael Fassbender's wife in 12 Years a Slave.

AMANDA

(aghast)

Byron!

The PLANNER sees the commotion and returns.

PLANNER

What's going on here?

GUYANESE WOMAN

(indicating Amanda)

This one wants to buy my booth...

(indicating Byron)

and this one wants to work in it.

PLANNER

There can be no exchange of parcels until an application is submitted to and reviewed by festival staff.

Amanda counts off about EIGHT TWENTY DOLLAR BILLS and shoves them into the Planner's hand.

PLANNER (CONT'D)
Review complete.

The Planner departs.

BYRON
Fuck!

ROSA
Byron, calm down.

BYRON
How can I calm down? She's
oppressive!

AMANDA
You find me oppressive?

BYRON
Incredibly!

AMANDA
Well the feeling's fucking mutual,
buddy.

BYRON
I'm oppressive?

AMANDA
Do you have any idea how much work
you are?

ROSA
Take it easy, Amanda.

AMANDA
You can't take care of yourself.
And I'm not Jane. I won't make you
little sack lunches...

BYRON
Stop it.

AMANDA
Or keep you away from saturated
fat...

BYRON
Stop.

AMANDA

Or teach you to drive a car, or
hammer a nail, or constantly have
to validate you.

BYRON

(pointing at Rosa)
Which is why you needed
reinforcements...

ROSA

Listen, I don't want to get in the
middle of --

Amanda cuts her off.

AMANDA

(to Byron)
Oh poor baby. I asked a beautiful,
attentive woman who you're
obviously attracted to to live with
us. How will you go on?

BYRON

She's not here for me. She's here
for you.

AMANDA

Fine! I need help with you! Can you
blame me? Anyone would!

BYRON

I can't be with someone who thinks
I'm so... incomplete!

AMANDA

Then be complete, Byron. Because
until then, you're just one big...
(reaches for something
hurtful)
...squanderer of women's lives.

And hurt it does. Byron turns, walks away.

Amanda doesn't know what to do. Let it stick? Apologize? For
what? The truth?

Doesn't matter. Byron's already gone.

INT. LOFT APARTMENT

An exhausted Rosa and Amanda enter the apartment carrying t-shirt boxes. They don't see Byron, so Amanda calls out to him.

AMANDA
Don't be alarmed. It's me, Herr
Commandant.

ROSA
Amanda...

Rosa holds up a LETTER that she found on the kitchen table. Amanda takes the letter, reads quickly.

AMANDA
He went home.

ROSA
To Jane's?

Amanda shakes her head.

CLOSE ON

A knife dicing a HOT PEPPER on a cutting board.

WIDE SHOT

Byron, preparing dinner in

INT. MOTHER'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

He washes a whole chicken.

Mixes marinades in a bowl.

Sautees a few slices of garlic in a pan.

His mother sits at the kitchen table observing, amused.

URLINA
Who taught you to cook?

BYRON
It's not rocket science.

URLINA
I'd be less surprised to see you
doing rocket science, actually.

A shout from the living room. It's Byron's brother MARCUS.

MARCUS (O.S.)
Ma! Byron! How much longer?

Byron shouts back:

BYRON
Forty five minutes!

MARCUS (O.S.)
You said that fifteen minutes ago!

BYRON
Eat the Wheat Thins I set out!

MARCUS (O.S.)
I told you! I'm off gluten!

BYRON
The Wheat Thins are gluten free!

MARCUS (O.S.)
By definition they are not gluten free! They're Wheat Thins!

BYRON
Check the box, Marcus!

A long beat while Marcus reads the box.

MARCUS (O.S.)
I stand corrected about the Wheat Thins! But I would still appreciate a precise ETA for dinner!

INT. MOTHER'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM

Byron dines with his mother and two older brothers at an immaculately set table. SHAMARI, the middle child, is the sweet one. Marcus, the eldest, is acid.

SHAMARI
The is delicious, Byron.

BYRON
Thanks.

SHAMARI
How long are you home for?

BYRON
Not sure yet.

SHAMARI

I think you should stay as long as you want.

BYRON

I appreciate that, Shamari.

MARCUS

We'll just have to integrate you into the chore chart.

BYRON

The what?

URLINA

Griselda has the month off, so I've created a chart of chores for you boys. It's on the fridge.

MARCUS

Tonight I'm cleaning the half bath off the foyer. Nevermind that I'm arguing one of the biggest cases of my career in the morning!

URLINA

Marcus. We talked about this.

MARCUS

I don't understand why we don't get Merry Maids! I'll pay!

URLINA

It's not about the money.

SHAMARI

Yeah, it's not about the money, Marcus.

MARCUS

You're damn right it's not about the money! It's about your Ma's mythos of the hard working immigrant that she's been thrusting onto us ever since we were kids --

AMANDA (O.S.)

Excuse me.

She startles everyone. No one heard her enter the dining room.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. The front door was open.

URLINA
Hello Amanda.

AMANDA
Mrs. Bailey.

URLINA
Would you like to join us for
dinner?

Amanda shakes her head.

AMANDA
I don't mean to interrupt. But your
son owes me a conversation. Is
there a place I can wait until
you're finished?

She looks around at the big, fancy house...

AMANDA (CONT'D)
A drawing room or something?

Byron stands, walks out of the room, indicates for Amanda to
follow.

Marcus shouts after them:

MARCUS
You're on the chart for dishes
tonight, Byron!

INT. BYRON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

A very Spartan room containing only the basics: a bed. A
dresser. A couple family photographs on the wall. Amanda,
sitting across from Byron on the bed, takes it in.

AMANDA
This is the room you grew up in?

BYRON
Yep.

AMANDA
I see your mom wasn't sentimental
about keeping everything the same.

BYRON
It's exactly the same. My mother
believes ornament crowds the mind.

AMANDA
That's so --

BYRON
Ungenerous?

AMANDA
Well. Yeah.

BYRON
Look out the window.

Amanda rises and walks to the window.

AMANDA
It's too dark to see anything.

Byron reaches for a REMOTE on his nightstand. With a click of a button he illuminates dozens of TINY WHITE LIGHTS, hung from trees, a trellis, and manicured bushes throughout this wonderfully terraced garden.

Amanda gasps.

BYRON
This is the only bedroom facing the garden.

AMANDA
Two older brothers, and they gave it to you.

BYRON
Are you going to call me spoiled again?

Amanda shakes her head.

AMANDA
I'd have given you it to you, too.

Byron is touched, which has the odd effect of putting him on guard.

BYRON
Why are you here?

AMANDA
Why are you here? One minute you're fine, and then all of a sudden you're --

BYRON
Things just aren't how I pictured
them.

AMANDA
With me?

BYRON
No, with me.

AMANDA
What the fuck does that mean?

BYRON
I thought that with a little push
from you, I could be this super
activated person. But I don't need
a push. I need a big old cattle
prod with like 800 volts of
electricity. Which is exhausting
for both us.

AMANDA
I never said I was exhausted.

BYRON
Are you?

AMANDA
Of course! You're exhausting! But
that doesn't mean you move back to
your mother's house, you fucking
baby!

BYRON
It's just for a while.

AMANDA
In the meantime I'm out there by
myself... trying to live a life
with joy and standards...

BYRON
You're not by yourself.

AMANDA
Of course I am. People don't like
me, Byron.

BYRON
That's not true.

AMANDA

Yes it is... and I don't care. I used to pretend I didn't care... but when I'm with you, I genuinely don't give a shit.

BYRON

This is all just too bad.

AMANDA

What is?

BYRON

That it can't work. Living on our own, doing things our way. Because the truth is that I love you.

AMANDA

I love you too.

BYRON

But I can't be your burden.

AMANDA

I know.

BYRON

So I don't know where that leaves us.

AMANDA

Maybe I should go. And you should stay. We'll do some thinking. And if a solution occurs to either of us...

BYRON

We'll call.

AMANDA

We should probably call either way, right? Even if it's just to say "I couldn't think of anything."

BYRON

We'll definitely call.

She leans in and gives him a long kiss on the forehead.

BYRON (CONT'D)

Take care, Amanda.

AMANDA

Bye.

And she leaves.

FADE OUT.

INT. BATHROOM - SHOWER - MORNING

Amanda is showering, eyes closed.

SUPER: 1 MONTH LATER

She takes a deep breath. Opens her eyes for a moment. Then shuts them again.

Suddenly, the water goes cold.

AMANDA

Ah! Ah! Fuck!

She steps out of the shower and into the BATHROOM, which we now see is spacious and well-appointed. Marble his-and-her sinks. Expensive floor tile. A bidet. The whole deal.

She quickly grabs a TOWEL from a DRAWER, wraps it around her wet body, and then storms out into the

HALLWAY

Which is long, wide, fancy. African art on the walls. She heads down the

STAIRS

Through a large FOYER, which we should recognize, and down a SECOND SET OF STAIRS

Which lead to the basement. Halfway down she yells:

AMANDA

Marcus!

In the

BASEMENT

She finds Shamari hitting the BENCH PRESS.

SHAMARI

Morning, Amanda!

AMANDA
(walking)
Hey Shamari.

SHAMARI
You gonna help me with my website
today?

AMANDA
Sure, sweetie, let's talk at 10.

SHAMARI
Coo'!

Amanda opens a door to

INT. BASEMENT BATHROOM

Where she finds Marcus sitting in a hot tub.

MARCUS
Hey, girl.

AMANDA
What's the rule, Marcus?

MARCUS
Rule?

AMANDA
You can't run the hot tub when I'm
in the shower. It turns the water
cold.

MARCUS
If Byron had called the plumber we
wouldn't have this problem.

AMANDA
He hasn't called the plumber yet?

MARCUS
What do you think?

She leaves the bathroom and walks back through the

BASEMENT

And up the stairs to the

KITCHEN

Where Urlina is making breakfast.

Amanda rifles through the fridge for a beverage.

AMANDA
Morning, Mrs. B.

Seeing Amanda in a towel, Urlina puts 2 and 2 together.

URLINA
That boy hasn't called the plumber?

AMANDA
Nope.

URLINA
Tell him that is not acceptable.

AMANDA
Oh, I will.

Urlina hands Amanda an egg and cheese sandwich on a plate. Amanda takes a bite.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Mmm. Gruyere.
(kisses Urlina on cheek)
Freaking love you.

Amanda leaves the kitchen with her sandwich and beverage.

We track her through the FOYER and up the MAIN STAIRS to the SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY and into

BYRON'S BEDROOM

Which now accommodates Amanda's WORK DESK and THREE-MONITOR SET-UP. This is now their room.

Byron is painting. He doesn't pay Amanda any mind at first, but she only need stand there for a moment, dripping wet, for him to realize he fucked up.

BYRON
Crap. The plumber.

AMANDA
Yup.

BYRON
I'll call today. Promise.

AMANDA
What happens if you don't?

BYRON
Name it...

AMANDA
My chores. And Shamari's. All week.

BYRON
Not Marcus'?

AMANDA
Marcus can do his own chores.

She shuts the door mischievously, and kisses him.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Your ma's still home. Turn on some music.

BYRON
Coming right up.

He skips over to stereo, and turns on AMERICA'S "TIN MAN."

AMANDA
America? Come on.

BYRON
This is a classic!

AMANDA
I'm now sleeping with you under protest.

As they kiss, we...

FADE OUT

But still hear their voices.

BYRON (V.O.)
Hey, what do you think of this piece I'm working on?

AMANDA (V.O.)
Byron...

BYRON (V.O.)
Just gimme a rating, 1 to 10. I'm trying something new with color and need to know if --

AMANDA (V.O.)
(more sternly)
Byron...

Yeah? BYRON (V.O.)

Focus. AMANDA (V.O.)

THE END