

PICTURES ONLY

Written by

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AN ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

FADE IN

1 INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

1

LOLA (25) African American, slender built, stylishly dressed, modern woman. She's carrying a large cardboard box full of work related items from a recent termination including a FRAMED DEGREE and a PINK SLIP folded and tucked near the top. She walks up to her apartment door with keys in hand and sees a RENT INCREASE NOTICE tacked to the door. She reads it out loud to her self as she walks in the door.

LOLA

"Dear tenant: Rent increase of 60%
will go into effect 30 days from
today on July 1st. -Mgmt"

2 INT. APARTMENT LIVING SPACE - AFTERNOON

2

She enters the apartment and sees her best friend and roommate JOSEPHINE (25) wearing a paint-stained jumpsuit and bandanna, standing barefoot painting a canvas. Jo turns turns to Lola.

JO

I hope those are groceries in that
box, its your turn to cook tonight.
At this rate, I may have to hit my
Rolodex for dinner with one of the
many gent's seeking my attention.

Lola kicks off her shoes and puts the box on the kitchen table.

LOLA

Jo, have you seen this?

Lola sits down at the kitchen table now beginning to sweat. Jo walks over towards Lola's box, about to reach inside, Lola jostles the rent increase notice into Jo's face. Jo snatches and holds the notice in her hands.

JO

Is this some type of joke? This has
got to be illegal. Was this on
everyone's door?

LOLA

I didn't even bother to notice.

Lola gets up to grab a glass and pours herself some water from the faucet. She takes a sip.

LOLA (CONT'D)

I was too busy processing ours.

Lola stands by the sink and stares at the glass in her hand, stunned by the gravity of losing her job and receiving the notice. Jo pulls the notice from her face with her attention back on Lola's box. She sees the pink slip peeking from the top. Jo removes the pink slip.

JO

Lo, what happened? You just started this position.

Lola turns around with a look of disappointment.

LOLA

Budget cuts. We were the first to get the boot. Every position minus my supervisor's was cut.

JO

Mhmm, You sure it wasn't because of a brilliant black girl trying to expose them to African Art in their very white establishment? I told you Lo, you gotta tread lightly around them folks.

LOLA

They're not like that, Jo. I've had creative control over some projects and influence in others. Trust me, they appreciated what I brought to the table.

JO

Honey, just because they invited you to dinner doesn't mean you have a seat at the table. You are still the negro in the room, and you better not dare say a word, cus they'll tell you to stay outta white folks business real quick. But they'll make it sound...ya know, cute, like "budget cuts".

Jo places the pink slip back in Lola's box.

LOLA

Well, Excuse me little miss, Money bags. All you'll have to do is hit up your folks for some cash. You'll be back to painting today and writing poetry tomorrow.

JO

No offense Lo, you're still new to this. Even as far as my family has gotten, White folk will always remind you that you're still their property.

3

INT. BARBARA'S KITCHENETTE UNIT - AFTERNOON

3

BARBARA (50) dressed in an all-white laundry clerk uniform with a matching cap, is wrapping up making herself some lunch, a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Barbara hears keys fiddling at the door. In walks Lola, carrying a large bag of groceries.

LOLA

Hey Mama!

BARBARA

Hey Baby!

Barbara lights up with excitement. Lola kisses Barbara on the cheek. Lola gently places the bag of groceries on the kitchenette table.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

What you doing here?

LOLA

I was hoping you would be here! I brought some groceries for you and Angela.

BARBARA

Aw you didn't have to. Your sister misses you dearly. How's work been coming along?

LOLA

Aw, I miss her too. And work has...had a lot of changes.

BARBARA

You wanna talk about it?

LOLA

Actually, I just wanted to drop these off before I have to be at work.

Lola proceeds toward the door.

BARBARA

Louise, wait...You been working like a mad woman, I don't want you stressing out about us. I know things haven't been easy lately, but just know I appreciate everything you've done, and I picked up a few extra shifts at the laundromat, So if you can, I would love if you watch your sister.

LOLA

But you're already washing all day long, momma!

She gestures to the bedroom.

LOLA (CONT'D)

The important thing is keeping Angela fed, clothed and a roof over y'all's head and keeping you healthy, right?

BARBARA (O.S.)

Now don't go fussing. What I said is final. Plus your sister could use some quality time.

ANGELA

MAMA!

BARBARA

God will make a way. He always does.

Barbara sighs and gets up and proceeds down the hall. Lola quietly exits the apartment.

4

INT. APARTMENT LIVING SPACE - AFTERNOON

4

Lola is sitting at the table drinking coffee and reading the classified section of the newspaper circling different ads. Jo comes in dressed in a robe.

JO

So? How'd it go?

LOLA

I couldn't tell her...

JO

So she thinks you're at work right now? Louise...

Lola nods. Jo sighs.

JO (CONT'D)

Look, I might know about some work. My Uncle Booker was at my parents house for dinner the other night, and he mentioned he's short on waitresses.

LOLA

You don't have an Uncle Booker.

JO

He's a friend of my dad. He owns a restaurant on the other side of Bronzeville.

LOLA

I appreciate that Jo, but I don't know the first thing about being a waitress.

JO

It could just be for a little while? Until you find something more worthy.

Lola nods again, thinking it over.

LOLA

Thanks Jo. I'll think about it.

5

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

5

Lola walks into a dimly lit dressing room. Costumes and accessories are draped on a garment rack. Mirrors line the wall. COCO (23) sits in front of a mirror and applies lipstick. She's wearing a burlesque costume.

LOLA

I'm looking for, Mr. Booker?

Behind Lola, walks in MR. BOOKER (57) Tall-Imposing, well dressed.

BOOKER

Coco you ready?

Coco nods.

LOLA

Mr. Booker?

He notices her, looks her up and down, nods.

BOOKER
Can I help you?

LOLA
A friend of mine said you're hiring waitresses?

BOOKER
Who's your friend?

LOLA
Josephine Carter.

BOOKER
Ah. Jo sent you. Yeah, we're hiring. But not for waitresses.

LOLA
Then what position are you looking to fill?

BOOKER
Can you entertain?

Booker gestures over toward Coco.

BOOKER (CONT'D)
You see how Coco is dressed? You have any idea what she does?

LOLA
I can make an educated guess.

BOOKER
Well, that's the job.

BOOKER (CONT'D)
The pay is good - better than any other job you're going to find. But if you're a friend of Miss Carter, I don't think you're the type of girl for this establishment.

Lola nods, considers, turns, slowly walks away, but she is still deep in thought. She stops walking. Turns around to face Mr. Booker.

LOLA
How much does the job pay?

BOOKER

Look, baby girl. If you want it,
the job is yours. All you gotta do
is dance and entertain. I don't run
no whore house. Whatever the girls
decide to do in their free time is
none of my business ok?

Lola nods.

LOLA

Ok.

BOOKER.

Name?

LOLA

Uh...Lo-Lola.

BOOKER

Lola. Hmm. All right, come by
tomorrow night.

Lola nods and leaves.

6

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

6

Show music can be heard through the walls. Lola sits alone in
the dressing room staring at a mirror. She's wearing a
burlesque outfit, a short pixie wig, face full of makeup.
Coco enters the dressing room, having just exited the stage.

COCO

Ready, Lola? You're on after the
interlude.

LOLA

I know.

Coco sits down beside Lola.

In walks MORGAN (LATE 30'S), The Stage Manager.

MORGAN

UH, LOLA.....you're up!

Coco turns around to Morgan.

COCO

Give her second.

MORGAN

Come on guys! 2 MINUTES! Move IT!

Lola Stands and prepares to head towards the stage.

COCO

Just have fun with it. Remember
you're in control out there.

7

INT. DRESSING ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

7

Lola enters the room from her first night on stage. Coco
cleans the makeup off her face. Lola is silent.

COCO

So, how do you feel? How was it?

LOLA

Uh, It was different.

COCO

Different than what you thought or
expected?

LOLA

Different for me. How long have you
been doing this?

COCO

About a year, Pictures for 8
months.

LOLA

Pictures?

COCO

Yeah. You know, selling photos so
clients can have a keepsake
collection, posters, things like
that.

LOLA

They pay a lot of money for that
kind of thing?

COCO

(laughs)

Loads. More if you do custom
scenes.

LOLA

Really?

COCO

I'd like to do that someday. Then I could spend more time with my Penny.

LOLA

Penny? Are you a mother?

COCO

Yeah. Penny's my daughter. (Beat)
Who do you do it for?

LOLA

(Beat) Freedom.

Coco nods.

8

INT. APARTMENT LIVING SPACE - LATE NIGHT

8

Lola enters the apartment with her wig on and full face of makeup. Jo is taking off her Jewelry as she just got in moments before.

JO

What the hell are you wearing?

LOLA

I just got off work, what you doing up this late?

JO

I Just got in a from a date. Is that your uniform for serving down at Booker's?

LOLA

(Beat) Apart of my uniform?

JO

How was your first day?

LOLA

Jo, your uncle doesn't own a restaurant.

JO

Then where the hell have you been for the past 5 hours?

LOLA

(beat) He's runs a burlesque club.

JO

What the devil? Well then tell him today was your last day because-

LOLA

I told him I'd be back.

JO

What?! Have you lost your mind?

LOLA

It's a job and I need the money.

JO

Well, you might run into some fellas from the social club down there. Or What if someone from the church sees you? Then what?

LOLA

I'd tell them how I much charge for a dance.

9

INT. DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

9

WEEK LATER:

Lola enters the dressing room with her work bag; Coco is sitting at her vanity. She digs a small packet out of the drawer and hands it to Lola.

COCO

This arrived for you.

Lola takes the opened packet that contains a small stack of prints and a letter. She takes a look at the first one and admires herself in it.

COCO (CONT'D)

They want you for WILDPLAY magazine. I know, It's been a whirlwind week for you but I think you should take it.

Lola is shocked; she reads. Coco smirks at her.

COCO (CONT'D)

So? You gonna take it?

Lola is sitting at the kitchenette table with a bag of groceries. Sipping coffee. Lola reaches into her bag, places a wad of \$5 dollar bills in a rubber band on the table sliding it over to Barbara who is sitting across from her. Barbara picks it up.

BARBARA

You know what's funny. I called to see when the electricity bill i

s due...and they said you paid the whole thing.

Barbara shakes the wad of cash in hand.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

You've got some explaining to do. What's going on Louise?

LOLA

What do you mean? Aren't you happy?

Barbara gives her a stern look.

Mama, I don't work for the institute any more. I lost my job a few weeks ago.

BARBARA

Then where did this money come from? And these groceries?

LOLA

Jo got me a job down at Mr. Bookers.

BARBARA

Doing what exactly?

Lola reaches into her bag for the magazine and slides it over to her mother.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Louise. This is-

LOLA

This is me mama. This is freedom. It opened up doors to give me what I want, and most of all keep my word to you.

BARBARA

So what now?

LOLA
This is just the beginning...

FADE OUT

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