

# **NIGHT MARKET**

Written by

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[1] EXT. THIRD WARD DRIVEWAY - DAY

Houston heat shimmers over cracked concrete and chalk hopscotch.  
A STOCKPOT the size of a bath rides a shaky propane burner.  
A beat-up GENERATOR coughs like it owes back rent.

MAYA TRAN, 28, laser-precise chef with a quiet engine;  
LU DELGADO, 27, DIY metal-fab wizard in safety goggles;  
DRE COLEMAN, 30, audio engineer/barber who treats sound like religion;  
PRIYA SHAH, 29, brand strategist with home-printer hustle—  
  
—each in motion like a pit crew that pays rent with flavor.

PRIYA

Soft-soft-launch of HEAT LUCK. Neighbors first,  
complaints later.

DRE

"Head Luck" if the G keeps ghosting us.

The GENERATOR COUGHS and DIES. The pot's SIZZLE flattens.  
A line of NEIGHBORS exhales—half amused, half hungry.

LU

It's meditating.

MAYA

I need five minutes of stability. Six to be cocky.

DRE

I can give you three and a questionable fourth.

Dre pops his CIVIC's trunk, hauls out an INVERTER with clamps like

a street surgeon. Clips a tiny SHOTGUN MIC to the pot.

DRE (CONT'D)

If she sings, they'll stay.

He clamps power. SIZZLE RETURNS—warm, buttery, intimate.

Dre routes it to a palm speaker. The sizzle becomes applause you can smell.

NEIGHBOR #1

That's church.

Maya plates crawfish glossed in Viet-Cajun butter. Lime wedge. Cilantro confetti.

CUSTOMER #1

(first bite)

Oh. I'm making mistakes today.

Phones rise. A tiny spark of viral.

A black SUV glides to the curb. EMBER GRIGGS, 34, influencer-restaurateur

in silk athleisure, exits with a ring light and a smile pre-tuned to monetization.

EMBER

(to phone)

Neighborhood vibes! Safety squad—show me your hand-wash station.

Lu points to a five-gallon jug with a spigot and dignity. Real. Enough.

PRIYA

Neighbors sharing food. Off-platform, on-purpose.

EMBER

Community and compliance, babes.

(to phone)

Tagging a local food blog-friendly check!

Dre nudges the SIZZLE volume—laughter blooms.

MAYA

(to Ember; calm)

Bite on the house?

EMBER

I don't... eat butter. But best of luck.

She's already chopping a petty reel.

TITLE OVER HOUSTON TEXTURE: A porch fan creaks. A bike bell dings.

A crawfish sneaks a last wave.

TITLE: NIGHT MARKET

[2] INT. TRAN FAMILY BAKERY - DAY

Old pastry case. New rent. MAI TRAN, 54, precise and economical, cleans what is already clean.

Maya enters, trailing garlic joy.

MAI

Driveway again?

MAYA

Focus group. They loved it.

Mai slides TWO ENVELOPES—FINAL NOTICE stamped rude and red.

MAYA

Mom—

MAI

We sign now, or go in three weeks.

MAYA

I can help. The truck can-

MAI

Trucks move. Bakeries stay.

(softens)

Your father chose this corner.

A framed photo: younger Mai and her late husband, flour on their faces.

MAYA

Then we fight. Together.

MAI

We fight smart. Not loud.

[3] INT. DRE'S BARBERSHOP - DAY

A mural of MR. COLEMAN (late) watches empty chairs.

LANDLORD tapes a NOTICE: LEASE TERMINATING-END OF WEEK.

DRE

End of the month-

LANDLORD

End of the week.

DRE

Sir-this is a neighborhood.

LANDLORD

This is a building. Price went up three neighborhoods ago.

He leaves. Dre studies the mural; jaw tight, heart louder.

DRE

I'll be loud for both of us, Pop.

[4] EXT. EAST END FAB SHOP - DAY

Sparks sneeze from a grinder. Lu coaxes a Franken-hood toward respectability.

ISABEL DELGADO, 32, city inspector polo and older-sister energy, arrives with clipboard and family history.

ISABEL

You made a Class-IV vent out of an Ikea leg?

LU

The Swedes would be honored.

ISABEL

You want legit? Be legit. I can't pass vibes.

She hands a flyer: CITY MICRO-PERMIT OFFICE HOURS.

[5] INT. MONTROSE APARTMENT - NIGHT

Priya on MUTE in a corporate Zoom. Boxes stacked like doubt.

MANAGER (V.O.)

Great news—consolidation to Austin. Priya, you'll  
love—

Priya drags Zoom to a corner, opens a deck: BAYOU NIGHT MARKET -  
BRAND STORY.

Terror and joy shake hands.

[6] EXT. BUFFALO BAYOU PARK - SUNSET

Picnic blanket. Skyline glows like it can afford itself. The  
four sit in a circle.



PRIYA

Gap to save bakery and barbershop: twenty-six K.

LU

I can sell twenty-six thousand zip-ties.

DRE

Or a single blue-hour market. Romantic, legal-ish,  
cheap.

MAYA

Plus the Viet-Cajun Throwdown. Ten K and press if we  
win.

PRIYA

Ember hosts that. She controls vendors.

MAYA

Then we don't borrow her table. We build our own.

A Bayou breeze flips a napkin and their next month.

[7] EXT. NAVIGATION BOULEVARD - DAY (MONTAGE - DAYLIGHT ONLY)

— Dishwashers on break taste-test CRAW-LACHES behind a taco  
stand. Honest nods.

— A young adult watches Lu measure a service window, copies with  
a six-inch ruler.

- Dre laves a flattop; the SIZZLE becomes a beat. Heads bob.
- Priya prints wristbands at a rec center; a volunteer designs a stamp: a kolache in a cape.
- Dockside wholesaler scans a text, shrugs—no more shrimp for Heat Luck. Politics travels faster than ice.

[8] INT. MICRO-PERMIT OFFICE (COMMUNITY HALL) - DAY

Fluorescent hum. Folding tables. Isabel presides: final boss of pragmatism.

ISABEL

You want a night market—at night—with no lights?

DRE

Blue hour. Done by civil twilight. Romance on a budget.

ISABEL

One vendor per six feet. Greywater? Restroom? Grease?

Lu slides a clipped-to-death plan: flow arrows, hand-wash, dump zone, decibel notes.

ISABEL (CONT'D)

Did you... measure?

LU

Like a person who wants to sleep.

ISABEL

Conditional half-day. No amplified sound over seventy dB.

Dre toggles a LIMITER. Bloop.

DRE

Already quieter than your AC.

She fights a smile. STAMP: APPROVED - CONDITIONAL.

[9] INT. BAKERY - DAY

Priya lays out the KOLACHE PASSPORT-stamp card, elder-first arrow, bakery funnel.

MAI

People don't eat maps.

MAYA

We'll make one they can.

A tiny crack in Mai's armor.

[10] EXT. THIRD WARD BACKYARD - LATE AFTERNOON

SET-PIECE: POP-UP STRESS TEST / WEATHER BEAT.

Canopies shiver like they heard the forecast. Neighbors arrive with chairs and opinions.

Clouds stack like unpaid invoices. THUNDER negotiates from a distance.

Rain begins: a tester, then a commitment. People pause... then stay. Houston knows itself.

DRE

Radar says sprinkles.

PRIYA

My hair says liar.

Tarps up. Towels fly. Neighbors grip poles like tent sailors, laughing.

Dre routes SIZZLE through a tiny speaker, side-chaining rain so butter sounds brave.

Maya plates a perfect tray, raindrops hissing into applause.

A black SUV slows—Ember sees something she can't package, glides on.

[11] INT. PRIYA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ARJUN, 30s, Priya's fiancé, stands by boxes labeled AUSTIN OR BUST?

ARJUN

Austin gives us a yard. And no hurricanes.

PRIYA

Houston gives us a life.

ARJUN

Your job's moving anyway.

PRIYA

Maybe I'm not.

A quiet fracture both feel.

[12] INT. BARBERSHOP - NIGHT

Empty. Dre presses play on an old VOICEMAIL.

MR. COLEMAN (V.O.)

You don't need perfect, kid. You need neighbors.

DRE

Then we're rich.

He texts: LET'S BUILD.

[13] EXT. BAYOU-ADJACENT PARK - SUNSET

Chalked booth footprints. Priya tapes a BLUE-HOUR STRIP SCHEDULE.

Lu torque-checks bolts. Maya tastes butter-nods.

Across a fence, a glossy banner UNFURLS: BAYOU EMBER: NIGHT FEAST - SAME DATE.

LU

She stole our day.

DRE

She bought a banner.

MAYA

(fire)

Then we feed better.

[14] INT. WHOLESALE WAREHOUSE - MORNING

Shrimp on ice. A clerk with apologies he didn't write.

CLERK

Supplier changed terms. Contract's contract.

MAYA

I have cash and a line out the door.

CLERK

I have a boss who follows someone who follows the money.

Maya snaps a pic of the price sheet—texts: PLAN B.

[15] EXT. EAST END COMPOUND (LU'S) - DAY

Under a tarp: Lu's rig—smoker, flattop, vent, fold-down window—like a Transformer had a food-truck baby and went legit.

PRIYA

She's beautiful... in a way I can afford.

DRE

Can it pass inspection?

LU

If she loves me for me.

Isabel arrives with clipboard and sibling antennae.

ISABEL

Field pass—conditional. Don't embarrass me.

LU

Never my goal. Sometimes my gift.

[16] EXT. NAVIGATION "TACO ALLEY" - DAY

SET-PIECE: TEST LINE / FALSE ALARM.

A line curls like a question mark that already knows the answer.

Maya unveils CRAW-LACHES: kolaches stuffed with smoky sausage and crawfish butter.

A neighbor's flattop coughs a GREASE "FLARE" (CONTROLLED STEAM EFFECT; FIRE SAFETY STANDING BY).

HFD spritzes; steam billows; the crowd APPLAUDS—no panic when the food tastes like home.

Isabel—off duty—slicks rain from her hair, checks the meter: 66 dB. Legal. She almost dances.

Across the lot, Ember films, smiling like a cat that wants your house.



[17] INT. PRIYA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

ARJUN

I accepted. Start date in two weeks.

PRIYA

Congrats.

ARJUN

Come with me.

PRIYA

I'm building something here.

ARJUN

Then I'll go start it. Catch up?

He sets a key on the counter. She doesn't pick it up.

ARJUN (CONT'D)

I love you. I just don't love waiting.

He leaves. Priya breathes, eyes wet—opens her laptop, keeps building.

[18] INT. BAKERY - PRE-DAWN

Mai kneads. Maya offers a mini Craw-Lache like a white flag with butter.

MAYA

Taste?

Mai tastes as if the kolache owes her rent.

MAI

Too proud.

MAYA

Proud feeds crowds.

A tiny twitch at Mai's mouth concedes nothing and everything.

[19] EXT. THIRD WARD STREET - DAY

Dre staples a POSTER: BAYOU NIGHT MARKET - BLUE HOUR ONLY.

Two ELDERS read, amused.

ELDER #1

Blue hour? That the cheap part of night?

DRE

That's the romantic part.

ELDER #2

We coming for romance or kolaches?

DRE

Both.

Sold.

[20] INT. BARBERSHOP - DAY

LANDLORD returns with a LOCKBOX.

LANDLORD

Keys, Mr. Coleman.

Dre's fingers linger on one chair like it's a friend.

DRE

I'll be back for you.

[21] INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - AFTERNOON

Priya trains VOLUNTEERS on stamps and QR maps.

PRIYA

Smile like you're handing out superstar tickets.

VOLUNTEER

We are?

PRIYA

In our hearts.

[22] EXT. BAYOU PARK - LATE AFTERNOON (DAY OF)

Canopies bloom. Booth chalk lines. Lu's rig gleams in janky glory.

Maya lines mise en place. Dre tapes down cables with neon gaff. Priya checks signage.

Isabel strolls with a decibel meter like a sheriff with lawful vibes.

ISABEL

Try me.

DRE

Ambient sizzle at sixty-six, promise.

He hits play-gentle SIZZLE beds the air. Isabel nods: fine.

[23] EXT. BAYOU PARK - SUNSET / BLUE HOUR OPENS

Crowd on blankets. The BAYOU NIGHT MARKET breathes alive.

Maya flames butter; the SIZZLE-APPLAUSE hooks the block.

Elders first. Stamps thump-STAMP. STAMP.

Across the path: SPONSOR FLAGS and stanchions-BAYOU EMBER: NIGHT  
FEAST-uplights and too much generator.

PRIYA

She brought a roadshow.

DRE

We brought neighbors.

Ember steps out, camera-ready.

EMBER

(to phone)

When you care about safety and-

DRE

(to volunteers)

Redirect left. Samples in hand. Smile with your eyes.

Volunteer flow judo-flips Ember's frame. Her B-roll gets joy-  
bombed.

[24] EXT. BAYOU PARK - SERVE LANE - CONTINUOUS

A COLLEGE BUSKER (20) strums. Dre clips a LAV—intimate, not loud.

MAYA

You know that slow H-Town two-step groove?

He nods. Plays an ORIGINAL, GENTLE TWO-STEP FEEL. Elders sway.

A contained LINE DANCE blooms—pure Houston.

Isabel checks the meter again—66 dB. Legal and lovely.

[25] EXT. BAYOU PARK - LATER

Clouds stack like calves before a storm. Priya clocks the horizon.

PRIYA

We're losing light.

DRE

That's the point.

A gust. A few drops. People don't leave. Houston understands itself.

Isabel taps the permit time; Priya nods. Clock is real.

PRIYA

Last call for stamps! Picnic packs to-go!

MAYA

One more tray. Fast hands.

They move like a pit crew. Jokes keep time.

[26] INT. EMBER'S TEMP HQ TENT - SAME

Ember watches metrics dip. MANAGER hovers.

MANAGER

Invite them to collaborate. Optics—

EMBER

We don't collaborate with counterfeit.

MANAGER

Then we crush them.

EMBER

Then we crush them.

[27] EXT. BAYOU PARK - WRAP-OUT

Dre powers down. Limiters blink SWEET. Volunteers strike ballet-quick.

People linger, happy.

PHONES BUZZ: FLASH FLOOD WATCH TOMORROW - PERMITS SUSPENDED.

The team stares. Tomorrow was Throwdown day.

LU

Bye-bye ten K.

PRIYA

And the press.

MAYA

And momentum.

DRE

Okay. We pivot.

PRIYA

To what? Swimming?



A polite rain begins. The crowd disperses like a satisfied choir.

[28] INT. BAKERY - NIGHT

Maya and Mai mop in companionable silence.

MAI

Your father said rain is God adding seasoning.

MAYA

We're over-seasoned.

Mai squeezes Maya's hand once. A novel in this family.

[29] INT. PRIYA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Priya types, deletes, types, deletes, finally sends:

ON PHONE (TEXT)

Permit canceled. Legal Plan C by dawn?

Three dots appear... vanish. The night hums.

[30] INT. DRE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dre scrolls VOICEMAILS. Lands on Dad again.

MR. COLEMAN (V.O.)

You don't need perfect. You need neighbors.

Out the window: a row of porches lit like a constellation.

Dre opens a map app. Drops pins—porches he knows.

[31] EXT. EAST END FAB SHOP - PRE-DAWN

Lu stares at the tarped rig. Isabel appears with coffee and compassion.

ISABEL

City shut everything down.

LU

Private property isn't city.

ISABEL

You thinking porches?

LU

I'm thinking porches.

She hands him a fat roll of blue tape.

ISABEL

Label cords. Don't trip grandmas.

[32] INT. BAKERY - PRE-DAWN

Maya loads trays. Mai ties an apron—mother armor.

MAI

If you insist on proud, be responsible too.

Extra gloves and sanitizer like talismans.

[33] INT. PRIYA'S APARTMENT - PRE-DAWN

Priya builds a FIND THE FLAVOR map—porch-to-porch stops  
funneling

to a BLUE-HOUR PICNIC zone (still legal). Elder-first routing.

Her phone BUZZES: Arjun. She flips it face down and keeps  
building.

[34] EXT. THIRD WARD PORCH - MORNING

SET-PIECE: PORCH-TO-PORCH MARKET.

A humble porch table becomes a stage. A hand-painted sign: HEAT  
LUCK STOP #1.

Elders sit. YOUNG VOLUNTEERS (18) stamp passports like notaries  
of joy.

Maya plates mini Craw-Laches; Dre lavs the porch itself—wood  
creaks like a bassline.

Lu runs cords taped in blue. Priya hands out maps like  
invitations to a secret everyone's welcome to.

ELDER #1

You came to us. That's respect.

MAYA

We eat where we are.

Phones rise—not to perform, to invite.

[35] EXT. MONTROSE PORCH - LATE MORNING

Stop #3. Flag and lemonade. Isabel checks sanitizer, nods—  
compliant.

PRIYA

Y'all doing this for us?

PORCH HOST

For Houston. And for kolaches.

[36] EXT. EAST END PORCH - MIDDAY

Stop #5. Lu's rig idles at curb-legal. A HEALTH DEPT REP approaches.

HEALTH REP

You folks are... mobile?

LU

Private property tastings. To-go only. No gathering over ten.

DRE

And under seventy dB of delicious.

The rep tastes. Smiles despite themself.

HEALTH REP

I saw your plans. Keep it clean. I'll swing by later.

[37] EXT. VARIOUS PORCHES - AFTERNOON (MONTAGE)

— Elders get first bites; Young Volunteers stamp with holy seriousness.

- Dre samples cicadas, bikes, laughter; layers a gentle groove.
- Priya live-reroutes the map around puddles.
- Maya shows an auntie how to fold kolache dough like a love note.
- A would-be scalper tries to sell a pre-stamped passport; Priya trades them a volunteer shift.

[38] INT. EMBER'S SUV - AFTERNOON

Ember watches their live map explode.

MANAGER

Invite them to your main event. Take credit-

EMBER

We set the table here.

(beat)

Fine. Invite.

[39] EXT. THIRD WARD PORCH - CONTINUOUS

Ember arrives solo. No ring light. Studies the vibe-intimate, earned.

EMBER

Collaboration. Today. I bring power and press. You bring... this.

The team trades looks. Maya steps forward.

MAYA

We good. But thanks.

EMBER

(smile, not kind)

You'll call when the rain hits.

She leaves, mask back on.

[40] EXT. BUFFALO BAYOU PARK - LATE AFTERNOON

Picnic area—legal, daylight. Volunteers lay blankets like quilt squares.

Priya chalks a big heart with an arrow: BLUE HOUR HERE.

Dre hides plant mics in shrubs—nature as band.

Lu checks bolts that were already tight. Maya breathes—steady.

Thunder grumbles from a polite distance. The sky softens toward magic.

[41] EXT. BAYOU PARK - LATE AFTERNOON

Volunteers chalk FIND THE FLAVOR arrows. Families spread blankets.

Maya counts mise. Priya corrals wristbands. Dre tests a plant mic.

DRE

Cicadas on A. Bayou on B. People on C.

(smiles)

Houston on all channels.

LU

Rig's idling sweet.

A distant RUMBLE answers. Not yet.

[42] EXT. STREET NEAR BAYOU - SAME

Ember's convoy idles across the street. Uplights like daytime denial.

MANAGER

Permit says blue-hour only. They'll die in the dark.

EMBER

(watching)

If they die, I want to own the vigil.



[43] EXT. BAYOU PARK - SUNSET

Gold edges the lawn. A College Busker on two pallets as a stage.  
Dre clips a LAV on the guitar—sound blooms intimate, not loud.

ISABEL

Sixty-six dB. Good neighbors.

PRIYA

Stamp station to the left! Elders first!

Stamps thump—STAMP. STAMP.

[44] EXT. BAYOU PARK - FOOD PREP - CONTINUOUS

Maya and Mai move like choreography. Butter down, dough in.

MAI

Too proud can burn.

MAYA

So can timid.

A look: agreement disguised as conflict.

[45] EXT. STREET / CURB - SAME

Lu's rig hiccups. A BELT SQUEALS.

LU

Don't do this to me, baby.

He swaps a spare with a zip-tie tensioner.

DRE (O.S.)

Thirty seconds, NASCAR.

LU

Twenty-five to be petty.

It purrs. He pats it like a grateful horse.

[46] EXT. BAYOU PARK - BLUE-HOUR WINDOW OPENS

The sky dissolves purple. Phones gasp.

Maya plates a tray of CRAW-LACHES. Priya Stories—no logos, no tags.

PRIYA

Blue hour: free romance with purchase.

Laughter. Line swells.

[47] EXT. BAYOU PATH - CONTINUOUS

Ember approaches alone. No ring light.

EMBER

I brought a generator. Press. Real hand-wash.

PRIYA

We're compliant.

EMBER

You're cute. I'm scalable.

MAYA

We're fed.

DRE

And within seventy dB.

EMBER

Take the collab. I'll say I discovered you.

They hear the crowd-neighbors talking to neighbors.

MAYA

We're not lost.

Ember pockets her phone, leaves with nothing to post.

[48] EXT. BAYOU PICNIC AREA - CONTINUOUS

JUDGES—street clothes, Throwdown badges—step in, sheepish.

JUDGE #1

Official event's washed out. Heard the food came  
to the people.

JUDGE #2

You got room for a bite?

PRIYA

Elders first. Judges are elders tonight.

They laugh and queue like decent humans.

[49] EXT. BAYOU PARK - SERVE LINE - CONTINUOUS

Maya presents Craw-Laches. Judges bite. A hush travels.

JUDGE #1

New and inevitable.

JUDGE #3

Dough's respectful. Butter's rude. I like rude.

MAI

(hiding pride)

She's her father's daughter. And her own.

[50] EXT. BAYOU LAWN - CONTINUOUS

Dre holds up three fingers to the College Busker. The kid flips to

THE ORIGINAL TWO-STEP GROOVE-SLOWER, WARMER. Elders beam.

A small line dance ripples-no stage, no stanchions. Houston.

Isabel checks the meter-legal. She nearly joins. Nearly.

[51] EXT. STREET / EMBER'S CONVOY - SAME

Ember watches her crowd thin. Manager hauls PRESS.

MANAGER

We can frame it: "Empowering locals."

EMBER

(quiet, honest for once)

They don't need me.

Mask back on.

[52] EXT. BAYOU PARK - LATER

Drizzle. Umbrellas. No one leaves.

Priya passes BLUE-HOUR PICNIC PACKS.

PRIYA

Last call before civil twilight!

ISABEL

(calling)

Five minutes to permit end!

DRE

Five minutes to legend.

He fades the groove. The SIZZLE takes lead. A hush of attention.

[53] EXT. BAYOU EDGE - CONTINUOUS

Maya hands a final tray to two elders.

ELDER #2

Your father used to bring leftovers.

MAYA

Then I owe you seconds.

Fist bumps. Quiet joy.

[54] EXT. BAYOU PARK - JUDGES' BLANKET

Judges confer over a folding table that wants retirement.

One stamps a PASSPORT: WINNER - HEAT LUCK. The crowd CHEERS.

JUDGE #1

Ten K's in escrow till the city reopens. It's yours.

PRIYA

Press release: the community crowned it first.

Phones record. Real because small.

[55] EXT. BAYOU PARK - DUSK CLOSING

Isabel raises a hand—time.

ISABEL

That's it, y'all. Civil twilight.

DRE

We hear you.

Silence... then warm voices, unamplified.

[56] EXT. BAYOU PARK - WRAP-OUT

Strike ballet. Lu checks rig. Priya collects stamps.  
Maya hugs Mai, quick.

The LANDLORD hovers, surprised.

LANDLORD

You did... this?

DRE

Neighbors did.

LANDLORD

I can give you thirty days. Market rate. No favors.



DRE

Give me thirty. I'll give you foot traffic.

Handshake—equals.

[57] EXT. BAKERY SIDEWALK - NIGHT

A line with stamped passports drifts to the bakery.

Mai unlocks, flips OPEN - THANK YOU, HOUSTON.

MAI

Elders first. Always.

She winks at Maya like it's nothing.

[58] EXT. MONTROSE BUNGALOW - NIGHT

Arjun with a suitcase. Priya meets him on the porch.

ARJUN

I watched the stream. You were... you.

PRIYA

I am... here.

ARJUN

I don't know if I'm built for hard mode.

PRIYA

I am. I love you anyway.

They hug like adults who might circle back.

[59] INT. EAST END FAB SHOP - NIGHT

Lu and Isabel coil cords.

ISABEL

You labeled. You passed. I'm... proud.

LU

Say it into the meter.

She laughs. He deadpans into her dB meter.

LU (CONT'D)

My sister is proud.

Meter reads 0. Pride heard anyway.

[60] EXT. BAYOU PARK - LATE NIGHT (AFTER WRAP)

The team sits on grass with leftovers. Houston hums.

DRE

Not perfect.

MAYA

Neighbors.

PRIYA

And a ten K stamp.

LU

And my rig didn't explode. Today.

They laugh, wrecked and happy.

Thunder grumbles, politely late. Curtain call modest.

[61] INT. BAKERY - DAWN

Morning rush. Fresh trays. A tip jar labeled BARBERSHOP CHAIRS half full.

MAI

Community pays its debts.

MAYA

Let's feed them reasons.

[62] INT. BARBERSHOP - DAY

Dre wheels in a borrowed chair. Two ELDERS wait with stamped passports.

ELDER #1

These stamps get us a fade?

DRE

They get you a story. The fade's on me.

Door CHIMES. Business.

[63] INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Priya faces a tiny press gaggle—two bloggers, a student paper, a city-mag stringer.

PRIYA

We built a market that fits our weather, time, and  
wallets. We'll publish the playbook. Copy it. Improve  
it.

Feed your block.

Pens scribble. Phones record. A movement, not a brand.

[64] INT. EMBER'S OFFICE - DAY

Minimalist museum of success. Ember watches joy she didn't produce.

She hovers over POST. Draft: "Congrats to Heat Luck—authenticity wins. Donating tents..."

Delete. Types:

ON SCREEN: Congrats to Heat Luck. See you at their next market. I'll be in line.

Post. Sincere? Practicing.

[65] EXT. NAVIGATION LOT - AFTERNOON

Lu demos a safer hood add-on to FOOD TRUCK OWNERS.

Dre installs a cheap limiter for a BUSKER.

Priya hands out a one-pager: BLUE-HOUR MARKET KIT (FREE).

Maya teaches a YOUNG COOK (18+) to fold kolaches without fear.

A small economy forms—skills, not extraction.

[66] INT. BAKERY - EVENING

Quiet. Maya and Mai tally a day that mattered.

MAY

Your father said, "Recipe is a map."

MAYA

And map is a recipe.

They share a look. New language between them.

[67] INT. BARBERSHOP - EVENING

Dre paints a tiny sign: SOUND CHECKS WELCOME.

He tapes a lav in a corner-free ambience for artists.

DRE

(to mural)

Chairs are coming home.

[68] EXT. MONTROSE - EVENING

Priya on a porch, alone. Phone buzz: Mom. She answers.

PRIYA

I stayed where I'm from.

Yeah, Mom. Hard mode. It's good.

She smiles through tears—picked the harder door and found a party.

[69] INT. EAST END FAB SHOP - NIGHT

Lu sketches a cleaner vent. Isabel adds a neat note.

ISABEL

Real flange. Real permit. Real business.

LU

Real me.

[70] EXT. BUFFALO BAYOU PARK - SUNSET (ONE WEEK LATER)

Blue hour again. A modest line. No banners.

The BAYOU NIGHT MARKET returns like muscle memory—neighbors, elders, families.

Dre cues the COLLEGE BUSKER for a soft groove. Meter reads 66—good neighbors.

Maya hands a Craw-Lache to a YOUNG VOLUNTEER (18) who stamps an elder's passport first.

Priya high-fives a volunteer. Lu tightens one last bolt out of habit.

Phones rise—not performative—communal.

DRE

(soft)

You hear that?

They listen: SIZZLE, cicadas, laughter, shoes on grass, the Bayou breathing.

MAYA

Sounds like home.

[71] INT. TRAN FAMILY BAKERY - MORNING

Line out the door. Whiteboard: TODAY'S SPECIAL - CRAW-LACHE (LIMIT 2 PP).

CUSTOMER

You the Heat Luck lady?

MAYA

One of 'em.



CUSTOMER

Tell your mom she raised a menace.

MAI

I heard that. And thank you.

[72] INT. CITY PERMIT ANNEX - DAY

Sign: COMMUNITY EVENTS HEARING - BAYOU NIGHT MARKET (CONDITIONAL RENEWAL).

Isabel waits by a water cooler. Team arrives with PLAYBOOK, STAMP DATA, dB LOGS.

ISABEL

Ember filed an objection. "Public disruption."

DRE

Disruption is just a groove that hasn't found its downbeat.

LU

I brought diagrams. And snacks.

PRIYA

We should not bribe with kolaches.

He hides a Tupperware. Badly.

[73] EXT. MONTROSE BUNGALOW - DAY

Arjun loads the last box into a hatchback. Priya arrives with kolaches and a folded map.

PRIYA

For the road.

ARJUN

For the porch.

They hug without pretending.

ARJUN

If hard mode gets... too hard—

PRIYA

I'll call when it's good hard. Bye, J.

[74] INT. EMBER'S OFFICE - DAY

Ember and Manager scroll through clips of the porch market.

MANAGER

We sponsor them. Own the halo.

EMBER

We sponsor the permit hearing. Own the faucet.

MANAGER

And if the faucet won't turn?

EMBER

Then we show the city how loud they can be.

[75] INT. HEIGHTS COMMUNITY HALL - DAY

VENDOR CO-OP. Priya writes, Dre records ideas, Lu flips a lug nut like a coin.

Maya sketches a prep grid.

VENDOR #1

My cooler is perfect except it's not a cooler.

LU

I have lids that believe.

VENDOR #2

How quiet is "quiet"?

DRE

Church whisper. Not Catholic-Black.

Laughter.

PRIYA

We're publishing the BLUE-HOUR KIT tonight. Copy it.  
Improve it.

Credit the aunties.

[76] EXT. THIRD WARD CHURCH LOT - LATE AFTERNOON

ELDERS' CRAWFISH BOIL. Deacon blesses hands, not brand deals.  
Maya tosses crawfish. Mai watches neighbors watch her.

AUNTIE #1

Baby, you put garlic like rent money.

MAI

It was due yesterday.

Dre positions boundary mics. The boil HISSES; elders crack  
shells to finger drumbeats.

Lu's portable hand-wash gets a nod like a diploma.

[77] INT. CHURCH KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Maya shows a YOUNG VOLUNTEER (18) how to fold kolache dough.

MAYA

Don't fight it. Ask it.

VOLUNTEER (18)

Dough's rude.

MAYA

So are people before they're fed.

MAI

Your butter-add zest. Quietly.

Maya grins, grates lime.

[78] INT. TEMP SPACE / DRE'S POP-UP BARBERSHOP - NIGHT

Two chairs, a mirror, a taped-up mural print.

ELDER

Your daddy used to talk folks into forgiving each other.

DRE

I only got fifteen minutes a cut. But I can start an apology.

[79] EXT. EAST END STREET - EVENING

Lu chalks a rectangle: QUIET ZONE. Dre places a meter on a milk crate.

LU

Seventy dB feels like-

DRE

An auntie telling you you're late.

PRIYA

Sixty-six dB is the sound of yes.

Isabel walks up, hands in pockets, pretends not to smile.

ISABEL

You practicing for court?

DRE

For neighbors. Court's invited.

[80] INT. CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - DAY

Placard: BAYOU NIGHT MARKET - CONDITIONAL RENEWAL HEARING.

Commissioners up high. Isabel at a staff table.

Ember at the opponent table with a polished lawyer.

Priya opens a banker's box labeled NEIGHBORS > NUMBERS—stamped passports.

CHAIR

Each side will have ten minutes, then questions.

EMBER'S LAWYER

It's a recurring commercial festival. Displaces traffic.

Flaunts sound limits. We have video.

DRE

So do we.

A plant mic and tiny speaker capped at 66.

PRIYA

We built a kit others can copy legally—blue hour only,

elder-first, capped sound, hand-wash on every table.

MAYA

And kolaches.

CHAIR

The kolaches are not legally dispositive.

LU

They are morally persuasive.

Muted laughs.

The lawyer plays a sizzle reel: crowds, a flare, a young dancer moving like joy.

EMBER'S LAWYER

Crowds. Risk. Noise. Not scalable without harm.

DRE

Good. We're not trying to be loud. We're trying to be local.

He feeds SIZZLE into the mic. The room warms.

DRE (CONT'D)

Sixty-six. Church whisper. Black church.

Isabel checks the meter; nods once.

PRIYA

We redirect foot traffic to elder-owned storefronts.

We publish the playbook. No gatekeeping.

MAYA



Elders eat first.

CHAIR

Ms. Griggs?

Ember rises. Tastes honesty.

EMBER

I run a larger event. We invest in safety. I don't  
like

how they operate... outside the funnel. But—

(beat)

They're neighbor-forward. That's not my thing to  
kill.

Commissioners blink.

COMMISSIONER #2

Withdraw objection?

EMBER

I won't stand in the way of renewal.

CHAIR

(to Isabel)

Staff recommendation?

ISABEL

Renew with conditions: blue hour only; dB cap; hand-wash;

publish the kit; route to elder businesses.

CHAIR

Approved. Unanimous.

A soft MURMUR—room letting out a breath.

[81] EXT. MUSEUM DISTRICT - LATE AFTERNOON

Post-hearing high. Drizzle arrives and leaves without introducing itself.

PRIYA

Ember spared us?

DRE

Or saw which way the church fans were blowing.

LU

I respect any villain who returns a library book on time.

[82] INT. BAKERY - NIGHT

Closed sign flipped, lights low. One tray cools like a promise.

MAYA

One is a ledger template. The other is a hug, but on paper.

MAI

I don't do hugs on paper.

MAYA

I will do proud, and I will also do math.

MAI

Show me where proud goes on the spreadsheet.

MAYA

Cell A1.

They laugh. Real.

[83] INT. BARBERSHOP - DAY

Two new chairs arrive. Volunteers clap like a plane landing.

VOLUNTEER

We named the chairs.

DRE

You what now?

VOLUNTEER

Faith. And Rent.

DRE

Faith up front. Rent by the window.

[84] EXT. EAST END FAB SHOP - DAY

Lu signs a carbon-copy receipt from a PERMIT INSPECTION.

Isabel checks the hood tag like a jeweler.

ISABEL

Real flange. Real stamp. Real business.

LU

Real me.

ISABEL

Stop saying that like it's news.

She hugs him quick.

[85] EXT. THE HEIGHTS / SIDE STREET - TWILIGHT

Priya pins a fresh BLUE-HOUR MAP to a bulletin board. A YOUNG VOLUNTEER (18) grabs a stack.

VOLUNTEER (18)

Can I run a stamp table?

PRIYA

Can you count and smile?

VOLUNTEER (18)

At the same time?

PRIYA

You're hired. Pay is kolaches and respect.

[86] INT. EMBER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Ember drags BAYOU EMBER FEAST into the trash on her calendar.

Types: NIGHT MARKET - IN LINE. Leaves the office early.

[87] EXT. THIRD WARD ALLEY - LATE NIGHT

Dre and Maya test a QUIET FRY. The pan KISSES oil, not shouts.

MAYA

People say "flavor bomb." Inaccurate. It's a flavor thesis.

DRE

I'm majoring in butter with a minor in humility.

[88] INT. MAI'S CAR - DAWN

Silence that isn't empty.

MAYA

Thank you for not saying I told you so.

MAI

I didn't.

MAYA

You could.

MAI

Later. For fun.

They smile.

[89] EXT. BUFFALO BAYOU PARK - DAY (SET-UP DAY)

Canopies in tidy rows. Booth numbers chalked.

A YOUNG VOLUNTEER (18) practices stamping an elder's passport;  
the elder pretends to be nervous.

DRE

Music of the spheres. But portable.

[90] INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

BLUE-HOUR MARKET 101. Priya:

PRIYA

You don't need permission to be precise.

You don't need perfection to be kind.

[91] EXT. EAST END STREET - AFTERNOON

Maya hands a Craw-Lache to Isabel—inspector off duty, sister on  
duty.

ISABEL

It's balanced. Rude butter. Respectful dough.

MAYA

You sound like a judge.

ISABEL

I am. Of everything.

[92] EXT. BAYOU PARK - BLUE HOUR (NEXT MARKET)

Co-op edition. Vendors from the workshop line the path.  
No VIP. ELDERS FIRST moves like a rule everyone wanted.

Ember stands in line, untagged, unlit, unbranded.

ELDER WOMAN

You somebody?

EMBER

Tonight? Hungry.

[93] EXT. BAYOU EDGE - CONTINUOUS

Lu watches his hood draft like a proud dad at a science fair.

LU

Real me.

Isabel elbows him—stop it.



[94] EXT. LAWN / DANCE PATCH - CONTINUOUS

ELDER SINGER croons over the ORIGINAL TWO-STEP FEEL—slow and warm.

Parents teach steps. Young adults learn wrong, then right.

Dre's meter glows 66 like a porch light. Isabel finally dances a little.

[95] EXT. SERVE LINE - LATER

A BLOGGER whispers into a phone:

BLOGGER

Not a festival. A choreographed apology we owe our neighbors.

Also, kolaches. I'm crying.

Maya laughs and almost cries. Mai pinches—no tears in butter.

[96] EXT. PICNIC BLANKET - SAME

Priya, seated, actually eats. Arjun texts a photo of his new porch.

She sends the market with a heart. No words. Good.

[97] EXT. BAYOU PARK - WRAP-OUT (RIGHT ON TIME)

Isabel raises a hand. Everyone obeys before she speaks.

ISABEL

Civil twilight.

Dre fades the mix until SIZZLE is memory. People talk-full,  
warm.

[98] EXT. BAYOU PARK - AFTER

Volunteers coil cords. Young adults grab chalk: SEE YOU NEXT  
BLUE HOUR.

Maya passes a to-go kolache to Ember as peace, not press.

EMBER

I didn't post.

MAYA

You were here.

[99] EXT. BARBERSHOP - NIGHT

Faith and Rent shine. Dre flips OPEN for a late cut. A YOUNG CUSTOMER (18+) peeks in, bold.

YOUNG CUSTOMER (18+)

My stamp card says I get a story.

DRE

Sit. I'll give you two. You can owe me a haircut later.

[100] INT. BAKERY - NIGHT

Maya counts cash into envelopes: RENT, CHAIRS, AUNTIE FUND.  
Mai deliberately messes one perfect kolache.

MAI

Imperfect sells faster. People like the one that needs them.

MAYA

So do kolaches.

[101] EXT. BUFFALO BAYOU - NIGHT (QUIET BUTTON)

Water minds its business. The city glows like a stove pilot.

A leftover stamp flutters: ELDERS FIRST. Crooked. Perfect.

[102] INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - MORNING

BLUE-HOUR MARKET KIT - FREE. A laminator wheezes like a hero.

ELDER MAN

We got a courtyard. Shady. Nosy neighbors.

PRIYA

That's a feature.

[103] EXT. THIRD WARD STREET - DAY

Random inspection-of breakfast. Isabel bites a kolache.

DRE

Please rate us "delicious but compliant."

[104] INT. BAKERY - MIDDAY

MAI

Numbers are spices. Too much burns.

Too little-bland.

MAYA

Sometimes they hide cumin in "miscellaneous."

[105] EXT. EAST END LOT - AFTERNOON

LU

Keep your hands fancy. City loves fancy hands.

DRE

Ten feet buys forgiveness. Twenty buys love.

[106] INT. PRIYA'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

PRIYA

Rotating chairs. Today you sit in the boss chair,  
tomorrow the folding one that bites.

[107] EXT. BAYOU PARK - SUNSET (NEXT BLUE HOUR)

A COLLEGE STUDENT in a "video app" hoodie helps stamp.

STUDENT

I'm studying algorithms.

PRIYA

Meet the only one that matters: Elders First.

[108] INT. EMBER'S OFFICE - SAME

MANAGER

We could buy them.

EMBER

We could learn from them.

[109] EXT. SERVE LINE - CONTINUOUS

SCRUBS WOMAN

I've been awake twenty hours.

MAYA

This counts as sleep.

SCRUBS WOMAN

Then give me a nap with butter.

[110] EXT. DANCE PATCH - CONTINUOUS

Isabel finally dances. Lu pretends not to see. Smiles anyway.

[111] INT. BARBERSHOP - NIGHT

DRE

You moved like a rumor.

YOUNG CUSTOMER (18+)

But it's clean?

DRE

It's correct.

[112] INT. BAKERY - LATE NIGHT

MAYA

For who?

MAI

For when.

[113] EXT. EAST END STREET - MORNING

TRUCK OWNER

This gonna keep the aunties happy?

LU

Nothing keeps aunties happy. This keeps them safe.

[114] INT. COMMUNITY RADIO STATION - DAY

HOST

Bring appetite and good shoes. Leave ego and  
generator at home.

[115] EXT. MONTROSE BLOCK - AFTERNOON

Arjun's basil thrives. Priya's market thrives. Different songs,  
same beat.

[116] INT. CITY HALL - SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

ISABEL

Will reduce calls to 311. Increase smiles.

DEPUTY

Smiles aren't a KPI.



ISABEL

Update your KPIs.

[117] EXT. MUSEUM DISTRICT - GOLDEN HOUR

GALLERY OWNER

You returned chairs early. With thank-you notes.  
We almost fainted.

MAI

Raised by receipts.

[118] INT. PRIYA'S APARTMENT - EVENING

VOLUNTEER

Which chair brings snacks?

PRIYA

Snack Chair is always occupied.

[119] EXT. BAYOU OVERLOOK - SUNSET

DRE

Mics don't make stories. People do.

[120] INT. BAKERY - PRE-DAWN

Mai lays a towel blanket on sleeping Maya, nudges a timer not to ring.

MAI

Proud, but not tired to death.

[121] EXT. EAST END CROSSWALK - MORNING

DRIVER

You the hood guy?

LU

Are you the fire guy?

DRIVER

Brisket.

LU

Then yes.

[122] INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

HELPER

It jammed.

PRIYA

Breathe on it like soup.

The printer obeys. Applause.

[123] EXT. MARKET - SUNSET

A chalk sign: IF YOU'RE NEW, ASK AN ELDER WHAT TO ORDER.

YOUNG CUSTOMER (18+)

Why that one?

ELDER

That one forgives you.

[124] INT. EMBER'S POP-UP WINDOW - SAME

YOUNG CUSTOMER (18+)

You look like the lady on my feed who yells at food.

EMBER

Tonight I'm quiet. Tamarind?

YOUNG CUSTOMER (18+)

Yes, please.

[125] EXT. MARKET - LATER

A sprinkle. Umbrellas bloom. Meter holds at 66 without words.

[126] INT. BARBERSHOP - DAY

YOUNG APPRENTICE (18)

Can I test my podcast?

DRE

We'll put a limiter on your feelings.

[127] INT. BAKERY - AFTERNOON

MAI

Write "water." People forget to drink.

MAYA

Yes, Chef.

[128] EXT. HEIGHTS SIDE STREET - EVENING

OWNER #2

Looks heavy.

LU

Lighter than your excuses.

[129] INT. COMMUNITY HALL - NIGHT

PRIYA

Rotating tree. New shade each week. Both aunties  
sign.

They sign like queens.

[130] EXT. BAYOU - DAWN

DRE

Brick-and-mortar for the truck?

MAYA

For my brain.

[131] INT. CITY PERMIT ANNEX - DAY

CLERK

You're making more work.

ISABEL

Less grief.

[132] EXT. MARKET - SUNSET (COMMUNITY NIGHT)

MAYA

This is chaos.

MAI

This is family.

[133] EXT. DANCE PATCH - CONTINUOUS

SCRUBS WOMAN

I can't sing, but I can hum real brave.

She hums to the ORIGINAL TWO-STEP FEEL. Others join. Soft and correct.

[134] INT. BARBERSHOP - NIGHT

CUSTOMER

How much is gossip?

DRE

Expensive. It pays the light bill.

[135] INT. BAKERY - NIGHT

MAYA

"Quiet Hour"—no phones, just forks.

MAI

People can do both.

MAYA

Then we'll ask nice.

[136] EXT. EAST END - MIDNIGHT

Text exchange:

LU: did good today

ISABEL: do better tomorrow

[137] INT. COMMUNITY RADIO - MORNING

HOST

If y'all hear a quiet sizzle around sunset, follow it.

That's home cooking your feet can find.

[138] EXT. BAYOU PARK - SUNSET (QUIET NIGHT)

Sign: BRING A RECIPE, LEAVE A RECIPE.

Recipes swap like cousins at a reunion.

[139] EXT. MARKET - LATER

MAYA

We don't need it for five minutes.

YOUNG CUSTOMER (18+)

Five minutes is half my life.

MAYA

Lucky you. Spend it here.

[140] INT. EMBER'S SMALL RENTED KITCHEN - NIGHT



On her fridge: BLUE-HOUR KIT with greasy fingerprints.

[141] EXT. BARBERSHOP - DAY

COORDINATOR

Apprentices?

DRE

Luck is a schedule. Bring 'em.

[142] INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - AFTERNOON

VOLUNTEER (18)

What if they feel like elders?

PRIYA

If they argue about it, they're elders.

[143] EXT. BAYOU - SUNSET (ELDER APPRECIATION NIGHT)

Elders tell quick stories. Maya quietly changes the salt. Mai notices and doesn't comment—highest praise.

[144] EXT. SERVE LINE - CONTINUOUS

YOUNG CUSTOMER (18+)

People won't know you did good.

EMBER

We will.

[145] INT. BAKERY - NIGHT

Mai pins a photo: Maya + Mai, flour on faces, a tray between them.

Same posture. New life.

[146] EXT. HOUSTON STREET MOSAIC - DAY (MONTAGE)

A kolache passed hand-to-hand.

A meter blinking 66.

A QR map to a corner that needed it.

A porch light flicks on. Another. Many.

[147] INT. COMMUNITY HALL - EVENING

PRIYA

Motion to formalize the Auntie Fund—emergency groceries,

wheelchair ramps.

All hands up. Amen anyway.

[148] EXT. BAYOU - BLUE HOUR (FINALE NIGHT)

Not bigger-better. Families, elders, young adults, dads who  
learned quiet.

Maya plates. Mai floats. Dre's hush-tech hums. Lu's bolts don't  
need him.

Priya finally eats hot food at hot-time.

Isabel off-duty smile. Ember in line with a chair and no camera.

Elder Singer holds a note like a porch light. College Busker  
harmonizes without ego.

Phones rise, then lower. People choose memory.

DRE

(soft)

Perfect enough.

MAYA

Proud enough?

MAI

Proud and responsible.

A final tray passes hand to hand.

A YOUNG VOLUNTEER (18) stamps ELDERS FIRST on a wrist, laughing like an accomplice.

The Bayou breathes. The city glows. The meter reads 66 like a promise kept.

[149] EXT. BAYOU PARK - CONTINUOUS

A GRANDMA rights a fallen sign with her cane.

GRANDMA

Gravity don't scare me.

Ember secures a loose stake—no cameras.

Lu shims a wobbly leg with a sugar packet.

LU

Field engineering. Sweet solutions.

Isabel pretends not to smile.

[150] EXT. SERVE LINE - CONTINUOUS

CUSTOMER

How many am I allowed?

MAYA

Two. Four if you're feeding elders.

He returns with four, nods at two older women. Promoted.

[151] EXT. DANCE PATCH - CONTINUOUS

ELDER SINGER

Don't rush the good part.

COLLEGE BUSKER

What's the good part?

ELDER SINGER

This breath. Take it.

[152] EXT. PICNIC BLANKETS - CONTINUOUS

ARJUN (ON PHONE)

Your light looks different.

PRIYA

That's the Bayou. It cheats.

ARJUN (ON PHONE)

I'll visit on a blue hour.

PRIYA

Bring basil.

[153] EXT. RIG / CURB - CONTINUOUS

ISABEL

You did good. Don't get sentimental.

LU

I'll cry in the alley.

[154] EXT. PICNIC BLANKETS - CONTINUOUS

A YOUNG VOLUNTEER (18) offers to stamp.

YOUNG VOLUNTEER (18)

I can stamp your hand.

MAI

Elders first?

YOUNG VOLUNTEER (18)

Always.

Stamp lands crooked. Perfect.

[155] EXT. BAYOU PARK - SUNSET TIL DUSK

DRE

We don't need loud. We got each other.

[156] EXT. JUDGES' BLANKET - CONTINUOUS

JUDGE #2

Not bigger. Better.

JUDGE #3

Every bite has a point of view.

[157] EXT. MARKET EXIT - MINUTES LATER

Chalkboard "WHY IT WORKED" fills:

"Because you didn't yell." "Because my auntie felt seen."

"Because I danced wrong and nobody fined me."

"Because the butter apologized and we forgave it."

Priya snaps a photo—keeps it.

[158] EXT. BAYOU PARK - CIVIL TWILIGHT

ISABEL

Civil twilight.

DRE

See y'all next blue hour.

Hands, not security, guide exits.

[159] EXT. BAYOU PARK - WRAP-OUT

MAI

Go say thank you. I will clean.

Maya blinks—promotion.

[160] EXT. PARKING STRIP - MOMENTS LATER

MAYA

You came hungry.

EMBER



Hungrier than I thought.

MAYA

Co-op meeting Tuesday. You can listen. Or just eat.

EMBER

I'll bring ice. And one mouth.

[161] EXT. BARBERSHOP - NEXT MORNING

LANDLORD

Felt like porch light.

DRE

Porches are open-source.

Twelve-month lease. Modest increase. Human terms.

[162] INT. BAKERY - MORNING

Sign: QUIET HOUR - 9:30-10:00 (EARS OPEN, PHONES CLOSED).

CUSTOMER

Tastes louder without the screen.

MAI

Good. Less salt.

[163] EXT. EAST END FAB SHOP - DAY

ISABEL

Paperwork for apprentices?

LU

Filed yesterday. Proud and responsible.

[164] INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

PRIYA

Rotating Boss Chair; Auntie Fund; elder-first non-negotiable.

YOUNG VOLUNTEER (18)

Add "Young Chore Crew" for stickers?

PRIYA

Amendment accepted. Stickers are governance.

[165] EXT. MUSEUM DISTRICT - AFTERNOON

LIBRARIAN

You returned tables early. With notes.  
We almost fainted.

MAI

Raised by receipts.

[166] INT. CITY HALL - SMALL CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

ISABEL

Pilots cut complaints twenty percent. Cleaner  
streets.

DEPUTY

Kindness lowered call volume?

ISABEL

Kindness with a plan.

[167] EXT. HEIGHTS BOULEVARD - EVENING

ARJUN (ON PHONE)

Different songs.

PRIYA

Same beat.

[168] INT. BAKERY - NIGHT

Mai tapes a Polaroid: Maya teaching a YOUNG VOLUNTEER (18) to stamp Mai's hand crooked.

MAI

Keep proof of good accidents.

MAYA

We do.

[169] EXT. BAYOU PARK - SUNSET (ONE MONTH LATER)

Banner: NIGHT MARKET - MONTH FOUR.

Apprentices coil cables. Young fabricators install a hood in fifteen flat.

Sign: IF WEATHER MISBEHAVES, FIND A PORCH.

SIZZLE carries like a rumor worth believing.

[170] EXT. DANCE PATCH - CONTINUOUS

Grandpa teaches a step he learned in '78 and never forgot.

[171] EXT. SERVE LINE - CONTINUOUS

PARENT

Are you—?

EMBER

Somebody who remembered a spoon.

[172] EXT. MARKET EXIT - LATER

New answers: "Because the rules were kind." "Because my grandma danced."

Priya writes: "Because we wrote it down."

[173] EXT. BARBERSHOP - NIGHT

DRE

(to mural)

Not perfect. Neighbors.

[174] INT. BAKERY - NIGHT

Envelopes: RENT, CHAIRS, AUNTIE FUND, TAXES (REAL).

Mai adds: COLLEGE SAVINGS (IF SHE WANTS IT).

MAYA

For who?

MAI

For when.

[175] EXT. EAST END FAB SHOP - NIGHT

Isabel tosses him the meter—his now.

ISABEL

For when I'm not there to scowl.

LU

I laminated the scowl.

[176] EXT. BUFFALO BAYOU - BLUE HOUR (EPILOGUE NIGHT)

Softer crowd. Firmer habit.

HOUSTON AS A CHARACTER—Third Ward, Montrose, East End, Museum District, The Heights—

threaded by water that minds its business and people who don't.

Maya passes a Craw-Lache to an elder who stamps MAYA'S wrist:  
ELDERS FIRST. Crooked. Perfect.

Priya pockets BLUE-HOUR KIT v1.9 with pen edits.

Dre checks the meter: 66. Habit is a song.

Lu tightens one last bolt that doesn't need him, just to say hi.

They stand together—not working—just looking.

MAYA

Hear that?

They do: SIZZLE. Cicadas. Shoes on grass. A laugh starting three  
blankets over, landing here.

PRIYA

Sounds like we wrote ourselves into the city.

DRE

And the city didn't edit us.

LU

Real us.

Isabel strolls by, off-duty smile. Ember passes, untagged,  
unhurried.

Neighbors wave. Elders wave first.

The Bayou takes a deep, even breath. The market answers.

FADE OUT.

THE END