

# **TWO DAYS , ONE NIGHT**

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wild bunch

A phone rings... Angle on SANDRA, a woman in her early thirties, who sleeps on a couch, her face buried in a cushion... The ringing stops... She hasn't heard a thing and carries on sleeping... The phone rings again... She still doesn't hear it and carries on sleeping... The ringing stops, then starts up again after a second or two... She emerges from her sleep, stands and takes a few steps to pick up her mobile phone that lies on a windowsill... She answers it.

SANDRA  
Hello?... Yes, I was sleeping...  
Yes, everything's fine. I was  
resting a little first...

She is interrupted by the buzzing of the oven timer in the kitchen.

SANDRA  
Wait a second, I need to take my  
tart out of the oven...

She has said this while walking towards the kitchen. She puts the phone down, opens the oven and, using an oven glove, takes out a metal pan with a fruit tart that she puts down on top of the stove... She picks up the phone again...

SANDRA  
I've made a tart for the kids...  
Yes... Why?...  
(she listens, taken aback  
by what she hears)  
No... No, Juliette... No...

She hangs up... and stands motionless with her phone in her hand, on the verge of tears...

SANDRA  
(to herself)  
Don't cry... No!...

She takes deep breaths, holding back her tears... The phone rings. She turns it off, puts it down on the work surface and quickly leaves the kitchen...

She finishes climbing a flight of stairs, opens the bathroom door, takes a box of pills from the top of a small medicine cabinet, hurriedly opens it, pops a pill from the blister pack, puts it in her mouth, bends down to drink from the washbasin tap... straightens up, looks at herself in the mirror...

SANDRA  
 (to herself)  
 Don't break down... It's going to  
 be okay... It's going to be okay...  
 Don't cry... Just don't cry... It  
 mustn't start all over again...

She takes a deep breath... manages to hold back her tears...

3 INT. HALLWAY - DAY 3

A man of thirty-five, MANU, dressed as a cook, comes in and quickly closes the door behind him. He hurriedly steps over to the open door of the living room...

4 INT. LIVING ROOM & KITCHEN - DAY 4

He comes into the living room and finds no one there... goes into the kitchen and finds no one there... goes back out into the hallway...

5 INT. HALLWAY & STAIRS - DAY 5

MANU  
 (shouting up the stairs)  
 Sandra?...

No reply. He climbs the stairs...

6 INT. CORRIDOR & BEDROOM - DAY 6

Manu passes the bathroom whose door is still open... walks over to the bedroom door, tries to go in but finds the door locked...

MANU  
 Sandra?...

No reply.

MANU  
 Sandra!... Sandra!...

SANDRA (O.S.)  
 Yes...

After a second or two, the key turns in the lock and Sandra opens the door...

MANU  
 Juliette called me...

Sandra has turned her back on Manu and returns to the unmade bed.

MANU

Why don't you want to go?...

SANDRA

It's no use.

She has pulled the sheets up over her, her face buried in the pillow...

MANU

She's sure that if you go to see Dumont with her, she'll get him to accept the idea of a new ballot on Monday morning...

A beat.

SANDRA

She's dreaming... They don't give a damn about me...

MANU

She said it's because the foreman saw them one by one and scared them...

Manu has sat down on the edge of the bed.

SANDRA

They prefer to have their bonus, it's only natural.

MANU

No, it's not natural...

He is interrupted by the ringing of a mobile phone. He takes it out of his jacket pocket and looks at the display...

MANU

(to Sandra)  
It's Juliette...  
(into the phone)  
Hello?... Yes... Yes...  
(to Sandra)  
She'd like to talk to you...

Sandra doesn't reply.

MANU

Sandra?... Please... Talk to her...  
Sandra!

After a second or two, Sandra sits up and takes the phone...

SANDRA

(into the phone)  
Yes...

(MORE)

SANDRA (CONT'D)  
 (she listens)  
 Yes...

She hangs up and gives the phone back to Manu...

MANU  
 Well?...

A beat.

SANDRA  
 She says Dumont hasn't made his  
 mind up yet and that he's ready to  
 see me...

MANU  
 Now?

SANDRA  
 Before five.

MANU  
 (standing)  
 I'll drive you over there.

SANDRA  
 What about the kids?...

MANU  
 We'll hurry round to pick them up  
 and they can come with us.  
 (he takes his phone out of  
 his pocket)  
 I'll text Maxime and tell him to  
 meet us by the steps.

She sits down on the edge of the bed, starts to put her  
 trainers on and suddenly starts crying.

SANDRA  
 (through her tears)  
 No... No... I don't believe it!...  
 No!!

She has shouted this final "No", then takes a deep breath to  
 try to hold back her tears...

SANDRA  
 I'm not going...

She stands up to go to the bathroom, he tries to take her  
 arm, she pushes him away, he follows her...

Sandra enters the bathroom.

MANU

You have to go, Sandra.

She has taken the box of pills down from the top of the small medicine cabinet.

MANU

You're taking them again?

SANDRA

I have to, I'm crying all the time like some stupid cow again.

MANU

The doctor told you to stop taking them, you're not sick anymore... Just have half of one...

She pops a pill from the blister, tries to snap it in two but it slips from her hands...

SANDRA

Shit...

Manu has spotted it on the floor...

MANU

I see it.

He gets down on all fours to pick it up from under the washbasin...

MANU

The only way to stop crying is to fight for your job, not end up alone at home all day...

He has stood back up... He snaps the pill in two, gives half to Sandra... He takes Sandra's hand in his.

MANU

You have to go there... Don't just give in...

SANDRA

I'm screwed up again...

MANU

You're not.

SANDRA

I am.

She puts the half-pill in her mouth and bends to drink from the tap...

8 EXT. INDUSTRIAL ESTATE - DAY

8

A car heads along a road in an industrial estate, passing modern industrial buildings with their different logos... crosses a virtually empty car park... heads over to an industrial building bearing the logo "SOLWAL" at the corner of which stands the solitary figure of a woman... The car slows down... stops... Sandra gets out of the passenger seat and goes over to the woman... They vanish around the corner of the building...

9 EXT. NEAR SOLWAL - DAY

9

Sandra and the woman, JULIETTE, aged forty or so, walk hurriedly towards an entrance to the building... Juliette carries a shoulder bag.

JULIETTE

We mustn't miss him.

SANDRA

(looking at her watch)

It's okay, it's only a quarter to...

All of a sudden, Juliette spots something that we don't see.

JULIETTE

He's getting into his car! Quick!

SANDRA

Why didn't he wait for us?

Juliette doesn't reply and runs across a large lawn, followed by Sandra, to reach the lane that the car is going to take, raising her hand to make it stop. Sandra has stayed back, at the edge of the lawn.

JULIETTE

(out of breath)

Come on! Come on!

Sandra takes a few steps, hesitating about joining Juliette in the middle of the lane. The car driven by MR DUMONT, a man in his forties, has slowed down and stops alongside Juliette.

JULIETTE

(out of breath, to Sandra)

Come on!

Sandra comes over to Juliette. Mr Dumont has lowered his window.

JULIETTE

(out of breath)

Good evening, Mr Dumont...

(MORE)

JULIETTE (CONT'D)  
Sandra has come with me because  
we... Excuse me...

She has turned round to cough and catch her breath...

MR DUMONT  
(to Sandra)  
Good evening, Mrs Bya.

SANDRA  
(out of breath)  
Good evening...

JULIETTE  
(to Mr Dumont)  
Sandra and I would like to ask you  
if we could vote again on Monday  
morning because Jean-Marc talked to  
each one of us and those who were  
hesitating, he told them that you  
were thinking more along the lines  
of cutting back on staff, of making  
Sandra redundant, so we'd like...

MR DUMONT  
(interrupting Juliette)  
I never said that... I simply asked  
Jean-Marc to consult you to find  
out if the majority preferred to  
have their bonus or if we should  
take Mrs Bya back. Our financial  
situation doesn't allow us to do  
both. There was never any question  
of anything else! Ever!

JULIETTE  
But Jean-Marc told more than one of  
us that you would rather lay people  
off and that if it wasn't Sandra,  
it could be someone else...

MR DUMONT  
Are you sure he said that?

JULIETTE  
Yes, to at least three people.

MR DUMONT  
Fourteen out of sixteen chose to  
have the bonus, three people  
wouldn't have changed the vote.

JULIETTE  
All the same, it would be more...  
more honest if we could do it  
again, have a real vote, without  
Jean-Marc seeing us one by one and  
possibly influencing us...

A beat.

MR DUMONT

As long as you respect the secrecy of the ballot, I have no objections...

JULIETTE

Thank you.

MR DUMONT

(to Sandra)

I was planning to talk to you about all this on Monday morning... and...

JULIETTE

(interrupting Mr Dumont)

Monday morning...

MR DUMONT

I'm talking to Mrs Bya.

JULIETTE

Excuse me.

MR DUMONT

(to Sandra)

Believe me, we have nothing against you but the recession and competition from Asia in solar panel production obliges us to take decisions that I myself regret... Right... We'll see each other on Monday. Goodbye.

He is about to drive off and has pressed the button to raise his window.

JULIETTE

Mr Dumont!... The vote Monday morning, can we do it between 8 and 8:30?

MR DUMONT

(who has stopped his window)

Yes... But don't get Mrs Bya's hopes up in vain. Remember, apart from two people, everyone voted to have the bonus, which is legitimate... Goodbye...

JULIETTE

Goodbye, Mr Dumont.

He has driven off, Sandra has nodded goodbye, without saying a word... She looks at Juliette... A brief silence...

JULIETTE

If I hadn't told you he wanted to see you, you wouldn't have come...

Sandra looks at her... She would like to speak but doesn't seem able to. She makes a gesture with her hand, indicating that she needs to drink... Juliette searches in her bag, takes out her thermos, pours what is left in it into a paper cup, hands it to Sandra who takes a sip of it... A beat.

JULIETTE

Are you okay?

Sandra takes another sip...

SANDRA

...I don't know what was wrong with me, I couldn't speak... I wanted to tell him that I was in shape, that I really wanted to get back to work but I couldn't utter a word...

JULIETTE

The emotion of being back here, no doubt, of seeing Dumont there in front of you... Even if you didn't say anything, I swear he backed down because you were here.

SANDRA

You think so?

JULIETTE

I'm positive. It'll be the same thing Monday morning. When they see you in the flesh, they won't be able to think just about their bonus anymore.

Sandra takes another sip...

10

I/E. MANU'S CAR - OUTSIDE SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY

10

The children, MAXIME, 10, and ESTELLE, 6, are in the back seat of Manu's car that has just pulled up. Manu looks at Sandra who has already opened the door to get out with a pile of pizza boxes in her hands.

MANU

I'm sure it would work.

SANDRA

You're dreaming.

MANU

No, I'm not dreaming...

Sandra has tipped her seat forward so that the children can get out of the car.

ESTELLE  
I'll take them!

MAXIME  
What about me?

SANDRA  
Two each...

She gives two pizza boxes to each of them, they walk over to the door of the house while Manu waits for Sandra near the car.

MANU  
Shall I call Juliette for the addresses?

SANDRA  
No...

11 INT. KITCHEN & LIVING ROOM - DAY

11

Manu has opened the oven and takes out a pizza that he gives to Estelle who holds a plate that she has just taken from the work surface near the stove... She lowers her face to the pizza.

ESTELLE  
It's really hot!

She walks away. Maxime has taken a plate from the work surface and holds it out to Manu...

MAXIME  
If Mum loses her job, she's going to fall sick again...

MANU  
She's not going to lose it.

Manu has put a pizza on Maxime's plate. Estelle has come back to the kitchen.

MANU  
(to Maxime)  
Call her to tell her we're eating.

Maxime leaves the kitchen. Manu takes a third pizza out of the oven and puts it on the plate that Estelle holds out to him...

MANU  
I'll bring the last one.

We have heard Maxime calling to his mother off screen to come and eat. Manu takes the fourth pizza out of the oven, puts it on the last plate remaining on the work surface, goes into the living room with his pizza and puts it on the table where the children are already sitting, cutting up their pizzas.

MANU

Start eating, I'll get Mum.

He opens a bottle of soda and fills the children's glasses...

12 INT. BATHROOM & CORRIDOR - DAY

12

Sandra has put on a long T-shirt for bed, she finishes washing her feet in the bathtub, dries them...

MANU

You're going to bed already? It's only seven o'clock.

SANDRA

I'm exhausted...

MANU

At least have dinner with us...

SANDRA

I'm too exhausted.

MANU

You're not exhausted, you're letting yourself go instead of reacting.

SANDRA

(on the verge of tears)  
That's easy to say... apart from Juliette and Robert, no one thought of me, as if I didn't exist...

She passes in front of Manu to go to the bedroom. He follows her...

13 INT. BEDROOM - DAY

13

She has entered the bedroom and turns to Manu, her eyes wet with tears...

SANDRA

They're right, I don't exist... I'm nothing... nothing... a piece of shit...

She slumps to the floor as if she were collapsing, in tears... Manu has knelt down next to her as she weeps, her head against the carpet...

MANU

(on the verge of tears)  
...Sandra...

He takes her gently by the shoulders and holds her to him tightly...

MANU

You exist... Sandra... I love  
you...

She also holds him in her arms... A few seconds pass... Then,  
still in each other's arms...

MANU

You exist for them too... before  
choosing the bonus, they  
hesitated... they thought about  
you... that's why you have to go to  
see them one by one... You hear  
me?...

SANDRA

...I'll see them Monday morning...

MANU

They'll be in a group then, you  
won't be able to talk to each one  
separately, tell them that you want  
to keep your job, that you need  
your salary, that you need to be  
with them, and not end up alone on  
the dole...

SANDRA

I'm going to look like a beggar...

MANU

No, it's...

MAXIME (O.S.)

(from downstairs)  
Are you coming to eat?

MANU

Yes!  
(to Sandra)  
... It's not your fault they'll  
lose their bonus if you stay, it  
was your boss who decided that, not  
you...

A brief silence.

14 INT. LIVING ROOM &amp; KITCHEN - DAY

14

Sandra, Manu, Maxime and Estelle are at the table. There are a few scraps of pizza left and they finish the fruit tart. Manu is on the phone with Juliette and tells Sandra an address that Juliette gives him. Sandra has a phone book open near her plate. On the pages of the phone book, there's a sheet of paper with a list of names and a few addresses to which she adds the one that Manu gives her.

MANU  
 (to Sandra)  
 Rue de la Petite Bacnure... Number  
 17... in Herstal...

Manu has helped Estelle to take a slice of tart. She is sitting near her brother who finishes eating his slice while consulting a PC laptop for an address...

MANU  
 (into the phone)  
 What?... Özgüden...  
 (to Sandra)  
 Timur Özgüden... Rue des Acacias...  
 Number 32, in Cheratte...

Sandra notes the address opposite Timur's first name... then starts looking at the phone book again, trying to find a name...

MAXIME  
 (to Sandra)  
 ...There's no Atarhouch with a "h"  
 after the "t"...

SANDRA  
 (to Maxime)  
 Try without the "h"...  
 (to Manu)  
 Vanstael takes an "e" after the "a"  
 or there are two "l"s?...

MANU  
 (into the phone)  
 Vanstael takes an "e" after the "a"  
 or there are two...

SANDRA  
 (interrupting Manu)  
 ...Got him, two "l"s, number 4...

She adds a 4 to an address on her list... In the meantime, we have seen Estelle leave the table and come back with a small Nintendo game.

MANU

(to Sandra)

Mireille has just moved to La Bergerie but she doesn't know which one of the two buildings...

SANDRA

What's Mireille's surname?

MANU

(on the phone)

Fassotte...

SANDRA

(noting it on her list)

I'll find her on the buzzers...

MAXIME

(to Sandra)

I have five called Atarhouch...

SANDRA

(to Maxime)

It's Rue de l'Echelle... Hicham...

MANU

(to Sandra)

Yvon Delpierre and his son Jérôme... They're in Sclessin but she doesn't know the street...

SANDRA

I'll see if he's in the book...

She checks the phone book...

MAXIME

Hicham Atarhouch, Rue de l'Echelle, number 23...

SANDRA

Well done... Look for Yvon Delpierre in Sclessin too... Yvon with a 'y' and Delpierre, "Del" plus Pierre...

MANU

(to Sandra)

She can ask Robert to drive you there tomorrow morning...

SANDRA

No, it's okay, I'll take the bus... There are a couple who don't live too far away...

MANU

(into the phone)

It's okay, she'll take the bus to see those who don't live too far from here... yes... at midday at the restaurant, then I'll drive her there... Yes, I'll put her on, thanks...

Manu passes the mobile phone to Sandra who is still busy looking for "Delpierre" and "Montegnée" in the phone book...

SANDRA

(into the phone)

... Yes... We'll see... Yes... Thanks, take care...

Sandra hangs up, puts the phone down on the table...

ESTELLE

Can we go with you tomorrow morning?

SANDRA

No, Dad will drop you off at Nona's and we'll come back for you in the evening.

Manu, who had gone into the kitchen, comes back with a coffee pot and pours coffee for Sandra...

MAXIME

Why can't we go with you and eat at the Maxi afterwards?

MANU

It's best if Mum is alone to talk to her colleagues. I'll tell Nona to bring you to meet us at the restaurant.

The phone has rung while Manu was speaking. Sandra looks at the display, answers the phone...

SANDRA

(into the phone)

... Yes... Yes... You think so?... Yes...

(she notes a phone number on her list)

... 17 or 77?... Yes... Thank you, goodbye...

(to Manu)

That was Robert, he saw Kader, one of the team who won't be at home this weekend. He told Robert that I could call him on his mobile...

MANU

Call him...

A beat.

MANU

If he says you can call him, that means he's ready to listen to you...

Sandra looks at him for a second, hesitant, then picks up the phone and the sheet of paper... She goes over to the door leading to the hallway...

15

INT. CORRIDOR & STAIRS - DAY

15

Sandra, near the banister, the phone in her hand, dials the number that she has noted on the piece of paper... She has finished dialing the number, lifts the phone to her ear and suddenly changes her mind. She presses the button to end the call... She takes deep breaths to calm herself... dials the number again... lifts the phone to her ear... It's ringing... someone answers...

SANDRA

Hello?... Kader?... It's Sandra...  
 Yes... I'm okay, yes... In shape,  
 yes... Robert told me that I could  
 call you... Is this a good time?...  
 It's about the vote... I saw Dumont  
 with Juliette and he's agreed to  
 another ballot on Monday... Robert  
 told you... Yes... I wanted to ask  
 you if you were okay with the idea  
 of me staying... Yes, I know you're  
 not the one who decides but you  
 understand... Yes... I don't want  
 to make you lose one thousand  
 euros, I just want to tell you that  
 I... It's hard for me to... wait a  
 second...

(she holds back her tears,  
 takes a deep breath)

I just want to tell you that I want  
 to keep my job... I need my salary,  
 we need it at home... and I also  
 need to be with you all during the  
 day... What?... Refusing to vote,  
 that wouldn't be enough, accepting  
 to lose your bonus is what it would  
 take... but I don't want to force  
 you, I know you need a thousand  
 euros too... Really?... Oh,  
 Kader!... Thank you...

(she breaks down)

I'm sorry... Your kindness, thank  
 you... thank you... Yes...

(MORE)

SANDRA (CONT'D)  
 yes, you have a good weekend too,  
 see you on Monday...

She hangs up, moved, happy...

16 EXT. SQUARE - SUBURBAN HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - DAY 16

Sandra, her bag hanging from her shoulder, crosses a large square towards two tall apartment blocks...

17 EXT. ENTRANCE TO BLOCK #1 - DAY 17

Sandra finishes searching a row of buzzers... searches the second row from top to bottom... then walks away from the hallway and goes over to the other building...

18 EXT. ENTRANCE TO BLOCK #2 - DAY 18

She looks for the name on a row of buzzers... finds it... presses the buzzer... After a few seconds...

MAN (V.O.)  
 (over the intercom)  
 Yes?...

SANDRA  
 Hello, this is Sandra, I work at SOLWAL with Mireille, could I talk to her, please?...

MAN (V.O.)  
 (over the intercom)  
 She isn't here...

SANDRA  
 When will she be back?

MAN (V.O.)  
 (over the intercom)  
 Midday, one o'clock...

SANDRA  
 I'll come back later, thank you...

19 I/E. BUS & SUBURBAN LANDSCAPE - DAY 19

Sandra stands on the bus, watching the scenery fly by... When some people stand to get off at the next stop, she sits down on a seat that has just come free... She takes a blister of her pills out of her jacket pocket, pops out a pill that she snaps in two, puts one half back in its hollow, takes a bottle of water from her bag, opens it and swallows the half-pill...

screws the top back on the bottle, puts it away in her bag and takes out a small map-book of the town and the sheet of paper with the list. She opens the book to a page and searches it...

20 EXT. INTERSECTION & STREET - SUBURBAN NEIGHBOURHOOD - DAY 20

Sandra, her map and her sheet of paper in her hand, walks away from a passerby who has just given her directions. She walks... crosses an intersection towards a narrower street...

21 EXT. STREET - SUBURBAN NEIGHBOURHOOD - DAY 21

Sandra slips her plan and her list into her bag as she walks, arrives at the house that she was looking for, checks the name on the bell, rings it... A woman of 45 or so opens the door...

WOMAN

Hello...

SANDRA

Hello, ma'am, I'm Sandra... I work with Willy at SOLWAL. Could I have a quick word with him?... It's about work...

WOMAN

He's at the back of the yard...

The woman comes out of the house, locking the door behind her and, with Sandra following, walks over to a gate that leads to an alleyway at the side of the house. We hear the sound of a disk-cutter... The woman opens the gate and sets off along the alleyway, followed by Sandra...

22 EXT. YARD & GARAGE - DAY 22

WILLY, a man aged 45 or so, is removing the cement from salvaged paving stones with the disk-cutter. Because of the noise of the cutter, he hasn't heard the footsteps behind him...

WOMAN

Willy!... Willy!...

Willy turns, stopping his cutter, and raises his protective goggles...

WILLY

Ah... Hi, are you okay?...

SANDRA

Yes... Robert gave me your address...

A brief silence... Sandra glances at Willy's wife who has stayed at her side...

SANDRA

... I've come to see you because Juliette and I saw Dumont and he's agreed to a new ballot on Monday morning... because Jean-Marc said a number of things to scare people... So... I'm here to see if you'd be willing to vote for me to keep my job...

WILLY

... I didn't vote against you, I voted to have my bonus. It was Dumont who set the two against each other, not me...

SANDRA

I know... It's sick, forcing you to choose... but I don't want to lose my job...

A brief silence.

WILLY

... I can't... I need my bonus. Our older girl's at university, we need five hundred euros a month just for her...

WOMAN

Six hundred with the service charges on her room...

A beat.

WILLY

... What do the others say?

SANDRA

Robert, Juliette and Kader are going to vote for me to stay, I don't know about the others, you're the first I've seen...

A beat.

WILLY

I'll think about it...

WOMAN

What? It's all thought out, we can't, Willy!

(to Sandra)

You know what I do every Sunday morning?

(MORE)

WOMAN (CONT'D)

I go to the flea market to sell the paving stones he salvages. That's how we make ends meet.

WILLY

(to his wife)

Cut it out...

WOMAN

(to Willy)

No, I won't! She has to know! I'm not just saying no for the sake of it. We need your bonus.

(to Sandra)

Since last February, I've had to go on half-time only, seven hundred euros less a month... Do you realize?...

SANDRA

Yes, I understand... Forgive me...

WILLY

You don't need to apologize, we can't, that's all...

Silence.

SANDRA

Would you happen to have an address...

(she takes her sheet of paper and her map out of her bag)

For Dominique or... Julien... or...

WILLY

I only know Yvon's, have you got his?

SANDRA

No...

WILLY

23, Rue Côte d'Or in Sclessin...

Sandra has taken a ballpoint pen out of her bag and notes the address on her sheet of paper that she rests on the map book...

Sandra crosses the square again to the second housing block... She spots MIREILLE about to enter the building...

SANDRA  
 (calling out)  
 Mireille!... Mireille!...

She starts running... calls out again.

24 I/E. ENTRANCE TO BLOCK #2 - DAY

24

Sandra is near the glass door of the hallway. She sees Mireille crossing it and hammers her fist on the glass...

SANDRA  
 Mireille!

Mireille, who has heard her, comes back over to the door, pulling her shopping cart and carrying a bag also full of shopping in her other hand. She is a woman aged thirty-five, edgy and tired. She opens the door and blocks it with her body so that it doesn't close... They kiss each other on the cheek...

MIREILLE  
 It's been a long time... Are you feeling better?...

SANDRA  
 Yes... Can I see you for a minute or two, I'd like to talk to you about the ballot you had about the bonuses and my redundancy...

MIREILLE  
 Of course... but I'm in a hurry... We have to go to... Tell me... Tell me quickly...

SANDRA  
 I can come back later or tomorrow morning if you prefer...

MIREILLE  
 No, no, go ahead...

SANDRA  
 Juliette and I saw Dumont, he's ready to hold another ballot Monday morning because Jean-Marc said certain things to scare people and influence them... So... I wanted to ask you if you'd agree to vote for me to stay...

MIREILLE  
 I'd do that but if I vote for you, I lose my bonus...

SANDRA

I wasn't the one who decided  
that...

MIREILLE

Me neither... How about the others,  
are they ready to lose their bonus?

SANDRA

For now, there are three of them.  
Juliette...

MIREILLE

(interrupting Sandra)

It's easy for her! Her husband  
mends cars on the black. I can't, I  
just can't! Maybe you don't know  
but I left my husband and I'm  
having to start again from scratch  
with my new guy! From scratch!  
Furniture, TV, bed, washing  
machine, dishes, the lot! We have  
to buy everything! I can't allow  
myself...

She stops speaking to let someone out of the building who  
passes between her and Sandra...

MIREILLE

...I can't allow myself to lose a  
thousand euros. You understand?  
Don't hold it against me but I  
can't...

SANDRA

I won't hold it against you...

MIREILLE

I'm sorry...

She takes a step back, letting the door close slightly...

MIREILLE

...I have to go, excuse me...

SANDRA

Goodbye...

MIREILLE

You're not too upset, huh?

SANDRA

No, no, goodbye...

MIREILLE (O.S.)

Goodbye...

Sandra walks away from the housing block...

25 EXT. BUS STOP / STREET - DAY

25

Sandra gets off the bus that has just stopped. She has her map and sheet of paper in her hand. She walks towards a square... Her phone rings... She takes it out of her jacket pocket and answers it...

SANDRA

Yes... Two and they both said no...  
They need the bonus... Yes...  
Thanks... Yes... You take care  
too...

She hangs up and puts the phone back in her pocket...

26 EXT. HOUSING BLOCK &amp; STREET - DAY

26

Sandra crosses a street, putting the map and the sheet of paper back in her bag... She goes over to the door of a housing block... looks at the row of buzzers with their names... finds the one she was looking for, presses the buzzer... After a few seconds, someone answers.

CHILD (V.O.)

Hello? Who is it?

SANDRA

(into the intercom)  
It's Sandra, I'd like to talk to  
Nadine...

The child says nothing...

SANDRA

(into the intercom)  
Are you Nadine's little girl?

The child doesn't reply...

SANDRA

(into the intercom)  
Is Nadine your mum?...

CHILD (V.O.)

Yes... but she isn't here...

SANDRA

(into the intercom)  
Do you know when she'll be back?...

The child doesn't reply but, over the intercom, we hear the voice of a woman whispering a few words to her...

CHILD (V.O.)

I don't know... she didn't say...  
goodbye...

SANDRA  
 (into the intercom)  
 I heard you, Nadine. Why won't you  
 speak to me?...

Sandra barely has time to finish her question before the intercom is hung up... She stands there astounded for a second...

27

INT. RESTAURANT - HYPERMARKET - DAY

27

Manu, dressed as a cook and with a sanitary cap on his head, is squatting near Sandra who eats at a table with Maxime, Estelle and NONA, a woman in her sixties...

MANU  
 ... Didn't you get the feeling that  
 they might change their minds?...

SANDRA  
 No... I put myself in their shoes,  
 a thousand euros...

MANU  
 You already have three who agree,  
 three out of six, that's half...

CHEF (O.S.)  
 (shouting)  
 Manu!

Manu, who has turned to the voice calling him, stands and rests his hand on Sandra's shoulder, squeezing it slightly in a sign of support...

MANU  
 (to the children)  
 I'll go and finish the fruit  
 salads, they'll be on the counter  
 in five minutes.

ESTELLE  
 Are there any strawberries?

MANU  
 Yes...

Manu has gone over to the kitchen area, Sandra has started eating again... She downs her beer in one go... She eats again... After a moment, tears well up in her eyes: she is on the verge of crying...

MAXIME  
 Are you okay, Mum?...

She nods as she continues to chew her food...

SANDRA  
 (to Nona, through her  
 tears)  
 I'll be back in a second...

She stands. For a fraction of a second, Nona grips Sandra's hand in hers... Sandra walks over to a glass door that leads out to the car park...

28 EXT. CAR PARK - HYPERMARKET - DAY

28

Sandra is near the back of a parked van that shelters her from people's looks... She tries to stop crying...

SANDRA  
 (to herself)  
 No... No...

Manu comes over to her... She clings to his arm with both hands as if to help herself get over her crying...

SANDRA  
 I don't want the children to see me  
 crying anymore...

After a while, she calms down...

SANDRA  
 Have you got a handkerchief?...

Manu takes the white napkin from his belt...

MANU  
 It's clean.

He hands the napkin to Sandra who blows her nose, dries her tears...

SANDRA  
 The one that hurts the most is  
 Nadine, I got on really well with  
 her, she wouldn't even talk to  
 me...

A beat.

SANDRA  
 I'm going home...

MANU  
 Let's try to see one or two more at  
 least.

SANDRA  
 It's no use...

MANU

Let's try...

Silence.

29 I/E. MANU'S CAR - SUBURBS - DAY

29

Manu drives, Sandra has fallen asleep in the passenger seat... We hear the sound of the wheels on the road, the voice of the satnav giving directions now and then... The car follows a road along the side of a wall... The wall files by outside the window against which Sandra rests her sleeping head... All of a sudden, she cries out in horror, making Manu give a start and waking herself up...

A beat.

MANU

Are you okay?...

SANDRA

...I dreamt that Estelle was drowning...

She rubs her head with her hands... takes her bottle of water out of her bag, a pill from her blister...

MANU

How many have you had already?

SANDRA

Give me a break...

She swallows the pill with a mouthful of water... The satnav voice indicates the road to follow... The car keeps on driving...

30 I/E. MANU'S CAR - STREET IN HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - DAY

30

Manu parks the car on a street in a housing development, near a row of small, identical houses... Sandra removes her safety belt, looks at Manu who looks at her... She opens the door and is starting to get out when he takes her hand in his... They grip hands for a second. She gives a faint smile in reply to Manu's gesture of affection and encouragement...

31 EXT. HOUSE - DAY

31

Sandra is at the door of a house. She rings the bell... After a few seconds, a LITTLE GIRL opens the door...

SANDRA

Hello, is your father Timur at home?

LITTLE GIRL  
No, he's at football.

SANDRA  
He's playing?

LITTLE GIRL  
No, he's training kids...

SANDRA  
Is it far from here?

LITTLE GIRL  
No, you take that street there and  
then you'll see the posts with the  
lamps in the sky...

SANDRA  
Thank you... goodbye...

Sandra walks back over to Manu's car...

32 EXT. CAR PARK - FOOTBALL GROUND BAR - DAY 32

Sandra walks over to the door of the bar... We hear music  
from inside... She hesitates a second before pushing open the  
door... She goes in...

33 INT. FOOTBALL GROUND BAR - DAY 33

Sandra looks at the tables where a few men are sitting...  
goes over to the counter where a BARMAID is working...

SANDRA  
Hello, I'm looking for Timur...

BARMAID  
In the middle of the pitch on the  
right, he's training the juniors...

Sandra thanks the barmaid, looks over at the football pitch  
through the big windows and an open door, then steps through  
this door to go out to the pitch...

34 EXT. FOOTBALL GROUND - DAY 34

Sandra walks along the side of the ground, following a  
railing... A man in his early thirties, TIMUR, dressed in  
shorts and a football T-shirt, is training the junior players  
with a second adult...

SANDRA  
Timur!...

Timur has heard someone calling to him... He comes over to Sandra...

TIMUR

Hello...

SANDRA

Hello... Your daughter told me you were here, I was round at your place...

A brief silence.

SANDRA

I wanted to see you about the vote on the bonuses and my redundancy... Juliette and I saw Dumont and he's ready to hold another ballot on Monday morning because Jean-Marc influenced some people by telling them that Dumont preferred to lay off staff... and that if it wasn't me who was made redundant, it might be them... so... there... I wanted to see you to find out if you'd agree to vote for me to stay on Monday...

Silence... Timur looks at her, his hands on the railing. He cannot bring himself to speak...

TIMUR

... Of course I agree... I... I...

He takes Sandra's hands... rests his head on them for a second... He is on the verge of tears...

TIMUR

...I'm so pleased you're here... Since last night, I've been mad at myself for voting for the bonus... I'm sorry, Sandra... I...

SANDRA

Don't apologize... I can understand, one thousand euros...

TIMUR

No... I'm ashamed... I even forgot what you did for me, remember, when I broke a cell and you said it was you...

SANDRA

And Jean-Marc told me: that's no way to set an example for the new guy!

They both laugh...

TIMUR

How many are agreeing to go without their bonus?

SANDRA

Four. Robert, Juliette, Kader and you... I have another ten left to see.

TIMUR

You'll manage it, I'm sure you will. Have you seen Miguel yet?

SANDRA

No.

TIMUR

I'll call him... Right, I have to go... See you on Monday...

Sandra has stepped forward to kiss him on the cheek, he kisses her cheek in turn.

SANDRA

Thank you...

TIMUR

Good luck!

Timur has gone back over to the group of juniors. Sandra walks along the side of the railing to the bar, she seems happy...

35

INT. STAIRS & CORRIDOR - HOUSING BLOCK - DAY

35

Sandra climbs a flight of concrete stairs lit only by the light coming from the narrow windows of the stairwell... She passes the doors of the lift, access to which is blocked by white and red plastic ribbons... She climbs another flight of stairs... She finishes climbing one last flight: she is a little out of breath... She walks down a corridor... goes over to a door... knocks...

After a second or two...

WOMAN (V.O.)

Yes, who is it?

SANDRA

(a little out of breath)  
It's Sandra, I work with Hicham at SOLWAL...

The door opens to reveal a North African woman aged between twenty-five and thirty with a baby in her arms and a child aged four or five at her side.

SANDRA  
(a little out of breath)  
Hello...

WOMAN  
Hello...

SANDRA  
(a little out of breath)  
I took the liberty of coming up and knocking because the caretaker told me the buzzers weren't working with the power cut...

WOMAN  
No problem...

SANDRA  
Are you Hicham's wife?

WOMAN  
Yes, but Hicham isn't here...

SANDRA  
What time will he be back?

WOMAN  
I don't know...

Silence.

SANDRA  
Could you call him to see when he'll be back or if I could meet him somewhere?... I'm sorry to ask but I really need to see him because he can help me keep my job... to avoid becoming unemployed...

WOMAN  
I'll call him, come in...

Sandra enters the apartment...

Sandra is in the small hallway that leads to the living room, the woman who still has the baby in her arms is making a call on her mobile phone... Sandra looks at her, she doesn't understand what the woman is saying to her husband but she realizes that he doesn't want to speak to her...

WOMAN  
 (in Berber, into the  
 phone)  
 ... Why?... She says as soon as  
 possible... I don't know...  
 (lengthy silence)

SANDRA  
 If he doesn't want to talk to me,  
 it doesn't matter, never mind..

WOMAN  
 (in Berber, into the  
 phone)  
 ...Monday where?...  
 (to Sandra)  
 He's asking if you can't wait until  
 Monday at the factory?...

SANDRA  
 If that suits him better, all  
 right...

WOMAN  
 (in Berber, into the  
 phone)  
 ... She agrees... Yes... Now?...  
 (to Sandra)  
 He wants to talk to you...

She has passed the phone to Sandra...

SANDRA  
 (into the phone)  
 Yes... Hi, Hicham... Yes... Kader  
 told you too?... Yes...  
 (she listens)  
 I... I understand... yes, I  
 understand... yes, goodbye...

She hands the phone back to the woman who talks in Berber  
 with her husband for a few more seconds while Sandra,  
 disappointed, looks at the child who looks back at her...

37 I/E. HOUSING BLOCK & SQUARE - DAY

37

Sandra comes out of the building...

MANU (O.S.)  
 Sandra!...

She turns round. Manu who was waiting for her near the door  
 of the building comes over to her...

SANDRA  
 He said no...

They walk over to the car...

MANU

No-no or maybe he can still change his mind?

SANDRA

He won't change it... Kader has already called him, he told him no as well. He needs his bonus...

MANU

Juliette sent me a text message with a new address...

They are about to get into the car...

SANDRA

I'm going to buy some water, do you want anything?

MANU

No.

She walks over to a small supermarket with a display of fruit and vegetables outside.

38

INT. SMALL SUPERMARKET - DAY

38

Sandra, who has taken a big bottle of water from the shelves, stands behind a customer who finishes paying the North African checkout guy... Sandra puts the bottle down near the cash register...

SANDRA

Hello...

CHECKOUT GUY

Hello... sixty cents, please...

Sandra hands him a one-euro coin, he gives her the change, she thanks him, picks up her bottle, walks over to the exit on an aisle where a few customers are doing their shopping... All of a sudden, she finds herself face to face with a North African guy in his early thirties, HICHAM, who arrives from a side aisle with a few crates of vegetables in his arms. They stare at each other in surprise for a second...

HICHAM

Come here!... Come here!...

He leads her off to one side, near the entrance to the storeroom where there's a small trolley with other crates...

HICHAM

I work here at the weekend, my wife didn't tell you because it's... You understand?

He has said this on reaching the trolley on which he sets down the crates, a little lopsided, holding them so that they don't fall.

HICHAM

I'm sorry I was so short with you on the phone but I really can't, I don't want you to lose your job but I don't want to lose my bonus either, put yourself in my shoes, it covers a year's gas and electricity, you understand?...

SANDRA

... Try to put yourself in my shoes too, I'm better, I want to go back to work, earn a salary, not end up all alone on the dole...

A beat.

HICHAM

The best thing would be for you to stay and for us to get the bonus. I told Jean-Marc that earlier but he says it's not possible for Dumont...

SANDRA

You saw Jean-Marc?

HICHAM

No, he called me, like the others I suppose, so we wouldn't change our minds.

SANDRA

Why does he think it's better if I'm laid off?...

HICHAM

I don't know... That's what he thinks, I told him he was wrong but... Anyhow, I have to carry on working...

He has picked up the crates again and starts to walk away...

SANDRA

What did he say about me?...

A beat.

HICHAM

Well.. He thinks that when someone's been sick they're not as efficient, which isn't true, I told him that. After my accident, I wasn't weaker, I was more motivated, you remember, I...

Sandra is on the verge of tears, she wants to speak, she cannot manage it... She lifts her hand to her throat...

HICHAM

What's wrong?...

She gestures to him as if to wave goodbye and quickly walks away...

39 I/E. MANU'S CAR - DAY

39

Sandra sits down in the car, nervously trying to open the bottle of water but she cannot do it...

MANU

What's the matter?... Give me that...

He has taken the bottle of water, removes the bit of plastic that secures the cap, opens it, she takes it, drinks several long gulps... wants to speak but cannot manage it... Manu wants to say something, she puts her hand over Manu's mouth to make him understand that he mustn't speak... She tries to calm herself down by breathing in and out very slowly... She takes a few more sips... spits some water back out...

After a moment:

SANDRA

Drive!... Drive!...

Manu starts the car up. She lowers the window on her side. The car has set off. She leans her head towards the window to breathe more easily...

40 EXT. LOW WALL - SUBURBAN PARK - DAY

40

Sandra and Manu are sitting on a low wall eating an ice cream... We hear the shouts of children at play, a few dogs barking, the sounds of cars passing nearby...

SANDRA

You're saying that to help me but you don't believe it...

MANU

I do, I do believe it... You have to believe it too and not let yourself be dragged down by what that asshole of a foreman says.

A beat.

SANDRA

He's right, I'm not up to it. I can't stop crying and now I'm losing my voice...

MANU

So what?... Anyone would snap in your shoes. You're about to start back, you're in shape and they tell you you're fired, it's enough to knock anyone out, it would knock me out too...

A brief silence...

MANU

If they take you back, I'm sure that after a few weeks with Juliette and all those who supported you, you'll be working like before, better even...

He has tried to put his arm around her shoulder but she has pulled away... They carry on eating their ice cream...

SANDRA

We might end up leaving each other...

MANU

Why do you say that?

SANDRA

Because you don't love me anymore, you pity me but you don't love me anymore...

MANU

Sandra...

He tries to put his hand on hers, she pulls it back...

A brief silence...

SANDRA

Doesn't it bother you that we haven't made love for four months now?...

MANU

It does... I'll know we'll make it  
again... I love you, Sandra...

A beat. He lays his hand on her shoulder, pulls her closer to him. She offers no resistance... After a beat:

MANU

We'll go to see the guy with his  
son, the Rue Côte d'Or is just down  
there...

Sandra doesn't reply, she is staring at something that we cannot see...

SANDRA

Look under the bench...

Beneath a nearby bench, we see a cat trying to catch the corner of a plastic bag between two planks...

SANDRA

I wish that was me...

41 EXT. OUTSIDE YVON'S HOUSE - DAY

41

Sandra rings the doorbell of a house... No one comes to open it... She takes a few steps towards the entrance to a driveway at the side of the house... stops for a second before vanishing along the driveway...

42 EXT. BACK OF YVON'S HOUSE - DAY

42

Sandra greets YVON, a man aged between forty-five and fifty, near a car where he is sanding a bodywork repair. She then greets JÉRÔME, a young man aged twenty, who is sticking masks prior to painting to the other wing of the car. Jérôme carries on applying the masks as he listens to what she says. In the background, we make out a girl standing on a chair polishing the roof of another car...

SANDRA

...I've come to see you because  
Juliette and I saw Dumont who's  
agreed to hold the ballot again on  
Monday morning... because of Jean-  
Marc who influenced the vote by  
telling certain people things to  
scare them... So I wanted...

JÉRÔME

(interrupting Sandra)  
What kind of things did he say?

SANDRA

...that Dumont wanted to lay off staff and that if it wasn't me who was fired, it would be someone else.

JÉRÔME

Who did he say that to?

SANDRA

Three or four people at least, I don't know who, but Juliette does.

JÉRÔME

She always knows everything that one...

Jérôme has spoken curtly as he continues to apply the masks, barely glancing at Sandra...

SANDRA

(to Yvon)

I wanted to know if at Monday's ballot... you'd agree to vote for me to stay?...

YVON

What do the others say, the ones you've seen?

SANDRA

Juliette, Robert, Kader and Timur are going to vote for me to stay. I still have another eight to see, with you two.

Silence.

SANDRA

I don't know if Jean-Marc called to tell you that I wouldn't be like before because of my depression but that's not true, I'm in shape...

Silence.

YVON

...I don't want you to end up unemployed but at the same time I don't want to lose my bonus... It's a lot of money...

SANDRA

...I know... I'm not the one who decided not to let you have it if I stayed... personally...

(MORE)

SANDRA (CONT'D)

I'm just asking to work and earn my salary because we need it at home to live...

JÉRÔME

We got the bonus because we worked!

SANDRA

...I know...

JÉRÔME

(raising his voice)

So why do you want us to give it to you?

YVON

(to his son)

Calm down! She never said that. She's suggesting...

JÉRÔME

(interrupting his father)

She doesn't want us to have our money, right? You think that's normal?

YVON

We can talk...

JÉRÔME

No! We worked to earn it, it's ours!

(to Sandra)

Aren't you ashamed, coming here to steal our money?!

YVON

Shut it, Jérôme.

He steps over to Sandra who looks distraught...

JÉRÔME

Get lost!... Just get lost, okay!

Just as Jérôme is about to push Sandra away, Yvon grabs hold of him. In the struggle, Sandra is hit in the face by Yvon's elbow and falls to the ground. Yvon and Jérôme fight for a few seconds... The father tries to press his son's face against the wall but the latter is stronger, shoves his father back and gives him a thump that sends him crashing to the ground... He quickly walks over to the car that his girlfriend was polishing...

JÉRÔME

Get in!

She immediately gets into the passenger seat as he gets in behind the wheel. The doors slam.

He speeds off and vanishes along the driveway leading to the street... Sandra has got back up, there is a red mark beneath her eye where Yvon's elbow hit her. She comes over to Yvon who is still on the ground, dazed... She hears Manu come running up.

MANU

I just saw some maniac tear out of here. What happened?

She doesn't reply. He helps her to lift up Yvon who, still groggy, is now sitting on the ground, held up by Sandra and Manu who give him a few light slaps to rouse him, in vain. Sandra takes the bottle of water from her bag that fell to the ground when she was jostled. She also takes out a paper tissue.

MANU

No need for a tissue, pour it over his head...

She holds her bottle over Yvon's head, pours some water... He comes to his senses...

MANU

Can you see my hand?

Yvon nods slightly...

MANU

(holding up three fingers)  
How many fingers?

YVON

... Three...  
(to Sandra who is  
squatting in front of  
him)  
Who's this?

MANU

I'm her husband...

Sandra has taken her paper tissue and dabs some water on Yvon's face...

YVON

... You can count on me Monday...

43 INT. KITCHEN - MANU & SANDRA'S HOUSE - DAY

43

Sandra takes a tea towel from a cupboard.

SANDRA

(raising her voice)  
Who cares? After all, they came to blows because of me, right?

Manu is taking some ice cubes out of the fridge.

MANU

Yes, don't get so upset...

SANDRA

I say that I can't take any more  
and you act as if everything were  
normal. You just don't realize!  
There's violence because of me, I  
can't stand that.

Manu has popped the ice cubes out of their plastic tray onto  
the tea towel that Sandra has spread out.

MANU

It's never happened before.

SANDRA

No, it's the same every time! Every  
time I feel like a beggar, a thief  
coming to take their money, they  
look at me ready to start hitting  
me... And I feel like hitting them  
too... I'm going to bed...

She has pressed the tea towel full of ice cubes to her eye,  
goes to the living room.

MANU

We said we'd go and see Miguel  
too...

SANDRA

No, I've had enough. I'll see them  
on Monday.

44 INT. LIVING ROOM, HALLWAY & STAIRS - DAY

44

Sandra leaves the living room... starts to climb the  
stairs...

MANU (O.S.)

Sandra!...

He is in the hallway, not far from the stairs.

MANU

There are five out of ten who want  
you to stay after all.

SANDRA

There are two, the others do  
because I forced them into feeling  
sorry for me... And if I'm taken  
back, imagine those I'll have  
prevented from getting their bonus!

(MORE)

SANDRA (CONT'D)

How are they going to look at me?  
How am I going to manage with them,  
all day, in the same workshop, at  
the same machines, in the canteen?  
I won't even go on Monday. Let them  
decide without me!

She climbs the stairs...

45 INT. BATHROOM - DAY

45

She has put the tea towel with the ice cubes in the  
washbasin. She takes a blister from her box of pills, pops  
out two of them...

MANU (O.S.)

(shouting)

Juliette's calling you on your  
phone!

SANDRA

No, I'm going to sleep!

She swallows the pills by drinking from the tap...

46 INT. SANDRA & MANU'S BEDROOM - DAY

46

Sandra, in her nightshirt, closes the curtains, plunging the  
bedroom into darkness... She gets into bed... After a moment,  
Manu quietly opens the bedroom door...

MANU

Sandra?...

SANDRA

Yes...

He comes over to the bed and sits down on it near Sandra who  
is curled up in a ball with her back to him...

MANU

Juliette just called me, she spoke  
to Timur who told her that Miguel  
will vote for you...

A beat.

MANU

That's six now, only three to go...

Sandra doesn't react... A brief silence...

SANDRA

... I'm all alone, Manu, all  
alone...

MANU

I'm here...

He caresses Sandra's head, her shoulder emerging from the sheets... He lies down behind her, putting one arm around her... After a moment, she lifts Manu's forearm to her mouth, biting it harder and harder...

MANU

You're biting too hard...

She lets go of him...

SANDRA

I wanted to be sure you were here...

A beat.

MANU

We'll carry on tomorrow... three more...

A beat.

MANU

I'm going to call the kids to tell them we won't be picking them up until tomorrow...

Manu starts to get up.

SANDRA

Stay with me until I fall asleep...

47 EXT. PATH - HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - MORNING 47

Sandra walks along a path lined with excavated earth that leads to a development of small prefabricated houses. The bruise under her eye has turned blue. She walks...

48 EXT. HOUSE - HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - MORNING 48

Sandra arrives at one of the small prefabricated houses, checks the name on the bell, rings it... waits... The door is opened by a woman aged between twenty-five and thirty, ANNE.

SANDRA

Hello.

ANNE

Hello.

They kiss each other on the cheek.

ANNE

Come in!

SANDRA

That's kind but I have work to do,  
well, work... I wanted to see  
you...

ANNE

I know why you're here, we're  
redoing the ballot on Monday.

SANDRA

Jean-Marc called you?

ANNE

No, Nadine did...

SANDRA

Did she tell you she wouldn't  
answer her door to me?

ANNE

Yes... she hates herself for it..

SANDRA

If she regrets it, that's  
something...

A brief silence.

ANNE

Are there many already who agree to  
lose their bonus?

SANDRA

Six... I still have another four to  
see... five with you...

ANNE

I talked to my husband about it and  
well... we have a lot of expenses  
with the house... We wanted to use  
the bonus to do the patio out  
back... The mud keeps washing down,  
we have to build a little wall  
too...

Anne has seen that Sandra is on the verge of tears.

ANNE

I'm sorry... I...

SANDRA

(through her tears)  
No, don't apologize! That's nothing  
to do with it...

(MORE)

SANDRA (CONT'D)

I'm just a bit nervous because of tomorrow morning... Right, I'll be going...

They kiss each other on the cheek again and just when Sandra turns her back on her:

ANNE

Wait, Sandra... It... It bothers me to tell you no... I...

SANDRA

I don't want you to feel pity for me, Anne... I almost cried just now but that has nothing to do with all this...

ANNE

I don't pity you but... I haven't stopped thinking about it since Friday evening... We need money but... I... I'll talk to my husband about it again, he'll be back at midday, he's gone off on his mountain bike... You can drop in later or I'll call you around one o'clock... I'll take your number... Just let me get my phone...

She vanishes inside the house to get her phone and we stay with Sandra who waits for her to come back...

49

I/E. MANU'S CAR - COUNTRY ROADS - DAY

49

The car drives along a road in the country with Manu at the wheel and Sandra making a call on her mobile. From the car radio, we hear the final notes of a rock song, then the voice of the host congratulating the listener who has given the right year for the single's release. Sandra has picked up the sheet of paper with the addresses and the ballpoint pen that were on the dashboard. She takes a children's book from the back seat and uses it to lean on.

SANDRA

(into the phone)

Yes, go ahead... with two t's...

She writes an address on the sheet of paper...

SANDRA

Yes... We're going to Julien's, he lives in Nandrin... I don't know...

MANU  
 (raising his voice so as  
 to be heard over the  
 phone)  
 We're going to make it!...

SANDRA  
 (into the phone)  
 ... He says we're going to make  
 it... I don't know... we'll see...  
 thanks...

She hangs up... For a while now, the car radio has been playing "La nuit n'en finit plus" (*The Night Never Ends*) by Petula Clark.

MANU  
 Enough!

He turns the car radio off.

SANDRA  
 Why did you turn it off?

MANU  
 You want me to put it back on?

SANDRA  
 Yes, and stop protecting me.

Manu has turned the car radio on again and it plays the rest of the song.

MANU  
 I'm not protecting you.

SANDRA  
 You are. You turned the radio off  
 because you thought this song was  
 too depressing for me.

MANU  
 Well, it isn't exactly...

Sandra has turned up the volume of the car radio, they look at each other with a smile... Manu reaches out and lays his hand on the back of Sandra's neck... The voice of the satnav tells them which direction to take...

50 EXT. OUTSIDE HOUSE - VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

50

Sandra is in front of a closed door, she waits...

WOMAN (O.S.)  
 (through the door)  
 Are you Jehovah's witnesses?

SANDRA

No...

The key turns in the lock, the door opens and a WOMAN in her early thirties appears.

WOMAN

I'm sorry, they usually come by around this time...

SANDRA

Hello... I'm Sandra, I work with Julien at "SOLWAL"... Could I have a word with him?

WOMAN

He's not here, he's at the café... there, near the baker's...

She points off in a direction that Sandra turns to.

SANDRA

Thank you... Goodbye...

WOMAN

Goodbye.

Sandra walks off in the direction that the woman showed her...

51 EXT. OUTSIDE CAFÉ - VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY 51

Sandra peers into the café through the window... We hear the hubbub of conversations and music... She turns back, walks over to the parking area on the square...

52 EXT. NEAR MANU'S CAR - VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY 52

Manu gets out of his car as he sees Sandra come over...

SANDRA

He's in the café but it's packed with people...

MANU

We'll wait till he comes out.

SANDRA

(as she gets into the car)  
No, I'll see him on Monday.

MANU

It's half past twelve, we'll get something from the bakery and eat it here while we wait for him to come out...

SANDRA  
Are you hungry?

MANU  
Yes.

53 INT. BAKERY - VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

53

Sandra and Manu are in the bakery, there is one customer ahead of them who finishes paying...

MANU  
(to Sandra)  
They have mini pizzas...

Sandra has looked out at the square through the display window...

SANDRA  
There he is...

MANU  
Go on... You want a pizza?

SANDRA  
Yes.

She goes out.

54 EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

54

Sandra runs a few steps... then walks rapidly...

SANDRA  
Julien!

She goes over to a man in his forties, JULIEN, who has turned to her. He is with a boy aged six or seven.

JULIEN  
Oh... Hi.

They shake hands...

SANDRA  
(to the boy)  
Hello...

BOY  
Hello...

JULIEN  
My son, Ryan...

A beat.

SANDRA

I wanted to see you because on Friday, Juliette and I saw Dumont who's agreed to hold a new ballot on Monday morning because of Jean-Marc who influenced people by telling them that if it wasn't me who was laid off, it might be them... I wanted to see you to find out if you'd agree to vote for me to stay...

JULIEN

Are there many who agree to lose their bonus?

SANDRA

Six... I still have five to see, with you...

JULIEN

(to his son)

Go and tell your mother I'll be back for lunch soon.

The boy looks at Sandra... who says goodbye to him... He says goodbye to her... walks away...

JULIEN

I don't know how those who accept to lose their bonus manage but I can't do it... My wife and I, we counted on it... You can't ask this of me...

SANDRA

I'm not the one who decided you'd lose your bonus if I kept my job...

JULIEN

Neither did I... Try to put yourself in my shoes...

A brief silence.

SANDRA

Okay, well... goodbye...

JULIEN

Goodbye.

She has just turned away to walk off.

JULIEN

Sandra!...

She turns to him.

JULIEN

Can I be frank with you?...

SANDRA

Yes...

JULIEN

Dumont has seen that sixteen of us can do the work, why would he take you back?

SANDRA

Because Juliette told me that with sixteen, you've had to do three hours overtime a week.

JULIEN

And what if we agree to do that to earn more?...

SANDRA

I don't know... Dumont just told me that if the majority wanted me to stay on Monday, I'd stay.

JULIEN

Good for you... See you on Monday.

SANDRA

Yes...

He has turned and walks off as Sandra watches.

55

I/E. MANU'S CAR - NEAR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - DAY

55

The car drives up to the path leading to the development of prefabricated houses where Anne lives and stops. Sandra, who had dozed off, wakes up when the car stops...

SANDRA

Why have you come back here?

MANU

I thought that maybe she hadn't called because you accidentally gave her the wrong number...

SANDRA

It's no use. I told you I didn't want to see anyone else, I want to go home. I'll see the ones left tomorrow morning. Can we go?...

MANU

Sandra, listen to me... That Julien's got into your head.

(MORE)

MANU (CONT'D)

The boss never told him he'd rather pay them overtime and manage without you. He doesn't know that! He just said that to discourage you, so you wouldn't go to see the others. He's afraid of losing his bonus, that's all...

A brief silence.

MANU

You mustn't fall into his trap... If she says yes, you only have to persuade two more, you can tell them there are seven already, nearly half...

A brief silence.

SANDRA

You're not the one who has to go...

MANU

I can go with you if you want but...

SANDRA

No...

She takes her pills from her bag, pops one out of the blister...

MANU

That's the third...

SANDRA

I need it...

She takes the bottle of water from her bag, drinks to swallow the pill...

56

EXT. NEAR ANNE'S HOUSE - HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - DAY

56

Sandra finishes climbing the path leading to the development, goes over to the door of Anne's house... rings the bell... After a second or two, Anne opens the door...

ANNE

I haven't called you yet because I'm talking it over with my husband who doesn't agree but I...

SANDRA

(interrupting her)  
No. Don't bother. I understand, don't worry. Good...

ANNE'S HUSBAND (O.S.)  
 (shouting)  
 Anne?!

SANDRA  
 Goodbye.

ANNE  
 I left a message with the builder  
 to stagger the payments so maybe...

SANDRA  
 No, forget it. I shouldn't have  
 come. Goodbye.

As soon as Sandra turns to leave, Anne's husband, with half  
 of his cycling gear off, appears.

ANNE'S HUSBAND  
 (to Anne)  
 What are you doing?

ANNE  
 (seemingly afraid of him)  
 I was talking to Sandra...

ANNE'S HUSBAND  
 (to Sandra)  
 You enjoy pissing people off?...  
 (to Anne)  
 Get back inside!

He has taken his wife by her arm to make her go back into the  
 house and he slams the door in Sandra's stunned face... She  
 turns away, hears the voices of Anne and her husband  
 arguing...

57 I/E. MANU'S CAR - SUBURBS - DAY

57

Manu drives, Sandra sits next to him, her bottle of water  
 open... Silence...

MANU  
 Are you okay?...

She doesn't reply... she drinks some water... Silence...

MANU  
 Can you speak?...

Silence.

SANDRA  
 Let's go home...

MANU  
 You're sure?

She nods...

SANDRA

I'm going to stop pissing everyone off... Jean-Marc is right... I'm not up to it anymore...

MANU

Don't say that...

Silence... All of a sudden, Sandra's phone rings... She doesn't react...

MANU

Your phone.

She doesn't react... Her phone stops ringing... Silence... Manu's phone rings... He answers it...

MANU

Hello?... Yes... How's it going?...  
What are you doing?... Yes... She's  
just next to me... Yes...

(to Sandra)

It's Maxime...

Sandra takes Manu's phone...

SANDRA

Hello... Yes... That's good... Dad  
will tell you... He'll come to  
fetch you this evening... Lots of  
love... Kiss your sister for me,  
no, put her on... Yes... Yes... I  
wanted to give you a kiss and tell  
you that Dad will come to fetch you  
this evening... Yes... Lots of  
love...

She hangs up... she hands the phone back to Manu...  
Silence... We hear the sound of the tyres on the road...

58 INT. CHILDREN'S ROOM - MANU & SANDRA'S HOUSE - DAY 58

Sandra finishes changing the sheets on the children's beds...

59 INT. LIVING ROOM & KITCHEN - MANU & SANDRA'S HOUSE - DAY 59

Sandra comes into the kitchen where Manu is pouring himself a mug of coffee... She picks up her bag that hangs on a chair, opens it to take out some money...

SANDRA

I'm going to get some bread and the sandwiches for the kids' picnic tomorrow...

MANU

Juliette just called, she'd like to  
talk to you..

Sandra doesn't reply...

60 EXT. SQUARE - SHOPPING CENTRE - DAY 60

Sandra walks... Her body, her face in front of the shop windows, metal shutters, doorways... She goes into a bakery, walks away behind the glass door that has just closed again...

61 INT. BATHROOM - MANU & SANDRA'S HOUSE - DAY 61

Sandra is popping the pills from a blister from her box of medicine, the pills tumble into a glass from which she has removed the toothbrush that stands on the washbasin with the three blisters that she has already removed the pills from. She takes the last blister, removes its pills that fall into the glass... She tips the pills into the hollow of her hand, puts down her glass, turns on the tap, fills the glass with water, puts some of the pills in her mouth, drinks to swallow them... puts the last pills in her mouth, fills her glass again, drinks to swallow them... She pours the remaining water from the glass into the washbasin, sets it down, puts the empty blisters in the box that she closes and puts it back on the top of the small medicine cabinet... She turns the key to unlock the door and leaves the bathroom...

62 INT. MANU & SANDRA'S BEDROOM - DAY 62

Sandra comes into the bedroom, closes the door behind her and sits down on the bed. We hear the front doorbell. She removes her trainers, puts them under her bedside table and, just as she is about to lie down on the bed:

MANU (O.S.)  
(shouting)  
Sandra!

She doesn't reply.

MANU (O.S.)  
Sandra!

She gets up from the bed and opens the door.

SANDRA  
I'm resting!

She starts to close the door.

MANU (O.S.)  
 (shouting)  
 Come down here for a second!

SANDRA  
 Why?

MANU (O.S.)  
 (shouting)  
 Come down, you'll see!

She leaves the bedroom.

63 INT. STAIRS & HALLWAY - DAY

63

Sandra comes down the few stairs to the small intermediary landing. She sees Anne with Manu in the hallway at the foot of the stairs...

SANDRA  
 Ah...

ANNE  
 I came to tell you that I'll vote  
 for you to stay on Monday.

Silence. Sandra looks at her, moved...

Sandra starts to come down the stairs.

ANNE  
 Go and rest now.

SANDRA  
 No, I want to give you a kiss  
 first...

Sandra comes down the last few stairs and kisses Anne on the cheek as she hugs her tightly... She lets go of Anne and looks at Manu... A beat...

SANDRA  
 I just took the whole box of  
 Xanax...

MANU  
 All your pills?...

SANDRA  
 Yes...

MANU  
 (to Anne)  
 Dial 100, get an ambulance! Hurry!  
 (to Sandra)  
 Come on!

He has taken Sandra by the arm, drags her into the living room...

64 INT. LIVING ROOM & KITCHEN - MANU & SANDRA'S HOUSE - DAY 64

Sandra, seen from behind, is held up by Manu at the sink who tries to make her throw up by sticking two fingers down her throat... In the background, we hear Anne calling the emergency services.

SANDRA  
(breathing with  
difficulty)  
No... it's no good...

Manu runs over to a drawer, opens it, takes out a wooden spatula and sticks the end of the handle into Sandra's mouth to make her throw up...

65 INT. BOOTH - A&E DEPARTMENT - HOSPITAL - DAY 65

Sandra, wearing a hospital smock, lies with her back raised slightly on a stretcher bed. She stares straight ahead as a DOCTOR takes a blood sample... In the background, we hear some sounds and voices from the corridor or other booths, notably the cries of a newborn baby...

SANDRA  
Has my husband been told I was back  
down here?

DOCTOR  
He's still in the waiting room next  
door, I'll go and let him know.

SANDRA  
Thank you.

A beat.

SANDRA  
Can you eat after having your  
stomach pumped?

DOCTOR  
Of course. Are you hungry?...

SANDRA  
Yes, very...

He has finished taking the blood sample and removes the tourniquet from Sandra's arm.

DOCTOR

I can get someone to bring you a meal tray. On Sundays, it's tomato soup and cheese sandwiches.

SANDRA

That would be very kind. Thank you.

Using a piece of tape, he attaches a bit of gauze to the spot on her arm where he took the sample.

DOCTOR

See you later.

He goes out. Sandra is alone... After a few seconds, Manu pulls back the curtain of the booth and comes in... They look at each other...

SANDRA

I'm sorry...

Manu looks at her... He has tears in his eyes. He bends down to her, she lifts herself up a little and they hug... A MALE NURSE carrying a meal tray pulls back the curtain.

NURSE

Excuse me... Did you ask for a meal?

They have ended their embrace.

SANDRA

Yes.

NURSE

I'll put it here on the chair.

SANDRA

Thank you.

The nurse goes back out.

MANU

You want to eat?

SANDRA

Yes, give me the soup...

Manu takes the bowl of soup from the tray and hands it to Sandra.

SANDRA

Thank you... I'd like to call the kids but I can't get a connection here.

MANU  
I already called them, I told them  
I'd be there a bit late...

She takes a sip of soup.

SANDRA  
Did Anne go home?

MANU  
No, she's in the waiting room.

She takes another sip of soup...

SANDRA  
The last three, we'll go and see  
them this evening...

Manu looks at her in surprise....

MANU  
You feel up to it?

SANDRA  
Yes... And you?

They smile. She drinks her soup...

66

EXT. MANU'S CAR - HOSPITAL CAR PARK - DAY

66

Sandra, Anne and Manu walk over to Manu's car...

SANDRA  
(to Anne)  
We'll drive you home first.

ANNE  
There's no need. Drop me at Place  
Kuborn.

Manu has opened his door to get into the car.

SANDRA  
No, at home...

Sandra has opened the passenger door and bends down to tip  
the seat forward.

ANNE  
I'm not going home...

Sandra turns to her...

ANNE  
I've decided to leave my husband...

A beat.

SANDRA

You're sure?...

ANNE

Yes... this is the first time that I've decided to do anything in my life...

A beat.

SANDRA

If you want, you can come and sleep at our place...

ANNE

That would be a big help tonight... thank you...

Sandra tips the seat forward. Anne passes in front of her to climb into the back...

67

EXT. DOOR OF A HOUSE - EXCAVATED STREET - EVENING

67

Sandra walks up to the door of a small house in a development. She rings the bell but it doesn't seem to be working so she knocks... and waits... After a few seconds, the door opens and a man of thirty-five appears, DOMINIQUE.

DOMINIQUE

Oh... hi...

He shakes Sandra's hand...

SANDRA

I'm sorry to come round so late... If it's a bad time, I can come back or see you tomorrow morning...

DOMINIQUE

No... I know why you're here, Yvon called me... he's ready to lose his bonus but I can't...

He has taken half a hand-rolled cigarette out of his shirt pocket...

DOMINIQUE

... There's only one salary here... I'd be really happy to help you but I can't... I can't make ends meet... I'm sorry... that's how it is...

He has spoken these last few words with a lump in his throat. He lights his cigarette...

SANDRA

I'm sorry too that you lose your bonus if I stay but it was Dumont who...

DOMINIQUE

In any case, you're right to fight to stay, I should tell you yes but I'm in the shit... I...

(he has tears in his voice)

Right, I... For me, it would be a disaster if the majority supports you but I wish for your sake that they do, I'm sorry...

Holding back his tears, he has gone back inside and closed the door behind him. Sandra stands in front of the closed door for a second, then walks off along the excavated street...

68 EXT. ENTRY TO EXCAVATED STREET - EVENING

68

Sandra walks along the only pavement allowing her to leave the excavated street, access to which is cordoned off by plastic ribbons, signs and traffic lights... At the end of the pavement, Anne, who is in the middle of a tense phone conversation with her husband, hasn't seen Sandra arrive and is blocking her path...

SANDRA

Excuse me...

Anne steps aside... Sandra carries on walking over to Manu's car that is parked a little further on...

69 I/E. MANU'S CAR - SUBURBS - EVENING

69

Manu drives with Sandra at his side who has turned back to Anne in the rear seat... We intermittently hear the voice of the satnav.

SANDRA

Maybe it's best if we drive you home?...

ANNE

No, no... it's not easy because we just moved in, we were talking about having a baby... but it's better this way...

A beat.

SANDRA

In any case, don't feel obliged because of me, I'd understand if you changed your mind...

ANNE

I don't feel obliged... I'm happy to support you... Earlier, you thanked me for coming to your place... I want to thank you for coming to mine too...

They smile at each other... Sandra turns back round...

A beat.

MANU

(to Sandra)

A little music? It's the rock hour...

SANDRA

(to Anne)

Do you like rock music?

ANNE

Yes, I love it

MANU

So do we!

He has turned on the radio that plays a rock song that Anne knows. She starts singing along with it, Sandra and Manu too... They join in the chorus together... They laugh...

70

EXT. HOUSING BLOCK ENTRANCE - BUSY ROAD - EVENING

70

Sandra waits outside the door of a housing block, her face near the intercom... In the background, we hear cars and trucks passing by at top speed... She presses one of the buzzers, lowers her head to the intercom again... There's no answer... She turns away from the door... walks along the busy road to Manu's car parked a short distance away...

71

EXT. DOOR OF A HOUSE - STREET - EVENING

71

Sandra rings a doorbell. A LITTLE AFRICAN GIRL opens the door.

SANDRA

Good evening, I'd like to speak to Alphonse.

LITTLE GIRL  
 (turning to the inside of  
 the house)  
 It's for Alphonse!

She is speaking to an AFRICAN WOMAN aged forty or so who appears at the door.

SANDRA  
 Good evening...

WOMAN  
 Good evening...

SANDRA  
 I'm Sandra, I work at SOLWAL with Alphonse and I'd like a word with him....

WOMAN  
 He's at the laundrette, along the street there after the intersection...

LITTLE GIRL  
 (to her mother)  
 I can take her there!

WOMAN  
 All right, but come straight back...  
 (to Sandra)  
 Goodbye.

SANDRA  
 Goodbye...

72 EXT. STREET NEAR INTERSECTION - DAY

72

Sandra walks with the little girl at her side. They exchange a few words that we cannot hear because they are too far from us... At one point, Sandra stops near Manu's car, says something to him that we do not hear, catches up with the girl who was waiting for her and they walk towards the intersection...

73 INT. LAUNDRETTE - EVENING

73

Alphonse, a young African man in his twenties who seems to want to say something to Sandra, looks at her in silence... a drier beeps, he turns and goes to open it. The little girl, his sister, is near the machine with an empty laundry basket.

ALPHONSE  
 (to the little girl)  
 Fold it all...

He comes back over to Sandra...

ALPHONSE

... I'd like to vote for you...  
that's what God tells me to do... I  
have to help my neighbour, I have  
to help you... but I'm scared. I'm  
scared of the others...

SANDRA

What others?

ALPHONSE

At the firm. That's why I didn't  
vote for you on Friday. Jean-Marc  
told me that if I wanted to be seen  
in a good light by them, I'd do  
better to vote for the bonus,  
nearly everyone wanted it. It's not  
for me, the bonus, I don't have the  
same length of service, it's two  
hundred and forty euros, it's a lot  
but it's not a thousand euros...

A woman comes into the laundrette with a bag of laundry.

WOMAN

Good evening.

Sandra and Alphonse return her greeting. Alphonse turns to his little sister to help her finish folding one last bath towel, then puts it in the basket that the little girl picks up. She goes over to the door...

SANDRA

(to the little girl)  
Goodbye.

LITTLE GIRL

Goodbye.

Alphonse, who has opened the door for his little sister with the basket, comes back over to Sandra...

ALPHONSE

I still have to dry this...

Sandra has taken a few steps with him over to the drier. They speak in lower tones now that the other woman is near the washing machines.

SANDRA

Has Jean-Marc called you this  
weekend?

ALPHONSE

Yes... yesterday...

SANDRA

Why is he set against me like that?

ALPHONSE

... He has a theory about people who've had depression, he says that they'll never be as productive as they were before... but I think what he doesn't like is that you're friends with Juliette. Juliette prevents him from playing the big boss.

SANDRA

In a pearl grey apron!

They smile... Alphonse has put the laundry in the drier...

ALPHONSE

Will it be a secret ballot?

SANDRA

Yes...

ALPHONSE

In any case, Jean-Marc will know... How many have agreed not to have their bonus?

SANDRA

Seven, perhaps eight with Charly. He wasn't at home, I'll see him tomorrow...

ALPHONSE

So that means if I vote for you, it's nine, I'll make it a majority...

SANDRA

You needn't be afraid, half of them will have voted like you.

ALPHONSE

Yes... but I'm on a fixed-term contract, like Jérôme, it's supposed to be renewed at the end of September. If Jean-Marc wants to put in a bad report about me, with the little mistakes I make in welding... my contract won't be renewed...

SANDRA

You're like me, you're scared of Jean-Marc...

ALPHONSE

Yes...

Silence...

74 I/E. MANU'S CAR - NEAR SOLWAL - MORNING

74

Manu has just stopped his car, Sandra finishes raising the passenger seat to let out Anne who gets out of the car saying goodbye to Manu, Maxime and Estelle... Sandra, who still has the bruise under her eye, leans down into the car to kiss her children, she seems tense...

SANDRA

Have a good day...

ESTELLE

Yes.

MAXIME

You too, Mum...

She leans down to Manu, kisses him, he grips her hand...

MANU

Chin up... Call me as soon as you know...

SANDRA

Yes...

Sandra closes the door of the car... walks off with Anne towards the corner of the SOLWAL building where Juliette is talking to ROBERT, a man in his forties, and Timur...

75 INT. LOCKER ROOM &amp; CANTEEN - SOLWAL - MORNING

75

Sandra is talking to CHARLY, a man aged about thirty who is placing his personal belongings in a metal locker and putting on his white overalls. Sandra's other colleagues - Willy, Hicham and Alphonse - do the same... From the adjacent canteen, whose door is open, we hear the hubbub of a lively conversation and, from time to time, raised voices...

CHARLY

... I was at the game... but Robert's just explained to me...

SANDRA

There are seven who agree not to have the bonus, one who's hesitating and... you...

CHARLY

I'll see... but I need it... right... I'll see...

A beat.

SANDRA

I know that a thousand euros is a lot but I'm going to lose my job and it's not my fault you have to choose between...

She is interrupted by raised voices, among which we make out Juliette's and Jérôme's.

JULIETTE (O.S.)

(raising her voice)

Sandra's not going to stay, okay!  
It's...

JÉRÔME (O.S.)

(shouting)

I don't give a shit! She's here!  
She's influencing the vote!

Sandra enters the canteen...

JULIETTE

It's only because she has to see Charly because she couldn't see him yesterday!

JULIEN

Never mind that, she's here and seeing her just before the ballot can influence people. I don't see why Jean-Marc can't stay in that case.

ROBERT

Because Jean-Marc is our chief and some people feel less free with the chief around.

JÉRÔME

More than anything, it's because you and that bitch aren't going to be able to feed us your bullshit!

KADER

Be polite!

JÉRÔME

Shut your mouth, you!

Kader and Jérôme start jostling each other. Robert and Timur part them.

JEAN-MARC

(in a grey apron)

Calm down! Calm down! Please, calm down!

Relative silence falls.

JEAN-MARC

I'm going to go out and Sandra's going to go out and nothing more will be said by anyone to influence the vote.

(to Juliette)

How is this going to work?

JULIETTE

I have the box...

(she holds up the ballot box)

Sixteen pieces of paper marked BONUS/SANDRA...

(holding up the papers)

People just have to circle one or the other and put it in the box... For the count, I suggest that Julien does it with me...

JEAN-MARC

Does everyone agree on that?...

No one shows any disagreement.

JEAN-MARC

Sandra...

Sandra goes out, passing in front of Jean-Marc who follows her.

76

INT. CORRIDOR & CANTEEN - SOLWAL - MORNING

76

Jean-Marc has just closed the door of the canteen behind him and starts to walk off in the opposite direction from Sandra.

JEAN-MARC

Happy now? You've stirred up the shit in the whole team!

Sandra looks at him but says nothing, taken aback by what Jean-Marc has just said to her...

JEAN-MARC

The ballot was done on Friday, there was no need to do another.

SANDRA

You didn't have to scare them so they would vote against me.

JEAN-MARC

What are you insinuating?

SANDRA

You told some of them that it would be better if I was laid off because it would be them otherwise...

JEAN-MARC

I never said that.

SANDRA

You did... And you called them over the weekend too to tell them not to change their minds.

JEAN-MARC

What? Who told you that?

SANDRA

It doesn't matter...

She turns her back on him. She has never spoken with such self-confidence before. She walks off along the corridor.

77 INT. WOMEN'S ROOM - SOLWAL - MORNING

77

Sandra comes into the women's room with its washbasin and mirrors. She rests both hands on the end of a washbasin to release her tension by taking deep breaths... takes a long look at herself in the mirror..

SANDRA

I dared to tell him... I dared to...

She turns on the tap, looks for something in her bag that she doesn't find... drinks a little water from her cupped hand...

JULIETTE (O.S.)

(calling out)

Sandra!... Sandra!

Sandra turns off the tap and leaves the women's room...

78 INT. CORRIDOR - SOLWAL - MORNING

78

Juliette looks at Sandra...

JULIETTE

Eight for, eight against...

Sandra lets this sink in... she has tears in her eyes. Juliette hugs her: she too has tears in her eyes...

JULIETTE

We're not going to let you down... I'll come and see you after work...

JULIETTE

The ones that supported you are  
still in the canteen...

Sandra blows her nose, swallows her tears and goes over to  
the door of the canteen with Juliette...

79

INT. CANTEEN - SOLWAL - MORNING

79

Sandra is near Juliette, Robert, Kader, Miguel, Timur, Anne,  
Yvon and Alphonse... She looks at them: the emotion is  
powerful yet restrained...

SANDRA

... Thank you... for supporting  
me... I'll never forget it...

A beat. She kisses Robert who has come over to kiss her, then  
kisses Kader... Miguel... Timur... Anne...

SANDRA

(to Anne)

If you want to stay with us  
tonight, you can.

ANNE

Thank you...

She kisses Yvon... Alphonse...

SANDRA

... Goodbye... I'll go and empty my  
locker.

JULIETTE

I'll come with you.

SANDRA

No, it's okay... Off you go...

JULIETTE

See you this evening.

SANDRA

Yes...

She goes to the locker room... takes her keys out of her bag,  
opens the padlock on her locker, takes out her work shoes, a  
T-shirt...

SECRETARY (O.S.)

Mrs Bya?

SANDRA

Yes?...

SECRETARY

Mr Dumont would like to see you.

SANDRA

I'll be right there...

She picks up her things, puts them in a plastic bag that was in her locker, takes her padlock...

80

INT. MR DUMONT'S OFFICE - MORNING

80

The secretary shows Sandra into the office...

MR DUMONT

Hello, Mrs Bya...

SANDRA

Hello...

MR DUMONT

Have a seat, please.

Sandra sits down.

MR DUMONT

You've managed to persuade half the staff to forgo their bonus, bravo!... Of course, half isn't the majority but in order to ease all the ill-will among the staff, I've decided to give them the bonus and take you back... I can't rehire you right away because during your sick leave Jean-Marc and I saw that the work could be done by sixteen instead of seventeen... At the end of September, I won't renew a fixed-term contract and you'll be able to come back... In the meantime, you'll be temporarily laid off...

Sandra doesn't say anything...

MR DUMONT

... There... that's the good news I wanted to give you, you're staying with us...

A beat.

SANDRA

I can't... I can't take the place of someone who is going to be laid off so that I can come back...

MR DUMONT

He won't be laid off, his contract  
won't be renewed, that's all...

SANDRA

It's the same thing... Goodbye, Mr  
Dumont...

She has stood up to leave.

81 EXT. NEAR SOLWAL - MORNING

81

Sandra walks towards the exit from the industrial estate. She is making a call on her mobile phone, carrying her hand bag over her shoulder and the plastic bag with her things from work... We are very close to her, very close to her face...

SANDRA

(into the phone)

... Yes... it's going to be  
tough... I'm going to start looking  
today.. Yes... Yes... At midday?...  
Yes... me too... See you la...  
Manu!...

(she has stopped walking)

Are you there?... We put up a good  
fight. I'm happy...

(she is moved)

... Yes... me too...

She hangs up and starts walking... she is happy...

FINAL CREDITS

THE END