

PEACHTREE PLACE

(Pilot)

by

Felischa Marye

WRITER'S DRAFT -- 9/7/18

COLD OPEN

INT. PEACHTREE PLACE - LAYNE'S KITCHEN/LIVING AREA - DAY

LAYNE LAWSON, 30, a natural beauty, well-groomed with not a hair out of place, sits at the counter in loungewear. She types ferociously on her laptop while on the phone.

LAYNE

(on phone)

Exactly, he's donating 100-thousand to the AUC. He went to Morehouse.

Layne listens to a response that must be less than positive.

LAYNE (CONT'D)

(on phone)

I understand that there's plenty of alum in Atlanta who support their schools, but this is an inspirational story about coming up from the bottom, getting to the NBA and using his wealth to support his school.

(listening)

First of all, it was not confirmed that it was an actual *pro-sti-tutes...*

(sound out each syllable as if it's a medical term)

...he was with.

Layne begins clicking something on her laptop.

INSERT COMPUTER SCREEN

Layne pulls up a video on IG of a drunk Craig with a woman on each arm, bragging to his boys.

CRAIG

(on video)

I paid for these hoes!!!

Layne marks it as spam.

LAYNE

(on phone)

And, when you think about it, making a donation to women in need... well, that just shows his heart.

She continues to listen to the producer, who clearly says something she doesn't want to hear. She perks up when it seems he's going to hang up.

LAYNE (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Wait. He's also giving a special donation to...

(searching the air for an answer)

...community youth... a college fund for future AUC students. That's really why I'm calling... to pitch a story about the...

(sounds out each syllable)  
comm-u-ni-tee.

(back to normal)

He's all about the kids.

Hard-core, vulgar rap music blasts from Layne's back bedroom.

LAYNE (CONT'D)

(covering the phone)

So can we get the camera crew back on the books? Hello? Hello?

She hangs up, annoyed.

INT. LAYNE'S APARTMENT - GUEST BEDROOM - DAY

A glammed up TRACEY JOHNSON, 30, records a social media dance challenge for Instagram.

Hair weave freshly gelled, a full face of makeup and tight, but sporty, sexy attire, she's awfully fancy for this early in the morning.

POV of the camera recording. Tracey points to her midsection.

TRACEY

You can move in this waist trainer like no other, my lovelies! Check it out at [snatched.com](http://snatched.com). Also, lashes by BlinkPretty, makeup by Fenty, jewelry by Bedazzled. Use my code, TraceyJ for a discount! And continue to support me in my mission to make you beautiful... CashApp name, TraceyJ1! Hashtag, be-a-blessing-get-a-blessing!

We see Layne enter in the background. Tracey is too into herself dancing to notice, until she sees Layne in her shot grabbing butt pads hidden underneath a pile. Tracey turns down the music.

TRACEY (CONT'D)  
Damn, bish, now Imma have to edit you out.

LAYNE  
Seriously?

TRACEY  
Harassing someone at their place of employment is disrespectful.

Layne analyzes the pads. Tracey snatches them from her.

TRACEY (CONT'D)  
Gimme those. I'll have you know these have brought me fame and fortune...

Layne shoots her a look.

TRACEY (CONT'D)  
Okay, fame.

LAYNE  
What do guys say when they realize you're wearing a damn butt pad?

TRACEY  
By then, it's way too late. And girl, trust me, at that point... they don't even care. Plus, I rarely wear them. Just every now and then for some extra flavor.

Layne walks over to a half-open drawer full of butt pads.

TRACEY (CONT'D)  
Mind ya business!

SLAM INTO--

**MAIN TITLES OVER ESTABLISHING SHOT:**

A colorful, sprawling contemporary apartment complex. Fountains spray water from a tree-lined pond out front. The sign alongside the building reads -- *Peachtree Place*.

**ACT ONE**

INT. PEACHTREE PLACE - LAYNE'S KITCHEN/LIVING AREA - DAY

Layne heads to her laptop while texting, with Tracey behind.

TRACEY

Wait until I get my followers up.  
500-thousand followers equals more  
advertisers. More ad money means...

LAYNE

You'll move out?

TRACEY

Means Imma be on somebody's  
operating table real quick for my  
two-for-one deal.

Layne glances up from her phone at Tracey for clarification.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

Tummy tuck and a rather ignorantly-  
sized ass.

LAYNE

Do you mind taking... whatever it  
is you do... back into the room? I  
have a crisis and need to focus.

TRACEY

I'm talking if Kim K. and Nicki's  
doctors were having a contest...

LAYNE

I get it.

TRACEY

I'm talking way too big for my  
thighs to match, but guys don't  
even notice...

LAYNE

OUT!

Layne sends texts and we hear two "swoops". A key unlocks the  
front door. In walks MARTIN TALBERT, 30, suited up, handsome.

MARTIN

Morning ladies.

His phone dings. He looks at it, then at Layne.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Oh, this is from you.

LAYNE

That key is for emergencies.

MARTIN

Looks like there's an emergency if you're texting me this early.

The door swings open. VERONICA NEIL, with plus-size model looks that would make a lover of thinner girls think twice, enters and heads to the fridge.

LAYNE

Maybe I should just take the door off.

VERONICA

I just need a few things.

Veronica grabs bacon, eggs, milk, jam.

TRACEY

Damn, is this Kroger?

VERONICA

Look who's talking.

TRACEY

You mean the star of the hit reality show, Baller Exes?

VERONICA

First of all, you were never the star. Second of all, you got kicked off.

TRACEY

A mere technicality... the fans want me back.

Veronica starts pulling out pans.

VERONICA

This is what I get for messing with young, broke penis. This 23-year-old agent at the brokerage ain't sold shit, so he be at my place eating me out of house and home. Ha. I said eating me out!

A beat of the crew silently staring at her.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

What?? Why you think I let him stay?

LAYNE

Veronica, is there something wrong with your kitchen?

VERONICA

Hellz yeah. It has no food in it.

MARTIN

Hey, real quick. I can't decide... which one of these sign offs make me look the best... I mean, I look good regardless, but...

LAYNE

Would you come on.

MARTIN

All right... Coming to you live, Channel 2, Martin Talbert.

TRACEY

Dry as hell.

MARTIN

Martin Talbert, here.

VERONICA

White as hell.

MARTIN

That's the tell in the ATL.

TRACEY

Corny as hell...

VERONICA

Corny as hell...

MARTIN

Yo, you guys are extra... **you...** today.

LAYNE

I said I wouldn't bug you at your new job for anything, but I need you to do a story on Craig Peters.

MARTIN

His cocaine problem or his sex tape?

LAYNE

I'm serious. I pulled all kinds of strings to get the AUC to allow this presentation at the Alumni reception, but it all falls apart if I don't have any TV coverage.

(MORE)

LAYNE (CONT'D)

It's a nice piece. He's giving scholarships to kids.

VERONICA

That's actually cool... what kids?

LAYNE

Working on that. I just got a text back from my contact at a community center... talking to her at one. I'm *this* close to Craig putting me on retainer, but I need to get him some positive publicity. I can't continue to live, or pay rent...

She shoots a look to Tracey, who feigns confusion.

LAYNE (CONT'D)

...if I don't stop these one offs and get some steady income.

TRACEY

And I quote... "I'm tired of working for the man. I'm ready to branch out on my own. I don't need no massa." Them steady plantation checks not looking so bad now, huh??

VERONICA

Says the woman living rent free with no checks at all.

TRACEY

Au contraire, my cash app be poppin' from time to time.

MARTIN

You know I didn't move back to Atlanta to do stories on the AUC. I loved Clark, but I'm just saying, that's not my brand of journalism.  
(thinking)  
Oh... Hold up...

Martin dials someone on his phone.

LAYNE

Who are you calling?

MARTIN

Mr. Atlanta himself... Vince.

## ALL THE GIRLS

Noooo!

Layne grabs Martin's phone, hangs it up...

MARTIN

How you gon' do my boy like that?  
He's gonna be at the AUC thing  
tomorrow anyway. He's got plenty of  
ATL media contacts.

LAYNE

You mean the same urban bloggers  
that exposed Craig Peters in the  
first place?? I know exactly what  
contacts my cousin has, and I don't  
want 'em.

TRACEY

He didn't even go to Clark, always  
trying to front, wit' his Atlanta  
Metro ass.

Martin sees Layne looking stressed, grabs her shoulders.

MARTIN

You know you're great at everything  
you do, right? It'll all work out.  
I'd help you if I could, but I also  
have Shauna flying in. She's gon'  
require all my attention.

(sing-songy)

You gud?

LAYNE

(same sing-songy voice)

I'm gud.

(then normal)

I wouldn't want to mess up your  
relationship, or your brand.

MARTIN

Thank you for understanding. I have  
to keep reminding myself that this  
ain't Memphis. I'm in a major  
market now.

Martin starts to exit.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I'm a serious reporter.

EXT. OLD FOURTH WARD - ABANDONED BUILDING - DAY

Martin, through the POV of a news camera, stands in front of a building demolition in the background.

MARTIN

Investment in the largely  
gentrified Old Fourth Ward is  
showing no signs of slowing down...

A MAN, 30's, smoking a blunt in a wife beater and jeans,  
wanders in the shot behind Martin, notices the camera.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

...and the demolition of this  
historic property on Glen Iris  
Drive serves to be just another  
example of the gentrification that  
many in the neighborhood are less  
than excited about...

The man gets closer. So close, he scares the hell out of  
Martin who jumps, then an idea seems to pop in his head to  
seize the moment.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Hello, sir, let's talk if you don't  
mind, Mr...

MAN

Di'Jaquandell Nelson.

MARTIN

De'Jaquanell...

MAN

Di...

MARTIN

Di. Di'Jaquanell...

MAN

Dell. Di'Jaquandell...

MARTIN

Mr. Nelson, what do you feel about  
the changes in the neighborhood?

As Di'Jaquandell takes a long drag, Martin awkwardly waits  
and looks back and forth to the camera, realizing this was a  
bad idea.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
 (whispers)  
 We're on live TV.

DI'JAQUANDELL  
 How I feel 'bout what, bruh?

MARTIN  
 About the changes in...

The music blasting in a car driving by cuts Martin off. The car HONKS.

DI'JAQUANDELL  
 (to car)  
 Aye cuz! Say cuz... I'm 'bout to go  
 right here to the plaza right  
 quick! Yeah! You already know!

We hear the car screech off. A beat as Martin waits again.

MARTIN  
 So, you think that the Old  
 Fourth...

DI'JAQUANDELL  
 Dey pushin' niggas out, ya feel me?  
 Same block, ben here. The City doe?  
 Shawty 'nem tryin' move me or whoot  
 ta whoop... dat ain't gon' go. Ole  
 Forf Ward, tilla die.

Martin waits for more, stands in this uncomfortable silence. POV of camera as Martin looks into it with a tense smile.

MARTIN  
 Reporting live from the Old Fourth  
 Ward. I'm Martin Talbert.

DI'JAQUANDELL  
 Give me \$50 and I'll show my dick  
 on camera.

Martin signals the cameraman to cut.

DI'JAQUANDELL (CONT'D)  
 You don't wanna go viral??

CUT TO:

INT. WEWORK - LAYNE'S OFFICE - DAY

Layne, buried among what seems like hundreds of boxes with her laptop open in front of her, talks to Tracey and Veronica via Google Hangout.

Tracey is cooking a feast in the background.

LAYNE

Tracey, are you even listening.

VERONICA

You know she not. She busy being America's Next Top Broke and Bougie Chef. Is that lobster?

TRACEY

You already know!

LAYNE

Hey... back to the point. Tonight. I can depend on you?

TRACEY

We just stuffing bags, right? I ain't messing up my nails.

VERONICA

(side eyes Tracey)

'Cause your cuticles ain't already on week three!

(to Layne)

So, why is this so last minute? I got a lot going on. I have an open house here in a few minutes, then I have to show a place across town.

LAYNE

I'll eventually hire an assistant but can't right now, and my client sent me a bunch of stuff that just came in last minute.

Layne pulls out a book from one of the boxes and looks at it - the cheesy-looking cover reads-- "Faith & Family" with a picture of her NBA client wearing a big gold cross around his neck, holding his wife's hand, on his knees, while praying in earnest to the heavens. Layne just shakes her head.

TRACEY

Do I get a stipend?

Layne gives her a blank stare through the screen.

LAYNE

You living in my house for free,  
cooking my food...

TRACEY

Just sayin'... Closed mouths... And  
I used my EBT, so technically,  
Donald Trump bought this food.

LAYNE

Bitch, get out my house.

TRACEY

(confidently)  
She don't mean that shit.

VERONICA

Hey, I'll help. But now I gotta go.

Veronica shifts a bit, and we hear a man GRUNT. Layne and Veronica appear confused when Veronica hits her laptop on mistake, re-aiming her webcam to reveal a GUY'S legs underneath her.

LAYNE

What the...

TRACEY

Are you fucking right now? Like,  
right, now?

LAYNE

Is the open house for a condo or  
your coochie?

The guy laughs in the background.

VERONICA

(to the guy)  
Shut up.  
(to the girls)  
My open house is in an hour. I use  
my time wisely. I suggest you pause  
from work on occasion, Layne, and  
knock some of that dust off yo'...

LAYNE

I can't with you. Bye. I gotta call  
these folks at the community center  
back about these kids for tomorrow.

TRACEY

Tilt the camera down. I wanna watch  
this shit.

VERONICA  
Hell no!

GUY  
She can watch.

VERONICA  
Bye Tracey!

TRACEY  
Hater.

Layne disconnects. She's about to move the boxes when her cell rings. It's Martin. She answers.

LAYNE  
Changed your mind?

MARTIN (O.S.)  
(on phone)  
Actually I did.

LAYNE  
I love you!

He pauses. She catches herself, plays it off.

LAYNE (CONT'D)  
(overly playful)  
You are the bestest friend ever.

INT. NEWSROOM - DAY

Martin holds the phone. The hectic movement of the newsroom whirls around him.

MARTIN  
Yeah, I'm sorry for being difficult before. My day was shitty so anything I can do to help you out I'll do. No need for us both to have a loss.

LAYNE  
Wait... what happened?

In the background, guys in newsroom laugh and replay the disastrous interview from earlier.

MARTIN  
Don't worry about me, just email me the details for tomorrow. I did want to ask you for one thing, though, since now I gotta stay and fix things at work. Can you pick up Shauna from the airport for me in an hour?

LAYNE

Uhmmm... Uber?

MARTIN

I know, but she has a non-negotiable no ride share rule. She can't get past the one driver that smelled like armpits and kept trying to get her to touch his pet ferret.

LAYNE

Here you go, messing up yet another relationship. I thought you said you're doing grown man things now. You know I'm swamped. I have a meeting, then that conference call at one because if I don't find some kids, you won't have anything to cover tomorrow. I just don't have time.

We CUT TO--

INT. LAYNE'S CAR - DAY

Layne, clearly making time, is pulled over at the airport.

The door opens and SHAUNA WRIGHT, 32, classic, prissy, wholesome southern belle, gets in, slams the door-- hard.

LAYNE

(tentative)

Hey girl.

They hug.

SHAUNA

Hi, lady. Sorry you had to do this. I don't know why Martin can't seem to manage his time. I was supposed to come last weekend, but then he rescheduled. His indecisiveness just... Uh.

Shauna sees that Layne doesn't know what to say.

SHAUNA (CONT'D)

I'm sorry to dump stuff on you...

LAYNE

No... I want to know, I mean hear.

SHAUNA

Let me ask you something... It's been two years. I don't know. Am I stupid waiting for Martin to ask me to move? Or am I going to be stuck in Memphis saying I have a boyfriend who I might join in Atlanta SOMEDAY.

LAYNE

It's been a month.

SHAUNA

Right?? Like will he EVER ask me to move??

LAYNE

What'd he say about you moving?

SHAUNA

(uses air quotes)

He said he wants to get "settled" first.

This seems to land hard on Layne.

LAYNE

I've known him a long time, and he's a man of his word. And, he's a good guy. The... perfect guy, actually.

Shauna tries to read Layne. Layne picks up on this.

LAYNE (CONT'D)

Which... makes sense, because you're perfect too, you know...

SHAUNA

(blushing)

No. I'm not.

LAYNE

(forcing it)

I mean, you're just what he's been wanting... someone who can be the mother of his kids.

SHAUNA

He told you that?

LAYNE

I know he's been talking about that stuff in general lately.

(MORE)

LAYNE (CONT'D)

Martin has kind of matured faster than all of us-- me and my friends. I mean, I'm still so career focused, I haven't even thought about that stuff for myself. But Martin... he's been all about his future... about creating the life he wants. And you two want the same thing so... you're clearly perfect for each other, you know?

Layne's smile widens, a little too much, as she glances at Shauna, now giddy with hope.

SHAUNA

That's just what I needed to hear!

LAYNE

(not meaning it)

Yaay.

Off Layne's tense smile, we CUT TO:

INT. SHARED SPACES OFFICE COMPLEX - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Layne sits with NBA player CRAIG PETERS, 32.

CRAIG

Channel 2. Great news.

LAYNE

As long as you find the strength to stay away from women who take Plan B as daily supplements and post 'booking info' in their bios.

CRAIG

You got jokes.

LAYNE

I'll send you talking points tonight. We'll rehearse in the morning. We're ending the program with the check presentation to the kids, so just stick to the key messages.

CRAIG

I like how you handle business, Layne. I need you on my team full time. Hey, where are these kids from again?

LAYNE  
 (realizing she forgot)  
 They're amazing. You're gonna love  
 'em.

Off Layne's "Oh Shit" face, we GO TO--

**ACT TWO**

INT. SHARED SPACES - LAYNE'S OFFICE - DAY - LATER

Layne, at her desk, seems desperate as she talks to KAREN YOUNG on speakerphone.

LAYNE  
 I got tied up. I am so sorry. What  
 if I use fewer kids? Then maybe you  
 don't need the program director's  
 approval.

KAREN (O.S.)  
 It's crazy on Fridays here. I told  
 you to remind me by one. She's  
 already on a plane out of the  
 country. There's nothing I can do.

LAYNE  
 Soror.

KAREN  
 Girl, seriously? Don't use that  
 card. You ain't been to a chapter  
 meeting since Obama's first term. I  
 gotta go. Next time, I got you.

Karen hangs up. Layne knows now what she has to do, and is  
 already regretting it.

LAYNE  
 Siri... FaceTime Vince.

The phone rings once. VINCE HARRIS, 31, waves popping, pearly  
 white teeth gleaming, appears on the screen.

VINCE  
 Cuz! What it do?!

Layne rolls her eyes.

LAYNE  
 Hey... there.

INT. PEACHTREE PLACE - POOL - DAY

Vince lounges poolside, with a glass filled with brown liquor next to him, an iPad on his lap. He takes a sip.

INTERCUT LAYNE AND VINCE'S PHONE CONVERSATION

LAYNE  
Hard day, huh?

VINCE  
I'm working... on my next email  
blast. You coming to my thing at  
Wet and Wild?

LAYNE  
Where there's a metal detector,  
full body search, AND a \$50 cover  
for the "Killer Kush" section? I'll  
pass.

VINCE  
It's Henny and Hemp night. Your  
loss.

LAYNE  
I need your help... with my PR  
activation.

VINCE  
Wha... What? You finally realizing  
we can be a mutha if we join  
forces?

LAYNE  
This is not joining forces. This is  
a one time event.

VINCE  
So you using me.

LAYNE  
What? No. Yes. Maybe.

VINCE  
What you need?

LAYNE  
Some kids.

VINCE

Stop acting bougie and come to Henny and Hemp, and you can get pregnant and high in the same night.

LAYNE

Vince, I'm serious.

VINCE

(thinking)

Ah'ight. I can hook you up. When you gon' finally hook me up with Tracey, though?

LAYNE

When I'm okay with two broken souls coming together to create debauchery in the world...

VINCE

Sounds magical to me.

LAYNE

Bye, Vince. I'll email you details.

Vince hangs up.

INT. PEACHTREE PLACE - MARTIN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE ON Shauna, clearly in pure ecstasy. PULL OUT to reveal her riding Martin as they have sex. He's both enjoying her enthusiasm as well as perplexed by it.

SHAUNA

Ah... Oh... Yes. Oh. Oh. God. I'm sorry.

MARTIN

Sorry?

SHAUNA

Not to you, to God.

She bends down to his ear, whispers.

SHAUNA (CONT'D)

I said His name in vain.

MARTIN

I don't think that's your biggest sin right now.

She rides harder.

SHAUNA  
Oh...! Tell me you love me.

MARTIN  
Oh. Okay...

She clinches his nipples. He yelps.

MARTIN (CONT'D)  
I love...

SHAUNA  
Oh... Ahhh. I love you!

This brings her to climax, and sends him further into confusion. Sweaty and out of breath, she rolls off.

MARTIN  
Whoa. Okay. You... missed me huh?

SHAUNA  
You surprised?

MARTIN  
Yeah. Since I moved, you haven't exactly been my biggest fan.

SHAUNA  
No... but Layne is.

Martin freezes.

MARTIN  
Wha... What do you... What?

SHAUNA  
She told me a lot I didn't know.

Martin is now at full attention, a bit of fear in his eyes.

MARTIN  
Yeah? Like, like what?

SHAUNA  
That you say a lot of great things about me. That I shouldn't worry because you're ready to settle down, and that... we're perfect for each other.

MARTIN  
Layne... said all that?

Martin sits up, still shocked. Shauna is thrown, sits up too.

SHAUNA

Which part was she wrong about?

MARTIN

Huh? No... she's right. I'm just surprised. Layne's always on my ass...

SHAUNA

Martin, language.

MARTIN

...on me about something, so I'm just tripping that she had all that to say is all.

SHAUNA

Maybe you're surprised she said all that because you don't feel all that.

Martin is silent. His silence is broken by what sounds like a hiccup... but we soon see it's the beginning of Shauna's strange cry. Martin rolls his eyes, clearly been here before.

MARTIN

(dryly)

Bae.

Shauna launches into a full on ugly face cry -- a bit too much to even think she's serious. He begrudgingly hugs her, secretly makes a face as she snots on his bare chest.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Look. You are a virtuous, nurturing, loyal, loving woman. You're just what I need in my life. I would be stupid not to know that. Layne is a smart woman. And she was right... you are perfect for me.

He continues to try to calm Shauna, but on his face, all we see is uncertainty.

INT. PEACHTREE PLACE - PARTY ROOM - NIGHT

ATLANTA TRAP plays in the background as Layne, Tracey and Veronica stuff bags with half empty glasses of wine nearby.

LAYNE

Don't just throw the tissue in there any kind of way, Veronica. There's a technique.

VERONICA

I got a technique where I shove these damn bags up your ass if you don't leave me alone.

LAYNE

(to Tracey)

Two pens in each bag? I told you I only have one of each thing.

TRACEY

You need more to drink, boo?

VERONICA

I shoulda brought down my weed.

LAYNE

I can't hear myself think.

Layne turns the music down.

TRACEY

Thank you.

Veronica turns it back up, shakes her butt in Tracey's face.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

Move that big ghetto bootie, before I get chlamydia.

VERONICA

First of all, you wish you had a ghetto bootie, Miss Long Back! Second of all, this magical oasis is clean as a whistle. When's the last time you got checked?

LAYNE

Focus, focus, damn.

TRACEY

Wait a minute, missy. You're the one late getting here to do this.

LAYNE

That airport traffic was cr...

VERONICA

Wait, what? The airport?

TRACEY

Oooo. Did you pick up Shauna for Martin?

VERONICA

Layne.

LAYNE

Martin's doing something for me. I needed to do something for him.

VERONICA

You wanna run upstairs and help them put on condoms, too?

TRACEY

You are ridiculous.

LAYNE

What are you talking about?

VERONICA

Talking about you... acting like you ain't been in love with him since freshman year, even before y'all started dating.

LAYNE

You, of all people, should know a college hookup is hardly called dating.

VERONICA

I don't text back and forth with my hookups all day.

TRACEY

Facts.

LAYNE

Hold on... Why are you double teaming me?

VERONICA

We're tired of you doing the same shit you've done since college... You like someone, then friend zone yourself trying to be their girl.

LAYNE

I do not.

TRACEY

You don't love him?

On Layne's face -- a look as if she's been found out.

LAYNE

Look. We were more friends than lovers, and even if I do kind of cringe when I see them together, and never liked or been attracted to anyone more than him... it doesn't matter. He chose her. He told me she might be wifey.

TRACEY

*Might... might* be. But you're the one with home court advantage. Besides, I don't see it. She's way too much.

VERONICA

More like... she ain't enough. She's boring as fuck. Always ordering grape juice when we invite her out to our shit. I be like, bitch, this ain't communion.

LAYNE

Listen, he made his choice.

TRACEY

Because he doesn't even know you're an option. You never told him how you felt... not even back then.

VERONICA

Yeah, you know men. They decide it's time to settle down, then they go with whoever's around who halfway fits the bill, and that's Shauna.

Veronica sees that Layne is in her head.

LAYNE

It's too late.

TRACEY

Every day is a chance to make a different choice. We're in our 30's now. Life is short, sweetie. If you do love him, you need to go get him, or Muffy upstairs will.

Layne thinks, inhales courage it seems.

LAYNE

I'll tell him.

They raise their glasses, toast. Tracey pulls out her cell.

TRACEY

One more 'gain, but smile and tilt  
the glasses at about a 30-degree  
angle for this boomerang.

Layne and Veronica roll their eyes, get up as we CUT TO--

EXT. PARK - VIP TENT - DAY

Layne arranges gift bags herself when she sees--

Martin on the other side of the tent talking to his  
CAMERAMAN. Martin catches her stare, and she plays it off.

The CAMERAMAN walks out. Martin crosses over to her,  
something clearly on his mind. Layne looks as if she wants to  
say something, but can't.

MARTIN

Hey. You gud?

LAYNE

I'm gud. Where's Shauna?

MARTIN

I'm trying to get her to come. We  
had a disagreement.

LAYNE

Oh!  
(correcting)  
Oh. Yeah? About?

MARTIN

What you said.

Layne looks fearful about what that could mean.

LAYNE

I'm sorry... did I do any...?

MARTIN

It's cool. You said a lot of great  
things about me I heard... even  
though I thought I get on your  
nerves most of the time.

LAYNE

(blurts out)  
You don't.

A beat as Martin tries to read Layne.

MARTIN

Well, everything you said to her just led to a conversation that I wasn't exactly prepared for, so she got mad at me.

LAYNE

I didn't mean to cause any problems.

MARTIN

Maybe it's good you did.

Layne looks at Martin, hides her excitement.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Because it got me thinking... what do I really want?

LAYNE

You don't know?

MARTIN

I'm not sure sometimes. Shauna can be, well, a lot. She always acting kind of irritated with me, so I don't know. I mean, she's a good girl. She's 100 percent focused on me, which is great, I guess. But sometimes it's hot, sometimes it's cold. I heard you think she's perfect for me, right?

He looks up, afraid of her answer. Layne takes a deep breath.

LAYNE

Martin, I have something to say, so I should just say it. I'm just gonna say it.

Martin looks at Layne quizzically.

LAYNE (CONT'D)

Sometimes, like, when you really care about someone, you like say the opposite, or do the opposite...

(MORE)

LAYNE (CONT'D)

Because you're afraid you might not be on the same page with the person, you know, or you might think you're, like, making stuff up in your head so you keep it to yourself, or you try to play it off and act irritated like someone is getting on your nerves, just to, like throw them off your scent... or you act all cool, like, *I don't care, I'm a strong black woman, I don't need no man*, you understand?

She looks up at Martin, who looks totally confused. A beat as Martin thinks.

MARTIN

(matter of factly)

No. I... I actually don't.

LAYNE

I'm no good at this... mushy shit. I'm just saying that... that life is short. Neither one of us should waste anymore time, Martin. You get it?

Martin smiles, touched. He kisses Layne on the forehead.

MARTIN

I do. Thank you for being honest and putting that out there. I know that's not easy for you, gangsta.

Layne chuckles with excitement -- he does get it.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I hear you. Life is short.

Before Layne can question that, Layne notices Craig, who arrives wearing a suit with a gold cross lapel pin and holding hands with his wife MICHELLE PETERS, 32, pretty, conservative. Layne notices him checking out the asses of women when Michelle turns her head.

LAYNE

Okay. I gotta go.

She kisses him on the cheek, relieved she finally came clean. She leaves Martin there, looking at her in a new light.

EXT. PARK - STAGE - LATER

Off the side, nervous Layne is with Craig. She glances at Martin with his camera crew off in the distance.

LAYNE

When Channel 2 is done getting some interviews, we'll do your check presentation. I'm pretty sure the kids should be arriving s...

Layne stops when she sees something moving through the upscale, well-dressed crowd.

We go into SLOW MOTION as Vince, to CARDI B.'S song "Drip", floats in accompanying FOUR FULL-BLOWN SCANTILY CLAD MILF THOTS, late 20s - 30s, with their LITTLE TOTS, 8 - 12.

Layne's heart stops. Craig is frozen, his wife Michelle grows enraged. Vince and the women and kids approach.

VINCE

So, we ready to make the world a better place or what?

On Layne's face-- defeat.

### ACT THREE

EXT. PARK - VIP TENT - DAY

Layne looks panicked as she watches Craig sweat and Michelle get angrier. Vince is bubbly as usual.

LAYNE

Wow. Ahhh... thank you, Vince.

MICHELLE

(whispers to Craig)  
What in the hell is this?

One of the mothers gets in Craig's face.

THOT #1

Take a pic wit' me!

As she poses for a selfie, she pulls her shirt down to reveal more cleavage and makes duck lips.

LAYNE

Uh, Vince... can you show the mothers the VIP tent, please? I'll take the kids.

THOT #2  
 VIP? Aww, shit!

Michelle walks away in disgust. Craig follows to catch up with her. Layne shoots Vince a look.

VINCE  
 (to the THOTS)  
 That way ladies! I'll get everyone drinks.

NEAR THE BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Vince approaches the MALE BARTENDER.

VINCE  
 Four Hennessys with a splash of coke.

He hears ignorant TRAP playing from the VIP tent, glances in that direction to see--

The THOTS twerking, one dancing on the pole like she does at her day job.

VINCE (CONT'D)  
 Just cokes.

ANGLE ON Tracey as she walks up to the adjacent bar and FEMALE BARTENDER, which Vince has his back to.

TRACEY  
 Vodka soda please... and no Smirnoff or none of that nonsense. Grey Goose, please.

She hands her the credit card, then turns when she hears Vince. ANGLE ON Vince with a few attendees.

VINCE  
 It's been like forever, mane! What it do?!

BACK TO Tracey, who rolls her eyes.

FEMALE BARTENDER  
 Sorry, Paige. Your card was declined.

Tracey doesn't respond.

FEMALE BARTENDER (CONT'D)  
 Paige?

TRACEY  
 (remembering)  
 Oh. Yes. Me. Thanks.

Tracey snatches the card. She heads toward Vince, checking to see if he heard anything. BACK ON Vince with an attendee.

ATTENDEE  
 (to Vince)  
 I remember your parties, dude.

VINCE  
 Man...!

ATTENDEE  
 For real, they were everything!

Tracey walks up, looks relieved that Vince didn't hear.

VINCE  
 Damn, dawg. You can't recreate that  
 shit, partner.

TRACEY  
 (to Vince)  
 What hall did you live in again?

Vince shoots her a look -- I know you didn't.

TRACEY (CONT'D)  
 At Clark...?

Vince looks her up and down.

VINCE  
 You thirsty, Paige?

He pulls out a wad of cash, flashes it and smiles. Got her. She walks away, thinks twice, turns around. Takes it, then sashays off as he watches, tickled, as we return to the--

STAGE

Off to the side with Craig, Layne sees Michelle fuming in the crowd. Craig looks nervous.

CRAIG  
 (distracted)  
 I can't afford to keep messing up  
 with her. Where did you find these  
 chicks, damn?

Layne, with her renewed confidence from finally telling Martin how she feels, puffs up, looks Craig right in the eye.

LAYNE

It's not these women here that matter. It's what you do. It's what you choose to do from this point on. Every day is a chance to make a different choice. Tell her how you feel. You're about to make a speech anyway. Proclaim it... in a big way, so she knows you're serious. It's freeing. Trust me, I know.

Craig thinks this over. Layne is in the zone.

EXT. PARK - LATER

It's a full house -- proud young alumni in their 20's and 30's are well-dressed and mingling.

ANGLE ON Tracey, who spots film producer JAMES MALONE with Veronica and a GROUP OF ALUMS. She squeezes and wiggles awkwardly through a tight crowd of people to get to them.

VERONICA

The Atlanta housing market has significantly low inventory right now, so you really need to have a good agent out there who knows where to find the little gems.

JAMES

I'd like to invest in Inman Park for sure.

TRACEY

(out of nowhere)  
Love that neighborhood.

All, including Veronica, stare at Tracey. The two alums start a side conversation as Tracey crosses in front of Veronica to James, extends her hand to him to shake it.

TRACEY (CONT'D)

James Malone... I'm Tracey Johnson...

Veronica scans Tracey from behind, makes a face.

JAMES

From...?

TRACEY

Baller Exes. But I'm not doing reality TV anymore.

(MORE)

TRACEY (CONT'D)

I'm an actress now actually, which is why I'd love to talk to you. I read in the Hollywood Reporter about your new project shooting in Atlanta...

Veronica weirdly hugs Tracey from behind, and hangs onto her, head-locking Tracey in a way that puzzles her.

VERONICA

(to James)

That's my girl... talented.

(whispers in Tracey's ear)

Bitch, yo' ass cheeks running from each other.

Tracey's eyes widen.

TRACEY

Ooo... I gotta... Veronica, give the man my info.

Tracey exits the area waving and walking backwards toward the Porta-Pottys. When no one's looking, she turns and runs and we see that her butt pads are very lopsided.

THE STAGE - LATER

In the crowd with Michelle, Layne, Veronica and Tracey, butt pads adjusted, watch the end of the check presentation. Layne, in fixer mode, sidles up to Michelle.

LAYNE

I just wanted you to know that I loved the book about you and Craig.

MICHELLE

You read it?

LAYNE

(lying)

Of course. And all I could think about was how far he came from when he first sat in my office and told me he wanted to change his image, not for himself, but for you. I know he stumbles along the way, but no matter how much he trips, the only thing that's important is that he finally gets there, you know?

Michelle smiles. Born fixer, Layne smiles back... got her. Layne returns to her friends. They all continue to watch the--

STAGE

Where Martin talks into camera, Craig next to him.

MARTIN

This is an amazing way to show support for AUC schools and for future college students...

ANGLE ON "Bebe's Kids" doing all the latest urban dances on the other side of the stage, while holding the \$50,000 oversized mock check.

CRAIG

Thank you. Thank all of you. I also would like to take a moment to thank my lovely wife, Michelle. It's hard to find someone who's ride or die, who knows your faults and who believes you can be better. I haven't always been perfect, but baby, I'm better because of your love, and I can't take a love like that for granted. So I'm going to be better for you. I love you with all my heart.

He seems earnest, and she feels it. He reaches out to her and she climbs onstage. They hug and kiss. The audience applauds. The news cameraman zooms in.

Martin, still on stage, eyes Layne. Her girls notice.

VERONICA

Aww shit.

TRACEY

I know, right? He all puppy-eyed looking at you, girl!

Layne beams.

LAYNE

I told him how I felt.

TRACEY

What? You shoulda told us that immediately!

Vince walks up.

VINCE

What y'all cackling about?

TRACEY

Mind your damn business.

VERONICA

Trying to figure out what's up with your boy... making googley eyes with your cousin.

LAYNE

Shut up.

VINCE

That's what's wrong with that nigga? He nervous talking about he got a surprise.

The girls look confused. The kids start to get off of the stage to join their mothers. The cameraman packs up as Martin gets back on the mic.

MARTIN

Excuse me everyone, I've been inspired a bit by Craig I guess, so I have something to say.

The girls look at each other, perplexed.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

There is someone here who has meant a lot to me... a woman I know I should be with... a woman I should've known all along I should be with...

TRACEY

Oh my Jesus.

MARTIN

I'm not getting any younger. Life is short...

(looks at Layne)

...and like Craig said you can't take love for granted. This woman is perfect for me. We're... perfect for each other.

VINCE

Oooohhh. For real?

LAYNE

Oh my God.

TRACEY

Don't call Him, call a florist. If you make Veronica the maid of honor, I quit you.

Layne grabs her girls hands.

MARTIN

So... Shauna Wright, can you come up here?

Layne's face drops. She squeezes the hell out of her girls' hands. They wince. Her eyes follows Martin's gaze... into the crowd behind Layne, as--

Shauna, blushing and beaming, weaves through the crowd, and joins Martin on the stage.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I do know what I want.

The girls watch Martin drop to one knee.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I know it's spur of the moment, and I promise I'll get you the best ring ever. But... will you marry me?

SHAUNA

Oh God. Oh yes... yes!

The girls stare at Layne, who dies inside.

**TAG**

INT. MAGIC CITY STRIP CLUB - NIGHT

We see Tracey by the bar posting on IG. She nudges Vince next to her.

TRACEY

Lemme borrow \$50.

VINCE

Why?

We see Di'Jaquandell with a devilish thug grin nearby.

TRACEY

Don't ask questions.

A STRIPPER'S BOOTIE POPS to the music. She moves to reveal Layne behind her, downing alcohol with Veronica beside her, as she scrolls through her contacts on her phone.

VERONICA

I gotta go to more of your PR events... I racked up with potential clie...

She looks over at Layne, in the dumps, a mound of Magic City chicken wing bones in front of her.

VERONICA (CONT'D)

Aww, love, at least that bullshit love speech Craig gave went viral... you got your retainer!

Layne just takes a drink.

MC (O.S.)

Let's hear it for Kelly Lingus!

KELLY LINGUS, one of the THOTs from earlier, exits the stage, walks by Layne, recognizes her.

KELLY

Hey girl! My son is beyond psyched about that college money. He's in an honors program now, so all he does is talk about being a lawyer one day. You doing good things.

Layne looks surprised, she brightens.

LAYNE

Thank you.

Kelly turns, starts a lap dance for a nearby customer as Layne watches-- another ass in Layne's face. Vince approaches with a WAITRESS carrying a bottle with a lit sparkler.

VINCE

(to the THOTs)

Get it mamas, get that money!

The hostess adds the bottle to others on their table.

VINCE (CONT'D)

Y'all need anything else?

As they start to answer, he sees someone he knows.

VINCE (CONT'D)  
 (to patron)  
 Nigga!!!

He leaves the table. Layne then spots Craig, entering the club with a group of women -- none of them Michelle. She shakes her head -- men.

ANGLE ON Tracey, who approaches the table.

TRACEY  
 (excitedly)  
 That producer James Malone just  
 texted me. He wants me to audition.

VERONICA  
 With or without your ass sling?

Tracey looks at her cell, grunts.

VERONICA (CONT'D)  
 What?

They see an IG story of Martin and Shauna showing off her ring.

TRACEY  
 Damn. He got that ring fast.

VERONICA  
 That's nice.  
 (to Layne)  
 It's probably fake though.  
 (back to the girls)  
 Only one thing you can do in a  
 moment like this.

TRACEY  
 She's right.

LAYNE  
 I know. I'm strong. I need to move  
 on.

VERONICA  
 Move on?!

TRACEY  
 Bitch, please!!!

VERONICA  
 We 'bout to break them muthafuckas  
 up.

Tracey, high fives Veronica.

TRACEY  
That part!

On Layne's face: Oh shit.

**(OUT)**

MUSIC OVER CREDITS  
"Sad" by Kodie Shane