



A Christmas Redemption
By J.A. Brown

LOGLINE:

15 years after her twin brother's untimely death on Christmas Eve, Ebonee Pritchard returns home facing a holiday she truly despises. After her mother's wish, Ebonee is greeted by 4 Christmas spirits, the last of them, Revenge.

SYNOPSIS:

Ebonee Pritchard, a driven and successful corporate raider in Charlotte, North Carolina, faces a life-altering journey during the Christmas season. Known for her ruthless business tactics, Ebonee's life takes a dramatic turn when she returns to her hometown for her uncle's funeral. Despite her success, Ebonee harbors deep-seated guilt and unresolved grief over the death of her twin brother, David, 15 years earlier, a death she inadvertently caused.

Upon arrival, Ebonee plans to shut down the town's beloved but failing candy factory, which is now managed by her high school best friend, Rose Davies. Rose is struggling financially and personally, especially as a single mother to her son, Zaire, who has serious health issues. Ebonee's initial plan to dismantle the factory for profit starts to falter as she reconnects with her past, including Rose and Marcus "Shadow" Caldwell, a major drug dealer she once romanced.

The plot thickens on Christmas Eve when Ebonee's mother, Regina makes a wish to help change her daughter's attitude towards Christmas and life. Later that night Ebonee is visited by four spirits: the Ghost of Christmas Past, Present and Future, and the unusual Ghost of Revenge. These spectral visits force Ebonee to confront her past actions, particularly on the night of David's death. The spirits reveal not only her role in the tragic event but also the dire consequences of her current path, including Zaire's worsening condition.

Faced with these revelations, Ebonee undergoes a profound transformation. She sees the potential for change, not just for herself but also for the community she was ready to dismiss but also redemption against the people responsible for David's Death. Motivated by a newfound sense of responsibility and compassion, Ebonee devises a plan to save the candy factory, which involves innovative business strategies and securing a deal that revives the factory while preserving local jobs.

As the Christmas spirit works its magic, Ebonee not only mends her relationships but also begins to rebuild her life, finding forgiveness and a sense of purpose that had eluded her for years.

A CHRISTMAS REDEMPTION

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FADE IN:

EXT. MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH - DAY - 15 YEARS EARLIER

SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA

The church stands solemn and dignified amidst a sea of parked cars. Mourners, dressed in black, make their way inside, the atmosphere heavy with grief and the murmur of hushed voices.

INT. MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH - DAY

Soft spiritual music played on an organ fills the CHURCH. The church is packed. Standing room only. The congregation is a mix of loved ones, family, and friends. ROSE DAVIES (17) African American, somber. Seated with her parents (mid-40s).

Rose pivots. TOMMY WEATHERS (18) Caucasian, tall, very muscular, wearing his SCHOOL LETTER JACKET. MARCUS "SHADOW" CALDWELL (25) African American. Local Drug Dealer. An imposing figure, sitting with his associates. His presence commanding yet respectful.

Marcus is adamantly pointing his finger. Yelling at Tommy in a heated discussion. Suddenly. Tommy angrily walks away.

The focus shifts to the first row of pews. A visibly distraught EBONEE PRITCHARD (17) African American, beautiful. Sits. She's an emotional wreck.

Her mother. REGINA PRITCHARD (40) African American, beautiful. Her uncle, OSCAR SAMUALSON (45) African American. Flank her. Offering silent support.

A PASTOR'S comforting voice echoes through the church. Ebonee hears none of it. Her grief is a deafening silence in her heart.

PASTOR (V.O.)

(soothing)

We are gathered here to celebrate
the life of David Pritchard, a soul
taken too soon...

Ebonee and her family rise. They slowly make their way to the open casket at the front. The congregation watches their faces a tapestry of empathy and sorrow.

INT. MT. ZION BAPTIST CHURCH - AT THE CASKET

Ebonee looks down at DAVID PRITCHARD (17) deceased, her TWIN BROTHER. David's face. Peaceful yet marred by scars and swelling. Evokes a silent scream in Ebonee's heart.

Tears blur her vision. She reaches out. A trembling hand wanting to touch David one last time. She's unable to bridge the finality of death.

YOUNG EBONEE

I'm so sorry, David... I should
have listened to you.

A CLOSEUP of David's face transitions into a surreal moment.

Suddenly. David's eyes flick open. Lifeless yet seeing. Pulls Ebonee into an embrace that crosses the boundaries between life and death.

DAVID (V.O.)

(echoing)

You murdered me..., Ebonee... why
did you murder me!?

INT. EBONEE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS - PRESENT DAY

Ebonee Pritchard. Now 32. Slender, her striking features echoing a young Halle Berry. Bolts upright in bed. Gasping for breath.

She sits up in her bed. Alone. The silence oppressive. Her breathing slows. Her eyes wide.

EBONEE

It was just a dream... just a
dream.

She swings her legs over the side of the bed. Head in hands.

EBONEE

(whispering)

I don't know how to find peace,
David... I don't know how.

SUPER: DECEMBER 22ND

EXT. CHARLOTTE NORTH CAROLINA - DAY

A gentle snow falls over the city.

INT. AMALGAMATED ENTERPRISES - DAY

Nestled in the heart of Charlotte. AMALGAMATED ENTERPRISES dominates the city's skyline. One of the city's tallest skyscrapers.

Its name emblazoned in bold. Large letters across the building's façade. Visible for miles around.

INT. EBONEE PRITCHARD'S OFFICE - DAY

Ebonee's office is modern and sleek, but Christmas is nowhere in sight. No decorations. No festive spirit.

Ebonee. Sharply dressed in a tailored power suit. Sits behind her desk, her demeanor is focused and intense. She's in the middle of a conference call. Speakerphone on.

EBONEE

Gentlemen..., I've seen your financials. You're bleeding cash..., and you know it. My offer is more than generous given the circumstances.

From the speakerphone. Multiple voices scramble to respond. A mix of desperation and defiance.

EXECUTIVE #1 (V.O.)

Ebonee..., please..., it's Christmas. We just need a little more time to turn things around.

Ebonee leans back. A smirk playing on her lips. Unimpressed.

EBONEE

Christmas...? That's your argument...? Business doesn't take a holiday, gentlemen.

A close-up of Ebonee's face. Her gaze cold. Calculating.

EXECUTIVE #2 (V.O.)

But thousands of jobs are at stake. Families..., communities...

Ebonee interrupts. Her tone sharp, almost biting.

EBONEE

(non-caring)

I don't care...! And whose fault is that...? You've had years to fix your mess. Time's up.

She pauses. letting her words sink in.

EBONEE

Here's the deal... You accept my offer..., or by New Year, you'll find yourselves in bankruptcy court... Your choice.

Silence on the line. The tension is palpable.

Ebonee's hand hovers over the speakerphone. Ready to end the call. She's in control, unyielding.

EXECUTIVE #3 (V.O.)

We'll... we'll take the offer.

Ebonee smiles. A predator having caught her prey.

EBONEE

Wise decision... My team will send over the paperwork. Enjoy your holidays, gentlemen.

She ends the call with a decisive click. Leans back in her chair. A look of triumph on her face.

Her cellphone buzzes with a text message. She glances at it. Her expression unchanging.

CLOSE ON PHONE SCREEN:

MOM'S CELLPHONE MESSAGE

Remember, Uncle Oscar's funeral is tomorrow. -Mom

Ebonee sighs deeply. She stands up. Looking out over the city. The view of her office reflects behind her in the window.

She glances at a calendar marked "December 22". She scoffs at a small, flashing CHRISTMAS TREE with HOLIDAY DECORATIONS in her coworker's office.

EBONEE

(to herself)

Bah humbug...! Christmas... I hate Christmas.

Ebonee looks out the window again. Her train of thought elsewhere. Remembering.

SUPER: CHRISTMAS EVE - 15-YEARS EARLIER

EXT. PRITCHARD FAMILY HOME - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

A modest home in Salem North Carolina, warmly lit from within. Snow gently falls. Christmas music emanates from the house.

The scene is quiet. Except for the muffled sounds of an argument coming from the backyard.

EXT. PRITCHARD FAMILY HOME - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

YOUNG EBONEE (17), rebellious and angry, faces off against her twin brother, David Pritchard (17), who is visibly frustrated.

David. Holding a small ziplock bag. Its contents implying her involvement with drugs.

DAVID

What's this, Ebonee!? Huh!? You think this is a game!? Do you think you're invincible!?

YOUNG EBONEE

Leave me alone, David! It's my life... I don't need you playing Dad! He's dead!

David steps closer. His voice softening, trying a different approach.

DAVID

I'm not trying to be Dad. I'm your brother, stupid! I'm scared for you, Ebb. This path you're on... it leads to nowhere good.

Ebonee looks away. A mix of guilt and stubbornness on her face.

YOUNG EBONEE

(muttering)
I can handle it.

DAVID

No..., you can't. Not alone... Let me help you. There's so much more for you than this, Ebb.

Ebonee scoffs, shaking her head.

YOUNG EBONEE

Like what...? Staying here...,
being stuck in this dead-end ass
town like everyone else, working at
the fucking candy factory? Get the
Fuck...

David's patience starts to wear thin. His concern turning to
desperation. He gestures at Ebonee.

DAVID

Keep your voice down, Ebb... It's
better than being dead or in jail!
You have a chance to make something
of yourself..., to get out of here,
go to college... Don't throw it
away.

Ebonee's eyes flicker with vulnerability. She quickly masks
it with anger.

YOUNG EBONEE

Maybe I don't want to get out,
David...! Ever think about
that...!? Plus..., Marcus will not
let anyone go. He told them that
they have to pay their dues. Do you
know what that means?

David walks closer to Ebonee. He juggles the bag of drugs.

DAVID

Well..., you don't have to worry
about that, do you?

YOUNG EBONEE

What...? What are you talking
about?

DAVID

You and Marcus..., I heard you two
were a couple.

YOUNG EBONEE

Where did you get that shit from,
David!? Nobody knows about Marcus
and me.

DAVID

Don't be so naive, Ebb... Mom
always told us..., what you do in
the dark, will always come to light
later and your feelings for Marcus
will betray you.

(MORE)

DAVID (CONT'D)
So, what about this
relationship..., that doesn't seem
creepy to you. He's twice your age!

YOUNG EBONEE
Marcus says he loves me.

DAVID
Marcus is a drug dealer...! He
loves everyone. The MAN is a
pedophile..., do you know what that
is?

YOUNG EBONEE
Yes..., but he's not like that.

David. His frustration peaking.

DAVID
We might be twins, Ebb..., but we
don't share the same common sense.
That's fine..., do what you want!
But I won't watch you destroy your
life. Marcus Caldwell doesn't care
about you. And if you keep this
up..., I promise you Marcus is
gonna get you locked up or even
worse..., killed!

David throws the bag of drugs down at Ebonee's feet. A mix
of anger and heartbreak on his face.

DAVID
When you're ready to get serious
about your life, sis we'll talk. I
know someone that can help you. I'm
going for a jog. I need to clear my
head.

YOUNG EBONEE
You do that, David...! Jog your
black ass away and don't come back!

David turns and jogs away. Leaving Ebonee alone in the snowy
backyard.

EXT. SALEM STREETS - NIGHT

David jogs alone down the snow plowed deserted streets of
Salem. His breath visible in the cold air. He's deep in
thought. His earlier anger replaced with worry.

He pauses. Looking back in the direction of home. He contemplates going back, but ultimately decides against it.

David jogs around a corner. He disappears into the night.

EXT. PRITCHARD FAMILY HOME - BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Ebonee is still standing in the same spot. Looking down at the bag of drugs at her feet.

She kicks it away in frustration. Then looks in the direction David went. Her cellphone beeps, it's a text from Marcus.

CLOSE ON PHONE SCREEN:

MARCUS TEXT MESSAGE

Did you make the delivery yet? -
Marcus.

INT. EBONEE PRITCHARD'S OFFICE - DAY - PRESENT DAY

EBONEE

(into phone)

Hey, Mom... Yeah, I saw your
message. I didn't forget, I'll be
there.

A brief pause. She listens to her mother's response. Her voice inaudible.

EBONEE

No..., I haven't forgotten where we
live. I'll see you this evening.

She ends the call. The forced frown fading. She looks around her sterile office. A storm of emotions crosses her face. She grabs her coat.

INT. EBONEE'S APARTMENT - DAY

A high-end, equally minimalist apartment. Ebonee is packing a suitcase. Her movements mechanical. She stops. Holding a photo frame. It's an old picture of her and David.

EBONEE

(whispering)

Goddammit!

She places the frame gently on the bed. She resumes packing.

EXT. CHARLOTTE DOUGLAS INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

A bustling scene. Christmas music plays throughout the airport. Ebonee. Carrying her small suitcase and laptop. Makes her way through the crowd. Her face set. Determined. Headed towards security.

Some passengers carrying wrapped presents. Some stop and view a large CHRISTMAS TREE display. A TRAIN TRACK with a large MOTORIZED TRAIN with PRESENTS moving around it.

Ebonee disgustedly mumbles. She walks past the tree. A little Caucasian girl age 5 stops Ebonee.

LITTLE GIRL
Merry Christmas Miss...

She hands Ebonee a wrapped CANDY CANE. Ebonee angrily swats the candy cane away. It hits the floor and shatters. The little girl cries. She runs to find her parents.

INT. AIRPLANE CABIN - DAY

Ebonee sits by the window. The cabin lights dimmed. She stares out into the darkness, the city lights fading below as the plane ascends.

She pulls out her laptop, She is lost in thought.

She opens her laptop scrolling through emails. She clicks on an email from the corporate office, her brows furrowing as she reads.

CLOSE ON LAPTOP SCREEN

The email is succinct, expressing condolences for her uncle's passing. But quickly pivoting to corporate directives.

The message is clear: "While in Salem, proceed with the shutdown and liquidation of the Davies' Candy Factory because of its underperformability, paving the way for a corporate takeover."

Ebonee leans back. Closing her eyes.

EBONEE
(whispering)
Great... From grieving to axing
jobs... Merry Christmas to me.

She closes her laptop. A sigh escaping her lips. She gazes out the window.

EXT. SALEM, NORTH CAROLINA - EVENING

The plane lands in a much smaller airport, surrounded by snow-covered fields.

Ebonee disembarks. Pulling her coat tighter around her neck. The cold air hits her. A stark reminder of the change in temperature.

EXT. SALEM STREETS - EVENING

The Limo drives through Salem. Christmas decorations are everywhere. She watches the town pass by. A mix of nostalgia and apprehension on her face.

LIMO DRIVER
(pointing out)
They've really gone all out for
Christmas this year, huh?

Ebonee merely nods. The limo pulls up to a modest house. The Pritchard family home. She takes a deep breath. She exhales.

EBONEE
(whispering)
Here we go...

EXT. PRITCHARD FAMILY HOME - EVENING

Ebonee steps out. Her posture rigid. A suitcase in hand. She pauses. Looking up at the house.

The front door opens. Regina, now (55), slightly older emerges. She's aged gracefully. Her presence still commanding, with a hint of sass. She spots Ebonee.

REGINA
Ebonee...? Is that really you...?
After all these years without a
visit?

Ebonee takes a moment. Then approaches. Her expression softening at the sight of her mother.

EBONEE
Yes..., it's me, Mom.

Regina descends the porch steps rapidly, closing the distance. She envelops Ebonee in a tight hug. Ebonee stiffens. Then slowly relaxes. Allowing herself a moment of vulnerability.

REGINA

Look at you..., all grown up and
too busy for your old mom.
Years..., Ebonee. It's been years.

Ebonee looks down. The guilt and regret tangible.

EBONEE

I know, Mom... I'm sorry. Things
got... complicated.

Regina scrutinizes her daughter. Her sassy demeanor
softening into concern.

REGINA

"Complicated" seems to be your
favorite word... But you're here
now. Oscar would have been glad...
even if it took his funeral to get
you back.

Ebonee glances around at the Christmas lights once more. Her
discomfort with the festive atmosphere palpable.

The mention of Uncle Oscar brings a fresh wave of sorrow.
Ebonee's facade cracks.

EBONEE

I wish I'd come home sooner. I
thought I had more time.

Regina places a comforting hand on Ebonee's shoulder.

REGINA

Oscar knew you loved him, in your
own way. Let's focus on celebrating
his life today, alright?

Ebonee nods.

EBONEE

You've gone all out with the
decorations..., huh? The whole
block's lit up like a runway.

REGINA

(chuckling, nudging
Ebonee playfully)
Oh, hush... It's Christmas! Your
Uncle Oscar loved the lights... and
so did you, once upon a time.

Ebonee manages a half-smile.

EBONEE

Yeah..., I remember. Uncle Oscar
always made it... special.

Regina smiles.

They reach the door. Regina turns to Ebonee. Her expression
serious yet full of love.

REGINA

He'd have been so happy to see you,
Ebonee... We all are... Let's focus
on being together now, okay?

Ebonee nods. She musters a laugh.

INT. DAVIES CANDY FACTORY - DAY

The factory is bustling with activity. Workers move about,
machinery hums. Ebonee approaches the receptionist. MARTHA
(mid 40s) husky.

EBONEE

I'm here to see the owner..., Mrs
Davies.

MARTHA

Oh..., you must be new to town.
Everyone knows her as Rose... Let
me fetch her for you.

Martha leaves. Ebonee looks around. Her expression
unreadable.

Moments later. ROSE DAVIES now 32, slim and beautiful
enters. Recognition flashes in Ebonee's eyes.

ROSE

Ebonee...? Is that really you?

EBONEE

(taken aback)
Rose..., it's been a long time.

ROSE

Yes..., way too long. So..., to
what do I owe the pleasure of your
visit? If I'd known you were
coming..., I would have baked a
cake.

Rose chuckles.

EBONEE
(straight to the point)
I'm here on behalf of Amalgamated
Enterprises. We're evaluating local
businesses for potential...
operational adjustments.

Rose's smile fades.

ROSE
Operational adjustments...? Speak
plainly, Ebonee.

Ebonee hesitates. She decides to be direct.

EBONEE
Your factory isn't performing well
financially... We're considering a
takeover... and likely closure.

Rose's face hardens.

ROSE
Closure...? What the Fuck...! Do
you have any idea what this factory
means to this city!? To the
families who've worked here for
generations!?

EBONEE
It's business, Rose... Sentiment
doesn't keep the lights on.

ROSE
And what about the people...? Or
did you forget about them when you
left town?

Ebonee looks away, uncomfortable. Rose presses on. Her voice
a mix of desperation and defiance.

ROSE
This factory has been the heart of
Salem for over 70 years. With a
little capital and
restructuring..., we can turn
things around. We just need more
time.

EBONEE
Time is a luxury, Rose... One that
Amalgamated Enterprises isn't
willing to extend you.

Ebonee remains unmoved. Her facade unbreakable.

EBONEE

My decision is based totally on financial viability..., not nostalgia.

ROSE

I thought there might be some of the old Ebonee left... Someone who cared... I see I was wrong.

Ebonee watches her go. She's left standing alone amidst the noise of the factory.

INT. TOWN HALL - EVENING

The factory floor has been hastily arranged for a town hall meeting. Rose stands at the front. Facing a crowd of anxious employees and townsfolk.

Rose is about to speak. Ebonee enters. Causing an immediate stir. Boos and jeers fill the room. She makes her way to the front.

Rose stands at the podium. Addressing the concerned and anxious crowd.

ROSE

Please..., let's give everyone a chance to speak... Even her.

Ebonee grabs the PODIUM MICROPHONE. Her expression stoic in the face of hostility.

EBONEE

I understand your concerns..., but the decision is final. The factory's performance doesn't justify its continuation in its current form.

A murmur of anger ripples through the crowd.

TOWNSPERSON

And what about our jobs...? Our families...?

EBONEE

It's a tough decision..., but it's necessary for progress. I suggest you start looking for new opportunities.

The crowd's anger grows. Marcus "Shadow" Caldwell, now 40, steps forward. The room falls into an uneasy silence. He approaches the microphone.

MARCUS
Let me speak!

Marcus's presence commands attention. He looks over at Ebonee. Then addresses the crowd.

MARCUS
I've heard your concerns tonight..., and I see an opportunity. I'm willing to take over the factory..., but sacrifices are needed. Salaries will have to be cut until we're back in the black.

Whispers and uneasy looks are exchanged among the crowd.

MARCUS
And I have other plans for this place..., Rose. Plans that extend beyond candy production.

Rose interjects. Wary but desperate.

ROSE
What kind of plans, Marcus...? This factory is the lifeblood of this town..., our town.

Marcus gives a non-committal shrug. His gaze locking with Ebonee's.

MARCUS
Let's just say... I see untapped potential here. And as for you, Ebonee..., I never thought I'd see you in a suit. You've come a long way from running errands for me.

The room goes silent. The implication hanging heavy in the air. Marcus's news to everyone, adds a layer of tension.

EBONEE
That was a long time ago, Marcus. People change.

MARCUS
Do they...? Or do they just find new ways to exploit others?

Rose looks between them.

ROSE
 (to Marcus)
 If you're going to invest..., the
 community needs assurances. We
 won't stand by and watch you
 dismantle what we've built.

Marcus smiles. A predator among prey.

ROSE
 We've been the backbone of this
 community for over 70 years. My
 grandparents built this factory
 with their bare hands..., and then
 my parents... and now me..., and
 we're not about to let it crumble
 because of corporate greed!

Applause and shouts of agreement fill the room.

MARCUS
 Oh..., you'll find I'm a man of my
 word, Rose... As for assurances...,
 you have my name. That should be
 enough.

The crowd is uneasy. Ebonee steps down. Her gaze lingering
 on Marcus before scanning the crowd's worried faces.

EBONEE
 (to Rose as she passes)
 Be careful with him. He's not what
 he seems.

ROSE
 Neither are you, Ebonee...! At
 least I know what I'm getting with
 Marcus..., I have no idea what I am
 getting with you.

Rose watches Ebonee leave. Then turns to face Marcus. Her
 resolve hardening.

EXT. DAVIES CANDY FACTORY - NIGHT

The meeting disperses under a heavy cloud of uncertainty.
 Workers and townsfolk exit into the chilly night, their
 faces etched with concern and fear for the future.

EXT. SALEM - NIGHT

Ebonee walks alone through the quiet streets of Salem.

INT. SALEM LOCAL BAR - LATER

Ebonee steps into the dimly lit bar. The atmosphere thick with the smell of aged wood and stale beer. The chatter and clinking of glasses provide a backdrop to her entrance. She finds a spot at the bar. She orders a drink.

Nearby. TWO CAUCASIAN MEN, one in his 40s and the other younger, are engaged in a heated discussion about the city's problems.

MAN #1
(frustrated)
...and the homelessness is out of control. It's like the city's just given up on them.

MAN #2
Crime's skyrocketing too... Seems like nobody's safe anymore.

Their conversation catches Ebonee's attention. The first man notices and decides to pull Ebonee into their debate.

MAN #1
(to Ebonee)
What do you think, lady...? This city's falling apart, right?

Ebonee. Slightly taken aback. Masks her surprise with a sip of her drink before answering with a hint of sarcasm.

EBONEE
(dryly)
Are there no prisons...? Are there no workhouses...? Are they still in operation?

The two men share a look before bursting into laughter, appreciating Ebonee's dark humor.

MAN #2
Exactly...! Maybe that's the solution, huh?

Their laughter fades. They turn back to their drinks. Ebonee notices Tommy Weathers, now 33, limping her way.

Tommy's disheveled look favoring his right leg. Limp and staggers towards her carrying an empty shot glass.

His appearance is a stark contrast to the promising three-letter ATHLETE he once was in high school.

EBONEE

Tommy...!? Tommy Weathers..., is that you!?

Tommy tries ignoring her looking the other way. Ebonee is adamant. She turns her expression, one of shock and disbelief at Tommy's appearance.

EBONEE

Tommy...? Oh my God, man...! What the hell happened to you...? I thought you went to the NFL.

TOMMY

(ashamed)

Oh..., hi Ebonee... I didn't expect to see you here.

Tommy slumps onto a bar stool next to Ebonee. Waving off the bartender's wary look. He orders another drink.

TOMMY

I'll..., I'll have a double bourbon!

The bartender fills his glass again.

TOMMY

Yeah..., the NFL. I had lots of promise after college..., you know? Then..., BAM... my knee gave out right before the combine. Tore my ACL... and just like that..., it was all over.

He takes a long drink. The sorrow evident in his eyes.

TOMMY

(to himself)

Came back to Salem..., hoping for a fresh start. But injuries kept coming..., and so did the drinks. Now..., here I am. The town's tragic story.

Ebonee. Momentarily lost for words, watches Tommy drown his sorrows.

EBONEE

I'm sorry, Tommy... I had no idea.

Tommy waves her off. A self-deprecating laugh escaping his lips.

TOMMY

When life throws you fucking curveballs, Ebonee... It's all about how you swing back... and I missed... But hey..., we're not all meant for happy endings, right?

The conversation lulls into a reflective silence. Broken only by the ambient noise of the bar.

EBONEE

Maybe it's not about the ending, Tommy... Maybe it's about what we do when we're faced with adversity.

Tommy looks at Ebonee.

TOMMY

(half-smiling)

Maybe you're right..., or maybe some of us are just too far gone. But it's nice to hear someone still believes in second chances.

EBONEE

I don't believe in second chances, Tommy... But I do believe that we are who we are..., and you can change if you want to or not.

Ebonee nods.

TOMMY

I've done some bad shit in my life, Ebonee..., some of which I could never be forgiven for..., and it's true about what they say about Karma... and it's finally catching up to me.

Tommy takes another long sip of his bourbon.

EBONEE

You should get some professional help... Talk with someone other than yourself helps.

Tommy chuckles. Shaking his head in disbelief at Ebonee's fake optimism. He drunkenly raises his glass.

TOMMY

To second chances then..., and to those who get them. May they make the most of it.

(MORE)

TOMMY (CONT'D)

So, Ebonee..., why are you here...?
I saw you speaking at the town hall
meeting.

Ebonee offers a wry smile.

TOMMY

So..., what's your play...? Are you
gonna let Shadow take over the
factory?

Ebonee sighs.

EBONEE

Hell no..., over my dead body.
He'll just tear down the factory
and put up some overpriced
housing... or worse. Even when I
was with him..., I never trusted
him to ever do the right thing.

Tommy drunkenly nods.

TOMMY

Is it worth putting all of those
people out of work and closing down
the candy factory? Especially at
Christmas.

EBONEE

I don't care about these people
Tommy... I'm here to do a job and
I'm burying my uncle tomorrow...,
so mind your business and go the
fuck home.

Tommy watches Ebonee swallows the last of her drink. She
sets the glass down with a heavy clink.

She gathers her belongings. She's met by two imposing
figures, African American twins. Both in their mid-20s,
muscular. Dressed in long black trench coats.

The twins. Synchronized in both speech and movement. Address
her with a stern tone.

TWIN 1 & TWIN 2

Ebonee..., Shadow wants a word with
you.

Ebonee gazes out the window. Spots the sleek silhouette of a
GREY MERCEDES BENZ G-Wagon SUV parked outside. In the back
seat. Marcus "Shadow" Caldwell awaits.