

VERVE

TWO BUTTERFLIES

Written by

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Inspired by true events.

Management:
Good Fear
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SUPER: ATLANTA, GEORGIA 1975.

Crisp cerulean sky overhead. No cloud in sight.

Sun rays blast down into every nook-and-cranny of this inner-city, Atlanta, street. It looks how it smells. Like shit.

Cicadas endlessly CHIRP. Row houses are squeezed together, lining the streets. If houses could sweat, these would pour.

PEOPLE lifelessly mill about. They fan their faces and drink from hoses. They're quiet. It's too scorching to talk to one another. Too hot to make a sound. UNTIL--

A thunderous CRACK - in the distance.

Everyone turns.

A WOMAN (50s), the type everyone calls "Mama" --

WOMAN

The hell was that?

Another CRACK. Distant SCREAMS.

They hesitantly run towards the sound.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Somebody call the police...

They arrive at a corner row house, slowly inching closer--like walking on glass.

Mama, from before, with horror in her eyes pushes her way through the crowd.

They halt to watch the now silent house.

She looks at "2792 Monastery Ave" metal address tiles that are nailed to the rotting house siding.

The wooden door has a jagged, smoking hole blasted into it.

Through the hole we can see it's dark inside.

The people outside stand silently. Eyes dart back and forth. Sweat drips. Adults SHOO children away.

They're waiting for--

A shotgun EXPLOSION. A window SHATTERS

They disperse, SCREAMING. Mama stands; horrified.

MALE VOICE (V.O.)
(shouting)
Where's Berta! Where the fuck is
Berta!

2

INT. ROWHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

2

FRANTIC FOOTSTEPS. A BABY'S CRY is hushed. A CLICK of a lock.

Through the hole in the door, stark light beams through scraggy openings. Dust particles dance in the rays. This illuminates the legs of--

WILLIE DENNIS, (40s), African American, belligerently drunk, bull-like and brawny, seething and sweating like a madman. He's panting heavily and wielding a shotgun.

We don't see his face. Only his back. He stands in the torn-to-shreds house in front of--

KYM MURRELL, (15), African American, drenched in sweat. Her gushing eyes are closed and she bites her lip, praying to God. Next to her, her brother MARK MURRELL, (20), African, American, arm clenched around her. His eyes shake but don't, for one second, leave Willie.

WILLIE
(drunkenly)
Where. Is. My. Wife.

MARK
(through tears)
Uncle Willie... We told you she
ain't here. Please.

Silence. He cocks the gun. Mark shields Kym with a hug.

Willie slowly raises the gun. They clinch tighter.

He pulls the trigger. EXPLOSION. Mark pushes Kym to the side. Bullets tear him apart, raining into his back.

Willie is thrown back against the wall by the kickback. He drunkenly drops the gun.

Kym runs to a closed door and yanks it open. Out of a coat closet ANITA MURRELL, (42), African American, panicked, holding a crying baby, ERIC (3). She bolts out quickly grabbing Kym's hand.

Willie staggers around, tries to get up, and get his gun.

Anita and Kym jet past Willie and Mark's dead body, quickly making their way to a hallway.

3 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 3

Willie violently runs through the hall, bouncing from wall to wall.

Anita and Kym are at the back end of the hallway. They reach a staircase. Still holding Kym's hand, Anita hastily tries to hoist them both up the steps.

4 INT. STAIRS - CONTINUOUS 4

Just then, Willie gets to the stair threshold. With shotgun in one hand, he extends the other to grab Kym's leg.

Anita and Willie both try to pull Kym. She screams.

WILLIE
You take mine! I take yours!

KYM
Mama go go go! Just take Eric.

Anita pulls harder but Kym lets go on her own. Kym falls down the steps and into Willie, knocking the gun out of his hand. Kym runs back towards the front room.

Anita runs up the stairs holding Eric and gets to the upstairs--

5 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 5

--hallway. She's running. Sweating. Panicked

ANITA
(shouting)
Get out of the house Kym! Don't go
hidin' no where. Just go straight
ou--

EXPLOSION. A shot gun goes off. Anita freezes.

The house falls silent. The sound of the gun echoes through the empty house.

Anita cries to herself and slides down the wall.

Downstairs, the sound of a body HITS the floor. Casings DROP. Eric lets out a huge SCREAM.

Anita quickly hushes him. She looks around.

Police SIRENS quietly fade in.

The shot gun COCKS once more. Heavy FOOTSTEPS animalisticly run towards Anita's direction. Down the hall and up the stairs. Anita gets up and runs towards an--

6 INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 6

--empty bedroom. She runs to the closet and locks herself and Eric inside. She burrows between hanging clothes. She covers Eric's mouth, hushing his breath. She tries to calm her own.

7 INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - DAY 7

Willie is busting down door after door.

WILLIE

I know Berta came to you, Anita.
You're hiding her ass in here
somewhere.

With each door he breaks, he gets more and more frustrated because she's not here.

He's hysterical, eyes bulging, sweat dropping, gun CLANGING against objects he runs into.

WILLIE (CONT'D)

(to himself; rushed)

Where is she, where is she, where
is she!

He runs to the last room and stops. He walks over to the closet. Slowly.

8 INT. CLOSET - CONTINUOUS 8

Anita presses Eric's head against her chest. She whispers a PRAYER. It's dark. Venetian shadows cast over her face in between cracks of clothes.

She hears Willie's FOOTSTEPS get closer.

The door swings open.

Anita closes her eyes. SIRENS blare right outside of the house.

She opens her eyes. He looks her in the face.

WILLIE
 (shaken)
 Berta ain't coming back... is she?
 (he screams)
 Is she!
 (beat)
 Tell your sister I love her.

Anita can't find any words. He raises the shotgun to his mouth and BLOWS his brains out.

Eric CRIES. Anita stands in horror as she watches Willie's bloody body fall. The shot RINGS. POLICE FOOTSTEPS march up the stairs.

She tightly closes her eyes.

MATCH CUT TO:

9 INT. ERIC'S HOME - NIGHT - 2000

9

SUPER: BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 2000.

The POP of a balloon sounds. CHILDREN run away, giggling.

Anita, now (68), jumps at the sound. She's cold and hardened, but draped in beautiful butterfly apparel. Butterfly necklace, butterfly earrings, and a butterfly blouse. They're effervescent. However, she's everything but.

ANITA
 Now didn't I tell y'all to stop
 playing around this house!

She stands in the back of the room, away from everyone, next to an in-home bar stacked with alcohol.

Next to her, are 3 opened and drained beer bottles.

Standing on her tiptoes, she tries to reach the top shelf of the bar, to no avail. Atop, there is a pack of beer.

Around her, a huge party is underway. Children pitter-patter, TWO YOUNG COUSINS gossip in the corner, PEOPLE are LAUGHING. No one takes notices to Anita in the back.

Still not being able to reach, she eyes a small ottoman. Slyly, she takes it from in front of the couch and brings it over to the bar, attracting no attention.

As she drunkenly steps up on it, she stumbles just a little bit, CLANGING against the metal shelves of the bar. Everyone looks at her. She pretends as if she's up to nothing.

When everyone turns away she tries once more until--

ERIN (25) young and sweet, outfit too tight and youthful for her age. She holds onto a cellphone as she approaches. She doesn't look up while speaking.

ERIN
Auntie Nita, want any food?

Anita waves her hand - "No" and gets back to her beer quest.

ERIN (CONT'D)
You sure? I can make you a plate to take home.

ANITA
I'm fine.

ERIN
(jokingly)
You should really eat something before adding any more to the collection.

She points to the beer bottles.

Anita takes one final leap and jostles the beer off of the top shelf and into her hands.

She gets off of the ottoman and pulls her keys out of her pocket. On them, a very used bottle opener.

She cracks the beer bottle open and flings the cap across the bar top. She takes a huge swig.

ANITA
Oh, so you got jokes, huh? Lemme tell you somethin' girl. I been drinking more years than you been on this earth so if you think 3 beers is somethin', you really are as simple as you look.

ERIN
(shocked)
Excuse me?!

ANITA
And maybe if you popped up from that phone screen, you'd notice that I'm okay now and I'll be okay three beers from now.

Anita takes another huge swig.

ANITA (CONT'D)
 These get me where I wanna be when
 I'm somewhere I'm not. And all of
 this right here is exactly that.

Erin begins to walk away until--

ERIN
 (embarrassed)
 They're about to sing happycake.

ANITA
 (through laughter)
 I'm good right in here.

Erin walks to the kitchen.

10

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

10

Eric, now (29), African American, pretty boy clenching onto
 youth, sits at the head of the table. Everyone gathers.

Lights are off as candles flicker. They begin to SING.

EVERYONE
 Happy Birthday to you! Happy
 Birthday dear Eric. Happy Birthday
 to you!

Just as they start the second verse--

ERIC
 (shouting to her)
 Mama! Are you coming in here?

ANITA (O.S.)
 No.

ERIC
 Too drunk to move, huh?

Everyone chuckles. She doesn't answer.

ERIC (CONT'D)
 You want us to slice you a piece?

Still no response.

11 INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

11

ERIC (O.S.)
Somebody's gonna have to take Mama
home again! She's Disney done.

LAUGHTER is heard from the kitchen.

ANITA
Oh shut up! I told you I'm fine! I
drink. I don't get drunk.

She slumps onto the couch, downing the bottle of beer. She
sets her other, used, bottles onto the table. She scowls.

The singing resumes from the kitchen.

EVERYONE (O.S.)
(muddled)
How old are you now, Eric!?

ERIC (O.S.)
I'm twenty-seven. Damn!

Everyone cheers. She finishes her drink. Upset that it's
over, she notices the tiniest bit of alcohol at the bottom.
She tries her hardest to suck it clean out.

Nothing.

Anita picks up the other bottles and with everything she has,
tries to suck the last bit out of each one.

There's nothing coming out. She raises the last bottle above
her eye and just as she looks down the mouth, a tiny drop
falls into her eye. She winces.

ANITA
(bitterly)
Congratulations to me.

Everyone cheers from the other room once again, finishing the
song.

She stares forward. Alone.

12 EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

12

A lit sign that reads "Catholic Charities Senior Living" sits
surrounded by manicured bushes and vibrant yellow roses.

A speeding and swerving 1994, faded and dented, sun stained,
CHRYSLER NEON barrels into the parking lot.

It weaves through the cars and makes its way to the very farthest spot, away from any and every car. It's completely alone.

13 INT. CAR - NIGHT

13

Anita sits behind the driver's seat, barely peeking above the steering wheel.

Intoxicatedly, she doesn't notice THE CHECK ENGINE light on the dashboard.

A BUTTERFLY MOBILE swings crazily, back and forth, from the rearview mirror. Anita grabs the mobile and stops it from swinging. She holds onto the mobile for a moment.

The clock reads "11:27pm."

She takes a moment, gathers herself, and gets out.

14 EXT. PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

14

Anita slides in between and past cars.

The drunkenness sets in. This is all a game to her now.

ANITA
(drunken mumbles)
Take mama home my ass! I'm doing
just fine. Yep, doing just fine.

She struggles to put one foot in front of the other and when she can't get it quite right, she giggles.

Just then, she trips and a car catches her balance, hard.

The ALARM goes off.

Anita jumps up as fast as a drunken old woman can.

She puts both hands over her mouth, tickled that she caused this noise. She laughs and makes her way towards the front door of the building, alarm still BLARING.

In the distance, at the front door, two, old, white women, sit in rocking chairs. They are SUZIE and BERNICE.

SUZIE
Another late night, Anita?

Anita doesn't look at them.

BERNICE

I see you fell into Ronnie's car...
again.

The two chuckle. Anita looks at them -- dagger eyes. Anita finally nears the door and reaches inside her purse for keys.

ANITA

All you two do is sit out here
waiting for me, huh?

BERNICE

Well someone has to make sure you
don't pass out on the stoop...
AGAIN.

SUZIE

And you wonder why nobody ever
comes by to see you. You really
should get better with your...
"thirst."

(smugly)

I'm just saying what everyone's
thinking, dear. To help, is all.

ANITA

Well thank you Burt and Ernie, for
the wonderful read up. I'll be sure
to add it to the list of opinions
I'll drink away when I'm "thirsty."
(beat)

Y'all have a "blessed" night.

Bernice and Suzie roll their eyes and rock once more.

Anita goes to put her keys in the lock but drops them.
Drunkenness wins again.

Suzie and Bernice get the last laugh.

As she picks them up, NEON LIGHTS glisten from across the
street in the nearby strip mall.

Anita looks over to the light, longingly and familiarly.

It's a liquor store.

Suzie and Bernice wince at Anita. Anita scowls back.

Anita teeters through the door.

In one hand she holds her purse. In the other, a new case of beer. A receipt and loose change spill out onto the carpet.

She cares not to pick it up.

It's a small, one bedroom apartment. She slugs into the dark kitchen.

When she opens the fridge, the light takes her by surprise and blinds her. She falls backs and slips on a rug.

She drops the pack of beer and each glass SHATTERS inside the case. Beer is RUSHING onto the ground as she fumbles around the dark kitchen.

Next to her on a table is a BLINKING house phone. "One missed message." She, in haste, presses the button.

AUTOMATED VOICE

You have one missed message. Press
"1" for message review.

While juggling between cleaning up the floor, Anita presses one.

A BEEP. She's on the floor mopping up the spilled beer with a paper towel.

ERIC (V.O.)

Hey ma. I'm just calling to make
sure you got home okay. It's past
11 so you should've gotten in by
now. Call me so I know you got
this. Love you.

A BEEP. Anita stands up, finishing cleaning up the mess.

AUTOMATED VOICE

End of new voice message. If you'd
like to save this message press
"1". If you'd like to--

Anita presses a button.

AUTOMATED VOICE (CONT'D)

Message deleted. End of new
messages.

On the walls are African Art, bible quotes, pictures torn from national geographic magazine put into makeshift frames.

But most noticeably there are Butterflies.

Beautiful specimen are incased on the walls. Paintings of butterflies sit against the furniture, waiting to be hung.

Anita drags around to her vanity mirror. In front is a hand-upholstered stool.

She sits, removing her make up slowly. Her eyes are red and yellowed. Her irises have a ring of blue around deep brown pools. The bags under her eyes weigh down her face.

Her skin is spotless, but sagging. Her eyebrows and eyelashes are barely there.

When she takes off her lipstick, she reveals tired and cracked lips.

She somberly removes a wig and places it on the counter in front of her. Grey, thick, disheveled hair sits pinned atop her head. She stares.

She turns around and gets up to find the remote.

Turning on the TV, she flips through channels. Paid Programming. CLICK. The 700 Club. CLICK. Spanish shows. CLICK.

She lands on a replay of the "7 o'clock local nightly news."

She leaves it on and goes to her closet to take off her clothes. She puts back her butterfly shirt next to what seems to be an endless supply of butterfly clothing.

TV REPORTER
...marking the 300th homicide in
Baltimore this year.

Anita swiftly turns around to get the remote.

TV REPORTER (CONT'D)
Officials say--

CLICK. She shuts the TV off.

17 INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

17

An OLD RADIO quietly plays MUSIC.

Anita brushes her teeth in a white robe. Her hair is wet.

She finishes up and lifts her robe to sit on the toilet. As she sits down she looks at the radio beside her feet.

She picks it up. As it plays, she smiles into it. Once she notices her own happiness, her face returns to a sneer.

18 INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

18

Anita walks back into the bathroom holding a glass of water and the radio in the other hand.

She places the radio on her bedside table and lays down.

RADIO

(in tune)

104.9 Light FM. Baltimore

Radioooooooo. You're listening to the classics Quietstorm radio.

(beat)

This is "No One Can Love More" by Phyllis Hyman -- only on the Quietstorm.

The radio reads "12:40am." Anita CLICKS off the lamp and plugs in a butterfly night-light.

Above the playing radio, dimly lit, is a PHOTO of two people standing on the step of an old row-house. It's Anita's dead children, Mark and Kym, on the steps of their old home.

MATCH CUT TO:

19 EXT. CEMETERY - DAY - **1975**

19

The photo rests on a stand. PULL BACK to see that it sits in between two caskets. One is visibly larger than the other.

A pastor stands at a podium, addressing a sullen crowd.

PASTOR

I wish not to mince words. Forgive me but I am not here to enlighten you... to tell you to lift your spirits... To tell you that everything is going to be okay.

Anita, in all black, sits with a seat separating her from everyone. Baby Eric sleeps on her lap. She rocks him.

PASTOR (O.C.) (CONT'D)
We are not too proud to acknowledge
that we have come here today
trusting that God would speak to
our hearts, calm our minds, and
give us strength as we continue to
walk with him. Even when we want to
leave him. We can admit this.

Anita looks over to a MAN on the opposite side of the congregation. He looks up to her but can barely keep eye contact. Just then, another WOMAN grabs his hand, kisses his cheek, and rubs his shoulder.

He quickly looks away from Anita.

PASTOR (CONT'D)
(obligatorily)
Proverbs 3:5 says Trust in the lord
with all thine hear; and lean not
unto thine own understanding. So
Ms. Murrell... Mr. Murrell. Trust
that God's Love and Will may not be
understood... Trust in him even if,
for right now, your trust in
anything is shattered.
(beat)
Would you like to say anything?

Anita sits there for a moment. Everyone is silent.

She says nothing but gets up. She's languid.

The Pastor gets down from the podium.

Anita hands Eric to the Pastor and slowly walks in between the two caskets.

She touches both caskets, gently.

She looks at them like she can see the faces inside. She smiles with each stroke and wipes tears off of them.

Just then, she notices TWO BUTTERFLIES, each landing on one casket right beside her hands.

She fixates on them but to everyone else, she looks like she's staring into space.

They won't move, resting calmly there, as if they're staring right back at Anita. She moves her hands closer to each one.

PASTOR (CONT'D)
Ms. Murrell...

She doesn't answer. He looks to the crowd for help. The Man from before, who was her husband, CURTIS COLLINS (43), African American, thin, not as upset, in a suit comes up.

CURTIS
Excuse me, everybody.

As he passes the caskets the two butterflies flutter away.

Anita, distraught, pushes past him to see the butterflies go out of sight. She looks back down at the caskets. Tears form. She looks at the photo of her children.

He pulls Anita past the caskets, out of ear shot of the congregation.

CURTIS (CONT'D)
Come here. Look at me. I'm here
with you, alright?
(beat)
We'll get through this together.
You can't do it alone.

ANITA
Oh Curtis please.

CURTIS
They were my kids too.

Anita looks at him in the eyes. She can't believe he has said that.

She looks over to the woman who kissed Curtis and then back to him. He looks ashamed, unable to meet her gaze. Tears form as she stares straight through him.

CURTIS (CONT'D)
Anita.

He attempts to hold her.

ANITA
(exhausted)
Please, don't touch me.

Just then.

FEMALE VOICE
(shakily)
He ain't the one you're mad at,
Anita.

Anita whips her head around to see BERTA MURRELL, (33), African American, emotionally destroyed, a plain black dress, tiptoes down the isle.

BERTA
Anita... Please.

She gets closer. She's done this thousands of times.

She reaches Anita and gets down on her knees, literally groveling, clenching Anita's pant leg.

Head held down, she shakes and cries.

BERTA (CONT'D)
I didn't know this would happen.
Please Anita. I left him for a
reason. I was doing what you said.
I always do what you say! How could
I have known he'd do this, huh?

The entire funeral party falls silent.

Berta looks up to Anita and--

SLAP.

Anita delivers Berta the quickest and fiercest blow. It reverberates throughout the cemetery.

Some close their eyes. Some SHRIEK. They're speechless.

Berta gasps for air. The slap took it out of her. She holds her swollen red face in the grass.

Anita stands up and steps directly over Berta, never looking her in the face again.

She slowly walks over to the Pastor and takes Eric back.

When she does so, she walks down the isle, leaving the unfinished funeral. Everyone watches as she exits.

Berta remains in the center of the pathway, crying on the dirt, clenching her face.

MATCH CUT TO:

Berta, (57), grey-haired, drooping faced, in a hospital gown, is tucked into sheets tightly. On a beeping heart monitor, the time reads "12:50am"

A dim, cold blue light shines across her sleeping face. She's motionless.

A DOCTOR and a NURSE stand over Berta, checking her chart. They stare at each other, worried.

The two leave the bedside to go to the doorway threshold.

The DOCTOR motions over to the RECEPTIONIST. He gets up and joins the two.

DOCTOR

See if there are any open spots at Emory's Alzheimer's care. We can't hold her anymore and I need the bed tonight.

The receptionist runs back over to the desk. He gets on the phone.

RECEPTIONIST

Emory has space but it's limited. There is a 2 day window in which the patient would need to arrive.

DOCTOR

That's plenty of time to get there.

NURSE

Not with no one to take her.

RECEPTIONIST

Actually, there is one last name listed on her file.

The Doctor and the Nurse look over to the receptionist. They then look back at Berta.

21 INT. ANITA'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

21

The apartment is dark. Anita SNORES loudly.

The phone RINGS but Anita doesn't wake up.

A BEEP.

AUTOMATED VOICE

1 New voice message.

22 EXT. ERIC'S HOUSE - DAY 22

It's a modest two story home now that we can see it in the daylight. It's the quintessential suburbs.

It's the type of house that any mother would be proud to see their child own.

23 INT. ERIC'S KITCHEN - DAY 23

Anita stands in his kitchen, fervently cleaning up from the night before. She looks worried.

She stops, stares down at the water, pondering. She picks up a plate but it slips out of her hand, CLANGING back into the pile of dishes in the sink.

Eric, in a sleepy daze, stumbles down the steps.

ERIC

The hell are you doing in my house?

ANITA

(without missing a beat)

Because I birthed you. Anything
that's yours is mine.

She cleans again, obviously plagued by something.

Eric notices.

ERIC

You don't have to clean up, Ma. Go
sit down somewhere.

Eric cleans, his back to Anita, as she sits down at the kitchen table. Plates litter the counter top.

Unfinished food sits in dishes atop a make-shift buffet table that rests along a wall.

Half of Eric's birthday cake remains on the table.

She sits at the table, thumbing through the cake without a plate. She takes large bites, dropping crumbs everywhere.

ERIC (CONT'D)

So did you have fun last night?

ANITA

(chewing)

Mhmm.

ERIC
Do you *remember* last night?

ANITA
Shut up.

Eric laughs. Anita eyes a wine rack beside the buffet. She gets up slyly and walks over to it.

She sifts through the bottles while Eric talks

ERIC
(through laughter)
I don't know, Ma! When you didn't call me back I thought something had happened to you.
(beat)
Before I toss any of this. Do you want any food to take h--

He turns around to see Anita struggling to open a bottle.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Ma!

He rushes over to snatch it out of her hand, bumping into the table, causing a CLANGING.

ANITA
Now see there, you almost "Oh Darlened" the whole damn table, being all in somebody else's business!

ERIC
Somebody else's business?! It's my wine! And it's only 10 am!

ANITA
They say the best cure for a hangover is fuck you give me back my drink.

She laughs, and gives Eric a wink.

He rolls his eyes and sits opposite her at the table.

He places a plate in front of her.

ERIC
Here. You're adding more crumbs all over my table.

He smiles. She plops a piece of cake onto the plate, giving Eric a face that says "you happy now?"

ERIC (CONT'D)

As much as I enjoy watching you eat my food and drink my shit, and as frequently as you do it, I know that's not why you're back over here so soon.

(beat)

So what is it this time?

Anita, at a loss for words, puts down her fork.

ANITA

I need you to do something for me.

ERIC

Yeah?

ANITA

(stalling)

I don't even know how to put this and don't go acting all stupid on me, hear? You always ask a bunch of stuff ain't nobody got time for. I told you about that-

ERIC

Ma!

Beat.

ANITA

(finally)

You know your... your umm, Aunt Berta.

ERIC

Haven't heard that name in years...

ANITA

Yeah well I got this call last night. On the machine, this morning, and apparently she's been in a hospital for some time.

ERIC

For what?

ANITA

There you go with them questions! Doesn't matter! Memory loss, who cares.

(MORE)

ANITA (CONT'D)

Point is, they left a message saying she needs to be moved from Hopkins all the way down to Atlanta. And I can't do any of that.

ERIC

Why Atlanta?

ANITA

(mocking the voicemail)
"Closest Facility. Best care" bull. They probably needed to take care of people with actual problems.

ERIC

You have to get her from here...
All the way down to Atlanta...
(beat; through laughter)
Good luck!

ANITA

I don't *have* to do anything!

ERIC

Doesn't she have a daughter?

ANITA

(bluntly)
She died.

ERIC

Oh my God. Why didn't you tell anyone?

ANITA

Because she ain't mine and it didn't concern me or anyone of you. Whatever. Can you do it? They need to get her there in the next two days or something.

ERIC

Are you kidding me?

ANITA

Why can't you just take off two days. I'm your mother!

ERIC

You know I can't do that. Besides, I've never met the woman.

He gets up and cleans again, brushing her off.

She gets up to follow.

ANITA
Then she stays there.

ERIC
Ma, she can't stay there. That's
why they called you.

ANITA
I ain't doing it!

The only words he has left. He's done.

ERIC
That's your sister.

ANITA
(rehearsed)
Ha-- Since when. Do I have to
remind you wh--

ERIC
You do plenty of that.

ANITA
Okay then. It's settled. She stays

Anita walks back over to the wine rack.

Eric gets frustrated. Unfiltered, he blurts--

ERIC
You're just gonna have to get over
this eventually!

Anita stops from pouring wine into her mouth.

ANITA
Get over what?

ERIC
This! All of it! Everything with
your sister!

The room is silent. Anita walks over and gets in his face. He
looks genuinely afraid.

ANITA
Get over what, Eric? I can't
believe you just said some bullshit
like that to me.
(beat)
Get over the fact that her husband.
(MORE)

ANITA (CONT'D)

The one I told her not to marry,
killed your brother and sister. My
two kids. Get over that? It's that
easy, huh?

Eric puts his hand on the bottle, slowly taking it from her.

ERIC

(calmly)

I didn't mean it like that. You
know, even if you can't admit it,
you know none of that was her
fault.

(beat)

She's the last *sister* you got! I
hear all the time that no one could
help you and no one can help you.
Lord knows I've tried. This may be
just what you need... to, you know,
get over it.

He's right.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Plus. You owe her, just as much as
she owes you.

ANITA

I just can't go back to Atlanta.

ERIC

Well it looks like you don't have a
choice, Ma.

Anita looks at Eric hesitantly. He looks back. He's firm.

She gets up from the table and picks up her coat.

She walks to the front door.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Wait! I made you some mixed CDs for
your car. I know you can't use the
radio.

He laughs.

ANITA

I can use the radio just fine,
thank you.

(beat)

Oh! And if you ever snatch wine
from me again, boy, I'll break your
hands.

She shoots him a grin that says "I love you even if I can't say it aloud."

Eric smiles right back.

ERIC
Love you too, Ma.

24 INT. ANITA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

24

Outside of Eric's house, Anita sits in her car fiddling with the radio. Angrily she smacks the console.

She picks up one of Eric's mixed CDs and puts it in.

The song "Rock Around The Clock" comes on. She looks at the radio and then up to God and then back to the radio.

ANITA
(under her breath)
Real subtle.

She starts her car and pulls off.

25 EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

25

A sterile and perfectly manicured hospital forefront. Each window on the building has nary a smudge.

PATIENTS file throughout the building, never a moments rest.

Anita, wearing butterfly designed clothes, stands beside her beat up CHRYSLER NEON in the patient pick up line.

She parks haphazardly, making it difficult for anyone to fit in the line as well.

She looks around, disgusted by the scene.

Just then, the hospital doors open to reveal Berta, in a wheelchair, with the Nurse and Doctor at the check out desk.

The Doctor turns her head and notices Anita standing in the hospital driveway. The Doctor exits towards Anita.

DOCTOR
(overly friendly)
Hello... Are you Ms. Murrell? Here
for Roberta?

ANITA
Mhmm.

DOCTOR
Great! We're just getting her
processed and she'll be all set.

Anita doesn't respond. She doesn't care what the Doctor says.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
(tentatively)
I'd like to point out that
Roberta's currently in an fog. So,
she may not recognize you or
remember anything about you besides
what she learns starting today.

ANITA
Fine with me.

DOCTOR
Also, I know Berta's daughter
passed away. I'm sorry for your
family's loss.

ANITA
She wasn't my family. That's
Berta's family. It don't bother me.

DOCTOR
Okay...
(beat)
Well, I can't stress this enough.
If, by the chance she does remember
you and your past--

ANITA
What do you think you know about me
and my past, huh?

DOCTOR
It's just... I know whenever she
was lucid and you came up, all of
the memories were too much for her.
She just loses it.

An awkward silence drifts in.

The nurse finally rolls Berta out. The Doctor puts on a
cheerful show. Anita cares not for pleasantries.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)
Alrighty, Ms. Berta! Looks like
it's time for you to go!

BERTA

Sorry I wasn't much help with the all that insurance stuff. I'll give my daughter a call and she'll handle it. She always does.

DOCTOR

It's nothing to worry about Ms. Murrell. Everything's taken care of! You just worry about that long drive, alright!

Anita, over it all, walks to the driver's side of the car. The Nurse wheels Berta over to the passenger seat, helps her in, and closes the door.

Just as Anita gets in--

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

I'd like to mention Berta has this comfort device. A lot of patients use them.

(beat)

Hers is a cell phone. It doesn't work anymore but she thinks it does.

Anita doesn't respond.

DOCTOR (CONT'D)

Remember, she has to be there in two days or she loses her spot. 7 am sharp.

The Doctor hands her a piece of paper. Anita rolls her eyes.

NURSE

Your sister really shouldn't be too stressed physically. If she is, her memory goes quicker. So, it's best she stay relaxed and pushed in the wheelchair at all times.

ANITA

Is she deaf, dumb, or stupid?

NURSE

N...No.

ANITA

Then she can push her own self.

NURSE

Bu--

ANITA
Can she walk?

NURSE
Medically speaking, yes. Bu--

ANITA
Well then, you ain't gonna baby a grown woman. If her legs aren't the problem, let her walk.

Anita hops in, leaving the Doctor and Nurse speechless.

She starts her rickety car, billowing smoke from it's undercarriage. She drives off, swerving out of the lot.

26 INT. CAR - DAY

26

Anita drives, staring straight ahead. She's going considerably fast for the residential streets.

BERTA
You specifically work for the hospital as a driver or...?

Anita says nothing.

BERTA (CONT'D)
I think it's admirable, really. Helping people. It's easy to get left in those types of places, with the doctors and machines and the beeping, with no one to give a damn. It's nice to see that there are some people that help, just for the sake.

Anita continues ahead, picking up speed.

BERTA (CONT'D)
You know you could stop choking the pedal a little. Unless you're trying to give me a heart attack.

Anita reluctantly slows down.

BERTA (CONT'D)
So what's your name, Ms. Driver?

Anita doesn't answer.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Hellooo. I ain't talkin' to myself.
(beat)
Nothing... Ain't part of the job to
speak? Can't get to know nobody? We
are stuck in here together.

Nothing.

BERTA (CONT'D)
(under her breath)
You just a evil somebody, huh?

Anita continues to ignore Berta.

Berta digs in her purse and pulls out an old flip phone and
dials. The phone makes a loud WAAH WAAH WAAH sound.
Disconnected number. Berta talks anyway.

BERTA (CONT'D)
(whispering to the phone)
Hey...Yeah so I got stuck with the
worst driver they could find...

ANITA
(annoyed)
You've got to be kidding.

The BLARING continues, driving Anita crazy.

BERTA
She's driving this beat up, old--

ANITA
Hey, uh-uh. I can deal with your
voice but not that damn noise.

Berta looks at Anita and then gets back to her call.

BERTA
Beat up old car!

ANITA
WAAH WAAH WAAH, you hear that!
WAAAAAAAH!!! That means it's
disconnected. It don't work.
There's nobody there. Hang up the
phone!

Berta is stunned by Anita's outburst.

BERTA
I'll have to call you back.

ANITA
(smugly)
Have fun calling nobody back.

BERTA
If you really hate your job this much, you should find something else to do. I can get my daughter to do the rest of the trip. They shoulda called her in the first place anyway.

ANITA
Yeah well, you can't call a dead woman.

Berta is taken aback.

BERTA
What is your problem?

ANITA
It's the truth. Not like you'll remember it in the next twenty minutes anyway or however long it is you people remember stuff.

BERTA
You're the devil.

ANITA
You're simple.

BERTA
Why not just let me out right here?

Berta and Anita silence until Berta notices a check engine light on Anita's dashboard.

BERTA (CONT'D)
If your job is to drive people from place to place, you might want to make sure your car is in shape to do so. I'm just saying.

ANITA
My car is just fine.

BERTA
Maybe try looking down.

Anita, trying to keep her eyes on the road, looks down at her check engine light.

ANITA
Son of a bitch.

27 EXT. REPAIR SHOP - DAY

27

Anita and Berta, still in the car, sit in the dilapidated repair shop parking lot.

A REPAIR MAN stands at the hood of the car, looking inside. He's screws something tighter and really works up a sweat. He finishes and walks over to the driver's side window.

REPAIR MAN
Your battery cables a little frayed but that ain't the main issue. You should be fine with that. What *will* give you an issue is the right side cell connector. It's got some corrosion. That'll heat up your engine right quick.

ANITA
Look you ain't sayin' nothin more than words to me. I don't know what any of that means. I just need to know can it drive or not?

REPAIR MAN
It will run, but I don't know how long for.

ANITA
Can it get me to Atlanta?

REPAIR MAN
I put in a replacement, but I wouldn't chance it.

ANITA
Ain't that your job?! You're supposed to repair the car!

BERTA
Don't mind h--

ANITA
(sharply)
Sh!

REPAIR MAN
With all do respect ma'am, they don't even make this model car no more.

(MORE)

REPAIR MAN (CONT'D)

Let alone the specific parts for it. I had to give you what we had.

ANITA

Well it's gonna have to do.

REPAIR MAN

(laughing)

It's the best thing I could do considerin' what you paid me.

(beat)

You got AAA? Insurance?

ANITA

AAA and insurance are for people who have accidents. I ain't never have one, don't plan on it, and damn sure don't plan on signing up for nothing. All I need is to get to Atlanta and get her the hell up out of here.

(beat)

Y'all got maps in there?

The Repair Man ponders.

REPAIR MAN

Not one to give you. But inside, up on the wall, we have a huge map of the U.S. highways, streets and interstates. Pretty much everything you need.

Anita gets out of the car, slamming the door behind her.

ANITA

(mumbling)

This whole damn thing should be free.

BERTA

What, you just gonna leave me in here?

ANITA

Get out then!

BERTA

I can't push myself across the parking lot!

ANITA

I told you that you can either push yourself;

(MORE)

ANITA (CONT'D)
 walk, like I know you can; or, you
 can sit there looking stupid
 because I'm not pushing you.

Anita walks across the parking lot and into the shop.

The Repair Man looks at Berta and then back at Anita.

28

INT. REPAIR SHOP - DAY

28

The doorbell DINGS.

As the Repair Man pushes Berta through the doors, Anita stands at the wall in front of a massive, glass encased map.

The shop is empty. It's riddled with papers all over the counter. An old fan BLOWS in the corner and a TV PLAYS infomercials.

He wheels Berta next to the waiting chairs and rushes over to the water cooler.

REPAIR MAN
 Water?

BERTA
 That'd be nice, thank you.

Anita says nothing. She just stares at the map. Her eyes follow the highway from Baltimore to Atlanta. The Repair Man hands Berta the water and walks over to Anita.

REPAIR MAN
 It's a pretty straight shot if you
 look at it. It's just the exits
 here and the exits there that you
 gotta remember.

Anita looks at the route. It's familiar to her.

REPAIR MAN (CONT'D)
 Why y'all going all the way down to
 Atlanta?

ANITA
 (begrudgingly)
 For her.

BERTA
 The hospital.

REPAIR MAN
 Y'all ain't flyin?

ANITA
 If we can barely pay you, what
 makes you think we can pay an
 airline.

(beat)
 Give me a pen and paper.

The Repair Man quickly looks through sheets of paper to find a blank one. He searches for a pen but can't find one.

Anita rolls her eyes.

BERTA
 (digging in her purse)
 I have one.

ANITA
 Give it to me.

BERTA
 No, I got it.

Berta takes the paper from the Repair Man as he walks over to the map. He points out the exits.

Berta squints while writing.

REPAIR MAN
 From here take I-85 South to US78
 in Dekalb County. Follow that all
 the way down. Don't get off of it
 or you won't know where you are.
 Once you get there take the second
 exit off of 78 onto Decatur. Got
 it?

ANITA
 (smugly)
 We ready to go?

The Repair Man pushes Berta pass Anita and out of the door. Before Anita follows behind them, she stares at the word "Atlanta" on the board.

FADE TO:

29 EXT. MONASTERY AVE - DAY - 1975

29

Anita packs her car to the brim with anything she can carry.

Her two other sisters WANDA, (43), and BARBARA, (44), stand on the sidewalk, watching her.

Baby Eric sleeps in the passenger seat. Anita picks up a RADIO from the grass, turns down the MUSIC that plays, and gently nestles it next to Eric. He smiles in his sleep, noticing the music.

WANDA

You don't want to stay in this house, fine, I get that. But you can come stay with me.

BARBARA

Or me!

WANDA

You and Eric can sleep in my bed. I'll share a room with Erin, I'm used to it.

ANITA

I can't do that. You just got her sleeping alone. Besides, we don't need two babies under one roof.

BARBARA

Well, what about at my place? Walter and I can make some room!

ANITA

Y'all ain't even been married a year. Move me and mine in, you'll be looking for husband number three.

BARBARA

Well we want you to stay.

ANITA

Well Barbara, we always can't always get what we want, can we? I can't stomach being in this city, let alone on this street.

(to barbara)

And Kym looked just like you. I'll be looking at her that face every day, only it's not hers. I don't need that.

They are taken aback. Just then, a car slowly approaches. Anita turns to look, and then back angrily at her sisters.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Who told her?

Anita hastily moves towards her car door. Berta jumps out, trying to cut her off.

BERTA
(shouting)
Come on, Anita! Wait!

Anita gets inside her car and slams the door, just as Berta gets to her.

She talks through the closed window.

BERTA (CONT'D)
(exasperated)
You weren't even going to tell me!

She pulls at the car door. Locked.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Open the door and talk to me!

Anita starts the car, silently staring ahead.

ANITA
Ain't got much else to say to you.

BERTA
You've said nothing! How many times
do I have to apologize.

Anita rolls down the window and looks straight through her.

ANITA
Lower your voice. My child is
sleeping.
(beat)
My only child.

That stuns Berta.

BERTA
So you're just going to leave then,
huh? Run away...
(beat)
You've always been good at it.

ANITA
(angered whisper)
Are you kidding me. Right now. You
think you can say that to me?!

BERTA
Yes! Because no one else will.

ANITA

How can you expect me to be happy,
here?

BERTA

Just be patient!

Anita looks at her, silent, almost understanding. She snaps out of it and looks forward, determined.

BERTA (CONT'D)

Well fine then! Do what you're best
at and just leave. Leave us h--

ANITA

Maybe I can't always deal with
protecting you! Clearly I can't
protect my own.

(beat)

So yes, I'll go if it means not
always having to take care of you.
Because right now, I can't! I have
him and I *only* have him.

BERTA

Dammit, Anita!

Berta somehow yanks the door open. Eric begins to wake up in a fit. Anita notices, and grabs the door handle. She looks at Berta with angered and piercing eyes and SLAMS the door shut.

Berta backs off.

Anita angrily straps Eric's car-seat in and then herself. She yanks the gear shift into drive.

She looks over to Barbara and Wanda who are still on the sidewalk.

ANITA

(motioning to Berta)

Thanks a lot!

Anita slams on the pedal, leaving them al in the smoke. Berta stares at her other two sisters. They are equally shocked.

Berta, watching Anita pull off, makes a quick decision. She wipes the tears from her eyes, runs over to her car, hops in the driver's seat and pulls off -- right behind Anita.

FADE TO:

30

INT. CAR - AFTERNOON - 2000

30

It's bumper to bumper and they're getting nowhere fast. Anita is antsy. She taps her foot and jolts her eyes from the road to the clock.

Berta sits in the passenger seat, rummaging through her purse.

ANITA

What's the next exit?

BERTA

(to herself)

I'm lookin' for the paper.

(beat)

Just keep going straight. I don't remember anything out of the ordinary comin' up.

Anita scoffs.

ANITA

(looking to God)

That's just too easy.

BERTA

What?

Anita doesn't answer. She only grins smugly.

She looks over into Berta's purse, taking her eyes off of the road. Berta notices.

BERTA (CONT'D)

Keep your eyes ahead! I got this.

ANITA

If you kept you stuff together and neat, we wouldn't be having this problem. Always been a mess. Clearly, always will be!

BERTA

You don't know nothing about me! I ain't no mess.

Anita rolls her eyes. They come to a stop in the traffic.

ANITA

Just find the directions!

BERTA

Not like we going anywhere. Plus if you keep interrupting me, the more I get distracted and the longer it takes me to find!

Anita holds her tongue.

In a haste, Anita switches over to another lane that seems like it's moving.

Just as she settles herself in it, the line stalls and the previous lane she was in, begins to pick up.

ANITA

Why does this always happen to me?

Berta giggles.

BERTA

Why don't you try being patient.

Anita sharply glares at Berta.

BERTA (CONT'D)

Tapping your foot, watching the clock, yelling about the directions! Look up there. Ain't nothing going anywhere any time soon. Sit back and relax. All that worryin' will age you faster than time ever can.

Berta looks over to Anita, who's looking straight ahead at the back of a car.

BERTA (CONT'D)

How old are you? 83?

Anita whips her head over to a laughing Berta.

BERTA (CONT'D)

See what I'm talking about!

ANITA

Just find the directions, please.

BERTA

Oooo, we got a please this time! That's some progress huh?

Berta picks up her purse and dumps everything into her lap. Items scatter onto the floor of the car as well.

ANITA
Not all over my car!

BERTA
It'll be easier to find this way.

Anita and Berta pick things off of the floor, one by one, trash after trash but can't find the directions.

Just then, Anita picks up a picture of Berta's daughter. Berta also notices. Anita looks at it for a moment until Berta takes it from her.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Can't lose that.

She puts it on the dashboard.

BERTA (CONT'D)
(not even looking up)
Ain't she beautiful! People think we're sisters. She hates that.

Anita sits back in her seat placing both hands back on the steering wheel, leaving Berta to do all the searching by herself. Anita looks forward, paying attention only to the road.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Well that was quick, wasn't it.
Filled your "being helpful" quota for the year, huh?

Anita doesn't answer.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Okay then...
(beat)
Got any kids of your own?

Anita remains quiet.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Women of our era don't have "no kids" so I know you got some.

ANITA
One.

BERTA
One what?

ANITA
I got one kid.

BERTA

Only one!? How did you manage that.
See me, I only had one because the
doctor told me I couldn't have no
more. If it was up to me, I woulda
had a whole slew of em!

Anita tenses.

ANITA

(somberly)

Yeah well, I just got the one...

Berta notices the butterfly mobile hanging from the rearview
mirror. She touches them gently.

BERTA

These are beautiful. Where'd you
get them from?

ANITA

I'm trying to pay attention to the
road.

BERTA

For what? We're barely moving!

ANITA

I got them a while ago. I can't
remember.

BERTA

This might be the only good thing
about this car, I'll tell you that.

Berta looks Anita up and down.

BERTA (CONT'D)

You really like butterflies huh?

ANITA

(examining herself)

They... they have wings.

BERTA

Meaning?

ANITA

They can fly away from whatever
they want to.

(beat)

Kind of like what I wish I could do
right now.

BERTA

Well no matter how rude you just was, they look good on you!

(beat)

See that's a compliment. Even your evil ass could use one, once in a while. Now you try and give me one.

ANITA

Oh come on.

Berta shovels through the rest of her trash until--

BERTA

You sound like a damn parrot.

(excitedly)

Nah see, I knew I had it!

ANITA

(extending her hand)

Give em' to me.

BERTA

(pulling back)

Uh-uh, I got it!

ANITA

(lunging)

That's what you said last time.

BERTA

Hands on the wheel!

ANITA

Give me the--

BERTA

I'll give them to you!

Anita pulls back.

BERTA (CONT'D)

I'll give them to you... if we...

(looking at an exit)

If we can stop at...

(struggling to see the title)

Stop at... "Cameron's Diner." I'm hungry as hell.

ANITA

We don't have time to stop!

BERTA

Then I guess you don't "have time"
to get these directions.

Berta opens the window and holds the paper outside of the car, dangling it in the wind.

ANITA

Would you stop acting like a damn
child.

Berta lifts it farther out of the window, giggling. Anita can't reach. She sighs heavily.

31 EXT. CAMERON'S DINER - CONTINUOUS

31

Anita and Berta pull into a parking space, the engine temperature of the car is elevated.

BERTA

Car's getting a little hot.
Should've paid the man full price.

Anita ignores her.

The lot is filled with cars of the century, making Anita's look even more out of place.

Neon lights shine across the storefront and an animated dancing pig gyrates in the window.

Anita gets out of the car. She walks towards the entrance until Berta KNOCKS on the window.

Berta CRANKS the window down.

BERTA (CONT'D)

You not gonna help me?

Anita chuckles and keeps moving forward.

Berta, annoyed, rolls the window back up, very slowly gets out of the car, and pulls her wheelchair out of the back.

Sitting in the chair, out of breath, she rolls herself to the door.

32 INT. CAMERON'S DINER - CONTINUOUS

32

It's crowded. PEOPLE walk about, FAMILIES loudly laugh, and WAITERS hustle by.

Anita and Berta, both in bifocals, looking exactly alike, sit across from each other staring at menus.

A WAITER comes over.

WAITER
Y'all ladies know what you want?

Anita doesn't look up. Berta, waits for Anita to answer--

BERTA
Give us a minute?

He smiles and walks off. Anita picks up the alcohol menu.

BERTA (CONT'D)
It's only... 2 o'clock.

ANITA
Mind your own.

BERTA
You have to drive.

ANITA
One drink ain't never killed nobody.

BERTA
I just don't think it's a good idea, is all.

ANITA
Good thing I didn't ask.

The waiter jumps back over.

WAITER
(jokingly)
Minutes over!

Anita looks at him with disgust.

ANITA
Yeah... Give me uh... give me a cheese burger, no pickles, one tomato with a side of mashed potatoes instead of fries. And one Sam Adams draft.

BERTA
I'm still thinking.

WAITER
No problem at all.
(to Anita)
Ma'am, I'll have your Sam Adams
when I get back!

Anita doesn't say anything.

BERTA
She says thank you.

ANITA
Don't speak for me.

He smiles at Berta and makes awkward eye contact with Anita.
He walks off.

BERTA
Doing it anyway, huh?

Anita, reading a magazine, pays her no mind.

BERTA (CONT'D)
I can never make up my mind at
restaurants.

Anita doesn't answer so they sit in silence.

Anita scans the room, observing all of the happy families
around. Berta, silently, examines the menu, looking back and
forth between items as if she's having an inner debate.

Anita looks at her, as if she is about to smile but annoyance
creeps back in and her face falls. She rolls her eyes again.

Just then the waiter pops back over.

WAITER
One Sam Adams Draft. And have you
decided yet?

BERTA
(hesitating)
Yeah... Uh... Can I get the ummm...
The ummm--

ANITA
(annoyed)
Just give her the grilled chicken
salad. No sesame dressing because
she's allergic to the seeds. Just
give her ranch or something.

Berta is stunned. Anita hands the Waiter Berta's menu

WAITER
(to Berta)
Is... that alright ma'am?

Berta slowly nods her head. The Waiter walks off. Anita reads her magazine.

BERTA
I'm allergic to sesame seeds? The
doctor tell you that or something?

Anita looks up to Berta.

ANITA
A lot of people are.

BERTA
(nervously laughing)
And my sister... she used to do
this thing, because I could never
decide what to get... She'd just
order my food, real quick like. She
always got me a salad because...
because I could never make up my
mind and it's just something I
wouldn't complain about.

Anita looks down, back into her magazine. Berta, pushing her glasses farther down her face, looks at Anita in the face.

As she stares, you can see the gears turning in Berta's head. She looks around the restaurant and then back at Anita. She looks down at her things, beginning to panic. She leans forward, trying to get a closer look at Anita's face. She stares so intently, almost reaching out to touch Anita's face.

After a silence, Berta violently gasps.

BERTA (CONT'D)
My God! Oh my God, Anita!

Anita looks up, stunned by Berta calling out her name. Berta is shell-shocked by her environment. She grasps onto everything around her, confused and horrified. Tears swell into her eyes.

Anita looks at her like she's crazy. Berta tries to grasp for air and words.

BERTA (CONT'D)
(getting louder)
Anita, my God, My sister Anita its-
(MORE)

BERTA (CONT'D)
(beat)
Where the hell are we?

Anita scrambles.

ANITA
(hushing her)
Calm down... I'm not who you think
I am.

BERTA
You think I don't know my own
sister!?

ANITA
(sternly)
Calm down, Berta.

People stare at the scene. A STRANGER, from a nearby table,
reaches out her hand in attempts to console Berta.

BERTA
(screaming)
No! Don't touch me! This isn't
happening.

ANITA
Ber-

The Waiter rushes over.

WAITER
Is everything alright.

He startles Berta.

ANITA
Everything is fine!

WAITER
Should you take her somewhere?

Anita, embarrassed by it all, ignores her sister.

WAITER (CONT'D)
Do you need me to help you to the
bathroom, ma'am.

He tries to help Berta into her wheelchair.

BERTA
Get your hands off of m--

ANITA
 (sternly)
 Berta! Go get yourself together.
 You're embarrassing yourself! We'll
 talk when you get back. Now get!

Berta, tears flowing, looks Anita in the eyes. They're cold and dark.

Berta reluctantly gets into the wheelchair. As the Waiter pushes her away, Berta extends a hand, trying to grab Anita's. Anita pulls away.

The diner is silent and everyone looks at Anita.

ANITA (CONT'D)
 Y'all can go back to minding your
 own now! Shows over!

Everyone slowly turns around.

Anita sits there, by herself, trying to occupy her time. She's anxious.

She checks the clock. TICK. TICK. TICK. It's been minutes.

She taps her foot, pushes up her glasses, and quickly eats her food. The Waiter from before walks by Anita and gives her an awkward smile as he goes to take another order.

She checks the clock again. TICK. TICK. TICK. Minutes seem like hours.

After she finishes her burger Anita stares at Berta's purse that's left on the table. It's a worrisome stare.

Just then, Anita realizes that Berta's been gone for a long time. She looks around the diner, Berta nowhere in sight.

Anita gets up to get a better look around. Nothing.

Curiously, she walks towards the bathroom.

33

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

33

It's a cheaply designed, crappy music playing, one woman stall bathroom.

Anita inches in.

ANITA
 Berta!

Anita goes all the way in and stands outside of the stall.

ANITA (CONT'D)

(annoyed)

Would you get your ass out here. We don't have all the time in the world.

Nothing.

ANITA (CONT'D)

(pushing on the door)

Berta!

Anita, confused, opens the stall.

Empty.

34 INT. DINER - CONTINUOUS

34

Anita rushes through the bathroom door to a crowd who is paying no attention. She sweats.

She hastily looks around, no Berta of sight.

She hustles back over to her seat and quickly grabs her things, still looking around. Just as she collects her belongings, the waiter walks past.

ANITA

(grabbing his arm)

Hey! Hey! Where did you take her?!

WAITER

To the bathroom.

ANITA

(getting louder)

She ain't there!

WAITER

I only pushed her in the door ma'am. I didn't stay to make sure she used it.

ANITA

You saw how she was actin', you shoulda been watching her. Don't you know how to take care of somebody?!

(beat)

Just move out of my damn way.

Anita pushes past and grabs Berta's belongings.

Anita CLAPS loudly, garnering everyone's attention.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Excuse me for a moment! Everybody
please shut the hell up for just a
second, alright?

(beat)

Have y'all happened to see a woman
come out of the bathroom? She was
in a wheelchair... or she should've
been. I don't know.

No one says anything.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Helloooooo?

WAITER

I don't th--

ANITA

Shh.

(getting even louder)

You mean to tell me y'all aint' see
a woman in a damn wheel chair bump
past your tables and out of the
door!?

People turn back to their food and families.

Anita gets angrier.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Well fine! Continue to worry about
your damn selves!

She hastily exits, pushing past the Waiter. She bumps into
people's chairs purposely.

WAITER

Someone has to p--

ANITA

Oh fuck off!

Anita barrels out of front door and into the parking lot. She
looks around for any trace of Berta. She gets more and more
nervous as each moment passes.

ANITA

Berta! Where the hell are you.

She begins to circle the lot. Anita checks each side of the diner. All she sees is dark woods in back and the reflection of neon lights across the lot.

ANITA (CONT'D)

I will leave you here. Keep
playing!

Anita walks over to her car. She checks the front and back seat over and over again. Clearly she's not there.

ANITA (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Too damn old for this. Feels like
I'm baby-sitting a child!

Anita leans up from the driver's seat. She takes one final worrisome look around. She's checked everywhere.

ANITA (CONT'D)

(screaming at the top of
her lungs)

Berta!!!!

Just then, a bus drives by and HONKS at a screaming Anita.

ANITA (CONT'D)

(yelling)

Same to you!!

Just as the bus goes out of sight, into the distance, it drives and stops at a Gas Station.

Anita squints her eyes, looking in the distance. She sees a figure, sitting under a light. It's Berta. Just then, she hops on the bus and pulls off into the night.

Anita's eyes widen in horror. Anita scrambles around the parking lot looking for her car. She scrambles through her bag, looking for her keys.

She finally finds them, fumbling with them as she gets into the car.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Anita starts the car, trying not to panic. She yanks into gear and flies out onto the road.

As she drives down the dark road, she doesn't see the bus. She picks up speed, barreling through the street. As she passes an intersection, to the right, she sees what seems like the bus.

Almost missing the turn, Anita skids around the corner, SCREECHING car and all. Almost hitting a parked car, Anita maneuvers into her lane.

Picking up speed, chasing behind the bus, Anita pulls up next to the bus, on the opposite side of the street. As she tries to make her way next to the driver, she motions for him to pull over. She HONKS.

ANITA
(shouting)
Hey!!! Hey!! Pull over!

He doesn't hear or see her. She speeds up and tries again, flailing her arms while trying to control her car.

ANITA (CONT'D)
Pull Over!!

He finally sees Anita but just then, he notices a CAR coming straight for her. He waves his hands ardently and motions to the oncoming car. Anita finally notices and swerves out of the way, into the grass, just in time.

As she whips back around, the bus is farther in the distance. She slams on the pedal and pulls in front of the bus.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

The DRIVER and passengers watch, confused while Berta sleeps.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Anita jets in front of the bus and slams on the brakes. The Bus Driver, trying not to hit her, SCREECHES to a halt. All of the passengers jolt forward.

Anita gets out of her car, runs to the Bus, and knocks on the door. He opens it.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

They all stare at Anita, confused. Anita's out of breath.

ANITA
(to the driver)
I know you heard me honking!

DRIVER
What in the hell are you doing?

Anita looks around the bus and sees Berta asleep. She walks over to her and nudges her awake. Berta's groggy.

BERTA
Can I help you?

ANITA
Come on, lets go!

Anita grabs Berta's arm to get up.

BERTA
Hey don't go grabbin' me. You don't know me like that.

ANITA
How I wish that were true.
(beat)
Let's go "Mrs. Murrell."

BERTA
How do you know my name.

Anita rolls her eyes and escorts her off of the bus.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

ANITA
Go on, get in.

BERTA
I ain't--

ANITA
Berta!
(beat)
Get in the car!

Berta hesitantly gets in. Anita follows suit, starts the car, and their off.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

BERTA
Where are we going?

ANITA
To pick up your pieces, as usual.

BERTA
What?

ANITA
To get your wheelchair. You left it
at a gas station and I won't be the
one to pay for it if it's gone.

BERTA
You don't owe me nothing.

They come to a red light.

Anita looks over to Berta, somewhat guiltily.

ANITA
Yeah well, I'm the one who has to
get you to Atlanta in one piece.

CUT TO:

36 EXT. STREET - DAY - 1975

36

Anita, tears in her eyes, sits at a red light behind another driver. She looks back into her rearview mirror to see Berta right behind her.

Anita pounds the HORN. The DRIVER in front of her can't move - It's a red light.

Anita looks in the rearview mirror again. Berta motions "pull over."

As soon as the light turns green, Anita whips around the car in front of her. She creates a commotion of HORNS and YELPS.

She pulls into an adjacent gas station, slams on the breaks, turns off the car.

37 EXT. GAS STATION - CONTINUOUS

37

Berta pulls into the station, right behind Anita. Berta quickly turns off the car and gets out. She waits for Anita to do the same.

Anita composes herself and gets out. They stare eye to eye like a standoff.

PEOPLE stop and watch the scene. Berta approaches.

BERTA
I'll never stop chasing you. You
know that!

Anita says nothing.

BERTA (CONT'D)
(coming closer)
We're both stubborn. Mama always
said it.

Still, nothing.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Only ones who deal with us was each
other.

Berta shows her wrist. On it, an aged bronze BRACELET with
STICK FIGURES AND THE LETTERS "A & B" sheepishly carved in it.

She hands it to Anita.

BERTA (CONT'D)
See.

Anita examines it and with one swoop, tosses it into the gas
station lot. Berta stands shocked.

Anita gets into the car, starts it, and pulls off.

Berta, stunned, walks over to pick up the bracelet. After
contemplating giving up, she puts back on the bracelet and
gets in the car.

Just as quickly as Anita, Berta storms out of the lot, right
on Anita's trail.

CUT TO:

38 EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT - 2000

38

Anita pulls up, brakes SCREECHING. She stops the car.

ANITA
Go on. Go get it.

Berta gets out to retrieve the chair. As she does so, Anita
just stares at Berta and grins. She looks around, almost
laughing at the situation but just as she notices her ease, a
scowl returns to her face, not letting herself be happy for
one instance.

Anita reaches over to the passenger side window and cranks it down.

ANITA (CONT'D)
Come on! It's late!

BERTA
Quit your yelling!

Berta walks over to the car, pushing the wheelchair.

ANITA
Put it in the back seat.

BERTA
So bossy.

Berta tries to open the door. It's locked.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Well, how am I supposed to put it
in if it's locked!

ANITA
I ain't gonna let you in until you
remember who I am. I ain't gonna be
explaining everything to you for
the rest of the trip. Who am I?

BERTA
Some woman who kidnapped me from a
bus?

ANITA
Come on now!

BERTA
I know who you are! Can we go.

ANITA
I'm your driver, remember? JUST
your driver... from the hospital.

BERTA
I said I know!

ANITA
Say it!

Berta scoffs.

BERTA
Your my driver! From the hospital.

She doesn't fully understand but she's too tired to care.

ANITA

You mean that or you just saying?

BERTA

I mean it.

ANITA

How do you know?

BERTA

Because that's what you told me.

ANITA

You just believe everything
somebody tells you?

BERTA

You seem believable. Are we there
yet?

ANITA

Does it look like it?

(beat)

I'm taking you to Emory, remember?

Berta looks around, confused.

BERTA

You smell like booze.

ANITA

And your wig is crooked but we
ain't got time for observations. We
gotta get back on the road.

Anita unlocks the car. Berta puts the wheelchair in the
backseat and gets in the front.

BERTA

Uh-uh, I'm tired.

ANITA

You can sleep in the car, let's go-

BERTA

I can't sleep in no car! Find
somewhere to sleep or something.

ANITA

We lost time because of you!

BERTA

Because of me? What did I do?

ANITA

It would take me longer to explain it to your crazy ass then it would to get to Emory so just get in and enjoy the ride.

BERTA

If you don't get me a bed soon, I swear.

ANITA

Would you stop your complaining.
(beat)
We are driving!

BERTA

Ain't you tired too!

Anita looks at the clock. It's around 1am. She looks in the rearview mirror. She looks like a tired wreck.

Anita starts the car and they're off.

39

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

39

Anita jiggles the rickety doorknob, CREAKING through. The two, Anita in front of a chair-bound Berta, stand in the threshold. They look at the disgusting room, mouths agape.

It's old. Wallpaper is peeling. Lamps have different colored bulbs. The ceiling has water spots. The two twin-beds have hideous comforters and the beds have one pillow each.

You really get what you pay for and they know it.

They slowly enter. They clean off the beds with a wipe Berta pulls from her bag.

BERTA

Of all the places?

ANITA

I didn't see you put not one nickel in this dime so shut it. You needed a bed, now you got one.

Berta rolls over to the bed closest to the window and places her things on the bedside table.

ANITA (CONT'D)

What do you think you're doing?

BERTA

Going to bed.

ANITA

Not over there. I always sleep next to the window.

BERTA

Well so do I!

ANITA

You ain't never slept next to no window, now move!

BERTA

Excuse me?

ANITA

Move!

BERTA

Do you just argue with everyone, constantly? How can people stand to be around you when you make it this difficult? Keep acting like that, after I'm gone you'll truly be alone. You want the damn bed, take it. I'm too tired for this.

Berta wheels over to the other bed, gets up, takes her clothes off, and gets in.

She CLICKS off the light and faces away from Anita who is now in her underwear.

Anita, who sits on the edge of the bed, stares at Berta, guiltily.

Anita looks around the room. She takes in her surroundings and sees an old RADIO on the dresser. She gets up, CLICKING off her bedside table light.

In the darkness, she scoots to the dresser and picks up the radio. Then she goes to the mini-fridge, opens it, and grabs a handful of mini-vodka bottles. Juggling everything, she takes it all into the bathroom and shuts the door.

40

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

40

Anita stands in front of the mirror looking at herself. With a wet paper-towel, she wipes the make-up off of her face.

As she goes through her ritual, she gets more anxious.

She pops open one bottle. Two bottles. Three bottles.

Downing each like a shot, she goes back to her face. She still can't focus. Tears forming in her eyes, she reaches over for the radio and turns it up.

SMOOTH and QUIET JAZZ PLAYS. Staring at it, she begins to breath heavily through her teeth, trying to hold back tears.

ANITA

Come on. Come on. Come on.

After she finishes rinsing, she takes her head out of the sink and bumps it on the faucet.

ANITA (CONT'D)

(whispered)

Shit!

Anita slides down against the tub, holding her head. As she's down there she sits and contemplates.

She looks at the radio, grabs it, and holds it close. She stares ahead as tears roll down her face. She turns it up and closes her eyes.

41

INT. BATHROOM - MORNING

41

BANG BANG BANG on the door.

Anita sprawls across the bathroom floor, neck contorted against the dirty porcelain tub.

Anita bolts up. She notices her surroundings. She fell asleep on the bathroom floor. She kicks around the mini bottles of alcohol.

She massages her neck and wipes the drool from her cheek.

BANG BANG BANG.

ANITA

I'm up! I'm up!

42 INT. CAR - AFTERNOON

42

They quickly drive down the highway. They don't talk to each other until--

BERTA
How much longer?

Anita doesn't know. She looks around for a sign but doesn't see anything.

ANITA
I don't know for sure. We just have to be there by tomorrow morning which is plenty of time. All you have to do is just sit back.

BERTA
Well you slept until two.

ANITA
Excuse me for being a little tired after what you put me through!

BERTA
I have no idea what you're talking about.

ANITA
Yeah, I bet.

BERTA
Who are you again?

ANITA
Dammit, Berta. I'm driving you to the hospital.

Nothing.

ANITA (CONT'D)
I'm not going to keep doing this with you.

BERTA
That's right. Now I remember. The evil lady.

Beat.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Imma get you this trip.

ANITA
Get me to do what?

BERTA
To lighten up. Smile. Laugh. Do
somethin' other than just mope
around all the time.

ANITA
(annoyed)
I am lightened.

BERTA
(laughing)
That ain't even a word.

ANITA
Since when isn't that a word?!
(beat)
Look you sure think you know so
much for somebody whose losing her
mind.

BERTA
Ain't nobody losing nothing! I know
a lot more than you think!

They sit in silence for a bit. It gets awkward as Berta looks
over to Anita.

BERTA (CONT'D)
You wanna play a game.

ANITA
No.

BERTA
It's easy.

ANITA
No.

BERTA
Ever hear of the alphabet game?

Anita looks over. Of course she's heard of it.

BERTA (CONT'D)
You gotta find words that start
with each letter of the alphabet,
starting with A all the way to Z.
They gotta be real words too, not
no--

ANITA

No car types or made up words. I know.

BERTA

Ohhh so you do have fun in you somewhere?

(beat)

My sisters and I used to play this game on our walk to school. Never won too much. Wasn't that competitive either.

A silence. They drive past a sign with a bunch of food locations on them. "Arby's" "McDonald's" "Subway" "Wendy's"

BERTA (CONT'D)

A! Arby's!

ANITA

No no no. You just said you can't use fake words.

BERTA

I was just testing you. But you just said you weren't playing.

ANITA

I'm not!

Berta silences.

They drive farther down the road until they see a billboard advertisement for "Animal Planet."

ANITA (CONT'D)

(excitedly)

A! Animal! Ha! See.

BERTA

Nah see, nah see!!! That ain't fair! I would've had that one if I woulda known you were playinh!

ANITA

(laughing)

Competitions aren't always fair!

BERTA

Okay. Okay. I got you!

Berta looks around, head moving swiftly from side to side. She sees Anita trying to do the same.

BERTA (CONT'D)
 Uh-uh, keep your eyes on the road!
 You ain't about to kill us both!

ANITA
 How else am I supposed to see
 anything!

BERTA
 Competitions ain't always fair, now
 are they?

They both look. Just then, Berta jokingly covers Anita's eyes
 with her hands.

ANITA
 What the hell, are you crazy!?!

BERTA
 Ah ah ah, don't take your hands off
 the wheel, now.

Anita shakes Berta's hands loose and just as she does--

BERTA (CONT'D)
 Ha! Bank of America! Bank!

ANITA
 Cheating hussy!

Berta laughs!

The two look for more words on signs. A billboard for
 "Carfax" passes by!

ANITA (CONT'D)
 C! Car-

BERTA
 (giggling)
 Fax! Carfax, you can't use that!

ANITA
 Car is a word!

BERTA
 But it's a part of Carfax!

ANITA
 (fighting a smile)
 Oh, what do you know!

They try to look for more signs but it's nothing but open
 road. It's silent.

BERTA
Do you have any music?

ANITA
Turn on the radio.

Berta tries to figure out the radio but she can't

BERTA
It ain't working.

ANITA
I think I got some CDs but don't
turn them up too damn loud. I need
to focus.

Berta opens it to find the blank CDs.

BERTA
Which one?

ANITA
How the hell am I supposed to
know?! Just pick one.

Berta inserts a CD and presses play. First SONG that comes on
- Chuck Berry's "Rock and Roll Music." Berta's not feeling
it. Next.

Then, "Unchained Melody." Next. "Sixteen Tons." Next.

"Rock Around the Clock." Anita looks over to Berta,
recognizing the song.

BERTA
Oooooo this was my jam! When I was
younger me and my sister had this
dance to this! Boy, it was
something!

She tries to do a hand jive motion, two slaps on her thighs,
and a stomp on the floor.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Shit I can't remember.
(beat)
Over under, two slaps, stomp?

Berta tries again, it doesn't quite work. Anita watches and
smiles.

Berta tries again. She's still not on beat.

ANITA
(calmly)
Try over under, one slap, two
stomps.

Berta does so. It's perfectly on beat.

BERTA
Okay! Okay!

She does it again. She's getting the hang of it.

BERTA (CONT'D)
(singing full out)
*Put your glad rags on and join me
hon/We'll have some fun when the
clock strikes one/We're gonna rock
around the clock tonight. Your
turn!*

Berta points to Anita. Anita looks at her like she's crazy and misses the verse.

BERTA (CONT'D)
*Ohhh Boo You! When the clock
strikes two, three and four/If the
band slows down we'll yell for
more. Go!*

She points to Anita who misses the verse again.

BERTA (CONT'D)
*One more time! When the chimes ring
five, six, and seven/We'll be right
in seventh heaven.*

She points to Anita. Through a begrudged tone--

ANITA
We're gonna... something something
something, till broad daylight.

BERTA
Woooo there she is!!
(beat)
Last time I had this much fun in
damn car was when me and my sister
stole the neighbor's old Cadillac.
She could hotwire the hell out of
anything!

Berta turns up the MUSIC and cranks down her window, sticking her head out, holding onto her wig. Anita looks at her.

ANITA

Get your head back in here and tell me the next direction! We're coming up on an exit and I don't know if it's ours!

Berta plops back down and begins to dig through her purse. She finds the directions and starts to read.

She looks up, squinting, and back down to her paper.

BERTA

I can't tell if I wrote US-78N or US-78S!

ANITA

(sharply)

What do you mean you can't tell! N and S are two damn different letters!

BERTA

Well pull over, I can't tell with all this bumping!

Anita makes her way over to the shoulder of the road, brakes SQUEAKING. When she comes to stop, the engine temperature is even higher than before. She looks worried but quickly diverts her attention to Berta.

ANITA

Well??

BERTA

I can't make it out.

ANITA

Give it to me.

She snatches it from Berta and tries to read it as well. She can't.

ANITA (CONT'D)

The one thing you had to do and you went and messed it all up.

BERTA

The rest looks fine!

ANITA

Yeah well we don't need the rest, right now, do we? We need this part.

(MORE)

ANITA (CONT'D)

(beat)

I'm keeping this the rest of way.

Anita puts the directions in her pocket.

BERTA

Well which way are we going to go?

Anita looks at both signs.

ANITA

South. We goin to Atlanta right?
That's the south.

BERTA

That ain't how that works.

ANITA

Shut up!

Anita starts the car again and REVS the engine.

MATCH CUT TO:

43 INT. CAR - AFTERNOON - 1975

43

Anita waits at a red light. She REVS the engine.

She's anxious. She looks in her rearview mirror to see Berta swerving through cars. Cars HONK their horns.

Eric begins to wake up, CRYING. Anita holds her head - a headache.

The light turns green. Anita speeds through the intersection passing by other cars, changing lanes and all.

It's a residential street so she dodges cars, coming way too close to them.

As she makes her way down the street, she checks the rearview mirror constantly. Berta is not too far behind.

ANITA

(screaming)

Leave me the fuck alone, God
dammit!

Eric CRIES louder.

Anita cuts a corner hard, jolting everything inside the car. She places one hand on Eric and slams on the breaks. They're at another light.

Berta, through the rearview mirror, motions to Anita to "Pull Over!"

Anita gets more anxious.

Berta HONKS her horn. Once. Twice. Three Times and holds it. Anita HONKS back. The person in front of Anita, thinks she's honking at them. HE puts his head out of the window and gives her the finger.

Traffic moves again. Anita picks up speed, desperately wanting to make the next light.

Berta is right behind her.

The light turns red. Anita's not there yet but she slams the pedal even harder, closing her eyes. HONKING increases.

She opens her eyes, just making the light. As she opens her eyes and looks into the rearview mirror. She sees Berta in the intersection until--

CRASH. Berta is T-boned by another, speeding car. Glass flies everywhere. The car, like a toy, is tossed to the side of the street.

Everything stops.

Anita lets up on the throttle, still going forward while she stares backwards. She finally stops.

PEOPLE surround Berta's car.

44

EXT. STREET INTERSECTION - CONTINUOUS

44

Anita slowly gets out, mouth agape, stunned completely. She walks towards the scene, in a daze. Everything around her is slow. SOUNDS are muted. There's a RINGING.

MAN (O.S.)
(shouting)
Someone call an ambulance!

People run to the car side while Anita approaches, like walking to the gallows.

She gets to the side of Berta's crushed car. She looks inside and sees Berta, unconscious, bleeding from the head.

People look at Anita. They recognize Berta was chasing Anita.

Anita backs up, afraid, tears rushing from her face.

MAN (CONT'D)
Do you know her?

Anita says nothing and stumbles backwards, staggering towards her car. She flees the scene.

45 INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

45

Anita hops in, shaken up. Eric still CRIES. She puts her head in her hands, tapping her leg vigorously. She looks over to Eric--

ANITA
(shouting)
Please... Be quiet. Be quiet! SHUT
UP!

Eric continues to CRY.

Anita, wipes her face off, looks in the mirror, and falsely composes herself.

She starts the car, clears her throat, and stares at the scene unfold in her rear view mirror.

CUT TO:

46 INT. CAR - EVENING - 2000

46

Close on Anita's face. She's content.

Anita and Berta drive along. It's quiet in a serene way. There's a sense of familiarity and comfort in the car.

BERTA
So how close are we anyway?

Anita looks around to a sign.

ANITA
Well we in Georgia so I'm thinking
not too far ahead.

BERTA
Need me to check the directions?

Anita looks at Berta with a grin.

ANITA
Not this time.
(looking around)
I should be good now.

BERTA

You sure?

ANITA

(unconvincingly)

Yeah, yeah. Besides I used to live down here. I think I remember a few streets.

BERTA

Get outta here! I did too!

Anita, eyes straight ahead, smiles. She knows.

BERTA (CONT'D)

Lived on Alameda! Heard of it?

ANITA

Sounds familiar.

BERTA

Me and my husband lived there.

ANITA

(sharply)

Change the subject.

BERTA

You have a husband?

ANITA

I said change the subject, didn't I?

BERTA

Listen, you gonna stop talking to me like that, alright?

Silence.

BERTA (CONT'D)

I had my daughter on the Alameda.

Anita rolls her eyes.

BERTA (CONT'D)

You got any kids?

ANITA

You already asked me that.

BERTA
Damn, did I?
(beat)
What'd you say?

ANITA
Yes.

BERTA
Yes, what?

ANITA
Yes, dammit, I got some kids!

BERTA
You gotta say somethin' more than
just one word answers then!

ANITA
What don't you understand about the
word yes!?

BERTA
How many?

ANITA
(annoyed)
I told you that too!

BERTA
Well guess what. Surprise! I don't
remember. Now, how many?

A beat.

BERTA (CONT'D)
What you don't know how many kids
you got? This is a time where a one
word answer would be nice!

ANITA
(quietly)
Three.

BERTA
Well where are they? What do they
do? How much money they make?

Berta giggles. Anita doesn't say anything. She looks forward,
straight at the road.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Silent treatment again, huh?

Beat.

ANITA
My youngest lives back up in
Maryland. He does some TV thing, I
don't know exactly.

BERTA
Good money?

Anita doesn't answer.

BERTA (CONT'D)
What about the other two?

ANITA
They don't do anything.

BERTA
Why the hell not? They grown adults
ain't they?! They should be doing
something.

ANITA
(deflecting)
Well you can't do nothing if you're
dead, now can you.

Berta looks at Anita, shocked. Anita keeps her eyes forward.

BERTA
I uh... I'm sorry. Losing a child
must be tough. I know I couldn't
imagine losing mine.

Anita looks over to Berta.

BERTA (CONT'D)
They loved you.

Anita nods.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Is that why you moved to Baltimore?

ANITA
Atlanta's a shit place.

BERTA
Then why are we going there?

ANITA
Look, I told you I can't keep doing
this with you.

They drive over a rough bumpy patch in the road. The car shakes and as it does, the Butterfly Mobile falls from the rearview mirror and into Berta's foot-space.

Anita tries to look for it while keeping her eyes ahead.

BERTA

I got it, I got it. Keep your eyes forward.

ANITA

Be careful with that!

Berta picks it up and gently places it back onto the rearview mirror.

She looks at Anita, again, noticing her butterfly attire.

BERTA

You really love butterflies.

ANITA

You've said that before too.

BERTA

My sister loved butterflies.

Anita complacently nods.

Berta looks to Anita, who is dressed in all Butterfly attire.

BERTA (CONT'D)

But probably not as much.

Smoke begins to billow from the car hood.

BERTA (CONT'D)

Ummmm, what's going on?

ANITA

That's the car in front of me.

BERTA

No it ain't. It's you!

The smoke builds. Anita looks down at her engine temperature gauge. It's skyrocketed. More smoke comes out of the hood. It blocks her line of sight.

ANITA

Son of a bitch!

BERTA
(starting to panic)
Lord Jesus, we're going to burn
alive on the way to... where are we
going again?

ANITA
Be quiet, I can't think!

Anita speeds up.

BERTA
Why are you going faster?!

ANITA
To blow the smoke out of th--

BANG!

They rear-end a car in the middle of the highway. They weren't going that fast so it's a tiny scratch.

Anita and Berta sit, silently, mouth wide open. Anita, still stunned, turns the car off.

An OLD MAN, (70s), White, gets out of his car and walks to the back bumper. He's in a state of "what the fuck?!"

Anita gets out and approaches him. Berta rolls down her window.

ANITA (CONT'D)
Shit.

MAN
Yeah, you think?!

ANITA
My car is--

MAN
Is shit. I can see that!

ANITA
Hey now, wait a minute.

MAN
You're paying big for this.

ANITA
Oh it's just a scratch! I can get
this out.

Anita walks over to the car, licks her thumb, and tries to wipe it clean. Nothing.

MAN

A scratch you're paying for.

ANITA

Look, I ain't got no money.

MAN

I can wait!

ANITA

You'll be waitin' forever.

MAN

Well you'll owe me...

ANITA

I ain't got anything to give you.

He looks her up and down. He skeevishly smiles.

MAN

What about dinner.

ANITA

Excuse me?

MAN

A fine, Afro-American woman like yourself I'm sure could use a good meal every once in a while.

BERTA

Did he say dinner? I'm starving.

MAN

There's room for you too. The more the merrier.

He creepily smiles at her.

MAN (CONT'D)

So what do you say? You ain't got much of another option.

ANITA

Look, I gotta get her to the hospital and gotta fix my car. I ain't got no time for--

MAN

You can't drive this thing! Let me just call up AAA, on me, and I can take you to the hospital after dinner. How's that sound

(beat)

I assume you're going to Emory, yes?

Anita nods.

ANITA

Look. We have strict directions. We just can't go off route, getting all lost.

MAN

Well Emory's only 20 miles from here and I'm not too far. 20 miles is 20 minutes! You won't need them now that you've got me.

Anita looks at the Man, at her car, to Berta, and back at his smiling face.

47

INT. MAN'S HOME - NIGHT

47

It's a quaint, oddly decorated home. Everything is a shade of Brown and looks like it smells like moth balls.

Tacky wallpaper is plastered on the walls and an Victorian styled china cabinet obstructs an entire wall of the dinning room.

Plates are dusty. Everything is in sets of one.

The Man comes out of the kitchen with mismatched plates in hand. One for Anita and one for Berta. He re-enters the kitchen.

Anita and Berta look at each other, down at the food, and back at each other. He returns.

Anita guzzles down a glass of wine like it's water. She begins to pour herself another.

MAN

Thirsty huh?

Anita looks at him and continues pouring.

ANITA

I thought you said "out" to dinner?

MAN

You two lovely ladies deserved some home cooking.

(beat)

So what are your names.

BERTA

I.. Um... I am...

ANITA

Her name is Berta.

MAN

And yours?

ANITA

You don't need to know.

(beat)

Berta, you know what your name is and where we are. We're going to the hospital.

BERTA

I know! Don't talk to me like no baby. I know stuff!

(beat, looking around)

So... you live alone?

MAN

Have been for 34 years.

BERTA

Were you married.

MAN

Widowed. Haven't been with anyone since.

He looks at Berta.

BERTA

Well ain't that sweet. You miss her?

MAN

I miss a lot of things about her, what we used to do. But her as whole, drove me up a wall.

He laughs. She smiles back. Anita shoots Berta a look.

MAN (CONT'D)

(laughing)

Back in our day, girls was only good for a few things. She tried to change all the rules but I still loved her.

ANITA

(sternly)

And what were those "few" things?

MAN

My lady could cook. My lady could clean. And my lady could fuck a jimmy clean. Am I right?

ANITA

No.

Berta chokes on her food and embarrassingly blushes. The man takes that as compliment.

MAN

Well Ms. No Name, what is it that you do?

ANITA

(obviously lying)

Oh, me? I'm a stripper. What's it to you?

MAN

Wow... Wasn't expecting that.

(beat)

You sisters?

ANITA

Uh--

BERTA

Yes!

Anita looks over, confused.

BERTA (CONT'D)

(obviously lying)

She's taking me to the hospital because I got a candidate for very first intestine transplant for a woman over 50! They using a goat's intestine. Longer than a person's, you know?

Berta gives her a look that says "I'm clever too." Anita smiles at her. Touche.

MAN

Wow. What a lov--

ANITA

Dinner was great, thank you, but we really have to get going. We held up our end so now could you take us to the hospital?

The Man looks at the time.

MAN

Oh, but it's past 10pm. It's too late for me to drive.

(beat)

I can take you first thing tomorrow morning. I have guest rooms for each of you!

ANITA

I ain't sleepin' in your house!

MAN

It'll be best for all of us, yeah?

ANITA

No!

BERTA

Anita...

MAN

Ahhh, Anita. What a lovely name.

ANITA

What?!

BERTA

To be quite honest, with you I'm a little tired.

ANITA

Sleep in the car!

MAN

What car!?

(beat)

First thing tomorrow morning?

48 INT. BEDROOM - AFTER MIDNIGHT

48

Anita lies awake in the bed. Tossing and turning, she realizes a radio on the night stand.

She gets up and stands in front of it. She rubs the top of it, looking for the on button. As she looks around she hears a creek in the hallway. She teeters over to the door to look out.

As she peeps through the crack, she notices the Man walking down the hallway. Rolling her eyes, she turns to walk away until she notices he's not going into his master bedroom.

He's going into Berta's room.

49 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

49

Anita tiptoes down the hall as best as she can. She gets to Berta's door and peeks in. Inside, she catches the Man bare naked, getting closer to Berta, wobbling his dick "awake."

Anita rushes in, turning on the lights.

ANITA

Are you fucking kidding me right now!

Anita, grabs a lamp off of the table, rips it out the wall, and hurls it towards him.

He ducks and tumbles onto the floor. Berta jolts awake.

BERTA

What the hell!?

ANITA

Get up, and get your clothes on!
This motherfucker just tried to
crawl into bed with you.

BERTA

What's going on?

ANITA

Just go, dammit!

Anita stands in front of Berta, guarding her from the man who cowers in the corner.

Anita picks up the lamp again and holds it above her head.

Berta gets out of the bed, puts on her clothes, and exits staring at the man.

Anita, who still seethes, stands above him. They look eye to eye.

ANITA (CONT'D)
Don't fuck with mine.

She shatters the lamp, SLAMMING it right next to him. She leaves the room.

MAN (O.S.)
(shouting)
Ungrateful bitches.

50 EXT. MAN'S HOME - AFTER MIDNIGHT - CONTINUOUS

50

Anita exits the house to an already waiting Berta. She slams the door behind her.

Berta sits in her wheelchair in the driveway.

ANITA
Get up. We don't have time for this. Let's go.

BERTA
We ain't walking nowhere!

ANITA
You wanna stay here!?

Beat.

ANITA (CONT'D)
Didn't think so!

BERTA
Well what the hell are we going to do then?

ANITA
If you stopped talking, I could think some.

Berta silences. Anita paces back and forth, looking around. Just then, she catches a glimpse of the Man's car.

She grins.

51 EXT. MAN'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

51

Anita sweats, sitting under the wheel of his car. She attempts to hotwire it.

BERTA
So you can break into a car and
hotwire it too?

ANITA
Shhh.

Berta looks around nervously.

BERTA
If you're going to do this, do it
quickly!

ANITA
What part of shh don't you
understand?!

Berta looks at the Man's house. It's dark and quiet.

Just then, the engine cuts on. Anita perks up and hops into the driver's seat.

ANITA (CONT'D)
Hurry the hell up and get in.

Berta gets out of her wheelchair and puts it in the backseat. She runs over to the passenger side and gets in.

They both strap up.

Anita REVS the engine.

BERTA
Well what are you waiting for?!?
Go!

ANITA
I want him to see this.

Anita slams on the HORN, not letting go.

The LIGHT in his house turns on.

BERTA
We need to go!

ANITA
Not yet...

She slams on the horn again. Just then, the Man opens the front door. Anita rolls down her window, sticking her middle finger out.

ANITA (CONT'D)
(shouting)
Thanks for the ride, you bastard!

The Man, only in underwear, rushes from his front porch to chase down Anita.

She quickly peels out of the driveway, laughing.

ANITA (CONT'D)
WOOOOOOOOO!

52 INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

52

The two LAUGH, speeding down the residential street.

BERTA
(through laughter)
I can't believe that just happened!
What the hell is going on here!?
(exhaling)
Woooo boy.

Anita still laughs.

BERTA (CONT'D)
I have to give it you. You're one
hell of woman.

ANITA
(wiping tears)
Ohh man, oh man, oh man. Where the
hell are we?

BERTA
I have no idea.

Berta looks at a nearby sign.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Wait. Does that say Rotwell?

Anita looks up.

ANITA
Yeah it does.

BERTA
Holy hell, I know where we are.

ANITA
Girl, you don't know a damn thing!

BERTA
Will you just trust me. Turn down
Rotwell.

ANITA
We ain't got time for this.

BERTA
(sharply)
Just do it!

ANITA
Alright! Alright!

Anita does so. She arrives on another residential street. She squints, driving slowly.

BERTA
And turn here.

As she does so she sees the street sign that reads "Alemeda." It's Berta's old street. Anita's smile wipes clean off.

ANITA
What're we doing here...

Berta rummages through her purse to find her phone.

BERTA
I can't believe we was so close all
along.
(beat)
I gotta call to make sure
somebody's home.

ANITA
Somebody's home..? And would you
give that phone bit up already. It
don't work.

BERTA
What phone bit? I'll show you it
does!

Berta dials a series of numbers. The DISCONNECTED TONE sounds.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Stop here!

They arrive at a boarded up home on the dark street. The house is rotting and decrepit. The windows and front door have planks of wood nailed to them. The front lawn has overgrown grass.

Berta gets out of the car, quickly approaching the house, still on the phone.

53

EXT. ALEMEDA ST. - CONTINUOUS

53

BERTA
(excitedly)
Willie! Willie, baby. Open the door.

Anita gets out of the car, furious and in disbelief. Berta walks up the steps of the house and onto the porch.

BERTA (CONT'D)
You would not believe this trip!
Hurry up and open the door. It's late.

ANITA
What're you doing?! Who are you talking to?!

Anita approaches Berta on the porch of the house.

BERTA
I thought you said I was talking to no--

ANITA
Who's on the phone!

BERTA
My husba--

ANITA
Give me the phone!

BERTA
(smugly)
No! Some of us have a man waiting for us.

ANITA
Give me the damn phone. Don't say that name.

BERTA
Willie? You mean MY Willie?

Anita snatches the phone from Berta.

BERTA (CONT'D)
What the hell?

ANITA
(screaming into the phone)
Who the fuck is this, huh?! Anybody
here!?! Nobody's fucking there.
See!

Nothing. She tosses the phone onto the porch.

ANITA (CONT'D)
What the fuck is wrong with you
saying his name? When I tell you to
do something, you do it!

BERTA
Who do you think you are, grabbing
shit from me.

Berta runs over to pick up the phone.

ANITA
What's up with you, huh? What the
fuck is going on. Do you know who I
am or are you fucking fogged up
right now? Tell me. Who am I?

BERTA
You're... my driver...?

ANITA
Are you fucking with me?

BERTA
What the hell is wrong with you?

ANITA
You said his name!

BERTA
Yes.. I did say my husband's name!
So what?!

ANITA
He's not just your husband. He's
not just your fucking husband.

Anita paces back and forth.

ANITA (CONT'D)

You don't remember anything?! My God, you don't know who I am? If you did you'd never speak his fucking name around me.

(beat)

And you bring me here!! To y'all's old house. Of all the places.

BERTA

What are you going on about?

ANITA

This whole trip, I tried. I tried to be nice to you and get through this. I did. I sat next to you this whole way with a fucking smile on my face and--

(beat)

But look where we are.

BERTA

What ar--

ANITA

Look around you! This ain't your house no more! Wake the fuck up. You see this?!

Anita runs over, kicking and punching holes in the rotting wood. She BANGS on the house in a fit of rage.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Nobody's home! Knock-knock! Hello! You don't fucking live here anymore, got it? Nobody does!

Berta looks around, confused. She takes in her surroundings,

BERTA

I...

ANITA

He's not just your god damn husband. He's a murderer. He killed my kids, dammit! He killed my kids and you have no clue! Your husband is dead. My kids are dead. Your... your fucking daughter is dead. And you don't even know it! You don't know what it's like to have a dead child because you so "forgot." But for the love of God, I wish you did know that fucking pain.

(MORE)

ANITA (CONT'D)

I wish you could remember picking out her casket. And her dress. And her makeup. I wish you could remember them burying her ass because if you did, you'd never speak his fucking name to me, let alone bring me to his damn house.

Berta pulls at her clothes as becomes very anxious and erratic in her actions.

Berta runs up to the door, BANGING.

BERTA

(shouting)

Willie!!! Willie!! Geraldine!! Open the door!

ANITA

(shouting)

I told you. I fucking told you not to marry him. I had to tell you everything and you never listened! And when you finally did, when you left him, look what happened. To me! So, I'm telling you now, I'm fucking telling you now. Don't say his name. Don't say it ever again!

BERTA

Geraldine!!!

Berta HYPERVENTILATES, just as she's done in the Diner, looking around, fully realizing her surroundings.

ANITA

No, shut that shit up! You don't get to do this now! You followed me all the way to Baltimore for me to talk, so here it is. You waited 25 years for this! You happy now?! I'm talking to you and I know you know who I am now!

Berta can't get it together. Anita gets up in her face.

ANITA (CONT'D)

(shouting)

I hated you! I hated you! I hated you!

(beat)

But I'm here dammit. Taking care of you again! Like I always did! But I'm done now.

Anita walks down the steps of the porch to her car. Out of the backseat, she flings Berta's wheelchair into the grass.

ANITA (CONT'D)
Get to Emory on your own!

Berta struggles to catch her breath. She makes a run towards the wheelchair, picking it up.

Anita hops in the car, starts it, and pulls off, leaving Berta standing in the grass.

54 INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS 54

Anita drives down the road, blowing off steam, SCREAMING for as long as her breath can take it.

She then hits herself in the face, getting herself together.

ANITA
(flipping God off)
Fuck you!!!!

She pulls the car over to the side of the road.

55 EXT. ROAD - CONTINUOUS 55

She gets out, breathing heavily through tears.

ANITA
Oh my God. Oh my God. Oh my God.
Lord Jesus Christ. I can't do this.

She paces in front of her car, finally deciding to lay down across the top of the hood. She stares in silence at the night sky before pulling herself together.

She stares for minutes, taking in the sky, the leaves, the bushes, the forest, the SOUNDS. Everything around her. She calms.

She slags off the hood of the car and into the driver's seat. Looking in the rearview mirror, drained, she wipes tears from her face. She starts the car.

56 EXT. ALEMEDA ST. - CONTINUOUS 56

Anita pulls up on Alameda St. once more. As she drives up to Berta's house, she sees Berta on the porch, sitting in her wheelchair, asleep.

Anita gets out of the car, walks up to Berta, and nudges her awake.

BERTA
Who are you?

ANITA
Let's go.

57 INT. CAR - EARLY MORNING

57

Anita drives ahead, eyes fresh from recent tears. Berta sleeps.

Anita looks at the time. "6:40am." 20 more minutes to claim the spot. Worried, she looks around for the directions and can't find them. She sees an "Exit Approaching" sign come up.

She nudges Berta awake.

ANITA
Give me the directions.

Berta awakens, unaware of the huge argument that just transpired.

BERTA
Well good morning to you too.

ANITA
We don't have time for this. Where did you put them.

BERTA
I ain't got directions. I don't even know where we're going.

ANITA
For the thousandth time, Emory Hospital.
(beat)
You were the one who wanted to write em and keep em. So where are they?

Anita sits back in the chair realizing Berta is right. She stops in the middle of the highway, right before the exit.

No one is around for miles.

BERTA
What the hell do you think you're doing!

ANITA

Oh hush up so I can find it!

Anita scrambles around the car. Berta looks around nervously.

BERTA

Could you hurry up before someone
crashes into the back of us!

ANITA

Shut up!

Berta sits back in her seat staring ahead. Anita twirls
around in her seat and becomes more and more frantic.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Son of a motherfucking bitch!

She smacks the steering wheel, pissed off. In doing so, she
knocks the butterfly mobile from the rearview mirror into
Berta's foot space.

Berta picks it up and holds it.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Don't mess with that! Just give it
here, alright!

BERTA

You really love this thing?

ANITA

Yeah now put it back.

BERTA

Butterflies that important, huh? My
sister--

ANITA

Yes I know, your sister loved
butterflies blah blah blah, you
told me.

Anita snatches them from Berta and hangs them delicately over
top the rearview mirror. Berta looks at them, back up at the
exit, and back at the mobile.

BERTA

You said Emory, right.

(beat)

I... I know where we are.

Anita rolls her eyes.

ANITA
No you don't.

BERTA
I do!

ANITA
Because this worked out so well the last time.

BERTA
What are you going on about?

ANITA
Nothing.

BERTA
Look, don't take this exit. Go to the next one... It should be... Jefferson.

Anita looks down at the next exit. Shit. It is Jefferson.

BERTA (CONT'D)
From there is my sister's house, and from there I know how to get to the hospital.

ANITA
(to herself)
That ain't the way to my house, is it?

BERTA
Say somethin'?

ANITA
No.. Nothing. I don't think you're right.

BERTA
I am!

ANITA
No. Let's just go this way. I think I remember it.

BERTA
(raising her voice)
No dammit! Listen to me! I ain't some helpless little thing. It's that way I know it! I would never forget it!

Anita is taken aback. She doesn't move.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Well ain't you gonna go.

ANITA
I don't thi--

BERTA
Well move then! I'll drive!

ANITA
HA! You'll drive!? You can't even
drive your own wheelchair.

BERTA
Get out!

ANITA
No!

BERTA
GET OUT OF THE DAMN CAR!

ANITA
NO!

BERTA
It's either you get out or we'll be
stuck here forever.

ANITA
You've got to be kidding me.
(beat)
Fine! Here! Take the wheel you damn
child! This should be *real* good.

Anita gets out of the car and walks over to passenger side.
Berta gets out and walks to the driver's.

Anita watches Berta settle in. She's giggling because Berta
clearly is very out of touch. She doesn't quite remember how
to start the car, let alone drive.

ANITA (CONT'D)
Any day now.

BERTA
Shut up. You're distracting me.

With a little more tests, she turns the car on. She shakily
drives off.

58

INT. CAR - MORNING

58

Berta drives through the streets of Atlanta.

ANITA

We almost there yet?

Berta continues her gaze forward. She's pressed closely to the wheel of the car, driving under the speed limit.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Tick Tock, Ms. Daisy.

Berta continues on.

ANITA (CONT'D)

I thought you said you knew where you were going!

BERTA

I do!

ANITA

Sure don't seem like it.

BERTA

(giggling)

I just don't remember the last time I drove.

ANITA

Oh sweet lord.

As Berta drives, Anita becomes aware of her surroundings.

It's the same street of Berta's accident years ago. They stop at a light. It's the same intersection where Berta's crash took place. Anita looks distraught, out the window to the spot of the accident.

BERTA

Didn't think I'd make it this far, did you?

Anita doesn't answer. She continues to stare out at the spot.

BERTA (CONT'D)

Can't give me no credit, huh?

(beat)

When we supposed to get there?

ANITA
(not even looking to
Berta)
Um... 7... am...

Berta looks down at the clock. It reads "6:53am." Oh shit.
Berta looks around, seeing if any cars are coming, and
through the red light she slams on the gas.

ANITA (CONT'D)
What the fuck are you doing?! Are
you crazy!!

BERTA
3 minutes! We're almost there!
We're down the street from my
sister's!!

ANITA
You crazy--

Berta makes a hard turn, weaving in and out of traffic. Anita
bumps her head against the window.

BERTA
My bad!

Berta swerves again. She makes a hard turn down a residential
street.

Anita perks up, recognizing her surroundings. She's visibly
nervous. Just then, she sees the sign for "Monastery Avenue."
It's a straight away street so Berta picks up speed.

Each row house looks the exact same as Anita tries to catch a
glimpse of each and every one. She hopes to see her own.
Berta picks up more speed.

As Berta gets to the end of the street, Anita finally catches
a glimpse of her old home.

It seems like slow motion for her. It's repainted, remodeled,
and refurbished.

In that moment, Berta zooms by. Anita turns around in her
chair to see the house directly behind her. It fades into the
distance.

BERTA (CONT'D)
The house on the corner. That was
my sister's!

Berta continues forward. Anita sits forward into her chair and looks ahead.

FADE TO:

59 INT. HOSPITAL - DAY - **1975**

59

Anita stands in front of hospital doors as PEOPLE file in and out. She's standing in front of the ER wing. She doesn't go in.

In a commotion, Berta's body is wheeled out of the ambulance and into the ER.

Tears form in her eyes as she watches Berta go out of sight into the madness of the hospital. She looks around, wipes her face, turns around, and leaves.

MATCH CUT TO:

60 INT. HOSPITAL - MORNING - **2000**

60

Busyness ensues. PEOPLE mill about, filing back and forth. People COUGH and SNEEZE throughout the ER waiting room.

Like the hospital before, it's sterile and fluorescent. Nothing special. Nothing inviting.

Anita scuffles into the hospital ahead of Berta, who is wheeling herself through the automatic doors. Anita approaches a MALE RECEPTIONIST, (30s).

It's "7:04am"

ANITA

(rushed)

Hi, I'm here to check in a patient.

RECEPTIONIST

This is ER ma'am, there's no check-ins.

Berta wheels up. The Receptionist notices her.

ANITA

Well where is the place for Alzheimer's people?!

RECEPTIONIST

That would be down that hall right there.

Anita begins to walk off. The Receptionist calls out to her.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)
(referring to Berta)
Does she need any help?

Anita turns around.

ANITA
She got in here just fine, didn't
she? Now hurry up. We're late!

Anita continues down the hallway.

61 INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

61

Anita jets down this long hallway. BEEPS echo the halls.
DOCTORS jet by. Anita takes in her surrounding, albeit
overwhelming.

Berta and The Receptionist follow closely behind.

Anita approaches the "Alzheimer's Residency." Front desk.

ANITA
I'm here to check in a patient.

A NURSE looks up.

NURSE
What's the name of the patient?

ANITA
Roberta Murrell.

The Nurse checks the computer database.

NURSE
Ms. Murrell was supposed to be
here...

She looks at the time. It's now "7:18am."

NURSE (CONT'D)
18 minutes ago. Unfortunately we
cannot--

ANITA
You're not about to tell me what
you can't do if I'm only 18 minutes
late.

NURSE
I'm sorry but policy is policy.

ANITA
Policy my ass. You didn't spend two damn days in a car driving her ass here. So, you can chuck the policy out of the window.

NURSE
The bed was gone 18 minutes ago.

ANITA
Oh bullshit the bed is gone! Check again!

NURSE
Ma'am--

ANITA
(sternly)
Check. Again. Now.

The Nurse looks at Anita, afraid. She checks the computer once again, defeated.

NURSE
Well look at th--

ANITA
Mhmm.

Beat.

NURSE
Ms. Murrell.
(beat)

I have your transferred documents here in the computer but I need to confirm. Is one, Geraldine Murrell still your emergency contact?

BERTA
Yes. That's my daughter.

NURSE
And you are aware that this facility maintains that you remain here in our care until further notice? You choose to be here, correct?

BERTA
I know! I know!

Anita looks at Berta solemnly.

NURSE
Alrighty! We can take you on back
now.

The Nurse grabs Berta's wheelchair to turn until--

BERTA
(laughing)
You were one hell of a driver.

ANITA
Oh now you remember me? Convenient.

BERTA
(laughing)
How could I forget someone so down
right awful?

Berta grins.

BERTA (CONT'D)
And still nothing from you, huh? I
tell ya, you're going to miss me
when I'm gone. You'll see. Goodbye
ya old grump ass. Maybe you should
think about getting a new job.

Berta laughs as Anita slowly walks off.

The Nurse rolls her off into an adjacent room.

NURSE
(to Berta)
I almost forgot your chart!

She rushes back to the reception desk to collect the chart.
Anita she rushes back over to the desk.

ANITA
Hey...

The Nurse looks up.

ANITA (CONT'D)
Change the emergency contact.

NURSE
Excuse me?

ANITA

You can't keep Geraldine as the contact.

NURSE

That's really the choice of the patient.

ANITA

Look her daughter's dead, okay. She don't know that.

(beat)

Make... make me the contact.

NURSE

And you are?

Anita looks over towards the room and back at the Nurse. These words are hard to say.

ANITA

I'm... her sister.

NURSE

Oh, of course.

ANITA

But don't tell her I did that, hear? It's no use anyway.

The Nurse agrees. Anita walks out towards the front doors. She turns back one time.

62 EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY

62

Anita exits the hospital doors. She's alone and she feels it. She gets to her car and turns around to take one final look at the hospital. She takes a deep breath and gets into the car, peeling out of the parking lot.

63 INT. CAR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

63

Anita drives along in silence. She stops at a red light and stares at the butterfly mobile hanging.

She leans her head against the window. Lying there, in the corner of her eye, she catches a glimpse of a liquor store.

She perks up, turns on her left blinker and as soon as the light turns green, she makes her way into the liquor store parking lot.

64 INT. CAR - DAY

64

Anita, parked, stares forward into the street, twiddling a FIFTH OF VODKA in her finger tips.

She looks down at it, cracks the top open, and takes a large swig. It burns.

She stares at her butterfly mobile again. After she takes another burning swig of vodka, she closes the top, and puts it in the back seat.

She starts the car.

65 EXT. MONASTERY AVE - DAY

65

Beautifully cut, green grass sits in front of each house. Perfectly painted picket fences line almost every house.

The sky is pure blue and the sun shines down on to the blissful day. A cool breeze FLUTTERS through the trees.

Anita's car slowly pulls up.

66 INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

66

Anita stares ahead, fighting to look at house "2792." When she finally can bring herself to look, she stares, as a tear forms in her eye. She gets out of the car.

67 EXT. MONASTERY AVE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

67

Anita walks slowly to her front steps. She takes in the surroundings. It all looks so different. As she walks up the steps to the front door, she can't bring herself to knock so she just stands there.

She looks down to the lower half of the door. It's pristine unlike the gaping gun hole she remembers. She crouches down to take a closer look until the door flings open. To Anita's surprise, A MOM answers the door.

MOM
Can I help you?

68 INT. ROWHOUSE - DAY

68

The house is beautifully decorated, clearly renovated with today's latest designs and technology.

The furniture is hand picked and immaculate. Anita sits on a couch, completely out of place. She looks around.

She inspects every inch of the room. She last saw it in ruins. She looks at every piece of the space, knowing what has happened here. Her eyes can't hide the hurt.

The Mom comes back into the living room from the kitchen, heading towards a coat closet.

MOM

You sure I can't take your coat?

Anita takes a look at the coat closet, the one she once hid in, and shakes her head.

ANITA

No no. I'm alright. Thank you.

The DAD comes in from the kitchen, holding a tray of waters. He hands one to Anita.

DAD

So you're here all the way from Baltimore? That's a long way to drive!

MOM

How long did it take you?

ANITA

Two days but that's because of some things we had to take care of.

DAD

Understandable.

MOM

(sweetly)

And it's crazy that you used to live here! I hope we done the place some justice.

Anita looks around.

ANITA

It sure is something.

DAD

And why did you come down here in the first place?

ANITA
(smiling)
Just some family business.

MOM
Well since we're here, would you
like to see what's new!

ANITA
Yeah, yeah. Sure.

69 INT. HALLWAY - DAY

69

Mom leads Anita down the hallway.

MOM
As you can see we managed to expand
the walls a bit, giving it more
room. Can you tell?

Anita grazes her hands against the walls.

MOM (CONT'D)
You like the wallpaper? I hope we
did your place some justice.
(beat)
Let's go upstairs. It's, in my
opinion, the best part of the
house.

She goes up the steps. Anita cautiously follows.

In the upstairs hallway, everything is beautifully designed
to mimic an upscale french parlor.

ANITA
Wow... You weren't kidding.

MOM
Here, let me show you my son's
room.

She takes Anita to a bedroom that is slightly cracked. She
opens it slowly to reveal a sleeping young boy. An iPad plays
music beside him. Anita smiles.

MOM (CONT'D)
I designed this one myself.

ANITA
It's... great.
(beat)
Only way to get him sleep?

She points to the iPad?

MOM

Ha, yeah. How'd you know?

ANITA

My boy was just like it.

MOM

Oldest trick in the book.

ANITA

We had this radio we'd stick in the bathroom down there. He could hear it from his room... This room actually. He said it made him feel safe.

(beat)

Like someone was always there.

Anita stares at the bathroom, exhaling. A sigh of relief and comfort.

ANITA (CONT'D)

You know... when I couldn't be there or awake, he'd always have someone to talk to or hear.

MOM

That's sweet.

(beat)

Would you like to see the master bedroom?

Anita looks at the bedroom.

MOM (CONT'D)

Wait until you see what I did with the master closet!

She's not thrilled. She remembers all too well what went down in that master bedroom.

ANITA

No. No, thank you. I should get going. Back on the road, you know.

MOM

Okay, well, do you want to call anyone to let them know you arrived safely and are on your way back?

ANITA
(in jest)
Ain't nobody worrying about me.

MOM
Oh trust me. Someone is always
worrying. I really can't believe
you are going to make that trip all
alone. Didn't you come down here
with somebody?

ANITA
Yeah but she had to stay. My sister
had to stay.

MOM
Can I ask what for?

ANITA
You can but that don't mean I'm
gonna tell you.

The Mom recoils, shocked by the hostility. Anita notices.

ANITA (CONT'D)
She's in the hospital.

MOM
I'm so sorry to hear that.

ANITA
It's fine. She's fine. Just a bit
of Alzheimer's.

MOM
Well I'm sure she appreciates you
looking out for her and all. What
are we without family!
(beat)
So you sure I can't call nobody for
you?

This hits Anita. She takes it in.

ANITA
I'll be alright. Thank you though.
You know, for showing me all this.
It really brings me back to... to
home.

MOM
Oh no problem! No problem at all!

70 EXT. MONASTERY AVE - AFTERNOON 70

Anita stands outside of the car. She takes in one final look at the street. Everything has changed.

She gets in her car, starts it, and drives off.

71 INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS 71

Anita drives down Monastery Avenue, passing her old street. As she makes her way through the city she becomes more and more fidgety. She looks back towards her past.

She taps her foot. Her heart races. The light is still red. She looks at the crash site one more time.

Fuck it. Anita makes a U-turn and beams straight back towards the hospital.

72 INT. HOSPITAL - AFTERNOON 72

Anita walks through the doors of the Hospital. She approaches the Alzheimer's Ward.

She's met by the Nurse from before at the receptionist desk.

NURSE

Ms. Murrell. Forget something?

ANITA

I did actually.

(beat)

Where's my sister's room?

NURSE

She's asleep due to her medication.
We're about to take her for
observation.

ANITA

That's all I need.

The Nurse escorts Anita to the room and leaves.

73 INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS 73

Anita walks up to the bed and gently caresses Berta's hand. Anita pulls a chair up to the side of the bed and sits, staring genuinely. Berta sleeps.

ANITA

(in jest)

I could slap you right now, you know that? All these damn years apart, and here I am still taking care of your simple ass. Funny thing is, you won't remember a thing about it.

(beat)

It must be something to wake up and not remember a thing... Lucky even. You got all these doctors in here calling it a disease and a problem but some people wish they were you, you know that?

Anita begins to get up, standing over top of her sister.

ANITA (CONT'D)

I don't hate you anymore, Berta.

Anita picks up Berta's hand and kisses it and makes her way to the door. Just then Berta jumps awake, startling Anita.

ANITA (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ.

BERTA

(groggily)

Did you need something?

Anita, taken aback.

ANITA

Umm yes I--

Anita looks around the room and then back to Berta. She walks over to the hallway window to see the Nurse not at the desk.

BERTA

Well?

Anita checks the hallway, nervously. She smiles.

ANITA

I'm here to get you.

BERTA

Get me for what?

ANITA

For your... observation.

BERTA
(looking Anita up and
down)
You a doctor?

ANITA
I don't look like one?

BERTA
You ain't dressed like one.

ANITA
Yeah well, I'm on break. Now it's
over and we gotta move you.

Anita rushes Berta out of the bed.

BERTA
I'm coming. I'm coming.

Berta begins walking towards the door until..

ANITA
No no no. Sit your ass down in that
wheelchair.

BERTA
I ain't crippled!

ANITA
Sit! I'll push you.

Berta reluctantly does so. Anita is just about to push her
until Berta reaches back trying to grab her purse.

BERTA
Wait, I need my bag.

Berta accidentally knocks it off the table behind her. All of
her contents fall out.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Dammit.

ANITA
It's fine. I got it.

Anita picks up all of Berta's things.

ANITA (CONT'D)
Nah see! Always causing a mess.

BERTA
(confused)
What are you talking about?

Anita notices Berta's memory loss.

ANITA
Never mind.

Anita puts things back into the purse until, under tissues and loose pieces of paper she finds the bracelet from their childhood. Anita is stunned.

She holds it in her hand, tears swelling in her eyes. She picks it up and shows it Berta.

BERTA
Give me that back! I know you ain't trying to steal my valuables.

ANITA
(choked)
It's nice.

BERTA
It ain't mine. It's my sister's.

ANITA
Oh okay... You want it or do you want me to put it back in your bag?

BERTA
In the bag is fine.

Behind Berta, Anita pretends to put in back in the bag but she places it on her wrist and covers it with her sleeve.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Are we ready now?

Anita smiles at Berta. She pushes her out of the door.

74

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

74

Anita looks around. The Nurse from before is nowhere in sight. Anita hurriedly pushes Berta towards the exit.

BERTA
(loudly)
You can go a bit a slower.

ANITA
You can shut up.

BERTA
Excuse me?! What kind of doctor--

ANITA
(sharply)
Sh!

75 INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 75

Anita pushes Berta into one of the crowded waiting rooms. She looks nervous. PEOPLE swarm. DOCTORS and NURSES are around.

They slip right past anyone. No one notices or cares.

76 INT. HOSPITAL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS 76

Anita picks up the pace. They head toward the exit. Berta is confused.

BERTA
This don't look like the
observation room.

ANITA
I don't look like a doctor.

The NURSE from before notices.

NURSE
Excuse me. Where are you two going.

Anita continues to walk.

BERTA
Umm hello! She's talking to us.

ANITA
No she's not, keep quiet.

Anita pushes Berta likes she heard nothing. They exit the building through the automatic doors.

77 EXT. HOSPITAL - AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS 77

Anita pulls keys out of her pocket and unlocks the car door as she walks. Berta looks around, confused.

BERTA
What the hell are you doing!

ANITA
I'm taking you home.

BERTA
Home?!

ANITA
That's what I said, right.

They approach the car. Anita wheels Berta over to the passenger side.

ANITA (CONT'D)
Get in.

BERTA
I ain't getting in no random lady's car, are you crazy?

Anita sees The Nurse at the hospital doors, on the phone, with a concerned look on her face. She stares at Anita and Berta.

ANITA
Look Berta. It's me. Anita.

BERTA
What?!

ANITA
Me! Anita. Your sister, dammit! We don't have time for this get in.

BERTA
No you ain't!

ANITA
Look at me! Yes I am! Now get in the car. We'll play the alphabet game. We'll do our dance. Whatever, it is, just get in the car.

Berta looks Anita up and down. She takes notice to the butterflies all over. She sees the bracelet on Anita's wrist.

BERTA
Hey that's my bracelet.

ANITA
You mean *my* bracelet! I will explain everything once you get in.

Berta hesitantly does so. Anita picks up the wheel chair, folds it, and put it in the backseat. Just then, she sees the Alzheimer's Ward Nurse exiting the doors, scanning the lot.

Anita quickly hops in the drivers seat. Berta looks at her confused. Anita starts the car and reverses out of the spot.

The Nurse catches sight of the car backing out and begins to run up to the car. She bangs on the window.

NURSE

I'm going to call the police!

Anita shifts the car into drive, looks at the nurse, and flips her off, peeling out of the lot.

78

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

78

Anita drives down the street.

BERTA

(shouting)

Could you explain what the hell is going on!

ANITA

Oh would you stop yelling!

BERTA

You just kidnapped me, dammit!

ANITA

Oh you're so dramatic. Always have been, always will be.

BERTA

You don't know me!

Anita rolls her eyes.

Berta rummages through her purse. She pulls out her phone.

BERTA (CONT'D)

I'm calling the police.

She dials. Anita looks over, and snatches the phone from Berta. Anita rolls down the window and tosses the phone out.

BERTA (CONT'D)

What the fuck!

ANITA

Trust me. It don't work anyway!

Berta looks down and sees the Vodka in the middle console.

BERTA
Are you drunk?!

Anita looks over at Berta's face and hysterically LAUGHS. Just then, Anita picks up the vodka and tosses out the window as well. Berta looks over in disbelief.

Berta scans Anita once more, the butterfly attire, the bracelet, and her face. She holds on her face, a face that looks just like her own.

BERTA (CONT'D)
Well damn... throwing my phone out the window like that. You may just be Anita after all. That bitch.

Anita looks over at Berta again and SCREAMS of LAUGHTER even harder. Berta chuckles a bit.

The car speeds off into the distance.

THE END