

MERCY

Written by

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OPEN ON BLACK:

The sound of SQUEALING TIRES SKIDDING on tarmac. CRASH.

FADE IN:

1 EXT. COUNTRY LANE. MORNING

1

TWISTED METAL of an UPTURNED FORD FOCUS on a FOGGY COUNTRY LANE. A DEER mills about the road, sniffing the SMOKING WRECKAGE.

We drift from the wreckage to (EMILY 20) a NAKED BLUE-HAIRED WOMAN lying in the middle of the road, unscathed and asleep. Her eyes BURST OPEN and she SCREAMS. There's a TATTOO of an OUROBOROS on EMILY'S forearm.

She hears chirping birds, whistling trees, a babbling brook. Her PANIC subsides only to resurface when she notices her nudity. Sensing something behind her, EMILY turns her head and spots the car in the distance.

EMILY creeps towards the car and as she arcs her head toward the passenger seat her eyes WIDEN. IT'S HER (fully clothed in paint stained dungarees). BLOODIED. EYES WIDE OPEN AND GLASSY. A BALDING MIDDLE AGE MAN beside her corpse is breathing but unconscious. Footsteps creep towards her. She turns back and discovers...

A SUITED MAN (30-years old, athlete's build, undercut) creeps towards her. There's an ORNATE GALAXY PENDANT around his neck and he's carrying a SCYTHER with a straightened shaft. We will later know him as VIRGIL NOBUMOTO.

2 INT. CLUB. NIGHT

2

A SEA OF PARTYGOERS who are CUTTING SHAPES, DOWNING SHOTS, grateful for the weekend. ENIOLA (29, BRAIDS, TRACK-SUITED) wields her CANON 5D as she wades through this sea, recording and taking stills. There's a PRESS PASS LANYARD around ENIOLA'S neck. This is work. A sweat-soaked woman spots ENIOLA filming her, and WHACKS the CANON 5D away, just as ENIOLA is enveloped by a WAVE OF

HIGH HEELED WOMEN, who spill drinks on her. ENIOLA studies all the groups around her enjoying their 20s...

OLLY (PRE-LAP)
What am I looking at?

ENIOLA (dressed for retail in a POLO, with BATTERED CONVERSE) stares at her manager OLLY'S (52, rugby-build) BROGUES as she DIGS her CHIPPED NAILS into her wrists. OLLY sits on his aged walnut desk. The poky room is thick with FABRIC SWATCHES, WOOD SAMPLES, and FOLDERS brimming with sales reports. ENIOLA stifles a yawn. OLLY SNAPS his fingers in front of her face, so ENIOLA looks up at the DUSTY SECURITY MONITOR on his desk. He presses play on a REMOTE and the freeze frame of her on the shop floor comes to life: *A homeless woman (40s) pleads with her for something and after some deliberating ENIOLA escorts the woman behind the counter and into a toilet.*

OLLY

I asked you a question.

ENIOLA

The shop was empty. No one saw her go in.

OLLY

And when more tramps come in here looking for somewhere to shoot up?

ENIOLA

She wasn't a junkie. She needed paper towels. And even if--

OLLY

Towels?

ENIOLA

She was on.

OLLY

On what?

ENIOLA

Her period. What else?

Her words hit OLLY like a stink bomb.

OLLY

Is Hus a homeless shelter? Eniola?

ENIOLA

She was desperate--I don't--she didn't--it's not like she left a mess.

OLLY

Do we want our clients to feel uncomfortable?

ENIOLA
Did anyone complain?

OLLY massages his face.

OLLY
Apparently patience is a virtue. What do you think? Hmm? D'you think you're irreplaceable?

ENIOLA tugs her baggy POLO that has the word HUS emblazoned on the top right.

4 INT. FURNITURE SHOP - SHOP FLOOR. DAY 4

A spacious Scandi home ware shop: Pastel armchairs. Modular sofas. Hanging lamps. A neon store sign reads: HUS. From afar we watch as ENIOLA shows a COLOUR COORDINATED COUPLE how to assemble a MODULAR SOFA. ENIOLA furtively gags when the couple slip their hands into each other's back pockets. Her colleague, REGINA (27, DESI, pixie-cut fashionista) spots her and smirks.

ENIOLA (PRE LAP)
Eighteen-hundred on a couch. Six fifty at Ikea tops. Know what I'd do with eighteen-hundred? Rent arrears.

5 INT. FURNITURE SHOP - SHOP FLOOR. LATER 5

ENIOLA and REGINA hover on either side of the entrance. Both of them smile as another colour coordinated couple glide in.

ENIOLA
Singing lessons for my sister.
Family holiday.

ENIOLA'S eyes start drooping.

REGINA
(misty-eyed)
"Eighteen-hundred" I could get some headshots. Do unpaid films for a bit. Oi dickhead's watching.

ENIOLA'S eyes BURST open and she spots OLLY behind the counter watching her.

ENIOLA
Please come tonight...Regina?

REGINA

After your glowing review of your friends? Why you even going to the reunion?

ENIOLA shrugs, then the two of them watch as OLLY sweet-talks a statuesque woman. He pats the woman's arm; she recoils, pulling back a little.

REGINA (CONT'D)

He grazed my arse again.

ENIOLA

For real?

REGINA

Tried to style it out as well: "Just need to get past hun."

ENIOLA

Wankstain.

OLLY as he glances at them and they force smiles at him. ENIOLA suddenly outstretches her hand a split-second before a BURLY MAN trips forward, launching his SMARTPHONE into her palm. She hands the man his phone.

BURLY MAN

Nice one.

6

EXT. HIGH STREET. NIGHT

6

ENIOLA in a SHABBY BLACK BOMBER JACKET (with torn lining), and BLACK DRESS, keys her pin into a CASH MASCHINE. There's a small line behind her of tipsy twentysomethings dressed to pull.

A HOMELESS MAN sits beside the cash machine, holding a

Coffee cup with a few pennies inside it.

She checks her balance: £10.21

ENIOLA

Shit...

She deliberates until she hears pointed tuts behind her. ENIOLA withdraws £10, puts it in the HOMELESS MAN'S cup and rushes off before he realises what's happened.

7 EXT. PUB. NIGHT

7

A gastro-pub on a street littered with bars. Packs of men and women on the prowl.

8 INT. PUB. NIGHT

8

A hand boasting finely manicured nails and a HUGE DIAMOND ENGAGEMENT RING, hovers in front of ENIOLA.

TASHA/ENIOLA

Oh wow/fuck me/it's beautiful.

The owner of the hand - KARA (30 finely coiffed Stepford wife) - holds court in a booth, with TASHA (29, ASOS junkie) and ENIOLA. ENIOLA SIPs a GLASS OF WATER with ICE as she taps her nails against a wooden table that's seen better days.

KARA

So I'm trying to get a picture of the Mona Lisa, and he says to me "I can make everyone look at you." and I'm like, "what d'you mean" He gets on one knee and the whole room, even Mona watches us.

TASHA

Does he have friends?

ENIOLA

He a drug dealer?

KARA

I date one roadman in college--

TASHA

Seriously friends--if he has cute

ENIOLA

(counts on her fingers)
One? Tyrone? Malachi,
Andre, Marcel--

KARA

He's a partner at a hedge fund. Oxbridge, but he knows how to have fun.

ENIOLA notices VIRGIL, the mysterious man from the outset, sitting nearby, staring at her. He raises his glass to her; she struggles to ignore him.

KARA (CONT'D)

His firm does a lot of aid work: Schools in Botswana an--

ENIOLA
 (disingenuous)
 A banker with a heart. I'm happy for
 you. Where's Jazz?

KARA
 Packing shopping bags at Tesco.

TASHA
 I'd shoot myself. Honestly.

ENIOLA
 Maybe she's happy.

KARA and TASHA share a derisive look.

KARA
 Would you be happy doing retail at
 our big age?

TASHA
 (Playing peacekeeper)
 What you doing now? Who you doing?
 Deets, deets.

ENIOLA
 I'm an account manager at Fuzz.
 Might've seen us online. Pop.
 Politics. Parties.

KARA
 I knew you'd find somewhere trendy to
 work. I mean it's clickbait, but like
 who isn't doing a bullshit job
 nowadays.

ENIOLA endures the backhanded compliment with a smile.

9

EXT/INT PUB. NIGHT

9

ENIOLA'S RUSTY ZIPPO sputters weakly in her hands as she tries
 to light her CIGARETTE. She's drunk on fatigue now. Suddenly she
 notices the deafening silence and the fact that she's completely
 alone outside. No cars. Not even a fox. The end of a match
 sparks alight and kindles her cigarette. VIRGIL to the rescue.
 They hover outside the pub.

ENIOLA
 Thanks.

He nods in response. She can feel him watching her as she feigns
 interest in the crescent moon.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)

That's an intense stare.

VIRGIL offers her his hand and as she shakes it, she notices the hair on her forearms rising. There's a charged moment between them when her meet eyes meet his, making her suddenly bashful.

VIRGIL

Virgil.

ENIOLA

Eniola.

VIRGIL

Eniola. Means person of wealth?

ENIOLA chuckles to herself.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)

What?

ENIOLA

My bank account is hungry. I'll leave it at that.

VIRGIL

It doesn't have to be.

ENIOLA

It does when you're selling furniture for 8 pound an hour. You speak Yoruba?

VIRGIL

Why don't you quit?

ENIOLA

Cause I don't have quit-my-job money.

VIRGIL

You could make the world a better place; and not in a building-poorly-managed-schools-in-Africa way. I mean really help people.

ENIOLA

Unless you have a reset button for the planet, there's no way you can really help anyone. God that was emo.

VIRGIL produces a BLACK BUSINESS CARD with the following in gold lettering: MERCY - est 210BC 235 Bolsover Street W1PL

VIRGIL

We look for people like you, people who care. We offer a generous salary--

ENIOLA

Generous?

VIRGIL

How does five hundred K sound?

ENIOLA gauges VIRGIL. He's serious...

ENIOLA

Just putting this out there: I'm not a hooker. Like, I admire the hustle, but it's not for me

VIRGIL's GALAXY PENDANT suddenly sparkles and vibrates.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)

How are you doing that?

VIRGIL outstretches his hand.

VIRGIL

I need you to hold my hand.

ENIOLA

Because?

VIRGIL

I want to show you what we do, but in order to do so (Sensing her unease) Look around, it's just us.

ENIOLA

Exactly.

VIRGIL

Apologies. I see how this looks, but this is one of those leap of faith moments.

ENIOLA inhales deeply and takes his hand.

ENIOLA

You try anything and I'm going straight for your balls. I can scream pretty loud too so yeah.

VIRGIL

Understood.

VIRGIL

I could've sat you down and explained everything, but words can only do so much.

ENIOLA stares at her hands and then scans the room again.

ENIOLA

How...

VIRGIL strides over to the bedside.

VIRGIL

Come, take a look.

ENIOLA rises to her feet and her eyes widen.

ENIOLA

Fuck!

ARNOLD (50s, HIRSUTE, DAD-BOD) lies on the bed, naked, with a pool of vomit beside his mouth, eyes wide and glassy with a frozen look of anguish. COCAINE residue on a FACE VALUE PHIL COLLINS record sleeve that lies on the bed.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)

Jesus Christ...

VIRGIL

Not quite, this is Arnold Grimwall, and this is his second and final heart attack.

In the corner of the room sits DENISE (21, escort) wearing a WHITE BATHROBE, and holding her knees with eyes wet from crying. Somehow she hasn't registered ENIOLA and VIRGIL's arrival. There's a little MOUND OF 50 POUND NOTES on the night stand.

ENIOLA

(whispering)

Who the fuck's that? What the fuck is going on!?

VIRGIL

At Mercy we collect the souls of the dead.

ENIOLA

This ain't happening, this is--

VIRGIL

A dream? When did you fall asleep?

ENIOLA reconsiders DENISE.

ENIOLA
She hasn't moved. Can't she--

VIRGIL
We're invisible to the living.

ENIOLA
Course we are. Why wouldn't we be.
(serious) is Hogwarts real? Do dragons-

VIRGIL
A flying reptile that breathes
fire? Come on.

ENIOLA waves her hands in front of DENISE'S VACANT face.

ENIOLA
Rah...

ENIOLA tip toes to the bed and studies ARNOLD'S glassy eyes.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)
So he's dead?

VIRGIL
More or less, the brain's still
fighting.

ENIOLA
He's still alive?! We should do
something!

VIRGIL
If he was our age maybe. Today all
efforts to "help him" would only delay
the inevitable. Besides--

ARNOLD'S corpse FARTS LOUDLY and FOLLOWS THROUGH. We don't see
it, but ENIOLA does and she gags.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
There goes the brain.

ENIOLA
Fam! I want out. I don't--just take me
back to the pub. This--I can't--

VIRGIL
Remember I told you that you could
help people?

An identical copy of ARNOLD, clambers out of ARNOLD'S CORPSE -
like a shedding snake - and screams, clutching his chest.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
Hi Arnold. How's it going buddy?

ARNOLD
Who are you? what are you doing in my--

ARNOLD notices his corpse lying beneath him.

VIRGIL
Arnold, I regret to inform you that at 8.14 you died following a massive heart attack.

ARNOLD
I don't--how can I be--that's me.

VIRGIL
(Whispers at ENIOLA)
They're always confused at first.
Always. Keep calm. Never waver.

DENISE gets up and studies ARNOLD'S CORPSE. ARNOLD reaches for DENISE but his hand passes through her like air.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
Arnold, we're here to escort you to the next frontier. It's a wonderful place where-

ARNOLD
I can't be dead; haven't had kids yet; haven't finished my book. There's so many things, places.

ARNOLD clambers off the bed and cowers in the corner of the room. ARNOLD slaps himself HARD, again and again.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
I'm gonna wake up. She's gonna be beside me and--

DENISE wanders to the bedside, collects the stack of fifties and tucks them into her robe pocket. SHE eyes ARNOLD'S WALLET that sits on the floor. She picks it up rifles through it and pockets a TWENTY POUND NOTE. An ENGAGEMENT RING falls out of the wallet and drops to the floor.

DENISE gives ARNOLD'S corpse one last look and then slips out of the room.

VIRGIL creeps towards ARNOLD and gestures for ENIOLA to do the same. ENIOLA follows the order and they flank ARNOLD, who starts sobbing.

VIRGIL
 (whispers to ENIOLA)
 At this point you place your palm on
 their foreheads and--

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
 Happiness awaits Arnold. Take care.

As VIRGIL raises his palm to ARNOLD'S forehead, his PENDANT SPARKLES and ARNOLD ATOMISES into a cloud of glowing particles. VIRGIL produces a VIAL from his breast pocket and all the particles race into it.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
 And that's reaping, in a nutshell.

ENIOLA is agog.

11 INT/EXT. BUS/STREET. NIGHT

11

ENIOLA and VIRGIL sit on the top deck of a near empty BUS.

VIRGIL
 What you're feeling now, trust me I
 felt it too, but after a while--

ENIOLA
 I don't want to get used to that.

VIRGIL
 You learn to separate yourself from
 it.

ENIOLA
 I just saw a dead man shit himself.

Several confused passengers glance at them.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)
 Thanks for the offer but I'm good.
 Very good.

VIRGIL
 You're good selling furniture?

ENIOLA
 Fuck you. And yes, actually I am.

VIRGIL
 Well, best of luck with that. What was
 it, eight pound an hour?

ENIOLA regards VIRGIL with a withering smile.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)

That didn't come out right. Can we--I--
can I try again?

ENIOLA

I don't know who you are or how any of
tonight happened, but I know when
something sounds too good to be true.

ENIOLA presses the bell and rises. VIRGIL reaches for her arm,
but she pulls herself free.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)

This is me. Thanks for the
traumatic experience.

VIRGIL's nose suddenly bleeds. ENIOLA taps her filtrum,
prompting VIRGIL to look in mirror. When he notices the blood,
he pinches his nose and points it upward.

ENIOLA gets up, staggers down the stairs and off the bus, as it
alights at a VANDALISED BUS STOP. ENIOLA rushes down the POORLY
LIT MAIN ROAD, past a stream of BOISTEROUS homebound clubbers.

12 EXT. FLAT. NIGHT 12

An eyesore of a TOWER BLOCK looms above a neglected East
London estate. Chipped paint. Graffiti. BARKING dogs. On the
32nd floor a dim light illuminates a window.

13 INT. ENIOLA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 13

DSLR equipment and enough clothes for a look book lie strewn
about ENIOLA'S room. A CORK BOARD covered in POLAROIDs of
ENIOLA'S friendship with REGINA, DEFACED STUDENT LOAN LETTERS
and a picture of ENIOLA and KARA when they were 16, blowing
chewing gum bubbles. ENIOLA'S fingers whisk across her
MACBOOK keyboard as she types the following in a search
engine: "organisation" +

MERCY + LONDON.

ENIOLA lies on her bed hunched over her laptop wearing an
OVERSIZED WU-TANG shirt. Numerous faith-based charities pop
up. She checks the next page. Nothing. She adds the
following: "210BC", which brings up sites relating to a
cannabis strain called, "no mercy". She chuckles to herself.
Let it go. She scrolls through a few rejection emails for
Videographer jobs. She lingers on the exception: Programme
and Proposal Development Manager SAVE THE CHILDREN.

The sound of her neighbours FUCKING suddenly interrupts her.

She strains to listen. ENIOLA jumps off her bed and turns off her light.

14

INT. ENIOLA'S BEDROOM. LATER

14

ENIOLA'S face is awash with pleasure. A PASSIONATE KISS between two topless black men plays on her grimy laptop monitor. With the lights off and her headphones on, she's in a cocoon, as she masturbates under her covers.

JUMOKE (O.S)

ENI!

ENIOLA FREEZES.

JUMOKE speaks at breakneck speed. Always.

JUMOKE (O.S) (CONT'D)

You said you was gonna help me. Eni?
Is it yours sincerely after to whom it
may concern or--ENI?!

There's a knock on her door. ENIOLA closes her laptop with Olympic speed, as her sister JUMOKE (17, braces, bantu knots) barges into her room. The light goes on.

JUMOKE (CONT'D)

What you doing?

ENIOLA

What? nothing. Go away.

JUMOKE rushes in and sits on ENIOLA'S bed.

JUMOKE

You're sending something dirty aren't
you. Sexy selfie time.

ENIOLA

Bruv why you still here?

JUMOKE

My friend Cheryl sent this guy Dwayne
titty pics, which ended up on this
porn site. Now she's a cautionary
tale. Ain't that Kara?

JUMOKE wanders over to ENIOLA'S CORK BOARD and hones in on the picture of KARA and ENIOLA as schoolgirls.

JUMOKE (CONT'D)

Who keeps pictures of their ex friend
on a wall? not gonna lie, that's a bit
moist.

ENIOLA

Yours faithfully. Get out of my room.

JUMOKE

You're too rude y'know. I'm
just--i was just asking a
question-

ENIOLA (CONT'D)

Jum, you don't knock on
someone's door and then just
walk--

A FIRE ALARM SCREAMS from somewhere else in the house.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)

FUCK SAKES.

ENIOLA is on her feet in seconds. She SNATCHES her laptop as
JUMOKE tries to open her it, and then bounds out of the open
door.

15 INT. ENIOLA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY/KITCHEN. CONTINUOUS 15

ENIOLA power walks down the hallway, and trips on the house
TABBY, who YELPS and darts into her room.

ENIOLA

Sorry.

ENIOLA pushes open the kitchen door and walks into a WALL OF
SMOKE. She's COUGHING. Her eyes water. She puts her LAPTOP down
on a counter, GRABS a kitchen towel, YANKS open the oven to
reveal a blackened roast chicken, which she slams on a dinner
table loaded with tea-stained bills. Her eyes linger on an
OVERDUE RENT bill.

ENIOLA'S stomach rumbles. She rubs her face and retreats back
into the hallway.

16 INT. ENIOLA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY/FEMI'S ROOM. CONTINUOUS 16

ENIOLA drags her feet down the hallway and hovers outside a
door. She raises her hand to the door. Uncertain. She knocks.
Nothing. She knocks again.

FEMI (O.S)

Yeah?

ENIOLA pushes open the door, which is caught on a newspaper. She
staggers inside the room of her hoarder dad, FEMI. Towers of old
newspapers. Clouds of nicotine. Lottery tickets. Beer cans.

On a 52 inch screen a statuesque black woman in a SEQUINED BLACK dress (GRACE ADEBIMPE) sings on a stage in a packed arena. It's a Youtube clip.

SINGER (ON TV)

Just lose my number when you're
letting go...I'm already grown. Can't
be here no more...

FEMI (54, husk of a man wearing bookish apparel a size too big) is glued to a scarred leather armchair, smoking, as he watches the performance. FEMI uses a REMOTE to pause the TV.

ENIOLA

I thought you were watching the
chicken.

FEMI

If you are cooking it, watch it.

ENIOLA

You said (inhales) rent's overdue, am
I calling them? Dad? DAD?

FEMI

I sorted it.

ENIOLA

You did?

FEMI

Eh now. Last week. No more letters.

ENIOLA

(uncertain)

How?

FEMI

You are asking your father how? are
you serious?

ENIOLA bites her tongue. Her eyes get lost in the freeze-frame of the performance of the woman on the screen.

17

EXT. PARK - FLASH FORWARD. DAY

17

Dappled light on ENIOLA's face as she sits on a floral blanket, which is almost perfectly concealed by bushes. She rises up and down ever so slightly. ENIOLA struggles to keep the pleasure from showing on her face. From her position she can see sunbathers, families, and joggers.

Our view descends and we can see that ENIOLA is riding VIRGIL, who traces his hands up her blouse and caresses her breasts. She pushes his hands away and he chuckles.

He slips his finger into her mouth and caresses her. Her eyes close in pleasure. She doesn't notice the JOGGER bounding in their direction

Before its too late and he's unzipped, and pissing on a tree beside them--

18

INT. ENIOLA'S BEDROOM. MORNING

18

ENIOLA'S EYES BURST OPEN. She's shielding her face, lying in bed and drenched in sweat. Her panic subsides and she laughs at herself. JUMOKE is standing above her, TRACK-SUITED holding a BOWL of CEREAL, which she eats as she talks. ENIOLA What time is it? what you doing in here?

JUMOKE

You were moaning, again.

ENIOLA reaches for her PHONE. It's 7.15am.

ENIOLA

Shit.

ENIOLA leaps out of bed. After sniffing her pits she picks up a ROLL-ON antiperspirant and uses it. She slips on some BLUE JEANS and struggles to get into them.

JUMOKE

I need your advice about something.

She finally gets in the jeans and notices a hole in the crotch. ENIOLA takes them off.

ENIOLA

I'm leaving the house in five. Whoever he is just dump him.

JUMOKE

As if I only talk about boys. Who told you about that Basquiat exhibit. Exactly.

ENIOLA

Where's my blue cardigan? Jummy you need to stop taking my shit. Fuck.

JUMOKE opens her mouth and flaunts unchewed cereal at ENIOLA.

JUMOKE

Thanks for helping me with my cover letter; not like you promised or anything.

JUMOKE slips out of the room as ENIOLA RIFLES through the mounds of clothes for something to wear.

19

EXT. FUZZ. DAY

19

A TALL GLASS OFFICE on a street lined with skyscrapers bearing the names of big banking firms and insurance companies. GYM-TONED CREATIVES file in and out of the building.

HOWARD (O.S)

Workplace harassment?

20

INT. FUZZ - OFFICE. DAY

20

A LARGE SHARED WORK DESK supports the baggy eyed EDITORIAL TEAM of FUZZ(6 sun-starved 20somethings), hunched over their Macbooks. The word "FUZZ" is spray painted on the wall.

We drift to ENIOLA (BOMBER JACKET with CAMO JEANS) who sits at the end of the table having a hushed conversation with HOWARD (39, short with Spartan-build) her manager, who hovers above ENIOLA'S shoulder, watching her monitor, which plays A freeze-frame of two dancers whining together at the club night she filmed.

ENIOLA

Yeah I was thinking vox pops - profiles on women in different fields. A friend of mine--she's an actress-- works with me at--

HOWARD

It's rush hour, you're headed to work, the carriage is packed; are you going to A: watch a clip about harassment? or B: a video where a panda falls down a hill.

ENIOLA

This is a trending topic Howard. It's not--this isn't niche at all.

HOWARD

Our writers do long form pieces on this sort of thing for the ten people online who still read.

HOWARD taps ENIOLA'S shoulder and drifts away.

ENIOLA
Did you get my email?

HOWARD slinks back to ENIOLA.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)
I don't--I--y'know I wanna keep doing
this, but I can't for free--I need--
I'm broke so like yeah.

HOWARD
If it was up to me you'd all have your
own offices. We just don't have the
budget to pay you all. Yet.

ENIOLA glances at HOWARD'S pristine ROLEX, her weariness palpable.

HOWARD (CONT'D)
Our overlords in New York make these
calls. We just respond to
their vibrations. But give them
some time. They'll come around.

A VEIN in ENIOLA'S temple BULGES. She moves her head to one side, a moment before HOWARD SNEEZES onto her monitor.

HOWARD (CONT'D)
Good work on the KOKO shoot. Sorry.

ENIOLA'S eyes land on the clock: 9.37. She's up and packing her laptop at BREAKNECK SPEED.

HOWARD (CONT'D)
The dating vox pop? Can I count on
you?

ENIOLA stops. Deliberates. Should she throw this away?

ENIOLA
Sure thing.

ENIOLA BOLTS out of the room.

SWEAT-SOAKED ENIOLA power-walks down a street, dodging a swarm of gillet-clad French students. She dives into HUS. OLLY sweet-talks a gay couple with a French bulldog wearing a neckerchief. He spots ENIOLA. She's getting an earful later...

ENIOLA DUMPS her BATTERED RUCKSACK behind the counter and whips around to spot: Lord no...KARA and a LANKY BROTHER with NEAT DREADS IN A BUN. Both dressed smart-casual. KARA glides towards ENIOLA.

KARA

Eni? Oh my god! what you doing here?

OLLY is watching them.

ENIOLA

Kara--wow, hi--

SEAN

Sean. Nice to meet you.

ENIOLA shakes SEAN'S hand too vigorously.

ENIOLA

So this is your dude-fiance--that's cool. That's--he's tall. You're tall. Hi! Eniola.

KARA

What you doing here?

ENIOLA

Just on my lunch break, checking out some stuff.

ENIOLA tugs her bomber jacket, hiding the HUS logo on her shirt.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)

See anything you like?

OLLY (O.S)

Jacket

KARA and SEAN glance at OLLY who watches ENIOLA expectantly.

KARA

Excuse me?

ENIOLA

So when's the big day? you guys must be bricking it. I mean I would be. STRESS. Stress. So much stress.

KARA

June 8th.

SEAN

Which will be two years since I met this one.

SEAN gives KARA a peck on the lips, which KARA turns into a full-on french kiss. ENIOLA clears her throat and they stop.

ENIOLA

Wow, that's-that's so wow. 2 years.
Seven-hundred and thirty days.

OLLY

Eni, jacket.

ENIOLA

Tell me about it - how you met.

OLLY strides up to ENIOLA.

OLLY

(whispers)

Jac-ket. Off. Now.

Eniola takes off her jacket, hurries behind the counter and dumps her it there. OLLY heads behind the counter and disappears into his office. ENIOLA is WHIPLASHED by KARA who takes an iPhone recording of her walking back to the shop floor.

KARA

Aww you look so adorable.

ENIOLA

Can you not.

KARA lowers her phone.

KARA

How long have you been...selling
sofas?

ENIOLA

You need to delete that.

KARA

I knew it was you. The other day I
walked past and I was like, fuck off
that's not--

ENIOLA inhales deeply. All she can see is red.

ENIOLA

Bruv you need to gimme your phone
right now.

KARA

I don't need to do anyth--

ENIOLA LUNGES for KARA'S phone but KARA backs away and they tussle over it. KARA trips over a stool and lands on the floor. Her nose is bleeding.

ENIOLA

Shit. I'm sorry -I didn't--

ENIOLA offers KARA her hand. KARA drags herself to her feet and pushes ENIOLA against a SHELVING UNIT.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)

Are you twelve?

KARA

Fuck you.

OLLY creeps out of his office, furtively DEVOURING the rest of a HALF-EATEN DONUT. He notices the commotion.

ENIOLA pushes KARA back. KARA'S heel snaps and she topples OVER. ENIOLA'S surprised herself, but lets the adrenaline take over, as she yanks KARA'S iPhone from the ground.

OLLY enters the scene trying to grab ENIOLA by the arm, but she struggles free each time. Her rage makes him invisible to her. SEAN helps KARA to her feet.

SEAN

Apologise.

ENIOLA

Yeah that's not happening. What's the code?

ENIOLA can't get past the home screen passcode. The wallpaper is a selfie of SEAN and KARA beaming on a beach. OLLY yanks ENIOLA to one side.

OLLY

Consider yourself fired.

ENIOLA lets KARA'S phone hit the ground and glides out of the shop.

22

EXT. SOHO STREETS. DAY

22

VIRGIL strides down a corridor of adult entertainment shops in Soho.

23 EXT. SIDE STREET. DAY 23

VIRGIL turns into a quiet side street and approaches a barely noticeable BLACK DOOR with chipped paint. He taps it three times, pauses and then taps again four times.

Footsteps approach him. The door swings open, revealing SALLY (20s, gaunt art school goth)

VIRGIL offers SALLY a BROWN ENVELOPE.

24 INT. BUS/CENTRAL LONDON STREETS. DAY 24

ENIOLA sits on the top deck of a bus, resting her face against the window. She watches the world outside: tourists; a pack of vaping cityboys; a stream of cycling women... She checks her iPhone's cracked screen and spots a message: FUZZ: Come in ASAP. Team meeting about Barcardi launch. She puts her phone away and closes her eyes. ENIOLA dips her hand into her bomber jacket pocket and discovers VIRGIL'S MERCY BUSINESS CARD buried in the torn lining.

She considers her sorry state in the bus window.

25 INT. SALLY'S LIVING ROOM. DAY 25

A barebones room. Futon. An open suitcase overflowing with clothes - all black. A bowl of something that is now furry. Wads of cash in neat piles. A sea of old lottery tickets, which have all been ticked with a pen. VIRGIL sits on the futon as SALLY towers above her, counting twenty pound notes in the envelope VIRGIL gave her.

VIRGIL

Why count? I mean if you can see--

SALLY

Doesn't work like that. What do you want?

VIRGIL

No to small talk. Do you happen to know what this means?

VIRGIL produces his SMARTPHONE from his pocket and shows SALLY a picture of the OUROBOROS tattoo on EMILY'S (opening scene) FOREARM. SALLY snatches the PHONE and scrolls to the previous image, that reveals EMILY'S face. SALLY wells up. SALLY returns the brown envelope to VIRGIL. She frantically picks up her toiletries, her wads of cash, and her stray clothes and buries them in the suitcase.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
Um, what's going on?

SALLY
You need to find them. All of them.
You need to keep them safe.

VIRGIL
Who?

SALLY offers VIRGIL a tissue a moment before his nose bleeds.

SALLY
The people like me.

26

INT. TOWER BLOCK STAIRWELL/WALKWAY. DAY

26

ENIOLA clammers up the final few steps of a grimy stairwell and drifts down a walkway toward the sound of raised voices.

ASHRAF (O.S)
I been patient Mr Adebimpe I have. You
know I have. And I don't like being
taken for a dickhead. It's not on!

ENIOLA nears the scene of an argument: FEMI cowering behind the chain of his door, as top-heavy ASHRAF (37, SUNGLASSES, GREY SUPREME SWEATSHIRT) yells at him.

FEMI
My giro comes next week. I don't know
what you want me to tell you.

ASHRAF notices ENIOLA and raises his voice, twisting the knife.

ASHRAF
No more sob stories about your dead
wife for one. In this country if you
borrow money, you pay it back.

ASHRAF nods as he walks past ENIOLA.

ENIOLA
How much does he owe you?

ASHRAF freezes in his tracks.

ASHRAF
With the interest? A fucking lot.
Until it's paid you lot aren't welcome
in my shop.

ASHRAF skulks off. ENIOLA struggles to look at FEMI. FEMI slips back into the house.

27 EXT. CENTRAL LONDON BACK STREETS. DAY

27

ENIOLA leaves a bustling high street and delves into a dark DESERTED BACK STREET, with her eyes shifting from VIRGIL'S MERCY BUSINESS CARD to Google maps on her phone.

The map tells her that she's nearing BOLSOVER STREET. She keys in the address on the business card - 235 Bolsover Street W1PL - but it doesn't appear.

She passes the charred skeleton of a building, reaches the end of the backstreet, but still hasn't reached Bolsover Street. ENIOLA power walks down a nearby street. She consults her map. She's back in front of the charred building.

She retraces her steps. Walks down an adjacent street. Then another. And another. Her map tells her she's close to Bolsover Street. She looks up: the charred building again.

She can see the light of the main road. Should she give up? ENIOLA looks up at the heavens for answers.

28 EXT. MERCY. CONTINUOUS

28

As ENIOLA returns her gaze to the ground it's somehow night time and she's surrounded by a SEA OF FOG. The charred building has been replaced by a SOARING GLASS SKYSCRAPER. A PRISTINE SIGN reads: MERCY est 210 BC

ENIOLA

The fuck...

A STREAM OF MEN AND WOMEN IN SUITS pours in and out of MERCY'S revolving doors. Half a dozen men and women (18 - 50), as bemused and ordinary looking as ENIOLA orbit YAMA (40s, DESI, stocky, floral Gucci three-piece suit, with sandals and socks) YAMA shoots ENIOLA a smile and extends his massive hand.

YAMA

Eniola, a pleasure to meet you. My name is Yama.

ENIOLA shakes YAMA'S heavily be-ringed hand.

ENIOLA

The sky--how?

YAMA

Virgil has told me great things about you. All will be explained soon.

29 INT. MERCY - ATRIUM. NIGHT

29

YAMA leads ENIOLA and the other new recruits out of the revolving doors and into the GARGANTUAN atrium. MARBLE FLOORS. GLINTING CHANDELIERS. A row of GOLDEN ELEVATORS STRETCHES SEEMINGLY FOREVER. PNEUMATIC TUBES snake all the way up the building, past walkways hundreds of feet above.

YAMA faces the group.

AMA

Welcome to Mercy. I know what you're thinking: the cleaning bill must be insane. And you're right it is!

A constant stream of suited men and women rush past as YAMA monologues - Some in black suits, others in green and occasionally an important-seeming person in FLORAL. YAMA pauses in front of a HUGE OBELISK, which has a screen affixed to it. The names and faces of men and women (along with their time of death) appear for a few moments on the screen then fade away.

YAMA

Souls power everything you see around you. We give them a home. They keep the lights on.

YAMA guides his group into an ELEVATOR. Just as the doors are closing, ENIOLA spots VIRGIL walking across the atrium. He winks as he notices her. The doors close.

30 INT. GOLDEN ELEVATOR - MERCY

30

The ELEVATOR soars upward with a gentle HUM. YAMA, ENIOLA and the other new recruits stand squashed like sardines in a can.

31 INT. COLLECTOR OFFICE - MERCY

31

The elevator doors open, revealing a large honeycomb of cubicles. YAMA, ENIOLA and the new recruits spill out of it. Black-suited agents are hunched over desktops writing reports.

YAMA

Collectors receive information here about clients before they set off for reappings.

32 INT. ANALYST OFFICE - MERCY

32

The elevator doors open, revealing an identical honeycomb of cubicles, except for the green-suited agents hunched over desktops, immersed in their work.

YAMA

After sifting through the life experiences of the deceased, analysts then place their souls in regions tailored to their continued growth. Like repotting orchids.

ENIOLA

How many regions are there? How are people measured?

YAMA

62 trillion. And put simply: there's no hell or heaven per se.

There is a LARGE SCREEN in the room playing footage of a diverse crowd of musicians performing together in a forest. A banner of text reads: REGION - ORPHEUS 7.

33 INT. ORACLE OFFICE - MERCY

33

The elevator doors open once more to reveal a circular room with dozens of men and women in booths; their eyes white as they type at computers. YAMA The Oracles see each death before it occurs. Our collectors use that information... ENIOLA zones out having spotted something which draws her forward like a magnet.

YAMA

Eniola?

She doesn't stop. ENIOLA approaches the HUGE symbol of an OUROBOROS on the marble floor.

YAMA (CONT'D)

Eniola?

The lights suddenly FLICKER.

34 INT. ORACLE OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

34

ENIOLA turns to face YAMA, but he's no longer there: none of the new recruits are. She turns to find the ORACLES slumped over their desks, wide-eyed and lifeless.

Footsteps creep up on her. She discovers a TALL FIGURE wearing a HOODED BLACK CLOAK with a RED OUROBOROS pattern on the back.

The figure looms towards her, grabs her by the throat and lifts her off the ground. She tries to fight it off. Everything goes black.

YAMA (O.S)

Eniola?

35 INT. ORACLE OFFICE -CONTINUOUS.

35

ENIOLA'S eyes open and she finds herself sitting on a chair, with the rest of the tour group watching her along with YAMA, who offers her a glass of water. She notices the horde of ORACLES, all busy at work. No hand around her neck. She's panting. Confused. Suddenly sweaty. The Ouroboros symbol is missing from the marble floor.

ENIOLA

Bathroom? is there a--

YAMA

Of course.

36 INT. LADIES BATHROOM - MERCY

36

WHORLS of water disappear down the drain. ENIOLA cools her neck and face with the tap water. She marvels at the loud rococo decor. There's a framed print of The Embarkation For Cythera in a gilded frame. Potted aspidistras.

37 INT. HALLWAY - MERCY

37

ENIOLA slips out of the bathroom into a corridor lined with offices.

VIRGIL (O.S)

Eniola.

ENIOLA finds VIRGIL standing alone, holding a coffee cup, waiting for her.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)

Yama mentioned you were unwell. What happened?

ENIOLA

Can Mercy keep me safe? You've got Oracles--security, right?

VIRGIL Absolutely. Are there dangers? yes, but with the right training you won't be the one worrying about safety, because you'll be the danger.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)

What?

VIRGIL

Breaking Bad. Nevermind. Here, soy latte.

VIRGIL hands ENIOLA the COFFEE CUP.

ENIOLA

Thanks. How much was it?

VIRGIL

Don't be daft--

ENIOLA

I don't like owing people money.

VIRGIL

2.50.

VIRGIL shows ENIOLA the book in under his arm, which has the following text on its cover: MERCY COLLECTOR GUIDEBOOK 2018/19

VIRGIL (CONT'D)

If you'd like, we can sit down right now and read through all of that until we're both grey, or I can take you into the field, where it'll make a lot more sense.

38

INT. GLADYS' LIVING ROOM. DAY

38

A floral living room packed with the accumulated mementos of a married couple. Framed photos of a GLADYS (70) and ARTHUR (70) taken from the 50s onward. Kitsch ornaments. Swing records. A TRAIL OF BOOKS leads to GLADYS, who lies CRUSHED beneath a LARGE bookcase, which has fallen on her. VIRGIL and ENIOLA materialise in front of a COUCH covered in plastic. ENIOLA soaks in the scene.

ENIOLA approaches GLADYS.

VIRGIL

What are you--don't touch her!

ENIOLA

Not letting her husband find her like this.

VIRGI

Her very dead husband? stop--

ENIOLA crouches beside GLADYS and closes her open eyes.

ENIOLA
So she's gonna just lie here?

VIRGIL
Someone will find her; her daughter probably.

ENIOLA
Can't we let someone know? I wouldn't wanna find my mum--

VIRGIL
"Who are you? What are you doing here? How did you gain entry to Gladys Fullbright's home?" Questions create problems.

VIRGIL notices a POTTED PLANT, on the windowsill beside him, QUICKLY SHRIVELLING.

ENIOLA
What?

ENIOLA can see her breath as a wispy CLOUD.

VIRGIL
If at any time you wish to leave, just tell me.

There's a GARGLING SOUND coming from the beyond the AJAR DOOR.

39

INT. KITCHEN. CONTINUOUS

39

A neglected kitchen. The sink is brimming with unwashed plates. An overflowing bin.

VIRGIL and ENIOLA creep out of the living room door, enter the kitchen where they discover --

GLADYS' soul lying on the ground, eyes panicked, as a TRANSLUCENT DECOMPOSED MAN has its hand buried in her stomach, draining her colour.

ENIOLA
The fuck is that?

VIRGIL slides his palms against each other and his SCYTHE MATERIALISES from thin air.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)
Fucking hell.

VIRGIL taps a counter with his SCYTHE and the PHANTOM shoots him a look.

VIRGIL
When a soul isn't reaped, it turns
into a phantom.

The PHANTOM swipes at VIRGIL, who PARRIES with his SCYTHE.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
He's forgotten what it's like to be
human, so he's feeding off her.

VIRGIL delivers a successful feint then slices a CHUNK out of the PHANTOMS arm. The PHANTOM ROARS then backs away from GLADYS' SOUL, which slowly regains colour. The PHANTOM lunges at VIRGIL, who ducks under his arm and SLASHES at the PHANTOM'S torso. VIRGIL and the PHANTOM circle each other.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
Proximity is key. Maintain your
distance--

A VEIN BULGES along ENIOLA'S temple. Her eyes roll back so that only the whites are visible.

She DIVES on VIRGIL, pushing him out of the way of a SECOND PHANTOM that RUSHES towards him from behind. VIRGIL rises to his feet and glances at ENIOLA whose eyes return to normal.

The FIRST PHANTOM launches a FLURRY OF BLOWS at VIRGIL who dodges and parries as best he can. He's boxed in a corner.

The SECOND PHANTOM looms over ENIOLA. She shields herself with her arms but the PHANTOM grabs her by the throat and lifts her off her feet. Its GNARLED FINGERS dig into her shoulder.

ENIOLA'S vision blurs...She can taste death. Closes her eyes. ENIOLA falls to her knees. She just about makes out VIRGIL adroitly atomising the 2 PHANTOMS, with his SCYTHE.

40

EXT. HIGH STREET. DAY

40

ENIOLA power-walks away from VIRGIL, who follows her down a busy high road.

ENIOLA
Stay away from me.

VIRGIL

Can you please stop for just a second.

ENIOLA

Not dying at 29. No no no no. Thanks but no thanks.

VIRGIL

You did exceptionally well for your first time. With more training--

ENIOLA

There are people who need me. I asked you if you could keep me safe and *you* almost died.

VIRGIL

The Oracles would've warned me if we were in danger. We weren't because you were there.

ENIOLA

What you on about?

VIRGIL

You know what I'm talking about.

ENIOLA

You didn't tell me nothing bout zombie ghosts. Fuck sakes. That was a lot! fucking...I can't no...

As they reach a CROSSING, ENIOLA, without looking, suddenly grabs a LANKY TOURIST, YANKING him away from a DELIVEROO DRIVER who ZOOMS by. Shaken, the TOURIST PANTS HARD, gives her a thumbs up.

VIRGIL

How far forward can you see?

ENIOLA

Sometimes it's five minutes. Sometimes a week. Sometimes--

VIRGIL

A WEEK!?

ENIOLA

What?

VIRGIL

No one can know about this. No one.

ENIOLA
Am I in trouble?

VIRGIL
I know people who can help you manage
this--fine-tune it.

ENIOLA
What people?

VIRGIL
Fancy a pint?

41 INT. PUB. DAY

41

The same pub from earlier, but it's nearly deserted now. Subterranean lighting. A golf match on a large TV. TOP 40 pop plays low. An ATM in the corner.

ENIOLA sits at a booth waiting for VIRGIL who is at the bar, ordering their pints.

His smartphone vibrates on the table. She tries to ignore it, but on the third ring she picks it up. Missed call from SALLY.

She glances at VIRGIL who is now being handed their drinks by a boyish bartender.

Seized by curiosity, ENIOLA navigates to VIRGIL's messages and finds dozens from SALLY, a few from MUM and misc utility bill alerts. She goes to his image galleries and is shocked by the first image she sees: EMILY (from the outset) dead with her ouroboros tattoo visible.

ENIOLA
Why's there a picture of a dead girl
on your phone?

VIRGIL
I reaped her earlier. (noting Eniola's
troubled look) oracles predict their
own deaths; She didn't.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
Have you seen this symbol before?

ENIOLA
Today at Mercy, the oracle room - it
was there, then it wasn't.

ENIOLA glances around the pub. No one's watching them.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)

I saw them all dead, the Oracles.

VIRGIL

Did you see how it happens?

ENIOLA

No, they were already... Their eyes...the smell.

VIRGIL takes his phone back.

VIRGIL

Whoever killed Emily is doing the same to everyone who can do what you do.

ENIOLA

Why?

VIRGIL

I don't know. But If we don't stop it Mercy will collapse. Phantoms everywhere. The end of all this.

ENIOLA

Can you get rid of it? My "gift". Is there like magic surgery--

VIRGIL

You saved that man's life. You saved mine too.

ENIOLA

You don't know what it's like, trying to stop something from happening and oh look it still happens. But now you've got all this guilt cause you could've (stops short)

VIRGIL

I work with Oracles and I know it can be - exhausting, brutal. But you're on another level: seeing as far as you can - that could change everything.

ENIOLA

I can't - I'm sorry. I try to keep it low-key. Gonna keep looking for jobs-- soon as I can, I'll get on a plane.

VIRGIL

You owe me 2.50.

ENIOLA

What?

VIRGIL

Your coffee. You said you didn't want to owe me.

ENIOLA

I aint got a tenner to my name.

VIRGIL

Are you sure about that?

VIRGIL gestures towards the ATM in the corner. It's a tense moment of silence. ENIOLA approaches the ATM and keys in her pin. ENIOLA agrees to check her balance. Her mouth widens. £100.000.00

ENIOLA

Fuck me...

VIRGIL approaches ENIOLA'S side.

VIRGIL

That's an advance. You have a choice now: walk away from me and see how far one-hundred K takes you, or sign a contract with Mercy and do some good.

ENIOLA

Can I think about it?

VIRGIL

Take all the time you need.

ENIOLA meets VIRGIL's gaze and holds it.

42

EXT. OXFORD STREET. DAY

42

ENIOLA wanders down Oxford Street, weaving in and out of the clusters of aimless tourists, with her eyes glued to a message on her cracked iphone screen.

REGINA: The wanker said he fired you. U ok?

ENIOLA lifts her head just as she's walking past a BURBERRY SHOP. Her eyes linger on a BLACK DOUBLE BREASTED COAT in the display window. She slows down and considers the torn lining of her BOMBER JACKET.

43

INT. HUS. DAY

43

The HUS store is teeming with shoppers admiring sofas, coat hooks etc. From a distance we watch REGINA behind the counter, as she hands another colour-coordinated couple their bagged items, then bids them farewell.

REGINA'S gaze follows the couple to the entrance, where she spots ENIOLA entering the shop wearing the BLACK BURBERRY COAT and eating a container of JOLLOF RICE with a plastic spoon. ENIOLA strides past OLLY who stares at her agog, midway through a sales pitch to a TRENDY GRAYING COUPLE, and approaches the counter.

REGINA
(whispering)
Fuck are you doing?

ENIOLA
Getting you off the plantation.

REGINA
What's going on?

ENIOLA
How many times have you told me you
wanna quit?

REGINA
Where d'you get that jacket?

ENIOLA
Today's your last day.

REGINA
He's coming over.

OLLY arrives on the scene eyes shifting between the women.

OLLY
Eniola, what part of you're fired
didn't you understand?

ENIOLA
(to REGINA)
Check your account.

ENIOLA stares down OLLY for a moment and then wanders towards a display L-shaped couch which she throws herself onto with her feet up. OLLY follows ENIOLA as REGINA whips out her phone, ignoring several customers who approach the counter.

OLLY
Eniola? Eniola? You suddenly deaf?

ANNOYED MAN (O.S)

Excuse me!

OLLY glances back at the counter. REGINA is feverishly working her fingers on her SAMSUNG S7's touchscreen, ignoring a man in front of her with a sad combover, holding a lamp.

OLLY

I'm gonna call the police.

ENIOLA

I'm eating jollof rice - and what?

REGINA SCREAMS with wide eyes. ENIOLA rises to her feet and glides to the entrance, waiting for REGINA who follows her outside.

REGINA (PRE-LAP)

What the entire fuck? oh my god oh my god oh my god say something--

44

INT/EXT REGINA'S MINI COOPER/EAST LONDON STREETS DAY

44

REGINA has tears in her eyes as she drives herself and ENIOLA in her MINI COOPER that's seen better days. Working-class East London passes by. Kebab shops. Nail salons. Derelict working men's clubs. ENIOLA stares forward smiling.

REGINA

What's going on?! d'you win the lottery? hmm? bitch, speak!

ENIOLA

First of all: this ain't a loan. Don't wanna hear nothing bout "I'll pay you back." Second: you know my ma did music and that?

REGINA

As if i'm gonna forget your mum on Top of the Pops.

ENIOLA

Well she left me something innit. Thought dad blew it all but yeah...

REGINA

How much?

ENIOLA

Bare...

REGINA SHRIEKS with excitement.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)

You're getting them headshots and you're doing this acting thing.

REGINA

I dunno.

ENIOLA

What d'you mean you don't know?

REGINA

When was the last time you saw a Desi chick in anything - Who wasn't Frida Pinto?

ENIOLA

You can be that Desi chick innit.
(notes Regina's look) What?

REGINA

"I'm getting you off the plantation"
you're not right y'know.

They both laugh.

ENIOLA produces her PHONE, and sends the following text to

JUMOKE: You free 2nite?

45

INT. CORNERSHOP. DAY

45

ASHRAF's cornershop. Newspaper clippings of boxing legends on a wall. School kids high on sugar. ASHRAF swiping left and right on tinder on his phone behind the counter. ENIOLA - headphones on blasting R&B - glides up to the counter and SLAMS £200 on it. A confused smile on ASHRAF'S FACE.

She picks up a SNICKERS bar, hands ASHRAF a five-pound-note and leaves without collecting her change.

46

INT. RESTAURANT. NIGHT.

46

A mood-lit Michelin star restaurant. Creatives network as they tuck into lobsters and steaks. Suits hold raucous meetings in booths. JUMOKE sits uncomfortably alone at a table, glancing at her neighbouring dinners who seem at ease. She sees ENIOLA before we do and her mouth widens. ENIOLA strides towards her sister, with a smile that quickly fades.

ENIOLA

Where's dad?

JUMOKE

What we doing here? where d'you get that jacket?

ENIOLA

I asked you to bring him.

JUMOKE

You know what he's like: "go where? what for? there's food in the house"

ENIOLA plods down in the seat opposite her sister.

JUMOKE (CONT'D)

I know Hus ain't giving you enough p for us to be here, so...

ENIOLA

Told you I was at Fuzz. They gave me an office, backdated my pay.

JUMOKE glances around.

JUMOKE

So you brought us to the whitest place in London. Seen. Fufu beneath you now?

ENIOLA

You can leave if you want.

They both stare at each other and burst out laughing.

47

INT. RESTAURANT. LATER.

47

ENIOLA'S wineglass is half-empty, while JUMOKE'S remains full. ENIOLA guides a forkful of satueed potatoes and duck into her mouth. JUMOKE's eyes are closed in pleasure as she eats braised chicken.

JUMOKE

Fam...I'm done. Can't eat Morley's Chicken ever again. It's over.

ENIOLA

Mum took me here when I graduated.

They both observe a haunted silence.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)

Speaking of which--

JUMOKE
Don't ruin my high.

ENIOLA
Frank Ocean. Erykah Badu. Zadie
Smith. All went uni.

JUMOKE
Someone's been on wikipedia.

ENIOLA
There's so much you soak in about the
world -- how people think -- debates.
And the friends you make.

JUMOKE
30 odd grand debt for debates? Am I
dumb?

ENIOLA
You ain't gotta worry about the money.
We're good.

JUMOKE stares at her food, notices her sister still watching.

ENIOLA (CONT'D)
There's so much life ahead of you
and I just--

JUMOKE
Am I allowed to say no?

ENIOLA
Jum you can do what you want, but at
the end of the day people like us
can't afford to be...

JUMOKE
What, dumb? You think all these people
here are smart.

ENIOLA
I think the world takes them
seriously.

JUMOKE
(whispers)
Are you embarrassed of me?

ENIOLA reaches for JUMOKE's but her sister folds her arms.

ENIOLA
Of course not. No. no. No.

JUMOKE

Remember when you used to take me to Harrods. We'd pretend to be princesses. To be honest, I thought that place was dry; all those orange women with frozen faces. 5 grand for a fucking wallet. But I could tell how much it meant to you, and I just wanted to jam with my sister. This is long.

JUMOKE rises from her seat, pointedly picks up some chicken on her plate, debones it and licks her fingers defiantly. She wanders off.

ENIOLA exhales and glances around the room.

48 INT. YAMA'S OFFICE. NIGHT

48

Framed prints of the dutch masters. A globe decanter. Wood paneled walls. ENIOLA'S EYES COMB through her employment contract on YAMA'S desk: The organization hereby employs ENIOLA ADEBIMPE as its JUNIOR COLLECTOR...for the period 20/09/18 and ending on 20/09/19 YAMA files his nails, facing ENIOLA unwaveringly. She suddenly notices the TAG HAUER watch on YAMA'S wrist. The hands aren't moving on it, a sight that unsettles her.

ENIOLA

So sorry for wasting your time, but I think I'm gonna try--I'm gonna...I'm gonna go.

ENIOLA rises from her seat, shakes YAMA'S hand, and notices the hair rising on her forearms. She heads out of the door.

49 EXT. BOLSOVER STREET/HIGH STREET. NIGHT

49

ENIOLA wanders out of BOLSOVER STREET and joins a stream of pedestrians on the high street. She freezes in her tracks and backtracks a little, so that she can get a proper look at a CAFE she'd walked past. She spots KARA in the middle of a tense conversation with an elegant FLORAL-SUITED woman we will later know as INES (32)

50 INT. CLUB. NIGHT

50

ENIOLA (V NECK BALMAIN DRESS) and REGINA (BLACK SEQUINS DRESS) are at the centre of a sea of bodies dancing together, letting loose. ANTHEMIC HIP HOP booms. ENIOLA and REGINA knock back shots with two LADS.

ENIOLA and REGINA smile at each other as they dance with the guys. SLOW HYPNOTIC R&B. ENIOLA'S guy SQUEEZES her bum and she guides his hands away. He does it again and she gives him a look. When he smiles, she extricates herself from his arms. He reaches for her and she pushes him back HARD, disappearing into the crowd.

STACCATO STROBE LIGHTING. She scans the club, unable to spot REGINA. The vein along her temple BULGES again. Her eyes roll back until only the whites are visible. Without stopping to pause, ENIOLA glides through the venue, dodging the hands of men; helping a WAITER avoid a fall; nudging a man whose foot almost crushes a phone on the floor; and finally grabbing REGINA and DRAGGING her away from a TALL GOOD LOOKIING GUY chatting her up.

51 EXT. CLUB. NIGHT

51

The CLUB sits on a street bathed in the light of clubs, kebab shops and taxi offices. smokers mill outside, shivering in the cold. REGINA strides out of the club away from ENIOLA, who follows her.

ENIOLA

Hey hey trust me on this you dodged a bullet.

REGINA freezes on the spot.

REGINA

How many times Eni, how many times--

ENIOLA

"Tell you first" I know, I know--I'm sorry.

REGINA

Don't say sorry just don't do it!
What was wrong with this one?

ENIOLA

(Whispers)

Two months from now he cheats on you.
Some girl on Tinder.

REGINA

See, if you told me that, I dunno I could've--we could've--argh. You proper grabbed me as well.

ENIOLA holds out her forearm.

ENIOLA
You can pinch my arm really really
hard if you want.

REGINA
I'm serious - it's bare annoying. What
if I wanted to fuck tonight, or
tomorrow? Those are dick appointments
I'm never gonna have. Don't laugh.

Eniola stifles a giggle.

ENIOLA
I'll tell you next time I swear.

REGINA
I should probably head.

ENIOLA
I am sorry I gripsed you like that.
Please say something.

REGINA
Something.

ENIOLA
You're funny.

REGINA
Thanks for today, honestly.

REGINA hugs ENIOLA.

ENIOLA
Get the second 149 that comes.

REGINA heads off alone.

REGINA (O.S)
Thanks mum.

52 INT. ENIOLA'S HOUSE - CORRIDOR/LIVING ROOM. NIGHT 52

The front door is opened by ENIOLA, who sneaks in, closes the
door and leans against it.

She creeps down the hallway, pushes open the living room door,
and peeks inside. FEMI is fast asleep on his armchair.

53 INT. ENIOLA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY LATER 53

ENIOLA shuffles down the corridor, glancing at happy family

photos on the wall. She opens her door to find JUMOKE sleeping in her bed.

54 INT. ENIOLA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT 54

ENIOLA lies in bed beside JUMOKE, staring at the ceiling.

JUMOKE
How's Fuzz?

ENIOLA
Fuzz?

JUMOKE
I knew you were lying. You got a sugar daddy don't you?

ENIOLA
...Yup. He's a greasy banker named Stephen. Got three kids. Always cries after we're finished.

JUMOKE
Putting that degree to good use.

ENIOLA bites JUMOKE's shoulder.

JUMOKE (CONT'D)
Oi!

ENIOLA
Send me the cover letter for that job when you're done innit. I'll take a look.

JUMOKE
Safe.

ENIOLA glances at JUMOKE and then stares at her ceiling, with drooping eyes.

55 EXT. STREET / ENIOLA'S ESTATE. DAY 55

ENIOLA walks down her street holding grocery bags, while listening to summery chillwave on her headphones. She doesn't notice the line of cars frozen in front of a green traffic light. ENIOLA approaches the entrance to her tower.

56 INT. LIFT/WALKWAY. DAY

56

Lift doors open and ENIOLA strolls out of it with her shopping. She walks across a vast walkway lined with the houses of her neighbours. She slows when she notices a plane in the distance, sailing across the sky.

Her brow furrows as the plane makes a sudden descent toward the estate. Is this happening?! She wanders back, bracing herself. The plane causes everything to vibrate as it glides over the tower. BOOM. The force knocks ENIOLA off her feet and she collapses onto the ground.

The weekly shopping is strewn across the floor. She rises to her feet and braces herself on the walkway barrier, which gives her a view of the street, littered with lifeless bodies. Low-flying jets WHOORRRSH overhead.

Whining car alarms. A blanket of dust descends. ENIOLA abandons her shopping and rushes forward until she reaches door 67, which she finds ajar. She starts as she notices the red OUROBOROS symbol in front of her house. It's blood. BOOM. A flash of light dominates the skyline near CANARY WHARF. She pushes on her front door.

57 INT. ENIOLA'S HOUSE/CORRIDOR/KITCHEN CONTINUOUS

57

ENIOLA stands in the doorway and covers her mouth with her hands. FEMI lies in the corridor, face down in a pool of his own blood.

JUMOKE staggers into the corridor from the kitchen. ENIOLA rushes forward and manages to catch her collapsing sister, who coughs up blood. JUMOKE grabs hopelessly at ENIOLA's work polo. The fear in her eyes is unbearable.

It takes ENIOLA a moment to turn in the direction of the approaching footsteps. The same HOODED figure brandishing a SYCTHE, much like VIRGIL's, approaches. He is silhouetted by the light outside.

HOODED FIGURE
Apologies for making a mess.

JUMOKE (O.S)
You're making a mess.

When ENIOLA turns in the direction of the kitchen, her perspective morphs so that she's looking at the corridor, from the kitchen.

ENIOLA has her hands in the soapy sink water, as the tap continues to run, flooding the tired linoneum floor. ENIOLA tears up as JUMOKE approaches her side and turns off the tap.

JUMOKE (CONT'D)

What?

ENIOLA hugs her sister. When she opens her eyes she spots FEMI peeking at them from the doorway with concern. He gives Eniola a perfunctory smile, then slinks away.

58

INT. EXECUTIVE FLOOR - MERCY. DAY

58

Framed portraits of notable Oracles and Managers line the marble hallway. A barrel chested man in a straining suit sits at a small desk. The lift doors open, unleashing ENIOLA, who power walks past the secretary--

SECRETARY

Excuse me. Can I be of any help?

ENIOLA freezes.

ENIOLA

Hi yeah. I'm here to see Yama.

SECRETARY

Is Mr Yama expecting you?

ENIOLA No but. It's. I just. Is he here? I really need to speak with him. It's about the job--soul collection.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

Just a moment.

The secretary produces a colossal ledger from a nearby filing cabinet, dumps it on his desk, and skims through it.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

The position has been filled I'm afraid.

ENIOLA

Filled?

SECRETARY

Correct.

ENIOLA

Are you sure?

SECRETARY

I am sorry for your wasted trip.

ENIOLA
 (already creeping forward)
 Look, this won't take long.

The SECRETARY rises from his feet, dwarfing ENIOLA with his Goliath height. ENIOLA freezes in her tracks. He gestures for her to follow him, but she makes a desperate dash. He's faster than her and plants his massive paw on her shoulder.

VIRGIL (O.S)
 You're here.

ENIOLA looks ahead and spots VIRGIL emerging from YAMA's office.

VIRGIL (CONT'D)
 (pacifying the secretary)
 I'll walk her out.

ENIOLA
 I'm not going anywhere.

VIRGIL
 This isn't a discussion Eniola.
 Your services are no longer
 required.

ENIOLA
 (tearing up)
 Look I've seen something OK; something
 really really fucking bad and and it's
 too much. I can't--not alone. You told
 me that I was--that no one else could
 do what I do.

VIRGIL approaches ENIOLA and escorts her to the lift.

59

INT. MERCY - ATRIUM/LIFT

59

ENIOLA and VIRGIL emerge from the lift in silence along with half a dozen clerks. She glances at him as he glares ahead, striding forward.

VIRGIL
 Indecision doesn't inspire confidence
 here. I don't know what you want me to
 do. Yama needs people he can trust.

ENIOLA
 They're coming for my family.

VIRGIL inhales deeply. He scans the room for onlookers and then guides ENIOLA to a quiet corner of the atrium.

VIRGIL

Who? When?

ENIOLA

I don't know. It sounded like a man:
the same man who strangles me in the
oracle room. The thing that's going to
happen to the oracles - it's going
happen everywhere: planes falling out
of the sky; dead people everywhere.
Why aren't you saying anything?

Something has drawn VIRGIL's attention away from ENIOLA.
ENIOLA follows VIRGIL's gaze to the OBELISK, which displays a
picture of KARA smiling along with her time of death: 8.04
am.