

THE BAG

Written by
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(Script sample)

Address
Phone Number

FADE IN:

OVER BACK.

TESSA (V.O.)

I feel like I just walked into an Urban Outfitters catalog. What happened to the bodega with the orange cat?

MIKE (V.O.)

Garfield got evicted. Couldn't pay its rent. Word is, it's running a speakeasy out of a PetSmart in Queens.

RAQUEL (V.O.)

That's...not how cats work.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Bright, clear skies. This neighborhood is lined with modern cafes, overpriced juice bars, boutique gyms. Gentrification in full bloom.

The TRIO steps into frame - MIKE (28) rugged, carefree - TESSA (27) bold, colorful, rebellious and RAQUEL (27) soft, warm, elegant.

They walk up the sidewalk in their old stomping ground:

RAQUEL

(looking around)

I still have dreams we live here.

Tessa plays with the settings on a CANON 5D, camera bag around her shoulder.

TESSA

This place was a dump when we lived here. I guess you prefer thrift stores over Pilates studios?

MIKE

It's called gentrification. Also, Pilates is a scam.

RAQUEL

This place is definitely not the same.

TESSA
 Yeah, well...time moves forward,
 Raq.
 (about Mike)
 Unlike some people I know.

Mike uncaps a flask, takes a sip, just enough to keep a buzz.
 Tessa eyes him.

TESSA (CONT'D)
 Do you ever stop drinking?

MIKE
 I'm a mixologist. It's called
 professional development.

TESSA
 You're a bartender at O'Malley's.
 That's like a guy at Subway calling
 himself a "sandwich artist".

MIKE
 And yet, it's some how classier
 than your Instagram. Getting a
 little porn-y over there, huh?

Tessa rolls her eyes but fights a smile.

RAQUEL
 Come on, guys. Can we just be here?

TESSA
 "Here" isn't quite here anymore,
 now is it?

MIKE
 Nope. Now it's an open air Whole
 Foods.
 (pointing)
 Look-"Artesian Donuts" with a line
 outside the door. Sheep.

TESSA
 (to Raquel)
 He's just mad the bar's gone.

MIKE
 (look of disgust)
 I'm mad because the bar is now a
 kombucha lounge with a Himalayan
 salt wall.

RAQUEL
(looking around)
Man, can you believe it's been five
years already?

Tessa takes another picture.

TESSA
I sure can...

RAQUEL
Aww, the coffee shop is gone too!?
I loved that place.

MIKE
You loved the WiFi with no passkey.

Tessa chuckles.

RAQUEL
(cracks a smile)
That too.

A beat. They arrive at an old apartment building—a little
more run-down than they remember.

MIKE
Home sweet home.

RAQUEL
Once upon a time.

Mike shrugs.

TESSA
I swear this place got smaller.

MIKE
Nah, you just got bigger.

TESSA
(playfully offended)
Excuse me?!

MIKE
I meant your ego. And your forehead
maybe.

Tessa scoffs.

RAQUEL
He meant your following.
(to Mike)
Right, Mike?

MIKE

That's not what I meant.

Tessa smirks. So does he.

They settle, look up at the building, take it in. A beat.

RAQUEL

You guys ever think about the last night we were here? Right before we all left?

Tessa thinks, tone shifts.

TESSA

(honestly)

I remember packing till five in the morning and vowing to never speak to either of you again.

MIKE

I remember someone crying in the bathtub because she couldn't fit all her shoes in the moving truck.

TESSA

That wasn't me.

MIKE

That was definitely you.

TESSA

If I don't post it, did it even happen?

MIKE

God, if people knew who you really were, they'd unfollow immediately.

TESSA

Well, luckily, I have a nice ass, they ain't unfollowing shit.

Mike smirks, shakes his head.

MIKE

Classy. Real classy.

He takes another swig.

RAQUEL

(saving the moment)

Well, I'm happy we're here now.

MIKE

So what are we doing back here
Tessa? You thinking about us moving
back in? Becoming a big ole fucked
up family again?

TESSA

You didn't read my text? Seriously?

MIKE

I was shit faced last night, I
thought my Uber driver was Red Foxx
from Sanford and Son.

Raquel laughs, smacks him in the shoulder. He remembers:

MIKE (CONT'D)

We're recreating that photo right?
From graduation?

RAQUEL

(to Mike)

It's the "then & now" challenge.
The whole class is doing it. I
think it'll be fun.

MIKE

Yeah, I guess that's kind of cool.
Let's make it quick, I have work in
a couple hours.

Someone comes out of the building, Tessa lights up.

TESSA

Yes! Hold that! Hold that!

As they slip by, the RESIDENT wonders:

RESIDENT #1

(confused)

Hi, uh, do you live in the building
or...?

They've already disappeared inside:

MIKE (O.S.)

We're visiting your mother!

EXT. APARTMENT ROOFTOP - MOMENTS LATER

The camera shutter clicks. The self-timer beeps its last,
capturing the three friends standing awkwardly together in
their old cap and gowns-nostalgic, amused.

As soon as the shot is taken, they break apart, taking off their getups.

MIKE

Alright, did we get it?

Tessa runs up to the camera, checks it out.

TESSA

Wow. Five years later and we still look like the same three people that have no idea what they're doing.

RAQUEL

Because we don't.

MIKE

Speak for yourselves! I have a plan. Goals and shit.

TESSA

Going home and finishing every bottle in your apartment before the weekend is not a plan, Mike.

MIKE

That sounds like a master plan...
(thinks)
Yeah, I'll go with that.

He takes another sip from his flask. Raquel chuckles. He offers her the flask, she declines.

TESSA

At least you're consistent.

RAQUEL

I thought by now we'd have it figured out. You know, jobs, relationships, maybe a vague sense of direction-

MIKE

Five years ago, we were eating gas station hot dogs at 2AM after getting sloshed at Tuesday Baby Tuesdays. Let's not pretend our expectations were that high.

RAQUEL

Yeah but back then, we thought this part of life would be...different.

MIKE

Better.

TESSA

There's always OnlyFans...

She jumps her eyebrows and points the camera at them. Mike and Raquel smirk, brush it off.

MIKE

I don't know. Maybe this is what life is—winging it, barely keeping up, hoping no one notices.

TESSA

That's deeply depressing.

RAQUEL

I agree. Let's get the *F* out of here before we spiral.

Tessa moves to grab her camera tripod, pauses. Something catches her eye.

A SHOE,

just barely peeking out from behind the rusted air vent.

TESSA

What...what is that?

Mike looks over.

MIKE

That's a shoe Nancy Drew. People where them.

Raquel looks over her shoulder.

TESSA

Yeah, well this one isn't moving.

Raquel gets up, checks it out, her stomach knotting. Mike sighs, already over it—until he steps forward and sees what they see.

A BODY,

slumped behind the vent.

A BADGE,

streaked with dried blood.