

WRIGHT

"Pilot"

Written by

Keyanna Wigglesworth

Based on the movie "Just Wright"

By

Michael Elliot

TEASER

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY GYM - BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

A youth basketball coach stands on the sideline, surrounded by her team as she hypes them up before the start of the game.

The parents and fans in the stands yell almost as loud as her. We hear the voice of LESLIE WRIGHT (21, at the time of recording) as we watch the coach on screen.

LESLIE (O.S.)

We talking about practice. Not a game! Not a game! Not a game! Sabrina supposed to be the NCAA's most valuable player but we talking about practice. Not a game. Not the playoff game we just won because of her. Not every game she played this season like it was her last.

The players take their respective positions on the court.

LESLIE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Not my other teammates who still ain't posted bail! Practice!

The referee blows the whistle to start the game. A player at center court wins the jump ball and sends it into the palm of their teammate ALANA ISAACSON (13).

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY GYM - COACH'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

ANGELINE JACOBS (14) stands in the doorway cheering her friends on. Her mom and one of the assistant coaches watch a 14-year-old YouTube video of Leslie.

It shows Leslie speaking in front of a crowd of protestors with some of her teammates behind her. Banners and signs reading "Hayworth University Black Student Union" can be seen next to her.

Other signs reading "FREE SABRINA OWENS" and "FREE SO" are also held up by protestors alongside pictures of teammate SABRINA OWENS (22, at the time of recording).

LESLIE (O.S.)

I'm upset for one reason--

ASSISTANT COACH
 (to the screen)
 Really? Only one?

ANGELINE
 (shouts onto the court)
 Let's go, Alana!

ANGELINE'S MOM
 (to Angeline)
 How do you think you're gonna do
 this interview with no voice? Get
 in here.

Angeline does as she's told and takes a seat at the table
 opposite them, yelling out to her friend one last time.

ANGELINE
 (to Alana)
 All the way, Isaacson!

ASSISTANT COACH
 (to Angeline)
 You sure this is who you wanna
 interview? They usually keep the
 admissions process for these
 boarding schools top secret, but I
 don't know if writing a profile on
 a rioter is your ticket in.

ANGELINE'S MOM
 (checks the time)
 A rioter who's late.

ANGELINE
 Tasia Hutchins got in last year and
 she submitted two supplemental
 materials with her application. I'm
 not getting in with just basketball
 and grades.

ANGELINE'S MOM
 That girl had a recommendation from
 the mayor's office and a mixtape.
 What is talking to a physical
 therapist who got arrested in
 college supposed to get you?

ASSISTANT COACH
 Her tape wasn't bad either. I
 thought my baby's first word was
 gonna be "daddy" but "period"
 works, too.

ANGELINE

Leslie Wright isn't just a physical therapist. She's the chief physical therapist of the largest clinic in the state.

ASSISTANT COACH

I think we're aware, Ang.

He tosses a T-shirt to Angeline and then another to her mother.

ASSISTANT COACH (CONT'D)

Warm-up gear just came in. What do you think?

Angeline unfolds the shirt and looks it over. The shirt reads:

D1 Physical Therapy Youth Sports

O

W

D

Angeline's mom looks at HASSAN DOWD's (61) picture on the back.

ANGELINE'S MOM

I think we're aware of what Hassan looks like since he owns the largest clinic in the state.

ANGELINE

And I bet neither of you know that Leslie was the one who convinced Mr. Dowd to start the youth sports program in the first place.

ASSISTANT COACH

Seeing as how he went out on a limb to hire her, she had to win herself some points somehow.

ANGELINE

After looking at her record, he probably didn't need much convincing. Leslie remained a NCAA stat leader from 2008 until she left the Hayworth University Lady Hawks in 2011. And she maintained a 4.0 all four years.

ANGELINE'S MOM
Which year was she arrested?

Leslie (35, now in present-day) walks through the door.

LESLIE
The year I tied for the title.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - CONTINUOUS

Leslie and Angeline walk across an interior bridge towards the clinic.

LESLIE

Sorry, I'm usually never late but I was waiting on an important meeting to land. It's all good though, we've got the whole day now.

ANGELINE

It's fine. We had more time to talk about this.

Angeline hands Leslie one of the new warm-up T-shirts.

LESLIE

Ok Hassan, I see the vision. Run fast enough so the opposing team doesn't see your weird ass shirt.

ANGELINE

Mrs. Wright, thank you so much again for letting me interview you.

LESLIE

"Leslie" is fine. Or "Coach." Just not "Mrs. Wright." That's my mom. You don't wanna interview her.

ANGELINE

Right, ok. Ms. Leslie, I actually prepared some questions for you. My apologies, I should've asked if we could use someone's office.

LESLIE

What for? Knowing me is knowing D1. Since I got promoted, all I do is stay cooped up in my office so we damn sure not doing this interview in somebody else's. We're walking this place.

Leslie opens the door to a corridor room under construction and leads Angeline through.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

And all 5,000 of its renovations.
Don't worry, I've seen you on the
court. This should be nothing.

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The two of them lunge up a set of stairs, almost racing each other.

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - ACCOUNTING OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Angeline reads aloud, eyes glued to her notebook while still trying to look at Leslie. She starts off nervously.

ANGELINE

In 2011 you and your best friend/teammate Sabrina Owens led the Hayworth University Hawks to the NCAA playoffs for the first time in over five years. Following an arrest for aggravated assault, Owens was forced by the university board to leave the team. You ended up tying her season scoring title average of 29.8 in your final collegiate basketball game. Your decision to walk off the court mid-game after learning of the board's decision to expel Owens has been compared to Tommie Smith and John Carlos raising their fists at the 1968 Olympics, albeit not received with as much support at the time. Does reflecting on that experience affect how you make tough decisions today as Chief Physical Therapist of D1?

ACCOUNTANT

That's D1 Physical Therapy. And this isn't Leslie.

Angeline looks up at the accountant sitting in front of her. She looks over again at Leslie, who's behind a glass door reviewing budgets with another accountant in the next room.

ANGELINE

Right, sorry. Wrong question. Let me flip to one I had saved for one of her colleagues.

ACCOUNTANT

It's ok, I can answer. Fuck yes. She's probably in there right now ripping that budget we've been working on to shreds. And we love it. That's how she saved this clinic thousands last year. Look, there she goes.

The accountant points to the glass door. We see Leslie beckon the other accountant JOSH HEADLEY (31) to take a seat at the table next to her.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM BEHIND GLASS DOOR - CONTINUOUS

LESLIE

I'm not here to talk about the budget. Or to talk at all, honestly. If you have any questions about the petition before signing, I'm happy to answer. Just not for too long. The meeting with Hassan is at 5.

JOSH

(looks down at iPad)

I've got one question for you, not about the petition. How are you? Getting promoted and then having your responsibilities triple in less than a month is a lot to handle. Even if everyone thinks you've been doing a great job so far -- which we all do. Have you talked to Hassan about maybe just lightening your load?

LESLIE

Do you remember the "Construction Cushion"?

JOSH

The \$500,000 line item that Hassan didn't let his senior accountant nor their overzealous then-intern ask any questions about? How can I forget.

(MORE)

JOSH (CONT'D)

Does a certain now-Chief PT need to impose a similar budget constraint on us for this year?

LESLIE

No. After Hassan wouldn't answer my questions, I called the contractor to see if he would. He had no idea what I was talking about because the "Construction Cushion" had nothing to do with construction. Hassan is laundering money from D1 into his personal accounts.

JOSH

And you're sure?

LESLIE

No. There's still a part of me that doesn't believe he could do this. But there's a whole 30 parents in that gym who haven't seen a dime of what they've fundraised put back into our rec program. This isn't the time to ask Hassan for less. If I'm gonna get the whole truth, I've gotta work more.

JOSH

How much work do you expect to get from Hassan after you show this to him?

LESLIE

We're asking for an in-person review of D1's charity arm. It's not a petition to fire him. It's to hold him accountable.

JOSH

Leslie. If this shit is true, we're gonna need to do both.

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - BREAK/RESOURCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Leslie and Angeline enter, each now holding a T-shirt with Hassan's face.

LESLIE

Ok how'd we end up with two of these?

ANGELINE

When you were out taking that call
Josh gave me his.

LESLIE

Why does Josh have one?

ANGELINE

Mr. Dowd wants him to figure out
how much we can sell them for at
the next game.

LESLIE

We can take a break from touring
for now but let's continue the
interview.

ANGELINE

Can you talk more about this part
of the clinic and what happens here
in the break room?

LESLIE

Resource Room. Tryna do a rebrand.
This not only used to be the Break
Room but also my office. I don't
miss it too much, though. I still
get to use this room to lead
employee training throughout the
year.

One of the physical therapists pops their head in the door.

PT

(to Angeline)

You ain't hear it from me, but word
is you can come here and get a nice
lil' after-work happy hour, too.

(to Leslie)

Text me tonight's menu when you get
done.

LESLIE

If you don't go to your patient.

PT

(to Angeline)

Ask them questions fast. This a
busy lady right here.

LESLIE

You mean a busy new Chief PT.

PT
There you go!

LESLIE
Get!

As he goes laughing down the hallway, Leslie makes her way to the computer station and starts logging into her personal email.

LESLIE (CONT'D)
Lemme check my email real quick,
but keep 'em coming.

ANGELINE
Although your sports career ended
too soon, your run in sports
medicine is just getting started.
What made you want to become a
physical therapist?

Leslie sees several new messages from petition signers, including Angeline's mother. She opens a new email from her, subject line reading "Can You Meet Him Sooner." The body reads:

The longer we wait, the more..

Leslie clicks on the thumbnail below, opening a recently published local news article titled "Healthcare Entrepreneur Hassan Dowd endorses Mitch Florant for Mayor".

LESLIE
Hassan.

Angeline looks at Hassan's face on the back of that T-shirt again.

ANGELINE
Dowd?

LESLIE
No.

Leslie gets up from the computer station and puts the T-shirt on a nearby bookshelf. She starts re-stacking a pile of research books.

LESLIE (CONT'D)
Well, yes. But not mostly. Leaving
the team after So got kicked damn
near left me with nothing. I
graduated with a degree in biology
but nobody would hire me.

(MORE)

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Around the same time I moved back in with my parents, an old friend of my dad's had just started his own clinic. Hassan hadn't spoken to my dad in 20 years but he was desperate to find someone who was as familiar with this community as he is.

ANGELINE

So then why you?

LESLIE

Because that was the reason I became a physical therapist. When I went away to college to become a doctor, I thought I was doing it for everybody that I left back in Jersey - my mom, my dad, my friends, all our old teachers. It's funny how coming back with less options than when I left allowed me to help my community even more. Most patients at D1 don't remember I was some big college athlete or even where I went to school. It matters more that I shoveled snow off their driveway as a kid when their back was too broken from work to do it themselves. And that their kids helped me when my dad's back was out from work, too. Only children don't make all those friends just because we're lonely. When there's a personal connection, no matter how you have to treat your patients, it'll be done with respect.

ANGELINE

My mom made a list of colleges she wants me to apply to and Hayworth is high up on it. That BSU protest video definitely knocked it down a few spots but she always wanted me to play for you. All the parents did. If I didn't know how much this place loves you, I wouldn't be interviewing you. What I'm trying to figure out is why Mr. Dowd picked you if he wanted someone as involved in the community as him?

(MORE)

ANGELINE (CONT'D)

These days you can only catch him on the news – or on that future cleaning rag over there.

LESLIE

All I can say is more money, more appearances. And more appearances means more speeches, which means, for me, many long nights of researching and writing in this room.

Back-to-back email notifications go off from the computer. Angeline looks over at the screen but Leslie throws the T-shirt with Hassan's face over it before she can see anything.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Look through some of these books and see if you can spot any of those preventative exercises I showed y'all at the last scrimmage.

With Angeline now distracted, Leslie hovers over the computer to read a new instant message from Hassan:

Coming to you, don't leave.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Hey Angeline, you can just take the book with you.

ANGELINE

Take it with me where?

LESLIE

My meeting must've gotten moved up. I'm gonna need the room.

ANGELINE

Oh, maybe I can ask them for a quote after. Do you mind me asking a meeting with who?

MORGAN (O.S.)

Your godsister, friend, and pro bono style consultant is here. C'mon, I just texted you. Open up!

LESLIE

The door is not locked, Morgan!

MORGAN (O.S.)

And my nails are not dry, Leslie!

Angeline opens the door. MORGAN ALEXANDER (29) stumbles in trying to carry her big ass Birkin and another one of those T-shirts with Hassan's face on it.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

(to Angeline)

Thank you.

(to Leslie)

Girl if you in here with a patient, just say that.

(to Angeline)

Go 'head and lay back down, baby.

LESLIE

(to Morgan)

Where, on the desk? Angeline is not a patient. She's one of D1's most valuable players and is writing a profile on me for her high school application.

ANGELINE

Oh good! Here's a quote for you:

(holds up T-shirt)

It should be Leslie's face here. With her hair down. Maybe a side part.

LESLIE

That was you that messaged me?

MORGAN

I know. Sorry I hit you from Hassan's phone but I was in a hurry. I just ran into him. He told me to put my number in his phone and then I was too ready to go.

LESLIE

Why are you here?

MORGAN

To break up with Josh.

(to Angeline)

Don't settle for an accountant when you are worth a man that has his own personal one.

(to Leslie)

Why have you been dodging Hassan's calls since last night? He told me to let him know if I saw you.

ANGELINE

(to Leslie)

We can finish the interview another time if you need. I can leave.

LESLIE

No, I--

Sabrina aka SO (37, now in present-day) appears in the doorway.

SO

I can take her.

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

So hurries down the hallway with Leslie, Angeline, and Morgan.

SO

I said I could take her. Don't worry, we all know you don't need any help.

LESLIE

You can always help. Just not right now.

SO

Fine. Then tell Karma that yourself.

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF YOGA/PILATES STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

So finishes telling Morgan how to get to the exit. After Morgan takes off, So and Angeline talk amongst themselves.

At the other end of the hallway, Leslie waits for KARMA HUTCHINS (30s) to finish her morning meditation. After a few beats, So comes up behind Leslie.

SO

When she came up to me looking for you, that's the most uncalm I've ever seen her. Didn't they just hire her? The new Yoga & Pilates instructor can't be looking like that. Especially when she has to report to Hassan.

As Karma changes yoga positions, Leslie loses confidence. Leslie turns away from the glass door to face So.

SO (CONT'D)

Morgan said he's been acting weird.
Everything good?

LESLIE

It will be.

SO

It doesn't have to be. I'll never forget the strings you pulled to get me hired here but we been friends since before that. Lemme know. I'm here.

LESLIE

I know.

SO

She is, too.

Leslie turns around to finally approach Karma, but instead sees AFUA DOWD (40s) now standing in front of her.

LESLIE

Afua.

AFUA

I know who that look is reserved for and it's not me.

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - PATIENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Afua lays on the patient table, now dressed in a hospital gown. Leslie sits at the computer reviewing Afua's patient record. She reads "Hassan Dowd" in the Emergency Contact input field, relationship listed as "Husband".

Leslie gets a new instant message from So. It's a photo of their 3-year-old son scowling in a suit.

SO

Kareem says start having a better day.

So's next message is a photo of them and their wife holding him at their wedding.

SO (CONT'D)
 (via iMessage)
 And we say come over after work if
 you need to. Fr.

LESLIE
 (via iMessage)
 I'll come find you in a bit. Need
 to talk.

AFUA
 Sabrina is doing really well now.

LESLIE
 They actually go by "So."

AFUA
 My apologies. They're very lucky to
 still have you by their side.
 Unlike Hassan, I recognize that you
 had a lot on your plate before the
 promotion. I can't imagine how this
 first month's been for you. And you
 can't imagine how bad I feel about
 asking you to treat me on top of
 all that.

LESLIE
 Don't. A pinched nerve in your
 lower back ain't nothing to play
 with. You come here for work every
 day, why not get treated here too?
 Easier on all of us.

AFUA
 Well if it ever becomes hard, you
 let me know.

LESLIE
 Thank you, I will. Some days feel
 like I'm stuck playing defense more
 than others, but it reminds me that
 every day is a new game here. A job
 title isn't changing that.

Leslie gets up from the computer and approaches the patient
 table.

LESLIE (CONT'D)
 Ok let's start with five knee lifts
 on each one.

Afua does the exercises as instructed. Leslie watches and
 stays close for support.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

And as for Hassan, he's got more on his plate than any of us. I guess I never expected him to care how much I'm taking on.

AFUA

Speak for yourself.

A beat.

AFUA (CONT'D)

Sorry, I just mean women in leadership roles should never talk like that. You're never really speaking for yourself. Black women especially are always grouped together and held responsible for one another -- whether we like it or not. When enough of us expect less, the rest of us eventually have to accept the same. Speaking for yourself is speaking for those who look like you so be careful with what you say.

LESLIE

Understood and appreciated. Give me 5 more, this time double knee lift.

AFUA

Also, it's not that important but -- I don't know...

LESLIE

Stress can worsen inflammation. We found that out the hard way last week, right? Go ahead.

AFUA

Hassan doesn't want me spreading this around but to hell with it. Part of all this construction is for D1's new Health & Wellness Center. And I'm gonna manage all of it. The pandemic slashed through profit margins more than any legislation could -- which Hassan obviously wasn't prepared for. We need something that's going to bring us back for good this time. Aquatic therapy, mental health counseling, acupuncture--

LESLIE
Sounds like a lot more than just
"something".

AFUA
I want a lot more.

LESLIE
Could you excuse me for a second? I
just need to check something in my
office.

AFUA
I wouldn't do that. Hassan has a
meeting in there right now.

LESLIE
Do you know what it's about?
Everyone knows what my office looks
like. Why would he have it in
there?

AFUA
I don't know but just stay by the
phone. He said he'd call when he's
done, which is hopefully soon. More
time for you to maybe fix the way
your office looks.

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - LESLIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

NJ and Brooklyn Nets paraphernalia fills the office from top to bottom. On top of Leslie's desk sits an old framed photo of her at three years old at her first Nets game. She's held by her father, who stands next to a younger Hassan.

Vintage Nets socks, wallpaper, jerseys -- Hassan takes his time examining each piece. SCOTT MCKNIGHT (36) watches game tape of himself at Leslie's desk. He squeezes a mini Nets basketball stress ball.

HASSAN
Hey, turn that off.

SCOTT
Ain't this what we supposed to be
talking about?

HASSAN

As your peer mental health counselor, I'm supposed to talk with you about your life, your anger issues, your mother breathing down your neck about settling down.
(points to tv)

That right there is where you go to ignore it all. Because I already know which part you're gonna skip.

SCOTT

So then why bring me back every week? I can recognize a pattern and do nothing about it on my own. And spend a lot less time just sitting on my ass and talking.

HASSAN

Really? I might have to argue with the sitting part.

Hassan pushes his way through life-sized cardboard cutouts of Jason Kidd, Buck Williams, and Scott McKnight to get to the couch. Framed basketball cards fill one half of the couch. Hassan pushes a few onto the floor to make room.

SCOTT

Everything is in its own place. Just move it somewhere else for now.

HASSAN

If only everything were that simple. Look, I shouldn't have to repeat what Afua already told you. We're the first trial run on this community counseling thing she wants D1 to try. You were damn near helping her convince me. Bring that guy back.

SCOTT

Have Afua corner you at a filmed charity event next to my mom and see if you not stammering like shit.

HASSAN

Already have, except it was at our wedding. Although you could probably call it a charity event, considering how broke I was after paying for it.

SCOTT

Or considering how much Afua actually raised for y'all. Ma told me it was in the thousands or something.

HASSAN

It was, but it took a lot more than that to move us out to London. Now that we're back in Jersey it's the other way around. Your mother is the only one of our guests that hasn't asked us for money or a job since we opened this place.

SCOTT

You hear that crowd?

Hassan turns to the TV and watches the stadium cheer after Scott completes a perfect shot.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

As long as I'm here, she'd never need to. Even if she did, she wouldn't. You tryna figure out why I'm so stubborn. Look no further than Ella McKnight.

HASSAN

Oh I get it, trust me. The only reason we're in this office -- if you can call it that -- is because I barely have one anymore. All this new shit Afua's got planned for D1 has her here every day.

(uses air quotes)

So now we "share" an office. Sometimes I think Ella and Afua are twins, not just friends.

SCOTT

Twenty years and an ocean couldn't even keep them apart so you might be right.

HASSAN

I'm looking at what brought them back together so I don't feel too wrong.

SCOTT

Don't speak too soon. I can handle an hour a week with you but a million dollar donation to D1 from me and Ma's foundation ain't gonna be decided on at some dinner.

HASSAN

Well since you can handle me, why don't you use this time to let me help you decide. Afua sure as hell ain't done asking you.

SCOTT

At least she's nice when she's asking.

HASSAN

You've got last season's scoring title along with the title of Most Wanted Player By Every Damn Franchise In The NBA. Everyone's nice to you.

The crowd in the game tape roars in disapproval. Scott and Hassan turn to the screen and watch a replay of Scott hitting an opposing player after they make a shot.

HASSAN (CONT'D)

Until they're not.

Scott finally turns the TV off.

HASSAN (CONT'D)

I let you watch this shit every week so you can get it through your head that it's not just you and your teammates running against that clock. There's 20,000 people waiting for you to mess up because screaming at you is more fun than screaming for you. And more newsworthy. Afua and I are not those people. It doesn't matter what you do out on the court. We'll always remember that it's you. That's who I'm here for. So talk to me -- about this suspension shit, about staying with the Nets, about anything.

SCOTT

How about next time?

HASSAN

Sure.

Scott gets up to leave.

SCOTT

Fuck. How I'm supposed to get out?
Your office is right next to the
back exit, remember? I don't need
no more videos of me on the
Internet right now.

Hassan looks to a shelf with an assortment of Nets fitted hats.

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - HALLWAY OUTSIDE LESLIE'S OFFICE -
CONTINUOUS

Scott walks to the elevator with his head down, wearing one of Leslie's hats and a pair of sunglasses. Although she recognizes her hat (and thinks she recognizes him), Leslie hurries past him and into her office.

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - LESLIE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Upon entering, Leslie sees Hassan sitting at her desk.

LESLIE

Was that--

HASSAN

No.

LESLIE

I know I'm --

HASSAN

Early. I know. As always.

LESLIE

I was wondering if we could talk
about how--

HASSAN

You're fired.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - FIRST FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Leslie begins the long walk to the front exit. She wears layers and carries piles of her Nets possessions. Josh follows behind her, trying to catch up.

JOSH

Don't worry, Leslie. I don't even think that many people know yet. You could probably come back later to get your stuff.

Josh picks up the back of her Nets throw blanket to stop it from dragging on the ground.

LESLIE

No, that's alright. I'd rather have it with me now.

The framed photo from Leslie's desk slips out of her bag. One of the construction workers catches it before it hits the floor. Josh takes it from him.

JOSH

Keep walking, you're good. None of these guys know what's going on.

The construction workers create a small huddle, wondering what they're witnessing.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER #1

She's leaving early.

CONSTRUCTION WORKER #2

Something about her "good morning" ain't sound right. She's not leaving. They're kicking her out.

Josh continues after Leslie.

JOSH

What about all your research books? You bought those on your own.

LESLIE

Y'all can have them. I'm not coming back here.

JOSH

Jesus, those bastards killed your keycard already?

Josh grabs Leslie's retractable ID badge holder and puts her ID up to a door's card reader to test it. Unexpectedly, the card works. Subsequently, Josh busts the door open of a large adjoined conference room.

A row of people stretching several doors down the hallway stares back at them, with the junior accountant from earlier standing first in line. Josh unhands the card and the retractable strap snaps back to Leslie's waist. The junior accountant closes the door on them.

Leslie turns to the other side of the hallway and sees another row of her colleagues back away from their respective glass windows. The PT from earlier edges closer to the window to take another peek. Leslie turns to Josh and then continues walking down the hallway.

JOSH (CONT'D)
We'll figure out when I can get you
the rest of your things!

Leslie hears a door swing open. She turns to see Hassan and Afua facing each other in a patient room. When they spot her looking at them, Afua closes the door. Standing just beyond the front entrance, Morgan waves Leslie down.

JOSH (CONT'D)
(to Leslie)
Just text me!

MORGAN
(to Josh)
Josh, I told you I prefer
circumcised!
(to Leslie)
C'mon, let's go. It's embarrassing
enough I had to drive your car over
here. Trying to start it for the
eighth time in a row is a new low
for me. And I used to drive a
Camry.

EXT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

LESLIE
You just gotta talk to her a little
bit. Why didn't you just Uber?

MORGAN
I don't know. The app was being
weird.

LESLIE
You sure not your bank account?

MORGAN
Really? That's what we doing?

Morgan climbs into the car and slams the door behind her.
Leslie follows suit.

INT. PARKING LOT - LESLIE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

LESLIE
I'm sorry. We gotta figure out something else, though. I'm not worried about you finding a job because I know how much you hate living with Ma and Daddy. And because I know how amazing you are. But finding some money to get your own car needs to come sooner. Driving you everywhere is killing Eleanor. You hear this shit?

Leslie tries to start the car, but to no avail. The sound of the engine screeching brings the D1 staff to the front entrance glass double doors. They all watch Leslie struggle to leave.

MORGAN
Ellison--

LESLIE
Eleanor!

MORGAN
Elle Woods couldn't make this piece of shit over. And that was before I started inviting you out.

Leslie's phone buzzes with a new notification.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
Which, by the way, you're welcome. Right on time.
(takes Leslie's phone)
It's that guy my friend introduced you to, isn't it?

LESLIE
The one who wanted me to look at his resume? Probably not. He asked for your number after we spoke for an hour, not mine. Remember?

MORGAN

Oh yeah. I think this is something else?

Leslie takes her phone back. She reads a new work email announcing the promotion of Sabrina "So" Owens to Chief Physical Therapist. Eleanor's engine wails throughout the parking lot as Leslie tries to start.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Leslie.

Leslie tries starting the car again. We see Angeline make her way through the crowd at D1's front entrance. She calls out:

ANGELINE

Leslie!

Leslie looks back at Angeline. Angeline's mother comes up behind Angeline and begins gently guiding her away from the building. Leslie tries starting Eleanor again.

MORGAN

I think you forgot something.

Leslie looks toward the front entrance. She sees So holding her framed photo while standing next to Josh.

Leslie turns the ignition in fury and Eleanor finally starts up. Before she can pull off she spots Karma walking to her own car, carrying her office in a box. Leslie turns Eleanor off, hops out, and runs over to Karma.

EXT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Karma struggles to fit everything in her car.

LESLIE

You need help?

KARMA

No, Leslie, we need help. We both just lost our jobs.

LESLIE

Ok, clearly. I think everybody can see that.

KARMA

No, clearly they only see one of us. Tell your audience to stop blocking the entrance before Hassan fires them, too.

Leslie stops Karma before she can lower herself into the car.

LESLIE

We got dealt with because we spoke out. That means something. If we don't let this stop us, it could mean a lot more. Like more non-profits that actually need the money getting it instead of that piece of shit.

KARMA

And what if I don't give a shit about what any of that means? I think we want different things. You want a headline. I just want this shit to stop.

LESLIE

Just because I'm -- was Head of PT doesn't mean I want a headline. I wouldn't have gotten that contractor's number without you and I haven't forgotten that. That's why I asked you to come with me to Hassan's last night. And to what was supposed to be our meeting today.

KARMA

Believing that Hassan can still be reasoned with is in no way acknowledging me. It's ignoring me. Do you even remember what happened last night?

LESLIE

No. Why do you think I was trying to talk to him today?

KARMA

I wasn't talking about him. Get out of here and learn how to do the same.

Karma gets in her car and drives off.

EXT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

So turns to Josh as he looks down at an iPad. They take it from him and see it's Leslie's petition from earlier.

INT. GYM - BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

A recreational basketball team of children (about 4th or 5th grade) practice taking shots from the free throw line.

None of them wait their turn while Scott and his agent NELSON KASPIAN (41) catch the resulting flurry of stray balls.

NELSON

You're not suspended.

SCOTT

Yet.

NELSON

You're doomsday-ing again. The commissioner's office said they'd call in the next few days with their final decision.

SCOTT

You mean catastrophizing.

NELSON

Did you do years of therapy just to learn some new words or to learn how to beat this thing?

SCOTT

Beating something that's been beating my ass since the fourth grade don't just take a few years. Might as well expand my vocabulary. "Anxiety and depression" is getting old.

NELSON

As your friend, I hear you and can admit that I have no idea what that's like. As your agent, I've heard you -- numerous times -- and need you to make a change. No matter how good either of us are at our jobs, I can't keep you on the Nets if you keep getting in your own way. "Aloof," "uncooperative," "difficult." I don't care how long you've been in the NBA, there's no room on any team for a player with that kind of rep.

(MORE)

NELSON (CONT'D)

Or at any Fortune 500, any television network, definitely not at any major nonprofit, which isn't so great for someone who spends all his free time volunteering. Even though he should be spending more time preparing for the meetings I set up for him.

SCOTT

So we gon' act like you and your wife wasn't just begging me to clear my Saturday morning for this?

Scott dodges a stray ball coming from across the court at lightning speed.

ZORA (O.S.)

Zora asked you weeks ago to fill in for one of her coaches.

ZORA KASPIAN (42) looks at them from the free throw line, where she tries to help the young ballers.

ZORA (CONT'D)

Her husband must've forgot to remind you.

NELSON

(to Scott)

Or I reminded you and you still forgot. I would too if I was busy booking protest photo shoots.

One of the kids grows increasingly frustrated with himself, as all his shots are way off. Other kids laugh at him.

SCOTT

Cap.

NELSON

No, looks like you forgot that, too.

Nelson takes out his phone and pulls up Twitter. Scott stares back at a picture of himself at a protest, then looks over at the young struggling player.

NELSON (CONT'D)

When I told you stay away from this shit I knew you weren't gonna listen. You couldn't find a hat or scarf or something to cover your face with?

SCOTT

We're trying to get the state to publicly recognize the food contamination in taxpayer-funded schools.

NELSON

This month. Which cause got next?

SCOTT

Covering up kinda defeats the purpose, don't you think?

NELSON

I think you need to stop trying to find your purpose in these social justice sideshows and accept reality.

The boy's frustration comes to a head. He chucks the basketball across the court, accidentally knocking Nelson's phone out of his hand.

NELSON (CONT'D)

ZOR--

Zora blows the shit out of her whistle.

ZORA

I need three lines!

INT. GYM - BASKETBALL COURT - BASELINE - CONTINUOUS

Zora walks between the three lines of players.

ZORA

Ok so! Coach Z is making partner at Huger & Mott LLP by 35 just like she promised herself at 14--

NELSON

Babe.

ZORA

They can't even tell time. What you worried about my age for?

The kids groan in indignation.

KID #1

We can tell you not 35.

ZORA
That's why I said "by"!

KID #2
(holding Zora's work ID)
No, she looks a solid 30. Like my
dad's girlfriend.

ZORA
Go put that back in my purse.
Didn't I say don't touch anything
that doesn't have to do with
practice?

KID #2
You said don't touch the phone bin.
What else am I supposed to look at?

Kid #2 looks down at the work ID photo of Zora with half up
half down goddess braids. She takes down a few box braids
from her ponytail to emulate Zora's look.

ZORA
(to Nelson)
Baby, can you do another sweep for
me please? Phones, drones and
anything else they hiding goes in
the bin.

Another round of groans from the kids.

ZORA (CONT'D)
Quiet! Like I said, I'm making
partner whether y'all learn how to
play ball or not. Your parents, my
colleagues, are too lazy--

NELSON
Z.

ZORA
Sorry. Too busy giving me work--

NELSON
Zora.

ZORA
They are far too busy *with* work to
find you something else to do after
school. So their top attorney's
basketball clinic is here to stay.
And so are you. But first, we're
all gonna get to know each other a
little better.

(MORE)

ZORA (CONT'D)

Teamwork is at the heart of every competitive sport. Basketball, trial court, dating -- it's all about knowing who you're playing with.

Zora gives Kid #1 and Kid #2, standing in opposite outside lines, a basketball each. Scott wanders into the middle line while Nelson cuts into one of the outside lines.

ZORA (CONT'D)

The two players on the outside will take turns passing to the person in the middle. We're going all the way down the court. When you reach the free throw line on the other side, the two players on the outside have to do a layup. Before you can pass to your teammate you've gotta ask them a question about themselves, unrelated to basketball. Don't forget to sprint on your way back!
(blows whistle)
Alright, let's go!

KID #1 (O.S.)

What's your favorite thing to do?!

Scott, standing first in the middle line, sees a basketball hurtling towards him. He catches the pass.

ZORA

(to Scott)

Remember, anything besides basketball!

It takes a while for Scott to think of an answer.

NELSON

We gon' be here all day.

Nelson hears his phone chime with a new notification. He reaches for his pocket.

ZORA

And that still wouldn't be enough time away from your phone.

Zora takes Nelson's phone. Kid #2, on the other side of Scott, throws the basketball he's holding at Scott.

SCOTT

Shit!

ZORA
 (to Kid #2)
 This is not dodgeball!

After the ball bounces off Scott's thigh, the kid retrieves it.

KID #2
 You said "anything."
 (to Scott)
 Let's go!

And they're off. Scott and his group begin passing and questioning down the court.

MONTAGE:

- Zora coaches Nelson, Scott and the kids through the drill.
- Zora sits on the bleachers with the phone bin. Scott and Nelson's phones sit at the top of the pile.
- Zora stops Scott from getting closer to the phone bin.
- Zora gets an email from chairman@hugermott.com. **Subject Line:** McKnight photos would be great EOM
- Zora uses her phone to take selfies with the kids while clandestinely trying to fit Scott in the background.
- Zora runs after Scott to get him to sign the kids' water bottles, backpacks, sneakers, etc.
- Zora takes selfies on Nelson's phone. He sneaks up behind her and grabs it.

Some questions shouted over the court:

"What would you do with a million dollars?"

"If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you go?"

Scott continues to move in almost slow motion as he tries to catch some of the children's answers.

KID #1 (O.S.)
 Mr. Scott, over here! Who's your
 best friend?

Stumped again, Scott looks to his teammate, eager to pass the ball.

He looks to the group in front of them, smiling and joking with each other down the court. He looks across the court and sees Nelson staring at Zora.

NELSON
(to Scott)
Don't look over here, I'm taken!

Nelson completes a layup. He gives Zora a peck on the cheek on his way to retrieve the ball. Tired of waiting for an answer, the kid finally passes. Upon catching the ball, Scott stares down at it.

NELSON (O.S.) (CONT'D)
That was the commissioner.

Scott turns to face Nelson, who starts walking up to him on the court.

SCOTT
And?

NELSON
That title keeps on saving you.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. WRIGHT HOUSEHOLD - FIRST FLOOR - EVENING

The doorknob falls into LLOYD WRIGHT's (65) hand as he turns it to enter a room. He looks through the bore hole and spots Leslie sitting on the ground next to some tools.

LLOYD

I said don't take off work.

LESLIE

I've got a lot of time-off saved up, don't worry. I'm just using some of it to help you with the repairs around the house.

LLOYD

Thanks, but I don't need this kind of help.

Lloyd places the doorknob on the counter.

LESLIE

Like father, like daughter.

The doorknob sits next to several other doorknobs. Leslie looks around at other doors and notices their knobs missing.

LESLIE (CONT'D)

I heard you can use some help at the shop. Maybe not mine, but y'know.

INT. WRIGHT HOUSEHOLD - BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

JANICE WRIGHT (66) scurries into the bathroom with a full bladder. She takes a closer look at the door, swinging loosely off its hinges with no knob in sight.

JANICE

Y'all talking about I never close the bathroom door and then do this shit!

INT. WRIGHT HOUSEHOLD - FIRST FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

LLOYD

Anything you hear from your mother eavesdropping is just that. Any damn thing.

(MORE)

LLOYD (CONT'D)

Wright's Hardware is gonna be alright. You know how that lady likes to worry.

LESLIE

I drove by there the other day. It looked like most of the businesses on the block are moving out. Have you talked to the other owners?

LLOYD

No, but they've swung by more than enough times to talk to me. And they were right every time. I can't hold onto the shop much longer. Eventually I'm gonna have to sell like how they're trying to.

LESLIE

You make eventually sound like now. If talking to them won't change anything, why don't you talk to the person who you know will? Hassan was just with the mayor.

LLOYD

Florant ain't mayor yet. He's just the guy running with the most money.

LESLIE

Then remind both of them that, after serving this community for decades, three generations of Wright's Hardware owners need help to keep it open. Since he wanna talk so much about Black businesses to any reporter that'll shove himself in his face.

LLOYD

You know Hassan loves a good stump speech. Although, he'd probably wanna stand on something taller for more folks to hear him. When the press comes, it's him doing the shoving.

LESLIE

Ok then! So you'll talk to him and he can spread the word?

LLOYD

About what? About how his business is getting written about while I'm busy digging mine out of the mud? No thanks, I'm good. We came up together. I'm not gonna be a burden now that he can finally enjoy what he's spent years building. Working for him is nice, Leslie, but you don't know him.

LESLIE

I know that working for him isn't just working for him. It's working for his approval on things you never even thought about before.

LLOYD

You in trouble at work? Look, the shop ends with my generation. I ain't send you to school to deal with this shit.

LESLIE

I know you and Ma didn't. I chose to go. And no, I'm just off for a few days. You never are, though.

LLOYD

Your mother--

LESLIE

No, not like how she means it. Even when you're not at the shop, you're somewhere around the neighborhood fixing somebody's toilet or helping them with their roof. Often as requested by Hassan so he can look like he cares about the people who live here. When you overextend yourself, I know you don't expect anything in return, but that doesn't make the work any less tiring. What about everything you've built? Hassan sat back and capitalized on it. He doesn't get to just fucking destroy it now that everyone sees that's all he's ever good for.

LLOYD

We still talking about the shop here?

LESLIE

Of course.

LLOYD

Good. Can you forgive the bastard that was thinking about selling it?

LESLIE

If he can give Eleanor an oil change before I have to leave for the Nets game.

LLOYD

You got it, Eleanor.

Lloyd starts heading out the door. He bends down, hands Leslie a doorknob from the counter, and gives her a quick kiss on her eyelid, missing her forehead. Leslie rubs her eye. Janice enters.

JANICE

Stop touching your face. That's the least you can do since you don't wanna wear no makeup.

Leslie sulks into the floor and defeatedly plops the doorknob down, creating a loud sound.

LLOYD

(almost out the door)
You got it, Leslie!

Leslie stands up and starts to head in the opposite direction for her bedroom upstairs.

JANICE

What was that about?

LESLIE

Nothing.

JANICE

Does he know you got let go?

Leslie stops and turns back around to Janice.

LESLIE

Ma!

JANICE

Who you talking to?

LESLIE

He doesn't need to know.

JANICE

If it involves Hassan, then yes the hell he does. Tell him to help you.

LESLIE

I don't think that's how help works. Have you seen Morgan?

JANICE

She told a friend she needed help getting to the game. You missed her about an hour ago.

Leslie grabs her keys off the counter and heads towards the front door.

LESLIE

I'll see you later tonight.

JANICE

What about your car? It sounded awful this morning.

Almost to the front door, Leslie turns toward the kitchen and sees Lloyd eating a sandwich.

LESLIE

You should see how it looks.

Leslie closes the front door behind her.

JANICE

Leslie, wait! Aren't you gonna ask--

INT. BARCLAYS CENTER - IN THE STANDS - LATER

Sitting next to her friends in the stands, Morgan spots Leslie walking up to them. Leslie hesitates to take her seat.

MORGAN

What are you wearing?

Leslie looks down at her ensemble of jeans and a Scott McKnight jersey. As she lowers into her seat, she eyes the pearl necklace around Morgan's neck.

LESLIE

What you wear to a basketball game. Shouldn't I be asking you that?

MORGAN

Too late now. Auntie Jan said she'd let you know what I was wearing. You know, for inspiration.

MORGAN'S FRIEND

(whispers to the others)
That bitch need a manual.

LESLIE

She sure as hell didn't mention giving you Grandma's pearls.

MORGAN

Probably because she only gave them to me for tonight, relax. We had drinks with some guys we met earlier. You know how Auntie always says you never know who you're gonna meet.

Morgan's phone chimes with a new text. She rummages through her purse.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Oop. Speaking of...

MORGAN'S FRIEND

(to Leslie)
An orthodontist.

LESLIE

Oh good, does he shave down veneers?

Morgan's Friend gets up to leave and taps another friend to go with her.

MORGAN'S FRIEND

We're gonna go get some air.

MORGAN

(to Leslie)
Come on, sit down. You're blocking people's view. And missing the game, right?
(to friends)
Y'all seen Steve McKnight out there yet?

INT. BARCLAYS CENTER - OUTSIDE NETS LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A reporter paces back and forth while talking on the phone.

REPORTER

It's Scott! Scott McKnight. Are you gonna put me through to your boss or not?

ASSISTANT (O.S.)

Not. It's almost 9pm. I'm not getting yelled at just because you want to.

REPORTER

Your boss is head of one of the biggest news sources in the tri-state area. She'll wanna know that the guy that everybody came to see tonight is hiding in the locker room.

The reporter hears a loud, quick crashing sound coming from the locker room. Surprised, he drops his phone on the floor.

INT. BARCLAYS CENTER - NETS LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Scott begrudgingly walks across the room with his back facing Nelson. He posts up on a wall and thinks to himself.

Nelson watches an office chair slowly roll passed him, leaving a trail of warm-up sweats in its path. He picks his phone up off the floor.

SCOTT

I didn't see your phone.

NELSON

It's ok. I didn't see this coming.

SCOTT

I know who did.

NELSON

Great. Can you tell him wrecking the locker room will only lead to him spending more games in here? Look, I'm sorry, alright. I told you exactly what the Commissioner told me. The committee said they'd get back to us with a final decision, but you were all clear to dress for tonight's game. If I would've known--

SCOTT

You couldn't have known the Commissioner would tell Coach not to play me. I just should've expected it.

NELSON

Don't jump to conclusions.

STADIUM ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

We've got a pretty full house tonight.

Scott and Nelson turn to the TV screen above the lockers.

STADIUM ANNOUNCER (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Folks, we're joined by Newark mayoral candidate and co-founder of Newark's first Black-owned venture capital firm, Mitch Florant.

They watch as Mitch sits in the stands and soaks up the applause. The scoreboard reads Chicago Bulls - 110, Brooklyn Nets - 82.

SPORTS ANALYST #1 (O.S.)

Let's turn our attention back to Florant's co-founder as well as two-time ESPY Award nominee for Best Coach, Coach Kenji Smith of the Brooklyn Nets. Smith has been struggling, yet surprisingly calm, throughout this entire game. Derrick?

SPORTS ANALYST #2 (O.S.)

Totally agree. It makes you wonder what's going through each players' heads right now. Makes you wonder how the team is doing, in general. I think it's safe to say not so well. We both know how strong the Nets are, but starting without Scott McKnight was a dangerous move.

SPORTS ANALYST #1 (O.S.)

Maybe not more dangerous than McKnight himself. Still no word on any disciplinary action following last game's incident.

Scott turns the TV off. He starts taking off his uniform and digging through his locker for his plain clothes.

NELSON

Scott. Scott, stop! It's just gonna take a little more time for this to blow over than we thought.

Scott closes his locker and continues to gather/search for his things.

NELSON (CONT'D)

Where you gonna go?

Nelson follows Scott to the door.

NELSON (CONT'D)

It's almost the end of the game. If even one reporter sees you trying to leave, you're gonna get swarmed. Then what do we do?

Despite Nelson, Scott opens the door and sees the reporter standing before him. The reporter gazes up at Scott and Nelson. Scott and Nelson glance at each other.

They snatch the reporter up and take him back into the locker room with them.

INT. BARCLAYS CENTER - IN THE STANDS - LATER

Leslie gets a text from Karma.

LESLIE

I gotta go.

MORGAN

But they're saying that McNulty guy still hasn't played. You don't wanna hold out a little longer for your man?

Morgan's friends make their way back to their seats.

MORGAN'S FRIEND

You're better off staying here than going out there and dealing with her.

LESLIE

What?

MORGAN'S FRIEND

(points to jumbotron)

We were just out there tryna find the bathroom. Ask me how long it took.

Leslie, Morgan, and her friends look to the screen. They watch as the cameras close in on a crowd forming near the stadium's entrance.

INT. BARCLAYS CENTER - NEAR ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

The growing crowd of people carrying signs reading "Money Mitch Sees Green In Politics" and "Sandy Thompson for Mayor" gets the attention of several reporters.

The reporters leave their usual post-game commentary posts to inch closer to the crowd. As they chant "Sandy 2023" the reporter from earlier outside the locker room walks up with Sandy Thompson (35, white).

SANDY

You don't have to tell me why you're helping me, but you do have to tell me about anyone you may have paid to join me tonight. Just for my own safety.

Sandy stares at Nelson, who's standing off to the side of the crowd.

REPORTER

Sandy, I like you. But not that much. I've got a buddy on the election beat. I thought he'd like to know Florant is here. He thought you'd like to know, too. Simple. As for your fans, that's all you.

SANDY

Whatever it takes to close the polls gap.

(looks at Nelson again)

Keep an eye on that guy for me, will ya? Could be an extra set of eyes for Florant.

REPORTER

Way ahead of you.

The reporter walks over to Nelson and together they walk away from the crowd. Sandy walks into the middle of the crowd and is handed a megaphone. She begins to lead an impromptu rally.

REPORTER (CONT'D)

Alright, a deal's a deal. You got your diversion. Now where's my phone?

NELSON

Waiting in my pocket. I'm not taking any chances on you or whatever last-minute story you're tryna scrounge up. Follow me. You get your phone back when we get to the parking lot.

Nelson and the reporter join Scott at the front entrance and the three clandestinely file out of the stadium. We see Leslie find her way through the crowd and out the front entrance, almost crossing paths with Scott.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

I/E. NJ TRANSIT TRAIN STATION - EMPTY PARKING LOT - LATER

Leslie sits in her car looking out her window at Karma. Karma's car is parked across from Leslie's. Karma sits in her car motionless and meditating with her eyes closed.

Leslie checks the time and then readjusts herself in her seat to get more comfy. She spots a guy grumbling to himself and stumbling on the other side of the train track as he collects cans.

When she sees him stop to admire Karma through her windshield, Leslie gets out of her car and speed walks over to the passenger side of Karma's. Not wanting to interrupt, she waits a few moments before she opens the door and joins Karma inside. Karma's eyes remain closed.

INT. KARMA'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

LESLIE

Karma.

KARMA

(opens eyes)

Hi.

LESLIE

Shit is fucked and you're right to be mad. Just be safe, too. Why are your doors unlocked? Why are you here? Alone?

KARMA

I have no job. I'm pretty sure I was drugged less than 48 hours ago. Less than two hours ago I came home to a man who broke into my apartment and told me I need to leave town for good. That's after his greedy ass raided my fridge. Safe isn't an option anymore.

LESLIE

What if you stayed at my place until I'm able to figure all this out? Nobody knows I'm not working at D1 anymore. When I got promoted Hassan introduced me to some malpractice lawyers.

(MORE)

LESLIE (CONT'D)

One of them has to know somebody who can help us.

KARMA

You have no memory of what happened at Hassan's that night and you're talking about lawyers?

LESLIE

I'm talking about proving that Hassan is stealing from D1. And even if a lawyer can't help us, then we just go right back to helping each other. Since I can't remember shit from last night, what do you remember?

KARMA

I remember us getting separated. At some point, I was laying down in a dark room. It wouldn't have even mattered if there was light, my vision was blurred. I don't know where I was but I know I wasn't with you.

LESLIE

So then be with me now so that I can make sure you're ok. I'm not letting some nigga Hassan hired off the street make you leave and I'm damn sure not gonna let him hurt you.

KARMA

It's not me that could get hurt.

Karma starts searching for something on her phone. Leslie looks to the tracks as she hears the bells and whistles of the approaching train getting closer. Karma presses play on a video and gives her phone to Leslie to watch.

As the train gets louder and closer, Leslie proceeds to watch video of herself kissing, and eventually leaving a room with, Hassan.

KARMA (CONT'D)

If we keep going after Hassan, he's gonna leak this himself and get ahead of it. You'll have to deal with a lot more people than just him. But that's not happening because I'm not gonna let him hurt you.

The train screeches to a halt. Leslie finally looks up from Karma's phone. Before Leslie can put the phone down on the console, Karma closes her hand around Leslie's so that she can't.

KARMA (CONT'D)
Delete your number.

EXT. GAS STATION - NEAR NJ TRANSIT TRAIN STATION - LATER

Scott drives his luxury car into the gas station and stops at the nearest pump. He juggles his phone conversation with trying to figure out how to open the gas flap.

SCOTT
Nelson, c'mon man. We couldn't do better than a five-game suspension? After Coach had me in the locker room for half the game to appease some nigga who ain't even mayor yet?

I/E. GAS STATION PARKING LOT - LESLIE'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

Leslie silently mulls over her circumstances in her car. She recognizes Scott's voice from a few feet away and turns to watch him try to pump gas.

EXT. GAS PUMP - CONTINUOUS

SCOTT
What I do off the court is none of their business. If the Commissioner wanna throw the book at me for one obstruction out of the thousands we see every game, cool. But suspension *and* that embarrassing shit he got Coach to pull tonight? That's overkill and you know it.

The wayward man from earlier at the train station whips around the corner and recognizes Scott. This time, he's got a shopping cart full of cans with him.

MAN
Scott McKnight? Thee Scott McKnight?! What's going on, man!

He approaches Scott to shake hands, but needs to keep one hand on his shopping cart so it doesn't roll away.

MAN (CONT'D)
Here, lemme park my shit, too.

He positions the shopping cart to lean against Scott's car for support.

MAN (CONT'D)
Hey man, look, I almost signed with the Nets back in '75. They used to call me the white Dr. J. The name didn't really stick but you get the point. Listen, which team you think's gonna draft you? You never know, I might have to make a few calls to grab your spot.

Annoyed, Scott shuts the gas tank door and heads back to the driver's seat.

LESLIE (O.S.)
(to Man)
You should probably know who Scott McKnight is before making calls about him.

Before Scott can lower himself into the car, he sees Leslie walk up to the pump.

MAN
What are you talking about?

LESLIE
The Nets just went into overtime. You think they letting their top scorer go home early?

He stares at Scott for a few beats and then spits indignantly on the ground in front of them.

SCOTT
Hey man!

MAN
That's white Dr. J to you!
(tips hat to Leslie)
Ma'am.

He takes his shopping cart and walks/rolls away.

I/E. SCOTT'S CAR - LATER

Leslie and Scott are surrounded by a feast of packaged gas station snacks and drinks. Leslie chuckles in the passenger seat as Scott adjusts the heat.

SCOTT

Thanks for getting rid of that guy.

LESLIE

And for pumping your gas. Don't forget my fee.

SCOTT

Your fee? It's cold out there. These heated seats don't count for nothing?

(looks out at her car)

They have to if you're riding around in that thing.

LESLIE

Do not come for Eleanor! She's not as fancy as yours but she's mine. Plus my granddaddy gave her to me. Even if I wanted to replace her, I couldn't.

SCOTT

Right on. Shit, I can't say that about my car. I mean, it's nice but it's not me. I know I look like some rich asshole that doesn't know how to pump his own gas, but it's more like I don't know how to operate a car that costs more than my nonprofit's building rent. When you're on a team, you're sort of expected to keep up appearances.

LESLIE

Nope, you still look like a rich asshole.

SCOTT

You know you lucky you wearing my jersey, right?

LESLIE

I'm just fucking with you. You gotta admit it's kinda strange, though.

(MORE)

LESLIE (CONT'D)

Your name gets brought up with LeBron, Iverson, Jordan -- I don't think it's you that needs to keep up. And by the way, y'all definitely didn't go into overtime. That game was over before I left.

SCOTT

Well, thank you. I'm sure five more games of me sitting out will change all that.

LESLIE

Did they bench you because of what happened last game?

SCOTT

What happened last game is what's been happening my whole life. Growing up, it was just me and my mom. There were times when we didn't have electricity or hot water. But we always had basketball. Both of us. If I was playing, she was cheering. So I played as much as possible until basketball was all I had. Being on the court became my life. When I'm out there and not performing how I should, it feels like I don't deserve to have one. I didn't mean to hit that dude. I was so fucking frustrated with myself for not blocking him that I tried to hit myself. I couldn't even do that right. My agent, my coach, the Commissioner, the fans -- it's getting harder to keep hiding this from everybody. But the people I was at that protest with don't hide shit. And they don't expect me to. And they damn sure not letting what these politicians do stay hidden.

LESLIE

So what are you gonna do now?

SCOTT

Sit back and shut up about my life story so you can tell me yours.

LESLIE

These Cheez Doodles hitting. Did they use sharp cheddar to make these?

SCOTT

At least tell me what you're doing here instead of enjoying the game.

LESLIE

Well you weren't playing so there wasn't much to enjoy. Kinda like everything else in my life right now.

SCOTT

What do you do for work?

LESLIE

Nothing. I got fired a few days ago and they replaced me with my best friend. All this time I was trying to protect them.

SCOTT

Ouch.

LESLIE

Another really good friend of mine got fired, too. We're probably not gonna see each other again. Nothing hurts more than that.

SCOTT

I'm sorry.

LESLIE

Me too.

Scott's phone, somewhere buried under their snack buffet, starts buzzing with an incoming call. Leslie and Scott poke around trying to find it.

Leslie finally grabs it and sees "HASSAN" across the screen. She pauses. Scott looks over and takes the phone out of her hand.

SCOTT

Thanks.

(into the phone to Hassan)

Yo. Yeah, yeah I know. I got a meeting with Coach tomorrow, I can't. Alright, I'll meet you at D1 after.

(MORE)

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Look, I know you and Afua mean well
but ain't no good press story gon'
fix all this.

(A beat)

Ok. You're right. Y'all are both
right. See you tomorrow.

Scott hangs up and begins to buckle his seatbelt.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

Leslie, it was a pleasure meeting
you on an otherwise unpleasant
evening. If they don't trade me,
I'll make sure to get you some fire
seats next season.

LESLIE

No problem at all. But if you're
feeling generous, we don't have to
wait 'til next season. Could I run
something by you?

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. D1 PHYSICAL THERAPY - HASSAN'S OFFICE - DAY

So sits across from Hassan as he stares intently at his monitor. He's got an article pulled up titled "Scott McKnight Donates \$100,000 to Local Businesses, Part of New Accelerator Program."

He grimaces at the accompanying image of Scott with his arms spread across Leslie and Lloyd's shoulders in front of Wright's Hardware. All three of them are all smiles in the photo.

SO

I didn't say you were wrong. I'm just saying it doesn't sound like her.

HASSAN

Well I told you it wasn't just her. Leslie and Karma thought making up lies about me would deflect from them. But you can't leave a trail of receipts for personal items on your corporate credit card and think no one's gonna find out.

SO

I just don't understand--

HASSAN

Why she didn't tell you? She was probably trying to protect you.

SO

I should get back to my desk.

HASSAN

You should. You've earned it.

So leaves Hassan's office, trying to fake a smile. Josh catches the door before it closes. So looks back and notices he's holding the online petition iPad from earlier.

JOSH

Hey, So. Congratulations!

Before So can reply, Josh closes the door behind him. Josh hesitates to take a seat, ultimately choosing to stand. Hassan keeps his eyes on the monitor.

JOSH (CONT'D)
(holds up iPad)
There's been new signatures. Want
me to call her up and do some
digging?

HASSAN
Not yet. We'd need something to
make her talk.

JOSH
Like what?

HASSAN
Like nothing else.

We see Hassan watch video of Leslie and Karma making out in
the same room he kissed Leslie in.

THE END