

FRIENDS IN NEED

Written by

India Jenkins

Homestead, Florida  
(305) 242-7277

FADE IN...

INT. BEDROOM-EARLY MORNING

A woman is sleeping in bed. Its RITA RUDOLPH, late 30's, beautiful, head-strong, introverted.

From the looks of the sheets she's been tossing and turning most of the night.

Phone rings. She answers.

RITA  
(On phone)  
Hello?....What's  
wrong?.....When?...Whoa slow down  
babe, what happened?.....I'll be  
there as soon as I  
can....Okay.....I love you  
too....Bye.

She hangs up and sits up awake looking as though she was about to burst into tears.

CUT TO.

INT. RITA'S CAR-MID MORNING

Rita is driving across town. The thoughts concerning the phone call she received kept swirling around her head.

CUT TO.

EXT. HOUSE-EARLY AFTERNOON

Rita is looking at a house, old but modest which belonged to her grandmother.

Bags in hand she walked onto the porch and knocked on the screen door.

SHAVONNE RUDOLPH, mid-20's, smart, sassy, but nosy, appears. They embrace each other in a hug with tears in their eyes.

SHAVONNE  
Let me help you with your bags.

RITA  
(Grabbing her bags)  
No its alright I got it.

Rita enters the house while Shavonne closes the front door behind her.

INT. LIVING ROOM-SAME

Rita is sitting on the couch looking at pictures of herself, Shavonne, her mother, and grandmother in a photo album.

SHAVONNE  
(Pouring some water in a  
cup)  
You want something to drink? Eat?

RITA  
Nah I'm okay, thanks.

Shavonne sits next to Rita on the couch. They both feel as though a part of themselves was taken away as they continue to reminisce about their childhood.

SHAVONNE  
I still can't believe she's gone.

RITA  
I thought she would have at least a little more time...As usual I was wrong.

SHAVONNE  
This isn't your fault honey.  
Grandma lived a full life and now she's at peace. She wouldn't want you to live guilty.

RITA  
(Looking at Shavonne)  
I didn't visit her as often as I should've that's why I feel this way.

SHAVONNE  
You had a lot going on and you actually did visit several times when Grandma was sick.

A beat.

SHAVONNE (CONT'D)  
You still seeing Bobby?

RITA  
No...I ended it a couple of months ago.

Rita experiences a flashback of her face bruised up after taking a beating.

She pointed a gun at Bobby as she ran out of his apartment, to her car and quickly drove off.

DISSOLVE TO CURRENT SCENE.

RITA (CONT'D)  
I had to get away from him before I  
did something I would regret.

SHAVONNE  
I knew he wasn't any good from the  
start. I would've bet a box of  
donuts on that shit.

RITA  
Well you made your point about  
Bobby very clear.

Getting up off the couch, Rita walk towards the side window  
stopping to stare outside.

Shavonne takes a sip of water of water before continuing.

SHAVONNE  
I'll be graduating soon.

RITA  
(Turning to her)  
Already? You started almost a year  
ago.

SHAVONNE  
It doesn't take that long to become  
a medical assistant. With that and  
taking care of Grandma, I'll be  
well prepared to get out on my own.

RITA  
Grandma would've been proud of you.

SHAVONNE  
She told you the same thing after  
you graduated from college.

DISSOLVE TO.

INT. GRANDMA ELLA'S BEDROOM-SEVERAL YEARS EARLIER

Rita was looking at her reflection in the bedroom mirror  
while wearing her blue cap and gown.

She turns around to face her grandmother ELLA RUDOLPH, late 70's, petite, wise.

RITA  
(Smiling)  
How do I look?

ELLA  
(Stepping close to Rita's  
face)  
Your mama and daddy would be so  
proud of you.

Ella touches Rita's cheek.

ELLA (CONT'D)  
And I'm proud of you.

RITA  
Oh grandma I miss them so much.

She gives Ella a hug

RITA (CONT'D)  
I love you.

ELLA  
I love you too dear.

Ella grabs something from out of her jewelry box to show Rita. Its a shiny, gold necklace.

RITA  
(Stunned)  
My God. This is beautiful. How long  
have you had this?

ELLA  
Child this necklace has been around  
for years.

Ella puts the necklace around Rita's neck.

ELLA (CONT'D)  
I gave it to your mama when she  
first married your daddy. She worn  
it for a long time until the day  
she died. And now I want you to  
have it....Wear It for me.

RITA  
(Still stunned)  
Oh grandma.

They hug.

DISSOLVE TO.

INT. LIVING ROOM-PRESENT

Rita sits back on the couch next to Shavonne while continuing to drink her cup of water.

SHAVONNE  
She left both of us her house.

RITA  
What?

SHAVONNE  
Grandma had a will arranged several years ago. The house was supposed to be left to mama but since she's gone too, Grandma left it to us. You and me.

RITA  
What are you saying?

SHAVONNE  
I...Was wondering....If you wanna stay here for a while.

RITA  
You mean move in?

SHAVONNE  
Yeah.

Rita doesn't know how to respond to the intriguing offer.

SHAVONNE (CONT'D)  
You don't have to say yes right away but could you think about it?

RITA  
I don't know what to say....I'll think about it.

Rita gets up off the couch and walks outside the door.

EXT. PORCH-ESTABLISHING

Rita takes out a cigarette and lights up. She sits in a chair to relax.

She sees a couple of kids jumping rope on the sidewalk.

Her attention turns to a middle aged man mowing his yard next door.

They both drew eye contact for the first time.

He gives her a slight wave and she nods back to him.

Shavonne joins Rita outside then sits next to her.

SHAVONNE  
Hot as hell out here.

Shavonne sees Rita putting out her cigarette and shakes her head.

SHAVONNE (CONT'D)  
I thought you quit smoking?

RITA  
I thought I could quit...Call it a slip.

SHAVONNE  
You a hot mess.

RITA  
(Looking next door)  
Who that man next door?

SHAVONNE  
(Looking at him then at Rita)  
That's Bill. Nice man but be acting funny though.

RITA  
In what way?

SHAVONNE  
Well him and grandma was friends before she died but most of the time he kept to himself.

RITA  
It ain't like he retarded right?

SHAVONNE  
Not that I know of.

RITA  
(Staring at Shavonne)  
Just because someone don't talk  
much, don't mean they retarded.  
They could be an introvert that's  
all.

SHAVONNE  
He alright though, you should  
introduce yourself.

RITA  
How Tyrone doing?

SHAVONNE  
He good. He asked about you.

RITA  
For real? What he up to?

SHAVONNE  
Reading, writing, eating, and  
lifting weights. That's about all  
you can do in prison besides take a  
few classes.

Rita shakes her head.

CUT TO.

INT. GROCERY STORE-AFTERNOON

Rita is strolling her basket down the Dairy aisle of the  
grocery store.

Grabbing a carton of milk, she has another flashback of her  
ex-boyfriend punching her and throwing her against the wall.

A falling mop causes her to jump back into reality.

Shaken, Rita continues to walk her basket towards the  
checkout lane when she accidently runs into the man from next  
door, coming from the other direction.

RITA  
(Panicked)  
Oh I'm sorry, I didn't see...You.

Rita realizes who it is as they lock eyes with each other for  
the second time. He picks up a loaf of bread off the floor and  
puts it back on the shelf.

BILL KENNEDY, mid 50's, shy, tortured, but generous.



BILL  
(Sarcastic)  
We gotta stop meeting like this.

Rita laughs. She begin to notice he has an interesting sense of humor.

BILL (CONT'D)  
Were you just getting ready to checkout?

RITA  
Yeah I was.

BILL  
Well you can go ahead of me, I'm in no rush.

Rita didn't know what Shavonne was talking about, Bill seemed like a well rounded, respectful man.

RITA  
Uh...Thank you.

Rita enters the checkout lane with Bill a few feet behind her.

INT. CHECKOUT LANE-SAME

Rita places her groceries on the rolling countertop. Unbeknownst to her, Bill gazed up and down at her backside.

CASHIER  
How are you today ma'am?

RITA  
I'm doing fine.

She then takes out her debit card.

RITA (CONT'D)  
I'll use debit.

CASHIER  
Total is...\$72.85.

Rita inserts her card in the machine.

CUT TO.

EXT. PARKING LOT-MINUTES LATER

Rita is loading her grocery bags into her trunk.

Bill who's also loading his car, sees her closing the trunk then wiping her tears as though she's been crying.

Concerned, he approaches her from across the lot.

BILL  
Are you alright?

Rita looks up and sees Bill in front of her.

RITA  
Oh yeah...I just have uh...allergy  
eyes...it happens. You need any  
help?

BILL  
No I'm fine, I'm getting ready to  
head home. I'm Bill Kennedy.

RITA  
Rita Rudolph.

They finally shake hands and eye each other.

DISSOLVE TO.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE-LATE AFTERNOON

Shavonne is reading a book while sitting on the porch. She then look up to see two cars approaching.

One was Rita's and the other was Bill's.

Bill's car park in his yard while Rita pulls up to the curb.

They both get out of their cars to get their groceries as Shavonne looks on.

SHAVONNE  
(Standing up)  
Need any help?

RITA  
Yeah I could use some.

Shavonne walk towards the car while Bill takes his own bags into his house.

SHAVONNE  
You got the orange juice?

RITA  
Hmm-hmm.

INT.KITCHEN-ESTABLISHING

Shavonne and Rita put the bags down on the kitchen counter and begin to put them away.

RITA  
You remember you told me about Bill possibly being retarded?

SHAVONNE  
Yeah?

RITA  
I think you're wrong about him. He's not even close to being retarded...He doesn't talk much but as far as mumbling, he ain't even close to that neither.

SHAVONNE  
What, you his boo now?-

RITA  
Very funny Shavonne. I'm just saying what you assumed about him earlier, turns out not to be true. Just saying.  
(Sighing)  
I miss Grandma.

SHAVONNE  
I know you do honey, me too.

RITA  
I had a memory of her while I was putting the groceries in the car and I came pretty close to bursting into tears. Luckily no one saw me...When is the funeral?

SHAVONNE  
Next Monday.

RITA  
I don't know how I'm gonna get through this.

CUT TO.

INT. BILL'S LIVING ROOM-EARLY EVENING

Bill is sitting on the couch watching a movie on television when his phone starts ringing.

He answers.

BILL  
(On phone)  
Hello....Hey, how are you?...No I  
just got back from the grocery  
store....I can't right now.....I  
rather not talk about it....Well  
Doc I can't tell you that....Maybe  
tomorrow afternoon...Okay.....See  
you soon....Bye.

Bill hangs up and has a flashback of his own to 30 years ago when he was in the Army.

DISSOLVE TO.

EXT. DESERT-THIRTY YEARS AGO (1991)

Bill and his platoon are running from enemy fire. One soldier shoots a Iraqi guard and another soldier ducks behind an Army jeep after coming close to getting shot.

Bill sees his fellow soldier and close friend RICHARD POWELL running for cover when another Iraqi guard starts to shoot his rifle.

Bill yells out for Richard to hide and tries to push him out of the way but he ends up shot in the chest.

BILL  
(Screaming)  
Richard!

RICHARD  
(Weak)  
I'm okay man...I'm alright.

Bill stares over Richard's body which is now covered in blood, including Bill's hands.

BILL  
You gonna be okay...Shit!

Other soldiers come over to attend to Richard's injuries.

Bill's next in command SECOND LIEUTENANT BOSCO, calls out to him.

BOSCO  
Get a helicopter  
ready!....Captain?...Captain  
Kennedy?

BILL  
He's gonna be okay....Will You get  
some fuckin help?!

BOSCO  
Bill? He's not gonna make it!

A beat.

Letting go of Richard, Bill can already see his eyes closed  
and his body ice cold from the excessive blood loss.

An Army helicopter arrives for them to leave the area.

BILL  
(Voice breaking)  
Lets get his body in the  
helicopter.

The whole platoon carries Richard on a stretcher and places  
him on a cot.

An emotionally drained Bill who's been crying didn't say  
anything the entire time.

This incident would continue to haunt him to the present day.

DISSOLVE TO.

INT. BILL'S LIVING ROOM-PRESENT

Bill had his head in his hands after having the flashback.

He then peek out the front window and sees a couple of kids  
playing jump rope on the sidewalk.

Bill takes out his cellphone.

After a few rings, a young man, HUGO KENNEDY, late 20's,  
sophisticated, but judgmental, comes on the line.

HUGO  
Hello.

BILL  
Hey son.

HUGO  
Hey pop...How are you doing?

BILL  
I'm fine, how about yourself?

HUGO  
(Annoyed)  
What do you want pop?

From the tone of the conversation, there's some unexplained tension between them.

BILL  
How long are you gonna do this?

HUGO  
Do what?

BILL  
We haven't talked in months Hugo, I would think you can give me some courtesy.

HUGO  
You mean the same courtesy you gave mom?-

BILL  
(Sighing)  
Here we go-

HUGO  
Yeah here we go...Why should I give you the time of day after what you done to her? Let alone the family.

BILL  
Shouldn't you ask her that? She was the one who kicked me out-

HUGO  
Is that before or after she got sick?

BILL  
I rather not talk about this anymore...Goodbye.

After hanging up in anger, Bill threw his cellphone on the floor causing it to break.

BILL (CONT'D)  
Shit!

EXT. SIDEWALK-THREE DAYS LATER

Shavonne and Rita are speed walking down the street.

SHAVONNE  
Child slow down you know I'm not  
used to exercising.

RITA  
For someone in the medical field  
I'm surprised you ain't embraced  
fitness.

SHAVONNE  
(Almost out of breath)  
Sheeeit...Not this sista. I'm  
coming in the field to take care of  
folks and load the dough...Nothing  
else matters.

EXT. PARK-MINUTES LATER

After walking, Rita and Shavonne take a rest on the bench.

SHAVONNE  
You know this exercising shit ain't  
bad..Even though I hate it.

RITA  
I do it almost everyday except  
Sunday...That day for Jesus. I  
thought about what you asked me  
before..You know about moving  
here....What's gonna happen to my  
job?...I can't quit.

SHAVONNE  
Wouldn't the firm let you transfer  
over here?

RITA  
The firm doesn't have an office in  
this area. It would be too much of  
a hassle to go to work from here.

A disappointed look crosses Shavonne's face.

SHAVONNE  
Do they know about Grandma?

RITA  
Yeah I told them before I came over here. They gave me a couple of weeks off since I didn't take up much of my vacation and sick days.

SHAVONNE  
I'm going to see Tyrone tomorrow, wanna come?

RITA  
Sure....What time?

SHAVONNE  
About 2:00.

RITA  
I'll be ready.

CUT TO.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE-AFTERNOON

Rita is walking to the porch then turns towards next door. She sees Bill sitting in a chair and decides to come over.

EXT. BILL'S HOUSE-SAME

Bill notices Rita approaching him and greets her with a wave.

RITA  
(Smiling)  
You look relaxed.

BILL  
Nice to see you smiling cupcake.

Rita sits next to him on the porch.

RITA  
Came up with a nickname for me already I see.

BILL  
No offense to you.

RITA  
No offense taken.

BILL  
Are you from around here?



RITA

I was born and raised here but I've been living out of town for the past several years..My sister told me you knew my grandmother.

BILL

The last couple of years of her life I have...She was one of the nicest people I ever met..Other than you.

RITA

I'm sure she's...smiling at the sight of you now. So what do you do for a living?

BILL

I'm retired...I also write articles for various magazines from time to time...How about you?

RITA

I'm a paralegal with a criminal law firm...never thought I'd end up there but its a way to make a living.

BILL

You don't seem too happy about it.

RITA

I am its just...I'm at a point in my life where I need something more...something inside me is missing.

BILL

I know the feeling. You don't look like the type to be a loner...is there a Mister Rudolph back home?

RITA

No...and I'm not looking for another relationship.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE-SAME

Shavonne comes outside to check the mailbox then sees Rita talking to Bill.

EXT. BILL'S HOUSE-SAME

Rita takes a cigarette out of her pocket for a smoke.

RITA  
(Muttering)  
Damn it.

BILL  
You need a light?

RITA  
Yeah I don't have one on me.

BILL  
Hold on a sec.

Bill grabs a lighter out of his jacket pocket.

BILL (CONT'D)  
I got you covered.

Bill lights up Rita's cigarette for her then she takes a drag as smoke comes out of her mouth.

RITA  
To tell you the truth I'm not  
supposed to be smoking.

BILL  
Oh?

RITA  
I was a heavy smoker in my 20's and  
every now and then I slip.

BILL  
It ain't like bad habits die hard.

RITA  
I feel you.

BILL  
(Looking at Shavonne)  
Look like your sister has her eyes  
on us.

Rita turns her head towards Shavonne then back at Bill and they both laugh.

RITA  
She has an awful habit of being  
nosy.

BILL  
Either that or she's very  
protective of you.

RITA  
I don't know.

Rita stands up to leave when Bill calls out to her.

BILL  
Rita?

She turns around.

BILL (CONT'D)  
For what its worth..I'm sorry about  
your grandmother.

Rita nods and heads back to the house.

CUT TO.

INT. JAIL-NEXT DAY

Shavonne and Rita are escorted by a correctional officer  
towards the visitor's lounge.

Officer swipes his key card and it clicks open for them to  
enter.

TYRONE RUDOLPH, early 30s, cocky, charming, outgoing, is  
waiting for them to enter.

OFFICER  
You got 20 minutes.

Rita and Shavonne come over to hug Tyrone.

They all sit down.

TYRONE  
Damn Rita where you popped up from?

RITA  
I just got into town a few days  
ago. Don't think I haven't thought  
about you, I put some money into  
your account.

TYRONE  
You didn't have to do all that.

RITA

Tyrone you my brother, whether you  
know it or not I do miss you  
everyday.

TYRONE

I heard grandma died.

RITA

Yeah...She did.

SHAVONNE

Her funeral is on Monday.

TYRONE

I wish I could be there with ya'll.

SHAVONNE

You'll be there in spirit...Grandma  
knew you loved her.

TYRONE

Ya'll got boyfriends or what?

Shavonne and Rita stare at each other then back at Tyrone.

RITA

Not anymore.

SHAVONNE

I'm not even interested in men  
right now.

TYRONE

(To Rita)

What happened with what's his  
name..Um..

RITA

Bobby...Things just didn't work out  
between us.

TYRONE

(Shaking his head)

You never could hold onto a man-

SHAVONNE

Tyrone?-

RITA

Its alright...I deserved that  
shot..It ain't like Tyrone been  
smelling the sweet tooth in this  
place.

Shavonne laughs causing Tyrone to roll his eyes.

EXT. JAIL PARKING LOT-SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

Shavonne and Rita walk to Rita's car continuing their conversation.

SHAVONNE

That was a cold ass shot you gave Tyrone.

RITA

Welp he had it coming, I don't pull punches.

SHAVONNE

Girl when you gonna let loose and stop taking yourself so seriously?

RITA

Soon as I see Elvis Presley marry Mom's Mabley...It is what it is.

SHAVONNE

Why you ain't tell him about Bill?

Rita shoots her a look as they stop at the car doors.

RITA

Ain't shit to tell, why you all up in my grill?

SHAVONNE

You really want me to believe there's nothing going on between you two?

RITA

(Defensive)

I don't care what you believe Shavonne..And its none of your business.

Shavonne shakes her head then they get inside.

CUT TO.

EXT. BILL'S HOUSE-AN HOUR LATER

Bill is taking out the trash.

He looks at a young man dressed in an Army uniform across the street hugging a little girl, more than likely his daughter.

Flashes of Bill being in the Army scrolled through his mind.

Two older women talking loudly and giggling brings Bill back to earth.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE-SAME

Bill is putting a pill in his mouth. He drinks water behind it while his phone starts ringing.

BILL

(On phone)

Hello...Hey how's it going?...Yeah  
put him on....Hey son....This is a  
surprise...What's going  
on?...You're kidding?...When Did  
this happen?....I wanna see you,  
when can I see you?....why not?  
You're my son....Please, don't shut  
me out....Lets just-

Phone clicks off.

BILL (CONT'D)

Damn it!

INT. BILL'S CAR-NEXT DAY

Bill is driving on the way to his son's house.

He turns on radio to listen to some music.

Browsing through stations, he turns on a news channel.

Bill next drives by an Army base where he sees visitors pulling up at checkpoint, reminding him of his basic training days on Fort Jackson.

DISSOLVE TO.

EXT. HUGO'S HOUSE-MINUTES LATER

Bill steps out of his car and walk towards the porch.

He knocks on the door.

Seconds later the door slowly opens and Hugo appears.

HUGO  
Pop.

BILL  
Can I come in?

Hugo reluctantly motions him inside.

INT. HUGO'S HOUSE-SAME

Bill enters the living room.

Tidy, modest, small house describes the scenery.

Bill sees pictures of Hugo's graduation, Army yearbook photo, several baby photos.

HUGO  
How do you like the place?

BILL  
Its pretty nice.

HUGO  
Why are you here Pop?

BILL  
(Defensive)  
You know damn well why son. Had a baby boy several months ago, got married last year without telling me and you asking me why I'm here? Obviously you know the reason.

HUGO  
That's why I told you yesterday-

BILL  
How long you gonna keep shutting me out?

HUGO  
You abandoned mom when she got very sick-

BILL  
She kicked me out, I didn't abandon her-

HUGO  
Was that before or after you cheated on her?-

BILL  
(Frustrated)  
And how many times I told both of  
you I made a mistake?! How many  
times? You can't answer that can  
you?

After a slight pause Bill continues.

BILL (CONT'D)  
I loved your mother very much Hugo.  
All I did was honor her wishes  
that's why I stayed away.

HUGO  
That still don't cut no ice with me  
pop.

Hugo sits down on the couch then Bill joins him.

BILL  
Did it ever occur to you that I  
haven't prayed or talked to God  
since your mother died?

HUGO  
(Looking at Bill)  
That's not like you.

BILL  
I know that's why its so painful to  
even bring up...What's my  
grandson's name?

HUGO  
Trevor....Trevor William Kennedy.

BILL  
(Nods his head)  
Is he here? Can I see him?

HUGO  
He's with Andrea, they should be  
back any minute...You want anything  
to eat or drink?

BILL  
Yeah sure, why not?

DISSOLVE TO.



INT. GRANDMA'S MASTER BEDROOM-LATE AFTERNOON

Rita is listening to jazz music while browsing through a photo album.

She comes across a photo of her and ex-boyfriend Bobby, prompting another flashback.

CUT TO.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE-TWO YEARS EARLIER

Rita and Bobby get out of her car walking towards the front door.

She stops short of the porch unsure of what's about to happen, leaving Bobby puzzled.

BOBBY  
What's up?

RITA  
You sure you wanna do this?

BOBBY  
I'm sure babe...I want to prove to  
your family how much I love  
you..you're all I need.

RITA  
When did you get like this?

BOBBY  
In your bed 2 months ago-

He laughs.

RITA  
(Laughing)  
Oh stop it!

Rita knocks on the door.

The door opens and we see grandma ELLA, mid 80's, appear.

ELLA  
(Excited)  
Well I'll be doggone, Rita!

RITA  
(Smiling)  
Grandma.

They embrace in a hug then Ella stares at Bobby.

ELLA  
And who is this young man?

RITA  
Oh grandma this is my new boyfriend  
Bobby.

ELLA  
Well ya'll come on in and make  
yourselves at home.

They enter while Ella closes the door.

INT. GRANDMA'S LIVING ROOM-SAME

Rita and Bobby enter the living room. Ella, through her arthritis pain slowly walk with them towards the kitchen.

ELLA  
I got some collard greens, fried  
chicken, and some macaroni and  
cheese if ya'll hungry.

BOBBY  
Oh yes ma'am that sound good.

ELLA  
Got some cornbread for extra.

RITA  
Where's Shavonne she should've  
helped you cook-

ELLA  
She did..she had to get a few  
things from the store. She'll be  
back soon.

Rita and Bobby sit at the table after getting their food.

RITA  
Should we wait for her grandma?

ELLA  
Yes. We're eating as a family,  
always.  
(To Bobby)  
So where you from Bobby?

BOBBY  
South Central, LA.

ELLA  
 Hmm, came from a roughneck  
 neighborhood huh?-

RITA  
 (Offended)  
 Grandma?

BOBBY  
 (To Rita)  
 Nah its all good, South Central is  
 rough. Can't argue with that.

ELLA  
 What made you move all the way down  
 south?

BOBBY  
 Nowhere to go from South Central.  
 Got a job in retail down here and  
 that's how I met Rita. One of the  
 best decisions I ever made.

ELLA  
 I don't want anyone hurting none of  
 my grandchildren, they'll be dealt  
 with if I find out.

BOBBY  
 That's something you'll never have  
 to worry about ma'am.

Shavonne's voice interrupt Rita's train of thought.

CUT TO.

INT. LIVING ROOM-PRESENT

Shavonne comes home from class. She places her backpack in  
 the closet and hangs her jacket on the hook.

SHAVONNE  
 I'm home!

Rita closes the family photo album and enters the living  
 room.

RITA  
 Back so soon? I though you had  
 classes?

SHAVONNE

I did but it was only one today. I needed to go to hold onto my sanity. You had anything to eat yet?

RITA

I'm not very hungry right now. Tell you the truth I'm thinking about going out to eat.

SHAVONNE

Where?..We'll go out and pick something.

RITA

I....don't know actually.

SHAVONNE

I might try that buffet restaurant that just opened up a few miles down the road. Whew child I heard they got some good shit.

RITA

Like what?

SHAVONNE

Well I'll get myself comfortable first and show you on the way there...give me half and hour.

Shavonne relocates to her room.

RITA

Okay, I'll go outside for some air.

Rita exits outside.

EXT. PORCH-SAME

Rita steps on the porch to sit down. She is anxious to smoke a cigarette but reluctantly puts the pack back in her pocket.

Sighing, she sees a car pulling up next door resembling Bill's.

Bill gets out of the care with a tired look on his face.

He sees Rita sitting outside and suddenly his eyes lit up.

Smiling, Rita sees Bill approaching and stops to join her.

BILL  
How sweet it is to see you?

RITA  
I can say the same about you.

BILL  
Off somewhere?

RITA  
Me and Shavonne gonna go pick up  
something to eat in a few minutes.  
Where you been to?

BILL  
I went to...see a friend.

RITA  
For all that long time?

BILL  
Its been a while since I seen him,  
gave us the time to reflect.

As she look straight ahead, Bill couldn't help but notice how  
beautiful she looked.

RITA  
Next week's gonna be tough.

BILL  
You'll be alright. You're a strong  
woman who from what I can tell  
could overcome anything life throws  
at you.

RITA  
Bill, I'm a lot of things but  
strong isn't one of them.

BILL  
Oh c'mon why would you say that?

RITA  
Because there were times when I  
thought I was strong and in the end  
I just...I didn't handle situations  
the right way.

Bill sees a tear slide down Rita's face.

He grabs a napkin from his jacket pocket and come closer to  
comfort her.

BILL  
Hey, hey its okay.

RITA  
I'm sorry Bill I...I didn't mean to  
lose it in front of you.

INT. LIVING ROOM-ESTABLISHING

Shavonne comes out of the room dressed up, checks her hair in the mirror then hear someone crying.

She peeped out the window and spots Rita crying in Bill's arms.

A concerned expression crosses her face.

EXT. PORCH-SAME

Rita tries to gather herself and finally wipes her tears with a napkin.

BILL  
I probably shouldn't say this but-

RITA  
What?

BILL  
I'm gonna give you my number to  
keep.

Bill writes his number on a piece of paper and hands it to Rita.

BILL (CONT'D)  
If you ever wanna talk or need a  
good listener, you can always call  
me.

RITA  
Either that or be on the porch.

Bill laughs and nod in agreement.

RITA (CONT'D)  
Thank you.

BILL  
I'm gonna head back inside, I'll  
see you later?

RITA  
Sure.

Bill smiles and heads back to his house.

Rita re-enters the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM-SAME

Rita grabs her coat just as Shavonne appears.

SHAVONNE  
You ready?

RITA  
Uh...yeah...I was just outside  
thinking.

SHAVONNE  
Oh I believe you were doing more  
than thinking.

Rita shoots her an annoyed look.

CUT TO.

INT. RITA'S CAR-MINUTES LATER

Rita and Shavonne continued their argument over her and Bill  
in the car.

RITA  
What business is this of yours? We  
were talking-

SHAVONNE  
Rita I'm just worried about you-

RITA  
You sure you're not jealous?-

SHAVONNE  
Jealous of what?

RITA  
Of me and Bill?

SHAVONNE  
He's coming onto you-

RITA

He was not Shavonne, get that shit out of your head! We were talking and I was telling him about grandma, that's when I lost it right in front of him..okay? He was just comforting me.

SHAVONNE

It better be all he did.

RITA

Shavonne let me tell you something. What I do with my life is none of your business. While I appreciate you trying to protect me, I can take care of myself.

SHAVONNE

I'm just looking out for you. With Tyrone in prison, you're really all I have left. I don't wanna see you end up like mama did. You know what happened to her.

Rita takes Shavonne's words to heart and nods her head.

CUT TO.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE-EVENING

Rita and Shavonne get out of the car carrying a couple of bags of food into the house.

RITA

Child I can't remember the last time I tasted food like that.

They both laughed as they enter the house.

INT. BEDROOM-LATE NIGHT

Rita is having trouble sleeping.

She turns on the TV, browsing through stations. She stops on an old movie that looked like it was made in the 1970's.

A minute later her cellphone rings. Its an unknown number which baffled her.

She answers.



RITA  
(On phone)  
Hello?

BOBBY  
Hello Rita.

Bobby's voice stuns Rita's face.

RITA  
Bobby?...How Did you get my number?

BOBBY  
I have my ways...How are you?

RITA  
What do you want?

BOBBY  
I wanted to talk to you.

RITA  
Its late Bobby, I'm trying to  
sleep.

RITA (CONT'D)  
You ain't sleep and you know it...I  
heard about your grandmother...I'm  
sorry she's gone.

RITA (CONT'D)  
News sure travels fast.

BOBBY  
What happened to her?

RITA  
She was sick...like most of us tend  
to do someday.

BOBBY  
I wanna see you.

RITA  
Well that's not gonna happen.

BOBBY  
Why?

RITA  
You know damn well why? All the  
shit you put me through, I don't  
want another reminder.

BOBBY  
I still love you Rita.

RITA  
I don't love you...I can do bad all  
by myself...goodbye.

She hangs up.

She considered going on the porch to smoke a cigarette but  
instead she calls Bill.

INTERCUT TO.

INT. BILL'S BEDROOM-SAME

Bill is half asleep when his cellphone rings.

He glances at the caller ID and answers.

BILL  
(On phone)  
Hello.

RITA  
Bill?

BILL  
Hey...You okay?

RITA  
Yeah, even though I couldn't  
sleep...Did I wake you?

BILL  
I was half awake anyway..What are  
you doing now?

RITA  
Watching a movie..It looks older  
than me.

BILL  
(Laughing)  
You're anything but old to me.

RITA  
Well thanks for the vote of  
confidence. You know I have a  
brother right?

BILL  
Really? I thought it was just you  
and your sister.

RITA  
No I do have a brother.

BILL  
Does he know what happened to your  
grandmother? How come he's not at  
the house?

RITA  
He knows about her but the reason  
why he's not around is  
because...he's in prison.

BILL  
(Shocked)  
My god...How long he's been in  
there?

RITA  
About 15 years...Drug possession  
and murder.

BILL  
Jesus.

RITA  
Its not like he's gonna get a plane  
ticket out. Life without a parole  
ain't exactly a vacation. My whole  
family prayed someday he would get  
out but it just hasn't turned out  
that way.

BILL  
You gotta have faith cupcake. Just  
because things don't turn out in  
your favor doesn't mean God won't  
work something out. Keep the faith  
in the meantime.

DISSOLVE TO.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE-AFTERNOON

Shavonne and Rita ride over to the funeral home to take care  
of final paperwork for their grandmother's funeral.

INT. FUNERAL HOME-SAME

Rita and Shavonne leave the funeral home and head outside towards the parking lot.

EXT. PARKING LOT-ESTABLISHING

Rita and Shavonne are walking towards Rita's car.

SHAVONNE  
Everything's all set.

RITA  
Yeah.

SHAVONNE  
Look, you're gonna be alright.  
God's taking care of grandma now.  
She's up there looking after mama  
and daddy. What we do from here on  
out is on us.

RITA  
(A beat)  
Bobby called me.

Shavonne stops dead in her tracks and shot Rita a look.

SHAVONNE  
Please tell me that's a bald faced  
lie?

RITA  
No...He called me late last night.

SHAVONNE  
How the hell he got your number?

RITA  
Damned if I know Shavonne, I sure  
as hell didn't give it to him. He  
claimed he had ways of finding out.

They arrive at Rita's car and climb inside.

INT. RITA'S CAR-SAME

They continue their conversation on their way home.

SHAVONNE  
What the hell was he talking about?

RITA  
He wants me back in his life.

Shavonne stares at Rita as she backs out of the parking lot.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE-AN HOUR LATER

Rita and Shavonne exit the car and continue talking.

SHAVONNE  
I hope you told that fool hell no.

RITA  
I'm not going back to his ass. He was practically begging me.

SHAVONNE  
We both know what would happen if you did.

DISSOLVE TO.

INT. BOBBY'S APARTMENT-TWO MONTHS EARLIER

Rita enters the apartment and found Bobby sitting there angry and drunk, waiting to explode.

BOBBY  
(Slurring)  
Where the hell have you been?

RITA  
I was at work, I had to do overtime.

He gets up close with his alcohol breath blasting in her face with rage.

BOBBY  
You said you were gonna quit!-

RITA  
And I told you I will not...I wanna work. Bobby you're drunk!

Bobby grabs Rita's throat, pulls her down to the floor and starts choking her.

A few seconds later, Rita knee Bobby in the groin and ran for her life out the door.

EXT. BOBBY'S APARTMENT-SAME

Rita sprints down the stairwell with Bobby hot on her heels. He tries to grab her but she sprays mase all across his face.

BOBBY  
(Screaming)  
You bitch!

Rita punches him in the face and ran downstairs leaving him unable to move on the ground.

DISSOLVE TO.

EXT. PORCH-PRESENT

Rita and Shavonne sat on the porch admiring the outside scenery.

Rita takes out a cigarette.

Shavonne shakes her head in disgust.

RITA  
How could I forget that night?

SHAVONNE  
You couldn't stop hiding the black eyes and bruises every chance you got. Was that the last straw for you?

RITA  
Yeah. I was tired of going to work and lying about what happened to my face, and feeling like a prisoner in my own body. After that night I called the police and pressed charges against him. Too bad it didn't last long, now all of a sudden he's calling me.

SHAVONNE  
I really think you should move to this area.

INT. LIVING ROOM-SAME

Shavonne takes off her coat while Rita places her purse in the closet.

RITA

And then what Shavonne? He'll start stalking me again.

SHAVONNE

Not if you get a restraining order. Either that or get an apartment nearby, I'll help you out.

RITA

What about my job Shavonne? I don't have a backup plan. It took me months to get the job I have right now.

SHAVONNE

I will help you Rita. Look I'm sure they're plenty of law offices in the area. Who's to say you won't find one as soon as you get settled? Take a chance.

A beat.

SHAVONNE (CONT'D)

If you go back, Bobby will find you one way or another.

RITA

He probably already done that. I can't just pick up and go that easy...I just can't do it.

Rita relocates to the bedroom, leaving Shavonne disappointed.

EXT. PORCH-NEXT DAY

Rita sits on the porch when she sees Bill kneeling down planting flowers in his front yard.

Bill notices Rita smiling at him.

He stands up and joins her.

BILL

Well my lady, its good to see you smiling today.

RITA

You usually put a smile to my face.

BILL

How long are you staying in town?

RITA  
Until after grandma's funeral...I  
have to be back to work a couple of  
days after...Why?

BILL  
(Nervous)  
I was..wondering if...you wanna go  
out to dinner with me tonight.

RITA  
(Taken aback)  
Oh my.

BILL  
Only if you want to and-

RITA  
I'll do it...what time do you wanna  
go?

BILL  
Would 7:30 work for you?

RITA  
I'll be ready, where do you wanna  
go?

BILL  
I'll surprise you.

RITA  
I'll make an exception for you  
because I actually hate surprises.

BILL  
I promise you won't be  
disappointed.

RITA  
I can't wait.

Bill gazes at Rita as though he wanted to kiss her but  
restrains himself.

RITA (CONT'D)  
I didn't know you were in  
gardening.

BILL  
(Glancing at his garden)  
Oh, I've been doing it most of my  
life. Are you the same way?



RITA

Never had much time to try, been working too much. I like sports, exercise, traveling, and movies.

BILL

Well lets see I'm all in for movies...traveling I dig...but sports and exercise is a no from me. I hate it even though I try to eat as healthy as I can.

RITA

That's one thing we got in common. My sister's trying to push me to move down here now that grandma's gone.

BILL

Are you?

RITA

I can't.

BILL

Why not?

RITA

I can't leave my job and besides I rather have my own place.

BILL

(Thinking)

You know what? I know a couple of realtors in this area who are building several houses in the area. They'll be ready in a few months, I could put in a word for you if you decide to move down here.

RITA

That's very thoughtful of you but I can't afford to move right now.

BILL

You can't? Or you won't?

RITA

(Defensive)

Both. With all due respect Bill I can take care of myself. I don't need anybody to help me.

She abruptly leaves and exits back in the house leaving Bill dumbfounded.

CUT TO.

INT. BILL'S LIVING ROOM-TWO HOURS LATER

Bill is sitting in his living room chair watching TV while talking on the phone to his son Hugo.

BILL

(On phone)

C'mon what's the difference if  
Andrea can't have anymore children?  
Your mother couldn't do it neither  
after you were born.

HUGO

Don't remind me pop...weren't you  
disappointed?

BILL

Well yeah but I didn't dwell on it.  
In the end I was grateful to have  
you. Some couples don't have  
children at all either because it  
just didn't happen or God forbid  
they died.

HUGO

Yeah you got me there.

Bill hears a knock at the door.

BILL

Son could I call you back?  
Someone's at the door....okay.

He hangs up.

Knock gets louder as Bill gets up to answer.

BILL (CONT'D)

Hold on I'm coming!

He opens and Rita appears.

BILL (CONT'D)

What's up?

RITA

I can't come in I just wanted to apologize for snapping at you earlier. Guess I'm not used to reaching out to people for help.

BILL

Don't worry about it...are we still on for tonight?

RITA

Yeah. See you later.

Rita exits while Bill looks at her walking back to the house.

He closes the door.

INT. GRANDMA'S LIVING ROOM-EARLY EVENING

Rita is finishing getting dressed as Shavonne shakes her head.

RITA

What?

SHAVONNE

I can't believe you going out with Bill.

RITA

I can't stay in the house all the time Shavonne. Sista gotta have a life too-

SHAVONNE

Who said you didn't?

Rita shoots her an "Aha" look.

RITA

Well I'll be damned. You green around the gills.

SHAVONNE

What you mean?

RITA

Jealous much?

SHAVONNE

Oh gimme a break Rita you being foolish about this whole thing.

RITA

Look Shavonne. I love you but you been on me since I got here. What I do, what I eat, where I go to, who I date. Run your own race and stop trying to run mine. I don't control your life okay? Just stop.

SHAVONNE

(Giving in)

Fine. Its your life and I'm not gonna interfere anymore. But if you ever need me for help, just know I got your back.

RITA

Oh Shavonne.

They embrace in a big bear hug.

Bill's car horn breaks up the moment and Rita heads outside.

SHAVONNE

Have a good time.

RITA

I will, don't wait up.

She exits out the door.

CUT TO.

INT. BILL'S CAR-EVENING

Bill and Rita are riding down the highway.

RITA

Where we going?

BILL

I told you its a surprise. I don't think your sister like me very much.

RITA

How so?

BILL

She always look repulsed by me every time I'm around you.

RITA

She looks at everyone like that,  
but she's also very protective of  
me even though I'm older than her.

BILL

I get that. My siblings were like  
that with me when I was a kid, told  
me to let me be and leave me alone.

RITA

Interesting. I told my sister the  
same thing.

A beat.

RITA (CONT'D)

How many siblings do you have?

BILL

I have three. Two brothers and one  
sister all living in North  
Carolina, we see each other as much  
as we can but not often mostly  
because they have their own lives.

Rita nods while staring out the window.

EXT. BILL'S CAR-SAME

Bill's car strolls down the street towards the city.

They arrive in the city with bright lights blazing through  
the city.

Rita wonders in amazement while trying to figure out where  
they're headed.

EXT. RESTAURANT-MINUTES LATER

Bill's car park to a tidy, fancy restaurant that apparently  
has been opened recently.

Music hopping with crowds of people young and old walking  
around enjoying the sights.

From the stunned look on Rita's face, she's never been here  
before.

INT. BILL'S CAR-SAME

Bill turns the car off while Rita is still browsing around.

RITA  
(Turning to Bill)  
Where are we?

BILL  
Its called Pink Blues Restaurant.  
It just opened up two weeks ago,  
hope you live jazz music.

RITA  
I sure do but-

Bill abruptly steps out before she finishes.

EXT. BILL'S CAR-ESTABLISHING

Bill walks around to her side of the car and lets out her  
out.

He holds her hand.

BILL  
(Playfully)  
Need an escort?

RITA  
(Laughing)  
Bill, you're too much.

They slowly make their way towards the restaurant.

RITA (CONT'D)  
This is beautiful.

BILL  
(Glancing at Rita)  
Tonight's your night cupcake,  
anything you want is yours.

INT. PINK BLUES RESTAURANT LOBBY-SAME

Bill and Rita enter inside where a hip atmosphere takes  
place.

A jazz band is playing on stage while folks are clapping and  
having a good time.

A young pretty hostess approaches them to take down their reservations.

HOSTESS  
Welcome to Pink Blues restaurant,  
how are you folks doing tonight?

BILL  
Very well.

RITA  
Fine.

HOSTESS  
Do you have a reservation?

BILL  
Yes under Kennedy.

Hostess eyes the computer screen, then sees Bill's name.

HOSTESS  
Bill Kennedy?

BILL  
Yes ma'am.

HOSTESS  
Okay follow me please, your table  
is ready.

RITA  
(Mumbling to Bill)  
Love the service so far.

INT. DINING AREA-SAME

They all enter inside the dining room.

Rita sees a couple dancing while Bill can't resist looking at Rita's backside.

The hostess stops at a table for two in the corner not too far from the stage.

HOSTESS  
Here we are.

Bill and Rita sit across from each other.

The hostess hand them their menus.

BOTH  
Thank you.

HOSTESS  
What would you two like to drink  
tonight?

They look at their beverage options.

BILL  
Hmm. I'll have some white wine.

RITA  
Do you have any cranberry juice?

A baffled expression come across Bill's face.

HOSTESS  
(Unsure)  
Um...sure....you want some?

RITA  
Yes please.

Hostess writes down their beverages.

HOSTESS  
Okay, your drinks will be ready in  
a few minutes and the waitress will  
take your order soon.

BILL  
Thanks.

RITA  
Thank you.

Hostess exits.

BILL  
(To Rita)  
Cranberry juice?

RITA  
Yeah?...I don't drink alcohol.

BILL  
Were you an alcoholic?

RITA  
No but my dad was. Its not  
something I like to talk about very  
much.



BILL  
Well the only time I drink is for  
special occasions. How's your dad  
doing now?

RITA  
He died.

BILL  
I'm sorry.

Hostess brings Bill and Rita's beverages to them.

A middle aged waitress also arrives to take their order.

WAITRESS  
Are we ready to order?

RITA  
Yes.

BILL  
I'll have a number nine please.

WAITRESS  
(To Rita)  
And for you?

RITA  
I'll have a number six.

WAITRESS  
Okay we have a number nine and a  
number six. Would you like any  
dessert along with your meals?

BILL  
No thanks, gotta watch my diet.

RITA  
A slice of sweet potato pie for me.

Waitress takes down their orders.

WAITRESS  
Orders will be ready in 45 minutes.

Waitress exits.

CUT TO.

INT. STAGE-SAME

The band finishes playing a jazz set and exits the stage for a few minutes.

INT. DINING AREA-ESTABLISHING

Bill and Rita clap for more music while waiting for their dinner.

They continue talking.

BILL  
At least it ain't heavy metal.

Rita laughs.

RITA  
I love this place already. I'm glad  
you brought me here tonight.

BILL  
(Kissing her hand)  
How sweet it is.

Bill sips some wine.

BILL (CONT'D)  
Can I ask you a personal question?

RITA  
Depends on what it is.

BILL  
How come a beautiful woman like you  
doesn't have a boyfriend?

RITA  
You're right that's too  
personal....A little too personal  
but since you asked I'll tell you.  
I just haven't had any good luck  
with me, so I stayed away from  
relationships altogether.

Bill sensed something else was going on with her but didn't press the issue any further.

RITA (CONT'D)  
How about you? Why are you alone?

BILL  
My wife died a year and a half ago.

RITA  
I'm sorry.

BILL  
I wasn't always the best husband to her but I loved her very much. Even to this day I still miss her.

RITA  
I'm sure she knows you'll be okay. How was she like?

BILL  
Tall, beautiful, sassy, but very stubborn.

RITA  
I'd be lying if I didn't say I am too.

BILL  
Don't tell me all women are like that?

RITA  
No but I can't say the same about men can I?

BILL  
Touche.

INT. DINING AREA-HALF HOUR LATER

The waitress approaches Bill and Rita with their food while they're looking at a woman singing on stage.

WAITRESS  
Here we are folks.

BILL  
About time.

WAITRESS  
Number nine, and a number six with sweet potato pie.

RITA  
This looks delicious.

BILL  
Thank you.

RITA  
Thank you.

Waitress exits as they begin eating.

INT. DINING AREA-SAME

Bill and Rita are eating their food.

Rita is enjoying Bill's company while Bill is becoming more and more fond of her.

BILL  
Having a good time?

RITA  
The best. I don't want it to end.

INT. STAGE-ESTABLISHING

A jazz band is setting up to play another set.

Bill sees them and is thinking of another idea in mind.

INT. DINING AREA-SAME

Rita glances at Bill staring back at her thinking he's up to no good.

RITA  
What?

Bill stands up.

BILL  
(Holding out his hand)  
Wanna dance with me?

Short pause as she browses at other couples getting ready to step on the dance floor.

RITA  
(Hiding her nervousness)  
Okay.

Rita gets up and she and Bill walk towards the dance floor.

INT. DANCE FLOOR-SAME

Bill and Rita start slow dancing close with the jazz band's music.

BILL  
Its been a while since I did this.

RITA  
Did what?

BILL  
A date...I haven't done it since my wife died.

RITA  
(Looking at him)  
You really outdid yourself tonight though.

BILL  
(Eyeing her)  
At least I know you're having a good time.

After the song ends, Bill and Rita eye each other as though they want to kiss.

A short pause.

CUT TO.

INT. BILL'S CAR-AN HOUR LATER

After their date, Bill and Rita are riding down the highway.

RITA  
Where are we going now?

BILL  
A nightcap.

RITA  
Is this really a good idea?

BILL  
You have nothing to worry about.  
Trust me.

DISSOLVE TO.

EXT. PARK-SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

Bill's car stop at a local park. Rita remains confused as to why she's there.

Bill steps out and opens her door.

They walk towards a bench to sit down and watch the stars.

RITA  
Its beautiful out here.

BILL  
Especially over there.

Bill turns Rita's attention towards the left where there's a purple and pink image.

RITA  
My God.

Bill chuckles as he turns to Rita.

RITA (CONT'D)  
I had a nice time tonight.

BILL  
Me too.

They come close to kissing but resisted.

BILL (CONT'D)  
I'll take you home.

CUT TO.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE-AN HOUR LATER

Bill escorts Rita onto the porch as they continue talking.

RITA  
I want to thank you for a wonderful time tonight.

BILL  
You deserved it for yourself.

Bill kisses Rita on the cheek.

BILL (CONT'D)  
Goodnight Rita.

RITA  
Goodnight.

Rita watches Bill go back next door as she enters the house.

INT. KITCHEN-SAME

Rita grabs a bottle of water out of the fridge.

After closing, she is startled to see Shavonne sitting at the table.

Rita sits across from her.

RITA  
You scared the hell out of me.

SHAVONNE  
How's the date?

RITA  
Lets just say its the most fun I  
had in quite a while.

SHAVONNE  
Bobby called.

An alarmed expression crosses Rita's face.

RITA  
Oh?

SHAVONNE  
He wants to see you.

RITA  
Not interested, hope you told him  
that.

SHAVONNE  
I did, even though he sounded  
desperate.

RITA  
I don't care if he sounded like he  
was constipated I'm still not  
interested.

SHAVONNE  
He asked to come to the funeral.

RITA  
(Frowning)  
What did you tell him?

SHAVONNE  
I told him he's not invited.

RITA  
You think he'll listen?

SHAVONNE  
I don't know but I definitely don't  
like where this is headed.

CUT TO.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE-DAY

Bill is having a session with his therapist DR. ADRIANNE  
FLETCHER, mid 40's, long legs, look as though she's in her  
20's, in her office.

ADRIANNE  
How have you been doing?

BILL  
Great as a matter of fact.

ADRIANNE  
Oh? Could you elaborate on that?

BILL  
I had some progress with my son in  
terms of communicating. We still  
have to iron out some issues but  
other than that, we're talking  
again.

ADRIANNE  
Bill you really haven't talked  
about other problems holding you  
back from moving forward.

BILL  
(Deflecting)  
I'm not ready to discuss that now.  
Its just not the right time-

ADRIANNE  
When can it ever be the right time?  
If you start to talk about it you  
can finally take control of your  
life again.



Bill changes the subject.

BILL  
I met someone.

ADRIANNE  
A woman?

BILL  
Yeah.

ADRIANNE  
Who is she?

BILL  
I met her 4 days ago. She's in town  
because her grandmother died and is  
attending her funeral. To tell you  
the truth I am afraid I'm  
developing feelings for her.

ADRIANNE  
Does she feel the same way about  
you?

BILL  
I don't know. She's in a vulnerable  
spot and I don't wanna take  
advantage of her. I took her out to  
dinner last night and she admitted  
she enjoyed herself.

ADRIANNE  
Give her some space to sort out her  
feelings. You also have to give  
yourself some time to find out what  
you really want.

Bill gives some thought to what Adrianne says.

INT. BILL'S HOUSE-NEXT DAY

Bill enters the living room where his phone is ringing.

He tries to rush over to answer but it goes to voicemail.

VOICEMAIL  
This is Bill, leave a message and  
I'll holla back at you.  
(Beep)

HUGO  
 (voice)  
 Hey pop its me. I know I said I  
 wanted you to visit us today but  
 something's come up. You're more  
 than welcome to stop by this  
 weekend. Gimme a call when you get  
 this message.  
 (Beep)

Bill is disappointed at Hugo's message.

He flops down on the couch and turns on the TV.

DISSOLVE TO.

EXT. CEMETARY-AN HOUR LATER

A small crowd is gathered around the grave site where Rita  
 and Shavonne's grandmother is about to be buried.

Several people including Rita were crying.

A priest is giving a prayer.

PRIEST  
 Ashes to ashes, dust to dust. May  
 the lord rest her soul upon you  
 today.

The casket slowly sets down 6 feet underground.

EXT. CEMETARY-SAME

Folks were shaking Rita and Shavonne's hands as they leave  
 the area.

INT. LIMO-MINUTES LATER

Shavonne and Rita ride in the limo on the highway back to the  
 house.

Shavonne stared straight ahead while Rita, expressionless,  
 looked out the window.

SHAVONNE  
 Nice service today.

RITA  
 Yeah.

SHAVONNE

I knew this day wasn't gonna be easy.

RITA

When is burying a loved one ever easy?

(At Shavonne)

What am I gonna do without her?

Shavonne touches Rita's hand and turns to her.

SHAVONNE

Listen. Grandma is well taken care of. God has her in his hands now, mama and daddy too. All we have is each other. We're gonna be okay.

A tear streak down Rita's face.

CUT TO.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE-SEVERAL MINUTES LATER

A dozen people surround the house dancing, eating, drinking, and enjoying the atmosphere.

Minutes later, a black car pull up to the curb of the house with hip hop music blasting.

EXT. BLACK CAR-SAME

Heads swoon over the car wondering who could be inside.

After the car shuts off, a man steps out and closes the door making his way towards the front.

Its Bobby.

RITA

(Disgusted)

I don't believe this shit.

SHAVONNE

I'll handle this.

Shavonne rushes to stop Bobby dead in his tracks.

SHAVONNE (CONT'D)

(Defensive)

What the hell are you doing? Who invited you-

BOBBY  
I invited myself and I wanted to  
pay my respects. Where's Rita?

SHAVONNE  
She doesn't wanna see you Bobby!

Bill witnesses the incident and quickly walks over to help.

BOBBY  
(Yelling)  
Hey Rita where you at?!

Rita rushes towards Shavonne as Bobby grabs her arm.

RITA  
(Angry)  
Take your hands off my sister!

He lets go as Bill comes in the middle surprising Rita and Shavonne.

BILL  
(To Rita and Shavonne)  
Is everything alright? He causing  
trouble?-

BOBBY  
Who the hell you pose to be?-

BILL  
(Close to Bobby's face)  
I'm a be your worst nightmare if  
you don't back off.

BOBBY  
(Threatening)  
No you need to fuck off!

Bill grabs Bobby's shirt and throws him to the ground.

A brawl break out between the two prompting Rita and Shavonne to stop them.

SHAVONNE  
That's enough!

BILL  
Get him away from me before I kill  
him.

RITA  
Get out of here Bobby, all you  
doing is making trouble!  
(MORE)

RITA (CONT'D)  
On the day I buried my grandma you  
do this shit?!

BOBBY  
Rita you don't-

RITA  
(Angry with tears in her  
eyes)  
I want nothing to do with you! And  
I don't give a fuck what you want!  
Get out of my life and never come  
back.

Eyeing Rita, Bobby exits to his car and drives away.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE-SAME

Bill come over to Rita and Shavonne.

BILL  
Ya'll alright?

SHAVONNE  
I'm okay.

Bill notices Rita still shaken up and attempts to comfort  
her.

Shavonne walks away.

BILL  
You okay cupcake?

RITA  
(Shaken)  
No...not at all.

EXT. PORCH-SAME

Bill escorts Rita to the buffet table to get her something to  
eat.

RITA  
(Frustrated)  
Oh Bill my stomach can't handle  
food right now. I need a drink.

BILL  
(Baffled)  
I thought you didn't drink?

RITA

No but I feel like having one. I  
want to thank you for what you did  
back there.

BILL

Lets just say every time I see a  
man put his hands on a woman, I  
blow my top.

INT. LIVING ROOM-ESTABLISHING

Rita is inside drinking some vodka.

She felt tired so she took the bottle and went to the  
bathroom to relax.

EXT. OUTSIDE-SAME

Bill is drinking some wine while eating some food across from  
Shavonne.

BILL

Have you seen Rita?

SHAVONNE

No she was here a few minutes ago.

BILL

I'm worried about her.

SHAVONNE

Tell you the truth so am I. See if  
you can find her Bill.

Bill stands up and heads inside the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM-ESTABLISHING

Bill is inside calling out to Rita, looking around the house.

BILL

Rita?....Rita, you in here?  
(Walking towards the  
bedroom)  
Rita where are you?

Rita hears Bill's voice but doesn't make any movement.

Now dressed, Rita quietly steps out the bathroom while Bill  
goes back outside.

EXT. OUTSIDE-SAME

Bill approaches Shavonne and sits down.

BILL  
No sign of her.

SHAVONNE  
Hmm. Maybe she stopped to the  
store.

Rita continues to drink while sitting on the couch.

BILL  
I'm sure she'll turn up.

SHAVONNE  
I'm gonna see if she's in there.

Shavonne enters in the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM-SAME

Shavonne sees Rita sitting on the couch drinking vodka.

Shaking her head, she sits down next to her.

SHAVONNE  
Bill was looking for you.

RITA  
(Slurring her words)  
Yeah....And?

SHAVONNE  
He's worried about you and so am I-

RITA  
Well don't...I'm doing just fine.

SHAVONNE  
I'm sure you are with that bottle  
in your hand.

She grabs the bottle from Rita.

RITA  
(Defensive)  
What the hell-

SHAVONNE  
I can only imagine what grandma  
would say if she saw you like this.

RITA  
(Angry)  
She can't can she?! But you might  
be fine with me falling on my face-

SHAVONNE  
What the hell are you talking  
about?

RITA  
I don't...I don't know.

Shavonne sees a tear coming down Rita's face.

SHAVONNE  
You're angry about Bobby aren't  
you?

RITA  
(Wiping her tears)  
How can he just show up on the day  
we bury grandma and stir up shit?  
He meant to do that to get to me.

SHAVONNE  
What are you gonna do?

RITA  
What do you mean?

SHAVONNE  
Bobby came all the way down here,  
out of his mind trying to force you  
to go back with him. I still think  
you're better off staying here for  
a while.

RITA  
I can't give up my job Shavonne-

SHAVONNE  
(Firm)  
I will help you find a job down  
here. No matter how long it takes,  
please reconsider.

Rita turns away then tries to stand up but is too tipsy to  
walk straight.

Shavonne catches her.

SHAVONNE (CONT'D)  
Whoa honey!...I'm Gonna fix you  
some coffee.



Rita sits back down.

Shavonne opens the front door and motions Bill to enter the house.

Bill enters the living room and glances over at Rita who has her head in her hands.

He looks back at Shavonne who shrugs her shoulders.

Bill nods as she go to the kitchen to make some coffee.

He sits next to Rita on the couch.

Rita look back to find Bill sitting next to her.

BILL  
I was looking for you.

A beat.

RITA  
Join the club.

BILL  
You know I'm here for you..for anything.

RITA  
(To Bill)  
Bill? You got your own family to look out for. Its not use hanging around someone you barely know-

BILL  
You're my friend Rita. When you really care about someone, you're there for them no matter what happens.

Feeling suddenly tired, Rita lays her head on Bill's shoulders.

Bill caresses her head.

INT. LIVING ROOM-EVENING

Shavonne went to her only class.

Rita and Bill sit on the couch with their eyes closed.

Groggy, Rita wakes Bill up.

BILL  
Hey?....what time is it?

RITA  
(Staring at her cellphone)  
8:00...my head is killing me.

BILL  
Vodka will do that to you. Why  
don't I get you something to eat?

RITA  
(Groggy and hung over)  
I really can't eat right now.  
Otherwise, I'll puke all over you.

They both stand up facing each other.

BILL  
I'm gonna go. Is there anything you  
need?

RITA  
No...I just wanna go to bed. I'll  
walk you out.

They head towards the front and Rita opens the door to let  
Bill out.

BILL  
Will you let me know if you need  
anything?

RITA  
I will.

Bill touches her hair then kisses her on the cheek.

BILL  
Goodnight cupcake.

He exits as she closes the door.

INT. BEDROOM-MID MORNING

Rita is packing her suitcase as Shavonne enters the room.

SHAVONNE  
I think you're making a big  
mistake.

RITA  
That's your opinion-

SHAVONNE

Rita I-

RITA

You had your say and now I'm making  
up my own mind.

SHAVONNE

I think you're running from  
something.

RITA

(Defensive)

I'm not running from anything.  
You're making a big deal of  
nothing.

Rita's cellphone vibrates.

She sees a message from Bill.

BILL

(Message)

Could you come over? I wanna talk  
to you.

RITA

(Concerned)

Bill wants to see me...I'll be  
right back.

SHAVONNE

Rita....wait A minute!

Rita runs past Shavonne and exits.

CUT TO.

EXT. BILL'S PORCH-SAME

Rita stands on the porch then Bill motions her to sit next to  
him.

BILL

Shavonne told me you're leaving  
soon.

RITA

Yeah...I'm going back home.

Bill touches her hand.

BILL  
I don't want you to go.

RITA  
She put you up to this?

BILL  
No...I'm speaking for myself.

They both stand up facing each other.

BILL (CONT'D)  
Please stay here.

After a short pause Bill kisses Rita, this time on the lips.

RITA  
(Hesitant)  
I...have....I have to go.

Rita rushes off the porch to her car and drives off.

EXT. RITA'S CAR-MINUTES LATER

Rita is driving down the highway.

INT. RITA'S CAR-MONTAGE

Rita is looking ahead while driving around.

Her mind flashes back to her and Bobby's relationship, being a child raised by her grandmother, and her friendship with Bill, whom she's really running from.

DISSOLVE TO.

INT. RITA'S CAR-SAME

Car horns snap Rita out of her distraction prompting her to drive off.

Looking around town where folks walked on the sidewalk, she wondered if she would be able to stay here.

INT. COFFEE DINER-SAME

Rita is sitting in the dining area drinking a cup of coffee.

She stares outside at the cars strolling back and fourth through the street.

A waitress approaches her with a coffee cup.

WAITRESS  
More coffee ma'am?

RITA  
Yes please.

Waitress pours some coffee in her cup.

RITA (CONT'D)  
Thank you.

Waitress exits.

Rita continues to stare and think about what would happen if she went home.

Rita then takes out her cellphone and makes a phone call.

RITA (CONT'D)  
(On phone)  
Hey...This is Rita how's it  
going?...I'm doing okay...yeah  
please I have to tell him  
something.

CUT TO.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE-AFTERNOON

Rita arrives back at the house.

She walk inside to find Shavonne waiting for her.

INT. LIVING ROOM-SAME

Shavonne jumps up to hug Rita who was coming from the diner.

SHAVONNE  
(Panicked)  
Are you alright? Where you been I  
was worried about you.

RITA  
I needed some time to myself.

SHAVONNE  
Bill told me he was trying to call  
you.

Rita stares at her cellphone and noticed several missed calls from Shavonne and Bill.

She places her phone back in her purse.

RITA  
There's something I wanna tell you-

SHAVONNE  
I know but listen-

RITA  
I turned in my two week notice.

Shavonne shot Rita a shocked face.

SHAVONNE  
When did you decide this?

RITA  
While I was out I made a call. As much as I love my job I think the time has come for me to move on.

Elated, Shavonne hugs Rita again.

SHAVONNE  
Welcome home.

EXT. OUTSIDE-ESTABLISHING

Shavonne and Rita stand on the porch continuing their conversation.

RITA  
You think I can be a medical assistant too?

SHAVONNE  
Don't do it just because I'm in the field. Just like you once told me..Run your own race.

RITA  
(Laughing)  
How could I forget? Remember this?

Rita shows a picture of herself, grandma, and Shavonne at an amusement park on her cellphone.

SHAVONNE  
(Laughing)  
Oh yeah.

RITA  
Child those were the days.

SHAVONNE  
It sho nuff was.

Their attention then turned to Bill who was eyeing them from his porch.

SHAVONNE (CONT'D)  
(At Rita)  
Go on...he's waiting for you.

Rita looks at Shavonne then walks over to Bill's house.

EXT. BILL'S HOUSE-SAME

Rita walks to Bill's front yard where he's waiting for her.

He gives her a hug and kisses the side of her face.

They both stare at each other and begin to kiss.

RITA  
I hope you know I'm gonna stick  
around for a while.

Bill laughs and continues hugging her.

DISSOLVE TO.

EXT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE-TWO WEEKS LATER

Rita's car is now parked in the driveway.

Shavonne and Bill both are helping Rita gather her belongings inside the house.

Neighborhood kids are playing jump rope and riding their bikes while an ice cream truck strolls down.

Several kids stop to buy some snacks and ice cream.

INT. LIVING ROOM-SAME

Shavonne leaves Bill and Rita alone to talk while she exits to the bedroom.

BILL  
I'm so happy you decided to stay.

RITA  
I'm not making any promises but for  
now this is where I belong.

They hug.

EXT. HOUSE-SAME

Bill and Rita stand outside browsing around the street as  
though a future between them is possible.

Dissolve to her and Shavonne as little girls playing jump  
rope in the same street years earlier.

Freeze shot.

FADE OUT.

THE END.