

ROBBY

It must be good for your work. Can I read it?

DAVIS

Read what?

ROBBY

The script.

DAVIS

It's not ready for other people's eyes. It's still pretty raw.

ROBBY

("What? Please?")

Oh, you're bringing it *raw*, huh?

DAVIS

Like, from-my-head raw. Writing's like cooking from scratch. You've got to try some things before you serve it up to people, know'mean?

ROBBY

You think I can't handle it raw?

DAVIS

I think I can't handle someone handling it. Some of the changes aren't feeling natural.

ROBBY

What do they want you to do?

DAVIS

Ah, man. It's... business shit. You don't // want to -.

ROBBY

If I didn't, I wouldn't have asked.

*Life.*

*Motion.*

DAVIS

Okay, so everyone loved *Sepia Street*, right? Like after it came out, and Jamie and I got it into festivals. There was all this talk about the next Spike Lee or John Singleton, 'cause God forbid I get compare to a Sorkin or something.

ROBBY

Racist, man.

DAVIS

So these producers asked to meet with me and Jamie and they say they want to make our next movie.

ROBBY

*Your* next movie.

DAVIS

Yeah, well, Jamie's kind of my partner.

ROBBY

I don't see him having to bang out an idea. You the root of the story, Flec.

DAVIS

Anyway, I tell them I want to write something that challenges the concept of race today, you know? Something new. I say that *Sepia Street* was what it was and now I'd like to look at something else. So they say what they always say, which is that they love it. They send our agent an option agreement. Four months later, I send them a draft and it's perfect. It's exactly what they were looking for, except for eight pages of notes, in small font, that they'd like me to consider.

ROBBY

Is that a lot?

DAVIS

It's the job. It's no big deal. So I make the changes and send in the next draft. They like it a little bit more. They saw that I took most of their notes, but not all of them. They wait a month to keep me twisting. See if I'll change my mind about some things. When I don't, they still pick up the option but ask that I take another pass on it. I do and I read it to Jamie.

ROBBY

What do you mean you read it to him?

DAVIS

It's what he does. He likes me to read it so he can hear what I have in mind instead of interrupting it in his head.

ROBBY

So he makes you do all the work?

DAVIS

He wants to be clear on what's there. So after I read it to him, he comes back about some of the notes I passed on. He wants me to make a change that I feel compromises the entire theme of -- It's not the story I want to tell. So I decide that I'll send it to the producer anyway. And they decided that I they said they

finally understood what I was going for.

ROBBY

That's what I'm talkin' 'bout! You stuck to your guns and got what you needed to get.

DAVIS

Yeah. But they also realized that Jamie may not be the best director to carry out this vision. Barry, my producer, he wants to set up some meetings with other directors, and - Robby, these are big, BIG directors.

ROBBY

No, shit.

DAVIS

It could be really big for me.

ROBBY

So what are you writing for, kid? You got this.

DAVIS

I'm writing to find a way not to screw Jamie. I didn't know what to do after I wrote Sepia Street. Jamie was the one who got the money, the space. I knew the actors I wanted, but it wouldn't have happened without him.

ROBBY

You've outgrown him.

*Life.*

DAVIS

He's a good director. He doesn't waste time shooting, he knows what he wants each scene to look like and gets it fast. I mean, nineteen days of shooting and we were in on the festival circuit. That's a gift.