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FADE TO

EXT. DIAMOND MINE 1867 SIERRA LEONE, WEST AFRICA AT
SUNRISE

THE SOUND OF SHOVELS DIGGING IN THE EARTH

AFRICAN MEN

(singing)

Workin in da mornin, til dawn tu feed me self
some rice Africa, Africa, the land of the shining stone,
Work, work til the mornin sun.

A LARGE SOAP STONE CARVING OF A FACE WITH SPARKLING
DIAMONDS AROUND IT APPEARS. The shovels digs faster until the
full body is seen. A hand reaches down to pick up the soap stone carving.
Diamonds on the carving glows like the rays of the sun.

AFRICAN VOICE

I sey! Looka! Dis. Gud ju-ju!
We mus take to chief.

The sound of the shovels stops. Mumbling voices of the FULANI are
heard.

FADE TO

INT. VILLAGE GRASS HUT

The CHIEF HANDS can be seen holding the soap stone carving. The
chiefs
fingers and wrists are covered with shining gold ornamentations.

CHIEF

Huh, huh! Dis one. We must keep secret
from all outside men. The gods have spoken to the Fulani.
The shining stone is the spirit of our soul.

FADE TO

INT. AIRPLANE -.1945 -.DAY

MUSICAL INTERLUDE ..AFRICAN BEAT

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Cut To

A young attractive African American woman, ex-school teacher in her late twenties, PEGGY LEE WIGGINS is sitting down in the outside left seat of an airplane. She is reading a Texas Magazine, OIL BOOM IN TEXAS. Peggy's hand turns the pages. PRECIOUS GEMS magazine appears below. The focus is on the beautiful precious stone and rings on her fingers as she picks up GEM MAGAZINE. The beautiful stones glow as she scans through the magazine. The stones are made of Jade, Malachite and Lapis. A black leather pouch hangs from her neck.

PEGGY'S FLASHBACK

FADE TO

INT. LAW OFFICE .EAST TEXAS -.BOGANY .MID MORNING

A young attorney name NASH WADE pauses as he glances over the Will. A look of sadness and grief covers PEGGY'S face. She is feeling all alone

NASH WADE

Are you sure you're up to this Peggy?
We could do this another time.

PEGGY'S mother and father are dead now. Peggy is feeling desertion. Tears run down her cheeks.

PEGGY FLASHES BACK 16 YEARS TO HER TWELVETH BIRTHDAY PARTY

FADE TO

EXT. HOUSE .BACK -YARD .DAY

SINGING .HAPPY BIRTHDAY

The focus is on a large white cake with twelve burning candles. Voices of children playing are heard in the background. PEGGY and her fiend, MANDE are standing over the cake. PEGGY is sad because after the party, Mande is leaving for Africa. A tear falls on one of the candles.

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MANDE

Come on Peggy, everyone is waiting!

MANDE rushes PEGGY to blow out the candles. Peggy's hands rest on the table as if she is getting ready to blow out the candles.

PEGGY

I hate your father for taking you away!
I hate him!

PEGGY turns away from MANDE. She is very angry and disappointed. MANDE defends his father's actions. He explains his father's reason for taking him away.

MANDE

Don't say that, Peggy! My father's studies are over here in America. He must return to our village, Kono. One day he will take my grandfather's place as chief of our village... .Please try to understand.

PEGGY turns to MANDE. She regrets that she even speaks of hating his father.

In many ways she thinks he is a wonderful man. She is just thinking of losing a good friendship.

PEGGY

I'm sorry, Mande. I just thought we were going to be friends forever like we used to say.

MANDE reaches in his pocket and pulls out an soft brown leather pouch.

MANDE

This will keep our hearts close forever. This has good ju-ju
and it
only comes from my village.I had it made especially for
you

MANDE gestures to put pouch around PEGGY'S neck. PEGGY smiles as she

turns around to recieve the leather pouch. She blushes. MANDE's father approaches. He taps Mande on the shoulder.

MANDE'S FATHER

Mande, Its time to go, son.

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FADE TO

EXT. BACK WINDOW OF CAR DRIVING AWAY ..DAY

CUT TO

Car is driving away as PEGGY stands at her window, crying. MANDE looks
back out the window and waves good-bye as tears run down PEGGY'S
cheek.

She whispers.

PEGGY

I will never forget you Mande.

FADE TO

INT ATTORNEY NASH'S OFFICE-BOGANY, EAST TEXAS

CUT TO

ATTORNEY NASH opens the Will as he sits at his desk. Timberland can
be
seen from his picture window behind his chair. PEGGY is sitting in front
of the

desk. She pulls out a handkerchief and slowly wipes her teary eyes.
ATTORNEY NASH sympathizes with PEGGY.

ATTORNEY NASH

Listen... .We just buried your mother about a month ago.
I can understand your grief, Peggy... .We got time you
know. Lets do this another

PEGGY straightens up, gathers her poise, puts her handkerchief back in
her
purse and tells NASH.

PEGGY

No--uh--I'm fine, Nash I want to get
this over with, okay?

ATTORNEY NASH continues as he explains the Will to PEGGY.

PEGGY

would rather have her wonderful parent's back than material wealth. The
sign
of loneliness shows on her attractive face.

ATTORNEY NASH

There is no contest because you are the only child. And I
must say you are going to be a very rich school teacher.
Your mama and papa, Lee and Bertha Wiggins left their

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(CONT'D)

entire estate to you. Their estate is worth five million
dollars, rich in acres of green healthy timber land
with oil right stab dab in the middle. Pretty soon,
them white folks up here gonna be calling you the
Negro Queen of East Texas.

PEGGY gets up from the chair in front of the desk. She walks over to the
big
picture window as NASH'S eyes follow her from waist down. She stares
out
the window and looks a far distant at pine trees for miles. She kinds of
smiles
and responds to NASH'S comment.

PEGGY

Nash, you better rephrase that Negro Queen
comment to Nigger Queen of East Texas.

PEGGY and NASH look at each other for a moment and burst out
laughing.

PEGGY needs a sense of humor right about now. But she remembers

when
her parents bought all this land. She is still standing at the big picture
window
behind ATTORNEY NASH'S Desk.

PEGGY(CONT'D)

Mama and Papa were smart Negro folks. Forty acres
were passed down to them and they just kept buying
more land when it was selling for little of nothing
Them days are gone now. White folks didn't know
rich the land was back then.

ATTORNEY NASH likes PEGGY. But she never encourages a
relationship.
Even if he is prosperous among black folks in EastTexas. PEGGY, for
years
thought about MANDE and one day to see him again. She loves the
African
culture. NASH tries to flirt a little with PEGGY, even more so now
because
of her richness. He gets up from his chair, stands behind Peggy as she
looks
out the window. He puts his hands on both of her shoulders.

NASH

Peggy. Now what are you going to do with all
that land and oil money? Peggy Lee Wiggins,
you gonna need a husband to protect you, the
land and them precious stones.

PEGGY moves away from the window to get away from his grasp. She
picks
up the purse from the chair, puts on her sun shades, pauses and responds
to
Nashs question.

6

PEGGY

Why, Nash Wade I haven't even given that a
thought of day. Maybe I'll just sell all of it and
run off to Africa.

Africa isn't a priority on NASH'S list. He thinks she has gone off the
hook. He
walks from behind his desk in disbelief of selling the land and going to

Africa.

NASH
AFRICA! You got to be joking, Peggy!

FADE TO

CUT TO

EXT. PEGGY'S CLASSROOM .EAST TEXAS- DAY

PEGGY is in her classroom. Students gather around her desk looking at precious stones from her private collection. The stones comes from different countries. PEGGY picks up crystals and holds it up to the students. Then she picks up an amber piece. She opens a book and turn the pages to an Africa map and points to the country of the amber's origin. The stones excite her students.

FADE TO

CUT TO

EXT. FRONT PORCH-PEGGY'S HOUSE-EAST TEXAS CUT TO

PEGGY is sitting out on her country porch in De-Berry, Texas. The sun is setting above the timber land and oil fields. She is watching the sunset as she reads a letter. She pauses for a moment as something in the letter freezes her. Suddenly she starts dancing and jumping for joy. MANDE, her long time African friend since the age of twelve has written a very serious letter. He ask to marry her and wants PEGGY to come immediately to Africa for his father's blessings. His father who is chief doesn't have long to live, so she must hurry.

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PEGGY
(excited)

Yes Mandel I will marry *you!* Yes!
And I will come for your father's blessings.
Thank you God!

FADE TO

MUSIC .AFRICAN DRUMS

CUT TO

INT. GRASS HUT .VILLAGE KONO-SIERRA LEONE, WEST AFRICA
.LATE- EVENING-1945

MANDE'S FATHER is lying in bed. He is dying. WOMEN are standing around fanning him. He is very old. PEGGY is trying to hold back her tears.

Mande goes over to his father and whispers something in his ear. The FATHER opens his eyes and a smile is on his face when he sees PEGGY. He beckon for PEGGY to come closer. PEGGY comes closer and kneels down. The African drums are heard outside of the chiefs house. THE CHIEF whispers something in PEGGY'S ear. Whatever he tells PEGGY, her face is sad. The look on her face is ice cold as if she is snake- bitten, The WOMEN around the bed are nodding and smiling as if they know a father's dying wish to his future daughter-in-law

THE CHIEF

Welcome to Kono, unlike your
country, we don't have
any vanilla and strawberry
ice cream to cool you off

PEGGY smiles as she holds the chiefs hand. Tradition over- powers her innocence. Suddenly, she feels out of place. Sweat begins to pour down her face as she watches a dying man fight for his last breath. The chief coughs a little as the women fan him. The sound of the African drums are louder. The chief turns his head toward PEGGY.

THE CHIEF

I hope you forgive me for taking Mande away.
You were so young to be in love. Everything is

settle now. There is a happy ending to my life now.

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A WOMAN is opening up a piece of black silky cloth. The glow of the diamonds brightens the room. PEGGY looks around as the WOMEN place the diamonds on the CHIEF. Only the WOMEN'S arms are seen. The diamonds are not visible, only the glow that brightens the room. The glow is as bright as auto lights. Peggy turns away from the glare.

THE CHIEF

I do give you and Mande my blessings. But you must promise to bear children until a boy is born to carry the chieftain on in my family. It is a tradition.

FADE TO

INT. GRASS HUT .AT SUNRISE

MUSIC .AFRICAN DRUMS

Tears run down PEGGY'S cheeks as she turns away from the bed. The CHIEF takes his last breath.

EXT. MUSIC .AFRICAN DRUMS

The glow of the diamonds carries the CHIEF'S soul to join other love ones on the other side. The rays of the sun and the glow of the diamonds connects as one powerful energy releasing the soul from the body.

MANDE

Good-bye father. May your soul travel in peace to join your love ones on the other side forever. I will see you again.

CUT TO

EXT. SUNSET .MANDE AND PEGGY SITTING UNDER A PALM TREE

PEGGY is going back to America. Even though, MANDE doesn't want her to go. She feels unworthy because she can't fulfill a dying chiefs wish.

MANDE

Peggy. What you have seen here, tell no outsider.
The power of the sacred diamonds lies within its secrecy.

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MANDE(CONT'D)

We will always be one, Peggy and I'm going to
be thinking of you everyday of my life. Our souls
are one. One day we will meet again. I'm sorry.

For the first time ever, MA.NDE and PEGGY hold each other in their
arms as
tears flow down her cheeks.

CUT TO

INT. VILLAGE OF KONO FORTY YEARS LATER MORNING

MUSIC AFRICAN DRUMS

A young twelve year old WHITE AMERICAN GIRL and her PARENTS
come
to MANDE'S house(hut). They are precious gem and stone collectors.
They are
the HARRISONS from Monterey, California. They are close friends of
PEGGY
WIGGINS PEGGY knows that CHIEF MANDE will help them in finding
precious
stones and gems in the area. A VILLAGER and GUIDE extends his
hands for them
to go inside the grasshut. The CHIEF is eating an African dish while his
wife
prepares another dish. As they enter, she gathers the dish and exits with a
smile.
MANDE gets up to greet the strangers, a custom in his village, always
make
strangers welcome. With a beautiful full dress African attire on, MANDE
gets up,
wipes his mouth and hands. CHIEF MANDE impresses E-LIS, the twelve
year
old as she just takes a seat quietly and observes the African surrounding.
It is a fascination to her.

CHIEF MANDE

Welcome! Welcome to Kono. Would you like

to join me? I have more than enough.

MANDE is very skeptical and cautious with outsiders coming to KONO. Maybe they come for the sacred diamonds or maybe PEGGY betrays him by telling others the tradition of the diamonds.

MR. HARRISON

Peggy told us so much about you Chief Mande and your country side have the most beautiful gems, precious stones and rare gold in your area. We are gem and stone collectors. We travel all over the world to collect one of God's beauty of nature, precious stones and gems. Could you help us?

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CHIEF MANDE is beginning to feel a little bit more comfortable with the family. The LITTLE WHITE GIRL, E-LIS is looking around the chiefs house. She is observing every inch of the grass hut. She remembers PEGGY'S stories about KONO.

MANDE

Huh, huh! I can help you with the gold. We have the finest gold in all of Africa. It is so pure, you can see the color red. But precious stones are found upland where the two rivers meet. Peggy is always in my heart. I will do this for her.

MR. HARRISON

Peggy told me you are kind and have a gentle soul.

MANDE pauses for a moment as the young girl stares at him.

CHIEF MANDE

Africa is different, uh child.. ..not like America, huh?. You must come to visit more often. It is a very friendly place.

E-LIS breaks out of her silence. She smiles and blushes a little bit when

MANDE directs attention to her.

E-LIS

Are there really diamonds laying everywhere on the ground like rocks? I heard stories about that.

CHIEF MANDE chuckles suspiciously. He doesn't discuss diamonds unless their is death in the village.

CHIEF MANDE

Some stories tells jokes you know. Maybe one day you will be business person like your mama and papa, come to Africa to do good business, huh?

FADE TO

FIFTEEN YEARS LATER

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CUT TO

INT. GRASS HUT KONO AT SUNSET

E-LIS is twenty-seven now and back in the village talking with the chief
Only a silhouette of E-LIS can be seen. CHIEF MANDE is an old man. All E-LIS'S dreams of becoming a gem collector and returning to do business in Africa is fulfill. She is one of the best experts on gems and stones. She visits the chief often since her first trip at twelve. They are good friends and a link to his heart,
PEGGY WIGGINS. PEGGY and MANDE are elderly folks now. E-LIS is very close to both. But this visit is a different one, a dying wish from PEGGY.
E-LIS is pacing back and forth as CHIEF MANDE sits, trying to explain.

E-LIS

We have no time, Chief. Let me do it!

CHIEF MANDE paces up and down with his African Kane. E-LIS is

trying to
convince him that she can carry the wish out.

MANDE

No! The task is too dangerous for woman. It will
kill you Go! I will find away There is one man that comes
here about this time, an African American Trader.

E-LIS stops pacing for a moment. She learns to trust no one. Whatever the
wish
is, two million dollars goes to the delivery man. But the danger to deliver
is the task.

E-LIS

Can this man be trusted, Chief?!

CHIEF MANDE looks out his window across the grass land. The sound of
the
drums echoe throughout the village. His memories of PEGGY crosses his
mind.
He turns and looks at E-LIS.

CHIEF MANDE

He is a business man. He will do it. Now go! This man loves
adventure and money, but we cannot tell him what it is for,.. .Now
go! Tell Peggy we will meet again.

FADE TO

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

12

INT. AIRPLANE .LATE EVENING .2000 .SUMMER

An African American man, LUDY MENDE is on the plane. He is in his
early
thirties, very sharp dresser with a sense of cockiness about himself
He leans back in his seat and reaches in his left hand coat pocket to check
for
his baggage ticket and passport. After sifting a few minutes, he begins to
sweat.
He takes out his handkerchief and wipes the sweat from his face. The
plane hits a
few air pockets. He holds his stomach. The stewardess notices his
discomfort.

She shows concern.

THE STEWARDESS

Is there something wrong, Mr. Mende?
He gives an 'okay' gesture with his hand.

CUT TO

LUDY MENDE FLASHES BACK TO KONO.

FADE TO

MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

EXT. KONO VILLAGE MORNING

CHIEF MANDE is talking with LUDY as they walk through the village of Kono.

The chief is trying to convince LIJDY to do this without giving him a clue for whom and what for. So he lies to Ludy.

CHIEF MANDE

Ludy. It is an old native trick. There is nothing to fear. Our village needs the money to buy machines to dig gold. Times have changed. We need those machines. You must do this favor. It is a good investment for you too, two million dollars. Think about it. We don't have much time.

FADE TO

INT. AIRPLANE- AIR FRANCE .2000- SUMMER

CUT TO

Ludy is sitting. He crunches up in a knot. He is cursing himself for letting the chief talk him into doing this. He is miserable. He remembers a day at the flea market with his grandmother bargaining with an AFRICAN

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(CONTD)

TRADER. He is only eleven years old.

LUDY FLASHES BACK

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

EXT. HOUSTON FLEA MARKET .MORNING-1989

LUDY is eleven years old. He is at the large flea market in Texas with his grandmother. He stops to look at some African ju-ju leather pouches. The old AFRICAN TRADER tries to bargain with LUDY. Old AFRICAN TRADER pleases his case. But LUDY doesn't move an inch on his last price.

The trader tries every sales pitch on Ludy, but nothing changes.

AFRICAN VENDER

But look... .Good leather from the best
Fula cow... .Very soft.

LUDY

If you let me have this for three dollars, my
friends will come and buy more, I promise.

While LUDY is standing bargaining with the OLD AFRICAN TRADER,
his
GRANDMOTHER is walking toward him with an armful of merchandise
and
ready to go.

GRANDMOTHER

Ludy! Let's go grandchild.
I done spent all my money.

AFRICAN VENDER

Ah! Ha! Ha! You bargain like an African.
Listen, you smart boy, I tell you what.
Take these and sell to your friends, If you sell
all of them, I will give you a special ju-ju charm
that is only made in my village and only given to
friends.

LUDY snatches up the leather pouches and put them in his shopping bag.

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LUDY

Thats a deal! Mister African man.

AFRICAN VENDER

Bereley, my name. One day you
gonna be fine trader. I can see
it in your eyes.

FADE TO

MUSIC- HIP-HOP

CUT TO

INT. AIRPLANE -AIR FRANCE- 2000- SUMMER

LUDY snaps back. His stomach is numb. His sweaty shirt is sticking to
his chest.

The plane wheels squeak as the motor raises to landing.

FADE TO

EXT. SIGN BUSH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT-HOUSTON, TX
MID-DAY

VOICE

(v.o.)

Welcome to Houston, Texas and
'thanks' for traveling Air France.

FADE TO

INT. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOM DEPARTMENT.

CUT TO

The custom officer is taking his time searching though LUDY'S duffer
bag. Ludy's
knees are buckling. He braces his hands against the table.

CUSTOM OFFICER

Well, everything checked out.

FADE TO

INT. AIRPORT LOBBY

EXT. -WOMEN RESTROOM

LUDY heads straight for the restroom. He almost goes in the women's toilet, but he see the sign just before he opens the door.

LUDY

Shit!

FADE TO

EXT. MEN RESTROOM

CUT TO

He dashes to the other side of the lobby to men's restroom. Just as he turns into the entrance, another man is coming out. BAM! He runs into the man and knocks his shoulder bag to the floor. Ludy is in such pain that he doesn't tell the man he is sorry. The man picks up his bag and shakes his head.

THE MAN

Must be a bunch of nuts running around here today. Get a life, buddy!

The man walks away mumbling to himself LUDY speeds into one of the stalls.

CUT TO

INT. MEN- REST ROOM-STALL

LUDY is sitting on the toilet stool in pain moving from side to side. The pain is unbearable. His head is feeling dizzy. He feels like he is going to pass out. He holds his stomach real tight, trying to eliminate the diamonds inside of his bowel.

LUDY

(grunts)

For the love of the American dollar.
Come on, baby! Come on! Yes!

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LUDY(CONT'D)

AH! AH! AH! Come on! I'm
gonna be a rich man, baby. AH!

Then the sound of a splash, then another splash and another splash in the
toilet.

The diamonds are expelling....

LUDY(CONT'D)

YES! YES!

LUDY flushes the toilet.

LUDY(CONT'D)

(v.o)

Now America! I'm ready to wheel and deal.

MUSIC- HIP-HOP

CUT TO

EXT. AIRPORT .MID MORNING

EXT. BLACK AND WHITE 2000 CARGO CHEVY VAN PULLS UP
TO
PASSENGER PARKING ZONE.

LUDY walks out of the airport lobby with his duffer bag. He looks around
as a
van pulls up. His friend and business partner blows his horn. His name is
BANTI,
an African American, humorous, loves women and is in his late twenties
and very
dependable. BANTI is LUDY'S right hand person. BANTI waves and
hollers at
LUDY.

BANTI

Hey! Ludy! Over here!

LUDY opens the door and throws his bag in the back of the van, takes a
deep

breath and looks at Banti. He is still trying to recuperate from all the pain.
BANTI
makes his humorous comment.

INT. -VAN

BANTI(CONT'D)
Dam, bro! I thought you got lost in Africa!

LUDY looks at BANTI and slap hands.

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LUDY
(serious)
Maybe one day I will.

BANTI drives toward airport exit to freeway.

LUDY(CONT'D)
Right now, we got to take care some
serious business. How's business
going bro?...

BANTI pulls off in slow traffic.

BANTI
Couldn't be better, bin. Sold some-some.

BANTI pauses for a second, reaches in the glove compartment and pulls
out a
HIP-HOP CD and pops it into the CD player.

BANTI(CONTD)
We're finally getting a piece of the pie.

LUDY
Good. Just a matter of time, bro, trust me.

BANTI takes out one CD and pops in another. He takes a look at LUDY,

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

BANTI
You know what, Ludy?

BANTI drives up entrance to freeway.

CUT TO

EXT-SIGN READS-- 59 SOUTH

BANTI looks at LUDY. LUDY is staffing out the window. He frowns a little from the pain caused by the diamonds.

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BANTI(CONT'D)

You've changed man... even your complexion.

LUDY turns and looks at BANTI. He wants to say something, but BANTI just keeps talking. LUDY shakes his head.

BANTI(CONT'D)

You look a little skinny, brother.
Whats up with this?

LUDY looks at BANTI strange.

BANTI(CONT'D)

Uh, but you look good, man.

LUDY smiles as he shakes his head at BANTI and his motor mouth.
BANTL exit freeway.

EXIT 59 SOUTH TO LYONS AVENUE

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

BANTI drives along as LUDY observes the old neighborhood. It is a very hot day in Houston, Black folks are standing under trees with their six packs of beer. Dominos players are loud, hitting on the table. Some kids are playing basketball on the cement court yard at a park. A woman is on the porch braiding a girl's hair while others waits their turn. BANTI turns onto another street.

EXT-STREET SIGN-- MARKET ST.

LUDY
I guess it's the rice, fish, casava,
mango and beautiful people, Bro.

MUSIC-HLP-HOP

LUDY pops out the CD. BANTI looks funny at LUDY.

BANTI
That's cool.. You wanna listen to some jazz.
Fine with me. You know I'm versatile.

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LUDY doesn't respond as BANTI drives right in the heart of Fifth Ward. An old man with a truck load of vegetables sits on the corner in a chair, selling mustard and collards greens. BANTI stops for a RED LIGHT. LUDY looks around the community.

LUDY
Did you get the last shipment?

EXT. TRAFFIC LIGHT .CORNER OF LIBERTY RD. AND
BRINGHURST ST.

BANTI continues to drive as the light turns green. LUDY plays a CD

MUSIC- FOREVER .CONTEMPORARY JAZZ-WILTON FELDER

BANTI
Had to talk my ass off, Bro.

LUDY smiles as he listens.

LUDY
Well, why do you think we are partners.
Man, you got a gift to gab, Bro.

BANTI
(shrug his shoulders)
Same thing my women tells me.

LUDY turns the music up.

LUDY

Can talk your ass out of and into everything, Bro
and you don't leave any prisoners either.

CUT TO

SIGN READS- RALSTON DRUG STORE

EXT. VACANT LOT BEHIND RALSTON DRUG STORE --
AFTERNOON

20

A GROUP OF MEN are standing around drinking wine and passing a
marijuana
joint as BANTI turns in that direction on another street. LUDY is
watching closely
as BANTI slows down. LUDY spots his friend, 6' 8" brown skin,
BUNCHY in the
group. He tells BANTI to stop the van.

LUDY

Banti! STOP HERE!

BANTI pulls over to the curb.

BANTI

What's up, Ludy?! Nothing but a bunch
of wine heads over there, man. Do nothing
but beg for money.

LUDY opens the door to the van. He's happy to see his old friend.
BUNCHY.
Reflection of old times crosses his mind.

LUDY

(opening van door)
Just chill!

BANTI turns the motor off LUDY walks toward the group of men.

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

BIJNCHY is smoking a joint. As he takes his last draw of the marajuana
joint, he
looks up and see Ludy walking toward him.

CUT TO

SLOW MOTION- LUDY AND BUNCHY ACTING LIKE PLAYING BASKETBALL

BUNCHY goes through the motion of dribbling and passing the ball to LUDY.

LUDY dribbles and passes the ball back to Bunchy. Bunchy goes up for the shot.

LUDY and BUNCHY slaps hands after the shot and hug.

BUNCHY

(out of breath)

We still got that old touch, Bro.

BUNCHY and LUDY just stands and looks at each other for a moment.

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LUDY

(concerned)

We were the best, Bunchy Litsen

LUDY grabs BUNCHY on the shoulders and looks him in the eyes.

LUDY(CONT'D)

(continuing)

You okay, Bro?

BUNCHY takes a deep breath. He rather not answer the question.

BUNCHY

Could be better, Ludy----but I'm cool its my choice.

LUDY goes into his pocket and gives BUNCHY one-hundred dollars.

LUDY

Listen.... I gotta go, Bro. If you ever wanna talk, call me Bunchy. You have my number Peace!
Love you, Bro. You take care.

BUNCHY rolls the money up and puts it in his shirt pocket

BUNCHY

(grateful)
Hey, man---thanks.

LUDY turns and walks away. BUNCHY remembers a basketball game.

BUNCHY(CONTD)

Hey, Ludy!

LUDY turns around.

BUNCHY(CONT'D)

We shoulda won that tournament. Dam!
I missed that three pointer
at the buzzer, man.

22

LUDY just shakes his head. LUDY yells back.

LUDY

Weren't your fault, Bunchy!

BUNCHY puts his head down, hits the side of the building with his hand.

LUDY(CONT'D)

Everybody knew you had a good look
at the basket, man No hard feeling, Bunchy.

BUNCHY downs his head and walks back to the group mumbling.

BUNCHY

Dam! I shoulda iced it man.
We woulda been champs Damp

CUT TO

INT. VAN

LUDY LOOKING AT A DISTANT TOWARD BUNCHY

BUNCHY tells the other men the story about the basketball game. He demonstrates by acting like he is shooting the basketball. The men doesn't pay any attention to his story.

BANTI

Hey! You all right, Ludy?

LUDY is looking out the van window at Bunchy

LUDY

Yeah. Just reflecting to where I
used to be.

BANTI is curious.

BANTI

Musta been a good brother once, huh?

LUDY looks at BANTI. To him BUNCHY is still a good brother.

23

LUDY

Bunchy had the whole world in his hands, man.. .Best
basketball
player in the state of Texas, you understand... Fell in love,
woman
left him for another doud. His head ain't been screwed on
right since,
Bro.

LUDY(CONT'D)

(stares for a moment)
Look at him, he still Lives in the past, man.
God help him. I've been there....

LUDY sees enough. He pops in another jazz CD.

MUSIC-STREET LIFE-CRUSADERS-JAZZ

LUDY(CONT'D)

Listen, Lets hat up. I've seen enough.
Swing by Janis's first. I wanna surprise her.

EXT. JANIS'S FRONT PORCH HOUSE .FIFTHWARD .DAY LUDY'S
RINGING DOORBELL

JANIS is a very attractive brown African American woman. She is twenty
eight

years old. She has a nice figure. JANIS and LUDY relationship has been on the rocks for sometimes.

LUDY is getting impatient as he stands at the door waiting for it to open.
LUDY
rings the doorbell again.

INT.- HOUSE -BEDROOM DOOR

INT. JANIS COMES FROM THE BEDROOM.

JANIS closes the door behind her. She ties the belt to her house coat.

JAMS
looks through the peep hole of the door a little before opening it.

JANIS
Yes! Who is it?

JANIS is very surprise to see LUDY standing outside the door.

24

JANIS(CONT'D
Aw Shit!

LUDY
(impatient)
Are you going to open or what, Janis?

FADE TO

As she opens the door, LUDY props his shoulder against the wall. JANIS acts as if she is glad to see him. She hugs him.

JANIS
(acting surprise)
Ludy! You re back, baby!

INT. HOUSE .HALL WAY THAT LEADS TO BEDROOM

LUDY is walking toward the bedroom. She tries to draw LUDY'S attention away from the bedroom. She begins sweet talking LUDY.

JANIS

Been thinking about you everyday, baby.
I miss you so much. I know things have
been shaky. How was your trip to Africa?

JANIS puts her arms on both of his shoulders and looks him in the eyes.

LUDY

(unbelievable smile)
Really? You mean you
wanna know, Janis?

JANIS and LUDY embrace one another.

LUDY(CONTD)

And you not pist about me going
off to Africa this time?

JANIS

I've changed Ludy.

25

LUDY looks unbelievable strange at JANIS. This changing attitude is
nothing
new to him. She does it all the time.

LUDY(CONT'D)

Listen... .uh how did you like them
African Clara bed sheets I sent to you.

JANIS responds immediately.

JANIS

Oh Yeah!.. .They are gorgeous.
Thanks, for thinking about me,

LUDY opens the bedroom door quickly!

LUDY

Let me see how they look on your
water bed.

INT. JANIS'S BEDROOM

A beautiful white twenty-five years old blonde is putting on her clothes. She is very attractive. Her name is BEVERLY. She doesn't look surprised or try to cover herself when LUDY opens the door, It is as if she wants this to happen. BEVERLY doesn't utter a word, just smiles and continues to put on her clothes. LUDY slams the door and is in a rage. JAMS sits down on the couch, crying.

LUDY

What the hell! I'm outta here! This is a nightmare. My eyes didn't see this. Dam you, Janis! Dam you!

LUDY walks quickly out of the house. LUDY is furious. JANIS is crying. She really doesn't want it to end this way.

JANIS

I never wanted to hurt you, Ludy.

LUDY slams the door in her face. She stands there in disbelief As she stands against the front door, crying, BEVERLY comes out of the bedroom to console her.

26

FADE TO

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

INT. VAN DAY .VAN PULLING UP AT A HOUSE IN FIFTHWARD

LUDY sits quietly as Banti pulls up in the driveway of their house. Banti is curious. BANTI turns the ignition off LUDY shakes his head and leans back in the seat. He stares into space.

BANTI

(curious)

Hey, bro. Whats up? You wanna talk about it?

LUDY looks at BANTI like he really wants to talk to somebody. How can he tell Banti that his woman is with another woman.

BANTI(CONT'D)

Never seen you like this before, Ludy.

BANTI(CONT'D)

What happen back there? Look like you been electrocuted, Bro.

LUDY really wanna call JAMS every low-life words on the planet.

LUDY

How long will it take you to pack up the goods, Banti?

BANTI looks surprise as he unbuckles his seat belt. Knowing LUDY, BANTI knows when to drop a subject on JANIS.

BANTI(CONT'D)

(surprised)

What?! Where are we going, Bro?

LUDY just looks at Banti. BANTI catches the hint and responds.

BANTI(CONT'D)

Uh... .not long Bro, maybe three hours,

27

LUDY

Good. We're going west, big business, Bro. And don't ever mention the name Janis around me again. Okay? And we'll leave it at that.

BANTI

Hey, fine with me, no sweat. Musta been some heavy shit went down, man.

FADE TO

CUT TO

INT. HOUSE .FRONT ROOM .DAY

SCATTERED CLOTHES AND PAPERS LAYING AROUND IN
ROOM.
AFRICAN MERCHANDISE ARE EVERYWHERE.

LUDY

Dam! This place looks like a hog's pen.

BANTI

(apologizes)
Sorry, man.

BANTI starts picking up some of the papers and clothes.

CUT TO

LUDY'S HANDS OPENING TISSUE OF DIAMONDS ON TABLE

LUDY begins placing the sparkling diamonds in secret compartments of
the kente
cloth band. The sparkles catches BANTI'S eyes.

FADE TO

BANTI RIGHT OPEN HAND HOLDING SPARKLING DIAMOND

BANTI

Dam! Are these for real, man?

LUDY takes the last diamond from BANTI and places it in the cloth.

28

LUDY

(smiles)
Two million we talking about here.
My contact is in L.A.

BANTI and LUDY slap hands.

BANTI

(excited)
How the hell did you pull this off, Bro?

LUDY snaps all the secret compartments of the kente cloth.

LUDY
You don't wanna know, Bro, believe me
Now pull off your shirt.

INT. HOUSE

LUDY waits for Banti to take off his shirt. Banti freezes.

BANTI
Aw, man! Not me!

BANTI takes off his shirt.

BANTI(CONT'D)
Carrying these rocks, man.
I'm going to be hotter than
a firecracker.

LUDY puts the kente band around Banti's chest, then he snaps it tight.

BANTI
puts his shirt back on.

LUDY
Better you than me. Someone could have
caught on to me at the airport. You don't
look like a person who would be carrying
two mill worth of diamonds.

BANTI buttons up his shirt. He feels the band around his chest. LUDY
touches
BANTI'S chest.

29

LUDY(CONT'D)
It's time now for the big money, Banti.
These babies gonna take us to the promise
land. Our day has arrived, partner.

BANTI is thinking about if he meets a pretty little lady and they decides to
have
a little body fun.

BANTIJ(CONT'D)
That's cool, man, I understand, but when

I lay up with my women, man, what do I tell them, Bro?

LUDY

(v.o.)

Just tell them you just got some powerful ju-ju from Africa that gonna keep you humping all night.

FADE TO

INT. BACK OF VAN-INTERSTATE 10-AT SUNRISE .EXT. MOUNTAINS - TREES AND DESERT

MUSIC-CONTEMPORARY JAZZ-FOREVER ALWAYS .BY FELDER

BANTI and LUDY are traveling on Interstate 10 to California. LUDY is reading a book on West Africa. BANTI is driving.

FADE TO

EXT. CALIFORNIA .MALIBU BEACH .EARLY MORNING

BANTI

(v.o.)

Yeah that's pretty good

FADE TO

.SEAGULLS FLYING

MUSIC-CONTEMPORARY JAZZ

30

CUT TO

EXT. PATIO

MUSIC-JAZZ

WOMAN LEGS AND FEET-- RUNNING ON BEACH SANDS

The sound of heavy breathing by E-LIS and the splashing of waves coming to

shore as seagulls float in the air beneath a rising sun. She jogs up to her patio outside her beach house. E-LIS takes the towel from a chair and wipes her sweaty body. She pours a glass of orange juice from the pitcher on the table and looks out into the blue water and silky sands.

EXT. WAVES COMING INTO SHORE ABOVE

E-LIS sits the empty glass down on the table.

CUT TO

INT. HOUSE- TELEPHONE RINGS

AFRICAN ART ABOVE TELEPHONE TABLE

CUT TO

EXT. PATIO

E-LIS finishes during her stretches. She inhales and exhales while taking a breath of the ocean freshness. E-LIS waves at another jogger running along the beach. The phone is still ringing. She glances at watch.

E-LIS

Aw, Shit!

CUT TO

INT. HOUSE- TELEPHONE-RINGING

E-LIS picks up the phone. She holds the receiver to her ear.

E-LIS

I'm on my way.

31

FADE TO

EXT-SIGN READS-LOS ANGELES-15 MILES

INT. VAN-LUDY DRIVING

MUSIC-CONTEMPORARY JAZZ

BANTI opens the glove compartment pulls out a joint of marijuana.

BANTI

And I got something that gonna float
us right on into the city of angels.

LUDY shakes his head when he sees BANTI with the joint. BANTI
pushes the
cigarette lighter in.

BANTI(CONT'D)

(imitates Jamaican accent)
This here herbs... the best in all Jamaica, man

LUDY is silent. BANTI lights the marijuana joint and puts the cigarette
lighter back. BANTI takes a long drag off the joint. He passes it to LUDY.

LUDY

Hey, Banti. I tell you all the time..
I don't get hire any- more.

LUDY'S face stares into the mountains as BANTI doesn't push the issue.
He just sits back in his seat and takes another drag off the joint. As Banti
smokes the marajuana, LUDY flashes back on hanging on the streets with
BUNCHY, getting hire everyday.

BANTI

(sits back in seat, takes a drag)
Like I said, Africa sho nough done change
you, Bro.

LUDY FLASHES BACK TO FIFTH WARD-HOUSTON

FADE TO

32

CUT TO

EXT. VACANT LOT . WINTER- MORNING-1990

MUSIC-JAZZ-STREET LIFE-FELDER AND CRUSADERS

BUNCHY, LUDY standing by a barrel of fire warming their hands and passing a joint of marijuana.

THE SOUND OF SIRENS SCREAMS THROUGH THE NEIGHBORHOOD

BUNCHY takes a long drag off the marijuana joint and passes it to LUDY takes a drag off the joint. BUNCHY warms his hands.

BUNCHY

You remember that day we played
Grambling--you came down the floor
like a run-a-way truck.

LUDY just stands there shaking his head and blowing his cold hands.

BUNCHY(CONT'D)

(acting like passing the ball)
You faked a pass to me and did a three-sixty
and kissed a trey right off the back-board.
It was awesome' You remember that Ludy?

BUNCHY turns to LUDY. LUDY shows no interest.

LUDY

Listen, Bunchy, the past is haunting our ass.
Them were the good-old days. We just can't
keep living back there, you understand? I
promised my Grand Ma before she die I would
give up these streets, man, This is no future. Bro.

BUNCHY turns away from LUDY like his best friend is turning on him.

33

BUNCHY

Then what else can we do, Ludy, we can't

BUNCHY(CONT'D)

just forget our personal contribution to this

society. Its the only dam thing I got lefl---and they owe me for my sweat, blood and tears on that basketball court.

LUDY
(rubs his hands together)
BUNCHY. I understand your feelings, but its over and done with, outta our hands I wanna go into some kind of business, get off these streets and be somebody.

This is a different conversation coming from LUDY. BUNCHY is quiet.

LUDY(CONT'D)
Grand Ma left me a big stash, man. I wanna use it wisely. You know what I'm saying?

LUDY slowly gazes over at BUNCHY

LUDY(CONT'D)
Maybe we can do something together, Bro....

LUDY(CONT'D)
We got more than basketball brains, man. The system owes us that, Bro.

BUNCHY
(takes a long drag off the joint)
Naw, bro. No more dreams for Bunchy here. The system done whooped old Bunchy for the last time. Anyway I can't give up this weed.

BUNCHY takes another long drag off the joint.

FADE TO

INT. VAN-MID-MORNING-INTERSTATE 10

34

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

BANTI IS TAKING A LONG DRAG OFF MARIJUANA JOINT

LUDY is Looking into the rear view minor.

LUDY

(serious)

Dam! There's the law tight on our tail.

BANTI coughs as he takes the joint out of his mouth.

BANTI

What?!

BANTI just freezes and never looks back. He coughs. Then he puts the marijuana joint in his mouth and swallows it. LUDY is laughing. BANTI looks back and there is no law in sight. He looks at LUDY as if he is crazy as hell.

LUDY

(still joking and laughing)

Just wanted to see whether you could still do that, man. That's amazing.

BANTI is touching his tongue with his fingers. He spits out a little paper.

BANTI

(not so joyful to him)

Ludy Mende! You are crazy! African crazy, man! I burn the hell out of my tongue for nothing!

FADE TO

EXT. VAN .VIEW OF HOLLYWOOD BLVD. .DAY

VAN MOVES TOWARD HOLLYWOOD AND VINE STREET.

MUSIC-JAZZ .FOREVER ALWAYS-FELDER

35

CUT TO

BANTI and LUDY see different scenes along HOLLYWOOD BLVD. Pretty women and weird dressed people walking down the street. A BLACK tall slim LADY wearing a leather short jacket and a tight mini leather skirt catches BANTI'S eyes.

BANTI

Look at that!

FADE TO

EXT .A RED FORD EXPLORER MOVING FAST ON LACIENAGAS
BLVD.

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

INT. RED FORD EXPLORER .E-LIS DRIVING-SPEEDING

CUT TO

EXT. THE TRAFFIC LIGHT AT HOLLYWOOD BLVD.
INTERSECTION

CUT TO

EXT. LUDY AND BANTI'S VAN APPROACHING TRAFFIC LIGHT

EXT. TRAFFIC LIGHT TURNS RED

CUT TO

INT.- LUDY DRIVES VAN NTO THE INTERSECTION ON
GREEN LIGHT

CUT TO

INT. .RED EXPLORER-E-LIS RUNS THE RED LIGHT

CUT TO

INT. .VAN-LIJDY TURNS QUICKLY OFF THE STREET ON TO

36

CONT'D

THE SIDE WALK ALMOST HITTING PEDESTRIANS TO AVOID
AN ACCIDENT.

THE CAMERA focuses on the van jumping up on the side walk. People
are
screaming trying to avoid getting hit by the van. At a distant, the RED

EXPLORER just keeps speeding up LACIENAGAS BLVD.

EXT. VAN-LUDY SLAMS ON BRAKES BEFORE CRASHING A FASHION SHOP.

LUDY
(slams the brakes right before crashing
into a fashion shop)
What the hell!

CUT TO

INT. VAN

LUDY takes a deep breath, trying to stay calm. He takes a look back at the merchandise. BANTI is bent over, trying to gather himself from the shock. People are standing around mumbling to each other and pointing to the van....

LUDY(CONT'D)
(unbraces his hands from the dash board)
DAM!

BANTI
(catches his breath and turns to Ludy)
You okay Bro?

LUDY is angry. He hits the dash board with his hands.

LUDY
(angry)
Stupid chick! She must be on speed
or something, man.

LUDY STARTS UP THE VAN

37

BANTI
Yeah! Lets get outta of here before the law
shows up. Nobody got hurt and thank God
we didn't crash that boutique.

CUT TO

INT. VAN- LUDY DRIVING ALONG LACIENAGAS BLVD. DAY

CUT TO

EXT. E-LIS PARKING RED EXPLORER IN FRONT OF DAKAR IMPORTS

CUT TO

INT. VAN

BANTI AND LUDY are looking through the front wind shield. They both spot E-LIS getting out the RED EXPLORER. LUDY slams on the brakes and makes a u-turn.

CUT TO

EXT. -E-LIS GETS OUT RED EXPLORER

LUDY

(v.o.)
Speaking of the devil.

EXT. SIGN ON SHOP-DAKAR IMPORTS

E-LIS walks into the shop. LUDY makes a u-turn at the next light.

BANTI

Ludy! Where are you going?

LUDY doesn't respond to BANTI. He is out to get revenge in some way.

BANTI(CONT'D)

Hey, man, just leave it alone, Bro
This is not Africa.

38

CUT TO

EXT. LUDY WALKING TO DAKAR IMPORTS

BANTI pops in a CD as LUDY tries to cross the street in traffic.

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

INT. DAKAR IMPORTS .DAY

CUT TO

INT. .JEWELRY CASE .AMBER, GOLD AND IVORY NECKLACE

CUT TO

E-LIS IS WALKING TOWARD A BACK DOOR IN THE SHOP. A
BLACK

GAY MAN, 40 years old is sifting behind the jewelry case,
polishing a gold bracelet. He is the manager of her store.

E-LIS

(rushing)

Good afternoon, Stanley

STANLEY

Good afternoon. You late.

STANLEY points toward the office door. E-LIS takes a deep breathe.

E-LIS

Haven't been my day, Stanley.

E-LIS(CONT'D)

(holding the door partially open)

Any messages?

STANLEY picks up a note pad. He flips a few pages.

STANLEY

(responds)

Mother Gem called and oh yes, uh Catherine

39

STANLEY(CONT'D)

from Beverly Hills called about those jade
and ivory necklaces.

CUT TO

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

EXT. LUDY IS WALKING ACROSS LACIENAGA STREET

The traffic is bumper to bumper as LUDY bobs and weaves,

CUT TO

INT. DAKAR IMPORT- E-LIS'S OFFICE

A middle age AFRICAN MAN is sitting down with a black brief case in his lap.

His name is MR. KAMARO. He is dressed in full African attire. He smiles when

E-LIS walks in the office. E-LIS apologizes as she walks to her desk. E-LIS

speaks in FRENCH to MR. KAMARO. French is his language and E-LIS masters more than one language.

E-LIS

(translates in French)

Sorry I'm late Mr. Kamaro.

CUT TO

EXT. LACJENAGA BLVD-HEAVY TRAFFIC

MUSIC- HIP-HOP

LUDY crosses the street. The sound of horns echo up and down LACIENAGA BLVD.

CUT TO

EXT. OFFICE OF DAKAR IMPORTS

MR. KAMARO is showing E-LIS some beautiful amber necklaces, trade beads

and precious stones from West Africa. The focuses on E-LIS admiring the jewelery

as she picks up an amber necklace.

40

E-LIS

(translate into French)

How beautiful!... Give me price
for everything.

E-LIS jesters with her hands that she wants to buy the whole briefcase
jewelry.

MR. KAMARO eyes lights up.

MR. KAMARO
(smiles as he sits the briefcase down)
For you Ms. E-lis Bataghani

MR. KAMARO reaches in his African attire near his belt line and pulls
out a modem
day calculator trimed in gold and starts figuring.

MR KAMARO(CONT'D)
(translate in French)
I make you very good price.

MR. KAMARO smiles as he taps the numbers. While he is figuring, E-
LIS opens
her desk draw and pulls out her check book.

MR. KAMARO
(trys his English)
You good customer, E-LIS Bataghani. Rasheed
send me to you----and he was right! He come
to Africa many times.

CUT TO

EXT. DAKAR IMPORTS .DAY

LUDY walks up to the door and takes a deep breath. He opens it and
enters.

CUT TO

INT. DAKAR IMPORTS

When LUDY steps inside the door and see so much African merchandise.
He seems
to get humble. He looks around, but no white woman.

STANLEY

(lady like)

If you need any help. Don't be shy.

STANLEY is thinking LUDY is just another customer with no money to buy.

So he looks up, then continues to polish the gold jewelry.

CUT TO

ETHNIC CARVINGS, SOAP STONES, AFRICAN FABRIC, IVORY, LEATHER BRACELETS CARVINGS, KENTE CLOTH, CLOTHING.

CUT TO

The OFFICE door opens. E-LIS and KAMARO comes out the office.

E-LIS

(translate in French)

Thank you, Mr. Kamaro. Have a safe trip back to Dakar and tell the family, hello.

LUDY freezes when he sees MR. KAMARO. LUDY waits until E-LIS finishes with MR. KAMARO as he walks toward the door. LUDY thinks that it is MR.

KAMARO'S store until he notices that the AFRICAN is leaving.

MR. KAMARO

(translate in French)

Thank you, Mr. Kamaro. Have a safe trip.

MR KAMARO nods to E-LIS and exit the store. E-LIS turns to go back in her office.

LUDY

(angry tone)

Excuse me, lady! Do you know what you just did?

E-LIS turns around before entering her office. She is speechless.

LUDY(CONT'D)

You almost kill us back there, lady I

Stanley walks from behind the jewelry case. He doesn't know what this

angry
person might do to E-LIS. He picks up the phone by the counter to

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(CONT'D)
call the police. He begins to dial a number.

STANLEY
Uh---now, listen here, whatever your name
is--you are out of control, darling! I'll fix this
right now. You can deal with LPD.

E-LIS
(very calm)
Stanley, please, put the phone
down, I can handle Uh, Mister--LUDY
Mende, Ludy Mende.

E-LIS(CONT'D)
E-LIS Bataghani is my name and I'm not aware that I caused
a near accident. I remember the light changing---if there were
any damages, I will take care of them. I'm sorry. I was just
stressed out a little and running late for an appointment.

LUDY
(Calms down)
No damages---just scared the hell out of me
and my partner. Next time you get stressed
out, take a walk in the park or something.
You are very lucky this time.

E-LIS
Sure. Thanks for the advice. Have you ever been to KONO?
The bracelet you are wearing, they are very difficult to get.

LUDY
Yes I am a Trader. I go there
all the time. Take care.

STANLEY
And no thanks to your funky
attitude, Wild Bill!

E-LIS
Stanley!

CUT TO

INT. VAN

BANTI

(curious)

Ludy. What's up?

LUDY is looking for RASHEED'S AFRICAN SHOP on HOLLYWOOD BLVD.

LUDY

Looking for brother Rasheed's place.
He's our contact to richness.

FADE TO

INT. VAN-LUDY PARKING ON HOLLYWOOD BLVD

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

LUDY parks the Van and unbuckles his seat belt. People are hanging out.

LUDY

Wait here---and watch your back.

CUT TO

EXT. RASHEED SHOP-IMPORTS FOR YOU

LUDY opens the door to RASHEED'S shop.

CUT TO

INT. IMPORTS FOR YOU

A young BLACK woman is standing behind the counter as LUDY walks in the door. She is reading an Essence magazine. Her name is ANTIMA She looks up at LUDY and continues to read, LUDY disturbs ANTLMA by peeping

over
the magazine.

44

LUDY
(peeps over magazine)
Ms. Attitude. Is Rasheed around?

ANTIMA closes the magazine and look disgustively at LUDY.

ANTIMA
He's back in his office. I hope you are bringing
him some money. We need some sales today. I
haven't been paid in a month..., Don't take long to
cop an attitude behind that. You know what I'm saying?

LUDY
Business been that bad, huh? Well let's see can I
bring you some good ju-ju today, okay?

ANTLMA closes the magazine nonchalance, shakes her head and walks
toward
RASHEED'S office.

ANT IMA
(starts toward office)
Yeah. Right! Its gonna take more
than African ju-ju to rain dollar bills
up in here. Wait here.

ANTIMA leaves to go get RASHEED. LUDY walks over to an artifact
and
begins to stare at it. It reminds him of HYWA in FREETOWN, SIERRA
LEONE.
LUDY picks up the smooth ivory artifact of an African woman, beautifiñ
carved.
He remembers and smiles.

FLASHBACK

FADE TO

MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

EXT. MARKET PLACE-DAY-FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE

CUT TO

LUDY is in the African market in Freetown, Sierra Leone, West Africa.
He is shopping around for his business. A BEAUTIFUL FULA woman sits alone quietly among all the sounds of different languages echoing about.

45

LUDY works his way through the crowded market. His eyes lights up when he sees this very attractive woman. She is surrounded by ivory carvings, colorful fabrics and beautiful gold earrings and bracelets. She wears beautiful braids like a crown on her head adorned with unique gold earrings hanging heavy from her ear lobes. As LUDY approaches, she smiles, unties and tie her lapper (fabric like skirt) and stands up for business. LUDY picks up an ivory artifact. He observes it closely while one eye is on the beautiful Fulani woman.

LUDY

How much for this?

FULA WOMAN

Two hundred American dollars.
This one is fine. My tribe.

LUDY decides to bargain with the FULA WOMAN

LUDY

I give you one-hundred fifty American dollars.
You have the most beautiful smile in the whole world.

HYWA

(smiles)
In the whole world! That's very big, Mister--

LUDY is flirting with the FULANI WOMAN.

LUDY

Ludy Mende. You are one beautiful woman, Miss--

HYWA

Hywa is my name.

LUDY

Okay, Hywa, one hundred-fifty dollars, last price, pretty woman.

HYWA

One seventy-five, last price I give you Mr. Ludy

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LUDY

You drive a hard bargain, pretty woman....

HYWA

(smiles)
Hywa is my name.

LUDY

(laughs a little)
Oh, sorry Freetown, your home?

HYWA

(smiles)
My home, North, Kono, diamond country....

LUDY

Huh, huh----you must be Fulani woman.

HYWA

(smiles)
You pay one-seventy-five and then I answer more question. Okay?

LUDY

Take me to your village and I buy everything.

HYWA

(smiles)
You, American man, wan go my village. It's far

North. Diamond country. Okay. Tomorrow.

CUT TO

INT. IMPORTS FOR YOU

ANTIMA returns. LUDY smiles as he puts the piece back.

ANT IMA

(sits down behind counter)

Rasheed will be out in a minute... So, you've been to Africa too.

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LUDY

(sits the carving down lightly)

Yeh, many times.

ANTIMA'S mind is on money.

ANTIMA

I sure would like to get my hands on some of them diamonds over there.

Then I wouldn't ever have to worry about getting paid.

LUDY thinks it is a coincident she brings up diamonds.

LUDY

Wouldn't everybody?

CUT TO

INT. VAN-DAY

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

BANTI is still jamming to the rap music. A BLACK man walks up to the window

is down as the man taps BANTI on the shoulder.

BANTI

(jumps)

Dam! What the hell!

BLACK MAN
(holds cigarette for light)
Hey, cous---got a light?

BANTI
(turns to man)
What?!

BLACK MAN
(still holds cigarette)
A light, man! You hard of hearing?

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BANTL pushes the lighter in and then pulls it out. He lights the man's short butt cigarette as the he sticks his head slightly in the window. He looks likes he's been on the streets for months.

BANTI
Here! And move on, Bro. I got other things on my mind. Okay?

BLACK MAN
(takes a long puff)
Hey, cous.. .I use to be somebody....

BANTL reaches in his pocket and pulls out a five dollar bill. He hands it to the BLACK MAN.

BANTI
(hands out five dollars to man)
This brother is sho-nough trippin.
Here. And quit harassing me, man....

CUT TO

EXT. LOS ANGELES LPD CAR PULLS UP BEHIND VAN CUT TO

INT. VAN

BANTI looks in the rear view mirror. He makes sure his shirt is button real good.
He prays the officer turns another way.

BANTI

Aw shit! Don't want no problem with
the cops---not with these rocks strapped
on me. Please, walk the other way.

CUT TO

EXT. COP BEHIND THE VAN

The COP stops and stares a moment at the van, then he walks into the
restaurant
next door. BANTI takes a deep breath and pulls his handkerchief from his
pocket
and start wiping the sweat from his face.

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BANTI(CONTD)

(sigh of relief)
Man, I'm sure glad he's hungry.

CUT TO

EXT. IMPORTS FOR YOU-RASHEED'S SHOP MUSIC-HIP-HOP

RASHEED comes from his office. He is surprise to see his old friend,
LUDY
MENDE. Its been several years, in CHIEF MANDE'S VILLAGE,
KONO.
They hug each other. RASHEED is in his late thirties. He's been in the
African
business for many years.

RASHEED

Ludy Mende! What's up, my brother?

LUDY

I'm making it, Bro. What about yourself?

RASHEED

It's working a little bit---could be better, but
that's life and you know how African goods
are, sometimes up and sometimes down unless
you got that shiny stuff, diamonds or gold.

LUDY changes the conversation for a minute.

LUDY

Been a long time---Freetown, right?

RASHEED

(laughs)

Right! Sierra Leone. Good people, Bro and hot foo-foo.

BANTI and LUDY laugh. They reflect on times in KONO VILLAGE.

RASHEED(CONT'D)

When the last time you've been back, man?

LUDY

As a matter of fact, just got back a few days ago. I finally hooked up my import business. I'm passing

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LUDY(CONT'D)

through. I got a spot down at the jazz festival. Heard a man could clean up.

RASHEED

That's great! What you got? I need some nice pieces. Something I can sell for a fortune.

LUDY

Sure, Bro. On them ivory pieces, they are rare, can't leave out of Africa with ivory anymore, but I do have some pieces in my stock before everything on ivory hit the fan, I can hook you up. By the way, our- old friend, the Chief sends you his regards.

RASHEED

Thanks, man. I like him. Good African brother. Very wise old man, Is he still telling his story about the time he lived in America

CUT TO

RASHEED get quiet as a LITTLE OLD JEWISH MAN comes in the store.

ANTIMA raises her head from the magazine.

RASHEED

Hold up! This might be my lucky day.. He's loaded, little tight, but---Excuse me Bro.

LITTLE OLD JEWISH man walks straight to the Fulani ivory carving.

RASHEED

eases over to give MR. ROSENSTOCK. He is a regular customer and he loves African merchandise.

RASHEED(CONTD)

How you doing today, Mr. Rosenstock?

ANTIMA closes her eyes and hopes that some money will be made today.

MR. ROSENSTOCK

Fine, *fine*---I mean, no I am not fine! Very difficult for me to make up my mind.

LUDY is walking around looking at some of RASHEED'S merchandise.

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RASHEED

Take your time, Mr. Rosenstock, take your time. My father always told me to never get in the way of a man's concentration.

MR. ROSENSTOCK rubs his beard as he softly touches the ivory carving with the

ut-most care. He takes an artistic view. He rubs his beard.

MR. ROSENSTOCK

Marvelous piece of work ! Just absolutely magnificent! Come on, tell me how much again?

RASHEED rubs his hands together. ANTIMA closes her eyes.

RASHEED

Ten thousand dollars, Mr. Rosenstock---and tax included for you.

Everybody is waiting for MR. ROSENSTOCK to make a decision.

MR. ROSENSTOCK
(nervously excited)
Okay! Okay! Wrap it up! Hurry!

ANTIMA wants to scream.... LUDY crosses his finger at ANTIMA and jesters it is the African ju-ju as he kisses his the leather pouch.

RASHEED
Uh---What?! Uh--cash or charge?!

MR. ROSENSTOCK pulls his handkerchief out and wipes his forehead.

MR. ROSENSTOCK
Cash! Of course. Don't want my wife to know, you understand---and hurry up before I change my mind.

CUT TO

As ANTIIMA picks up the FULAM woman ivory piece and begins to wrap it, LUDY remembers HYWA, his FULA girlfriend. She is the daughter of CHIEF MANDE. He remembers the loniless and tears in her eyes. As

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ANTIMA wraps the FLJLANI ivory carving, LUDY remembers her love.

LUDY'S FLASHBACK

FADE TO

MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

CUT TO

EXT. KONO-VILLAGE-MID-MORNTG

LUDY and HYWA are walking along the sands of the ocean near the village. The sound of the splashing waves are coming to shore. Seagulls are making their bird sounds as Fishermen cast nets to the sea.

HYWA

I been knowing you for long time
now, Ludy. I get serious about you..

LUDY holds her in his arms as they stops and look at each other.

LUDY

Is that good or bad, beautiful
Fulani woman of Kono?

HYWA pulls away from LUDY and starts walking up the beach. She is
sad
because LUDY is leaving again. She turns around with teary eyes.

HYWA

Maybe bad. You go like always. Take my heart
with you every time. Too much sadness for me.

LUDY catches up with her, touch her on the shoulder. HYWA turns as he
takes
her in his arms.

LUDY

But I always come back to you, Hywa.

HYWA

(turns away)

Wait too much all the time, Ludy. Before long, be old woman with
no children.

This no good for African woman, especially Fulani.

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CUT TO

A large wave comes to shore as Hywa walks near the ocean. The sound of
African
drums are playing. Children are running along the beach collecting sand
crabs as
LUDY and HYWA stands face to face,

FADE TO

MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

CUT TO

INT. IMPORTS FOR YOU

ANTIMA finishes wrapping the ivory carving as she packs it in the large bag gently as LUDY AND RASHEED looks at the piece for the last time.

FADE TO

EXT. VAN

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

BANTI is leaning out the passenger side of the van talking to a young BLACK woman with a nice body and fancy hairstyle. Her name is SHEILA. Music is still jamming.

BANTI

You from Texas? All right, sis!
Got some time, Sheila?

CUT TO

EXT. IMPORT FOR YOU

MR. ROSENSTOCK is leaving the store and he is holding the Fulani woman carving close to his chest like someone is going to take it

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CUT TO

INT. IMPORTS FOR YOU

RASHEED is counting the money.

RASHEED

We can talk some serious business now, IBro.

RASHEED gives all the money to ANTIMA. ANTIMA grabs the money quickly

and count her portion out.

RASHEED

Here, take what I owe you, okay, Antima?

FADE TO

EXT. -OUTSIDE IMPORTS FOR YOU

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

RASHEED and LUDY walks outside, but BANTI is gone. The POLICE CAR is gone too. LUDY is furious.

LUDY

Where in the hell is Banti?!

RASHEED

Listen.. Your partner ain't carrying no dope or nothing on him, huh?

LUDY is angry as he paces up and down the curb.

LUDY

Just a little jamba.

RASHEED

(shakes his head)
Cause I saw a cop pull up behind your van earlier. Maybe we should call the police station, Bro.

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LUDY

(paces in anger)
Dam!

FADE TO

EXT. VAN-SPEEDING TOWARD CURB AT IMPORTS FOR YOU

MUSIC-HP-HOP-PLAYING LOUD

CUT TO

BANTI and SHEILA pulls up to the curb. LUDY waits to open the passenger door where SHEILA is sitting. BANTI is eating a fish sandwich. The van stops and LUDY opens the door boldly as RASHEED stands with his hands in his pockets eyeing SHEILA as if she is the villain.

LUDY

(furious)

Banti! Where in the hell have you been?
And who is this?

RASHEED

(interrupts as he eyes Sheila)

You shouldn't be riding around here with all these goods, Bro. You got to be careful, even in Hollywood, believe me.

RASHEED gives BANTI some serious advice. SHEILA frowns.

RASHEED(CONT'D)

Banti. Like I said, you got to be careful. Some folks see your plates, man, and you become bait.

LUDY opens side door to van. He checks everything to make sure his jewelry and other things that could be put in the pockets is safe.

SHEILA

(steps out the van)

Excuse me! That was directed right to me. I'm outta here. I feel like I'm being watched

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SHEILA(CONT'D)

by the FBI. Dam! Nice meeting you, Banti. I'll see you at the jazz festival.

BANTI

(shakes his head)

Yeah, sure, baby. Sony. See you there.

SHEILA shuts the door of the van, pulls her dress in place and walks smoothly away, never looking back.

LUDY
(covering goods back up)
Banti.. ..I'll talk to you later about this.
You know what we have at stake here.

BANTI
I'm telling you, Bro, Sheila is cool. I got a good taste for women. You don't have to be so up-tight. I got our back, okay?

FADE TO

MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

CUT TO

INT. KONO VILLAGE-MORNING-CHIEF MANDE HOUSE(HUT)

A young FULANI man is giving Chief MANDE a dowry for Hywa. His name is FALALA. The Chief looks at the money and smiles. CHIEF MANDE and FALALA are sitting down facing each other.

CHIEF MANDE
(holding money in his hands)
10,000 Leones, twenty cows and a bushel of kola nuts you give to me for Hywa.

FALALA
(serious look in his eyes)
Fulani tradition way, Chief Mande. I be good to Hywa and we have many sons to carry on your chieftain in Kono.

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CHIEF MANDE can feel that FALALA is a worthy person for his daughter.
But refine to get in the way of LIIJDY and HYWA.

CHIEF MANDE

I see. Falala, you are a worthy person, but
do you not know Hywa is in love with Ludy.

FALALA

(defends himself)

Ludy, good American man, Chief... Me Fulani, she
Fulani. Ludy go away too much. I'm betty for her---
make her fine husband, speaks same language....
And I work hard for money to make her happy.

CHIEF MANDE gives money and agreement papers for kola nuts and
cows
back to FALALA.

CHIEF MANDE

I have to discuss this matter with Hywa, Falala.
Tradition is changing now. She has to make up
her own mind.

FADE TO

MUSIC-JAZZ-FOREVER ALWAYS-FELDER

CUT TO

INT. IMPORTS FOR YOU-RASHEED'S OFFICE- NOMOLI SOAP
STONE
CARVING ON DESK.

LUDY, BANTI AND RASHEED takes a seat near the desk. LUDY
observes the
soap stone carving. MANDE'S place.

RASHEED

(observes the interest in the carving)

Nice piece, huh? The Nomoli was found many years
ago right in the heart of the diamond minds. Chief
Mande said it had something to do with the soul.
Did he ever tell you that?

LUDY

Yeh, I'm hip---Just another one of the Chiefs stories and tradition. He told me so many stories, I don't know what to believe.

RASHEED

(serious)

Now what kind of business that is so important than the goods in your van. This better be good, Ludy.

BANTI

Oh, yeah! Its all good, Bro. We wouldn't lie to you.

BANTI puts the magazine he is reading back on the desk. He starts to unbutton his shirt. LUDY begins to explain to RASHEED. ANTIMA hears the conversation that's going on in the office. The walls are very thin. She grabs a pen and paper from her side pocket.

CUT TO

ANTIMA moves closer to the end of the counter to listen closely to LUDY and RASHEED conversation.

LUDY

(explains)

Do you remember the diamond story Mustafa told us?

RASHEED laughs as he hangs up his jacket.

RASHEED

About a man who stole diamonds by swallowing them and expelling them through his ass? Mustafa could lie his ass off, man. You believe that stuff,man? Them Africans have so many stories, they will take your head for a swim, Bro.

BANTI is still in the process of pulling off his shirt.

LUDY FLASHBACK

FADE TO

MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

CUT TO

INT. KONO VILLAGE-CHEF MANDE HOUSE(HUT)-HYWA IS ROLLING FOO-FOO

LUDY is back in KONO VILLAGE. LUDY and CHEF MANDE are sitting, waiting as Hywa rolls the diamonds in th foo-foo gently. She looks at Ludy with tears in her eyes.

HYWA

Trust us, Ludy Mende.. .Palrn oil and foo-foo will help your belly. Diamonds will float like boat.

HYWA rolls foo-foo in palm oil and hold one by one up to Ludy's mouth. LUDY hesitates each time. For the fear keeps him tense as he swallows the foo-foo with diamonds. He kind of gags a little, but HYWA coaches him on with her gentle touch.

FADE TO

MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

INT. IMPORTS FOR YOU-RASHEED'S OFFICE

CUT TO

BANTI and RASHEED just sit in silence for a moment, unbelievable. They have to catch their breath.

BANTI

(still stun)
You know what? You are crazy!
Man, that was gross. You could be dead.

RASHEED

Not that I believe any of this shit, man. You and the Chief both are out of your heads. Y'all need help real bad---Show me what you got I know somebody can help you. If they

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RASHEED(CONT'D)

are the real deal, this person and his partner are experts and they got eyes like a hawk.

BANTI takes off the belt and starts pouring the ten tiny diamonds on the desk.

They are so bright and shinny that RASHEED turns away.

RASHEED(CONTD)

Dam! I almost need my sunglasses on to look at these rocks. Seems like the more sun they get, the glow increases... I'm gonna close the blinds.

RASHEED walks over to the window and closes the blinds

BANTI

What you think? I Are we millionaires?

RASHEED pulls out his cell phone. He dials a number.

RASHEED

My opinion I think ya'll done hit pay-dirt, Bro---of course with my cut.

CUT TO

INT. STORE- IMPORTS FOR YOU-ANTIMA EAVES- DROPPING ON CONVERSATION

ANTIMA have her ears pin to the wall. It seems as if she is going to do something stupid for the sake of money, but she knows there has to be a plan.

SHEILA is a friend of hers but nobody knows. This is where plan A starts for ANTIMA.

CUT TO

INT. RASHEED'S OFFICE

RASHEED is finish talking with PONY, the contact for the diamonds.
LUDY
and BANTI is suspicious about the name, PONY

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RASHEED
(puts cell phone away)
Pony is on his way. He's cool.
He knows the ropes.

LUDY
A brother name, Pony?

RASHEED knows that LIJDY and BANTI are from Texas and
relationship
between Blacks and Whites are far-fetch.

RASHEED
Nope! White boy.. .Why?

LUDY doesn't trust to do business with PONY.

LUDY
Maybe it's not a good idea to bring
him in on this.

RASHEED
Don't worry.. Pony is cool. Him and his partner
are about the only hip folks I can trust, you know
what I'm saying?.. Trust me, Bro. He's okay.

CUT TO

INT.-OUTSIDE OF RASHEED'S OFFICE

ANTIMA continues to listen, a draft partially opens the office door.
LUDY, BANTI and RASHEED are still observing the shinning diamonds.
The sound of the front door opening causes her to retreat from the door.
She quickly walks up to the front of the store and grabs some papers.

INT. FRONT DOOR-IMPORTS FOR YOU

CUT TO

PONY walks in the door. A young white male in his early thirties approaches ANTIMA as she is sitting at the counter pretending she is going through some paper work. He wears his hair in a pony tail. PONY is smooth and calm looking. He looks like a legit American business man, casual dress- ware becomes him.

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PONY

Antima. How you been doing, baby?

PONY kisses ANTIMA on the cheek. She kind of blushes a little. She is a little sweet on PONY.

ANT IMA

Good to see you, Pony. I'm fine. No complaints today--now tomorrow, who knows.

PONY

I hear you. Take care.

PONY needs no invitation to walk back to RASHEED'S office. PONY and his partner, E-LIS are like family.

ANTIMA

Yeah---See you later, Pony

CUT TO

INT. -RASHEED'S OFFICE

PONY walks in the office. PONY ,BANTI and LUDY acknowledge each other by nodding their heads BANTI and LUDY are still skeptical. RASHEED introduces them.

RASHEED

Pony... This is Banti, Ludy..~ Thanks for coming.

PONY spots the diamonds on the desk. He takes out his magnifying glass from his pant's pocket and takes a good look at the diamonds under the lights. He shades his eyes from the glow by putting sun glasses on.

BANTI

Come on, man! How much are they worth?

CUT TO

ANTIMA is still eavesdropping as she stands quietly behind the door.

LUDY

Are they legit?

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PONY

Never seen these kind before.... But they are legit....

BANTI

You mean, you can't give us a figure, man

RASHEED

Well, at least we know they are real stones, Bro

PONY

Listen, My partner is in Monterey. She is the expert on rare diamonds like this and she won't be back in town until two weeks, man. Now, right off the bat, you have something here thats probably worth a lot of money---I can't tell you how much and like I said, she is in Monterey.

RASHEED

That's Perfect! They are headed for Monterey too. Maybe they can hook up with your partner.

PONY

Good...Where will you be staying?

ANTJMA is still eavesdropping from the next room. LUDY and BANTI still don't trust PONY enough to tell him what hotel they will be staying at in Monterey. They hesitate to tell PONY.

RASHEED

(nods)

It's okay, Ludy.

BANTI

Can you and your partner be trusted?

Pony slowly puts the diamonds on the desk and look up at RASHEED as if to say,

"I'm wasting my time here."

RASHEED

Pony, look, forget the brother ever asked that, okay?!

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LUDY

Just watching our backs, man....

BANTI

This is America, man---nothing personal.
We shoot straight from the hip, Bro

PONY

Sure, man... white boy gonna burn you every time Right? I'm wasting my time here.

PONY turns to exit the room. But RASHEED stops him.

RASHEED

Hold up Pony Just a misunderstanding up in here... .Hey, brothers, listen, this is California! When it comes down to business, we got to have trust, brothers. Now ya'll just chill out if you wanna move these rocks, okay?

LUDY

Like Banti said, nothing personal

PONY

Listen... .Do you wanna move the diamonds?

RASHEED

Everything cool, Pony. Right, brothers?

LUDY nods his head toward BANTI, meaning, its all right to let PONY know the name of the hotel in Monterey. RASHEED is eager to continue. He clasps his hands together.

RASHEED(CONT'D)

Okay! Now that's better... This is all about business, Bro---nothing else.

LUDY

Holiday Inn By The Beach, under Ludy Mende.

PONY

My partner will contact you tomorrow and tell you where to

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PONY(CONT'D)

meet her. She moves around a lot, so it is very difficult to contact her. Good luck.

ANTIMA is still eavesdropping at the office door. She knows everything about the diamonds and the contact in Monterey. PONY opens the door to the office and ANTIMA quickly moves to the counter where she acts as if she is reading a magazine.

CUT TO

FADE TO

MUSIC-JAZZ-FOREVER ALWAYS-FELDER

EXT. VAN-DRIVING ALONG HIGHWAY 1-COSTAL ROUTE-OCEAN-SUNSET

CUT TO

INT. -VAN

BANTI and LUDY are driving along Highway 1 to Monterey. The sun is just beginning to set. LUDY is driving while BANTI counts the money from the merchandise they sold to RASHEED.

BANTI

Not too bad. Nice little pit stop to break the ice. Five thous here, man.

LUDY looks out at the ocean, takes a deep breath and smiles.

LUDY

The goodies are just beginning to taste sweet, Bro.

BANTI

(counting the money)

I still say, we shouldna told anyone where we gonna be staying and especially that white boy. I could see something in his eyes, man...,

66

LUDY

If Rasheed say he's cool, he's cool, man.. .
Chill! Let's not get paranoid. Might just miss something... .Anyway, I saw something in Sheila's eyes too.

BANTI and LUDY looks at each other----and then laughs.

CUT TO

EXT-SUN SETTING IN THE OCEAN

MUSIC-JAZZ-FOREVER ALWAYS-FELDER

FADE TO

EXT. -HOLIDAY INN BY THE OCEAN-MONTEREY, CA -MGHT

MUSIC-JAZZ-CONTEMPORARY

CUT TO

INT. HOLIDAY INN-MONTEREY

The CLERK checks verification and gives the credit card back to LUDY. Meanwhile BANTI is enjoying the view and pretty women sitting in the lobby of the hotel. The CLERK hands the key cards to LUDY.

CLERK(CONT'D)

Here you are Mr. Mende... Room 120 is right down the hallway on your left hand side---enjoy your stay at Holiday Inn By The Beach.

CUT TO

INT.-HOLIDAY INN-RM.120-PATIO

MUSIC-JAZZ-CONTEMPORARY

BANTI is sitting outside on the patio. He looks at the ocean as night time falls on the waves coming to shore. BANTI feels the cold Monterey breeze

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as he puts on his jacket. The lights of the hotel reflect off a wave coming to shore.

LUDY comes out to join BANTI. He pulls up a chair and sits down to enjoy the time.

BANTI

Man! This is nice!

LUDY looks out toward the ocean. LUDY is teaching BANTI.

LUDY

You see, Banti, the world is as big as that ocean. We have to get rid of the hangups and enjoy, Bro, because we only here for a short nap, man. At the twinkling of an eye, we could be gone .And this is

pretty good for two bro-man from the communities
to enjoy. Drawing The Line. That's it!

LUDY and BANTI slap each others hand.

BANTI

I can feel you, Bro! This is like heaven, man.

The sounds of the waves are splashing against the large rocks.

LUDY

And this place is floating on money, Bro---And
tomorrow, this African American Trader gonna
sell his ass off You know what I'm saying? And
pray we both be millionaires before its over.

The phone rings.

FADE TO

MUSIC-JAZZ-CONTEMPORARY

The sounds and view of the ocean is seen. BANTL just sits there on the
patio watching. LUDY can be seen talking on the phone from the patio.
LUDY hangs up the phone with a surprise look on his face. He walks back
out on the patio.

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LUDY(CONT'D)

(sits down silently, thinking to himself)
Well, I be! Everything goes around
comes back around. This is a small world
E-LIS BATAGHANI--I will see you tomorrow.

BANTI

Did you say something, Bro?

LUDY

Just thinking out loud.

EXT. OCEAN

MUSIC-JAZZ

The sound of the ocean and music blends into the night as morning rises.

FADE TO

EXT. MONTEREY JAZZ FESTIVAL-MID-DAY-COOL

OUTSIDE ON THE MONTEREY FAIRGROUNDS

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

The sound, of jazz is sounding everywhere as people gather around the vendors and merchant's booth on Monterey's fairgrounds. Folks are carrying their blankets, wearing casual attire with drinks in their hands.. BANTI and LUDY'S booth have crowds of people. BANTI looks around and there is SHEILA smiling at him as he moves toward her. He gives her a big hug. LUDY is doing business on the other side of the booth. A little old CARMELISH LADY is in the crowd around the booth looking at the kente cloth. She tries to get LUDY'S attention.

LITTLE OLD CARMELISH WHITE
LADY

(holding cloth)

Excuse me... How much?

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OLD LADY gets LUDY'S attention. She's wearing cat-like sunglasses.

LUDY

Two hundred and fifty. Beautiful, isn't it?
Made in Ghani. Ashanti country. Sometimes
they wear it like this....

LUDY demonstrates as E-LIS walks up to look at some trade beads.
LUDY

and E-LIS eyes meet each others. They greet each other with a nod at a distant
while LUDY is selling..

OLD LADY

I'll take it! Wrap it up. Going to make a
gorgeous wall hanging, don't you think?

OLD LADY holds the money for Ludy to take. But he eyes E-LIS.

OLD LADY(CONTD)

Young man, I said I'll take it!

LUDY

(hurrys to put in bag and gives it to her)
Uh, oh! Thank you Ma-dam'

CUT TO

E-LIS takes interest in the trade beads. LUDY walks over to the beads.

E-LIS

(extends a hand shake to Ludy)
My pleasure again, Mr. Mende.

LUDY

Listen. Uh, what can I say but, everything goes
around comes back around--and here you are my
contact to make me a millionaire, interesting.

E-LI S

(smiles gently as she picks up another strand)
We just never know, do we Mr. Mende.
Life is just full of surprises.

70

LUDY

Yeah, well, I have to agree, Mrs. Bataghani

E-LIS

Good... .And the name is Ms. Bataghani

LUDY

(smiles)

Well, I didn't know, sorry.

E-LIS

Mr. Mende, I'm interest in all your trade beads. Give me a price.

LUDY takes out his calulator and starts to figure the cost.

LUDY

Uh, lets see---six thousand big ones.

E-LIS reaches into her purse and pulls out an address for LUDY.

E-LIS

Listen, uh, bring the trade beads and the diamonds around ten in the morning. Is this agreeable?

E-LIS hands LUDY the card with her address. LUDY takes a look at the card.

LUDY

Oh, sure... .No problem....

E-LIS

Just exit off Highway 1 on Ocean Ave, okay?

E-LIS looks at her watch. She gathers her brochures and things.

E-LIS(CONT'D)

Oh, I gotta run!---and good luck!

70

LUDY

(looks at card)
See you in the morning....

CUT TO

EXT. ENTRANCE TO JAZZ FESTIVAL-FAIRGROUNDS-DAY

MUSIC-JAZZ

E--LIS walks toward entrance of the fairgrounds where the jazz musicians are performing. The sound of the trumpet echoes throughout Monterey.

FADE TO

EXT. VAN-LUDY DRIVING ALONG OCEAN AVE-CARMEL MORNING

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

LUDY is riding in CARMEL, down OCEAN AVE. He is observing all the unique shops along the way. Tourists are window shopping early.

FADE TO

EXT. -SMALL VILLA HOUSE NEAR THE OCEAN-MORNING-LUDY
STANDING AT FRONT DOOR RINGING DOORBELL.

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

LUDY is at E-LLS'S beach house. He is ringing the doorbell. E-LIS opens the door with a towel around her neck. The sound of seagulls echoes from the ocean.
She is surprised to see LUDY so early.

E-LIS

(surprise)

Oh, Mr. Mende~ I didn't expect you so early.

71

LUDY

(apologizing)

Uh, did I awake you or something? I didn't mean to----Well I didn't know the area, so I left a little early. I can come--

E-LIS stands there with the door open, dripping wet from jogging.

E-LIS

Oh, no! Please come in... You have to excuse me. I just finished jogging.

CUT TO

INT.-E-LIS'S HOUSE

MUSIC-JAZZ

LUDY is looking around at all the beautiful ethnic things E-LIS have from Africa. Plenty of things from SENEGAL, GHANA and MOROCCO. E-LIS goes to the kitchen and opens the refrigerator.

E-LIS

Would you like something to drink? Orange juice, soda or water.

LUDY

(sits down on the sofa as he continues to observe)
Sure. Orange juice will be fine.... So, you like to jog.

E-LIS pours the juice in a glass and walks toward LUDY in the living room. She gives the glass of juice to LUDY as he gets up manfully to receive the juice.

LUDY(CONTD)

(taking the juice)
Thank you

E-LIS

(sits down in chair across from sofa)
About twice a week---It really relaxes my nerves, you know. What about you? Traders are always on the move too. Ya'll need some kind of relaxation.

72

LUDY

Sometimes I run when I'm really stressed out. I run all the time when I go to Africa because after I get through bargaining, I need an outlet,

so I run the beaches---and they are beautiful.

E-LIS unties her jogging shoes and wipes her face with a towel from the chair.

LUDY sees a Black woman's picture on a lamp table, not AFRICAN, but American. He glances at the picture.

E-LIS

That's great!

LUDY

How long have you've known Rasheed?

E-LIS

I met him through Pony. I say about four years ago. Ever since then, if anybody comes to town with precious gems or stones, I'm his contact. And he is a friend---Why do you ask?

LUDY

(complements)
Just curious. Cozy place you have here.

E-LIS

Thanks. My husband and I bought this place for a total getta -way from business.

LUDY kind of caught by surprise.

LUDY

Your husband? I thought--E-LIS kind of pauses for a second.

E-LIS

Yes, he was killed in Africa a few years ago in a car accident... .Would you like some more juice?

LUDY gestures with his hands that he is fine.

LUDY

No, this is fine----sorry about your husband.

E-LIS eludes the subject.

E-LIS

Yeah---Uh, listen, are you in a hurry? Before I look at those diamonds, I want to be fresh and clean to do justice for you. I'm gonna run up-stairs and take a quick shower if you don't mind.

LUDY

Sure. You got enough in your house to keep me company.

E-LIS

Thank you Make yourself at home, okay? And if you want any more juice, please, don't be bashful.... And there is some Senegalese and Fulani sounds up on the shelves....

E-LIS rushes upstairs to shower. LUDY goes over to the stereo and flips in an African tune. He walks toward the patio door and watches a large wave coming to show. LIJYDY stares out to the ocean.

LUDY FLASHBACK

FADE TO

EXT. KONO VILLAGE-OCEAN SIDE-DAY

MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

The sound of the drums in Kono. LUDY and HYWA are walking along the coast. Fishermen are pulling in their boats from a days work at sea. They are singing as the waves come into shore. HYWA head is down as tears flow from her eyes.

HYWA

I don't understand, Ludy. I thought you love me....

They sit for a moment on a bench under a palm tree off the beach.

LUDY

I do, Hywa. But loving you here and loving you in America will be different. You will change, Hywa and I love you the way you are right now, try to understand. ...I don't want to be the one to take you though that kind of change. You have a beautiful and strong culture---You have a beautiful smile and such a free spirit, you know. In America, you will lose all of that, Hywa----maybe you will be better off marrying Falala, at least there will be understanding. I never had what you have---a strong and pure culture, you know....

HYWA

(tears in her eyes, she speaks softly)
But I don't love Falala, Ludy!

FADE TO

INT. E-LIS BEACH HOUSE-PATIO DOOR-CARMEL-MORIJING

MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

CUT TO

A large wave comes to shore as LUDY stands at the PATIO DOOR staring at the OCEAN. E-LIS walks in the room. LUDY is still thinking about HYWA. He loves her and wonders if she is all right The African music continues to play. LUDY is like in a daydream.

E-LIS

Mr. Mende. Mr. Mende. ...Hope you didn't mind.

LUDY

No problem. Just had a few moments to think back on Africa.

E-LIS

(sits down on couch)

Africa does have a sort of charisma about it.
I got mated there and sometimes I really miss
it, you know---so I know what you mean....

LUDY

(surprised)

You got married in Africa?!

CUT TO

E-LIS goes into her kitchen drawer to get a gem book. She puts it on the
kitchen
table and opens the refrigerator to get a glass of juice. LUDY walks from
the
PATIO and sits down on the couch.

E-LIS

(pouring juice in glass)

Traditional Moroccan wedding and all---My
husband was Morrocan and his business was
in Senegal You sure you don't anymore juice.

LUDY

I'm fine.... Thanks. I knew it was something
different about you....

E-LIS

(smiles as she put the juice in the fridge)
Oh, really?!

E-LIS picks up the precious gem book and walks over to the couch. She
sits on
the couch besides LUDY. Not close but at a distant. She places the juice
and gem
book down on the large coffee table in front of the couch.

LUDY

You know, very hip, international flavor---the for
real type that doesn't make one feel like a stranger.
That's Africa all the way.

E-LIS

Oh, I see. Let's just say, I've grown up through the years----now the diamonds....

76

LUDY begins to unbutton his shirt to take off the kente cloth.

E-LIS(CONTD)

Mr. Mende Excuse me

LUDY

(continues to unbutton)

You wanna see the diamonds, right?

E-LIS

(sees the band)

Yes, but---how clever!

LUDY tries to untie the kente cloth band from around his chest. He is having difficulty.

LUDY

(trying hard to untie the cloth)

This was really made for Banti....

E-LIS moves closer to LUDY to assist him in removing the kente cloth band from around his chest.

E-LIS

(unties the band)

Uh, uh, I see... .Let me help... .there you go.

LUDY takes the diamonds from the kente cloth band and puts them on the coffee table. The room lights up like the sunshine. E-LIS kind of shades her eyes from the glare. She pretends.

E-LIS(CONT'D)

Wow! These are very rare. Look at the sparkles.

As a gem collector, I've never seen any stone with

a glare like this. You got yourself something special.

E-LIS picks up her magnifying glass and begins to examine them. The glare of the diamond is stable now. E-LIS opens the large precious gem book on the table. She runs through the pages quickly looking for some information on KONO VILLAGE DIAMONDS.

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E-LIS(CONT'D)

(looks up from the book)

Amazing How did you get these out of KONO?

These diamonds are not allowed to leave the village.

They don't say why, here I would say roughly, according to who is interested, the value is worth around two million or more--

LUDY

(excited)

Two million! Yes!

E-LIS is still looking at the diamonds as she pretends not to know anything.

E-LIS

By the way, how did you get these stones from KONO. Not that it matters to me.

I'm just curious. Many have tried, never succeeded.

LUDY keeps his promise to CHEF MANDE. To LUDY ,E-LIS is a stranger, not like RASHEED and BANTI.

LUDY

I can't reveal that secret.

E-LIS kind of look up from the magnifying glass to glance at Ludy.

E-LIS

That's fine by me Listen Uh---- You got some time? I think I have a buyer for you and she's a very rich lady.

LUDY

Sure. What kind of time are we talking about?

E-LIS

Listen, my client lives one hundred miles in the mountains and it will take three day for her to examine the diamonds. She always examine stones like diamonds very carefully. But she spends now if that is too---

78

LUDY gets in that feeling of “don’t trust anyone,” but he can’t pass this opportunity up. He is a little reluctant right now to say, “yes” too quickly. His mind is really on the two million and one million goes to him and the other to the CHIEF

LUDY

You kidding me. Three days?

E-LIS closes the gem book, take off her reading glasses and sit back.

E-LIS

We could go there tomorrow morning----

E-LIS(CONT’D)

The two-million is a done deal.
These are the real thing, Mr. Mende..

LUDY

And your fee, Ms. Bataghani ?

E-LIS

(smiles)
Let’s just say, a mild twenty percent.

LUDY

(not sure)
Huh, huh.

E-LIS

Are we on or what?!

LUDY

Okay, we on Tomorrow morning, 8a.m.

E-LIS

Good. No problem. We on.

FADE TO

INT. MOTHER GEM'S MANSION -MOUNTAINS-BIG SUR-NIGHT

79

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

The PHONE IS RINGiNG in the MANSION. An old woman sits by her desk.

Precious stones and crystals surrounds her. An AFRICAN ARMLET hangs from

her neck She is in her early eighties, only her old hands can be seen. Her name is

MOTHER GEM. Her real name is PEGGY LEE WIGGINS. The young school

teacher who struck it rich from oil on her land in East Texas. OIL and TIMBER is

her bank and as of today, she still collects millions from the land. The same woman

who traveled to KONO VILLAGE to many CHIEF MANDE. Now she is just an

old rich woman who lives with her crystals and precious stone. She has one heir to

her estate, E-LIS.

CUT TO

INT. DESK-PHONE RINGING AGAIN AND AGAIN

MOTHER GEM picks up the phone as she coughs a little before answering. The

armlet can be seen closely around her neck.

MOTHER GEM

(picks up the phone)

He's here! Good Is he suspicious of anything?

No, keep him that way.. Everything must be kept a secret just bring him and the diamonds.

You've done well my child And please, my
child, hurry, love you

FADE TO

INT. E-LIS HOUSE-CARMEL-NIGHT

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

E-LIS is hanging the phone up as she sits out on her PATIO, tears flowing down her cheeks as she stares into the ocean. MOTHER GEM adopted E-LIS after her parents were kill in a mud slide when she was only twelve. Now she is about to lose the only real person in her life, MOTHER GEM.

80

FADE TO

INT. LOS ANGELES-IMPORTS FOR YOU-NOON

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

ANTJMA and TWO OTHER YOUNG MEN, WHITE AND BLACK are planning to steal the diamonds from BANTI'S chest, ANTIMA knows everything and she is out to get those diamonds. She tells them she doesn't want no killing, just get the diamonds. She is giving them the address of HOLIDAY INN BY THE BEACH.

ANTIMA

(hands the two men an address)

Listen. Don't worry If ya'll pull this off--
Its money in the bank--my buyer is waiting,
okay? Just get the diamonds. No killing.

FADE TO

INT.-MONTEREY-HOLIDAY INN BY THE BEACH-ROOM 120

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

LUDY and BANTI are discussing LUDY'S trip to the mountains. BANTI doesn't like the idea of LUDY going in the mountains with a stranger.

LUDY

is packing his things for the next morning in his duffer bag while he listens to

BANTI.

BANTI

(reluctant to trip in mountains)

Going where? You crazy, man]

LUDY

Hey, Bro, chill! This is business. We talking about maybe some big bucks here, Banti.

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BANTI

(start pacing the floor)

Its some strange shit going down behind them diamonds, man----Three days in the mountain with some white girl you know nothing about?

LUDY

Banti, hey Bro, I'm learning to listen to my heart, man.

BANTI

(pacing)

Well, did your heart tell you this is America, not Africa. You just might not come back.

LUDY

What you talking about, Banti?

BANTL

It could be a set up man! Anything could happen in them mountains, Ludy....

LUDY

Uh, uh, bro---I didn't digest them diamonds for my health, Kaffa man, Kaffal--And for two million, I'll take my chances in the mountains, okay?

BANTI

Okay! Okay! Sometimes you just like to walk on fire.

LUDY

(gives him cash in an envelope)
Just chill. Add this to the forty thous.
We are on a roll, Bro. . Cheer up!

BANTI

(takes the cash)
Just don't sell your life, Ludy....

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CUT TO

INT. HOLIDAY INN-ROOM 120-NEXT MORNING

BANTI is back at the hotel, Holiday Inn. He is putting the money away in the closet.

There is a knock on the door.

BANTI

(closes the closet door)
Yeh, just a minute!..

BANTI opens the door and SHEILA is standing there leaning against the wall. She waves a bag of cocaine in the air.

SHEILA

I'm b-a-c-k. And look what I found.

FADE TO

INT. EXPLORER-CLIMBING MOUNTAINS- MID MORNING

MUSIC-JAZZ

LUDY is driving the EXPLORER. The ocean looks like a small lake beneath the mountains. E-LIS and LUDY are headed for BIG SUR where MOTHER GEM owns a restaurant and a store beneath. E-LIS looks over at LUDY to make sure he is all right. He is coming into a steep curve.

E-LIS
Are you all right?

LUDY
I'm fine---Nice vehicle

E-LIS
Yeah, thanks---good for the mountains...
I thought you would have fun driving it...

LUDY
What about your parents? Are they native Californians too?

83

E-LLS
(stares out the window, reluctant to answer)
Past tense.... They were until...

LUDY
(serious)
Until what?--

E-LIS
(looks out toward the mountains)
Until one stormy and rainy night, they were coming from a gem show and a mud slide kill them. I was twelve years old, right after my first African visit I thought I would get over them gone, but it never goes away....

LUDY
(serious)
It never will. My grandmother raised me---

LUDY is driving toward a sharp curve in the highway. E-LIS warns him.

E-LIS
(drys her eyes)
Look, be very careful along here----Watch out!

CUT TO

EXT. WHITE UTILITY VAN-COMING AROUND CURVE

A WHITE UTILITY VAN is coming around the curve and almost hit the EXPLORER. LUDY turns sharply, almost going off the mountain.

E-LIS
Dam idiot!

LUDY
(smart comment)
Now you know how I felt.

84

CUT TO

INT. RED EXPLORER- BRACELET ON E-LIS RIGHT WRIST

LUDY observes E-LIS brown leather bracelet. He is curious because it symbolizes friendship and the bracelet is only made in KONO. It is not a commercial product from the village.

LUDY
(curious about the bracelet)
Where did you get that bracelet from?

E-LIS
A friend gave it to me long time ago.
I was only fourteen years old.

E-LIS REMEMBERS WHEN CHIEF MANDE PLACE THE BRACELET ON HER WRIST. E-LIS REFLECTS BACK.

E-LIS'S FLASHBACK

FADE TO

INT. KONO VILLAGE-CHEF MANDE HOUSE(HUT)-NOON

AFRICAN BEAT

CHIEF MANDE puts the leather bracelet on E-LIS'S WRIST. She is FOURTEEN years old. She returns back to KONO V]LLAGE after her parent's death.

CHIEF MANDE

(putting bracelet on her)

We friends now little E-lis. You welcome in my village any time. And may your mama and papa's soul rest in peace. Tell Peggy hello

CUT TO

EXT. GRAVE YARD-LOS ANGELES-AFTERNOON

E-LIS is standing crying at her parent's gravesite. She is only twelve. A BLACK WOMAN is holding her hand. The WOMAN kneels down. THE

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WOMAN IS MOTHER GEM.

MOTHER GEM

(hold both of E-lis's hands)

I promised your mom, I will take care of you, child. There is so much I must teach you about precious gems. Your mother and father taught me every thing. I know about gems. I must pass it on to you.

FADE TO

CUT TO

INT. RED EXPLORER

The mountains are getting pretty steep now. The fin of driving is coming to an
end for LUDY

E-LIS

Look, pull over. Its going to get a little
rough from here on---I'll drive.

CUT TO

EXT. RED EXPLORER-WHEELS CUTTING CLOSE TO MOUNTAIN
EDGE

CUT TO

INT. RED EXPLORER-LUDY TURNING WHEELS.

There is very little space between the highway and the mountain edge.
Finally
LUDY comes to a stop.

E-LIS

That's good enough----

Without hesitating, E-LIS just opens the door.

LUDY

(reach for her to late)

BATAGHANI~ WATCH OUT!.....AW SHIT!

86

E-LIS

(screams out)

AHHHHHHH! AHHHHHHH! LUDY!

CUT TO

EXT. RED EXPLORER PASSENGER DOOR-WIDE OPEN

SHE slips, not realizing they are too close to the side and slips toward the
edge
of the mountain. She grabs the door right before she falls. SHE IS
HANGING
ON FOR DEAR LIFE as LIJDY leans over quickly to help pull her up.
The
door is wide open and it is the only thing that is saving her. There is
nothing
but ocean and rocks below.

LUDY
(trying to help)
Hold on, Bataghani--I'm going to try something.

LUDY moves over to passenger side to try and pull the door toward him, but E-LIS is in an awkward position. The EXPLORER is on edgy ground to the right side making it difficult for E-LIS to swing forward. LUDY looks down at the big blue ocean. His heart almost skips a beat. ELIS doesn't want to look down. She is just swinging out in open space.

LUDY(CONTD)
Don't look down! Look at me, okay!

LUDY holds his hand out to her but she is scared to let go of the door.

LUDY(CONT'D)
Come on Bataghani!----Give me your hand.

E-LIS
(tries to hold her hand out)
I can't let go, Ludy----My hands are slipping! LUDY!

LUDY
Listen, you can do it! Come on, try! Whose gonna believe this black man didn't push you over, huh? Now, give me your hand, WOMAN!

E-LIS tries to hold on as sweat is dripping from LUDY'S *face*. Finally

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their hand grasps one another and LUDY pull her and the door toward the seat. He grabs her around the waist for dear life and pulls her inside. They both look down at what could have been. Then they look at each other in a more sentimental way as if they want to stay in each other's arms.

LUDY(CONTD)
OKAY! OKAY! I GOT YOU!

E-LIS
WHEW! Thanks. I was almost a gonner---Didn't
know we were so close to the edge.... I owe you
one, Ludy Mende.

LUDY
(takes a deep breath)
Do you always live this dangerous? Or is this the
way you like to have fun?

E-LIS
You think so, huh? I do value life, Mr. Mende.

FADE TO

EXT. RED EXPLORER CLIMBING MOUNTAIN-MID-DAY

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

EXT. SIGN -WELCOME TO MOTHER GEM'S MOUNTAIN-ONE
MILE

CUT TO

EXT. -EXPLORER

E-LIS drives around the last curve in the mountains and there sits a
MANSION,
a BOOK STORE and a PRECIOUS GEM store. Above the store is a
HEALTH
FOOD restaurant name GOOD EATING.

CUT TO

INT. EXPLORER

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E-LIS
Welcome to Mother Gem's Mountain, Ludy Mende.

LUDY
Who is Mother Gem?

E-LIS drives the vehicle into the parking area. She parks the vehicle and looks at LUDY.

E-LIS

My client that is going to make you a millionaire.

LUDY

I feel like I'm living a fairy tell.

E-LIS

(unbuckles seat belt)

You are. Only thing though---This one is real. You hungry?

LUDY

(unbuckles seat belt)

You bet! You frighten up an appetite back there.

CUT TO

EXT. GOOD EATING RESTAURANT-PATIO-MID-DAY MUSIC-JAZZ

LUDY and E-LIS are sifting down at the table. A black young attractive waitress comes over and hand them the menu. Ludy looks surprise in a way to see a black waitress this far in the mountains. The view of the quiet forest and ocean are seen from the wooden deck patio. Other people are sitting, chatting and eating. A white young energetic waitress comes over to LUDY and E-LIS to take their order.

WHITE WAITRESS

Welcome to Mother Gem's Mountain---And we, here at Good Eating hope you enjoy your stay. Now, without farther delay---- May I help you?

E-LIS

(Looks over the menu)

Yes, I would like a banana smoothie, uh, let's see----oh yeah, brown rice with mushrooms, almonds and carrots---and a small salad, plain.

WAITRESS writes E-LIS'S order on slip, then waits for LUDY to order.

WAITRESS

And you sir. Are you ready?

LUDY

(looking at the menu)

Yes---uh----steam vegetables, smoked tofu with brown rice, a smoothie, but with mango juice----and a carrot cake muffin, please...

Thank you

WAITRESS

(takes menu)

It is going to take about fifteen minutes, If you want I could bring you your juice and smoothie.

E-LIS

I'll just wait.

LUDY nods in agreement with E-LIS. WAITRESS leaves.

FADE TO

MUSIC-JAZZ-FOREVER ALWAYS-FELDER

INT. MOTHER GEM¹S MANSION-GEMS AND CRYSTALS IN ROOM

CUT TO

LUDY and E-LIS are walking into MOTHER GEM'S MANSION. It is very quiet. The brightness of the gems glows to the ceiling. Crystals are everywhere. All kinds of stones and gems fills the room. The house is alive with reflections of colors from the stones and gems. The sound of soft jazz with an African beat is playing. The mystical surroundings petrifies

CONT'D

LUDY as he walks observing and feeling the peaceful atmosphere. E-LIS is looking around for MOTHER GEM.

E-LIS

Amazing, isn't it?

For a moment, LUDY mind is not on the two million dollars. He wraps himself up into the mystical and spiritual feeling he is receiving from the gems and crystals.

Being an emotional person like he is, this takes him by surprise. He picks up a picture of a young Mother Gem. Her name is PEGGY LEE WIGGINS on the picture. He puts it down and then picks up a picture of a girl and boy at a birthday party which is a picture of MANDE and PEGGY. He walks over to another picture of an African around twenty six years old which is MANDE back in KONO as a young man. But he doesn't recognizes similarity.

LUDY

(puts the picture down)

Very mystic. Its like walking into some kind of powerful force that gives a good feeling and a burst of energy.

E-LIS explains to Ludy something special.

E-LIS

Mother Gem believes that all these precious gems are free spirits that enlightens one in life and death. She believes that they lives forever, feeding happiness and positive energies into people lives,.. .Like when you see a woman get her first diamond wedding ring. She lights up.

LUDY

Kind of strange---For a moment I forgot about the two million. This makes me feel something else other than material values, you know what

I'm saying? And nobody is around watching or protecting these precious gems and stones.

E-LIS and LUDY walks slowly observing the precious stones and gems. Stones, gems and crystals from all around the world. The whole room sparkles.

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E-LIS

This is her way of trusting Uh, this way
---she must be out back in the flower
garden.

FADE TO

EXT. MOTHER GEM'S MANSION-FLOWER GARDEN

CUT TO

MOTHER GEM is plucking some flowers. E-LIS and LUDY are walking through the beautiful garden. MOTHER GEM has on a bold African print dress with gold dangling earrings and bracelets.... She is wearing a leather pouch around her neck. LUDY notices the pouch. She is humming a jazz song by ELLA. E-LIS walks up to MOTHER GEM and kisses her on the neck. It has the initial "M". It never crosses LUDYS mind that the initial stands for MANDE.

MOTHER GEM

(turns)

Huh, huh, Ms. Bataghani. Been expecting
you---You late, real late.

LUDY is still surprise as he stands speechless, just starring.

E-LIS

I tell you, Mother Gem, that mountain is
not getting any easier.

MOTHER GEM

(kind of looks at Ludy)

Young people---Where're your guts nowadays?
And young man, say something---the cat got your
tongue.

LUDY

Uh, yes, mam... Ludy Mende.

E-LIS

You know, the person I called you about.

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MOTHER GEM

(looks at Ludy)

Oh, yes, the young man with the diamonds.

MOTHER GEM(CONT'D)

You know I almost forgot you were coming---
sometimes my memories goes and come.

MOTHER GEM takes a long look at LUDY. LUDY eyes the pouch around her neck. E-LIS is roaming in the garden.

LUDY

Amazing. You live up here all alone.

MOTHER GEM plucks off a red rose and smells it as she put it in the flower basket.

MOTHER GEM

I guess it is strange for you to see a black woman sitting all alone on top of this old mountain, huh? Loosen up, white folks ain't the only ones that like the mountains, young man.

LUDY

Mother Gem, I didn't mean it like that. I just think you are a very brave woman with a lot of guts and charisma. I'm just fascinated.

MOTHER GEM turns toward E-LIS looking at a special flower. She coughs painfully and gathers her breath. LUDY shows concern. She doesn't want LUDY to get any hint, she is dying.

LUDY(CONT'D)

(concern)

MOTHER GEM! Are you all right?
That is a very bad cough you have.

MOTHER GEM kind of evades his emotions and turns to E-LIS near the daisies.

E-LIS is trying to be strong for MOTHER GEM. E-LIS tries to hold back the tears.

She doesn't want LUDY to see her emotions,

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MOTHER GEM(CONT'D)

(not concern)

Young man, this cough has been with me for a long time----E-LIS, aren't those daisies pretty. Look like them daisies just grew up over night.

E-LIS turns as she kind of wipes her eyes holding back sadness. She walks over and put the daisies in the flower basket

E-LIS

Mother Gem, you must have a green thumb because your flowers are so pretty, all of them.

MOTHER GEM

Well, Mr. Mende, your surprise is over. Let's go inside---We got business to discuss.

MOTHER GEM coughs a few times as they walk inside the MANSION.

FADE TO

INT. MOTHER GEM'S MANSION-DEN AND KITCHEN AREA.

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

MOTHER GEM sits breathless in a big chair across from the couch.

LUDY

The pouch that you wear---Where did you get it from?

E-LIS is reading one of the gem magazines. MOTHER GEM has a stack

of them
laying on a table near the couch.

MOTHER GEM
(sits down in big chair across from sofa.)
You are very observant, young man---a friend
gave this to me many years ago....

But Ludy is still curious. The old woman really amazes him.

94

E-LIS
(looks up from magazine)
Mother Gem. Are you all right?--Why don't
you rest first.

MOTHER GEM
(smiles)
I'm fine, E-LIS.... This man wants to know all
about me.

MOTHER GEM(CONT'D)
Mother Gem before he does business---
Its call charismatic

LUDY
And what about children?----Maybe grandchildren
could come and help you out up here. Why wouldn't
someone want to come and enjoy all this luxury.

E-LIS raises her head from the magazine. Children conversations are very
personal with MOTHER GEM. E-LIS knows this. Its haunts MOTHER
GEM
everyday of her life to not have any.

E-LIS
(looking from the top of magazine)
Ludy!

MOTHER GEM takes a loud breathless cough that shakes her whole
body.

LUDY just shakes his head. He feels helpless.

MOTHER GEM

To answer your question, young man---I never had children of my own... So I took up loving precious gems and stones.... They became my little smiling children. Strange huh? Do you know crystals and diamonds have souls. Even when they cut them up in the mines, they cry and scream.

MOTHER GEM gets up from the chair and walks to an area where there are plenty gems and stones. She picks up a piece of bright crystal, holds it to the sun.
She ask LUDY to come take a look.

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MOTHER GEM(CONTD)

Young man, come over here...I wanna show you something.

LUDY goes over near the window where MOTHER GEM is standing.

MOTHER GEM(CONT'D)

(holding a crystal in her hand)

We all are precious like this, Ludy---Only when we let ourselves be. Look at it, shining and glowing. A kind of purity that all of us need in our hearts... No pain, no sorrow, no fear and no hate, just good clean positive energies, smiling and loving, the soul of man and woman... The power of the diamond bonds people together in marriage. A woman eyes lights up when she sees a diamond---fire in her eyes...It comforts the soul. And only special kind of diamonds can do that. I pray you have the ones to light my soul,

LUDY

(silent for a moment)
I see.

MOTHER GEM

(sits back in chair)
Now, business... This is what you are here for...
Do you know the rules?

E-LIS

(put the magazine on the table)

He knows I explained everything to him on the way up, Mother Gem.

MOTHER GEM

Good... .And Ludy, you have entered my house.
It is a house of love and peace.. .Enjoy the mountains...
Take your mind off the diamonds....

LUDY

And if they are not the diamonds you want,
then what?

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MOTHER GEM

(gives Ludy a stare)
No deal--and it was nice knowing you.
Now, please, the diamonds.

LUDY unbuttons his shirt and take off the kente cloth band. He takes the diamonds out and lay them on the table near the couch. MOTHER GEM is impressed with his technique of carrying the diamonds.

MOTHER GEM(CONTD)

Very clever, LUDY MENDE. Very clever Okay.. .
I will let you know something in three days. I have
only one guest room available. If you don't mind,
you can share the room with E-LIS. Tomorrow I
will be sleeping late, so I don't want to be disturbed.

MOTHER GEM knows that they are the right diamonds. She just doesn't want
LUDY to have any clue or idea that there is something else going on with the
diamonds. It would delay E-LIS ability to perform the diamond ceremony.
All MOTHER GEM wants LUDY to think he's going to get his pay, two million dollars and keep him in the shadow of the plan.

FADE TO

INT. HOLIDAY INN BY THE OCEAN.-RM-120-MONTEREY-3A.M.-
MORNING

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

SHEILA and BANTI are sleeping back at the hotel. SHEILA'S arm is thrown across BANTI'S chest and her legs on his thigh. Their half nude bodies can be seen partially from under the cover. All of a sudden the door opens softly. Two men are searching for the diamonds in dresser drawers and everywhere. BANTI and SHEILA are still fast asleep. THE BLACK MAN looks in the closet and finds the money. He holds it up to the other man. THE WHITE MAN knocks a lamp over. They freeze as BANTI opens his eyes. He sees the shadow of the two men from the bright moon shining through the open curtains---He jumps up quickly.

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BANTI

(angry)
What the hell!

SHEILA wakes up. She is unaware of what is happening. When she finally opens her eyes, she sees the two men in the room. She jumps up from bed and covers herself and moves in a corner. She puts a towel around her body. SHEILA really has to act this one out because she is all a part of ANTIMA'S plan.

SHEILA

Shit!---Please, don't kill us---take what- ever you want!

ONE WHITE MAN nervously points the gun at BANTI. He isn't good at this sort of crime. BANTI senses that he could take him. The BLACK MAN is going through the clothes and boxes of merchandise in the closet. BANTI is standing wanting to do something.

WHITE MAN

(doesn't want to kill anyone)
Be no problem---just un-ass the diamonds,
man! Right now!

SHEILA
(scared and shaking in the corner)
Diamonds! You crazy, man---Do we look like
we got diamonds? You got the wrong room!
Banti! Do you have any diamonds?

BANTI is so angry, he is trembling as the BLACK MAN takes the money
in the closet.
He counts it real fast and laughs.

BANTI
(fist balls up)
I don't know what the hell you talking about,
man! ---And ya'll ain't leaving here with that
money---unless its over my dead body.

The WHITE MAN nervously cocks the gun with two hands. All he wants
to do is
get out of there without killing anybody. But he feels that BANTI

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CONT'D
is going to do something crazy. SHEILA is sitting in a corner by the bed,
crying.
She knows BANTI is going to do something crazy. To her this isn't
supposed to
happen. Everything is supposed to go smoothly, no killing. SHEILA just
knows
BANTI has the diamonds hid. But she doesn't know that Ludy has the
diamonds,
a mix-up in their plan.

SHEILA
(crying in the corner)
Shit, Banti! Let him have the money, man!
He's gonna kill us! Please!

THE BLACK MAN holds the money up in the air. All their festival
earnings
are in the hands of robbers. THE BLACK MAN stuffs the money back in

the
bag and put it under his arms.

BLACK MAN

Look, man----no killing! Maybe they don't have
the diamonds---we got some money, let's hat up.

BANTI angry as he moves closer to the man with the gun.

BANTI

Just off me then, man--- It's leeches like you
that fuck up AMERICA,---just like crabs in a bucket--
We worked hard to build the business---and I rather
die right now before I let you suck our blood, man---
Kill me!---Kill me!

SHEILA is crying in the corner with her hands up trying to stop BANTI
Suddenly

BANTI jumps the WHITE MAN with the gun. The WHITE MAN is
surprised as

they scuffles to the floor and the gun goes off The TWO MEN flee the
room as

BANTI lays there dead. SHEILA is hysterical as she holds BANTI in her
arms.

The sound of speeding car pulls away from the hotel. Sound track plays as
the

ocean view is seen from the window as SHEILA weeps softly as she rocks
back

and forth.

SHEILA

(crying)

This wasn't supposed to happen I'm sorry
Banti. ...I'm so sorry.

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FADE TO

INT. MOTHER GEM'S MANSION-UPSTAIRS-BEDROOM-NIGHT

MUSIC- JAZZ

LUDY and E-LIS are lying down in two separate beds. The moon is full as it shines through the bedroom curtains. There is silence as LUDY stares at the ceiling. E-LIS turns to her side away from LUDY with tears in her eyes.

MOTHER GEM is dying and she probably won't make the night. She has to perform the SACRED DIAMOND CEREMONY at SUNRISE. LUDY can't know. She wipes the tears from her cheeks and turns to look at LUDY.

E-LIS

(weak voice)

Ludy. Are you sleep?

LUDY turns to look at E-LIS'S face. He smiles as he remembers a story that CHIEF MANDE used to tell him all the time

LUDY

No. I was just thinking about an old story Chief Mandé told me several years ago. The chief is a good story-teller. Some you believe and others were just humor to make you laugh. There were two that interested me, one about a black woman name Peggy and another about a young white girl who came to be a very good friend of his.

LUDY sits up in the bed to tell E-LIS the story. E-LIS kind of stares, thinking of Sunrise. Right now, LUDY is the only one that can comfort her at this moment, but how does she approach him. She needs to be in his arms.

E-LIS

(smiles as she listen)

African people are great story-tellers Sometimes they can be so funny--very humorous people. What was the white girl's name?

E-LIS knows that the young white girl is her. Even though LUDY is close

to
the plan, no way he is even thinking there is a connection between CHIEF
MANDE, E-LIS and MOTHER GEM.

LUDY

(begins story)

I don't remember the little white girl's name...

Chief Mande told me that he lived in America,
his father was studying there and received a
degree from one of our black colleges,
about forty-five miles from my home. He said his
father majored in Agriculture. Anyway he was six
years old when he met this girl name Peggy and
they were friends for six years. He returned back
to Africa with his father at twelve. It was a sad
moment for him and Peggy. She didn't want him to
go. So he gave her a traditional armlet that was made
only in his village by a special person. To give a gift
of this kind meant friends forever. He told me years
later, when both of them were around twenty-seven,
he sent for her to be his wife. He said that she actually
came. Now that part is a lie What is an American
woman, black or white going to do in a village?
About the little white girl, he said she still comes to
his village often to see him---I can't believe that either.
The funniest thing about the little white girl, he said,
at her first visit, she asked him, "Are there any diamonds
on the ground everywhere?"

Tears are flowing from E-LIS'S eyes. She turns away from LUDY. LUDY
gets up
from his bed and sit besides her. He doesn't know that she is about to lose
the
woman in his story. She lays her head against his chest. He doesn't know
whether
to touch her or what.

LUDY(CONT'D)

(concern)

What's wrong, E-LIS? Was my story that sad?

E-LIS raises her head from his chest. She can't tell him, she is sad because
Mother
GEM is dying, so she pretends of still grieving over her parents for all

these years.

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E-LIS

MOTHER GEM and my parents were real good friends. Every-time I come into these mountains, I think of the times I came with my parent I'll be all night, just a flashback Just hold me, Ludy Mende.

LUDY runs his hand through her golden hair as both look at each other in an intimate way. LUDY holds her in his arms.

CUT TO

INT. MANSION-MOTHER GEM'S BEDROOM-SAME NIGHT

MUSIC -JAZZ

MOTHER GEM is examining the diamonds. She places them on a black cloth and the glow is very bright as she coughs badly. She struggles to get back in the bed. She is very weak. She isn't going to make it through the night. But she is fighting to hang on until SUN-RISE for the CEREMONY. She lays back in the bed and looks to the ceiling.

CUT TO

INT. -MANSION-UP- STAIRS-BEDROOM-SAME NIGHT

MUSIC-JAZZ

E-LIS and BANTI are making sexual love. Sweat is pouring from LUDY'S body. The window above the bed is open as a cool breeze chills their bodies. Moon- light pierces through the hanging shear curtains.

CUT TO

EXT. THE MOON LIGHT AND STARS-NIGHT

MUSIC-JAZZ

FADE TO

INT. KONO VILLAGE-CHIEF MANDE HOUSE(HUT)-MORNING

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MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

CUT TO

CHIEF MANDE is giving his blessings to FALALA and HYWA. Tears are flowing down HYWA cheeks. She still loves LUDY. The African music is playing and folks are dancing and celebrating the marriage.

FADE TO

INT. MANSION-UP STAIRS-NIGHT

MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

CUT TO

E-LIS and LUDY quietly relax with their eyes to the ceiling wondering what happened. Was it wrong or right? They turn and smile at each other. E-LIS moves closer in his arms under the sheets.

FADE TO

INT. KONO VILLAGE-CHIEF MANDE HOUSE(HUT)-MORNING

MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

CUT TO

CHIEF MANDE is putting armband around the necks of HYWA and FALALA.

FADE TO

EXT. HOLIDAY INN-MONTEREY

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

MEDICS carries BANT'S body out of the hotel. A HOMICIDE OFFICER is questioning SHEILA. She is crying. People are standing around, being curious as they point toward the ambulance. The MEDICS loads BANTI'S body in the ambulance. The sound of police radios and ambulance~ s sirens ring out as they leave the scene.

FADE TO

INT. -MANSION-UP-STAIRS-BEFORE SUN-RISE

MUSIC-SOFT JAZZ

CUT TO

LUDY is sleep and exhausted. E-LIS slides quietly out of the bed, making sure she doesn't awake him. She slips into her house coat and tips out the room. The sun is about to rise and she has to check on MOTHER GEM.

INT. MOTHER GEM'S ROOM-DOWNSTAIRS-MANSION-BEFORE SUNRISE

CUT TO

E-LIS tips in MOTHER GEM'S room, She breaks down and cries. MOTHER GEM turns her head slowly against the pillow to look at E-LIS. E-LIS stands over MOTHER GEM flying to hold back the tears. MOTHER GEM looks different. Her long gray hair almost covers the pillow. Her eyes look like they are going to pop out of her head. She grabs E-LIS hands and smiles. E-LIS sits down in a chair by the bed, grasps

MOTHER GEM'S HAND to her lips, trying to hold back her tears.
MOTHER GEM looks toward the window, praying that she last until sunrise.
The sun and the diamonds are the spiritual force to take her soul to the other side.
She looks at E-LIS with her weak voice.

MOTHER GEM

Don't cry, my child.... This is time to rejoice, baby...
Me and Mande, one day gonna be free. You know.
We had good times on this old mountain.

E-LIS

(wipes her eyes)

I love you, Mother Gem for all the time and things
you did for me after my parents died. I just don't
wanna lose you like I lost them.

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MOTHER OEM starts coughing rapidly. E-LIS holds her hand tight.
She looks out the window for the sun-rise. THE SUN IS COMING UP
OVER THE MOUNTAIN. MOTHER GEM CAN FEEL THE
WARMTH.

MOTHER GEM

I love you too---and take care of Ludy---
show him the ropes You know what to
do child... .Honey, we don't have much time.

E-LIS quickly opens the night gown of MOTHER GEM. She takes the
sacred
diamonds and places them in a circle on MOTHER GEM'S chest. The
sparkles
are so bright. E-LIS covers her eyes. Then she cracks the curtains to the
room
slightly to let the sun beam on the diamonds, There is a glow coming
from every
opening in MOTHER GEM'S body, her nose, eyes, mouth and ears, The
sun
beams and glows from the diamonds are colorful. Mother Gem is almost
turning
colors as the circles of different colors go round and around Mother
Gem's chest

area. E-lis is crying. All of a sudden, the circle gets larger and lightens up the whole room, then it reduces and passes MOTHER GEM'S SOUL through the small crack in the curtains, a BEACON LIGHT. Mother Gem is gone. Only her body is there. E-LIS is crying as she drops to her knees. She takes the diamonds from her chest....

E-LIS

Thanks, Mother Gem, thanks for all your time and love. Travel in peace....

FADE TO

INT.-KONO VILLAGE-CHEF MANDE HOUSE-NOON

MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

CUT TO

The DRUMS are playing in the VILLAGE of KONO. CHIEF MANDE is dead. People are standing around watching him as HYWA weeps quietly. His soul has gone on.

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FADE TO

EXT. IMAGINATION OF HEAVEN IN THE CLOUDS-DAY

MUSIC-AFRICAN BEAT

CUT TO

MOTHER GEM and CHIEF MANDE are rejoicing on the other side. The beautiful sparkles of diamonds surrounds them as they hold hands dancing around in a circle. AFRICAN music is playing. The bonding of two souls on the other side celebrates their being together at last.

FADE TO

INT. MANSION-UPSTAIRS-BEDROOM-MORNING

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

LUDY

E-LIS I know the rule----but I need to ask
MOTHER GEM one question before I go.
I've been curious about her ever since I saw
that armlet.

E-LIS dashes out the room quickly.

E-LIS

Out of the question---you gave her your word--
you wouldn't break the rule. Our mission is over
here If the money is outside her door--you are a
rich man--if not, the diamonds were not what she
wanted We can't break the rule, Ludy---
You ready?

LUDY picks up his traveling bag and nods. They exit the room.

FADE TO

EXT. MOTHER GEM'S ROOM-OUTSIDE DOOR-BRIEFCASE

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MUSIC-SOFT JAZZ

CUT TO

The briefcase is sitting right outside MOTHER GEMS room door. LUDY
picks

it up and kind of judge the weight. It feels like money in the case to him.

He

smiles at E-LIS. She is happy for him, but sad in her heart.

E-LIS

From the weight of that case you carrying, I
believe you are a rich man, Ludy Mende.

Ludy turns and starts to knock on MOTHER GEMS door. He wants to

enter
the room. He turns the door knob. E-LIS has tears in her eyes.

E-LIS(CONT'D)

Ludy! Noo-oo! Please! Don't do this!
Let her soul rest in peace.

LUDY is in shock. He begins to wonder what is going on with the diamonds. He
can't believe that MOTHER GEM is dead.

LUDY

What's going on, E-LIS?! Is it something
I need to know?

E-LIS

Its not for you to know. You got your money.
Just do as she asked you to do, please I'm
sorry, Ludy. I really am.

LUDY sits the briefcase down. He paces the floor. He needs some
answers, Its
how he earned the two million that gives him honor. To him this is not
business,
it something about the diamonds.

LUDY

(serious)
Listen. I can't go without knowing the truth.
Yes, the two million is going to look good for
BANTI and I. But either I kick thjs door down
or I'm going to keep knocking until you tell me
what's going on---

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E-LIS

Please, Ludy, I beg you, I beg you. Let
her soul rest... You did an old lady a
favor, Ludy. Take the money and lets go.

LUDY knocks on the door and pulls the door knob.

E-LIS(CON'TD)

Okay! Okay! I'll tell you everything
when we get in the car---but we must

go, now!

LUDY picks up the suitcase and touches MOTHER GEM'S ROOM DOOR with his hand as they exit. He really likes MOTHER GEM. Now, he will never see her again. At this time, money is not the issue to him. Its emotions and pride.

FADE TO

INT. RED EXPLORER-NOON

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

LUDY is sitting on the passenger side of the RED EXPLORER, He opens the briefcase. Two million dollars, right before his eyes. E-LIS leans over the steering wheel. She doesn't know where to begin telling the truth to Ludy. She looks at the two million.

E-LIS

(hesitates)

Ludy....If I tell you this---Please keep it a secret and don't tell Chief Mande, okay? I promised Chief Mande I would keep this a secret forever. Rumors get out about the sacred diamonds, everybody will flock to his village

LUDY doesn't understand and he is a little confused.

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LUDY

(confuse)

Wait a minute! Back up! Chief Mande got something to do with this?

E-LIS

(begins her story)

CHIEF MANDE planned the whole thing to get the diamonds over into America. You see, that story is true about Peggy Wiggins. Chief Mande is that twelve year old boy in the picture with Mother Gem and Mother Gem is Peggy Wiggins. She couldn't have children when Chief Macide asked to marry her. She didn't think it matter until the dying wish of Chief Mande's father to Peggy was to keep having children until they get a boy. That was important to Chiefs Mande's father for the chieftain to stay in the family. Chief Mande still wanted to marry Peggy, regardless, but she was the one that didn't want to go against tradition. The last thing she wanted from him was to have the SACRED DIAMOND CEREMONY whenever she die. You see, Ludy, this is another promise the Chief had to keep----until this day they loved each other. He didn't want to drag you into this, but you could be trusted and you was strong enough to digest the diamonds with foo-foo I'm sorry.

LUDY

(angry at the Chief)

He could have told me It was just a plan
Now every time I look at this money, I'm
going to see MOTHER GEM'S face, her last
death wish on my hands. I delivered her wish.
How you think that make me feel. I'm gonna
have many sleepless mghts. Next, you are
going to tell me you are the little white girl in
Chief Mande's story.

E-LIS

Yes I am Mother Gem adopted me after my
parents were killed. You see, this is why he
couldn't tell you because you were MOTHER
GEM'S only hope for her to have the ceremony
and he knows how superstitious you are. You see
Ludy, the diamonds aren't just diamonds, but
sacred to the VILLAGE of KONO They have
certain spiritual powers that Mother Gem saw
in the VILLAGE of KONO many

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E-LIS(CONT'D)

years ago. You helped Ludy... You made a soul very

E-LIS(CONT'D)

happy... And you are rewarded for your deeds... .
Not for the diamonds..., and not for the money.
The two million is just a 'thank you' from Mother
Gem. Enjoy it--its all yours. ...She would like that.
And maybe one day you will understand

LUDY

(takes a deep breath)

Anyway, the money is not exciting to me anymore.
I really wanted to get to know her. She reminded
me of my grandmother, a very proud woman.

FADE TO

EXT. -HOLIDAY INN-MONTEREY-NIGHT

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

INT. RED EXPLORER

LUDY and E-LIS drive up to the HOLIDAY INN BY THE BEACH. E-
LIS
turns the motor off

E-LIS

Listen. I will wait out here for you.

LUDY gets out the car and walks into the hotel. E-LIS stares out at the
ocean
and breaks down and cries. She is thinking of Mother Gem. She reflects as
a
large wave comes to shore. E-LIS holds a crystal in her hand.

FLASHBACK WHEN SHE IS TWELVE

FADE TO

EXT.- MOTHER GEM'S MANSION

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MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

MOTHER GEM

(hands the crystal to E-lis)

Now, E-lis, this is a very special precious stone.
Crystals have certain healing powers Here take it.
Put it under your pillow at nights and your pain
and so now will go away.

FADE TO

INT. EXPLORER

CUT TO

The sound of the waves rushes to shore. E-LIS sits quietly out in the car as she dries her eyes with her hands. E-LIS looks toward the entrance of the hotel. She puts the crystal back in her purse.

CUT TO

EXT.- HOLIDAY INN- ENTRANCE TO HOTEL

LUDY barges out the door. He is hysterical, crying. He drops the briefcase.

CUT TO

EXT. EXPLORER

He starts beating on the car. E-LIS jumps from the car, picks up the briefcase and rushes up to LUDY. She tries to calm him down.

E-LIS

Ludy! What happened?! Where's Banti?!

LUDY

(leaning against the car with his head in his hands)
Banti is dead! Oh God!
What I have done? Dam! Dam!

E-LIS holds LUDY in her arms to comfort him.

FADE TO

INT. MONTEREY CITY MORGUE-MORNING

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

Down at the city MORGUE, E-LIS and LUDY views BANTI'S body. E-LIS turns away with tears in her in eyes. LUDY stands there frozen as tears flow down his eyes. He touches BANTI'S face. E-LIS pulls LUDY away as he breaks down and cries.

FADE TO

EXT. HOUSTON, TX-PARADISE CEMETERY-AFTERNOON

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

Banti's funeral is at a grave- site in Houston, Texas. Some folks are wearing elegant African attires. Others wears are contemporary fashions with stylish hats. LUDY is standing with BANTI'S mother. The MINISThR gives the last words over BANTI.

THE MINISTER

(recites passages from the 23rd psalms)
The lord is my shepherd; I shall not want, he
maketh me lie down in green pastures; he
restoreth my soul.

FADE TO

EXT. -EXIT TO GRAVEYARD

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

Everyone is leaving the grave- site, mingling and whispering. LUDY walks

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slowly with BANTI'S mother. He puts his arm around her as they walk toward

LUDY'S VAN. Her eyes are fill of tears as they run down her cheeks. As they approach LUDY'S VAN, she speaks with LUDY. Her name is MAMA PHILLIPS.

MAMA PHILLIPS

Ludy. Banti was my only son. My baby is gone now. I don't know what I'm going to do.

MAMA PHILLIPS dries her eyes as LUDY buttons his lips to keep from crying out too, trying to show some strength. LUDY hugs her tight.

LUDY

Mama Philips----look we gotta be strong, okay?----
They tell me God works in mysterious ways. Come with me, there is something Banti wants you to have.
Me and Banti always worked hard for the business and we made a lot of money.

LUDY and MAMA PHILLIPS walks toward the van.

EXT. LUDY'S VAN

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

LUDY opens the door of his van and pulls out a briefcase and hands it to MAMA PHILLIPS. LUDY hugs her once more, jumps in the van and drives off MAMA PHILLIPS waves good-bye.

FADE TO

EXT. MOTHER GEM MANSION-ROSE GARDEN-MORNING

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

E-LIS is placing flowers and a precious gem on MOTHER GEM'S grave. She is buried in her ROSE GARDEN in the back of her MANSION house on the mountain. E-LIS smiles as she kisses the grave stone that reads:

CUT TO

113

MOTHER GEM
1918-2000
TRULY A PRECIOUS GEM

FADE TO

EXT. HOUSTON, TX-ALLEY BEHIND DRUG STORE-NOON

MUSIC- HIP-HOP

LUDY is blaming himself for BANTI'S DEATH. The streets are calling him back. The death of BANTI is causing him so much pain. BUNCHY grabs LUDY in his chest and looks him in the eyes.

BUNCHY

Why you wanna bring yourself down like this----
I respect you brother for getting off the streets
and doing good for yourself-- I'm not gonna let
you do this to yourself. Streets ain't for you no
more. You are an International brother now---
Go home! I'm sorry about BANTI---but you
got to keep doing it.

BUNCHY releases LUDY'S shirt. LUDY'S doesn't know what to do or say. He looks at BUNCHY and then walks away into the streets.

CUT TO

EXT. L.A.-LOS ANGELES POLICE CARS-HEAD

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

L.A. POLICE SQUAD CARS are sounding their sirens through the streets.

SHEILA is in the back of one POLICE CAR. She is crying. She is one of the persons involved in setting BANTI UP.

INT. OTHER POLICE CAR

In the back seat of the other POLICE CAR are the TWO MEN who are responsible for the crime on BANTI. Their heads are hung down as the sound of POLICE CAR'S squeaking tires and loud sirens echoe through the streets.

114

FADE TO

INT. -HOUSTON, TX-LUDY'S HOUSE

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

Back in Houston at LIJDY'S HOUSE, he just can't pull himself together He takes a picture of him and BANTI off one of the nearby end tables. He glances at the picture and puts it back on the table. A bag of marijuana is sitting on the coffee table in front of him. He decides to light a joint. Just as he begins to light the joint, he pushes the bag of marijuana off the table in anger. He holds his head in his hands. The phone is ringing but he doesn't answer. THE PHONE KEEPS RINGING.

FADE TO

INT-E-LIS'S CARMEL BEACH HOUSE

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

E-LIS is holding the telephone to her ear. Her heart is sad for LUDY. She can feel that he is out of control. If only she could talk to him She is still hoping he answers the phone. Slowly, she puts the receiver down as the sound of the ocean is heard.

FADE TO

EXT-IMPORTS FOR YOU

MUSIC-HIP-HOP

CUT TO

ANTIMA is taken away by the POLICEMEN. She is immediately put into the police car. She is the master mind behind the plot to steal the diamonds. RASHEED stands alone in disbelief The police car pulls off ANTIMA looks back at RASHEED. He shakes his head and walks back into his shop, paining from the criminal acts and the death of BANTI.

115

FADE TO

EXT. HOUSTON, TX-MAIN STREET-MID-MORNING

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

LUDY is walking for hours, just trying to get hold of himself He passes a precious gem and diamond store that sells jewelry. LUDY stops at the show window and looks in. A diamond from a ring shines right into his eyes. He wipes his eyes.... It glows again right into his eyes. LUDY wipes his eyes again. TWO

COUPLES

leave the store. The MEN have just bought them DIAMONDS RINGS.
They
are happy. The WOMEN hug the MEN as THEY adore the rings on their
fingers.
LUDY observes as he turns to the showcase and a diamond glows right
into his eyes

FADE TO

INT. JEWELRY SHOWCASE

CUT TO

From the glow of the diamond, MOTHER GEM appears in spirit to
LUDY.
LUDY wipes his eyes in disbelief MOTHER GEM is smiling and she
reminds
LUDY of something.

INT.-SPARKLE FROM THE DIAMOND RING-MOTHER GEM'S
SPIRIT

MOTHER GEM(SPIRIT)

Remember Ludy, the diamonds have powers
that joins friends together in death and life,
It brings happiness to a weary soul. Look at
the glows and sparkles, they will heal your
sorrow. Embrace your-self in love energies that
you see right here. Your life is as precious
as a sparkling diamond. Bunchy is right. Streets
and drugs are no more for you. You have seen
the bright side of life through the eyes of precious
gems and stones. Don't give it up.

116

(CONT'D)

LUDY wipes his eyes again and the glow from the diamond shines
brighter as
MOTHER GEM SPIRIT disappears.

FADE TO

EXT. -CARMEL BEACH

MUSIC-JAZZ

CUT TO

LUDY and E-LIS are jogging barefooted on the white sands of CARMEL BEACH. LUDY, with a splurge of energy talks E-LIS into running in her casual clothes. He doesn't care. He is happy. All of a sudden they stop. Both are out of breath. They drop to their needs, laughing.

E-LIS
(takes a deep breath)
Ludy Mende... You are a mad man!

LUDY
(hands on knees)
I just needed a good blow out.
You know what I'm saying?

E-LIS
(catches her breath)
There is something I want you to know.

LUDY
This better be good, E-lis Bataghani Wait!

LUDY picks up a stick from the sands. He draws a line across in the sand. E-LIS doesn't understand.

E-LIS
(pulls her hair back)
Ludy! What on earth are you doing?...

117

LUDY
I'm DRAWING THE LINE on my life. Right now, I'm responding to whats in my heart for the first time, not how things suppose to be. . And for the first time, I see a glow in you. Its not your beauty, race or anything, just pure light that gives off positive energies. I'm DRAWING THE LINE No more judging a person on the

outside or take the beauty of life for granted.
The sacred diamonds must have had some affect
on my life. I did carry them for hours.

E-LIS

(smiles)

Ludy... You have changed and I'm happy for
you Listen... Will you hear me out? Since Mother
Gem doesn't have any living relatives, she left
her estate to me....

LUDY

That figures She had a lot of love for you.... and
you are her adopted daughter.

E-LIS

What about going into business with me.
We would make a good team.

LUDY

Say that again!

E-LIS

What about being my partner, Ludy Mende.

LUDY

Are you serious? I'm just an African American
trader that loves adventure... Anyway, you have
a partner.

E-LIS

Pony is going into his own business. Think
about it.

118

LUDY

A little white lady for my partner. What if it
goes farther than partnership?

E-LIS

No problem. We can beat the odds...

LUDY

Oh, yeah.... And you're really ready to beat

the odds.

E-LIS

More now than ever, Ludy So whata you
say... .Me we on?

LUDY smiles as he reaches in his pocket and pulls out a diamond ring.

LUDY

What do you think?

E-LIS eyes lights up like fire as the diamond sparkles in the sun light.

E-LIS

Oh, my God!

LUDY puts ring on E-LIS'S finger.

LUDY

Let's just say that this is our little sacred bond
while we are here on earth, Miss Bataghani.

E-LIS and LUDY embrace one another, as a wave from shore covers
their feet on the white sands of CARMEL BEACH.

FADE TO

MUSIC -JAZZ

THE END

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