

ACT THREE

"Aldo Boyd" 6/10/15

INT. NIGHTCLUB AT THE DUNBAR HOTEL - NIGHT - LATER

A hopping, upscale JAZZ CLUB with an African-American crowd. In the day, hosted greats like Lena Horne, Cab Calloway, Louis Armstrong. Tonight's stage is filled with a young group of musicians, fronted by the handsome ALDO BOYD (30) on the sax.

Tom enters as Aldo finishes a rousing solo. Aldo spots Tom.

INT. NIGHTCLUB AT THE DUNBAR HOTEL - PRIVATE TABLE - LATER

Tom and Aldo sit in the back of the dark club, with drinks.

I
START

ALDO

You're really gonna walk into the Dunbar Hotel and ask me to do that? You know this is where they held the first convention for the NAACP. Know what that stands for?

TOM

C'mon, Aldo, of course I --

ALDO

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

TOM

If I don't get Charlie Sanders, this picture's gonna bomb and take my career with it.

ALDO

You should be saying the same thing about needing me.

TOM

I would, but that's not the way it is. And I didn't make the rules.

ALDO

But you're not changing them either. So you get a black man to do this shit for you, but he can't be the lead in one of your movies?

TOM

Lemme ask you something. Do you give a shit about the plight of the black man, or do you give a shit about the plight of Aldo Boyd?

Paradise Pictures

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(CONTINUED)

ALDO

What do you think?

A beat. Aldo grins. These guys know each other well.

ALDO

So why don't you do this shit, Tom Konigsberg? Or what, a Jew won't get everyone up in arms?

TOM

Not in the same way.

ALDO

If my wife finds out...

TOM

She's not going to.

Aldo sips his drink. A new band takes the stage. Aldo closes his eyes as MORE MUSIC fills the club. God, he loves it.

ALDO

Man, I'd play here every night if they let me. Never leave. Sleep all day, perform until the sun came up. If people aren't ready for my Hamlet, fuck them all.

TOM

She's a fan of yours, you know.

Tom pulls out an issue of SILVER SCREEN MAGAZINE, the cover of which we don't quite see. Tom opens it and reads...

TOM (CONT'D)

"One of her favorite musicians is jazz player and actor Aldo Boyd. 'He's just divine,' she said."

ALDO

How do I know you didn't fake a whole magazine? Wouldn't put that shit past you for one second.

TOM

Listen, you don't wanna do this, don't do it. But I'd owe you one. A big one.

Aldo's torn. Takes another long sip of his drink. Then...

ALDO

I do this for you, Tom, then you're gonna start figuring out a way to change the rules. At least for me.

INT. SCHWAB'S PHARMACY - THE NEXT MORNING

STOP

The morning crowd. People picking up prescriptions, buying cigarettes, browsing magazines, lining up at the counter to eat breakfast. Tom finds Gretchen at a booth nursing a cup of coffee, working on a script. Empty plate in front of her.

TOM

You polished off all your pancakes.

Gretchen looks up at Tom.

GRETCHEN

I had eggs and toast. I don't eat pancakes anymore.

TOM

Never thought I'd see that day.

GRETCHEN

Yeah, well things change. People get rid of their bad habits.

(a beat, and then)

You come all the way over here to tell me how great "The Blue Dahlia" was?

TOM

I think I found a role for Stanley.

Gretchen shakes her head with a weary grin. Sighs at him.

GRETCHEN

In other words, you have a script you want me to rewrite. It's always quid pro quo with you, Tom.

TOM

I need the Miss RKO touch on this one.

GRETCHEN

I told you I wasn't doing that for you anymore. Not after last year.

TOM

Gretchen, this isn't me trying to throw more logs on our fire.

3/4

ABERDEEN
Lemme see everything.

The Photographer nods at the Redhead. She drops her robe.

ABERDEEN
The resemblance is uncanny.

GREASY PHOTOGRAPHER
Yeah, right, you just needed a legit
reason to keep staring at her tits.

Another KNOCK. Aberdeen looks at the Photographer -- "I got
this." He opens the door and finds Aldo Boyd out front.

ALDO
What are you doing here?

ABERDEEN
Supervising.

ALDO
That wasn't part of the deal.

ABERDEEN
I gotta make sure Tom gets what he
wants, then make sure I'm the only
person leaving here with the photos.

Aldo takes a beat. Steps toward Aberdeen. In his face...

ALDO
Like I said, this wasn't part of the
deal. And if you don't walk out
that door, Ray, there won't be any
photos. You hear me?

A long beat. Then Aberdeen decides to let it go this time.

ABERDEEN
Aldo, this is your lucky day. 'Cuz
I got other places I need to be.

Aberdeen gives Aldo one last hard stare... and then he exits.

EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET IN HOLLYWOOD - DAY

A row of Spanish-style bungalows. Gretchen and Stanley walk.

GRETCHEN
You understand Tom can only do so
much.

II
START
→

← STOP