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UNTITLED CITY MAYOR PROJECT

"Pilot"

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ACT ONE

OVER BLACK:

A single CHORD crescendos throughout:

MALE VOICE (COURTNEY ROSE)
"It is not the critic who counts;
not the man who points out how the
strong man stumbles, or where the
doer of deeds could have done them
better. The credit belongs to the
man who is actually in the arena,
whose face is marred by dust and
sweat and blood."

The chord explodes into...

EXT. FORT GREY, CALIFORNIA - DAY

...a GANGSTER RAP BY DAVEED DIGGS about surviving inner-city Fort Grey. Over the song, KINETIC SHOTS of street life: A WOMAN paints a mural. A FRUIT VENDOR chops fruit. TEENS play basketball. Picture Vallejo with the busyness of Flatbush.

INT. DARK RECORDING BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

TIGHT ON: Our hero, COURTNEY ROSE (30), in a black Hanes tank top, Golden State Warriors hat, and big studio headphones, performing the soundtrack we've been listening to. There's a STANDING MIC with a pop filter and FOAM SOUND PANELS on the wall. This could easily be Paramount Recording Studio.

Courtney's IPHONE ALARM goes off -- it's 5:59 PM. He stops rapping and turns off the music. We CUT WIDE to REVEAL that our recording booth is just his converted bedroom closet, filled with CLOTHES and CLOSETY JUNK. He opens the door and steps out into...

INT. ROSE APARTMENT - COURTNEY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

His small, well-lit bedroom. The barred windows and peeling paint indicate we're in low-income housing. MUSIC POSTERS of his idols cover the walls: Public Enemy, NWA, Whitney Houston, Prince. In the center, a HOMEMADE SIGN promoting one of Courtney's local rap shows at the "Lyricist Loft."

He flips on the 6:00 LOCAL NEWS (low volume in the background). As it plays, Courtney sits on his bed, takes off his old ratty shoes, and reaches under the bed for a pristine box of NIKE DUNKS. He carefully opens it.

COURTNEY
(to a sneaker)
There she is. I missed you,
gorgeous. Did you miss me?
(flirtatious)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
Yeah, you're just saying it 'cause
I did. Where's your twin sister at?
(picks up other sneaker)
Daaamn.
(to first sneaker)
What? What'd I do now? I can't
control who says hi to me!

REVEAL DINA ROSE (48), Courtney's mother and his whole world,
standing at the door in her mail carrier uniform.

DINA
Yeah, maybe you did need a Dad
after all.

COURTNEY
(chuckles)
What's up, Moms. How was work?

DINA
Oh, I can't even talk about it.
Nope. Can't even. Not today.

She exits frame, beside herself. Courtney is unfazed. This is
their routine. He counts off "three, two, one," then casually
points to the empty doorway. Right on cue:

DINA (CONT'D)
So, you know my manicurist,
Roberta?

COURTNEY
Is it weird that I do?

DINA
And you know my gas station guy,
Maurice?

COURTNEY
Yeah, it's weird.

DINA
Well guess what they share in
common? A secret baby. And you know
how I know?

COURTNEY
You read his mail.

DINA
Nooo.
(beat)
I read her mail.

COURTNEY
Ma, do I need to ground you? You
can't be opening other's people's
mail. It's like a federal crime.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DINA
Not when you're the one delivering
it.

COURTNEY
I'm pretty sure that's not true.

Dina notices the news story on TV and points to it.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
(excited, raises volume)
It's on! Check it out.

ON THE NEWS:

MALE NEWSCASTER
...in tonight's *Your Voice Your
Vote* we meet one of the lesser-
known "candidates" for Mayor of
Fort Grey. ABC7's Gabby Montoya
takes us inside the "campaign,"
which my producer is telling me not
to express in finger quotes. Gabby?

As the reporter intros her package, Courtney gives Dina a
Cheshire grin. She rolls her eyes. We take the news package
FULL FRAME:

REPORTER (V.O.)
If you haven't heard the name
Courtney Rose, you're not alone.

MAN ON STREET
Doesn't ring a bell.

WOMAN ON STREET
I don't follow sports.

B-roll of Courtney rapping in a bare-bones lounge.

REPORTER (V.O.)
He's a 30-year-old struggling
rapper and a fixture at Fort Grey's
Lyricist Loft, an open mic space
sponsored by the Public Library.

B-roll of Courtney with a CAMPAIGN SIGN, waving from the back
of a moving GARBAGE TRUCK. His version of Harry Truman's
whistle-stop train tour.

REPORTER (V.O.)
Now, he's adding a new title to his
playlist: candidate for mayor.

TWO SHOT of the reporter and... an empty space. Unamused, she
holds out her mic as if someone is actually there. REVEAL
Courtney sliding down an impossibly long bannister, landing
right in front of the mic. Without skipping a beat:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

COURTNEY

So, yeah, turns out it's super easy to run for local office. Step one: Get 200 signatures. Step two: Don't be a felon. And I don't go to trial 'til next year!

(to camera)

Just kidding, Mom. I love you.

The reporter gives a little Jim Halpert stare to camera. Then B-roll of Courtney gladhanding at CHURCH.

REPORTER (V.O.)

But organizing a campaign takes a lot of help. Enter Mr. Rose's two best friends from high school.

JERMAINE LEFORGE (27, psychophant, always the operator) and T.K. CARTER (32, insecure, sensitive, portly) sit on a STOOP.

CHYRON: "JERMAINE LEFORGE, FUNDRAISER"

JERMAINE

We couldn't do it without our generous donors.

(deals credit cards)

MasterCard. Discover. Visa. Michelob Visa.

CHYRON: "T.K. CARTER, OFFICE MANAGER"

T.K.

(answers cell phone)

You've reached Courtney Rose for Mayor and/or T.K.'s personal cell. How may I direct your call?

REPORTER (V.O.)

As for the issues, Mr. Rose says he's keeping an open mind.

COURTNEY

I'm all about listening and learning. That's what made me a great student in high school.

CHYRON: "ISABELLE MATTHEWS, HIGH SCHOOL MATH TEACHER"

TEACHER

He was not a great student. That I can tell you.

END PACKAGE. We stay with the reporter's OUTRO:

REPORTER

The question remains, is Courtney Rose for real, or is he just an election sideshow?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

REPORTER (CONT'D)

Either way, this local rapper will have to beat the competition. Gabby Montoya, ABC7, Fort Grey.

BACK TO APARTMENT.

DINA

Why in the name of the Lord are you doing this?

COURTNEY

Why does anyone in my generation do anything?

(duh)

Attention.

Dina rolls her eyes then crosses to the LIVING ROOM.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

Look, Ma, I know I'm a good rapper.

DINA

A great rapper.

COURTNEY

One of the greats, yes. But nobody's ever even heard of me! I know, it baffles me too. I mean, how long have I been tryna to go up at the 10-10 Club? Eons and eons. But just watch, this campaign's gonna change all that.

DINA

Listen to me. You want to get discovered, you do it the old-fashioned way: by waiting for a nice old Jewish man to give you his business card.

COURTNEY

(fast)

Or... people see my name in the news, they look up my music, the labels start circling, I say, "Guys, it's too much too fast" just to be dramatic, next thing you know: Me and Taylor Swift in a Super Bowl performance that Red and Blue states can enjoy.

DINA

(to heavens)

Thank you for making him cute. We'd be in real trouble otherwise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

COURTNEY

(whispers)

Ask if he's coming to the debate.
That's where I bring it all home.

Dina cuts him a look. He grabs his BIKE from the door.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

Mom, I know you think I'm crazy,
but I'm doing this for us. You
deserve a big tacky mansion that
guzzles water and causes droughts.
Whole bunch of exotic pets running
around...

DINA

(beat, can't help herself)
Cute and endangered?

COURTNEY

Brink of extinction.

DINA

Well, I don't need all that. Long
as I got my Courtney and my CVS
wine, I am good to go.

COURTNEY

(playful)

But more the CVS wine than the
Courtney?

DINA

Don't ask questions you don't want
the answers to.

COURTNEY

(smiles, opens door)

Bye, Moms. I love you.

DINA

(shooing him)

Alright, enough affection. You're
smothering me.

He chuckles then steps outside. As Dina closes the door:

COURTNEY

(playful)

It's dope that we're roommates, you
know? It's like, we're fam but also
we're fam. It's like, it's like,
you're my Ma but also --

Aaaand it's shut. On the slam...

EXT. MACARTHUR BLVD (FORT GREY CITY COMMONS) - MOMENTS LATER

We PAN OFF a "COURTNEY FOR MAYOR" sign in Courtney's bedroom window and find him riding his bike through the city. The song in his headphones serves as the soundtrack to the scene.

Courtney lets go of the handlebars to showboat and wave at neighbors. He turns a corner and passes an abandoned junkyard. A SIGN on the chain-link fence tells us it's actually the "FORT GREY CITY COMMONS." There's a 10-YEAR-OLD BOY sitting on a truck tire, throwing a tennis ball to his dog. Courtney stops to check on the kid.

COURTNEY

Hey, little man. You keeping watch?
Protecting our city's...
(picks up object)
I don't know what this is.

BOY

Ernie wanted to play. He thinks
it's a park because he's a dog and
dogs aren't smart.

COURTNEY

You know, when I was your age --
what are you, 19? -- there wasn't
all this junk everywhere.
(looks around, nostalgic)
Me and my friends would come here
to freestyle. There was this
rapper, E40, we were always tryna
impress.

BOY

You're a rapper? Like Jay-Z?

COURTNEY

Exactly like Jay-Z. Only he's sold
50 million records, and I've
sold... 50 million less.

BOY

He went platinum. You went
aluminum.

COURTNEY

(laughs)
Oh, the kid's got jokes.

BOY

It's from "Alvin and the Chipmunks:
The Squeakquel."

COURTNEY

A film snob. I like it. Alright,
head on home before the garbage
zombies come out and eat Ernie.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
That was dark. There are no garbage
zombies. I'll see you later...?

BOY
Elijah.

COURTNEY
Elijah. Courtney.

He puts his headphones back on, then bikes away from the
decrepit City Commons.

EXT. FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH - A LITTLE LATER - EVENING

The big Debate. Courtney rides up to the back entrance, where
Jermaine and T.K. eagerly wait. As Courtney locks his bike:

JERMAINE
(excited)
Did you see the news? Perfection.
Total hit job. That's when a piece
gets a tonna hits.

T.K.
Isn't that "viral?"

JERMAINE
(annoyed)
No. Viral is, like, when a dog puts
on his sunglasses and goes surfing.

They all embrace like best buds.

COURTNEY
Boys, I am energized, I am
mobilized, I am shining like a car
that's been simonized.

JERMAINE
(impressed)
Is there a word he can't rhyme? Do
"orange".

COURTNEY
Nothing rhymes with orange.

JERMAINE
Can't be done. So, little bit of
housekeeping: I took care of the
mic check. They were like, "You
don't want it that loud," and I was
like, "Trust me."
(beat)
They were right. It was too loud.

Jermaine reaches for the door, but Courtney pulls them into a
huddle, foreheads touching.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COURTNEY

Hold up, hold up. Let's take a moment to remember life as we know it. 'Cause after this debate, I'll be blowing up the Billboard Hot 100, and believe me, I will definitely let it go to my head.

T.K.

(loud sip of Big Gulp)
Same. I should probably cut off my non-famous friends. I'll miss them, but it's like, what do we even talk about, you know?

PRELAP: AUDIENCE APPLAUSE from inside, just like a concert. Courtney stretches his neck and hops like a prizefighter.

COURTNEY

Gentlemen, let's start the show.

Flanked by Jermaine on one side and T.K. on the other, Courtney enters with the swagger of a thousand Kanye Wests.

INT. FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH - A LITTLE LATER

In a STYLIZED entrance, Courtney follows TWO MEN and ONE WOMAN onto the stage.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Ladies and gentlemen, please join me in welcoming to the stage your 2017 candidates for Mayor of Fort Grey, California!

Courtney and the others land at their podiums and wave. TWO MODERATORS sit behind a desk with SIGNAGE: "YOUR VOICE YOUR VOTE: ABC7 PRESENTS 'THE 2017 FORT GREY MAYORAL DEBATE.'"

MODERATOR #1

From the left: Former State Assemblyman Sheldon Trout. Board of Education member Eileen Vickers. President of the Fort Grey City Council Ed Gunt. And Courtney Rose... rapper.

The crowd LAUGHS. As the debate proceeds, ANGLE ON: T.K. and Jermaine watching from the wings.

T.K.

I'm a nervous wreck. He didn't prep, he refused to put on foundation.

(holds up compact)
Why do you think Nixon never became president?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JERMAINE
(irritated)
Why do you have makeup?

T.K.
Wow. Little queerphobic but okay.

JERMAINE
You're not queer.

T.K.
With intolerance like that in the
world, thank God.

BACK TO THE DEBATE:

MODERATOR #2
Mr. Rose, in June the City Council
passed the Grover-Stevens bill to
expand school choice. As mayor,
would you uphold or overturn it?

COURTNEY
(cocky, knows nothing)
I am so glad you asked about...
what was it, Grover-Stevens? I
happen to be tight with Grover
Stevens.

ED GUNT
(sneering)
Grover and Stevens, big guy. Two
people.

COURTNEY
Two people, twenty people, it takes
a village. But is this bill good?
Is it bad? Who are we to judge?
Because at the end of the day,
there's only one judge that
matters, a young carpenter --

The audience laughs. ANGLE ON: T.K. and Jermaine:

JERMAINE
(awestruck)
Guy should have his own late night
show. "Jimmy Kimmel Live Starring
Courtney Rose."

TIME JUMP. BACK TO THE DEBATE:

ED GUNT
(smarmy)
...As you know, Terry, I'm the
proud son of a seamstress and a
steelworker. My folks weren't rich.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ED GUNT (CONT'D)
But what they didn't have in wealth
they made up for in love.

REVEAL Courtney is now LIP-SYNCING Ed Gunt's predictable schtick. The audience laughs. Ed glares at Courtney.

ED GUNT (CONT'D)
Point being, yes, I will continue
to prioritize infrastructure. I'm
proud to have led the effort to
restore our City Commons, which is
now well underway --

Courtney can't believe what he's hearing. A switch flips.

COURTNEY
Whoa, whoa, whoa.
(tosses napkin)
Flag on the play.

The audience laughs.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
Wow. It's not everyday you hear
"proud" and "City Commons" in the
same sentence. Have you actually
been there, Mr. Gunt? There's so
much trash, Google Maps has it
listed as a mountain.

The audience applauds.

ED GUNT
Which is why I pledged that by
2020, all that junk will be gone.

COURTNEY
And by "gone," he means underneath
the new junk from 2018 and 2019.

ED GUNT
Facts are stubborn things, Mr.
Rose. We're making great strides
with our infrastructure throughout
the whole city. I have a statistic
I'd like to share --

COURTNEY
I do too. It's called "looking
outside."
(laughter)
Hey, help me out, fam. Who drove
here tonight in a busted up car
from all our busted up streets?
(applause)
And who's going home later to a
building with boarded-up windows?
(applause)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
Beats looking out at the gang
graffiti, right?
(louder applause)
Don't tell us our reality isn't
real, Mr. Gunt. As my man, Groucho
Marx, would say, "Who you gonna
believe, me or your lying eyes?"

Courtney's arm bumps the podium. A piece of WOOD falls off.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
(holds up broken piece)
Okay, now I know we're in Fort Grey.

The crowd gives it up. They're loving him.

ED GUNT
I hate to interrupt the dog and
pony show, but urban development
takes time --

COURTNEY
I've been living here for 30 years.
Can we get around to it in the next
30?

ED GUNT
Listen, I'm as impatient as you
are.

Courtney takes out his PHONE and starts dialing.

ED GUNT (CONT'D)
(exasperated)
What are you doing?

COURTNEY
Oh, I'm just calling bullsh*t.

The crowd goes wild. Courtney MOONWALKS across the stage.

MODERATOR #2
Mr. Rose, now seems like a fitting
time for this question. There's
been speculation you entered this
race for the wrong reasons. Are you
running to be mayor or to promote a
rap album?

COURTNEY
Wow. I have to say, it hurts that
anyone would think I'm here to
promote my album, available on my
website, www.CourtneyRoseMusic.com.

The audience laughs. Courtney takes out a STACK OF CDs from
his backpack. He starts handing them out to the candidates.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

The mere suggestion that I would be here to push a product is not only absurd --

(hands CD to moderator)

-- that's for you -- it's also irresponsible. Which, incidentally, is the title of my mixtape --

ED GUNT

Oh, for Chrissake, can a grownup please intervene?

COURTNEY

(now deadly serious)

The voters have been asking that question for twenty-five years.

(to audience)

You people have been great. If any y'all work at the 10-10 Club, please book me. I'm cheap. Courtney Rose out. Peace!

He walks off stage like a champ, to a standing ovation.

INT. FELLOWSHIP BAPTIST CHURCH - BACKSTAGE - A LITTLE LATER

Post-debate backstage frenzy. The local version of the spin rooms you've seen a million times on CNN. Jermaine is holding court among a GAGGLE OF REPORTERS.

JERMAINE

There's been rappers who crashed award shows, rappers who put out sex tapes... but a rapper running for mayor?! It didn't get more hip-hop than that, folks!

Courtney pulls Jermaine away. ANGLE ON: T.K. over by the exit with campaign aide VALENTINA "VAL" FLORES (32). Her t-shirt says "ED GUNT: STEADY LEADERSHIP FOR UNSTEADY TIMES."

T.K.

T.K. Carter? You don't remember me from high school?

(off her "sorry")

How about middle school?

Courtney and Jermaine approach to collect T.K. and leave.

VALENTINA

(been a while)

Courtney Rose.

T.K.

It's a wonder I have any self-esteem.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COURTNEY

Val Flores, right? Wow.
(to the guys, re: Val)
This honors kid never got a single
problem wrong in 10th-grade calc.

VALENTINA

(re: Courtney)
And mysteriously, neither did the
punk who sat right next to her.

COURTNEY

(playful)
Those are some serious allegations,
Ms. Flores. Jermaine, set up a
press conference.

VALENTINA

(takes out wallet)
Anyway, how much for one of those
mixtapes? Is twenty bucks okay?
Here's hoping it leads to millions
more, right?
(sarcastic)
And hey, don't let anyone tell you
that you're exploiting a vulnerable
city and cruelly using its voters
as pawns in a shameless bid for
self-promotion. Okay? Cool. Good
luck!

Valentina storms off. Courtney is left shell-shocked.

JERMAINE

So, when did you want to do this
press conference?

Courtney watches her go, then follows the guys out.

EXT. FORT GREY, CALIFORNIA - PASSAGE OF TIME - DAY/NIGHT

INT. ROSE APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Election night! Courtney and Dina are hosting Jermaine, T.K.,
and Dina's girlfriends, KRYSTAL and FRANNY. They're having
fun, with local TV news in the background.

COURTNEY

(reading laptop)
This is unreal. You know I hate to
brag, right? Rhetorical. No need to
answer. So, since the debate, take
a guess how many iTunes downloads.

JERMAINE

Conservative? 20 million.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COURTNEY

(annoyed)
20 million? That would put me
between The Beatles and Rihanna.

JERMAINE

Forgive me for believing in you.

DINA

(snapping)
Hey! You're both my everything, but
if you talk over these election
returns, I'mma run you over in my
mail truck. I'll regret doing it
after, but I'll do it.

COURTNEY

I'm surprised. Usually you turn off
any program that doesn't end in a
Fantasy Suite.

Courtney crosses to the BATHROOM.

DINA

Excuse me. There is a picture of my
baby boy's beautiful face on the
TV. Can a Mama not enjoy this?

He shuts the door.

KRYSTAL

(sultry)
I'm enjoying it. Mmm, mmm, mmm.

FRANNY

Settle down, Krystal.

KRYSTAL

You think he's fine too, Franny.

FRANNY

Yeah, but I don't say it in front
of his mother.

DINA

Shut up, shut up! What's this? Why
are they trippin'?

MALE ANCHOR (ON TV)

...and that would be Ward 3, the
final ward to report their returns
tonight. It represents the central
portion of Fort Grey, the inner
city, if you will --

Everyone huddles close to the TV.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

COURTNEY (O.S.)
Ma, we all out of the good soap?
The antibacterial? Why isn't every
soap antibacterial?

FEMALE ANCHOR
And Ward 3 appears to have gone
overwhelmingly for... Courtney
Rose. Wow. I'm just...

COURTNEY (O.S.)
I added water. We're good for a few
weeks.

MALE ANCHOR
(touches earpiece)
Are we ready to make-- Okay then.
Well, folks, if you can believe it,
and I certainly cannot, it looks as
if local rapper Courtney Rose is
our projected winner in the race
for mayor of Fort Grey, California.

TOILET FLUSH. Courtney steps out. They all turn to him.

COURTNEY
What happened?

JERMAINE
What happened is... you the mayor.

The LANDLINE and CELL PHONES start ringing. No one answers.

COURTNEY
Well, sh*t.

Off Courtney's shock and awe...

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. ROSE APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Phones are still ringing. Courtney tries to wrap his brain around what's happening. T.K. goes to answer the landline.

COURTNEY

This has to be a mistake. I mean,
Russia clearly tampered with the
voting machines, right?

(to T.K.)

Don't pick that up. I'm not talking
to any newspapers.

T.K.

Don't worry, it's just the Thai
food I ordered.

(picks up phone)

Hello.

JERMAINE

I don't think it's a mistake, man.
The press is never wrong.

T.K.

(covering phone)

So, I actually forgot to order Thai
food. It's USA Today.

Jermaine takes the phone out of his hand and hangs it up.

DINA

Why's it crazy that you won? I
voted for you. Twice.

(to heavens)

Thank you, Grandma Ida.

COURTNEY

(rubbing temples)

So what do I do? How do you go
about "not being mayor"?

JERMAINE

The first step would probably be
"not running for mayor."

T.K.

You want my two cents?

(they react: "Eh")

I say you serve for one day only.
That way you get the scissors.

COURTNEY

What's the scissors?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

T.K.

The giant scissors they give mayors
to cut ribbons. Politics 101, man.

COURTNEY

Okay, I'm just gonna go down to
City Hall in the morning and tell
the clerk, "Thanks but no thanks."

They all start arguing over each other.

DINA

(yelling)

FIRE!

COURTNEY

(off their GASPS)

Just means we're gonna talk on the
fire escape. I can see how it'd be
confusing.

EXT. ROSE APARTMENT - FIRE ESCAPE - MOMENTS LATER

Courtney and Dina look out at the night vista: the back of a
building, clotheslines, etc. It's quiet and intimate.

DINA

This is better. Just you, me...

(points)

...the pet hoarder in Building F.

COURTNEY

A whole food chain up in there.

DINA

(getting serious)

So, hear me out. When you told me
about this campaign stunt, I was
like, "That boy is bonkers."

COURTNEY

I am but my mother's son.

DINA

But here's what I know: Nothing
happens by accident. Nothing.

(conceding)

When Krystal dropped her cigarette
and slipped off here, that was an
accident. Tell me this. Why is it
that you rap?

COURTNEY

(re: bleak surroundings)

That cash-money lifestyle,
obviously.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DINA

Don't be cute. You don't rap about models and bottles and yachts.

COURTNEY

Yeah, I don't know what those things are.

DINA

You're a poet, an observer, a commentator. You critique the way things are. Maybe now you can actually change it. Maybe instead of telling people's stories, you can actually write them.

Courtney takes this in.

COURTNEY

Wow. Not gonna lie, that was, like, super impactful. You should write lyrics for me sometime.

DINA

So what do you say? Is my roommate a mayor or what?

INT. ROSE APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Courtney and Dina climb back in through the window.

COURTNEY

Fam, after careful consideration, and with the advice and consent of Mom... I have decided to take my talents to City Hall!

Everyone reacts with surprise and excitement.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)

I know, right? "Courtney Rose: humble servant of the people"
(catches self)
And that is the least hip-hop job description ever. Coulda gone with "boss."

JERMAINE

We need you now more than ever, buddy... to hook us up with Niners tickets and get us into fashion shows.

COURTNEY

No, Jermaine. This isn't about us. It's about the people. Wow, that felt good to say. Now I get why people volunteer at non-profits.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

T.K.

Your rap career is basically a non-profit.

(off Dina's glare)
What?

DINA

Listen to me, Court. Before you do anything, talk to someone who's walked the walk. Good leaders know what they don't know. I'm sure you have questions.

COURTNEY

(thinks)

I may know someone who has answers.
I used to copy them all the time.

INT. SHABBY CONDO BUILDING - LATER - NIGHT

Courtney KNOCKS on a door. Valentina opens it, half-asleep, in an oversized UCLA t-shirt. She holds a CARVING KNIFE.

VALENTINA

What the hell?!

COURTNEY

(re: knife)

What the hell?!

VALENTINA

I watch a lot of true crime. What are you doing here?

COURTNEY

Right. Sooo...
(small wave)
I'm the mayor.

VALENTINA

Does not answer my question.

COURTNEY

Yeah, now that we're into this, I'm realizing it could have waited 'til morning.

(then)

I need advice, and you're literally the only person I know in politics.

VALENTINA

Please, flatter me some more.

COURTNEY

So, I know good leaders know what they don't know. Thing is, I don't know if I know or don't know what I don't know.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
You know if I know or don't know
what I don't know.
(beat)
You know?

Val starts closing the door. Courtney stops it with his foot.

VALENTINA
Courtney, I called you a complete
joke, which was actually one of the
nicer things I said about you.

COURTNEY
You speak truth to power! Whoa, I'm
power. How crazy is that? "Hi, this
is Power, is Valentina there?"
Silly.

VALENTINA
Pray for Fort Grey.

COURTNEY
(realizing)
Right there. That's what I need.
Someone who's not afraid to call me
out, just like my Mom does! I'm
thinking out loud too much, aren't I?

VALENTINA
You're doing a lot too much.

COURTNEY
(intense)
Come work for me, at least for the
transition. You know City Hall
better than anyone.
(reads phone)
Three years with the Comptroller,
fours years in policy, five city-
wide campaigns. What does that add
up to? A very unsexy LinkedIn page.
Seriously, you gotta zazz that up
or something.

Val starts closing the door again. Courtney stops it.

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
Wait. I may be a joke, but I'm the
joke who got 22,000 votes. Something
I said in that debate struck a chord
with people, maybe even with you.
Unless your heart is with Ed Gunt.

He's getting to Val. She opens up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VALENTINA

Ed Gunt wasn't my Jack Kennedy. He was a job. A good job. Politics isn't like other careers. You try to do good, but if you're a girl who aces all her math tests, you also try to do well. Those don't always line up.

COURTNEY

Maybe they can. With my ability to connect, and your -- I want to say nerd smarts? -- maybe we can write a new chapter for this city.

Val can't help but be a little moved.

VALENTINA

You're really committed to this? Because I don't work seven days a week for class clowns.

COURTNEY

We're working seven days a week?
(beat)
That's cool. I was mostly just curious. And yes, Val. I am 100 percent committed.

VALENTINA

You would have to trust me. When it comes to implementation --

COURTNEY

I am putty in your hands.

VALENTINA

Ronald Reagan: "Peace through strength." Courtney Rose: "I am putty in your hands."
(sighs deeply)
I'll start putting together a staff. Why I don't cash in and lobby for big tobacco is beyond me. Go home.

She shuts the door. Courtney smiles. He's on the right track.

EXT. CITY HALL - DAY

Courtney looks up at his soon-to-be headquarters and takes a deep breath. People start to notice him.

PASSERBY

Go get 'em, Courtney! We're counting on you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATHER

I hate to be that guy, but can we
get a quick picture?

COURTNEY

Oh. Of course. Of course. My only
request: Do Instagram it.
(they laugh)
Okay, now individuals.
(smooches Grandma)
Kiss from a Rose!

They crack up. Our young mayor-elect is getting his mojo.

INT. CITY HALL - HALLWAY/TRANSITION ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Courtney and Val walk and talk down the hallway.

VALENTINA

The clerk's office set us up in the
Old Caucus Room. Fun fact: They
call it the Carcass Room because
Councilman Olch had a fatal blood
clot there.

COURTNEY

That is fun.

VALENTINA

Anyway, as promised, I reached out
to dozens of former staffers and
consultants in the county.

COURTNEY

And you brought me the best and
brightest among them.

VALENTINA

I brought you the two who called me
back.

Val opens the door. REVEAL DICK PAPADOPOLOUS (65, chain-
smoker) and KITTY CLEGHORNE (40, timid) sitting at a table.
Courtney and Val join them.

DICK

(shakes hand)
Dick Papadopolous. Cut my teeth
over at the DMV. My services
include, but are not limited to,
wiretapping, disappearing things --

VALENTINA

Ookay. And this is Kitty
Cleghorne, who'll be coordinating
press for the transition.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KITTY
(barely audible)
I look forward to channeling your
voice to the media.

COURTNEY
I did not hear those words, but I'm
thrilled to have you guys on board.
We're gonna shake up this --

Just then, Jermaine (confidently) and T.K. (apprehensively)
enter with laptops and "files" and join them at the table.

JERMAINE
Sorry we're late. We had to buy
notebooks.

As Jermaine and T.K. shake hands with Dick and Kitty:

VALENTINA
What's happening?

COURTNEY
Oh, I hired a couple consultants.
These boys know Fort Grey inside
out. Secret weapons, these two.

DICK
I can get secret weapons. Gimme a
day to file off the serial numbers.

VALENTINA
(to Courtney)
Hey, so, I can't do my job if you
blindside me and make impulsive
decisions.

DICK
Hoo boy. I thought the DMV had
palace intrigue.

VALENTINA
Let's just move on. We should use
the transition to think big picture
and plan your first hundred days.
Now what I like to do is use index
cards to organize your priorities.
Green index cards for fiscal
issues, blue index cards for social
issues, red index cards --

COURTNEY
If I hear "index cards" one more
time, I'm going out the window.

VALENTINA
(irritated)
And why is that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

COURTNEY

Because no revolution in the history of the world has ever begun with the words "index cards."

(performing)

"Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can scribble down on a 4x6 index card!"

(steps onto chair)

"Walk softly and carry a big felt-tip Sharpie!"

(steps onto table)

"Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this corkboard!"

JERMAINE

"When they go low..."

(thinks)

I thought I had one.

COURTNEY

(rallying the troops)

Why did 52 percent of the city vote for me? Because they're sick of hearing what phonies "intend" to do. Don't think about three months from now. Think about today.

T.K.

Carpe diem: "Out of many, one."

VALENTINA

(exasperated)

What did you have in mind?

COURTNEY

The City Commons. We transform it from a hellish junkyard --

JERMAINE

Into the most beautiful junkyard you've ever seen.

COURTNEY

And the best part, we do it right away, without spending a dime.

DICK

I have access to very cheap labor.

T.K.

(playing along)

Wait just a minute, did you say in one night without spending a dime? But how?!

COURTNEY

By doing what we do: throwing the party of the millenium.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

"Pilot"

Network Draft

CONTINUED: (3)

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
 Beer, barbecue, brooms, and
 buckets. Turn up and clean up!

JERMAINE
 He's a lyrical genius.

Everyone but Val gets excited.

VALENTINA
 You can't just up and throw an
 event at the City Commons. It's a
 major long-term project, not a rush
 job. You need a permit, time to
 organize it, time to promote it...

COURTNEY
 So I'll get a permit. And we can
 gather a crowd in hours. Jermaine,
 how long did it take to round up
 people for my "Red Sky" video?

JERMAINE
 Less than three weeks.

COURTNEY
 (annoyed)
 It took us a day.

JERMAINE
 Yeah, but we had to wait for my
 cousin to fly back from Jersey, so
 technically...

COURTNEY
 Trust me. When we pull this off,
 they'll only have one question:
 why'd it take twenty-five years?

PRELAP: MONTAGE MUSIC begins. Valentina is visibly irked.
 Courtney, Jermaine, and T.K. are super excited. As Courtney
 starts to map out the plan on paper...

INT./EXT. VARIOUS (MONTAGE) - DAY

In a series of stylish CROSS FADES, we see Courtney,
 Jermaine, and T.K. rounding up a crowd at the SAME TIME we
 see residents showing up to party and haul junk.

- Jermaine sends out a FLURRY OF TEXTS that say, "'Sup."
- Courtney sends out a call to arms on his FAN LISTSERV.
- RESIDENTS begin showing up to the City Commons.
- YOUNG PEOPLE follow Courtney out of the "Lyricist Loft."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

-- T.K. plays CHESS against an OLD MAN in the park as OLD SPECTATORS watch. T.K. checkmates his opponent, who, having lost the bet, motions for everyone to follow T.K.

-- A PACKED CROWD at the City Commons.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FORT GREY CITY COMMONS - EVENING

Flocks of residents haul junk, drink beer, and eat barbecue. Jermaine is working the DJ booth. SHOTS of Courtney's team working hard and feeling proud. Courtney addresses the crowd with a MEGAPHONE. He's fighting the loud music.

COURTNEY (INTO MEGAPHONE)

What is up, Fort Grey, California!
You feelin' good?
(cheers)
I'm feelin' good too.
(to Jermaine, no megaphone)
Hey, can you lower the music?

JERMAINE

It's one of the best parts of the song.

Jermaine, put upon, rolls his eyes and gives in.

COURTNEY (INTO MEGAPHONE)

I want to thank you all for proving my long-held conviction: that progress is always possible... if you load people up with cheap beer and bratwursts.
(laughter)
No, but seriously, after this, if you could all come over to my apartment, my closet's a disaster.
(laughter)
Alright, well, thank you for believing, and keep on keepin' on.
Now back to the trash --

He barely finishes the word before Dina grabs the megaphone.

DINA (INTO MEGAPHONE)

Is he a bundle from heaven or what?
Yes he is...

As Dina continues, Val pulls Courtney aside.

VALENTINA

I'm afraid to even ask, but you did get the permit, right?

COURTNEY

(exaggerated panic)
I knew I forgot something.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COURTNEY (CONT'D)
And that something... is my "permit-
having victory dance."

He holds up the PERMIT then embarrasses Val with his moves.
ANGLE ON: T.K. and Kitty sorting plastic.

KITTY
(barely audible)
I hope my press contacts come. Most
of the numbers I have are toll-free
tip hotlines, so we should be good.

T.K.
Who'd you give the scoop to? The
Grey Lady? Russert?
(rolls eyes at self)
And I swore I wouldn't become
establishment.

ANGLE ON: Jermaine approaches Courtney.

JERMAINE
So, are people talking about the
shrub I planted?

COURTNEY
Yeah, man. I'm hearing a lot of
good things.

JERMAINE
Nice. I feel so much purpose now.
When you accomplish something, you
feel this... I would describe it as
a sense of accomplishment.

Just then, Courtney's CELL PHONE rings. He picks up.

COURTNEY (INTO PHONE)
Hello.
(beat, then surprised)
Thanks, man.
(astonished)
Wait, for real? Like, for real, for
real?!
(beat, face falls)
No. No, no, no, no, no. Lemme call
you right back.

Courtney hangs up.

JERMAINE
Wrong number?

COURTNEY
That was the booker for the 10-10
Club. One of their openers
canceled, and he thought, "How
about the mayor kid?"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

JERMAINE

Are we an incredible team, or are
we an incredible team?

COURTNEY

Oh, but there's more. Guess who's
headlining.

(disbelief)

E40. Yeah.

JERMAINE

Crazy. When is it?

COURTNEY

(checks watch)

In about... eight minutes. Now it's
seven. I don't know what to do.

JERMAINE

If I was you, here's what I'd do: I
would ask me. And then I - you -
would tell you - me - don't go.

Courtney looks around at the bustling party, torn.

COURTNEY

When am I gonna get another chance
to open for our childhood idol in
the holiest of all venues?

(checks watch, taps it)

K, this second-hand is crazy fast.

JERMAINE

Dude. You need to slow your roll
and focus. This party is your baby.
Care for it, nurse it. It needs
time to suckle.

COURTNEY

I hated that metaphor.

(then, convincing himself)

I can pull this off. That's what I
do. I pull stuff off.

JERMAINE

Can I share a story that might shed
some light here? It's very long,
but it goes somewhere. So, I have
no hair on my left arm --

(noticing)

Courtney?

Jermaine sees Courtney hopping on his bike and leaving the
party. Off Jermaine's concern and disappointment...

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. 10-10 CLUB - A LITTLE LATER

A cool music club with no signage at all.

INT. 10-10 CLUB - CONTINUOUS

Courtney impatiently waits for a rapper to finish so he can go on. He checks his watch.

COURTNEY

Come on, come on, come on, come on.

EXT. FORT GREY CITY COMMONS - SAME TIME

Jermaine is DJing very loud music. Dina approaches.

DINA

Hey, have you seen Courtney?

JERMAINE

Is that him? Blue stripes?

DINA

The white guy?

JERMAINE

Yeah, I don't think it's him.

INT. 10-10 CLUB - SAME TIME

The crowd cheers as Courtney takes the stage. He launches into one of his songs.

EXT. FORT GREY CITY COMMONS - SAME TIME

TWO POLICE CARS pull up to the party. The DJ music abruptly stops. Val approaches a POLICE OFFICER.

VALENTINA

Hey, officer. Can I grab you a beer? Nothing like a cold one on the road.

(gravely serious)

That was an unfortunate joke, born out of my discomfort.

POLICE OFFICER

I'll take a burger. So, we received several noise complaints. I'm gonna need to see a Public Assembly permit.

VALENTINA

Well, then you are in luck because we have one of those.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VALENTINA (CONT'D)
(calls out)
Courtney! Where is he?

JERMAINE (INTO MEGAPHONE)
Yeah, I'm also wondering where's
Courtney.

VALENTINA
(beat)
So did you want lettuce on that
burger?

Everyone starts murmuring and looking around.

INT. 10-10 CLUB - SAME TIME

Courtney is rapping a verse with the lyrics, "Where am I?" He introduces E40, who joins him on stage. Courtney is having the time of his life.

EXT. FORT GREY CITY COMMONS - SAME TIME

Flashing lights and sirens continue. Jermaine, T.K., Dick, and Kitty gather near Val. She talks to Police Officer #1, who is now eating his burger.

VALENTINA
Why don't you give me your number,
and I'll text you a photo of the
permit later tonight.
(just making sure)
That didn't sound like
solicitation...?

The officer SIGNALS to his partner in the car.

POLICE OFFICER #2 (PA SYSTEM)
Party's over, folks. Vacate the
premises. Go home.

Everyone starts BOOING and GRUMBLING.

POLICE OFFICER #2 (PA SYSTEM) (CONT'D)
If I have to say it again,
citations will be issued.

DINA
(to officer, scoffs)
Citations. I'll take a citation if
you can find me one person who
knows what a citation is. You don't
know what a citation is.

POLICE OFFICER #1
I know what an arrest is.

Jermaine pulls Dina away as everyone disperses, booing and hollering. Off our crew's consternation...

INT. 10-10 CLUB - SAME TIME

Courtney says goodbye to the audience. E40 is still on stage.

COURTNEY

Thank you, everyone. Thank you,
E40. From the bottom of my heart,
hashtag-blessed. Much love.

Courtney runs off stage and out the back door, beaming.

EXT. FORT GREY CITY COMMONS - A LITTLE LATER

LIGHTS FLASH as the police drive off. Val, Jermaine, T.K., Dick, and Kitty stick around, dejected. Dina heads to her mail truck. Their disappointment is a stark contrast to the now-lovely City Commons. Courtney arrives and sees the aftermath. He sheepishly and humbly joins his crew.

COURTNEY

I'm guessing they didn't all leave
for an afterparty.

(silence)

Yeah.

(silence)

Okay, will someone please yell at
me? Kitty, I'm sure you can crank
up the volume.

T.K.

We vouched for you, man. I told
everyone in my phone they couldn't
miss this thing.

(scrolling through phone)

What do I say to "Cute sushi
delivery girl" or "James Craigslist
Couch?"

JERMAINE

(shaking head)

And the fact you didn't tell any of
us where you were going?

Jermaine glances around to make sure he's in the clear.

T.K.

I can't even. I'm going home.

(walks out of frame, then

returns)

I don't have a ride.

DICK

I think I'm just a less emotional
person.

They all start to walk away. Val turns back around.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VALENTINA

I get that you want to be a rapper, Courtney. But don't ask me to commit to something you won't commit to yourself. It makes you a hypocrite. And then... you're just a politician.

Courtney, wracked with guilt, watches her go. He turns around, and right there with a MIC and CAMERA CREW is ABC7's Gabby Montoya. He reacts: "Really?"

REPORTER

I know. Mainstream media blah blah blah. Frank, shoot him from below. I want to see chins.

Off our miserable mayor-elect...

EXT. MACARTHUR BLVD - A LITTLE LATER - NIGHT

Dina drives Courtney home in her mail truck. It's dark out. After a beat of silence:

COURTNEY

So the U.S. Postal Service just lets you use this as your personal car.

DINA

Maurice at the gas station fudges the odometer. Last month I drove negative eighty miles.

They pull in front of a REC BUILDING. Courtney is confused.

COURTNEY

The YMCA?

DINA

God, I hate this place. I really, really hate this place.

(beat)

I took you here when you were three years old. Put on your cute little swim trunks, squeezed into my one-piece... the things a mother will do. I turned my back for two seconds, and then I heard the whistle. You'd jumped in the water without your floaties because you couldn't wait to swim like a big kid.

(beat)

Impatience is your original sin.

He takes this in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DINA (CONT'D)

Courtney, your restlessness is a virtue and a vice. It makes you hungry to be better. But it also distracts you. You're always chasing that new shiny object.

COURTNEY

I guess that's how you come up empty-handed.

DINA

Only now it's not just your hand. It's the hands of all the people you represent. There are kids looking at you like a superhero. You're their example. Their hope.

COURTNEY

I blew it pretty bad, didn't I?

DINA

We'll send you to rehab for some made-up crap. You'll be fine.

Courtney smiles at Dina, then reaches behind the seats.

DINA (CONT'D)

What do you need?

COURTNEY

I'm just seeing if you have a one-piece in here.

DINA

Please. I'm a bikini girl now.

Off Courtney's laugh...

EXT. FORT GREY CITY COMMONS - EARLY NEXT MORNING

Courtney rides his bike past the new City Commons. He sees little Elijah skateboarding and playing with his dog.

COURTNEY

So what do you think? I don't know your taste in landscape architecture...

ELIJAH

Did you do this?

COURTNEY

It's possible I played a role.

(beat)

A big role.

(beat)

I'm gonna be mayor, so...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ELIJAH

My mom went to the party here. It was cool 'cause I got to have a babysitter. She never goes to parties.

COURTNEY

Oh yeah? Well, I hope she had fun.

ELIJAH

She said she got drunk. I think that means "happy."

COURTNEY

Alright, well... give Ernie my best, okay?

Courtney hops on his bike.

ELIJAH

Courtney? I'm gonna be mayor too, I think. But don't worry; I won't run against you because you'll be president then. Or a superhero.

Courtney smiles, then puts on his headphones and rides away.

INT. ROSE APARTMENT - HALLWAY - LATER THAT MORNING

Jermaine and T.K are holding BAGS OF GROCERIES. They knock on Courtney's door furiously.

JERMAINE

Courtney! How're you gonna make us brunch when you're sleeping?

T.K.

(drinks O.J. from CARTON)
My irritation with Courtney is surpassed only by my love of Eggs Benny.

(re: orange juice)

What exactly is pulp?

Jermaine is now on his CELL PHONE.

JERMAINE

Voicemail. We shouldn't be worried, right?

T.K.

Nah, we can pick up some McGriddles instead.

Jermaine rolls his eyes. Off his slight concern...

EXT. FORT GREY CITY COMMONS - AFTERNOON

Jermaine and T.K. sit on the sidewalk, concerned.

JERMAINE

Were we too hard on the guy last night? I'm not used to having the moral highground.

Val shows up, irritated.

VALENTINA

What, guys? What's so important that you couldn't say it over the phone?

JERMAINE

Courtney... is no longer with us. That was a weird way to phrase that. I mean, we can't find him.

VALENTINA

Fortunately, Courtney is no longer my problem. But I'm sure you'll find the 33-year-old man you're looking for.

(long beat, then sighs)

Fine. I'll round up the bloodhounds.

They all head out. There's something drawing Val to Courtney (and it's probably not these two guys).

INT. CITY HALL - HALLWAY/TRANSITION ROOM - NIGHT

Val, Jermaine, and T.K. enter to find Courtney with thousands of INDEX CARDS everywhere. COFFEE CUPS and FAST FOOD BAGS round out the tableau. They're very surprised. Courtney looks up at them, exhausted.

COURTNEY

Oh, hey, guys. Wait, you're actually here, right? After the three-hundredth index card, my vision got really weird.

JERMAINE

We were worried about you. But also angry at you. It was complicated.

COURTNEY

I'm sorry. I turned off my phone to avoid distractions. Now I just need those blinders they put on horses.

T.K.

I have a pair.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VALENTINA

You have nice handwriting. I would've gone all-caps, but this works.

COURTNEY

My first 100 days. The index cards on the left are my ideas for infrastructure. These are for senior issues. The index cards over there are for water standards. These index cards ---

VALENTINA

If I hear "index cards" one more time... I may just have to stick around a while.

(then)

Get some sleep. Could be your last chance for a while.

Courtney smiles as Val, Jermaine, and T.K. start to leave.

JERMAINE

Does anything on those cards make sense?

VALENTINA

Not a word.

T.K.

Tell him in the morning.

Off Courtney now asleep on the table...

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CITY HALL - MORNING - SEVERAL DAYS LATER

As we hear Courtney's RAP from the open, he takes the oath of office on the steps of City Hall. Dina, her buddies, Jermaine, T.K., Val, Kitty, and Dick all applaud as the rap song fades and Courtney takes the mic.

COURTNEY

I just want to say... nothing at all. Let's get to work.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW

TAG

INT. CITY HALL - MAYOR'S OFFICE - A FEW DAYS LATER

Courtney, Dina, Jermaine, and T.K. are admiring his new office. There's a BIG MAHOGANY DESK, an AMERICAN FLAG, CALIFORNIA FLAG, and FORT GREY FLAG. MOVING BOXES cover the floors. They're setting up his private voicemail. In a series of JUMP CUTS:

GREETING #1:

COURTNEY
(into desk phone)
You've reached the office of Mayor
Courtney Rose. Please leave a
message.
(BEEP)

He turns to the group: "Good?" They all shrug: "Eh."

GREETING #2:

JERMAINE
You've reached the office of Mayor
Courtney Rose. Future Governor
Courtney Rose. Future President
Courtney Rose. Future Intergalactic
General Secretary --
(BEEP)

GREETING #3:

T.K.
(beat, then defeated)
I got in my head. The beep really
sneaks up on you.
(BEEP)

GREETING #4:

DINA
You've reached the office of Mayor
Courtney Rose.
(tough)
And you better believe this is his
Mom. So watch what you say, or I
will find you. Have a blessed day.

They all look at each other: "Perfect."

END OF TAG