

Triggered

By

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OVER BLACK:

NATALEE(YELLING O.S)
TWICE AS HARD TO GET HALF!

LOUD THUD

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LOUD THUD

FADE IN:

INT. EXPENSIVE HOTEL SUITE - BEVERLEY WILLSHIRE - NIGHT

We see NATALEE SIMONE, violently bringing down the crystal trophy one last time with all her might, splattering blood across her face.

Breathing heavily, she stares down at what she had done with no remorse.

She tilts her head, takes one last look and steps over the head of the motionless, unrecognizable body.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Natalee stares at herself in the huge bathroom mirror, there is blood splattered across her face but her clothing is still perfect.

The pace of her BREATHING slows down as she calms herself, she sits the bloodied crystal trophy on the marble sink but avoids touching the surface.

Behind her is the body of a male face up, his face is an unrecognizable mush, and blood is slowly gushing from his head.

She begins vigorously tapping her finger on the award. Without breaking her stare in the mirror, the sound of her HEARTBEAT begins to rapidly increase.

(a beat)

Her finger suddenly stops, her heart rate slows down as a sinister smile spreads across her face. She looks directly at the audience.

OVER BLACK

TITLE: TWO MONTHS AGO

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR

**Allow me to give you a little more
insight into our protagonist.**

FADE IN:

INT - CONDO - EARLY MORNING (5:45 AM)

CLOSE UP of photos of Eartha Kit, Nina Simone, Oprah Winfrey, and Beyonce above a black velvet headboard with golden accents. We move down the headboard to find Natalee sleeping, face up, hands folded across her stomach as if she were sleeping in a casket.

Natalee, Dark Skinned African American Female, Late 20's, Overworked Magazine Editor, very polished, well spoken, strong but has a softness to her.

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR

Meet Natalee. Natalee Simone.

Natalee is starrng at the ceiling with a smile on her face.

Her ALARM begins blaring.

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR

**Who seems to be in a better mood than
we previously saw her...**

Natalee snoozes the alarm, slips on her satin slippers, and makes her bed with the speed and precision of a hotel maid.

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR

**As you see, she has done quite well
for herself at the tender age of 28...**

She walks over to her window and opens her bedroom curtains revealing a breathtaking LA view against a beautiful dawn sky.

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR (CONT'D)

**As the VP & Assistant Editor of
Primetime Magazine, the #1 lifestyle
(MORE)**

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR (CONT'D)
magazine in the world, she lives a
life that most dream of...

She leaves her bedroom, walks through her closet (revealing a to die for wardrobe) and into her bathroom.

INT. NATALEE'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

NATALEE
 Siri play my "Wake Up Bitch" playlist.

Siri begins playing Reel It In by Amine

Natalee approaches her mirror and greets her reflection with a smile. She looks down at a framed note on a tattered postcard that reads "Twice as hard to get half. You got this Simone. -NaNa"

NATALEE
 I got this Nana! This Award is MINE!

She sighs nostalgically and nods her head reassuring her reflection that she "got this."

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR
Today the awardees for the Wiseman 100
Gala will be announced, and Natalee is
expecting to be awarded with the
company's highest honor.

Natalee brushes her teeth and finishes her morning beauty routine. She turns the shower on and steps in.

The MUSIC gets louder in the background.

She continues her dancing in the shower which is quickly interrupted by the ringing of her cell phone.

Instinctively knowing who's calling she takes a deep breath, ready to receive the good news.

NATALEE
 Siri answer.
 (Ecstatic tone)
 GOOD MORNING BRENT!

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR
Meet Brent... Who should be heading to
the Primetime offices, but is in fact
 (MORE)

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR (CONT'D)

not.

INT. PRIVATE JET - DAWN

CLOSE UP of Gold Rolex, Gold cufflinks, against crisp Navy Blue suit. BRENT WISEMAN, White Male, Early 30's.

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR

Brent is the epitome of privilege, he has never worked a day in his life but thanks to the centuries-long curse of nepotism... he is President and lead Editor of Primetime.

BRENT

(ecstatic)

I'M IN AN AMAZING MOOD THIS MORNING,
DO YOU KNOW WHY I'M IN AN AMAZING MOOD
NATTY?

INTERCUT:

NATALEE

(can't control her excitement,
tries to play it cool)

I may have an idea but why are you in
a great mood Brent?

BRENT (O.S)

Well my chocolate eclair, guess who
will be getting honored for Primetime
having their most profitable year yet?

She jumps up and down in the shower, almost slips but catches her balance on the railing.

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR

This is amazing news! Have 8 years of sleepless nights, endless hours of hard work, and sacrifices finally paid off? You see ...

BEGIN MONTAGE:

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR CONT'D

From her first day there, Natalee has worked her ass off to push that company in a profitable direction, while Brent spent his days getting well... being a Brent

TITLE: Brent - noun - White, CIS, Straight, Male whose sole identity is formed around the American Frat Boy Lifestyle (partying, drinking, lack of understanding for anyone outside of himself, the occasional sexual assault, and evading judicial punishment no matter the crime.) **Synonyms: Brett, Chad, Brad, Blake, Trent, Brody, Garrett, etc.**

SPLIT SCREEN:

INT - PRIMETIME HEADQUARTERS - 10 YEARS AGO

TITLE: Intern Natalee - 10 YEARS AGO

ON THE LEFT:
We see a young Natalee behind a desk that has a plaque which reads "Brent Wiseman", she is finishing up an important memo Brent was supposed to send out yesterday, letting employees know the date of the gala had been announced.

ON THE RIGHT:
Brent is being carried into the office by his friends after a long night of partying. They are struggling to keep him from falling while trying to inconspicuously make it through the office lobby as the receptionist stares at them.

INT. PRIMETIME STUDIO - 5 YEARS AGO

TITLE: Creative Director Natalee - 5 YEARS AGO

ON THE LEFT:
Natalee is behind Martice producing a shoot that Brent was supposed to take care of. She apologizes profusely on behalf of Brent stating that he had to deal with a family emergency.

ON THE RIGHT:
Brent is partying on his yacht, his hands are tied behind his back as he begins the "Apocalypse", where he does a line of coke, takes 2 shots, pops a molly, and ends with a huge bong hit.

INT. PRIMETIME CONFERENCE ROOM - LAST WEEK

TITLE: VP & Assistant Editor Natalee - LAST WEEK

ON THE LEFT :
Natalee in a meeting presenting new marketing ideas and their financial projections.

ON THE RIGHT :
Brent in the middle of a very intense threesome with an unidentified female and guy.

END MONTAGE:

Natalee is in the shower unable to control the smile on her

face.

BRENT (O.S)

I AM! Primetime has officially made it to the top of Wiseman Publishing! I must say my name just brings success!

Brent's voice fades out, her HEARTBEAT begins rapidly increasing. Natalee is visibly angry, but rather than reacting she digs her stiletto nails into her hand as hard as she can.

NATALEE

(voice cracking)

That's amazing Brent, I'm so happy for you.

BRENT

I bet you're happy to be a part of this greatness! I'm actually on my way to Cabo to celebrate, you think you can keep things running without me while I'm gone? I know it takes a lot to play God.

Natalee digs her nails into her hand a little harder, the steam of the shower intensifies with her anger.

NATALEE

I can handle everything, enjoy Cabo! Is there anything I should know before heading in today?

BRENT (O.S)

No, the skies should be clear for takeoff, I promise I didn't leave any turbulence but I'll see you in a few weeks! BIG DADDY OUT!

Natalee releases her nails from her hand and watches as the blood trickles into the shower, stone-faced. She then leans against the wall of her shower and slowly slides down to the floor releasing a loud awkward screech.

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR

That pasty cunt.

EXT- PRIMETIME HEADQUARTERS - EARLY MORNING

A Male driver steps out of the car and opens the back door, Natalee steps out and begins her walk into the Primetime

headquarters. Very well dressed, hair bone straight, coffee in one hand, Hermes and cellphone in the other.

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR

Welcome to Prime...

Natalee stops mid-walk and makes a very stank face.

NATALEE

Okay King Elizabeth, I think I can take it from here.

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR

But, but I just started. I thought we were doing well together...

NATALEE

Look I tried the Bridget Jones thing but I'm kinda over having a white man controlling my narrative, I deal with that enough in life. Don't worry you'll be back, I've got this part.

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR

FINE! Just don't do anything interesting until I get back.

She enters the office building and makes her way through the lobby.

INT. LOBBY OF PRIMETIME OFFICES - EARLY MORNING

She makes eye contact with the audience during her walk...

NATALEE

(to audience)

Sorry about that, in the words of every black woman ever "if you want something done right, do it your damn self"

The elevator doors close. Everybody Mad by O.T Genesis begins playing.

INT - PRIMETIME HEADQUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

The elevator doors open and Natalee appears, beginning her power walk to her office.

NATALEE

(to audience)

Welcome to Primetime, the #1 lifestyle magazine in the world, thanks to moi. Think of me as black Miranda Priestly just with a lot more melanin and a lot less recognition.

(a beat)

Working here has been my goal since I picked up my first Primetime at 8 years old! People live by the words of Primetime as if it's their bible.

(a beat)

And it has been MY DREAM to control a mainstream media narrative that holds so much power, especially now when pop culture is BLACK culture!

She takes a loud slurp of her coffee.

TITLE: CAUTION! THE TEA IS EXCEPTIONALLY HOT!

NATALEE (CONT'D)

I will not be satisfied until I can give the disenfranchised a voice people will listen to that isn't saturated by the opinions of straight white males!

(a beat)

I'm a few steps closer to making that dream come true. But as my Nana always said, every rose has its thorns...

WHITE EMPLOYEE #1

(Extremely Urban)

Waddup bawse?!

WHITE EMPLOYEE #2

Heyyyyy girlfriennnnn! Slay the Balenciaga!

WHITE EMPLOYEE #3

(approaching Natalee)

YASSS QUEEN! Allow your Melanade to glow! You know like melanin with lemonade because you're giving me Yonce vibes.

Natalee palms his face and guides him out of her way.

NATALEE

So many thorns... but I must carefully
(MORE)

NATALEE (CONT'D)
 choose my battles if I want to
 continue to prosper.

(a beat)

But for my non-black folks out there,
 the proper way to greet a black woman
 is, I don't know... "Hello?!" the
 ebonics you learned from Cardi B this
 morning are uncalled for!

INT. NATALEE'S OFFICE - MORNING

She enters her office and her assistant follows promptly
 behind her.

NATALEE
 Good Morning Rebecca, where is my
 briefing?

She begins situating herself at her desk before noticing that
 Rebecca isn't Rebecca. She tilts her head quizzically.

NATALEE
 (shocked)
 And you are?

LUNA NICOLE, Afro-Latina (Cuban), 22, from Compton, CA.
 Short, very shapely, long straight hair, brown skin, very
 stylish.

LUNA
 (nervously)
 Sorry, I'm Luna Nicole, Rebecca's
 temporary replacement, um... Brent
 thought she would be a bigger help in
 Cabo...

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BUNGALOW IN CABO

Brent snorting cocaine out of Rebecca's ass.

BRENT
 I've always wanted to do that. Call me
 LEO DECAP-THESE-HOES Wooooo!!

CUT TO:

INT. NATALEE'S OFFICE

Luna places the briefing book in front of Natalee.

LUNA

But Ms. Simone let me start by saying that I am a huge fan and I have nothing but love and admiration for your work...

Luna's voice FADES OUT, Natalee looks at the camera.

NATALEE

(to audience)

Y'all also see that she's black right? I'm not sure if you noticed the blizzard we walked through before getting here but this is shocking.

LUNA

He also said we'd have a lot in common, we should work well together "#blackgirlmagic".

Luna makes air quotations with her hands. Natalee rolls her eyes.

NATALEE

Please excuse his ignorance, but while he may think we have a lot in common, I don't know you.

Luna gulps.

Natalee begins looking through her briefing but catches a glance of Luna's shoes.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

What do you feel makes you qualified for this position? Aside from the vintage Dior pumps that I'll gladly determine if you're worthy of wearing.

LUNA

I assure you that I am highly qualified, I graduated top of my class at Princeton with a degree in journalism.

(she sits her resume in front of Natalee)

Fashion has always been a passion of mine but it was your very first piece in Primetime "Black like it never

(MORE)

LUNA (CONT'D)

left" that pushed me into the field of journalism, I have never seen clothing and words come together like that. Just give me a day to prove to you that I can do this I promise you won't be disappointed and I can show you why these shoes chose me.

NATALEE

Alright Luna, seeing as though I have no choice, let's see what you can do.

Natalee continues scanning her briefing using her finger to run down the long list.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

You will learn quickly by paying attention, asking questions, and please make sure you are always taking notes if I do not see a notebook in your hands while here I will be personally offended.

She abruptly stops her finger on the page.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

Now I use this briefing as a reminder but there is a Wiseman Gala briefing listed here that shouldn't be.

LUNA

Ah, yes. Rebecca left things a little scattered but your first appointment is at 8:30 AM, where you will address the coverage and plans for the Wiseman Gala.

Natalee freezes, tilts her head, and raises her eyebrow so high that Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson would be proud.

NATALEE

(very cold)

Excuse me?

The sunlight shining through her window begins to get dimmer.

LUNA

(nervously)

Um yes, Brent and his parents have asked that you overlook the plans for

(MORE)

LUNA (CONT'D)

the Wiseman Gala, given the success of
Primetime's Spring Soiree earlier this
year... that is fucking major...
right?

The bit of sunlight left disappears and clouds begin covering
the prematurely sunny sky behind her.

NATALEE

Luna could you go and ask Janine to
print you about 60 NDA's and could
you also grab me a coffee?

LUNA

Sure, who's Jani..

Natalee gives her an icy look and thunder and lighting
suddenly rumble behind her.

LUNA (CONT'D)

I'll figure it out.

Luna leaves the office quickly, closing the door behind her.
Natalee turns to the audience and begins chuckling
maniacally.

NATALEE

(in between laughs)

**I have to plan the award ceremony...
where that pasteurized privileged
crackhead... is going to receive an
award for MY WORK...**

(a beat)

Who says irony is dead?

Her laughter turns into very heavy controlled breathing, she
gets up and begins pacing her office.

The storm brewing behind her begins to intensify.

She grabs a pillow off of her couch and lets out a scream
into it while pacing.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

(angrily)

**Brent runs this company as much as
Elvis is the creator of Hound Dog and
baby you can just call me Big Mama
Thornton. I pour my soul into this
place and my work but the only thing**

(MORE)

NATALEE (CONT'D)

everyone sees is the jive white boy
with the money and blue suede shoes.
WHAT. THE. FUCK!

She rips the pillow in half but hears high heels walking towards her office.

She drops the pillow in the wastebasket, reapplies her poker face, and walks out of her office.

Luna catches her as she leaves, hands her the coffee and follows behind her.

NATALEE

(calmly)

Now I must say, hell yeah I'm pissed about not winning MY award but having this event on my resume would push my career in any direction that I want it to go.

(a beat)

Meaning the Wiseman's would either have to pay up and give me the title I deserve or watch my perfectly round ass bounce to the next venture.

INT - HUGE GLASS CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They enter a conference room where the all-white staff is promptly waiting, she situates her things at the head of the table but remains standing.

NATALEE

Good Morning! This will be a quick meeting so let's get to it...

A late staff member enters the room with a smile but sees Natalee standing at the head of the table and his smile quickly disappears.

LATE STAFF MEMBER

Apologies, Ms. Simone if I would have known you were hosting this meeting I...

Natalee puts her finger over her mouth immediately shushing the employee and looks at her watch.

NATALEE

I hate excuses more than I hate
(MORE)

NATALEE (CONT'D)
lateness. Technically, you're on time
love but what is my motto?

Natalee hits her pen on the side of the table like a composer
and raises her hand as if she's directing an orchestra.

EVERY STAFF MEMBER
(in unison)
If you're early you're on time, if
you're on time you're late, and if
you're late don't bother showing the
FUCK up.

NATALEE
The next time you forget to check your
email I'd suggest you just don't show
up.

She motions for him to find his seat. He quickly runs to his
seat, trips before getting there.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
Now the Wiseman Gala will be held at
the Beverly Hills Hotel on April 30th.
This is the most exclusive yet most
popular event in the history of this
country.
(a beat)
Not the MetGala, not a Beyonce Oscar
Party, but this event will have some
of the worlds richest and most
prominent people under one roof.
Before I begin, you all will have to
sign these NDA's.

Luna passes the NDA's out around the table.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
There will be no Tiffany Haddish
moments in regards to this event. I
don't care if you walk into a suite
and find out that Meryl Streep is
Becky with the good hair, you will
take that secret to the grave with
everything else that takes place.

Everyone quickly signs as Natalee situates herself at the
head of the table.

NATALEE

The leaking of any details will not only result in you losing your job but I will single-handedly make sure you're career disseminates...

(She smiles condescendingly, Luna gathers the NDA's)

Now that we've gotten that out of the way, let's begin.

CUT TO:

Natalee leaves the conference room with Luna following, they notice commotion coming from the lobby.

NATALEE

(checks her watch)

What the hell is going on now?

They head towards the lobby and 2 employees run pass them fixing their hair and makeup in their phone cameras, almost knocking Natalee over

EMPLOYEE #6

I can't believe that he's here omg.

NATALEE

Who?! It better be Jesus with the way you almost stained this Gabbanna blouse.

EMPLOYEE #7

Ew, not Jesus, LIL DUMP!!!!

Lil Dump steps off of the elevator and the employees bombard him asking for selfies and more.

LIL DUMP, 18, suburban angel turned mumble rapper, professional cultural appropriator.

NATALEE (O.S)

Lil Dump is currently one of the biggest commandeers in music and his entire gimmick pisses me off.

SMASH CUT TO:

Lil Dump music video "Mumble" where he is surrounded by black women slapping them on the ass, has a mouth full of colorful teeth, shitty brown dreads, homeless chic outfit, and rapping "I may mumble, but ya bitch don't".

CUT TO:

Janine the Receptionist runs up to Natalee.

JANINE, 22, the receptionist at Primetime, very nervous all the time, but gets shit done.

JANINE

We have a problem, Brent was supposed to do this interview on Lil Dump but Brent isn't here and nothing is ready what do we do? What should I do?
Wha...

Natalee places her finger over her lips, shushing Janine. She places her hands on Janine's shoulders, calming her down.

NATALEE

After I introduce myself, Luna will take him and his team to the screening room, while she is doing that you will contact Martice, tell him Simone said Code Red and then get in contact with the studio upstairs and have them set up the white seamless, simple lighting... and the hue's. Monitor that and catch your breath while I visit the closet. Understood?

Luna and Janine nod their heads. The collective heads towards the mob of employees.

Natalee clears her throat and the crowd surrounding Lil Dump immediately disperses.

NATALEE

Welcome to Primetime, Brent couldn't make it but I will take his place. My name is Natal...

LIL DUMP

Natalee Simone aka my future wifey, girl I know you better than I know my lyrics. I be spotting you with Brent all the time.

NATALEE

Sorry but my future husband would know that cutting me off mid-sentence is the quickest way for me to cut you.
(a beat)

These are my colleagues Luna and Janine, they will take care of you while we continue setting up the studio, if you need anything please feel free to let us know.

Lil Dump looks her up and down and a smile spread across his face.

LIL DUMP

Anything?

(He looks down at her ass)

How about some of that Ferrero Rocher?

NATALEE

(rolls her eyes)

Luna, please take our guest to the green room.

Luna guides Lil Dump and his team away and Natalee and Janine separate to tackle their tasks.

NATALEE

"No Turbulence," Brent says... First the gala and now I have to deal with this literal piece of shit. The worst part about being great at what you do, is that people always think there's nothing you can't do.

INT. PRIMETIME CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

She walks into the Primetime Closet where she is greeted by Lumiere'.

NATALEE

Lumi?! We have a code red.

Lumiere pops from under a pile of tutu's.

Lumiere'- keeper of the closet and Natalee's longest (only) work friend/therapist. White male, 29, very tall and husky, but has "feminine" traits.

LUMIERE

Red is dead, I prefer burnt rouge.

He places his hand on his forehead as he is dramatically carted towards Natalee by interns.

LUMIERE(CON'T)

Now, which one of Brent's messes can I assist you with cleaning up today? Thank god I came dressed in Janitor Chic today.

NATALEE

(lays her head on his chest)
Brent was supposed to do a spread on Lil Dump for next month's issue and now that's my problem.

LUMIERE

And you didn't win that award because?

NATALEE

Because that's the life of a black woman in America, all of the work none of the reward.

LUMIERE

Well if it helps, I must say you wear oppression well.

He grabs a diamond encrusted crown and places it on her head.

NATALEE

Thanks, it does wonders for the waistline.

LUMIERE

(pats the empty space on the cart)
Aboard my flying carpet boo, let me show you the world.

She hops on the cart next to him and the interns begin pushing them through the closet.

NATALEE

I was thinking we did the Miu Miu Spring 18'...

The interns begin pulling everything they list and placing them on a rack.

LUMIERE

With the vintage Tommy...?

NATALEE

And the Balenciaga...?

LUMIERE
Giuseppe Spring 19' Sneakers?

NATALEE
And throw in the Valentino Heroes'
just in case

LUMIERE
Oooh, I like where this is going, I'll
have the rack ready in 10 and I'll
throw a few advertising options.

NATALEE
Can you also have your interns find
the props from last years Halloween?
Especially the Givenchy and Wang
masks?

LUMIERE
Ohhh a spooky slay, we're on it.

Natalee leaves the closet and heads to the upstairs studio
where Janine is having a borderline panic attack.

INT. PRIMETIME STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

NATALEE
Janine, babe I'll take it from here.

JANINE
Thank you Ms.Simone, I called Martice
and he hasn't responded which is
freaking me out I called him five
times and texted Code Red with the red
circle emoji and a Stop sign... wait
do you think he thought that meant
"stop don't come" I don't...

MARTICE
Martice is here, can someone tell that
nervous ball of gas to calm down
before she combusts.

Martice Monclieff - late 20's, 6'6, African American, dark
skinned, very muscular, bald, stylish.

NATALEE (V.O)
(As he approaches)
Meet Martice ladies and Gents, world
famous photographer, ladies man, and
my ex-boyfriend... I know, he's fine
(MORE)

NATALEE (V.O) (CONT'D)
right, hell Penelope still gets a
little excited every time we see him.

TITLE: Penelope = Natalee's Vagina

NATALEE
 Janine that's all we need, stay near
 the phone and make sure Luna is okay
 in the green room.

Janine nods her head and leaves the studio.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
 Martice thank you for getting here so
 fast, give me sugar.

MARTICE
 Anything for the woman that holds my
 heart, so what do we have today?

They kiss each other on both cheeks, embrace and turn towards
 the white seamless.

NATALEE
 So here's my vision, we're shooting
 Lil Dump, the "rapper", but this will
 be my ode to appropriation.
 (As she talks the items appear)
 I want soft lighting with a slight red
 hue and a row of the masks Lumi will
 bring suspended mid-air, and make sure
 you leave a space in the middle for
 him.

MARTICE
 I'm feeling this, I'll tweak the
 lighting a little bit but we should be
 ready in about 15 min.

NATALEE
 You are a lifesaver love, how can I
 repay you?

MARTICE
 By meeting me in our spot after this
 shoot is done?

Natalee smiles and gives him a side eye.

MARTICE (CONT'D)

(whispers)

You know my face is always an open
seat for you.

Lumiere and the interns enter with the clothing and begin
setting up in the dressing room.

LUMIERE

And what about me? You think that seat
can fit all this ass?

MARTICE

Hello to you too Lumiere

NATALEE

Don't worry Lumi he likes being
smothered.

Lumi drops in front of Martice and looks up at him

LUMIERE

Well, you can call me gravy, porkchop.

They all laugh. Natalee checks her phone and sees a text
message from Janine to get to the screening room ASAP.

NATALEE

Lumi, Martice has the rundown on the
setup, I'm going to check on our
"star"

Natalee quickly heads to the screening room to see what's
going on.

EXT. SCREENING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Natalee approaches the screening room where she finds Janine
breathing into a paper bag.

JANINE

I walked in... *inhales* just to check
on... *exhales* Mr. Dump... *inhales*
and he was smoking the devil's
broccoli...

Natalee shakes her head and sighs.

NATALEE

Janine, I will handle it just go to
your desk and calm down.

Janine nods her head as she continues breathing in the bag and heads to her desk.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

The Devils broccoli? The more I get to know her the more I think she could be one of many wives for some old white man in Wyoming.

Natalee opens the door to the screening room and a cloud of smoke billows out.

She takes a deep inhale, composes herself, and steps inside to find Lil Dump and his entourage smoking and playing loud music.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

I see you've made yourself at home... cut the music down this is a place of business.

LIL DUMP

I can't function if I'm not lit like tits

Natalee rolls her eyes and gulps the words that would cause her to lose her job.

NATALEE

Where's Luna?

LIL DUMP

Baddie wit da fattie? She went to get us some food.

NATALEE

Her name is Luna... now we need to do something about all of this...

Natalee looks at her watch and then up at his face and hair. She closes the green room door behind her and snatches the blunt out of his hand, she takes a long pull.

LIL DUMP

You may want to be careful with that, that is some strong shit.

She scoffs at his doubt and takes another pull.

NATALEE

I think I'll be fine, but answer this
(MORE)

NATALEE (CONT'D)
 question
 (she exhales the smoke)
 Have you showered today?

His entourage bursts into laughter.

LIL DUMP
 (angrily)
 Yea fuck I look like?

A friend behind him shakes his head No.

NATALEE
 A mess to be honest with you.

She takes another pull and hands the blunt to one his friends.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
 If you tell anyone that I did that,
 I'll deny it. Now follow me, your crew
 can stay here.

LIL DUMP
 So you just going to smoke my weed and
 insult me?
 (he puts his hand over his chest)
 I think I'm in love

He follows her out of the green room.

INT. PRIMETIME SALON - CONTINUOUS

LIL DUMP
 What is this place? I ain't getting no
 manicures or some shit.

NATALEE
 Well if you want this shoot to happen
 you're gonna need to upgrade all of
 this.

She motions her hand up and down his body.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
 You said you were a fan of my work
 right? So can you trust me?

He nods reluctantly and she motions him to the salon chair sitting in front of a huge vanity mirror.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
Where is she? She usu...

VICKY
IS THAT A RAPPER I SMELL?!?!?!

Vicky, Primetime's Lead Hairstylist, 27, Filipino, very vibrant, loud personality.

Vicky slides down the staircase railing and runs over to Natalee and Lil Dump faster than Speedy Gonzales.

VICKY (CONT'D)
Hi, I'm Vicky but you can call me V because I have a vendetta for you babe.

LIL DUMP
You know what that means right?

NATALEE
You two will have enough time for that later, but right now we have a code red. Can you clean him up for me? Retwist his front dreads, pull his hair back and possibly a facial or 5?

Vicky takes his hair down and the smell alone makes her and Natalee gasp.

VICKY
God damn, boo cancel that vendetta, no matter what it means.
(she holds her nose closed)
Simone I can have him ready in about an hour, I know it's a code red but damn this rats nest is going to take a lil elbow grease.

LIL DUMP
I am sitting right here... just in case y'all forgot.

NATALEE
Okay, we'll finish the set up upstairs just text me when you're done.

Natalee exits the screening room.

INT. PRIMETIME STUDIO

Natalee enters the studio and smiles as she sees everything is coming together.

MARTICE

We're almost done here what do you think?

NATALEE

I love it! This just got exciting, could we bring in the red chair with gold trimming and set it where he's supposed to stand?

She checks her watch again.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

Wow, of course we're ready before he is, Vicky is working on him and it's gonna take about an hour.

MARTICE

An hour huh? You think we could take a quick break?

NATALEE

Meet me there in 5.

Martice shocked that he received a yes, quickly breaks off and runs/speed walks to their secret spot. Luna bursts into the studio.

LUNA

(panicking)

I can't find Lil Dump and his high ass friends have no idea where he went.

NATALEE

Calm down, he's in the salon getting cleaned up. I have a quick meeting to get to so go check on him and stick with him, once he's done bring him here and ping me.

Luna nods and she and Natalee walk-in separate directions.

INT. BRENT'S OFFICE (NATALEE & MARTICE'S SECRET SPOT)

Natalee enters Brents office where Martice is eagerly waiting. She hops into his arms and they begin passionately kissing. He sits her on Brent's desk and takes off his shirt.

NATALEE

Well someone has been working out,
you just wanted to show off huh?

She smiles while marveling at the masterpiece in front of her.

MARTICE

Oh no, that's just so I don't resemble
Lewinsky after one her presidential
meetings.

He throws his shirt across the room and places her legs on his shoulders.

NATALEE

My god...

She tilts her head back in ecstasy.

LATER

Natalee and Martice sit up and begin catching their breath.

MARTICE

(breathing heavily)
We may have to get this carpet
cleaned... now you see why I threw my
shirt across the room?

NATALEE

Well, when I'm slapping your head
telling you to stop... you should
stop.

She gets up and begins looking for her clothing.

MARTICE

How could I? I've missed you.

He walks behind her and kisses her on her neck as she begins buttoning her shirt.

NATALEE

I bet that's what you tell all of your
hoes.

MARTICE

Seriously, look at me.

He turns her around and lifts her chin up so that she'd make

eye contact with him.

MARTICE (CONT'D)

I've been sober for 2 years now, my career is back in a respectable place, and that wouldn't have happened if you didn't stick by my side, even after the car accident.

She uncomfortably looks away and folds her arms.

MARTICE (CONT'D)

You are such a big piece of who I was and deserve all of the credit for who I've become...

NATALEE

Nigga, is this a proposal? Because the answer is No and really while I'm in a THONG?

He bursts into laughter.

MARTICE

I promise this isn't a proposal, not yet at least, this is just me asking for a 2nd chance... for the 108th time... Or how about a 2nd first date? Can we just start over?

Luna texts Natalee, she looks at her phone and lets out a sigh of relief, happy she doesn't have to answer him.

TITLE: Lil Dump is getting final touches as we speak we'll be at the studio in 5 min. -Luna

NATALEE

Can we finish this convo later? I have to run.

She begins heading to the door with her face buried in her phone scrolling through the emails she missed.

MARTICE

NAT! Wait!

NATALEE

Martice we'll talk later, I have to go and so do you!

MARTICE
Without pants?

She looks down to see that she's still in her underwear.

MARTICE
(laughing)
You see, we complete each other.

She mocks his laughter and snatches her bottoms out of his hands.

INT. PRIMETIME STUDIO - LATER

Natalee and Martice walk into the studio to find everything in place, Luna approaches them.

LUNA
Lumiere is getting him dressed and he'll be ready for camera shortly.

NATALEE
Was Vicky able to work a miracle?

They head towards the dressing room.

LUNA
Miracle isn't the word, I honestly think she replaced him with a clone.

They reach the dressing room and Luna heads to knock but Natalee barges in to find Lumi and his minions getting Lil Dump dressed but having a jolly good time.

NATALEE
Well, you look decent!

Lil Dump rubs his hands together Birdman like while looking in the mirror.

LIL DUMP
Ya girl Vicky did me good

NATALEE
She did indeed, see why hygiene is important?
(Lumi laughs)
Has Lumi been nice so far?

LIL DUMP
Do you not see this sauce he drizzled
(MORE)

LIL DUMP (CONT'D)

on me?

Natalee smirks and heads over to the clothing rack and begins shuffling through the options.

LUMIERE

Thank Ms.Simone, she can make a rabid raccoon cover ready if she had to. But back to my question, why do they call you Lil Dump? Aside from the smell of your breath, did Vicky forget that part of the process?

LIL DUMP

They call me Lil Dump cause I'm the shit.

Lumi laughs.

LUMIERE

So what's your real name? Because that explanation makes me want to say "Lil Dump" even less.

LIL DUMP

Only because y'all laced me like this, my name real name is... Xander!

Natalee stops searching through the clothes when she hears his name and landed on the perfect Christopher Raeburn piece to complete his outfit.

NATALEE

You know Xander is a lot more likable and aesthetically pleasing than Lil Dump

She puts the jacket around his shoulders.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

Keep it just like that, Lumi can you hand me the...

Lumi hands her the final accessory, she places it on Lil Dump and the room falls silent.

She begins to tap her finger on the back of her phone (which is a sign she is thinking and not to be disturbed) and gives him a quick look over with her signature eyebrow raise.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

Everyone meet Xander! Boy, you look good!

She turns him to the mirror and he starts shaking his hand as if he touched something hot.

LIL DUMP

Ya boy looks spicy!!

She smiles seeing their work come together, Martice knocks on the door and enters.

MARTICE

Are we ready?

NATALEE

Yes actually, Xander, this is Martice your photographer for today.

They give each other a nod.

LIL DUMP

Nice to meet ya man, now can we capture this masterpiece.

He steps off the podium and leaves out of the dressing room.

NATALEE

I know, I'll say it this time, damn I'm good, but couldn't do it without you guys.

Natalee follows Lil Dump out of the dressing room and everyone else follows suit. Lil Dump sits in the chair and Martice grabs his camera.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

Can we play my playlist?

On to the next one by Jay Z begins playing, Vicki begins powdering Lil Dump's face.

LUMIERE

(whispers to Natalee)
So who's your new assistant?

NATALEE

Luna, she just started today. I see
(MORE)

NATALEE (CONT'D)
 that look in your eye's and I'll say
 this now, HANDS OFF!

(He scoffs)

She has her head on straight and you
 will not have another one of my
 employees dickmatized. I have a good
 feeling about this one.

LUMIERE
 You can't blame me for Kieth... or
 Nikki... or Andre... or Regina's crazy
 ass...

Natalee gives him a look that signifies he proved her point.

LUMIERE(CON'T)
 Okay, I see your point but I can't
 hide the talent that the Lord gave me.

NATALEE
 Lumi I'm serious.

LUMIERE
 (rolls his eyes)
 Could've had you dickmatized too but
 nooooo we had to bond on the hate we
 have for our families instead that
 night.

She gives him the finger as she approaches Lil Dump while
 nodding her head to the music.

NATALEE
 You ready kid?

He nods as she adjusts his clothing, moves a fly away out of
 his face. Natalee steps off the seamless and behind Martice.

MARTICE
 Alright, let's begin.

Martice begins taking photos as Luna approaches Natalee with
 her cellphone.

LUNA
 (whispers to Natalee)
 Brent is on the line.

Natalee takes the phone.

BRENT
 (yelling, intoxicated)
 NATTY DO YOU LOVE ME ARE YOU RIDING??
 SKRT SKRT.

NATALEE
 How can I help you Brent?

BRENT
 (obviously intoxicated)
 Rebecca just reminded me that my boy
 Lil Dump had a shoot today, could you
 ask him to preform at the Wiseman
 gala? I want that place TURNT.

Natalee sighs as we PAN IN on Martice steadying his camera,
 and the flash goes off.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. PRIMETIME STUDIO - DAY OF GALA

Flash goes off, On to the next one is still playing. Martice
 is taking photos of KEENA NOIR, an up and coming soul singer.

Natalee is vigorously multi-tasking, directing the shoot, on
 the phone with vendors for the gala and reviewing the final
 edition for next months issue of Primetime on her iPad.

TITLE: 2 Months Later

NATALEE
 The staging for Lil Dump should have
 already been set up, what do you mean
 there are tent issues.... hold on

Natalee takes the phone from her ear.

NATALEE
 Keena, you're killing it can you just
 tilt your head to the left for me?
 Perfect! Thanks, Honey.

Natalee smiles and returns to her phone conversation.

NATALEE
 Now you listen to me, I don't give a
 FUCK who dropped the ball when I get
 to that venue there better a mother
 fucking tent over that mother fucking
 red carpet, or so help me I will turn
 (MORE)

NATALEE (CONT'D)
 that place into Human Centipede 4 and
 I guarantee you will be on the
 receiving end! HANDLE IT!

Natalee hangs up the phone and turns to find everyone staring at her.

NATALEE
 Isn't there a photo shoot that should
 be happening?

Everyone resumes their activities and Luna hands her a coffee.

LUNA
 The final seating arrangements are in
 and the cards are being placed, the
 decor is almost complete, your dress
 is in your suite, and security just
 called to confirm that the cameras
 will be off in the entire building
 once the first Louboutin touches the
 red carpet. I also have the final
 edition of next months issue, I need
 your approval for print by 4 PM.

NATALEE
 Thank you, Luna! Be a doll and let the
 front desk know that we are wrapping
 up here and we'll be ready to go in
 about 30?

Martice takes a quick break to review the pictures on his camera and looks over at Natalee.

MARTICE
 Simone, I got this, we're actually
 about to wrap up. How about you go to
 the Wilshire and do what you have to
 do? I'll have the photos to you in the
 morning to go over.

NATALEE
 Are you sure?

MARTICE
 I'm positive, go! Don't worry, you'll
 make it up later.

NATALEE

You are a lifesaver. Keena, I can't wait to see what you wear this evening love.

He resumes taking pictures and Natalee makes her way to the door with Luna following behind her.

NATALEE

(to audience)

Oh shit, things have been so crazy I completely forgot about you guys. Welcome to the day of the gala, we have 6 hours until the first car arrives at the red carpet and I am still not at the venue.

LUNA

The car is ready for us downstairs.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

Thanks to our favorite dickhead, this day ended up being a flaming piece of ass. But I got this under control or I will have this under control...

Natalee and Luna enter the elevator.

NATALEE

I have this under control...

The elevator doors close.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. BEVERLEY WILSHIRE - CONTINUOUS

Elevator doors open to reveal Natalee deep into her iPad, she steps out of the elevator with Luna following directly behind her at the Beverley Willshire to her hotel room.

TITLE: 5 hours until the Gala

NATALEE (CONT'D)

From the day I was born my Nana made sure I understood 2 things, that I was black AND a woman,

They arrive at her suite and Luna opens the door.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
a combination that only God herself
would dare to combine.

INT. BEVERLEY WILSHIRE SUITE - CONTINUOUS

Luna opens the room door and Natalee enters without breaking her focus from the iPad.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
She would grab my shoulders look me
dead in the eye and say "Simone
nothing will come easy...

She begins tapping her finger vigorously on the back of the iPad while dropping her purse on the couch and pacing back in forth before the window that held one of the most breathtaking views of LA.

NATALEE
 Luna, I've made my changes, once those
 are updated we are ready for print.

Natalee hands Luna the iPad and Luna heads into the other room.

NATALEE
Then she'd say that God gave every
black woman 5 skills that she needs to
succeed no matter her circumstance...
strength, adaptability, perseverance,
the gift of a sharp tongue and hell of
a side eye.

We follow her as she walks over to the window to see the tent that she was previously yelling about being set up over the red carpet.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
With those things, there is nothing
she can't accomplish.

She takes a marijuana vape pen out of her bra and inhales it, Luna re-enters the room and stands next to Natalee.

LUNA
 Next months edition is headed to
 print, the tent is going up, the decor
 is coming along fine, and we have a
 final walkthrough that has been pushed
 up, things are ahead of schedule,
 (MORE)

LUNA (CONT'D)
looks like you're gonna pull this off
Nat, can I say I told you so yet?

NATALEE
(Mockingly)
Can I say I told you so?...

She rolls her eyes and inhales from the vape pen again.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
The night isn't over yet. One thing
you'll learn about these events is
that no matter how much you plan, how
much you organize, how much you try
and be preemptive or proactive...
something always goes wrong.

LUNA
Why are you so sinister?

NATALEE
Life.

LUNA
Well damn Bruce Wayne, did the Joker
shoot your parents as well sis? Have a
little faith.

Natalee gets a message from Martice.

TITLE: Martice: The shoot is done, want to chill for a bit
before things get crazy?

NATALEE
How long do we have until the
walkthrough?

Luna looks at her watch.

LUNA
2 hours, I'm going to go settle into
my room if you are all set here? I'll
text you if anything goes wrong.

Luna leaves the room and Natalee proceeds to text Martice
telling him to stop by before the red carpet.

She kicks off her heels and makes herself comfortable but is
interrupted by a knock at her door. She throws a silent
tantrum while making her way to the door.

NATALEE
 (whispers under breath)
 What now?

Natalee looks through the peephole and is taken back for a second but scurries across her suite to grab her high heels, she then grabs a bottle of perfume from her purse and sprays it to cover the smell of marijuana.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
 One second!

She puts on her shoes and sprays herself a few times before tossing the bottle, but missing the bed and loudly breaking the glass bottle against the wall.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
 (whispers)
 Shit... Fuck...

Natalee toggles between getting the door and cleaning the glass but just throws a pillow over the mess and runs to the door. She opens it...

NATALEE
 Mrs. Wiseman, what do I owe the surprise?

Georgia Wiseman, late 50's, Mother of Brent Wiseman, short, blonde, piercing blue eyes, deep voice, very smart.

GEORGIA
 Call me Georgia honey, Mrs. Wiseman is my dead... thank the lord... mother in law.

Georgia looks up and down the hallway making sure that no one sees her and enters the room.

NATALEE
 Can I get you anything? Water, Coffee?

GEORGIA
 Whiskey? Do you have Whiskey?

NATALEE
 I'll check the bar, is everything okay Mrs. Wi... I mean.. Georgia?

GEORGIA
 Yes, everything is fine, we just need
 (MORE)

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
to talk about your position at
Primetime.

NATALEE
(looks at camera)
**Didn't I tell you something would go
wrong?**

Natalee reaches the bar and finds an unopened bottle of Jon Bowman, one of Natalee's favorites, with a note from Luna that read "In case faith doesn't work"

She chuckles to herself, grabs 2 glasses and makes her way back to Georgia, who has now made herself comfortable on the couch. Natalee begins pouring the drinks.

NATALEE
So... what about my position would you
like to discuss?

Georgia grabs one of the glasses and drinks the entire glass, Natalee watches in awe. Georgia puts the glass down and motions for Natalee to pour another.

GEORGIA
I'm going to cut to the chase, my
child... my poor child... my poor,
DUMB ASS DELUSIONAL child has gotten
himself in a bit of a debacle.

NATALEE
What kind of debacle?

GEORGIA
One that the President of our #1
magazine can't be in.

Georgia takes her cell phone out of her clutch and quickly scrolls to a photo. She shows Natalee a photo of a girl with cum on her face.

NATALEE
Georgia I'm not sure what you're into
but...

GEORGIA (CONT'D)
Do you know that girl is?

Natalee looks closely at the picture.

NATALEE

Is that Demi Joyce... 17-year-old daughter of Wellington Joyce... the 2nd biggest stakeholder in Wiseman publishing?

GEORGIA

Can you guess who's cum that is on that SEVENTEEN-year-olds face?

In sync, they both grab their glasses and gulp down the whiskey.

GEORGIA

Wellington and Brent had a disagreement about Brent's behavior and well...

BEGIN MONTAGE:

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - STAKEHOLDER MEETING - DAY

Brent is being held back by other stakeholders from attacking Wellington.

BRENT

SUCK THIS DICK! YOU THINK I CANT BE THE FACE OF MY OWN DAMN MAGAZINE? GET OFF ME!

He breaks free from the group of men holding him.

BRENT

Its cool, I'm fine, don't worry, Wellington will learn not to fuck with ME! Mr. Pringle looking motherfucker.

He smiles mischievously and exits the room while giving everyone the finger.

END MONTAGE (BACK TO SCENE):

GEORGIA

And this was Brent's way of teaching him a lesson... not knowing that Demi is 17 years old and wants to be the next Karlie Jenner...

NATALEE

While vile and very fucked up... what does all of this have to do with me?

GEORGIA

Demi will leak this video and cry #MeToo for publicity. This behavior was tolerable when Primetime was something we bought to give Brent a hobby outside of his usual habits, but now that it's our #1 magazine there need to be some changes.

NATALEE

(sarcastically, to audience)

Of course it's the fault of the 17 year old girl and not the 38 year MAN who plotted sleeping with her.

(she rolls her eyes)

But changes she says? Who knew that a potential loss in profit would finally lead to "changes"

TITLE: #MESSAGE

She takes another sip from her glass.

GEORGIA

So Brent will accept his award tonight, go out on top and step down from his position before the video makes its way to the internet next week.

Georgia begins pouring herself another glass.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

And you... you will replace him.

(a beat)

I want you to replace him.

Georgia takes the shot to the head.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

I wanted to come to you and see if you were even interested...

NATALEE

Could you excuse me for a brief moment? I just need to run to the restroom. Please feel free to help yourself... of what's left

Georgia nods as she pours herself another drink. Natalee gets up and makes her way to the restroom.

INT. SUITE RESTROOM. - CONTINUOUS

Natalee makes sure the door is closed behind her and as quietly as she possible she begins her victory dance (The Chicken Head, Milly Rock, Twerk, Holy Ghost Combo). She quickly composes herself, flushes the toilet and turns on the sink to make it seem like she actually used the restroom.

INT. SUITE LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

NATALEE

Sorry about that.

Natalee sits back down on the couch across from Georgia.

GEORGIA

So what do you say?

NATALEE

Well Georgia, although the circumstances are terrible, I would love to.

GEORGIA

Good, we will go over details and paperwork Monday. I have to go and get ready for tonight's festivities.

They both stand, Natalee reaches across the table for a handshake.

NATALEE

I look forward to Primetime's future.

Georgia smiles but reluctantly shakes Natalee's hand, Natalee takes note.

GEORGIA

You mind if I take this?

(she picks up the bottle of whiskey)

I'm surprised your palate is accustomed to this. This is actually one of my husband's favorites.

NATALEE

(finishes her glass)

I know

Georgia tilts her head quizzically.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
 (Smiles)
 Please, help yourself.

Georgia makes her way to the door.

GEORGIA
 Also, let this be our little secret
 until after everything is signed.

NATALEE
 No problem, See you tonight!

Georgia puts on her shades and hurries out the door. Natalee closes it behind her.

NATALEE
Maybe Luna was right, sometimes you
have to have a little faith...
 (she takes a sip)
but my black girl senses are tingling
something is up... because that bitch
hates me.

Natalee begins tapping her finger on her drinking glass.

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. NATALEE'S SUITE - NIGHT

TITLE: THE GALA

Natalee is in the same position, but she's dressed in her gala attire tapping her finger on her champagne glass, staring out of her window looking down at the now very active red carpet. Lumiere is adding finishing touches to her dress.

LUMIERE
 And the masterpiece is complete.

Lumiere snips a string from Natalee's dress and stands to marvel at the custom piece. Natalee continues glaring out of the window.

LUMIERE(CON'T)
 Okay, what is on your mind? Because you can't be dressed in custom Yves Saint Laurent and distracted about anything except how good you look right now.

Natalee continues to stare out of the window deep in thought.

LUMIERE(CON'T)
HELLO?!?!

Lumiere grabs her hand, stopping the frantic tapping on the glass.

NATALEE
Sorry Lumi, did you say something?

LUMIERE
(concerned)
What is going on with you sister?

NATALEE
Nothing, I just want to make sure
tonight goes off without a hitch.

LUMIERE
Could this have something to do with
Georgia the Wicked Bitch of the West
stopping by earlier?

Natalee shakes her head no and sits her glass on the table.

NATALEE
She just stopped by to check on the
arrangements.

LUMI
When has Georgia ever come down from
her ivory tower to schmooze with us
peasants?

NATALEE
Lumi I promise it was nothing
extreme...

LUMIERE
(whispers)
Is this about Brent Sr?

NATALEE
You know we don't talk about him.

LUMIERE
Well you're going to have to talk
about it one day Nat.

Luna enters the suite.

LUNA

The red carpet is running smoothly,
Brent is late of course but we are
ready to adjust if need be.

NATALEE

Let me know as soon as his car enters
the queue. Have his parents arrived?

LUNA

Yes, they are mingling with guest as
scheduled on the stakeholder's private
patio.

NATALEE

Perfect and any incidents with the
guest?

LUNA

90% of them are definitely high on
unidentified substances but nothing
major has happened.

There's a knock on the door.

NATALEE

Could one of you get that, I need to
run to the restroom?

Natalee goes to the bathroom and Luna answers the door,
Martice enters.

LUNA

Hey Marti! She just entered the
bathroom.

LUMIERE

(Whispers)

Has she told you anything? Something
is up definitely up with her...

MARTICE

No, she just asked me to come here
before I walked the carpet.

LUNA

I still don't understand how you get
to walk the carpet.

MARTICE

Have you seen this face?

LUMIERE

Seriously guys, what about you Luna?
Has anything happened today? I'm a
little concerned.

LUNA

Lumi I'm sure it's just pre-gala
jitters, maybe she's just nervous.

Natalee exits the bathroom and joins the group.

NATALEE

I told you I'm fine Lumiere. Could you
and Luna head down to make sure we
aren't having any red carpet trouble?

LUMIERE

(Rolls eyes)

Fine. If you're okay then you'll have
no problem doing the thing.

He begins slowly doing the cabbage patch.

NATALEE

Lumi no.

He continues, she cracks under pressure and joins in,
replicating the iconic dance scene Bobby and Whitney shared
in the Hyatt gift shop circa 2005.

LUNA

(to Martice)

What the fuck is happening?

Natalee cracks and she and Lumi begin laughing.

NATALEE

I needed that, now go and make sure
things aren't falling apart, please.

LUMIERE

Luna lets go.

LUNA

Are we gonna act like that didn't just
happen?

Luna and Lumiere exit the room.

MARTICE

You sure you okay?

NATALEE

(sighs)

I'm fine...

MARTICE

Lies. But I know you'll talk to me when you're ready.

(he fixes her broach)

Now, what did you call me here for, because I know it wasn't just to lie to me?

NATALEE

I'm sorry... this isn't the way I wanted to do this but...

She takes a deep breath.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

Will you be my date tonight? I know it's last minute but there's no one I'd rather have by my side tonight to keep me calm and I've wanted to ask for a while but things have been so crazy and I...

MARTICE

It would be my pleasure, Nat. Now can we go kill this red carpet? You look great by the way.

Martice sticks out his arm and Natalee wraps her arm around his, and they exit the room.

EXT. RED CARPET - CONTINUOUS

We enter the very chaotic red carpet, every media outlet from CNN to BET to the Washington Post and Complex are in attendance to get a glimpse of the night's festivities. Natalee and Martice are in queue waiting to walk the red carpet.

MARTICE

Same old routine?

NATALEE

Yea you can go first, we'll meet inside the gala.

Martice steps through the tented red carpet entrance.

LUNA

Why didn't you guys walk together?

NATALEE

Because he distracts them from my work.

LUNA

What?

NATALEE

Can I ask what your thoughts were on Beyonce's Lemonade?

LUNA

(confused)

Uh, it was a dope album, I just still can't believe that Jay Z fucking cheated on her.

NATALEE

Lemonade was an absolute artistic masterpiece, Beyonce found a way to express the struggles that many black women go through emotionally and all you can think about is that she was cheated on.

(a beat)

That is why Martice and I NEVER walk the red carpet together.

Luna looks dumbfounded.

LUNA

I don't even have a response... do you boo.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

(laughs)

Didn't I tell always take notes? Make sure you jot that down

Natalee approaches the tent entrance, waiting for her queue to enter. The crowd outside of the red carpet tent begins screaming.

Luna places her hands over her ears to hear the message being spoken over the headset.

LUNA (CONT'D)

Fuck, Brent is here.

Brent arrives at the red carpet entrance in an all black Rolls Royce. He steps out of the car accompanied by REBECCA. They pose together for a few photos before approaching Natalee at the entrance.

BRENT

There's my favorite chocolate drop!

He wraps his arms around Natalee hugging her tightly, she doesn't reciprocate. The paparazzi captures the moment.

NATALEE

(smiling awkwardly)

You know I don't like affection
Brent...

She breaks from his hug noting the white powder in his nose, she snatches his handkerchief out of his suit pocket and hands it to him...

NATALEE (CONT'D)

Shouldn't we be keeping our noses
clean tonight?

Rebecca snatches the handkerchief from Natalee.

REBECCA

He's fine.

Rebecca wipes his nose and stuffs the handkerchief back in his pocket. Natalee clenches her teeth and digs her nails in her palm...

NATALEE

Glad to see you've finally gotten the
grasp of assisting. It wasn't quite
your forte a few months ago.

REBECCA

That's because I hated fucking working
for you.

Natalee digs her nails deeper into her palm.

BRENT

Well thanks for holding our spot my
coco queen, hope tonight isn't trash.

They brush passed Natalee and walk through the red carpet entrance, the paparazzi erupts inside the tent.

LUNA

You want me to cut that hoe?

NATALEE

No worries.

Natalee looks down and realizes that her hand is bleeding.

NATALEE

Luna, I think I'm going to skip the carpet could you tell Martice I have to take care of something I'll meet him inside.

Natalee makes her way around the tent and through a side entrance.

INT. RESTROOM - CONTINUOUS

Natalee enters the bathroom and locks the door behind her. She drops her purse on the sink and begins to rinse the blood off of her hand, she grabs a washcloth and holds it in her hand to stop the bleeding. She begins to pace the bathroom floor clenching both fist.

NATALEE

(fighting a panic attack,
hyperventilating)

Only the weak react... Only the weak react... do not let him mess this up for you Natalee. Keep it together!

BATHROOM ATTENDANT

Whatever it is, keep it together. That dress is way too pretty to be upset in.

Natalee is startled, quickly gets herself together.

NATALEE

I'm sorry ma'am I didn't realize anyone was in here.

BATHROOM ATTENDANT

Its okay honey, you would think I camouflage with the wall they way people overlook me. Mind if I take a look? I think I have a few band-aids over here.

The attendant takes the bloody handkerchief out of her hand.

She begins examining Natalee's hand.

NATALEE

Ma'am it's fine, I gotta get back out there.

BATHROOM ATTENDANT

It'll only be a second, I can't let you bleed all over that pretty dress and besides, I think I interrupted your pep talk.

Natalee chuckles. The bathroom attendant grabs a band-aid and a small tube of Neosporin off of her cart.

BATHROOM ATTENDANT (CONT'D)

You know there's only 2 things that can make a girl like us have to give herself a pep talk like that... a man or a Caucasian...

She cleans off Natalee's hand.

BATHROOM ATTENDANT (CONT'D)

No matter which one ticked you off, you make sure to keep it together...

She places the small band-aid over Natalee's cut.

BATHROOM ATTENDANT (CONT'D)

Keep it together so I can see a lot more pretty brown girls like you strolling in here. Ones that talk to me.

NATALEE

Thank you for that Ms..?

BATHROOM ATTENDANT

Ms. June B. Jones.

NATALEE

Oh, like the book character?

JUNE

That little white girl was named after me.

(Natalee laughs)
now go enjoy yourself don't keep the people waiting.

INT. MAIN BANQUET HALL - LATER

CELEBRITY HOST

Give it up one more time for iTech,
Wiseman's #1 Tech Magazine.

The audience applauds as the iTech team leaves the stage with their award.

CELEBRITY HOST(CONT'D)

Now the moment we've been waiting for
and the reason that many of us have
jobs tonight, please welcome Georgia &
Brent Wiseman to present this years
Wiseman Elite award.

The audience burst into a loud applause as Georgia and BRENT SR. take the stage.

BRENT SR. Mid 50's, Tall, Silver Fox, quite handsome, an older but almost exact replica of Brent Jr.

GEORGIA

Thank you all so much for attending
tonight's festivities. I hope you all
are enjoying yourselves.

BRENT SR.

(words slurring)

My wife and I pride ourselves in being
able to introduce the world to so many
amazing voices and stories that can
help make people aware of the world we
live in.

GEORGIA

The next award is going to someone
very very dear to us, we have watched
him build and nurture this magazine
into his own. His hard work has
brought in a record-breaking amount of
magazine sales.

The screen behind them begins a slideshow of some of Primetime's most popular covers, all of which Natalee produced.

Natalee looks up at her work and a feeling of rage comes over her, but she channels all of her rage to her finger as she begins tapping it vigorously on the table.

GEORGIA (CONT'D)

His creativity has pushed Primetime from the belly of Wiseman to the very top.

BRENT SR.

Please give a huge round of applause for my son, Brent JR!

The crowd erupts in applause and cheer, Brent stands at his table and absorbs the cheers.

Natalee's finger tapping is so INTENSE that it can be heard above the applause. Martice takes note and grabs her hand, he kisses it and holds it tightly.

Brent walks on the stage, hugs his parents, they hand him the award, and he absorbs the applause once more before approaching the podium.

BRENT

Thank you guys so much.

REBECCA

GO BABE! WOOWOOO!

Brent makes a perplexed face

BRENT

Chill.

He awkwardly laughs as she quickly takes her seat.

BRENT (CONT'D)

When we took over Primetime, the magazine was a complete shit show. But with the hard work of... actually, Natalee would you mind coming up here?

Brent points her out in the audience. Natalee looks up and smiles, she politely shakes her head no.

NATALEE

Have your moment!

BRENT

No, come on up here! This is my favorite cocoa puff guys!

Natalee cringes but reluctantly stands up and smiles as the crowd applauds her while making her way to the stage. She

approaches him.

BRENT (CONT'D)
 Could you hold this for me?

Brent holds out the crystal trophy to hand it to her, she stands there, frozen.

BRENT (CONT'D)
 Come on Natty this thing is heavy.

An awkward silence falls amongst the crowd, Natalee stares at the award. Brent Sr. nudges her to grab it and she does.

BRENT (CONT'D)
 Like I was saying when we took over
 Primetime it was a complete mess. I
 had a vision to ...

Brent's voice FADES OUT, we PAN IN on Natalee who stands there smiling as the sound of her heartbeat begins to rapidly increase.

EXT. BEVERLEY WILLSHIRE TERRACE

Natalee is sitting by the fireplace, staring at the flames through the crystal trophy. A very drunk Lumiere sits across from her.

LUMIERE
 (clearly intoxicated, now has a
 British accent)
 Why are you not celebrating right now?
 The award ceremony has gone off
 without a hitch, everyone seems to be
 taking the right amount of drugs, no
 one has died...

Natalee smirks but doesn't take her eyes off the trophy, Martice approaches and hands her a glass of whiskey.

LUMIERE (CON'T)
 Whatever is bothering you can wait
 until tomorrow, honey.

MARTICE
 Lumi give her some space.

LUMIERE
 Okay, Zaddy. I'm going to find Luna,
 she'll shake her ass with me.

Lumiere skips away.

MARTICE

I'm not gonna push it, but there is a dark cloud of emotion following you and you haven't stopped staring at the trophy since you walked off that stage. You're kind of freaking me out.

NATALEE

Did you know that before the Wiseman's bought Primetime, it was a black-owned magazine? And now, I am one of 4 black employees? The only one who isn't a janitor?

Natalee takes a sip of whiskey, without breaking her stare into the trophy.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

Looking at the faces in that room tonight, the faces of the worlds most important... and the lack of color... the lack of women ...

She looks at the many faces surrounding her, trying to find someone that looked like her.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

Sitting at the top of this pyramid... and yet I'm the only executive that is both of those things. Why?

Natalee spots Brent and Rebecca arguing over Martice's shoulder.

MARTICE

Because you're that good at what you do, you should've had Brents position years ago but this is something we already know. Why is that bothering you so much tonight?

NATALEE

(she yells)

WHY?!

She accidentally spills her drink into the fire pit causing the flames to erupt behind her.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

I just watched that man get honored
for my work! After all that I've
sacrificed!

MARTICE

That just comes with our complexion
Nat. Hell 90% of my early work has
been claimed by some white man I
worked for and no matter how much I
protest, their name is attached to my
art. But my time came, and so will
yours.

She sees Brent stumbling into the hotel, alone. She finishes
her drink, grabs the trophy, and stands.

NATALEE

I'll be back.

Natalee beelines for the hotel entrance searching for Brent
amongst the crowd. She spots him getting in the elevator and
charges towards him.

NATALEE

Brent, Wait!

He makes eye contact with her before giving her the finger
and allowing the doors to close.

Infuriated, she takes the stairs and charges to his room.

SPLIT SCREEN:

ON THE LEFT:

Natalee is running up the
staircase faster than Usain
Bolt could run a mile.

ON THE RIGHT:

Brent is in the elevator
attempting to dance to the
elevator music while staring
at himself in the elevator
doors and singing "I Milly
Rock on any block".

Brent steps off the elevator and dances his way to his room,
Natalee burst through the staircase door.

Brent is so intoxicated he doesn't notice her charging at
him. He walks into his room and Natalee slips through the
door behind him.

NATALEE

Did you not hear me call your name?!

BRENT
(startled)
WHAT THE FUCK DUDE?! Where did you
come from?

NATALEE
(Yelling)
Did you not hear me call your name?

Brent throws up his hands pretending to be scared.

BRENT
Woah there girl, bring the attitude
down a few notches? You are acting
like a Kiesha right now and it's
fucking up my vibe.

NATALEE
I have every right to have a fucking
attitude you dick. My name should be
on this fucking trophy and we all know
it.

BRENT
And what name is that? You have no
name. You think you've done enough to
receive that honor?

Natalee clenches the trophy tightly.

NATALEE
Done enough? I've done majority of
your work and you have done nothing
but plaster your sad ass name across
it and claim it as yours. There would
be no Primetime without me!

He laughs and takes the remainder of his shot.

BRENT
Now that was a fucking joke, you
should be the comedian host next year.

He takes a small clear bag with a white pill in it out of his
coat pocket.

NATALEE
And what have you done? From the first
day we both walked through those doors
I've been cleaning up your fucking
mess, building, and nurturing that
(MORE)

NATALEE (CONT'D)
 company with my BLOOD & SWEAT... while
 you have been trying to beat Robert
 Downey Jr's cocaine world record.

BRENT
 Are you done?

He chuckles and swallows the pill dry.

BRENT (CONT'D)
 Good! Now let me remind you of what
 you are my dark and lovely beauty, you
 are an employee, to be more specific,
 one of my employees. Meaning if I
 decide to shit on the floor right now,
 at some point you will be involved in
 the process of cleaning that shit up.
 My only job in this equation is to
 make sure you have shit to clean up
 because without me Natty...

He places his hands on her shoulders.

BRENT (CONT'D)
 there would absolutely be no you.
 Matter of fact you can kiss that new
 promotion bye bye
 (a beat)
 Unless...

Natalee clenches the trophy.

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR
Sorry I must interject, Natalee just
take a deep breath

NATALEE
Not now

BRENT (CONT'D)
 (places his hand on her shoulder)
 You wanna show me that trick my father
 loved so much...

Natalee snaps and clocks him in the face with the sharp end
 of the crystal trophy, blood begins to spurt from his head.

NATALEE
 Do you know how hard I've had to work
 to even walk through Primetime's
 (MORE)

NATALEE (CONT'D)

doors?

She hits him again in the head with the trophy, he falls to his knees, clenching his gushing forehead.

NATALEE

What I've had to overcome? What I've had to sacrifice?

She brings the trophy down on the top of his head, knocking him on his back.

She steps over his body for better leverage.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

Twice the work, twice the sacrifice,
twice as hard to get half of the
crumbs you unskilled privileged pricks
throw off of the table!

She slams the crystal trophy as hard as she could on his face, his body begins twitching.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

TWICE AS HARD TO GET HALF!

She slams the trophy on his face again.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

TWICE AS HARD TO GET HALF!

She slams the trophy base on his face, splattering blood across hers.

NATALEE (CONT'D)

TWICE AS HARD TO GET HALF!

Natalee slams the trophy down one final time. Breathing heavily, she stares down at what she had done with no remorse.

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR

Not again.

(a beat)

Excuse me I think I'm gonna be sick.

She tilts her head and takes one last look before stepping over the head of the motionless unrecognizable body before wiping the trophy clean on her black dress.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Natalee stares at herself in the huge bathroom mirror, there is blood splattered across her face but her clothing is still perfect.

She's breathing heavily but slowly, she sits the crystal trophy on the marble sink but avoids touching the sink's surface.

Behind her Brent is lying face up, his face is an unrecognizable mush, and blood is slowly gushing from his head.

She begins vigorously tapping her finger on the award.

Without breaking her stare in the mirror, the sound of her HEARTBEAT begins to rapidly increase.

(A Beat)

Her finger suddenly stops, her heart rate slows down and a malicious smile spreads across her face.

She pulls a black silk handkerchief from her brassiere, cleans the blood from her face.

She steps over Brent's body and while holding the handkerchief over her hand, checking his pulse to make sure there isn't one.

She stands, smiles, and makes her way back to the door but takes one last look at Brent and her smile grows.

She uses the handkerchief to open the door and makes her way to the staircase, walks down 3 flights to her floor and hops on the elevator, where she is surrounded by intoxicated people.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

GUEST #1

Is that Brents trophy?

She drunkenly throws her arm around Natalee.

GUEST #1 (CON'T)

Can we get a selfie with it?

Natalee nods and lets each person on the elevator get their picture with the trophy, watching intensely as each person

adds their fingerprint to the weapon she just used to kill Brent.

She reaches the lobby, takes the trophy and finds Martice amongst the crowd.

MARTICE

Where the hell did you go? Tell me you didn't curse out Brent. Do you still have a job?

NATALEE

I couldn't find him, but can we get out here? Maybe head to your place? I've had enough of tonight.

MARTICE

Yea, I'll grab the car. Meet me at the valet in 10?

She nods as he walks away, Georgia and Brent Wiseman Sr. approach her.

GEORGIA

Natalee, I must say you have outdone yourself this evening, everything was amazing.

Brent SR. places his arms around Natalee and Georgia.

Natalee tenses.

BRENT SR.

Keep up the work and you'll have your name on a trophy like that.

GEORGIA

We look forward to seeing your vision for the company, if Brent has brought this far... we can only imagine how far you'll go.

Brent Sr. kisses Natalee on the cheek.

Georgia pulls him off of Natalee and plays it off by hugging him.

Natalee takes a deep breath and just smiles.

NATALEE

Thank you guys, that means a lot
(MORE)

NATALEE (CONT'D)
coming from you. But I am actually
about to get out of here.

She hands them Brent's trophy.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
I couldn't find Brent to give this to
him but if anyone deserves that memory
it's you two, for raising such a
special boy. Have a good night.

She leaves to meet Martice.

EXT. BEVERLEY WILLSHIRE DRIVEWAY

Natalee approaches Martice.

MARTICE
You really killed tonight you know?
Don't let that guy ruin your moment

She kisses him passionately as his car arrives.

NATALEE
Trust me, I won't.

The valet opens the car door for her she steps inside.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
Now let's go celebrate, our way.

She closes the car door. Martice quickly gets in and speeds
off.

INT. MARTICE'S CONDO

They enter the apartment mid-kiss, Natalee takes off his
jacket and throws it across the room.

MARTICE
What has gotten into you?

NATALEE
Success.

She grabs his face and they resume passionately kissing. He
picks her up and carries her into his bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. BEVERLY WILLSHIRE - MORNING (DAY AFTER GALA)

A HOTEL MAID is making her rounds cleaning up the rooms. She approaches Brent room where a very drunk Rebecca is sleeping outside of the door. She kicks Rebecca's foot

HOTEL MAID

Sweetie, last nights festivities are over, WAKE UP!

Rebecca is startled. She looks at her watch and is surprised by the time.

REBECCA

Can you let me into this room? My boyfriend is in there and wouldn't open the door for me.

HOTEL MAID

Afraid I cant do that love, did you hear him in there? Maybe he left?

REBECCA

Look just open the fucking door Esmarelda.

The maid places her hand over her chest.

HOTEL MAID

My name tag clearly states that my name is Susan, if you haven't noticed I am white and you are not getting into that room.

Rebecca storms off. The maid chuckles as Rebecca trips over her dress and falls into the elevator. The maid proceeds to knock on the door.

HOTEL MAID

Hello, anyone there?

She waits for a response, after hearing nothing she uses the key to unlock the door and backs her cart into the room. She notices Brents' feet first.

HOTEL MAID

Sir?

She approaches his body, sees his mushy face and SCREAMS

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. MATICE'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Natalee screams as she slaps Martice's head under the covers. Martice emerges from under the blanket.

MARTICE
(catching breath)
I'm going to drown one day, but it
will be a happy death

Natalee takes a gulp of water.

NATALEE
And I have no problem being the
executioner.

They kiss, she gets up, puts on his robe and heads into his bathroom.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

She closes the door behind her and begins to have flashbacks of bashing Brent's head in, she smiles while bringing attention back to her reflection.

Martice burst into the bathroom behind her staring at his phone with his hand over his mouth.

MARTICE
Brent was found murdered this morning!

NATALEE
(Pretends to be shocked)
What? You're lying? Brent?! NO!

She chimes into her inner Meryl Streep and begins crying. Martice tries to comfort her but she pushes him away.

NATALEE (CONT'D)
I just need a moment alone

Martice kisses her forehead and closes the bathroom door on her way out. Natalee turns to the mirror and laughs at the tears running down her face.

NATALEE
(to audience)
I am sorry you guys had to see me in
that state, but in the words of the
great Waka Flocka Flame "I go hard in
the muthafuckin' paint nigga, Leave
(MORE)

NATALEE (CONT'D)
 you stankin' nigga, what the fuck you
 thinkin' nigga"

TITLE: #BrickSquad

BRITISH MALE NARRATOR
 For heaven's sake can't you have a
 little compassion this time, while he
 may have deserved it... a man just
 lost his life.

NATALEE
 Well, he wouldn't have lost it if he
 had a little compassion. But you're
 right, lets have a moment of silence
 for our beloved Brent Jr.

(a beat)
 Annnnddddd we're done.

MARTICE (YELLING O.S)
 Natalee!

She puts on her sad face and opens the bathroom door, she walks into the living room and finds Martice accompanied by 2 cops and a black woman in a suit, DETECTIVE JOHNSON, African American, mid-30s, tall (Ex-WNBA player).

DETECTIVE JOHNSON
 Ms. Simone our apologies for just
 popping up like this but we have a few
 questions to ask you about the murder
 of Brent Wiseman.

Natalee looks back at the audience.

NATALEE
 Ah Shit.

HARD IN THE PAINT by Waka Flock begins playing.

CUT TO BLACK