

ADLEY
The Juniper Gallery.

Z-JONES
That's the one. You kinda just do those shapes and lines,
right?

ADLEY
Yeah. Shapes and lines.

JOY
(Thrilled about meeting Z-
JONES)

This is so fucking unreal! Just...wow...

Enter HANNAH

HANNAH
Okay, so...we're ready for Prof. Schwartz. Sorry we're so
delayed. Sir...follow me, please.

Stops, turns.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
(Subtly flirtatious)

Oh...Ms. Jones...you dropped this.

Hands Z-JONES ski mask.

Z-JONES
(too cool)
Yeah, thanks.

HANNAH seems a little riled.

ADLEY
Well, then. Sheep to the slaughter.

Z-JONES
Good luck, doc. But not too good. I need the scratch.

ADLEY
Yeah, who doesn't?

Exit ADLEY and HANNAH.

Z-JONES
Notices JOY is staring at her.
You alright?

JOY
I...just...can't believe I'm talking to you.

Z-JONES
It's no big deal.

JOY
Yeah it is. And all this time I thought you were a dude.

Z-JONES
Everyone assumes that.

JOY
I knew it, somehow. All makes sense now. You helped me define what art is...and what it can and should be. Art that changes minds and hearts.

Z-JONES
Now here you are, a competitor. Ironic.

JOY
I'm not much competition. Not for you.

Z-JONES
They'd love to give this grant to someone like you.

JOY
What do you mean, someone like me?

Z-JONES
A tuned in, young voice.

JOY
But that's you...

Z-JONES
I'm not a young voice...anymore.

JOY
You really think I have a shot? You're Z-Jones.

Z-JONES
They're not picking that guy.

(Gestures toward boardroom)

And I think I blew it in there.

JOY
What happened?

Z-JONES

One of them asked me about

(mocking bureaucratic
cadence)

The merits of my work...

(normal voice)

...so I asked him what the merits of being a rich asshole.

JOY

Hell yeah. Seriously, what do they know about art?

Z-JONES

Two things. How much it auctions for, and the resale value.

JOY

Exactly.

Z-JONES

I'm my own worst enemy sometimes.

JOY

You did the right thing.

Z-JONES

Not really. I need this money.

JOY

I'd do the mural for free. But, true, the money won't hurt.

Z-JONES

Yes, one of us will be burdened with painting a dining room mural.

JOY

Burdened?

Z-JONES

(Reaches for JOY's
portfolio)

You mind?

JOY

Oh my, god, yes! I mean, no...I don't mind. Not at all.

Z-JONES

(Flipping through)

Not bad...not bad...there it is...excellent...like it...like it...there it is again.

Closes portfolio.

Yeah, I can see why they picked you as a finalist.

JOY
(Honored by the compliment)

Really? You mean it? Wow! Thank you. Wow!

Z-JONES
Pretty pissed off shit, though. Intense. All of it. Jesus.

JOY
There's a lot to be pissed about. You know what I mean.

Z-JONES
Like what?

JOY
Like...uh, inequality, the patriarchy, growing up in West Virginia as a church kid. Yeah, I was surrounded by every reason in the world.

Z-JONES
A church kid? No shit? Like the Bible and all that?

JOY
Sunday school, youth group, speaking in tongues, the whole deal.

Z-JONES
Tongues? That's hardcore.

JOY
Everything I was taught was wrong.

Z-JONES
What about love your neighbor and that shit?

JOY
They don't mean it. Depends on the neighbor.

Z-JONES
You don't look like a church kid.

JOY
Thank god for that.

Z-JONES
What caused this great awakening?

JOY

This is gonna sound dumb, but it was art. I always loved to draw, but there was no way I could draw everything that was in my head, or at least show my parents. So I kept a secret sketchbook under my mattress. I felt myself changing with every new drawing...until I became...me.

Z-JONES

Wow.

JOY

Imagine having to keep a sketchbook a secret. How fucked up is that? No wonder I started doing murals. I don't want anyone missing now what I have to say.

Z-JONES

I get it.

JOY

You understand that art needs to be loud, bold.

Z-JONES

I dig.

JOY

It needs to confront, say something.

Z-JONES

Preach it, sister.

JOY

I was tired of the ignorance.

(Beat.)

JOY (CONT'D)

Okay, so speaking of ignorance, I had Professor Schwartz last semester. The guy flunked my final project because it "lacked nuance". You believe that shit?

Z-JONES

Gestures with JOY's portfolio.

Is it here? Your project?

JOY

Yeah, why?

Z-JONES

Show me.

JOY smiles, takes her portfolio back and opens it then closes it.