

BATTLE BORN PILOT

written by

John E. Whittaker

327 3/4 North Spaulding Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90036
775-771-9571
npspider@gmail.com

SCENE 1:

EXT. CITY STREET - RENO, NV - DAY

We open on a city street in a not so great neighborhood in Reno, Nevada. A newer Ford Fusion or equivalent drives down this road. At the wheel is Sandra Bailey, an African-American female, early 30's, braids, light makeup, designer red pant suit.

The man sitting next to Sandra is Alfonso Mitchell her husband, also African-American, and on his smart phone. He's the same age but heavier with short hair and wearing a police officer's uniform. It's winter but sunny and there's no snow on the ground.

EXT. GAS STATION - DAY

They drive towards a gas station/convenience store. No other cars around. She pulls in to the station and he looks up.

INT. CAR

AL

Why are you stopping here?

SANDRA

Gas is cheap.

AL

This place got hit twice last month.

She stops the car and turns off the ignition.

SANDRA

No one's robbing it right now so seems like the perfect time to get gas.

A beat as he looks at her.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

Come on, Anderson starts court at 8:00.

AL

I know he does.

SANDRA

Then you should know I'm in a hurry.

Al unfastens the seat belt and groans as he opens the door and exits the car.

AL

If you got time to stop for gas then you got time for me to pee.

EXT. - OUTSIDE CAR - GAS STATION

Sandra starts to speak but Al closes the door and walks towards the store. She pushes the button to open the gas tank cover.

SANDRA

(To herself) I thought women's bladders were supposed to be small.

She gets out of the car.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

(Calling to Al) I thought men's bladders --

He waves her off.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

Oh, forget it.

She slides the credit card and begins to pump gas. We see a badge clipped to her lapel. It reads: Deputy District Attorney Sandra Bailey.

Her gaze meanders until it stops on two men and one woman across the street next to an abandoned brick building. They're trying to convince the woman of something. Then they kind of 'help' her around to the back of the building out of sight. Sandra notes that, just in case.

Sandra keeps pumping. She looks at the convenience store. He's not out yet. Figures.

The only sound we hear is gasoline whooshing through the hose into the tank until -- CRASH! Sandra whips her head around to her left. The brick building across the street. Sounded like a bottle hitting the pavement. Then, two male voices. Can't understand what they're saying but it sounds like laughing. Sandra stares in that direction. Then a woman's voice.

She's not laughing. One of the male voices sounds threatening. The female voice shrieks.

Without breaking her stare, Sandra uses both hands to set the little metal trigger holder against the pump's trigger and walks slowly towards the sounds.

FEMALE VOICE
(OS, louder) Stop it.

Sandra leaves the safety of the gas pumps. Another noise. More male voices. She walks faster then stops. She's got nothing with her. Looks around. Looks towards the brick building that conceals the source of the voices.

MALE VOICE
(OS) Get her legs.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING

Sandra spots a two foot metal pipe laying next to some trash and construction waste. She walks quickly now in her heels across the street to the pipe and picks it up. But she stands there, listening.

FEMALE VOICE
(OS) Stop it assholes.
Leave me alone.

MALE VOICE
(OS) Bitch, you got one
lay left in you.

FEMALE VOICE
(OS) I said NO!

SANDRA
That's all I need.

Sandra strides quickly and with purpose to the side of the building and turns the corner.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
(To unseen men and woman)
HEY!

EXT. GAS STATION

Now we're back at the store. Al steps out and towards the car but Sandra isn't there. Strange. He looks left and right. She's not there either.

He jogs to the car only to see the gas pump in the tank but no gas pumping and no one holding the pump handle. His mind goes right to where your mind would go if your wife disappeared in a bad neighborhood. Now his heart is racing. She wasn't in the store and she's not in the car.

Al hears a THUNK from behind that brick building, like metal striking brick. Then shouting. Sounds like Sandra. He puts on the college football running back moves through the gas pumps and SPRINTS towards the sound.

EXT. ABANDONED BUILDING

We follow Al as he runs to the side of the building. More voices.

Al reaches the corner and stops. Hears Sandra and another female talking. Turns the corner with his right hand on his holster.

AL

Police!

Sandra stands there, pipe in her left hand, with some skanky ass looking white woman. Some kinda meth mouth lookin' --

SANDRA

(Breathing heavy and
visibly shaken.)

Al!

AL

What the hell happened?

Sandra drops the pipe.

SANDRA

Nothing.

FEMALE VOICE

Officer, this bitch is trying to --

AL

Shut up.

She shuts up.

Al looks around. It's just Sandra and this mugshot candidate. His tense shoulders relax a little as Al removes his hand from the holster. Heart still beating fast. Looking at Sandra.

AL (CONT'D)
Baby, what happened?

SANDRA
(Holding her left hand
with her right)
Just two dumb ass punks trying to
rough her up. I handled it.

Meth mouth takes a couple steps back.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Just two kids.

Al walks to Sandra.

AL
(Softer now) What
happened?

SANDRA
I heard a scream and came over to
investigate. Two young men were
trying to force themselves on her.
They ran away.

M&M steps back some more.

AL
(Looking around to make
sure no one else is
there.)
How did you get them to do that?

SANDRA
I used very persuasive language.

AL
Is that right?

SANDRA
That's right.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
(Holding out her left
hand.) But I cut myself.

Al holds her hand. He frowns.

AL
Pretty sharp words.

SANDRA
Well, I had a little help.

Al looks at the pipe, bends down, and picks it up. There's a little blood near one end where the pipe had been scored by something tougher than it. The other end is coated with dust.

The poster child for drug abuse prevention runs. They let her go.

AL

(Suddenly overwhelmed.)
You scared the shit out
of me. I came back and
you were gone. You can't
do that shit.

SANDRA

I'm sorry, Al.
(She really is.)
I didn't mean to frighten you.

AL

You're not thinking. Something
could have happened to you.

SANDRA

I said I'm sorry.

AL

Sorry wouldn't mean shit if
something had happened to you.

SANDRA

(Defensive) I thought I
saw a crime and went over
to stop it. You'd have
done the same thing.

AL

Yeah, but I have a gun. And a
badge.

SANDRA

I have a badge, too.
(Pause)
And a pipe.

Al looks at Sandra. He's still upset but she's ok.

AL

Not every battle needs you to fight
it.

SANDRA

That's what makes me a good DA.

AL
Fight all you want in court. Just
don't do it on the street.

SANDRA
(Pause)
I won't.

AL
You promise me? You have to promise
me.

SANDRA
Al, I promise.

AL
(Less upset.) Thank you.

Al still has the pipe so he examines it and takes a few
seconds to breathe.

AL (CONT'D)
(Nodding to the dusty end
of the pipe)
At least there's no blood on this
end.

SANDRA
I'm not stupid.

AL
They could have been packin'.

SANDRA
Bullies like that are all the same.
You just have to use loud noises to
scare them away.

AL
Either way, this isn't the place to
be a hero. Didn't I tell you this
is a bad neighborhood?

SANDRA
You just mentioned the gas station.

AL
(Points to Sandra's
injured hand)
Let me see it again.

SANDRA
Any excuse to hold my hand.

Not funny. Al takes her hand. Her palm has a small gash.

AL
You gotta get some antibiotic
ointment on that.

SANDRA
I will.

AL
(Stern, like a parent)
Keep an eye on it. Don't
let it get infected.
Don't touch anything.

SANDRA
I'm OK.

AL
We need to buy some band-aids from
that store.

SANDRA
No, we don't. I got a tampon in my
purse.

Al sighs. Sandra can tell he's still upset so she gives him the time to calm down but watches him. Caresses his shoulder and back. He takes the time to talk himself down from the ledge.

After several seconds Al is calm enough.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Let's go back to the car.
(Points to the pipe.)
You can throw it away at the
station.

She takes his arm with her good hand.

SANDRA (CONT'D)
Come on, Duke.

Al smiles. An inside joke. They start walking back to the car.

AL
Why'd she call you a bitch?

SANDRA
I got her convicted of possession a
few years back.

Al furrows his brow. And she still thinks that woman's a victim?

Sandra inspects her shoulders and arms.

SANDRA (CONT'D)

My suit's not dirty is it? Maybe I should go home to change.

AL

(Shakes his head)

And you don't want to be late.

END SCENE