Girl Trip
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Official White 6-15-16
FADE IN:

OVER BLACK WE HEAR THE VOICE OF RYAN PIERCE:

RYAN (V.O.)
Every group of friends has that one song --

Off this, Mary J Blige’s “Real Love (Remix) drops.

1

INT. FRAT HOUSE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

SMASH INTO: A 90’s college party in full swing. We find FOUR BLACK GIRLS pushing and shoving their way to the dance floor.

RYAN (V.O.)
That no matter where you are or what you’re doing, pulls you out your seat. That was me and my crew: The Flossy Posse.

The Flossy Posse tear it down with dance that’s all their own. No guys. Just them. PARTY-GOERS stare and point, but these girls don’t give a shit.

RYAN (V.O.)
I know. Trust me: what you swore was fly back in the day probably wasn’t either. But those were -- and still are -- my girls, thinking we were the baddest chicks in the game...

2

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY - FLASHBACK

Graduation Day. Our girls take photos in their caps and gowns, which have been bedazzled with ‘FLOSSY POSSE’ logos.

RYAN (V.O.)
Definitely the baddest chicks at Spelman. After college, we were with each other through everything.

3

EXT. OUTDOOR CAFE - NIGHT

SASHA shows off her byline on the cover of Time Magazine. The other ladies toast.

RYAN (V.O.)
Successes...
INT. PLANNED PARENTHOOD - DAY - FLASHBACK

Sasha, Ryan and Lisa sit in the waiting room -- ominous STD posters are on the wall.

RYAN (V.O.)
Mistakes...

Dina bursts out of the door of the doctor’s office giddy, arms in the air, signalling victory.

DINA
It’s chlamydia! I got the shit you can cure!

They all cheer.

EXT. BOTANICAL GARDEN - DAY - FLASHBACK

RYAN, gorgeous in her wedding gown, says her vows to STEWART in a story-book perfect wedding ceremony.

RYAN (V.O.)
Weddings...

The girls wear bridesmaids gowns and necklaces shaped like “FP.” They all dab their eyes as Ryan and Stewart kiss.

EXT. LISA’S HOUSE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Lisa’s baby shower. The Flossy Posse watch a very pregnant Lisa open gifts. Her man looks disinterested as he drinks a beer in the background. Lisa clocks it, but plays it off.

RYAN (V.O.)
Babies...

INT. COURTROOM LOBBY - DAY

The ladies wait, somber. Lisa exits the courtroom, wiping away tears. They embrace her and walk out.

RYAN (V.O.)
Divorces... We were ride or die.

INSERT: A PHOTO MONTAGE

The Flossy Posse at Essence Fest over the years with a Chyron indicating each passing year.
RYAN (V.O.)
But sometimes, words go unsaid.
Disagreements go unresolved. You
still talk on the phone, keep up on
social media, but a year goes by
where you don’t see each other.
That year turns into five. Life
doesn’t feel right without them.
And that’s when you realize the
Flossy Posse needs to ride again.

We end on the last Essence photo, dated 2012 and CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE PHOTO SHOOT - DAY - PRESENT DAY

RYAN PIERCE, 30s, beautiful, poised, and perfectly put
together, strikes poses as a Photographer snaps pictures and
a FEMALE PRINT REPORTER interviews her.

RYAN
Relationships take work. Our
biggest challenge as women is
finding the balance of marriage,
career, kids, life in general --

FEMALE PRINT REPORTER
I agree!

RYAN
We’re told we have to choose
between the personal and the
professional. But I never believed
that. I control my own destiny. I
am strong, I am powerful, I am
beautiful. If I will it, I can have
it all.

FEMALE PRINT REPORTER
And it appears you do.

Reveal Ryan’s handsome husband STEWART PIERCE, 30s, her equal
in every way. He steps in with a loving embrace for his wife.

INT. RADIO STATION - DAY

A DJ is in mid-interview with Ryan and Stewart.

DJ
Stewart, how does a former all-pro
tight-end link up with the second
coming of Oprah?
Ryan’s strength has always been making others their best selves. I knew I needed that in my life. (looking at her) So, I pursued her and I got lucky.

He sure did.

Everyone laughs. She looks at him with love.

No. I’d say we both did.

A national news show -- Ryan and Stewart are being interviewed by TAMRON HALL.

So Ryan, how did he propose?

With barbecue.

(surprised)

Excuse me?

It was this little hole in the wall spot off campus with some serious pulled pork. Our favorite spot when we didn’t have any money.

He told me he didn’t know where his football career would take him, but that it wouldn’t mean anything if I wasn’t along for the ride.

Wow. Tell us -- what is the secret to making this marriage work?

That’s easy. I married my best friend. Ryan is my equal. My partner.
RYAN
He told me -- and I’ll never forget -- he wanted me to soar as high as I could.

On Tamron’s face, swooning as she gestures to their book: “You Can Have It All”. A photo of Stewart kissing Ryan’s cheek is the cover.

TAMRON HALL
And soar you have. A best-selling author for the second time. Now for our viewers at home, you can purchase Ryan’s latest New York Times best seller, “You Can Have It All,” online or catch them on tour--what’s your next stop?

RYAN
New Orleans. We’ll be signing copies down at Essence Fest.

STEWART
And Ryan will be giving this year’s keynote address. That alone is worth the trip. Guaranteed!

TAMRON HALL
Speaking of having it all -- when are you two starting a family? You’d make such beautiful babies and be fantastic parents.

RYAN
Trust me, Tamron, it’s on the agenda.

Ryan smiles at Stewart. He winks back. It’s adorable.

12 INT. LOFT - DAY

We’re on Ryan and Stewart’s smiling faces on a flat screen. Journalism awards adorn the walls. Reveal SASHA FRANKLIN, 30’s, whip smart and in charge. Her desk is covered in past due bills. She watches the Ryan and Stewart interview on one laptop and TMZ on another, phone to her ear.

SASHA
You don’t have anything for me? Not even some Nicki Minaj or Kardashian foolishness?
Another PHONE rings. She knocks over the framed photo of her holding up her Time Magazine cover as she reaches for it.

SASHA
I’ll call you back.
(then; into second phone)
Bill, hey... I know why you’re calling.

She puts the call on speaker.

ADVERTISING REP (O.S.)
We’re pulling our ads unless you up your views, Sasha.

On her laptop we see her blog -- SASHA’S SECRETS. A headline reading STEVE HARVEY -- ILLITERATE OR JUST IGNORANT? is above a PHOTO of STEVE HARVEY looking confounded as he reads his note cards at the Miss USA pageant.

She scrolls through the site as we see gossip tidbits about black celebs, none of them flattering.

SASHA
I have it on the DL that Drake is smashing Oprah. It’s not something that I can publish right now...

Sasha knows she’s bullshitting and so does the Ad Rep.

ADVERTISING REP (O.C.)
Unless you have proof -- we can’t spend any more money on a dying gossip blog, Sasha.

SASHA
I can’t invent scandal, but I’m going to Essence Fest this weekend. Someone’s bound to do something crazy.

ADVERTISING REP (O.S.)
Increase views by the end of the weekend or we pull out.

SASHA
Come on, Bill. Don’t be premature!

The line goes dead. Sasha hangs up, frustrated. Out the corner of her eye, she sees her BMW being hooked up to a tow truck outside.

SASHA
No! No, no, no, no!!!
EXT. LOFT - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

An out of breath Sasha runs up to a gross, sweaty TOW TRUCK DRIVER, hooking up her car to his truck.

SASHA
That’s my car!

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
Not anymore, bae bae.

SASHA
Dude, come on, I need my car!

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
Yeah, I feel you, but the bank ‘needs’ their money. Sooo, you know.

The Tow Truck Driver continues hooking up Sasha’s car. Sasha is desperate.

SASHA
What if we could work something out? You look like a man who appreciates a woman with curves.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
Oh, I do... If you let me tie you up, strip you down, and then take a shit on your titties, I’m one hundred percent in.

SASHA
(stunned)
Who thinks that? Let alone says it. Fuck that, your nasty ass is out of control. I’ll take Uber.

TOW TRUCK DRIVER
Suit your self. Good luck gettin your whip back, bae-bae.

He hops in his truck. As he drives off, Sasha screams--

SASHA
Wait, what if I whip out a titty? Will you settle for a titty?!

Sasha watches, frustrated, as he pulls off with her car. A 12-YEAR-OLD BOY rides by on his bike, stopping.

12-YEAR-OLD BOY
Whatever you’re selling? I’m buyin.
DINA, 30s, hot tempered and always looking for a cause to fight (justified or not), sits across from her boss, TED, 50s, stern-faced and full of disappointment.

TED
Dina, throwing staplers at co-workers is not only frowned upon here at Total Paper, it’s also illegal. It’s a form of assault.

DINA
That’s why I aimed for his lower body and not his face.

TED
Not the point. You’re lucky Vikram decided not to press charges.

DINA
And he’s lucky I aimed low. So we’re both lucky. All good.

TED
(sighing)
Dina, I’m going to have to let you go. For everyone’s safety. I hope you understand.

Dina shrugs this off. She does not understand.

DINA
Totally. Won’t happen again. We’re all cool.

TED
Dina, listen to me. We’re not all cool. I’m letting you go.

DINA
Okay, okay, I feel you, Big Ted. It’s water under the bridge. Gonna get back to work.

TED
Dina. There’s no bridge and you should not get back to work. Now, please acknowledge you understand that you’re fired.

DINA
Ted, I get it. You’re upset. I shouldn’t thrown things in a... (MORE)
DINA (CONT'D)
(using air quotes)
"place of work".

TED
Why are you making air quotes? This is a place of work.

Dina stands.

DINA
Lesson learned. By the way? I’m going to Essence Fest with my girls this weekend. So I’m gonna need Friday off.

TED
Dina, you can have all the days off. You’re fired. As in you don’t have a job. Do you understand me?

DINA
Yep, see you bright and early Tuesday. So glad we did this, Ted. I feel like this is progress.

Dina exits. A banged-up Vikram spots her in the hallway and runs in the other direction. Flustered, Ted calls after her.

TED
Dina! Don’t make me call security!

INT. LISA’S HOUSE – DAY

LISA COOPER, 30s, Type A, no nonsense, wearing nurse’s scrubs, reviews a very detailed list.

LISA
Here’s their schedule: bath time, snack time, homework time, ten minutes of TV, bed time.

DELORES, 60s, watches Family Feud, barely listening to Lisa.

DELORES
Steve Harvey could get it on the Lord’s day. While I was at church.

LISA
Mom! Focus!

DELORES
Will you calm down?! I have raised kids before.

(MORE)
Although not without their issues.

LISA
You know what? Forget it. I’m staying. I can’t take a chance on them deviating from their bed time.

Before Delores can protest in walks Dina, shades and Mardi Gras beads on, blasting Lil Wayne from her phone.

LISA
How’d you get in here?

DINA
Fuck a locked door. You ready to get turnt?

LISA
I can’t go. There’s just too much going on --

DINA

DELORES
For once I agree with Dina.

Delores calls out into the hallway.

DELORES
Austin! Riley! Come say goodbye to your Mom! She’s going off to have fun so she won’t be so grouchy all the time.

Lisa gives her mom a look as AUSTIN, 6, and RILEY, 4, run in. Lisa kneels down, pulls them into a tight, dramatic hug.

LISA
Do not let Meemaw let you stay up late. And do not forget how much I love you.

DINA
Bitch, you ain’t going off to war.

Dina grabs Lisa’s bag and walks out. Lisa still hugs them.

DELORES
Go! I beg you! We’ll be fine.

Lisa reluctantly releases them, starts toward the door. Dina waits on the porch.
DINA
Are you seriously wearing scrubs?
You got on granny panties too?
   (looking at her feet)
Oh, shit! Clogs?? Is that your new
birth control?

16 INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - DAY
Ryan and Stewart gather their belongings. Their agent,
ELIZABETH DAVELLI, 40s, crude and ballsy as hell, walks in.

ELIZABETH
As usual, you guys fucking killed
it! And I’m not the only one who
thought so...

STEWART
Are you going to tell us who else
thought so?

ELIZABETH
Jesus, you have no patience for
dramatic revelations, do you? Fine.
Bethany Marshall, the head of
marketing at Calmart thought so!
And...

Ryan hangs on her words. Excited.

RYAN
Just tell us!

ELIZABETH
They want to launch an exclusive
“Ryan and Stewart” collection and
underwrite a “Ryan and Stewart”
talk show.

Ryan screams, hugging Elizabeth.

RYAN
Are you kidding me?

STEWART
(stunned)
That’s -- amazing!

ELIZABETH
She said, and I quote, “They’re
just so real.” She and her biz
affairs team are flying down to New
Orleans this weekend to make the
(MORE)
ELIZABETH (CONT'D)
offer. They want to launch the line by the end of the year--

Ryan looks at Stewart, over the moon.

RYAN
Stewart, this is --

STEWART
-- Incredible! Everything we’ve talked about.

He kisses her lovingly. Then checks his watch.

STEWART (CONT’D)
Damn -- better head out if I’m going to make my flight. I’ll catch you and the ladies later.

RYAN
Yes, you will!

ELIZABETH
Bye, big guy.

Elizabeth hugs Stewart. A little too long. It’s awkward, but you can’t blame her. He exudes sexuality and manliness.

As he goes, Elizabeth looks at Ryan.

ELIZABETH
Don’t hate me, but -- are you sure you still want to have a wild weekend with your girls, when so much is hanging on the line? Can’t you just close the deal and take them to St. Bart’s next month? Buy them all Birkin bags?

RYAN
Elizabeth, it’ll be fine -- we’re all adults. Our wild days are behind us. Most of us...

ELIZABETH
You’re sure? Because if I went to New Orleans for a weekend with my college friends, there’d be pictures of our tits all over the internet. If I’m being honest, there’s a few of those already, but YOUR tits are best-selling author tits...
RYAN
What’s the title of my book, Elizabeth?

ELIZABETH
(rotely)
“You Can Have It All”.

RYAN
That’s right.

ELIZABETH
Fine -- I trust your judgement. And I can’t wait to meet “The Flossy Posse.” You guys are going to be keekee-ing all weekend. Girl, bye.

RYAN
Liz -- and I say this out of love -- do yourself a favor this weekend and refrain from saying “sistas”, “bye, Felicia”, “ratchet” or any other urban colloquialisms you may think are appropriate. They’re not.

ELIZABETH
(beat)
Wow. I’m not even offended. That’s why you are Ryan-fucking-Pierce and you’re going to be RICH. Go have your hashtag Black Girl Magic weekend. PS. Which one’s Felicia?

Ryan shakes her head, smiling, and walks out.

ELIZABETH
(calling after)
Am I allowed to say “hello” to her?

17
INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL GATE - DAY

Lisa and Dina sit at the gate as Lisa digs through her KNAPSACK.

LISA
I’ve got us covered for the plane ride: anti-nausea medication, hand-sanitizer, hazmat masks, earplugs. Only have one blanket though. You know how many germs are in an airline blanket?

Dina frowns at her scrubs.
DINA
Aren’t nurses supposed to be sexy? Fishnets and cleavage and sponge baths and whatnot?

LISA
Yes, in porn. Not in the real world. This might be why you have trouble keeping a job.

DINA
I stay employed, Judge Judy.

Lisa pops an anti-nausea pill and puts her mask in place.

DINA
You need to relax. I got some bomb ass cush if you wanna take a hit before we board. Shit will get you right.

LISA
Wait, how did you-- actually, nevermind, I don’t want to know.

DINA
Good, ’cause I ain’t telling. But I’ll give you a hint: where the sun don’t shine.

LISA
Definite pass then. You think there will be any drama with Ryan and Sasha. It’s been long enough, right?

DINA
Better be. I came here to get white girl wasted. I’m not letting any of you bitches kill my vibe.

A smiling Ryan rolls up behind them.

RYAN
Excuse me... can you ladies point me to the “Flossy Posse”?

LISA               DINA
Ryan!               My nigga.

Ryan gives Lisa and Dina big hugs.
RYAN
I’m so happy to see you two!!

SASHA (O.S.)
Hey ladies!

They all turn to see Sasha roll up, expensive outfit. The picture of confidence and success. Sasha hugs Lisa and Dina, full of love and excitement.

SASHA
I’ve missed you guys!

They pull apart. Sasha turns to Ryan. An awkward beat. Then they hug, the barely touching kind.

RYAN
Look at you, girl! Life is treating you well.

SASHA
Please. I see you and Stew pop up on my feed once a week going to some fabulous event.

Lisa and Dina pick up on the “nice-nasty” vibe.

LISA
(sotto)
This isn’t weird, right?

DINA
(sotto)
Shiiit. These bitches plastic.

Lisa pulls out four bedazzled Flossy Posse vests from her bag to break the tension.

LISA
Okay, check it out. I made these just for the occasion!

The vests look like something old ladies in Atlantic City would wear to keep track of each other in the casino.

DINA
Bitch, I thought I told you to push that sewing machine off your roof.

LISA
What? They’re fashionable...

SASHA
...in a Kanye sorta way, sure.
RYAN
How ‘bout we save them for the last night?

SASHA
Or the flight home?

DINA
Or this recycle bin over here.

LISA
You know what? Y’all don’t deserve them...

The girls laugh. Lisa pouts, puts the vests away. As they hug her in good fun.

INT. PLANE - DAY

Our ladies sit in first class, which is all black except for a terrified ELDERLY WHITE COUPLE, 70’s.

ELDERLY WHITE WOMAN
I don’t understand. I thought this was first class.

Sasha, sits next to a masked and blanket covered Lisa sprays her arms with insect repellent. Sasha gives her a look.

LISA
I’m just saying. We all have to be mindful. When that Zika swarm hits you want to prepared.

SASHA
Don’t make me trade seats.

LISA
You want half my sandwich?

SASHA
You still vegan?

LISA
Uh-huh.

SASHA
Then no.

A FLIGHT ATTENDANT tends to Ryan and Dina.
FLIGHT ATTENDANT
What can I get you, Ms Pierce?

RYAN
Vodka tonic, splash of cranberry.

DINA
Oh shit, I see you Ryan! Getting the party started! This shit is free, right?

Ryan nods, embarrassed. Dina snaps her fingers, excited.

DINA (CONT’D)
Heyyy. In that case, let me holler at three whiskey shots and a coke to chase that shit. Coke zero, though, I’m watching my figure. Actually, do you have Cherry Coke?

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
Ma’am, you know this flight is only an hour, right?

DINA
Oh, right. Good lookin’ out. So let me get those three shots now. Then hit me with a shot of Bailey’s when we reach our cruising altitude...

The Flight Attendant scurries off.

DINA (CONT’D)
And don’t forget my Cherry Coke!

RYAN
Dina, can we turn it down a notch?

DINA
Girl, please. We about to descend on the Crescent City to celebrate Black womanhood in all its forms. From the elegant to the ratchet. (she gets up) Who here going to Essence fest?!

Nearly all of the plane affirms.

ELDERLY WHITE WOMAN
We are not.

Her husband, slightly deaf, is confused.
ELDERLY WHITE MAN
Are we being hijacked?

DINA
Ladies, we ain’t turning down shit!! Am I right?

The plane full of women affirms it. Sasha laughs. Dina’s crazy but that’s their girl.

LISA
Dina! Sit down!

Dina grabs the tray of shots from the FLIGHT ATTENDANT

FLIGHT ATTENDANT
Ma’am--

DINA
It’s alright, girl. I got this. Get us some more Patron shots next. I got everyone in here.

The Flight Attendant is miffed but goes back. Dina passes out shots to Sasha, Lisa and the rest plane singing “I’m Every Woman.” The rest of the plane joins in.

Ryan exchanges smiles with Sasha and Lisa who sing and clap along. Sasha whips out her selfie stick.

SASHA
Alright, ladies! On three...

Sasha counts down as the girls lean in and snap their first trip pic. Right then Lisa projectile vomits.

DINA
Told you to get that kush.

A brass band version of Bill Withers’ “Lovely Day” drops kicking off a MONTAGE of photos and handheld video:

EXT. NEW ORLEANS AIRPORT - DAY

A plane lands.

INT. NEW ORLEANS AIRPORT UPPER LEVEL - DAY

The ladies rolling through the airport with their LUGGAGE, Essence signage and a JAZZ BAND greet them.
DINA
The Flossy Posse is back, N’Awlins!

A LIMO DRIVER with an Ipad that says “FLOSSY POSSE” on it greets them as well.

21 EXT. AIRPORT CURBSIDE - DAY

The ladies ceremoniously enter the limo, like royalty, acting silly and having fun.

22 INT. LIMO/SUBURBAN SUV - DAY

The ladies toast with champagne as they drive past the Superdome, heading downtown to the French Quarter.

23 EXT. BOURBON STREET - DAY

Public drunkenness. Hurricanes and Hand Grenades in hand. Droves of fine-ass MEN and beautiful, shapely WOMEN in all shades of brown.

Their limo pulls up and they hop out to join other revelers dancing to the brass band that plays “Lovely Day”.

The ladies strike a pose. Sasha snaps a picture and posts it to social media, #EssenceFest #FlossyPosse #SashasSecrets.

Dina dry-humping a human statue who stays in character and doesn’t move.

They wave to men on wrought-iron balconies who dangle beads.

Ryan listens to a sweet elderly man playing a washboard with spoons.

24 EXT. BOURBON STREET - DAY

Sasha gets distracted from her social media trolling on her phone and looks up to see a Zip-Line strung up between balconies on opposite sides of the street. A White Frat Guy whoops and hollers as he soars above them.

SASHA
Now that is some white boy shit right there. They need to keep that for Mardi Gras and let us have ours.

Dina walks up with four HAND GRENADES.
DINA
Four extra large hand grenades!

LISA
Dina, I asked for wine.

DINA
Bitch, I’ve seen you put grain alcohol in a Slurpee. Before noon.

SASHA
For real. If G-string Daytona-Beach Lisa met Granny-Big-Draws Lisa --

RYAN
Right? Girl, you used to shut clubs down back in college.

LISA
That was before two tiny humans ripped through my vagina and sucked the life from my tits. My ‘booty poppin on a handstand’ days are over.

DINA
How long’s it been since you got that back blew out?

Lisa shrugs.

LISA
Two years, maybe?

They all GASP, stunned.

RYAN
Since Terrence?

LISA
Honestly, I don’t even think about it. I take a vigorous spin class, read some erotica and I manage.

SASHA
This is unacceptable. You are getting some this weekend.

DINA
Straight up, you’re not leaving here without at least two dicks inside you.
RYAN
Okay, let’s not go crazy -- but as your therapist -- I prescribe penis.

A group of women fans spot Ryan and rush up.

WOMEN FANS
Can we take a picture with you?

RYAN
Sure!

They each get their autograph and selfie as the Flossy Posse stands off to the side. Sasha is noticeably envious.

DINA
Damn, this shit gonna happen all weekend? It’s like travelling with Beyonce.

LISA
Aww, leave her alone. Ryan is doing her thing. Proud of her.

Sasha grumbles as an email alert comes up on her phone. Subject: EXCLUSIVE SCOOP. Sasha opens it, excited, then --

SASHA
The fuck --

LISA
What’s the matter -- ?
(seeing the alert)
Oh my God!

DINA
What y’all tripping about?
(taking a look)
Ahhh hell naw --

On Sasha’s phone: a photo of STEWART KISSING ANOTHER WOMAN.

LISA
That can’t be --

Sasha enlarges the photo. It’s undeniably Stewart.

DINA
I’ma Beat. This. Nigga’s. ASS!
SASHA
That’s definitely Stewart’s punk ass. And that is definitely NOT Ryan he’s tonguing down.

LISA
Oh my God, poor Ryan --

DINA
Where’d you get this?!

SASHA
My paparazzi guy sent it to me.

DINA
Who is this bitch?

SASHA
(recognizing her)
Simone. No last name. Some Instagram ho. I heard she sucked off A-Rod in a bathroom stall once.

Sasha shows Simone’s latest Instagram photos. SIMONE, 20s, is Amber Rose-salacious and sexy.

LISA
I hate her! But damn -- look at that ass! Is that real? You don’t get that with just squats, do you?

DINA
Your ass-envy is about on my last nerve.

SASHA
Oh shit -- the bitch is here!

The photos are tagged at Essence Fest.

DINA
Eat a Dick Simone is here?

LISA
We have to tell Ryan.

DINA
Sasha, go handle that.

SASHA
Why do I have to be the one?

DINA
It’s your picture, ho!
The women look over at Ryan who poses with some little girls.

LISA
She’s having such a great time!
We’ve got to be really delicate about how we tell her.

SASHA
Agreed.

DINA
Fuck that. Do it like a Brazilian wax. It’ll sting, shock and maybe make her scream, but it’ll be better than waterboarding the bitch.

LISA
No. Wait until we get to the room.

RYAN
(walking up)
Wooo. Oh my God. I forgot how hot it is here. Please tell me y’all ready to head to the hotel?

Sasha stashes her phone. Lisa gives Dina “not now” eyes.

SASHA/DINA/LISA
Sure/Yeah/Let’s go.

EXT. BOURBON STREET – DAY – MOMENTS LATER

Ryan is all smiles as they walk Bourbon Street linking arms with Sasha and Lisa who look like deer in headlights. Dina is intense.

RYAN
We’ve got a great suite at The Monteleone, VIP passes to all the parties, great seats at the Superdome for New Edition, Maxwell, Babyface... and we are going to EAT! Damn the calories.

SASHA/LISA/DINA
Yup/Sounds great/Be some happy, fat bitches...

RYAN
Now, I’ve got some obligations, but this weekend is all about the Flossy Posse re-connection. That’s (MORE)
RYAN (CONT'D)
what a girls trip is all about:
staying up late, drinking and
making memories that we can laugh
about the rest of our lives.

SASHA/LISA/DINA
Yolo!/Amen/Might kill somebody.

RYAN
(did she hear correctly?)
And gossip! I want to catch up on
everything you three haven’t been
sharing on the phone. No secrets. I
want all the dirt--!

Dina can’t take it anymore, blurring out --

DINA
Bitch, your man’s fucking an
Instagram skank!

Ryan stops walking, stunned. Sasha and Lisa give Dina a look.

LISA
You had to say something?

DINA
That was an opening. That’s God at
work! Recognize.

RYAN
What’s going on?

SASHA
Come on --

Sasha and Lisa pull Ryan into the nearest bar. Dina follows.

DINA
(muttering)
Shit. You don’t want me telling
something, don’t tell me...

INT. BOURBON STREET BAR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

A crowded bar full of day-drinkers. Sasha shows Ryan the
photo. Ryan silently swallows.

SASHA
Ryan, I don’t know what to say...

LISA
We’re all here for you, Ry.
DINA
Don’t worry Boo, I’ma lay hands on him for you. Hot grits, extension cords, Timberland heel. I’ma go in!

The ladies brace for an insane reaction. Ryan looks up from the photo. She’s surprisingly calm.

RYAN
I’ve known about this for a few months now.

The ladies’ jaws drop. The fuck?!

RYAN
Obviously, I was upset when I found out, but we’re in counseling and we’re working through it.

LISA
Oh. Well, that’s great. You’re working it out.

RYAN
Stewart and I are a team. He made some mistakes, but that’s in the past.

SASHA
No, it’s not, this picture was taken two days ago!

RYAN
Sasha. I’m done talking about it.

SASHA
But --

RYAN
Guys, I meant what I said out there: this weekend is about us. We haven’t hung in five years. And by the grace of God we’re here. Together. Let’s make the most of it because if we don’t take advantage of this precious time, shame on us. Today is the last day we’ll be this young.

DINA
She just fucked me up with that.
RYAN
Now, let’s get out of here! Flossy Posse’s back in N’awlins! Let’s go!

DINA
Let’s roll, bitches.

As Lisa and Dina head out, Sasha pulls Ryan back.

SASHA
Hold on. I hear everything you’re saying. And I’m down. But you can’t just pretend this picture doesn’t exist. It’s only a matter of time before the photographer shops it. It’s all fair game in journalism.

RYAN
Journalism? Is that what this is?

Sasha gives her a look. Ryan concedes.

RYAN
What do you think I should do?

SASHA
Let me find out if anyone else has it. And if not, you let me leak the photo.

RYAN
Are you crazy?! Calmart wants to make a deal for a Ryan and Stewart BRAND. I can’t have pictures of him kissing another woman on your site!

SASHA
Hear me out. If I leak it, we can get in front of the story. We can steer the conversation instead of TMZ. This way, you and I find an angle to minimize the damage.

Ryan hates that this is what her life has become.

RYAN
The deal should close this weekend. Can it wait until Monday?

SASHA
I’ll look into it, but probably.

RYAN
Okay. Thanks, Sash.
SASHA

Sure.

Ryan exits. After a beat, Sasha follows.

INT. THE MONTELEONE - LOBBY & FRONT DESK - DAY

The ladies enter a classy hotel lobby thoroughly impressed.

RYAN

I’ll go check us in. Go check out the Carousel Bar, it’s so cute.

Ryan goes to check in while Lisa, Sasha, and Dina head for the Carousel Bar.

INT. CAROUSEL BAR & LOUNGE - DAY

Lisa, Sasha, and Dina enters the Carousel Bar, which rotates like an actual carousel.

DINA

Damn. This is the shit.

LISA

Wow...

SASHA

It’s aight. Little stuffy for my tastes. If I had known I could have gotten us a suite at the W.

Before they can question Sasha’s haterade Lisa notices Stewart in the restaurant eating with MARION, late 50s.

LISA

Oh, hey there’s Stewart.

(then, remembering)

Oh. Asshole.

Dina can barely contain her anger. Sasha takes notice.

SASHA

Dina, look at me. Do not make a scene. You heard Ryan. Be cool.

DINA

Oh, I’m gone be real cool. Just gonna say hey, that’s all --

Dina takes off her earrings.
LISA
Dina, it’s not our business. We need to respect Ryan’s wishes.

DINA
Mmmhmmm. Hold these.

She hands the earrings to Lisa and plows toward Stewart. Lisa and Sasha run after her.

LISA/SASHA
Dina, no!!

Drake’s “0 to 100” drops. The ladies watch, horrified, as Dina clears the entire table. Food and drinks spill everywhere. Stewart stands, pissed, glares at Dina.

STEWART
What the hell is wrong with you?

DINA
You KNOW, nigga! Don’t play me!

Dina grabs an empty bottle off an adjacent table, breaks it, and moves to hit him, but Sasha pulls her back.

SASHA
Dina, no!

DINA
I will END YOU. You and your little thirsty ass, wannabe MILF, hood rat, side tossup ho!
   (to Marian)
   You got on knee-pads under them slacks, Slurpee?

STEWART
Dina, this is my Aunt Marion!

DINA
Yeah? Well, listen up, Auntie: yo nephew is NASTY.

Sasha grabs Dina, pulling her away. The entire lounge eyes them. Lisa awkwardly stands with Stewart and Marian.

LISA
(to Marian)
That’s a beautiful suit. Navy is such a beautiful color on you. Really brings out your eyes.
MARIAN
Uh... thank you. I guess.

LISA
Well, nice meeting you. Please resume your meal.
(beat)
And for what it’s worth, I’m very disappointed in you Stewart. Very.

Lisa crosses back to Sasha who has calmed Dina down. The entire lounge eyes them.

INT. MONTELEONE - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

A SECURITY GUARD approaches Dina.

SECURITY GUARD
I’m gonna need you to leave the premises immediately.

LISA
It’s fine. We’ve got everything under control now.

SECURITY GUARD
(re Dina)
She’s holding a broken Pellegrino bottle.

Lisa carefully takes the broken bottle from Dina’s hand. Ryan runs up to them, at a loss to what just happened.

RYAN
What the hell happened?! I was gone for three minutes!

SASHA
It happened really quickly.

LISA
Like a summer sunset. It was bright and beautiful, then suddenly got very, very dark.

Ryan turns to the guard.

RYAN
Sir, I apologize for my friends, but I can assure you everything’s fine now.
Right then, Stewart approaches. He points at Dina, speaking only to the guard--

STEWART  
Dina, you’re lucky my aunt is hard of hearing.

DINA  
And you lucky I don’t carry a straight edge anymore.

SECURITY GUARD  
Mr Pierce, we’re in the process of removing this woman right now.

STEWART  
If that’s your policy then I understand.

Ryan is incredulous at Stewart. The security guard moves in.

DINA  
Okay, okay, I’m going. Just give me one second.

The security waits a beat. Dina reels back and OPEN HAND SLAPS THE DOG SHIT OUT OF STEWART.

DINA (CONT’D)  
Alright, now I’m ready.

The guard escorts Dina outside. Lisa and Sasha follow.

STEWART  
Your girl needs a leash.

Stewart begins to exit. Ryan wants to reply badly, but considering the eyes on them now she thinks differently, grabbing his arm and interlocking it to walk with him

RYAN  
(with a smile)  
Your room. Now.

They head toward the elevator.

INT. STEWART’S HOTEL SUITE - DAY - MOMENTS LATER  

Stewart exits the bedroom putting on a crisp new shirt. He’s casual cool like this discussion is routine. Ryan is also very matter of fact in her tone.
RYAN
Are you kidding me? You said you ended this shit. Now there’s a picture?

STEWART
My bad, babe.

RYAN
My bad? You didn’t burn dinner. Your sloppy ass got caught sucking face with some Instagram ho. And the bitch is here?

STEWART
I didn’t invite her.

RYAN
So? You need to send that genetically enhanced ass home.

STEWART
Come on, babe. How am I supposed to do that?

RYAN
The same way you tell her to come get dick: text, dm, call, tweet.

STEWART
(pulling out his phone)
Done.

RYAN
You’re really going to do it right in front of me?

STEWART
Trying to be pro-active.

RYAN
You know what? I can’t do this. This is bullshit. This hasn’t been a marriage in awhile, but we agreed to at least be a partnership. Your trifling ass can’t hold up your end of the bargain. Let alone your pants. This is against everything I tell my readers and followers-- yet I’m putting up with it.

STEWART
Ryan, I’m sorry. I messed up. It won’t happen again. Real talk.

(MORE)
Ryan looks at him with disdain, but what he says resonates.

STEWART (CONT'D)
Ry, I’m not going anywhere. You know that. Let’s just keep doing our dance and handle our business. Be that couple who has it all. You know you love me...

RYAN
No more slip-ups. Stick to the plan. And keep your ho under control.

STEWART
Done.

Stewart reaches his hand out to shake hers. Ryan eyes him and reluctantly reciprocates.

31 INT. MONTELEONE - LOBBY - DAY - MOMENTS LATER
Ryan walks up to Sasha and Lisa, holding her head high.

LISA
You okay?

RYAN
I’m fine. So where are we?

SASHA
Dina’s not allowed back in. She’s out front, waiting for us.

32 EXT. MONTELEONE - DAY
Dina sulks talking to passers by.

DINA
Don’t even go in. They tripping.
INT. MONTELEONE - LOBBY - DAY

RYAN
Then we’ll just get another hotel.

SASHA
I’ve called. All the four and five stars are booked.

RYAN
You know what? I came here to have fun with my girls, not hang out in the hotel. Let’s do this!

INT. EMPRESS STAR HOTEL – LATER

The dirtiest, shittiest motel room ever.

SASHA
I’m thinking there’s been a few chalk outlines on this floor.

RYAN
Oh, someone’s definitely been murdered here.

Lisa pulls Clorox wipes from her bag and wipes everything.

LISA
Just don’t let your bare skin touch anything.

DINA
No mini-bar? The fuck? I feel like that one-star was mad generous.

SASHA
You just had to cause a scene, huh? Classic Dina. Can’t go anywhere without some drama.

DINA
Classic Sasha. Can’t let shit go.

LISA
(itching)
Stop fighting! I think I have scabies.

There’s a KNOCK at the door.

DINA
We expecting anyone?
The others shake their head no. Dina opens the door. A drunken HOBO stands there.

HOBO
Rochelle here?

DINA
Nah, man. You got the wrong room.

She starts to shut the door.

HOBO
This where I meet Rochelle every night.

DINA
Rochelle ain’t here. You got to go.

HOBO
It don’t have to be Rochelle. I’ll take one of you.

He holds up a five dollar bill. The ladies look at each other, horrified.

SASHA
Are we staying at a motel where five dollar hookers do their business?

DINA
(kidding)
Lisa, you game? Might as well turn a profit on dick number one tonight.

The Hobo eyes Lisa’s scrubs.

HOBO
Not if she wearing that --

Lisa slams the door and puts on the chain.

LISA
We are done talking to this fool.

Just then the Hobo SLAMS HIS NAKED JUNK up against the window.

HOBO
(through the window)
You don’t want some of this?
The women shriek as Sasha quickly closes the curtain. They all look at each other -- then CRACK UP.

SASHA
Did anyone else just flash back to Ft. Lauderdale? Senior year?

RYAN
Come to think of it, this room may be an exact replica.

DINA
Except the junk smashed against the glass belonged to some fine ass Omegas, not some crackhead with cole slaw in his pubes.

RYAN
Wow, you really took a good look, didn’t you?

DINA
I’m don’t miss shit.

INT. SHITTY MOTEL ROOM - LATER

Music blasts from Dina’s phone. The women model their party outfits for the each other like they’re on a runway. Ryan looks stunning in a hot dress. Dina models her short dress. Sasha shows off her designer outfit.

Ryan notices Sasha has a tag sticking out of her dress.

RYAN
Sash, hold up, you got a tag hanging out.

She goes to pull it out and Sasha jumps away.

SASHA
No!
(off Ryan’s look)
Just tuck it in. I made a deal with the designer that I’d Instagram it this weekend. Taste-maker shit.

DINA
Lis, hurry up! Maxwell ain’t gonna wait all night to meet me, the man’s got shit to do!
Lisa emerges from the bathroom wearing a boxy cotton blouse, a long skirt and loafers. The ladies stare at her in disbelief.

SASHA
What the hell are you wearing?

LISA
(defensive)
What? I love this outfit.

RYAN
It’s nice, Lis. But I think what Sasha’s trying to say is --

DINA
Bitch, fuck your feelings. You ain’t getting no dick dressed like that.

Ryan reaches into her bag. Pulls out a bandage dress.

RYAN
Go put this on.

LISA
Are you crazy?! That’s not a dress! That’s what I wrap around people with head wounds.

Ryan hands Lisa some sexy heels.

RYAN
Pair it with these heels.

LISA
I’m not putting any of this on.

DINA
Lisa, hear me now. Men will fuck anything. Except you in that outfit.

Lisa sighs, walks back to the bathroom, and we HARD CUT TO:

INT. MERCEDES SUPERDOME – FLOOR – NIGHT

NEW EDITION is on stage and everyone is feeling the groove.

The “New” Lisa walks into the Superdome. HEADS turn. She’s hot. Ryan, Sasha and Dina walk up with her.
Dudes greet Lisa with a chorus of “Goddamns” by the men she passes but it’s been so long since she felt goddamn-worthy, she looks down, not meeting eyes with any of her admirers, struggling to get used to walking in heels again.

INT. MERCEDES SUPERDOME - VIP AREA - LATER

CELEBS and other VIPs pepper the dimly lit, posh VIP Bunker sponsored by Ciroc.

Ryan poses on the red carpet. Then she waves over her girls who gladly join her and get the paparazzi treatment.

INT. MERCEDES SUPERDOME - VIP AREA - LATER

Later Ryan conducts an interview in a media bungalow

Later Sasha works the room, smiling and greeting celebs and taste-makers.

Lisa struggles in her heels as she crosses the room.

ON A COUCH -- LATER

Sasha scans the crowd, looking for gossip.

LISA
This party is hot!

DINA
(spotting someone)
Ooh! There’s my dry-cleaner!

SASHA
That’s Arsenio.

DINA
Yeah.... I knew he looked familiar.

RYAN
Lisa, there’s a LOT of guys checking you out, in case you haven’t noticed.

LISA
The drinks are already free, what’s it matter?

SASHA
Lik, I know you love the maternal role and taking care of everyone

(MORE)
SASHA (CONT’D)
and we love you for it, but
tonight? You need to be a MILF.

LISA
You know how long it’s been since I
had to flirt with anyone? I
wouldn’t even know how.

SASHA
You got tits and a pussy. That’s
95% of the work right there. Make a
little chit chat, determine who’s
worthy, then get some. You are a
fierce, sexual goddess who’s been
hiding in mom jeans. Get out there
and slay!

Lisa takes this in.

LISA
You’re right. Let’s do this.

INT. SUPERDOME - VIP AREA - NIGHT

We see a MONTAGE of Lisa awkwardly trying to chat up men as
Sasha stands nearby, playing wingwoman.

LISA
My week was good... Got the smog
inspection on the car... Used some
reward points to buy a humidifier.

He walks off as Sasha shakes her head, having heard.

CUT TO:

INT. SUPERDOME - VIP AREA - NIGHT

SUITOR #2

LISA
You’re not lactose intolerant?
Damn! Lucky you. Seven out of ten
people are. Both my kids and my
mom.

Suitor #2 walks off.

ACROSS THE PARTY
Ryan and Dina spot this.

RYAN
What’s she doing? Telling them she voted for Trump? Go save her!

Dina heads over.

DINA
Stick your titties out and put your straw in your mouth.

SASHA
Can’t hurt.

Lisa readjusts and it’s the unsexiest display ever.

DINA
I can’t watch this.

Dina walks off. Then TYLER PERRY spots Sasha, approaches.

TYLER PERRY
Sasha Franklin? From Sasha’s Secrets?

Sasha smiles at him.

SASHA
Mr. Perry... it’s an honor.

TYLER PERRY
Really? Honor is the last thing I’d think of coming out of your mouth.

SASHA
Now, hold on --

TYLER PERRY
No, heifer, YOU hold on! The filthy lies you spread on that digital bathroom wall of yours are disgusting. You know damn well I didn’t “canoodle” with Shonda Rhimes.

SASHA
I’m just the messenger--

TYLER PERRY
Really? Well get this message -- if I see you in a dark alley, dark room or in your nightmares I will Fuck. You. Up.
Sasha’s mouth hangs open. As he goes --

TYLER PERRY (CONT’D)
God bless you. Praise Jesus.

He pushes past Sasha and walks on. Sasha looks down at her phone. She’s video recorded the whole encounter.

SASHA
Thank you, Madea.

Ryan walks up to Sasha.

RYAN
I thought we agreed to make this a girl’s weekend. Not a work session.

SASHA
What do you call what you’re doing?

RYAN
I’m just saying I don’t want anyone being uncomfortable thinking you’re spying on them.

SASHA
I don’t “spy” on people, Ry--

Across the room Lisa can see the tension brewing.

RYAN
I just, look you’re my girl and this is business. I’m their guest. And you’re my guests.

SASHA
So you’re telling me to behave?

RYAN
I’m saying we agreed to keep this about our weekend.

SASHA
No, you agreed that. Without me. Which is how you usually do things.

Ohhh shit... Ryan takes a breath, refrains from saying anything. Lisa approaches and deflects it.

LISA
Hey, I need to go to the ladies room. Sasha, come with me.
She drags Sasha off. Meanwhile Dina has TYRA BANKS in a headlock for a selfie.

DINA
It’s like that movie where you played twins!

TYRA BANKS
Okay...

Tyra walks off.

DINA
I’ll tag you!

JULIAN (O.S.)
Glad to see some things never change.

Ryan turns to see JULIAN, late 30s, charming with an infectious smile. She lights up.

RYAN
Julian?!

JULIAN
I thought that was you --

They hug. Dina notices.

DINA
Julian? Damn, nigga! You got cute!

Julian smiles, taking the backhanded compliment in stride.

JULIAN
I can’t believe I’m looking at half of the Flossy Posse again. Don’t think we’ve all been together since what... Homecoming ‘05?

RYAN
Those were fun times. You playing this weekend?

JULIAN
Yeah, sitting in with Solange at the House of Blues on Saturday night... you should swing by, I’ll put you all on the list.

RYAN
We’ll be there.
JULIAN
In the meantime, what can I get you to drink? Wait, vodka tonic, splash of cranberry?

RYAN
You remembered.

DINA
What about me?

JULIAN
Any top shelf dark liquor with cherry coke?

DINA
My nigga.

Julian walks off, Ryan watches him admiringly.

INT. MERCEDES SUPERDOME – MEZZANINE MOMENTS LATER
Lisa and Sasha head toward the restroom. Sasha pulls crap off the duct tape she’s put on the soles of her shoes to keep them from scuffing.

SASHA
Lisa, I’m not one of your kids. You can’t just drag me to the bathroom to lecture me --
(re her shoe)
Oh hell, that’s a condom wrapper.

INT. WOMEN’S ROOM – NIGHT – CONTINUOUS
Lisa and Sasha enter.

LISA
Ryan’s going through a lot right now, please just be nice.

SASHA
I’m trying! She’s the one giving me grief for doing my job. Not all of us can smile for the camera, sit next to a football player and make a living.

LISA
That’s not fair and you know it.
SASHA
You always do this. Ryan can do no wrong in your eyes. Even when she bailed on all the plans we made to go start an empire with Stewart. She and I could’ve been the black Huffington Post...

LISA
It’s been five years, Sasha! Five years! This trip was supposed to bring us all back together again...

SASHA
Fine ...

LISA
(hugs)
Thank you. Love you.

Sasha smiles.

SASHA
Hug on some of that man meat out there.

LISA
(sigh)
Please. Who am I kidding? I gonna call my kids and then invest in a good vibrator.

INT. VIP AREA - NIGHT

Lisa is on the phone with her kids in the corner.

LISA
Are you being good for Meemaw?... Austin? Where’d you go?

Her signal died.

LISA (CONT’D)
Dammit!

She waves her phone above her head, trying to get the signal.

A waiter, MALIK, 21, very tall and hot as balls, walks by, tray in hand.

MALIK
You know that doesn’t work, right?
LISA
Yes, but I always do it anyway just in case.

MALIK
You wanna sit on my shoulders and try it?

Lisa can’t tell if he’s serious or not, but goes for it.

LISA
Uh, sure.

INT. VIP AREA - NIGHT

Dina takes a selfie with Estelle.

DINA
I wanna . . . Thank You, Estelle. See what I did there?

ESTELLE
Yeah. Never heard that before.

Estelle gives her side-eye and exits. Sasha talks to Julian.

SASHA
Julian, I know you know: what was the elevator fight about with Jay, Bey and baby sis?

JULIAN
Even if I knew, Sash I wouldn’t do that. I wouldn’t do that to you either.

SASHA
That’s why it’s an anonymous source- 

DINA
Hold on, y’all -- we’ve got smash time at two-o’clock.

They look -- Lisa’s on Malik’s shoulders, giggling and embarrassed. He turns her so that he’s facing her crotch and now she’s even more embarrassed. And hella turned on.

SASHA
A minute ago she had them running and now she’s got her snatch in someone’s face?
JULIAN
Glad to see things haven’t changed.
Y’all still wild.

Then THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE from the main stage as Diddy takes the stage. The live feed streams into every bunker, on every flat screen. Dina bounces like a giddy teenager. Sasha dances. Ryan sits, plays it cool.

JULIAN
Damn, the Ryan I remember couldn’t hear Diddy without moving. You’re at Essence Fest with your girls. You gotta turn up.

DINA
Tell her, J!

Ryan still plays it cool.

JULIAN
Maybe you’re just not close enough...

Julian flashes backstage passes. Dina grabs one.

DINA
Hell yeah. I’mma get pregnant tonight!!

INT. MERCEDES SUPERDOME – BACKSTAGE – NIGHT

The ladies have a blast. Ryan dances to the music, finally loosening up. Julian eyes her, smiling. She catches his eye. Everyone sings along as the music plays.

DINA
I love you!

Dina flashes her boobs at Diddy, who gives her side-eye from the stage.

DINA (CONT’D)
Don’t act like you don’t want this!
You know I made your pucker feel good!

EXT. MERCEDES SUPERDOME – STREET – LATER

The concert’s ended. The ladies stumble out. Lisa’s arm in arm with Malik.
DINA
Turn up, turn up, turn up! Where we going next?

MALIK
My fraternity’s having a party at Xavier.

LISA
How old are you?

MALIK
Twenty-one.

SASHA
We are not going to a college frat party.

DINA
I should probably wait out here for Diddy.
(off their look)
Once you see these big brown jump-offs, they burned in your brain.

A black SUV pulls up. A tinted window drops, it’s Julian.

JULIAN
What y'all getting into?

RYAN
We should probably just get to bed.

SASHA/DINA
Hell no!/It’s only midnight.

JULIAN
I know a spot.

RYAN
I don’t know you, guys... I just don’t have any energy left.

48 INT. NEW ORLEANS NIGHTCLUB – NIGHT

Ryan and the Flossy Posse dances on the DJ stage in a packed nightclub. Drunk and having a blast. Julian dances her with a smile.

JULIAN
Now that’s the Ryan I remember.

The other girls are happy to see her happy.
SASHA
This is exactly what Ryan needed to forget about the whole Stewart mess.

DINA
A little alcohol, a little bootie poppin’ -- cure for everything.

She looks at Lisa pointedly. Malik is still beside her.

The DJ drops the intro of Mary J Blige’s “Real Love”.

LISA
Oh shit! They’re playing our song!

Dina shoves people to the side.

DINA
Move bitches! Flossy Posse coming through...

Dina, Sasha and Lisa climb on top of the table with Ryan and pop their booties in unison as the hook comes in. Malik is beside himself.

As the song PLAYS:
the ladies smoke a joint in the stairwell,
Dina does a jello shot off of some guy’s abs,
Ryan pulls Julian up on the table with them.

RYAN
I’m so glad we ran into you. It’s been a long time since I had fun like this.

JULIAN
The Ryan I remember from Spelman never had a problem with that.

RYAN
I miss that Ryan.

JULIAN
Well, you brought her back tonight.

RYAN
Maybe she needs you around more often...

She’s definitely flirting -- but Julian remains a gentleman.
JULIAN
I should probably get you home.
It’s 3 AM, didn’t you say you have
an appearance tomorrow? With your
husband?

RYAN
(reality sobering her)
Yeah, that nigga--

JULIAN
What?

RYAN
What? No. Yes. You’re right. I
should get back.

She leans down to take a shot from a tray that’s being
offered and spots something on the balcony --

RYAN (CONT’D)
But not before I try some white boy
shit!

She jumps off the table. Julian follows, concerned.

EXT. BOURBON STREET – BALCONIES – NIGHT – MOMENTS LATER
Ryan is now on the zipline, soaring over the street packed
with people.

ON THE NIGHTCLUB BALCONY
The girls cheer her on.

DINA
Our girl is unleashed!

ON THE ZIPLINE
Ryan’s loving it. Feeling free.

RYAN
Wooooo!

ON THE STREET BALCONY ACROSS THE STREET
Ryan
That was amazing! Come on Sasha!!

She’s flush with adrenaline.

ON THE NIGHT CLUB BALCONY
Sasha shrugs.

**SASHA**
It does look fun.

**ON THE ZIPLINE**

Sasha now soars over the street.

**SASHA**
Hell yes!

**ON THE NIGHTCLUB BALCONY**

Lisa is next. Doing an “I have to pee” dance.

**LISA**
Damn, I hope that club across the way has shorter bathroom lines.

**ON THE ZIPLINE**

Lisa soars along until -- she stops moving. Stuck in the middle of the zipline.

**LISA**
What’s happening? Why am I stuck?

**ON THE NIGHTCLUB BALCONY**

Malik looks worried.

**MALIK**
Why’d she stop?

**DINA**
I don’t think she did it on purpose.

**ON THE ZIPLINE**

Lisa tries to inch it along. Nothing works.

**LISA**
(to herself)
Dammit... Now’s not a good time for this!

She crosses her legs. Really needing to pee.

**LISA**
Just had to break the damn seal, didn’t I?
ON THE BALCONY ACROSS THE STREET

The Zipline Operator tries to reel in the slack on the line. Julian has appeared next to Ryan.

JULIAN
(calling out)
They’re gonna fix it, hold on.

LISA
Tell them to hurry!

ON THE ZIPLINE

Lisa starts to look worried.

LISA
C’mon, Lisa, you can hold it...
please Lord Baby Jesus, do not let me --

But it’s too late. She starts to PEE all over the crowd below.

LISA
(mortified)
NO!!

ON THE BALCONY ACROSS THE STREET

SASHA
Oh, shit --

RYAN
I can’t watch!

ON THE STREET

As people wipe their heads, angry, Lisa wants to die.

CROWD MEMBERS
What the fuck?/No, that bitch didn’t!

LISA
(calling down)
I’m so sorry! I just couldn’t hold it any longer!

ON THE NIGHTCLUB BALCONY

Dina springs into rescue mode, hopping on the zipline.
DINA
Girl, I got you!

ON THE ZIPLINE

Dina soars up behind Lisa, bumping into her. The momentum pushes them both across.

DINA
Bitch, you never told me you give golden showers! That’s my jam!

Dina spreads her legs, PURPOSEFULLY PISSING on the crowd below.

As they react --

DINA
Y’all didn’t even have to take me to Red Lobster!

ON THE BALCONY ACROSS THE STREET

Julian catches Lisa and Dina as they make it across.

JULIAN
When I said turn up -- I didn’t know y’all were gonna listen quite so hard.

Lisa wants to die.

LISA
Oh my God, I just peed on Bourbon Street!

DINA
Fuck yeah! We just peed on Bourbon Street!

JULIAN
(laughing)
Come on. Let me take y’all back to your hotel. Where you staying? The W? The Ritz?

Off Ryan’s embarrassed look, we CUT TO:

INT. JULIAN’S SUITE - NIGHT

Julian wheels his bag out of the bedroom, giving his suite to the girls. Ryan, now in her pajamas, feels bad.
RYAN
Are you sure?

JULIAN
There’s no way in hell I’d let y’all stay in that dump. I’ll crash with the guys in the band. Get some sleep.

RYAN
Thank you, Julian. For everything tonight.

He turns at the door. Concerned about her.

JULIAN
You sure everything’s good with you?

RYAN
Absolutely.

She smiles at him and he nods.

JULIAN
Okay then.

Ryan shuts the door and walks into --

51 INT. RITZ CARLTON - GIRLS’ SUITE - BEDROOM - NIGHT
Dina and Sasha now listen at the bathroom door. It’s silent.

DINA
He either fucked her speechless, or they stabbed each other and they’re bleeding out.

52 INT. RITZ CARLTON - GIRLS’ SUITE BATHROOM - NIGHT - SAME TIME
Lisa and Malik kiss. Hot and heavy. He lifts her on the sink. She reaches for his zipper, reaches in and grabs hold --

LISA
(giggling)
Shy, huh? Don’t worry I just want to touch it. Move your arm.

MALIK
Uhh, that’s not my arm.
Lisa pauses, stops kissing, looks down at what’s in her hands, looks back at him, back at his junk, gasps and releases him.

LISA
Does it have a name? Or a driver’s license? Or a cage?

MALIK
(laughing)
Don’t let the size scare you.

LISA
Why not? I’m scared.
(staring)
I’m terrified.

LISA (VO) (CONT’D)
Y’all should’ve seen this thing --

CUT TO:

53 INT. RITZ CARLTON - GIRL’S SUITE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT
Lisa is now on the couch in the living room, as are the other ladies who are dog-ass tired and half-asleep. Except for Dina, who scarfs down some room service.

DINA
Well, why didn’t you bring it out and show us?!

LISA
Y’all, it was like tree trunk.

DINA
Good thing you got a beaver! Take it down!

LISA
Mmm mmm... I couldn’t do it.

DINA
What?! The good Lord gave you ass like that and you just handed it back?

SASHA
(half asleep)
I’m gonna give you a lecture in the morning, but right now, I’m too tired.
Ryan is passing out as well.

RYAN
I think my liver is broken.

DINA
Oh, no y’all don’t. Come on.

She gets down on her knees and prays while the other look at her like she’s nuts.

DINA
(eyes closed)
What? I’m not going to hell. Jesus loves me. And I’ma pray for y’all too. Recognize your blessing.

The others look at each other then join Dina in her prayers.

FADE TO BLACK.

54  INT. RITZ CARLTON - GIRLS’ SUITE - NEXT MORNING  54

The ladies are piled on the king bed, arms and limbs criss-crossed, passed out. Ryan’s cell RINGS. She looks at her watch and jumps out of bed, answering the phone.

RYAN
(into phone)
Elizabeth, hi, be right there!

Ryan hangs up in a panic.

RYAN (CONT’D)
Shit! Shit! Shit! I don’t even have time to shower!

Ryan tries to pull herself together as the girls wake up.

DINA
(half-asleep)

As Ryan rushes into the bathroom --

DINA
And she’s the one writing self-help books...

She goes back to sleep.
Ryan rides in a golf-cart being driven by a festival assistant. Bouncing up and down, sunglasses on, hungover AF. She burps loudly. A hot mess.

Ryan pulls up in the golf cart. A bit disheveled and frazzled. Maybe still a little drunk. Stewart shakes his head.

STEWART
Nice of you to show up. You want to maybe comb your hair?

RYAN
What? I don’t look pretty? How’s my breath?

She breathes on him. We can tell by his reaction that it’s toxic.

STEWART
What’s wrong with you?

Elizabeth walks up.

ELIZABETH
Whoa -- Somebody had some adult beverages...
(worried)
Let’s get you some coffee... And hair and makeup.

A GLAM SQUAD TEAM of HAIR, MAKE-UP, and WARDROBE set up.

ELIZABETH
Just so you know -- Bethany from Calmart will be in the audience. She wants to get your vibe before the meeting.

Ryan’s vibe right now is hungover as fuck. She puts on a smile.

RYAN
Then I guess I should brush my teeth --

She makes a face at Stewart who gives her a “will you quit playing now?” look.
Lisa, Sasha and Dina eat breakfast, hungover.

LISA
Look, you guys, I’ve been out of the game for too long. He’s been with girls who know tricks I don’t.

SASHA
Please... there’s no tricks you don’t know.

DINA
You ever grapefruited?

Sasha looks just as confused as Lisa.

DINA
Neither of you tricks have grapefruited?

LISA
Okay, explain.

Dina picks up a grapefruit from the fruit basket.

DINA
(demonstrating)
You cut a hole in each end of the grapefruit and make a tunnel -- then put the grapefruit on his dick while you suck it.

Sasha sets down her forkful of grapefruit.

SASHA/LISA
What???

Dina picks up a banana to use in place of a dick.

DINA
But you gotta make sure you twist and squeeze -- that way your man feels like he’s getting sucked and fucked at the same time.

She twists it up and down the base of the banana while she sucks on the top. Slurping noises included.

Sasha and Lisa’s mouths are agape as she demonstrates.

Dina raises her head from the banana.
LISA
Where’d you even learn that?

DINA
The Internet. You want a trick?
There you go. You’re doing your man
and getting your Vitamin C.

SASHA
And a protein shot --

They all laugh hysterically.

EXT. FRENCH QUARTER STREET - LATER

Dina, Lisa and Sasha walk down the street where people are already drinking. Lisa and Sasha stop to linger in a funky clothing store as Dina is lured by two street VENDORS who vie for her attention.

VENDOR #1
Hurricanes! Two for twenty-five!

VENDOR #2
Extra special, authentic Hurricanes. Two for twenty over here!

Dina heads for Vendor #2, when Vendor #1 calls out.

VENDOR #1
Don’t go to him, beautiful. I’ve got something special for you.

DINA
Oh, now I’m beautiful...? Do tell...

VENDOR #1
Baby, you can get Hurricanes anywhere. But I’m the only place in New Orleans you can get this...

He pulls out a shiny bottle of ABSINTHE. Dina’s eyes light up like a kid. He’s got her.

DINA
The fuck is that?

VENDOR #1
It’s two hundred year old pure wormwood absinthe. Green Fairy.

DINA
I want it!
Excited, Dina reaches for the bottle, but he pulls away.

VENDOR #1
I just want to make sure you know what you’re getting--

DINA
I don’t give a fuck. That shit is green and shiny and looks like it will get us hella bent!

VENDOR #1
It will. A tiny splash will have you seeing in 3-D.

Dina stares at the bottle, transfixed, not listening.

VENDOR #1 (CONT’D)
Just a splash, got it? Any more than that--

DINA
Nigga, just give it to me.

VENDOR #1
This bottle should probably last you four or five years--

DINA
Yep, got it. Five weeks.

VENDOR #1
No. Five years.

DINA
Five days. Understood.

VENDOR #1
I feel like you’re not listening. This has hallucinogenic properties--

Dina hands over some cash, grabs the bottle, cuts him off.

DINA
Thank you. This will be used very ignorantly.

As Dina walks away, the Vendor shakes his head, knowingly.
FANS. BETHANY, 40s, the conservative Calmart exec, sits in
the front row next to Elizabeth, beaming.

RYAN
And now Stew is going to add rice
so it can get coated with all that
savory flavor.

STEWART
And keep stirring so it doesn’t get
burned.

RYAN
Can’t have that, y’all.

They laugh together as everyone in the audience enjoys the
wonder couple.

ON SASHA/LISA/DINA - INTERCUT

The ladies sit in the crowd watching Ryan and Stewart.

SASHA
Ryan is on some Academy Award shit
right now for that performance.

LISA
Maybe it’s not all put on. I think
she still really loves him and
there’s nothing wrong with that.

DINA
You think we gonna get to taste
what they making? I love jambalaya.

ON STAGE

SHAUN ROBINSON
You two look like you’re having so
much fun! I guess that chapter in
your book is right: “The Couple Who
Cooks Together Stays Together”.

Everyone applauds as Ryan catches a glimpse of Simone in the
audience! Her demeanor shifts.

RYAN
So true. You see Shaun, when
cooking it is vital to remain
faithful to the recipe so it can
turn out right. The shared
experience should bring you closer
because you’re invested in the
(MORE)
RYAN (CONT'D)
final result. Isn’t that right, honey?

STEWART
Sure is. Ryan is very neat, orderly and follows the recipe to the t-

RYAN
And Stewart is a messy cook. Doesn’t clean after himself and improv. A lot.

STEWART
(sensing a shift)
Well, there is no one way to be in the kitchen. Sometimes you want to switch it up, sometimes a little extra spice give you a little kick and maybe surprises you.

Ryan grunts a sarcastic utterance. Then--

SIMONE
(shouting)
That’s what I’m talking about.

Lisa, Dina and Sasha see Simone as does Stewart.

SASHA
No, this bitch didn’t.

ON STAGE

SHAUN ROBINSON
Now this meal comes with some fresh jalapeno cornbread . . .

RYAN
No Shaun! No bread. No side dishes!

Shaun is taken aback.

RYAN (CONT'D)
One pot meals like this have everything you need for a hearty, savory, meal. But some folks just aren’t satisfied. I say put it in a bowl and keep it moving.

ON BETHANY AND ELIZABETH

Elizabeth doesn’t know what’s going on as Bethany laughs.
BETHANY
Oh wow, she is a hoot.

ELIZABETH
Ha. Yeah. That’s my girl.
(sotto)
What the fuck--?

ON STAGE

SHAUN ROBINSON
Why don’t we invite a lucky audience member to come and sample?

STEWART
Great idea.

Simone is up out of her chair and heads toward the stage. The ladies notice and leap into action.

DINA
Oh hell no...

SASHA
Let’s go...

The ladies and Simone scurry, converging toward the stage.

SHAUN ROBINSON
Looks like we have a few hungry volunteers.

ELIZABETH
Who the fuck are these chicks?

Ryan silently fumes as Simone approaches and gets a sample from a VOLUNTEER. Lisa cuts her off and takes it instead.

SIMONE
Oh, sorry. I just wanted a taste.

LISA
I think you’ve tasted enough. Ryan made this meal with Stew. Not you.

DINA
(tasting it)
For real. And it’s good than a motherfucker. Ryan you can cook!

SIMONE
It’s really good, but I’d really love more sausage in mine.
RYAN
(maintaining composure)
Really? How about it Stew: you
gonna give her some more sausage?

STEWART
(throat clear)
Well, the customer is always right.

RYAN
Oh. Apparently there’s an abundance
of sausage to go around. Stewart
just loves to dole it out---

SASHA
(intervening)
Ryan. Just how much sausage should
be added?

RYAN
When it comes to sausage it all
depends on how greedy you want to
be before stuffing it in your bowl.

Ryan grabs a MEAT CLEAVER swinging it dangerously close to
Stewart who has to weave out of the way.

RYAN (CONT’D)
You can chop it . . .

Whack whack whack goes the cleaver into the sausage.

RYAN (CONT’D)
You can slice it sideways---

Ryan slices with a CHEF’S KNIFE splitting the sausage in
half, then methodically slicing it in little pieces.

RYAN (CONT’D)
You can even grind it.

Ryan grabs two sausages, tosses them in a meat grinder and
goes to work making mincemeat.

SHAUN ROBINSON
Isn’t sausage ground up already?

RYAN
Yes, but one might choke on chunky
bits of sausage.

Ryan tosses a bowl of jambalaya with extra sausage to Simone.
SIMONE
Only if you have a gag-reflex.

DINA
Oooh, this bitch gonna get hurt.

BETHANY AND ELIZABETH

BETHANY
Are they still talking about jambalaya?

ELIZABETH
Uh-huh. Yeah. It’s colloquial: “put your foot in it”, “so good make ya wanna slap ya mamma” “bitch gonna get hurt” Same etymology.

SHAUN ROBINSON

SHAUN ROBINSON
This ladies and gentlemen this may be the epitome of too many cooks in the kitchen.

SIMONE
Thanks for the sample. I’ll be sure to try it again.

Simone saunters off. Ryan calls after her.

RYAN
You should move on from this one--

SASHA
(cutting)
Uhhh because there’s plenty of more delicious food ...

LISA
Out here at Essence eats . . .

DINA
So get your own, ho!

SHAUN
And that is the Essence of Cooking!

APPLAUSE from the audience. Lisa/Sasha/Dina/Ryan and Stewart all bow. Bethany beams.
INT. SUGAR MILL - BACKSTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Ryan and Stewart walk backstage.

STEWART
What the hell was that, Ry?

RYAN
You’re asking me? You were supposed to keep the sausage gobbler in check. What happened to that?

STEWART
That was not my fault --

RYAN
Oh, so your penis ended up in her mouth how exactly? Because let’s be clear: that’s how this started.

STEWART
You’re gonna have to figure out how to get yourself under control . . .

Elizabeth enters.

ELIZABETH
That was fucking amazing! The crowd loved it. Bethany loved it. Were those your girls? I thought there were only three? Who’s the hottie with the badonkadonk?

STEWART
She’s nobody. Never seen her before.

ELIZABETH
Crap. I should get her number --

RYAN & STEWART
No!

ELIZABETH
No worries. It’s better improvised. Stewart, can I steal you for a minute? There’s a reporter who’s a football fan.

He walks off with Elizabeth. Ryan takes a deep breath.

RYAN
I am strong, I am powerful... I am...
She stops as her eyes mist. The mask is off. She breathes in deeply, trying to find inner strength. Sasha walks up.

SASHA
You good, Ry?

Ryan pulls herself together. Turns around, smiling.

RYAN
Yeah, girl. All good! That was kinda crazy, huh?

SASHA
Little bit.

RYAN
Thanks for having my back up there.

SASHA
Of course. You sure you’re good?

RYAN
Yup. All in a day’s work. I’ve got a fan meet and greet -- I’ll catch up with y’all later, okay?

She walks off, holding it together. Sasha is concerned.

INT. ESSENCE FEST CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

Thousands of people walk through the center as sponsors hold panels on everything from beauty and style to business to empowerment and music. Celebrities including Tyrese and Morris Chestnut wave to and interact with fans. Dina screams.

DINA
Oh my God! ‘Rese! Tyrese! Be my baby-boy, puleeeeeeze!!

She goes to pull up her shirt and Lisa stops her.

LISA
Dina, I swear to God if don’t control yourself . . .

DINA
I’m just saying I’d leave Diddy for Tyrese.

Lisa rolls her eyes. Sasha is busy checking her email on her phone. She has an OVERDRAFT NOTICE from her bank and an EVICTION NOTICE from her landlord.
SASHA
What the hell--?

LISA
Everything okay?

SASHA
Yeah... it will be.

INT. RITZ CARLTON - GIRLS’ SUITE BAR AREA - AFTERNOON

Dina’s behind the bar mixing drinks like a pro, discreetly pouring a generous amount of ABSINTHE in each glass. Music blasts through the TV’s iTunes connection and iPhotos of the Flossy Posse from past Essence Fests rotate on screen.

DINA
You’ve got the Crabwalk, the Butter Churner, the Organ Grinder... sometimes they cry during that one.

SASHA
Why would you want them to cry?

DINA
Power.

LISA
(popping head in)
Can you turn that down? I’m on the phone!

Sasha turns down the music. Sasha and Dina exchange looks.

DINA
Oooh, she need some dick.

INT. SUITE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Lisa resumes FaceTime with Riley and Austin.

LISA
I’ve gotta go, we’re gonna go listen to a man sing some songs. Make sure Meemaw puts you to bed now.

Ryan walks by and waves to the kids.
RYAN
Hi guys! Bye guys!
(to Lisa)
So cute!

As Lisa hangs up --

LISA
You and Stewart ever talk about it?
Maybe a baby will help bring you closer. Kids change men. Didn’t change Terrence... but hell, maybe you’ll get lucky. And no one will ever love you like your babies.

RYAN
Oh yeah. We talk about it -- I’ve just been so focused on career.

LISA
Well don’t wait too long. No one will ever love you like your babies.

DINA (O.S.)
Until they become ungrateful fucking teenagers

LISA
Don’t listen to her.

Before Ryan can respond the sound of a door knock is heard.

INT. GIRLS SUITE - LIVING ROOM/LOUGE - CONTINUOUS
Elizabeth enters the open door, smiling.

ELIZABETH
Is this the Flossy Posse suite?

DINA
Who’s asking?

ELIZABETH

Ryan walks out of the bedroom, nervous at seeing Dina and Elizabeth in the same proximity.

RYAN
Hey...
ELIZABETH
Bethany wants to meet you and Stewart tonight at the White party. I know you’re with the F to the P, just hang out with her for fifteen minutes. Inspire her to add another zero to the deal...

RYAN
Y’all cool to hang out at a party for a little bit before we go to the concert?

DINA
Who’s Bethany?

RYAN
She’s the Calmart exec giving me and Stewart our own BRAND.

DINA
Oh, THAT Bethany! We love that bitch! Let’s make a toast.

SASHA
Ooh, did you make us hurricanes?

DINA
Fuck a hurricane. This is a tsunami.

LISA
I was thinking maybe just wine tonight...

DINA
Did you put on your granny panties again? We got drinking to do!

Dina hands one to Elizabeth.

DINA
Welcome to Saturday night Flossy Posse style...

Ryan shoots Elizabeth a look like, “Don’t worry, it’s just one drink.” Dina raises her glass, as do the others.

DINA
To Bethany. And the shit-ton of money she’s going to give Ryan.

ELIZABETH
And Stewart...
DINA
Yeah, that motherfucker, too.

Ryan shoots Dina a “shut-up” look as they all down their drinks.

ELIZABETH
So, I’ll see you there? And don’t forget we’ve got the signing meeting tomorrow. Let’s be bright-eyed and bushy-tailed.

She eyes Dina, worried.

RYAN
You have my word. Tonight I’m taking it easy.

ELIZABETH
Dass mah gurrl... 

They all look at Elizabeth crazy. Then--

DINA
Okay, she’s cut off.

INT. SWANKY LOUNGE - NIGHT

Super exclusive, VIP Essence-sponsored party. Sasha, Lisa and Dina get busy to a NEW HIP-HOP JAM.

Sasha looks out into the crowd.

SASHA
Is that Pharrell? I can’t tell. Why does he look so blurry?

The music changes and the crowd looks like they’re slowing down. The girls start to sway a bit.

LISA
I feel a little funny. Do you feel funny?

DINA
Feel funny?
(feeling herself)
I feel fine. See? Feel me?

Lisa rubs her.

SASHA
Why are you feeling her?
LISA
Because she axed did she feel funny?
   (giggling)
I said axed.

DINA
You did.
   (looking)
Oo, baller-alert. Bye, bitches.

Dina takes off out of frame.

SASHA
Is she moving in slow motion or am I hearing in slow motion?

Sasha looks up at the stars painted on the ceiling.

SASHA
Oh shit -- do not look up!

MONTAGE of the ladies tripping:

- In Sasha’s POV she’s hurling through space
- Dina dances with a model-looking type guy and she is into him, grinding her ass all over his crotch as the camera moves to reveal a hideous dude who can’t believe his luck.
- Lisa looks toward a myriad of statues of Jazz Musicians that suddenly animate and come to life. Lisa is mesmerized.

66 INT. SWANKY LOUNGE - NIGHT
Dina steps up to the bar.

DINA
One grapefruit please. And a knife.

She has a devilish look on her face.

67 INT. SWANKY LOUNGE - WOMEN’S ROOM - NIGHT
Dina and her “model” go into a a women’s room stall with the grapefruit and shut the door while Lisa is in the mirror re-applying her make-up like a 6-year-old would.

LISA
Pretty!

Meanwhile, outside the stall--
A Swanky Lounge - Night

- Sasha tries to walk through the crowd, despite the fact that all the party-goers look upside down. She finds Lisa, now in crazy make-up.

**Sasha**
There’s a bear in here! Plus, I figured out time travel.

Dina walks up, bent at a 70 degree angle, clothes now on backwards.

**Dina**
I just burped and a rainbow came out.

The rest of the party-goers stare at them, shaking their heads.

**Lisa**
What’re they looking at?

Dina looks at Sasha, her face is an undulating Mardi Gras mask.

**Dina**
Oh shit how you do that? That’s dope...

Dina grabs Sasha’s face. Sasha pushes her hands away.

**Sasha**
Stop playing! I told you there’s bear in here.

**Lisa**
You know what? I think we might be trippin’.

**Sasha**
Where’s Ryan?

**Lisa**
She can’t trip in front of Bethany!
INT. SWANKY LOUNGE - NIGHT

ACROSS THE PARTY

Ryan, now sweaty and dizzy is in a VIP booth with Stewart, Elizabeth and Bethany trying her best to focus.

BETHANY
I just loved your cooking demo today. The way you two played off of each other was fantastic. So much fun.

RYAN
We’re all about fun. Funnn Funnn!

Ryan starts rubbing ice cubes on her face.

BETHANY
Are you feeling okay?

RYAN
I’m just so thirsty --

Ryan takes a sip of water and completely misses her mouth.

STEWART
Let me get you a napkin.

He dabs her forehead with it. Whispering to her --

STEWART
What the hell are you on?!

RYAN
What?!! Nigga chill out --

Bethany is taken aback as is Stewart, but then his attention is caught by --

ACROSS THE ROOM

Dina walking across the room taking off her clothes.

DINA
Why it so damn hot?

ON RYAN

She looks up at the WAITRESS, who now appears to be Simone, but only to Ryan.

WAITRESS
Can I get you anything?
RYAN
(to Stewart)
What the hell she doing here?

STEWART
She’s here to take our order.

WAITRESS/SIMONE
I can come back--

RYAN
Don’t. You. Dare.

The waitress scurries off. Stewart leans into Ryan.

STEWART
What the hell’s gotten into you?

RYAN
The devil--?

STEWART
(to Bethany)
So, tell me more about the Calmart philosophy.

BETHANY
Well--

Suddenly, Elizabeth starts laughing hysterically. Ryan tries to step in and address a confused Bethany.

RYAN
So you were saying, Bethanyyyyy!!!

Bethany’s eyes begin to BUG OUT like they’re animated.

RYAN
Oh, shit!

Elizabeth continues laughing then starts pecking at Stewart’s shoulder like a chicken. He shrugs her off and she starts doing it to Bethany.

BETHANY
I’m not sure what’s happening here...

Ryan looks around the party. There’s SIMONE. She blinks her eyes. And there she is dancing, then by the bar drinking, in a booth eating, chatting on a couch -- everywhere Ryan looks, Simone is there.
RYAN
Excuse me. I need some fresh air.

Ryan takes off, leaving Stewart there to cover on the fly.

STEWART
My apologies, Bethany. Ryan’s been taking a new allergy medicine and it’s had some side effects.

BETHANY
(referring to Elizabeth)
What’s her excuse?

Elizabeth is on the ground in fetus position laughing hard.

ACROSS THE PARTY

Sasha, Dina and Lisa are trying to get to Ryan. But they’re moving in slow motion. Barely covering ground.

SASHA
We’ve gotta save Ry! If we’re trippin, she’s trippin.

DINA
I’m not tripping, but I’m feeling niiiiice

Ryan spots them.

RYAN
We need to leave! Now! The tsunami has hit! The tsunami has hit!

EXT. FRENCHMEN STREET - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

On the street, the Flossy Posse are all clearly still on the absinthe high. Guzzling water from a street vendor. Ryan turns to Dina, pissed.

RYAN
What the hell did you put in those drinks?!

DINA
Love.

RYAN
Dina, I’m not playing!
DINA
... and a little absinthe. I may have over poured.

SASHA
None of y’all saw the bear?

RYAN
Fuck! Bethany just saw me like this. We need to hide but I’m too fucked up to find the hotel.

LISA
(like a child)
Look! Pretty hair!

She points at a booth on the street where someone is selling WIGS and SUNGLASSES.

Cash Money’s “Bling-Bling”, pours out from the open door of a ratchet bar next door.

DINA
You know Bethany won’t find you in there... Let’s go set it off.

Lisa and Sasha look at each other like WTF this bitch talking about, before they follow her. Ryan does the same.

INT. RATCHET BAR - MOMENTS LATER

The ladies burst into the bar -- WIGS AND SUNGLASSES ON. Still amped. Throwback southern hip hop blasts. This crowd is ratchet as hell. Ryan goes unrecognized.

DINA
Booty sweat and Hennessy in the air. We have found our tribe!

All of a sudden Q-Tip’s “Vivrant Thing” comes on.

RYAN
Oh hell yeah. Let’s dance this shit off.

The ladies hit the floor, doing their old sorority step dances. The crowd goes wild. The Flossy Posse owns the floor. Until...

A group of YOUNG CHICKS, 20s, trashy as fuck, answer the call. They bring the noise.
YOUNG CHICK
Y’all might wanna sit down and rest.

DINA
Keep talkin, Kesha.

The DJ alternates newer and older songs as the crews battle.

He reaches into his 1997 arsenal and hits them with Master P’s “Make ‘Em Say Uhhh” and the Flossy Posse brings the heat. Ryan is having a blast -- no inhibitions. In disguise. Free.

Then, Fetty Wap’s “Trap Queen” drops and the Young Chicks tear it up. But the Flossy Posse will not be outdone. “Lose Control” by Missy Elliot comes on and they kill it.

INT. RATCHET BAR - NIGHT

Four shot glasses toast. The Flossy Posse is unstoppable. Before they can knock it back-- Simone walking by bumps into Dina. Record scratch moment.

Oh shit.

Simone pales, realizing who they are. And they recognize her.

DINA
You know what? Everyone expects me to beat your ass right now -- but I’m all about love tonight. You have hallucinogens to thank for that.

Lisa CLOCKS SIMONE IN THE FACE. Hard.

LISA
Mine wore off.

Now it’s on. One of Simone’s Crew goes after Lisa.

DINA
Well, shit, if Lisa starts a party, I will fucking attend!!

She smacks Simone hard. But Simone is trash. She’s got moves. She punches Dina in the face. Hard. Dina smiles.

DINA
Thank you. Now I can beat your ass with no remorse whatsoever.
An all out brawl ensues. Dina unloads on Simone. Sasha jumps on Simone’s back. Lisa punches all of Simone’s friends. Letting out years of repressed divorced anger.

Ryan is in the perfect position to clock Simone like a motherfucker until --

Blue lights flash outside and a CLUB PATRON yells.

CLUB PATRON
Five-oh, y’all!

Ryan settles for grabbing Simone’s fake tit and wrenching it--

RYAN
Titty Twister!

EXT. RATCHET BAR - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Ryan gets her head slammed on the hood of car, outside of the bar, cuffed. Wigs crooked, sunglasses broken.

RYAN
I’m gonna kill you, Lis!

Slam down goes Lisa into frame

LISA
I don’t know what got into me.

A couple POLICE OFFICERS sit Lisa and Ryan next to Sasha and Dina on an outdoor bench. Other COPS interview witnesses.

RYAN
We are so FUCKED!

DINA
Relax! I’ve been here before. It’s just a misdemeanor. Once we post bail --

RYAN
Bail?! Do you hear yourself? I am not a rapper! I’m a therapist! I write self-help books! I can not go to jail!

SASHA
Martha Stewart went to jail. People still listen to her advice about cranberry centerpieces or whatever the fuck it is she talks about.
Ryan starts panic breathing.

DINA
Ry, relax! It was self-defense.

LISA
(as if)
I threw the first punch.

DINA
Yeah, and you clocked the shit out that bitch.

SASHA
Straight knuckles.

RYAN
(chuckling in spite of)
You did, Lis. “Mine wore off.” Pow!

They all laugh about it. Ad-libbing about what they did. Then reality starts to set in on Lisa.

LISA
Wait a minute. This could end me. I’ll lose my license. I could lose my kids over this.

DINA
Aww shot she about to blow.

She looks over at a FAT COP.

LISA
No, I’m not. I got this.

She walks over to the Fat Cop. On a mission.

ON THE FAT COP

He writes out a ticket as Lisa walks up.

LISA
(helpless)
Officer, these cuffs are so tight. Is there any way you can take them off?

The cop doesn’t even look up.

FAT COP
Nope.

Lisa tries a different tactic.
LISA
But I’m afraid the interstitial pressure on my radial nerve could lead to arterial ischemia or necrosis.

The cop looks up, impressed.

FAT COP
You a doctor?

LISA
Just a registered nurse.

FAT COP
How’d a woman like you end up in a bar fight?

He removes her cuffs.

LISA
To be honest, my friends and I were roofied tonight and it caused us to act really out of character.

FAT COP
(concerned)
You know who did it?

LISA
(eyeing Dina)
Hard to say.

FAT COP
Lucky you didn’t get hurt in there. Little thing like you could barely even throw a punch, I bet.

LISA
Not one you’d feel...

LISA
Thank you for taking those cuffs off. Feels so good to be free!

She waves her hands in the air, really sexing it up as she dances. The Fat Cop is smitten.

ON THE LADIES

The other ladies watch from the bench as Lisa makes small talk, giggles at the COP’s jokes..
DINA
Here we go -- take it home, Daytona Beach Lisa. Take it home.

ON THE FAT COP AND LISA
She’s flirting up a storm.

LISA
Is there any way my friends and I could just go back to our hotel? You really want to write up all that paperwork over little me?

The Fat Cop looks around to make sure none of the other cops are watching.

FAT COP
I’mma make an exception. For you.

INT. RITZ CARLTON - MEZZANINE - NIGHT
Our ladies come up the escalator giddy with laughter.

RYAN
Lis, you have my undying gratitude.

DINA
That was some Jedi voodoo sex magic is what that was.

SASHA
Yeah, too bad it’s going to waste.

As they round the corner, Malik awaits holding a flower. Wearing a tie. Lisa cups her hand to her ear.

LISA
Sorry, Sash, what was that?

SASHA
(surprised)
Okay. Get it, bitch. Get it.

LISA
Oh I’m going to. Tonight -- I slay.

Her sexual confidence is now fully restored. She gives Malik a smile as she takes the flower from him.

DINA
Yassssss hunty. Yassssss!
Lisa takes his hand and practically skips to the elevator.

**DINA**
He better fuck the shit outta her.

**RYAN**
Remember when life was that simple? Just wanting a boy to like us enough to want to give ‘em some.

**SASHA**
That’s all we cared about. That and having no money. Those problems are in the past thank God.

Ryan looks at her, sincere.

**RYAN**
I miss you, Sash. I really do.

**SASHA**
I miss you, too.

**RYAN**
We were gonna take over the world back then.

**SASHA**
Never got around to that, did we?

**RYAN**
I hate to see you chasing after celebrity bullshit. It’s beneath you. You’re so much better than that.

Sasha realizes Ryan didn’t mean it to sound condescending.

**SASHA**
I’m good. I’m handling mine.

Ryan smiles and nods. Not wanting to fight.

**RYAN**
Okay.

**SASHA**
(beat)
Ry, you don’t need the bullshit either. Don’t be afraid to step out your comfort zone. You can do it.

Ryan knows what she means. The elevator doors open and several drunken late 50s Essence Fest attendees are inside --
singing "Booty Poppin" by Ludacris and doing the accompanying dance moves.

DINA
That’s us in twenty years, y’all.

RYAN
God, I hope so.

INT. RITZ CARLTON - GIRL’S SUITE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - LATE

Dina, Sasha and Ryan are on the couch, giggling as they scarf down food.

SASHA
Dina, you did not go in a bathroom stall with Jason Momoa! He wasn’t even at the party!

DINA
Bitch, I got pictures!

She pulls out her phone and pulls up a photo. We see a quick flash of a man’s balls on her forehead with his limp dick hanging down her nose -- like a Roman Helmet.

Dina frowns when she sees the face of the dick’s owner.

DINA
Who the fuck is that?

SASHA
And why is his business on your face?

RYAN
(laughing)
I think they call that a Roman Helmet.

Dina flips through the pictures and there’s one of SASHA getting Roman Helmeted too.

DINA
Look, you got one, too!

SASHA
What?! Erase that!

As Sasha reels from this -- they hear a moan from the bedroom.
DINA
The beaver took down the tree!

The bedroom door opens and a disheveled, recently fucked Lisa steps out, wrapped in a towel.

LISA
Just gonna grab this --

She grabs a grapefruit out of the fruit basket on the table and goes back into the bedroom with a smile.

DINA
Ohhh... it’s on! Prepare yourselves, ladies. Five, four, three, two...

Malik’s MOANS tell us that Dina is right.

SASHA
Damn! I’ve gotta try this!

Suddenly, Malik SCREAMS so loud the windows rattle.

RYAN
Oh my God, did she just bite it off?

Lisa yanks open the bedroom door.

LISA
Grapefruit juice just shot in his eye! Where’s my Visine!

Lisa digs through her bag. Malik comes staggering out, grapefruit still on his dick (covering it). One hand over his eye, one hand over his balls.

MALIK
(wailing)
Why, Jesus? Why?

All four girls are in the king bed. Dina pours some mini-bar champagne.

SASHA
I don’t care how late it is, we are toasting that Lisa got ten inches tonight.
DINA
I wish we could’ve seen it without the grapefruit on it.

LISA
Hand me my phone --

DINA
Good girl!

Lisa pulls up a picture. They all stare at it in silent awe.

RYAN
That is a beautiful penis.

SASHA
It’s a work of art.

Dina sends the picture to herself.

DINA
I’m taking this to Walgreens and having it printed out to put on my desk at work.

The ladies laugh.

INT. GIRLS SUITE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The ladies all kneel beside the bed praying in unison as we

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. RIVER WALK - DAWN

The sun rises over the Mississippi.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - ESSENCE POP-UP BOOKSTORE - DAY

Ryan and Stewart sign books for fans. Doing their “Happy Couple” show. Smiling, taking pictures. People love them. And the line is lengthy.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - NEAR FOOD BOOTHS - DAY

Lisa and Dina explore the food booths, feeding their hangovers.
DINA
What you mean there ain’t no etouffee left? I waited all this damn time. What you got then? Red beans and rice? Aight.

LISA
Excuse me is that cooked in animal fat?

DINA
Hell no. It’s just some hamhock.

A few hundred feet away, Sasha’s on her phone.

SASHA
(desperate)
Wait! Don’t pull your ads! I’ve got audio of Tyler Perry cussing me out like a sailor... What d’you mean that’s not news?... Fine. I’ll get something good. ‘Jay-Z and Solange elevator’ good. By tomorrow.

Sasha hangs up. Against the wall and out of options. She looks at the picture of Simone and Stewart on her phone and shakes her head. The sound of applause is heard, then --

IYANLA VANZANT (O.S.)
The question is not “if” but “when”?

Sasha looks over to a healthy crowd gathered around Essence’s Center Stage where beloved guest, IYANLA VANZANT speaks to an attentive crowd.

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INT. CONVENTION CENTER - NEAR POP-UP BOOKSTORE - DAY

Ryan and Stewart are being escorted toward the exit, but Ryan pauses to take a listen.

IYANLA VANZANT
When will you realize the power for change is in your hands? You can’t wait for someone else to make the decision that will affect you in your life. Only you can do that? You want better? You deserve better? Then do better. Demand it of yourself. Even if it means change. And beloved, change takes time, takes effort, takes bravery.
Listening in the crowd is Sasha. Two hundred yards away Ryan also listens.

IYANLA VANZANT (CONT’D)
Don’t you dare ask anyone to change unless you put in the work yourself. Fight the good fight. The bad fight has enough soldiers.

The message has resonated with both Ryan and Sasha. Elizabeth catches Ryan’s attention to take her to the back.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Ryan and Stewart are at a table with Elizabeth, Bethany and some guys in Suits.

BETHANY
You two have built an incredible brand. And we want in. We think the Ryan Stewart brand can be to Caldmart what Martha Stewart is to K-Mart. But bigger.

RYAN
Really?

BETHANY
Bottom line you two give people hope of having it all. And we want in.

STEWART
Sounds fantastic.

ELIZABETH
Yes it does. But let’s be honest, it’s all about the offer.

Bethany scribbles down a number and slides it across the table. Elizabeth, ever the negotiator intercepts the paper.

ELIZABETH (CONT’D)
Holy fuck--!

Ryan and Stewart read it, stunned. More money than they ever expected. Bethany stands and shakes Ryan and Stewart’s respective hands.

BETHANY
Look forward to working with you.

She and her team head out.
ELIZABETH
  I’ll see you out . . .

Elizabeth gives Ryan and Stewart fist pump before exiting. After a beat. Ryan and Stewart look at each other.

RYAN
  Looks like we did it.

Stewart is too stunned to respond as Ryan heads off camera.

83
EXT. CONVENTION CENTER – LATER
Ryan and Stewart head to their SUV as many screaming fans cheer them. Ryan half-heartedly waves. Stewart is pensive before pulling the driver to the side a beat before joining Ryan.

84
INT. SUV – DAY
Ryan sips on water and checks her phone as Stewart climbs in and shuts the door. Other than the hum of the motor, the AC and the screaming fans it is silent. Ryan notices.

RYAN
  Where’s the driver?

STEWART
  Ryan, I’m sorry.

Ryan turns to Stewart, eyes glistening. Ryan looks concerned.

RYAN
  What the fuck is wrong with you?

STEWART
  I been wrong.

RYAN
  Uhhh okay--?

STEWART
  “I been wrong.” I been saying it without any real consequence. It’s just been words. And I’ve been wrong for that.

RYAN
  Alright, you been wrong, you’ve been going through the motions. I get it. Can we go? I have a little bit of a headache--
STEWART
This deal is incredible. The possibilities are limitless. I’m amped. I’m energized.

RYAN
Yeah, it’s a lot of money . . .

STEWART
No. You don’t understand: This is the kick in the ass I needed.
(off her look)
When I retired from football I was messed up. I didn’t what my purpose was. Who was I without this game? Dumb male ego shit. As much as you tried to show me and encourage me I couldn’t hear. I didn’t want to hear it.

RYAN
Kind of like how I feel right now–?

STEWART
Ry, I don’t blame you for wanting to shut me out. I wouldn’t want to hear me either. But we did it. We did this together. We’re back. And now everything can be the way you want it. We can be Ryan and Stewart again. And I don’t mean some public persona “us”. I mean “us.” You and me: the man you fell in love with.

Ryan looks at the sincerity in his eyes, still unsure. He takes her hands and kneels on the car floor.

STEWART (CONT’D)
I promise you if you give us another chance I’m in this for real. No more show. No more bullshit.

Stewart is as vulnerable as ever. Ryan is torn.

85

INT. HOUSE OF BLUES - VIP SEATING - NIGHT

A magnum of champagne is popped and poured.

RYAN
Thank you, Calmart!!!
Sasha snaps a selfie of the ladies, champagne flutes in hand. She tags everyone and posts it on social media. #EssenceFest #HOBNOLA. Ping! Dina looks down at her phone.

DINA
Damn, bitch! I could never be C.I.A. with you posting my business everywhere.

RYAN
(to Sasha)
Then you need to quit that, because if anyone’s taking out Isis, it’s this bitch --

She clinks glasses with Dina. Then addresses Sasha

RYAN
Hey, do you think your paparazzi guy would sell the photo to me? We could bury this shit and move forward.

SASHA
(nodding, skeptical)
I could find out. What’s going on?

RYAN
Well, ladies Stew and I had a real talk today and I really think our marriage is going to get back on track.

LISA
Really? Oh my God that’s great, Ry.

DINA
You taking dirty-dick back?

RYAN
Look, y’all men have egos... his was deflated. Retiring fucked him up. That’s how men are: rudderless, needing a purpose.

DINA
Well, alright. It’s used, not broke.

RYAN
You should have seen it: he practically begged me to stick with us. I saw the sincerity in his eyes. I’ve haven’t seen that since--
SASHA
His last big contract.

RYAN
Sasha, I have faith--

SASHA
Faith that fame and money are worth your dignity and self-respect?

RYAN
(beat)
Why can’t you be happy for me?

DINA
Yeah, don’t hate, Sash.

SASHA
I’m not hating. I’ll just be happy when she’s happy. Truly happy. I know what Ryan happy looks like. I ain’t seen it in a minute.

Ryan is taken aback.

LISA
Come on, you guys, this is a good thing. Let’s celebrate this, okay?

The band strikes up from the main room and the CROWD starts to cheer.

86
INT. HOUSE OF BLUES - MAIN ROOM - NIGHT

Solange commands the stage. Julian’s sexy on bass.

RYAN
There he is!

DINA
Aw shit. Look who grew up and grew a pair. Alright, Julian. I see you!

LISA
He’s working that bass!

SASHA
Yeah, he is --
Julian performs a gripping solo. Everyone cheers. Julian eyes the crowd, his eyes landing on Ryan and the girls. Giving them a wink.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOUSE OF BLUES – FOUNDATION ROOM – NIGHT

Ryan and Julian sit on a couch.

JULIAN
So, I know you’ve got your professional life on lock, but how you doing otherwise?

RYAN
I’m good! Really, really blessed.

JULIAN
You and Stewart doing okay?

RYAN
Better than ever.

Julian studies her. Knows something’s up.

JULIAN
You don’t have to do that with me, Ry. I know you. Ain’t no bluff in you.

RYAN
So my sincerity is a curse?

JULIAN
I wouldn’t have you any other way. You just can’t be my spades partner.

RYAN
(laughing)
It’s like that? I see where I stand. But seriously, we are fine. I’m just nervous about the speech tomorrow.

JULIAN
Why? You’ve always been one of the most self-assured people I’ve ever known.
RYAN
I don’t know about that--

JULIAN
Bullshit. You do know about it.
From the moment you walked on campus, you owned it. Not cocky,
just matter of fact: “I’m the shit, y’all. Recognize.”

They share a laugh.

RYAN
Didn’t know then how challenging it
would be to get here now.

JULIAN
Clearly that didn’t matter ‘cuz you
got everything you could ever want.

RYAN
(nodding)
Yeah. I guess that’s true.

Julian holds up his drink to toast. Ryan clinks with him.

INT. HOUSE OF BLUES – FOUNDATION ROOM – NIGHT

Sasha comes out of the ladies room and spots -- Simone making
a beeline for the Ryan. Sasha intercepts her.

SASHA
Where the hell do you think you’re going?

SIMONE
I need to talk to Ryan.

Sasha steps to Simone.

SASHA
That’s not gonna happen. Let’s go--

ACROSS THE CLUB

Ryan spots Sasha with Simone and frowns. Sasha backs Simone
out of sight.

ON SASHA AND SIMONE

SASHA
How’d you even know she was here?
Simone pulls up her SMART PHONE to display Sasha’s Instagram.

SASHA
I gotta get a new line of work.
Look, I’ll relay the message.
What’s up?

SIMONE
I’m pregnant. And before you even insult me, yes, it’s Stewart’s.

Sasha’s jaw drops. Not at all expecting this.

SASHA
Does he know?

SIMONE
I left him a message. He won’t call me back.

SASHA
I’ll try to find some tears to shed for you.

SIMONE
Look, I don’t need your shade.
That’s not why I came here--

SASHA
Then why did you?

SIMONE
I didn’t know who else to tell. I need Stewart to call me back within the next twenty-four hours or I will go public. I have pictures. Nasty-freaky ones too. You wanna be the one to break the story? Be my guest.

SASHA
You must be high. And ya ass is fake.

Simone walks off. Lisa walks up to Sasha.

LISA
What was that about?

SASHA
She’s pregnant.

LISA
What?
SASHA
Yup. The biggest damn story of the year and I can’t even run it. Come on.

Sasha heads toward Ryan. Lisa gives pause before following.

89
INT. HOUSE OF BLUES - FOUNDATION ROOM - NIGHT
Julian and Ryan reminisce. Ryan laughs loudly as Lisa, Sasha and Dina approach with serious faces. Julian notices.

JULIAN
Everything alright?

Ryan spins around, senses the gravity of the situation.

RYAN
What... what is it?

90
INT. RITZ CARLTON - GIRLS’ SUITE - NIGHT
Ryan, tear-stained eyes, sits in a robe on the couch. Her girls surround her. Lisa rubs her back.

RYAN
I tried everything. I went to all the top specialists, tried every fertility treatment on the market... She gave him what I couldn’t. That’s why he did it.

LISA
Ry, why didn’t you tell us you were having trouble getting pregnant?

RYAN
Because I was embarrassed! I didn’t want anyone to know --

DINA
We’re not just “anyone”. We’re your girls. You have a problem, you tell us!

There’s a KNOCK at the door. Lisa looks through the peephole.

LISA
It’s Stewart.

DINA/SASHA
Oh, hell no./The fuck does he want?
STEWART (O.C.)
Ryan, please. We need to talk.

Ryan gestures to let him in. The ladies all glare at him.

STEWART
Alone.

Ryan hesitates, then, to the girls --

RYAN
Can you give us a minute?

The ladies exchange looks, but do as their told.

SASHA
We’ll wait for you downstairs.

Dina removes something from her purse and hands it to Ryan.

DINA
Take my taser. Just in case. You can turn up the voltage with that dial on the side... Fuck it, I’ll just leave it on high.

Dina mouths “I’m watching you” to Stewart, then leaves. Ryan and Stewart sit down across from each other.

RYAN
I could kill you. That’s how furious I am right now.

STEWART
I talked to Simone. She’s agreed to sign an NDA in exchange for a monthly payment for her and the baby--

RYAN
So that makes everything okay?! You got her pregnant, when I can’t?

STEWART
We can still do this, Ry. No one will know. You don’t have to believe me, but we can make it all work. The deal, all of it.

Ryan glares at him in disbelief.

RYAN
It’s not just about the money, Stew! Do you have any idea how much (MORE)
you’ve hurt me? You’ve ruined everything! How can I trust you?

STEWART
I know you can’t trust me as your husband anymore. But you can trust me as your business partner. This deal will set us up for life. We can’t do it if we’re apart.

RYAN
Do you even love me?

STEWART
Of course I do, babe. But this is bigger than love. It’s marriage.

Ryan stares at him, knowing she’s selling her soul if she stays.

STEWART
Ryan without Stewart doesn’t have it all...

INT. RITZ CARLTON - MEZZANINE - NIGHT

Dina, Lisa and Sasha sit in lounge chairs.

LISA
I hope she kicked his cheating ass out and tased his dickskin until it smelled like bacon.

DINA
Damn, Lis. You were the one talking “work it out” --

LISA
Changed my mind the minute I saw that look on his face. Fuck him and the ho he rode in on.

SASHA
Amen!

Ryan walks up, game face on.

LISA
How’d it go?

RYAN
Stew’s figured out a way to handle the Simone situation.
Their jaws drop.

SASHA
So, you’re staying with him?

RYAN
Yes, we both made mistakes. But we’ve had some good times together.

DINA
Did he dickmatize you that quick?!

RYAN
Dina, he’s my husband. Not some guy in a bathroom stall. I’m not going to just throw everything away.

Ryan’s phone RINGS. She ignores it.

LISA
I get it, Ryan. You’re scared. When I left Terrence, I was terrified. I didn’t think I could make it on my own. But I’m figuring it out. You will too. I’ll help.

RYAN
So I can live with my mother like you?

LISA
Wow. Shots fired.

RYAN
I’m sorry, but everything I have is dependent on us staying together! My career, my brand -- I can’t do it alone. If I give all this up -- I have nothing.

SASHA
Bullshit. You don’t need him! The Ryan we met freshman year was already a star way before Stewart sashayed his ass into the picture. And by the way, we all know that proposal story is bullshit. We were there!

DINA
Yeah, he was so drunk he didn’t even remember he proposed until you told him the next day.
LISA
He gave you a ring made out of a gum wrapper.

SASHA
Is there even anything real left with you two?

RYAN
I don’t expect you to get it. You’re all single! You don’t have any clue about how a relationship works!

Whoa. This smacks them hard.

DINA
The only reason I’m single is because there’s no such thing as too many dicks.

RYAN
You’re gonna get herpes with that attitude.

SASHA
Where the hell do you get off judging our personal lives?

RYAN
Says the woman who talks shit about people for a living! Way to use that journalism degree --

SASHA
Who’s talking shit now? I got advanced degrees, bitch. You the one with the bullshit MRS.

LISA
Everybody breathe, dammit! Time the fuck out!

Silence.

DINA
(to Ryan)
That herpes shit was low.

Ryan’s phone RINGS again. She finally answers the call. It’s Elizabeth. Ryan walks off to talk to her.

RYAN
Hello.
Sasha’s phone begins BLOWING UP with alerts. “Ryan and Stewart Pierce Mistress Scandal.”

SASHA
Oh shit...

Lisa and Dina look at Sasha, alarmed by her tone.

LISA
What’s wrong?

Ryan walks back up, pissed. Going right for Sasha’s throat.

RYAN
You conniving bitch!

Dina jumps in to keep them separated.

DINA
Damn! You bitches got strong!

SASHA
I didn’t leak it, I swear -- Simone must have.

RYAN
I saw you all huddled up with her. What’d you sell it to another site to cover your tracks? I know you’re broke. Don’t think I didn’t notice all the tags hanging off your clothes. We all did.

Sasha looks guilty that she’s exposed.

LISA/DINA
Yeah/those aren’t red bottoms/I’ve done it before

RYAN
How much did you get for ruining my life?

LISA
Oh shit. It’s gone viral! #YouCantHaveItAll is trending.

RYAN
Congratulations, Sash. Whatever you got, I hope it was worth it.

SASHA
You know what, Ryan? Truth is, I did consider releasing it, but I (MORE)
SASHA (CONT’D)
didn’t because you mean more to me than money. But you never valued our friendship as much as you value your own success.

RYAN
How can you say that? I’ve always been a friend to you!

SASHA
No, you haven’t! I worked my ass off getting our website off the ground. I quit my job at The Times, hired a designer... And what did you do? Left me high and dry! Because you thought you’d have a better chance at fame with Stewart. And NOT ONCE have you apologized!

RYAN
If you had said no, I wouldn’t have! You should’ve spoken up.

SASHA
You should have never put me in that position in the first place!

DINA
I mean... you could’ve said no.

SASHA
Dina, nobody asked you--

LISA
Sasha, I don’t think Ryan --

SASHA
Just stop. I should’ve known better than to expect you two to back me. In this circle, we all know there’s a queen... and her two worker bees.

DINA
Bitch, who you calling a worker bee? Better take that shit back.

SASHA
You know why we never hang out at home? Because we don’t like getting banned from restaurants.

DINA
It was The Olive Garden! Who gives a fuck?
LISA  
Okay! Everybody, TIME OUT!  

SASHA  
Lisa! Shut up. We’re not your kids!  

LISA  
Then stop acting like it! You know what? I don’t need this. I’m going back home where I’m appreciated!  

Lisa walks off.  

DINA  
Fuck it. Me, too. I’ll hitchhike if I have to. Better than being around a bunch of phony-ass bitches who forget how to be friends.  
(to Ryan)  
You owe me a taser.  

She leaves. Sasha and Ryan are left standing there.  

RYAN  
You satisfied, Sasha?! You ruined my life and twenty years of friendship.  

She walks off.  

SASHA  
Are all you bitches still on absinthe? I didn’t do anything!  

EXT. NEW ORLEANS CRESCENT CITY CONNECTION BRIDGE – SUNRISE  
The sun rises over the Crescent City.  

INT. NEW ORLEANS DIVE BAR – DAWN  
Dina swirls her straw in a drink. Not drinking it.  

BARTENDER  
You want me to make you something else instead?  

Dina shakes her head-- no cocktail’s going to fix this.  

The Hobo who flashed his junk to them at the shitty motel enters. Drunk, not recognizing her.
HOBO
You got any change?

DINA
You don’t remember me?

He squints at her.

HOBO
You Rochelle?

DINA
Yeah, I’m Rochelle. You ready for our date?

She pulls out a purple strap-on-head-dildo from her purse. The Hobo hesitates for a moment, then --

HOBO
Where we gonna go?

Dina’s had enough.

DINA
Freak. Pull up a chair.

94

EXT. JACKSON SQUARE FOUNTAIN – DAY

Lisa sits on a bench FaceTiming with her mom, who’s playing Twister with her grand-kids, tangled up like a pretzel.

LISA
I need you to get me from the airport-- I’m coming home early.

DELORES
What? I don’t get it. You were having such a good time!

LISA
I know! And now the weekend’s ruined. So I’m coming home.

DELORES
Lis? Take it from me... We’re lucky if we get one really good friend in this lifetime. You have three.

On Lisa contemplating her mother’s words.
Ryan gets dressed for the keynote speech, trying to keep it together. The TV’s on in the background.

WENDY WILLIAMS (V.O.)
Hot Topics! So this picture of Stewart Pierce slobbing down this Instagram skank has me floored! Who’da thought there was trouble in paradise? Poor Ryan, right?

Ryan snatches up the remote, pressing a button. The screensaver comes on. Past Essence Fest photos of the girls pop up on screen. Pictures of them in much happier times.

Ryan watches for a beat, then powers it off.

Sasha stares at her laptop screen.

WENDY WILLIAMS
...Honestly, I don’t know how Ryan’s gonna survive this. Especially as a quote-unquote relationship expert.

Sasha turns it off.

Andra Day’s “Rise Up” plays as we see a MONTAGE OF THE GIRLS:

Lisa watches GROUPS OF FRIENDS laughing and pass her. She sobs and drowns her sorrows by eating BEIGNETS. Finally, she pulls out her phone. Texts Dina: “Where are you?”

Ryan and Stewart meet in the elevator, staring straight ahead, no words. Ryan tries to keep her head high.

Lisa enters, sees Dina sitting at the bar sharing a pitcher of beer with the Hobo.

LISA
Now I know you’re as upset as I am.
DINA
I know y’all probably only keep me around for laughs, but I love you bitches and would die for each one of you.

Lisa tears up.

LISA
I know you would and that’s why we keep you around. You’re the most fiercely loyal friend we’ll ever know and we’re lucky to have you. Laughs or not.

They hug.

DINA
We need to go see Ry’s speech. She’s hurting right now and she needs us.

LISA
Let’s go --

DINA
And guess what we’re wearing?

100  INT. RITZ CARLTON - POOL - DAY
Sasha records a video for her blog.

SASHA (V.O.)
This morning I decided I no longer want to be part of a process that tears people down in order to profit.

101  INT. LIMO - DAY
Ryan looks flawless despite everything. She rides in silence next to Stewart, who looks equally stylish.

The limo stops. Ryan puts her game face on, then exits.

102  EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS
Ryan flashes her million dollar smile to the crowd like a pro as REPORTERS and PAPARAZZI surround her and Stewart.
REPORTER #1
Ryan, is it true that you’ve already filed for divorce?

REPORTER #2
Stewart, how many mistresses do you have?

Ryan and Stewart, hand in hand, walk through, poised.

103  EXT. NEW ORLEANS STREET - DAY
Lisa and Dina’s phones PING. They stop to listen to Sasha’s video post.

104  INT. ESSENCE VENUE - DRESSING ROOM - DAY
Alone, Ryan stares at herself in the mirror, misty-eyed, repeating her mantra for strength. At her lowest point.

RYAN
I am strong, I am powerful, I am beautiful...

She sees a bottle of champagne with a card from Bethany that reads “Congratulations to the woman who ‘has it all’!”

Ryan’s phone BUZZES. She picks it up, sees Sasha’s tagged her in a post. Ryan listens.

SASHA (V.O.)
Effective immediately, “Sasha’s Secrets” is no more.

105  INT. RITZ CARLTON - MEZZANINE LEVEL - DAY
Sasha crosses the lobby with her bags in town, a plain outfit—* not trying to floss— and what’s left of her dignity. As she * rounds the corner -- Sasha looks up, surprised. Lisa and Dina walks toward her. Wearing their Flossy Posse vests that Lisa made.

DINA
So you was going to drop the mic on your blog and jet?

SASHA
Though it might’ve been best that way.
LISA
(hugging her)
You thought wrong.

SASHA
Look, y’all. I know it might be hard to believe, but I didn’t do it.

LISA
We know.

She hands Sasha her Flossy Posse vest.

SASHA
I just want to go back to the way things were...

DINA
Shit, we all do! You find me a time machine where we can all live in the same dorm eating Top Ramen and Mad Dog 20/20 for dinner, I’m there... But we’re grown-ass women now and we got to make this shit work, so buckle up, bitch. We’re not letting you out.

SASHA
(putting on the vest)
Damn! Look at you! All giving pep talks --

Lisa looks at her watch.

LISA
Shit! Ryan’s speech. We gotta move! It starts in twenty minutes!

106 INT. CONVENTION CENTER - GREEN ROOM/DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Elizabeth walks Ryan and Stewart through the plan.

ELIZABETH
Here’s our strategy: deny, deny, deny. It’s a doctored photo. We could spin it as a TMZ/National Enquirer hoax. Say you refused an interview and they were being vindictive. Bottom line, they’re assholes, you’re golden.

Ryan nods, breathes in, trying to pull herself together.
Gridlock. Cars are honking. Drivers yelling. Horses crapping. The ladies survey the traffic, panicking.

LISA
We’re not going to make it!

Sasha pulls cash from her wallet and hands it to the driver.

SASHA
Yes, we are. We’re just going to have to do it on foot.

DINA
I’m not running in this heat.

SASHA/LISA
Dina, let’s go!

Dina sighs, then climbs out, pissed.

The ladies run. Pooping out after two blocks.

LISA
(breathless)
Fuck, we’re old.

They see NEW ORLEANS’ signature mode of transpo: A PEDI-BIKE riding by.

SASHA
Hey! Wait up!

Sasha and Lisa in the canopy. We reveal Dina straddling the driver’s lap as he looks over her shoulder to navigate.

LISA
Step on it, man! Stop bullshitting!

He pumps his legs harder.

DINA
Yes, yasssss. Slower, baby. Slower.
Every seat is filled. Julian sits down in the back. Ryan and Stewart walk out hand in hand. Ryan surveys the crowd for her girls. They’re not there. Ryan sighs, disappointed, as Stewart walks on stage.

The pedicab weaves in and out traffic as the ladies draw nearer to the convention center.

They climb out the cab and run through throngs of people to push inside.

A very composed Stewart begins speaking into the mic.

STEWART
It’s my honor and privilege to introduce this year’s Essence Keynote Speaker. Together, we’ve weathered many storms and overcome some of the toughest challenges.

(then)
Please welcome my rock, the woman I’m proud to call my wife... Ryan Pierce!

The crowd cheers as Ryan walks on stage. Stewart plants a kiss on her cheek, then takes a seat.

RYAN
Thank you, Stew, for that wonderful introduction. Thank you Essence for the honor of speaking today. And last but not least, thank you all for coming out to support me...

Ryan reads Elizabeth’s prepared statement from a Teleprompter.

RYAN (CONT’D)
As most of you know, there’ve been many questions about the status of my marriage. And I’d like to put those rumors to rest... The picture that surfaced this morning isn’t

(MORE)
All allegations of infidelity are false. My husband and I are in a loving, faithful marriage.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - HALLWAY - SAME TIME

The ladies, sweaty and out of breath, run down the hall. Sasha spots the main auditorium doors. They’re closed.

SASHA
Oh no, it’s already started...

Dina reaches for the handle. A VOLUNTEER halts them.

VOLUNTEER
Sorry, ladies. No late entries.

Lisa and Sasha look to Dina, knowingly.

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - MAIN AUDITORIUM - MOMENTS LATER

With a loud BANG the back doors open abruptly as Dina kicks them in, the ladies tumble inside, causing a scene.

VOLUNTEER (O.C.)
I’m calling security!

DINA
I said step back, fool!

Ryan stops. EVERYONE turns and looks toward the commotion. Dina straightens her clothing. Lisa smiles politely.

LISA
Please… Continue.

Ryan smiles, taking in the sight of her girls. She looks into the audience, sees VARIOUS WOMEN she’s encountered over the weekend. Women who look up to her. Ryan tries to continue.

RYAN
In fact, my husband and I are stronger than ever...

Ryan pauses for a long beat. Her emotions catching up.

RYAN (CONT’D)

SASHA
(sotto)
Come on, Ry…

The crowd waits. Ryan wrestles with her conscience. Then looks at her girls, her support system, the Flossy Posse.
RYAN (CONT’D)
My agent wrote a very convincing statement for me to read to you. And I really thought I could go through with it... because I’ve done a really great job of pretending so many times before. But sometimes you reach a point when you just can’t anymore. And I can’t. I’m tired of all the lies...

Stewart looks nervous as hell. He stands, trying to stop her.

STEWART
Ry, let’s take a minute here--

RYAN (CONT’D)
Stewart, sit down. Please.

STEWART
Ryan, baby. Be careful--

RYAN
Sit your ass down. Now. (to the audience)
The picture is real. My husband is having an affair. When I found out, I felt a lot of things: Anger. Heartache. Betrayal. But mostly, fear. Fear that my marriage was ending and that I would be alone. And I was terrified of that... So terrified I was willing to stay with someone who betrayed my trust. So terrified I was willing to accept being treated as less than I am...

Stewart hangs his head. Humiliated. People are shocked.

RYAN (CONT’D)
And I know that I’m not alone in this. I know a lot of us stay in bad relationships because we’ve convinced ourselves that being disrespected is better than being alone. But we shouldn’t fear being alone. Because there’s power in re-discovering our own voice.

Julian, in the audience, smiles.
RYAN (CONT'D)
And I’d forgotten that. I forgot
that years before I was Stewart’s
wife, I was Ryan. A woman with her
own ambitions. Her own dreams.

She makes eye contact with Sasha, Lisa and Dina.

RYAN (CONT'D)
But luckily, my girls reminded me
of that... reminded me of my own
worth. And that there was a time
when I didn’t fear anything.

Their eyes well with pride.

RYAN (CONT'D)
No one has the power to shatter
your dreams unless you give it to
them. And I refuse to give anyone
that power again.

Ryan looks out at her fans in the crowd.

RYAN (CONT'D)
If anything, I hope that me
revealing my truth inspires you to
realize your own. Thank you for
listening.

Ryan makes a swift exit, fighting off tears. As the door
closes, an ERUPTION OF APPLAUSE. Stewart sits there, stunned.

116 INT. ESSENCE VENUE - DRESSING ROOM - DAY

All three ladies rush in. Ryan looks at them, says genuinely--

RYAN
I’m so sorry, I didn’t mean any of
what I said earlier. I was just--

LISA
We know. We’re so proud of you, Ry.
That was beautiful... Really brave.

DINA
(fighting back tears)
You my nigga for real.

Sasha hangs back, tries to find the right words.
Ryan, I would never hurt you, you have to --

I believe you.

Sasha smiles, breathes a huge sigh of relief.

Yes! Now hug it out!

Sasha rolls her eyes at Lisa, then pulls Ryan into a hug.

Then Elizabeth walks in. Ryan looks at her apologetically.

Liz, don’t hate me, I--

Bethany still wants to do the deal--

But how--

With just you.

Ryan takes this in, stunned.

Turns out single women are an even bigger market.

Seriously?! 

Ecstatic, Ryan hugs Elizabeth.

Well y'all know what that means... it’s a celebration, bitches!

Dina pops the champagne bottle. The ladies all cheer.

The ladies watch Mariah Carey sing “Fly Like a Bird.” Swaying to the music. Having fun.

You okay?

Ryan shakes her head. Decides to keep it real.
RYAN
Not yet. But I will be.

Sasha whips out her selfie stick.

SASHA
Selfie time!

DINA
This bitch...

The ladies all gather and pose for an iconic selfie. A FREEZE FRAME captures it and dates it 2017.

On Ryan, finding strength in this moment with her girls.

RYAN (PRELAP)
In the end, I had to redefine what “having it all” really means...

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - CENTER STAGE - DAY

SUPER: ONE YEAR LATER AT ESSENCE 2018

Tamron Hall sits across from Ryan, mid-interview.

RYAN
...so often, we’ve used that phrase to describe a woman who has a relationship and a successful career. I used to define it that way, too, but I’ve since evolved.

TAMRON HALL
What does it mean to you now?

RYAN
Having it all means having people in your life who elevate you.

INT. LISA’S HOUSE - DAY

Lisa is on a date. Confidence restored.

RYAN (V.O.)
Friends who are nurturing...

Lisa gets a call from her kids and we see the wallpaper on her phone is the photo of our ladies at Essence Fest.
Club PATRONS laugh, drink and have a good time. Dina walks around, checking on the CIROC GIRLS. Running the show. She sees Diddy across the club and gives him a nod.

RYAN (V.O.)
...who are fearless.

Dina pulls out her Essence Fest Photo on her smart phone and admires it.

Empty office. Boxes everywhere. Sasha hangs up a framed, blown up VARIETY article that reads: “OWN picks up Ryan Pierce and Sasha Franklin’s Women’s Empowerment series.”

RYAN (V.O.)
...who share your goal to contribute to the world...

Sasha sets the Essence Fest photo prominently on her desk.

Ryan sits, thoughtful and introspective.

RYAN
...Having it all means surrounding yourself with people who love and support you. And who won’t let you be afraid to go after the life you want.

TAMRON HALL
Well put. But I do have to ask, now that the divorce is final, are you dating anyone special?

RYAN
I learned my lesson the first time-- I’m not talking about my love life! I will say this though, I’m the happiest I’ve been in a long time.

She gives a genuine smile as we CUT TO:

In the Convention Center Audience we see Julian waits all smiles.
Ryan approaches Julian standing with Sasha, Dina and Lisa.

RYAN (CONT’D)
So... how was I?

JULIAN
You’re still the shit.

He kisses her as Lisa, Sasha and Dina walk up together.

LISA/SASHA/DINA
There she is!/Bring it in, girl/You one brilliant bitch!

As they hug, we know the Flossy Posse will always ride.

FADE OUT.

The Pinettes, an all-female brass band leads a second line march and our ladies down Bourbon Street as they play a brass band version of I’m Every Woman.