

GOLDEN SECRETS

Written by

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TITLE CARD READING "1864 - ANGOLA, LOUISIANA"

EXT. ANGOLA PLANTATION WHARF - DAY

A 5,000 acre cotton plantation sits at the mouth of the Mississippi River. The golden sunshine dances off the water. Twenty or so Enslaved Persons load thousands of COTTON BALES onto Union Naval vessels.

AMANDA, late 20s, black, guides the wagons onto the wharf. A rugged OVERSEER, late 40s, watches from behind - a leather whip hangs from his belt.

Two Union Officers, with disdain on their faces, watch the Enslaved People work...

UNION OFFICER 1
Why don't we just burn it? We're at
war ain't we?

The second officer rubs his index and middle finger together with his thumb, a nod to MONEY.

UNION OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)
Then why don't we just take the
cotton and sell it ourselves.

UNION OFFICER 2
You a cotton broker?

UNION OFFICER 1
How hard can it be?

UNION OFFICER 2
What's the market rate for 10
Bales?

UNION OFFICER 1
Uh...

UNION OFFICER 2
5?

No response...

UNION OFFICER 1
1?

Nothin...

UNION OFFICER 1 (CONT'D)
We need her.

Two enslaved men and one woman push a wagon full of cotton in front of the officers. The second officer spits at their feet.

The Enslaved ignore the incident and push on - heads down.

Amanda nods at the group as they push the wagon onto the wharf. She gestures for another group to follow in its tracks. Her body language is open and direct - she's in charge.

EXT. ANGOLA PLANTATION HOUSE - DAY

A white antebellum home overlooks the Mississippi River. Union officers litter the back lawn. Between the home's thirty foot white Corinthian columns stands SARAH HAYNES, late 40s, jet black hair. Her emerald green eyes track the activity on the wharf below with laser focus.

JOSEPH HAYNES, Sarah's son, 15, walks up from behind. He hands his mother an envelope...

JOSEPH
A letter from Jefferson Davis.

Sarah gasps and snatches the letter from Joseph.

SARAH
You fool!

Sarah stuffs the letter in her dress then scans her surroundings. Her head swings back to Joseph, her lips pursed.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Are you trying to-

UNION NAVAL OFFICER
We're nearly loaded.

A Union Officer approaches from the yard, startling Sarah. The Officer hands her a document.

UNION NAVAL OFFICER (CONT'D)
Last order of business.

SARAH
What is this?

UNION NAVAL OFFICER
The ironclad oath of allegiance...

She reads the document out loud...

SARAH

And I, Sarah Haynes do swear that, to the best of my knowledge and ability, will support and defend the Constitution of the United States, against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same.

Sarah contemplates the words...

SARAH (CONT'D)
Very well.

She signs the document and hands it back to the Officer. He smiles and gestures to a younger officer behind him. The man presents Sarah with a ceremonial Union SWORD. Sarah accepts.

UNION NAVAL OFFICER
Welcome back to the Union, Mrs. Haynes.

In the distance Amanda barks...

AMANDA (O.S.)
Steady! Steady!

The Union Officer glances to Amanda and chuckles...

UNION NAVAL OFFICER
Never seen a Slave with so much power. She's a pretty little thing too. Someone oughta put her in her place.

The Officer licks his lips. Joseph clenches his fist and takes an aggressive half-step forward. Sarah lifts her finger by her side. Joseph freezes. Sarah glides forward - halving the distance between her and the Officer.

SARAH
It's rather interesting Colonel...in New Orleans. Because of the war, no business, no legitimate business, is profiting.
(beat)
But...illegitimate business? Now that's thriving. You're a married man are you not?
(beat)
(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)
It'd be a shame If somehow the
ledgers of the city's largest
brothels made their way North. Even
published perhaps?

UNION NAVAL OFFICER
What are you-

SARAH
Fifty Five nights, Colonel.
(beat)
Under the name of Lance Randolph
Stephenson. Sound familiar? Odd
that someone would sign their
actual name at a brothel.

The Officer's eyes widen. Sarah looks towards the wharf.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Back to work then?

The Officer turns without making a sound and trudges towards
the wharf.

SARAH (CONT'D)
Colonel?

He turns back...

SARAH (CONT'D)
Not a hand nor a foul word.

The officer sharply turns - jaw clenched.

TITLE CARD READING "PRESENT DAY - ANGOLA UNIVERSITY"

INT. ANGOLA UNIVERSITY CAFETERIA - DAY

Hundreds of college students carry trays of food to their
tables - lots of laughing, joking, chitchatting.

Sitting alone at a table in the back corner is BRITNEY, a
young black woman in her early 20s. Her laptop's up and she's
googling "The value of a history degree." She pulls up an
article titled "History Degrees Bring Zero Value to Recent
Grads." She rolls her eyes and shuts her laptop.

She grabs a pamphlet from her side body bag. It reads "Angola
Business School Start Your Legacy." She bites her lower lip.
To her left she hears...

COLLEGE GIRL
Hey!!

Britney looks and sees a girl waving at her. She cracks a smile and waves back.

The girl ignores Britney and walks right by. The girl hugs someone at the table next to her. OUCH.

Britney puts her head down in shame...

Britney's PHONE vibrates. She glances at it then packs up her things.

She keeps her head down as she walks past the girls at the table next to her.

INT. ANGOLA UNIVERSITY LECTURE HALL - DAY

Hundreds of students file into a large lecture hall. The stage is arranged in a Q & A format fit for three people. A young moderator sits on the left and an older guest speaker sits on the right. One of the chairs to the right is empty.

A large projection screen reads "Angola in the 19th Century with Professor Jarvis Snowden, Angola University and Warren Flanagan, Curator of Collections, Haynes House Museum."

Britney sits in the back of the hall - several empty seats beside her. She's reading "Souls of Black Folk" by WEB DuBois.

An older black man, early 70s, dressed in a suit two sizes too big, walks up the aisle. This is PROFESSOR SNOWDEN.

He turns to Britney as he walks by and WINKS. Britney smirks. Professor Snowden walks onto the stage, shakes everyone's hands, then sits in the empty chair.

The crowd quiets and the panel begins...

MODERATOR
Thank you everyone for coming to our panel. With me today is Jarvis Snowden, an Early United States History Professor here at Angola University and Warren Flanagan, the Curator of Collections at the Haynes House Museum. Let's get right into it. My first question addresses the elephant in the room. Professor Snowden, we'll start with you.

(MORE)

MODERATOR (CONT'D)

Since the city of Angola was fueled
by the Haynes Family Cotton
Plantation, how-

Professor Snowden leans into his microphone...

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Family Fortune.

MODERATOR
Excuse me, Professor?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
The city and University were fueled
by the Family's FORTUNE, not the
plantation per se.

MR. FLANAGAN, mid 70s, white, rolls his eyes.

MR. FLANAGAN
Here we go.

The moderator looks to Mr. Flanagan and then back to
Professor Snowden, confused...

MODERATOR
But the fortune derived from the
cotton, did it not?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
A portion did, sure. But the bulk?
No, not from the cotton.

MODERATOR
Could you elaborate?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Did the Haynes family make a lot of
money from selling cotton in the
1850s? YES of course they did.
Everyone did. Thanks to a free
labor force and an unquenchable
European demand, how could they
not? But the money that built this
town? The money that propelled the
Haynes family into Forbes Magazine?
That's not from the cotton.

Mr. Flanagan jumps in.

MR. FLANAGAN

I think I know where this is going.
Come on Jarvis this isn't a forum
for one of your conspiracy
theories. Yes the family's fortune
appreciated after the civil war.
Sarah Haynes made savvy investments
in the stock market.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Sarah Haynes made one savvy
investment. And it wasn't in the
stock market. It was in...

The professor looks around the lecture hall, owning the
silence.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)

GOLD.

Hushed murmurs in the crowd. Britney smiles and rolls her
eyes.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)

Confederate Gold, minted by
Jefferson Davis himself.

Mr. Flanagan laughs as he shakes his head.

MR. FLANAGAN

Here we go-

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Sarah Haynes conspired with
Jefferson Davis to steal and
conceal millions in Gold from the
lost confederate treasury. It's all
here in my upcoming book.

Professor Snowden take a book out of his suit pocket and
waves it at the audience.

MR. FLANAGAN

This is an old wives tale. We're
not here to sell your latest book,
professor.

Mr. Flanagan turns to the moderator.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

There's no corroboration for any of
the Professor's allegations. It's
just an urban legend - a bedtime
story!

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

A bedtime story indeed. One told to me by my mother. One told to her by her mother. And one told to her by her mother, Amanda Hemings Snowden, Sarah Haynes' favorite enslaved. I believe you have her portrait in your collection, don't you Mr. Flanagan?

Mr. Flanagan rolls his eyes...

MR. FLANAGAN

No, well yes, technically...

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

How come it's never on display in the mansion?

MR. FLANAGAN

It almost always is, Professor. Just ask any of our visitors.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Well I would love to come see it for myself but your docents won't even let me through the front door!

MR. FLANAGAN

Because you've made a mockery of the family's history! Look at what you're doing right now!

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

That's a portrait of my great grandmother! It belongs-

The moderator tries to regain control of the lecture...

MODERATOR

Okay Okay Okay. Conspiracy theories aside. Let's get back to my original question.

Professor Snowden and Mr. Flanagan lean back into their chairs, relaxing a bit.

MODERATOR (CONT'D)

Given this city's antebellum history, How can the Haynes family right the wrongs of their ancestors? We'll start with you this time, Mr. Flanagan...

MR. FLANAGAN

Being simply the curator of the family's museum, I'm in no position to speak on the family's behalf. But with that said, Jackson Haynes has given millions to the fight against social injustice. I also speak from personal experience when I say that Mr. Haynes and his son Blake are both honest and highly admirable individuals.

INT. OLD HICKORY UNIVERSITY FRAT HOUSE - NIGHT

BLAKE HAYNES, 21 years old, snorts a caterpillar sized line of cocaine off a kitchen counter. He darts up, brushes back his sweaty hair and screams...

BLAKE

Let's go!!!

A hype squad of frat boys surround him. They're in the middle of a 'Project X' type house party. A guy does a keg stand. A group of girls take shots. A girl takes a bong hit. A group shotguns beers. Two girls make out.

Time for Blake's party trick.

He grabs a bottle of BEER and angles the cap onto the edge of a nearby table.

While holding the bottle with his right hand, he slams his left hand down on top of the bottle. The cap pops off.

Flawless execution.

He lifts his beer into the air and looks around...

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Listen up. Listen up!

The room quiets down immediately.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Only three things matter tonight...

One! Honor the gods!

Blake gestures to the wall of Frat Alumni - all clean cut white guys.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Two! Finish your beers!

He tilts up his bottle...

BLAKE (CONT'D)
And Three! Don't go home alone!!

Blake brings his fingers to his mouth and pretends to perform cunnilingus. The room explodes into laughter.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Here Here!

GROUP
Here Here!

Everyone takes a massive chug. Blake pulls a small baggie of cocaine out of his pocket and looks around.

BLAKE
Who's hittin' the slopes tonight?

A Frat Guy in khaki shorts and a polo runs up to Blake and whispers in his ear...

FRAT GUY
Cops out front.
(whispers)

Blake nods and puts the cocaine in his pocket. He taps a few of his boys on the arm and gestures towards the back door. The group heads to the exit. Blake grabs a six pack on the way out.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Cops storm into the house. The party scatters. Blake and three of his buddies laugh behind bushes across the street.

EXT. OLD HICKORY UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - NIGHT - LATER

Blake and the boys drunkenly meander around campus. They pass a sign that reads "Durkheim Building - School of Sociology." Another reads "Buffett Building - Business School."

The group finally passes a small school building with a sign that reads, "W.E.B. Du Bois - History."

FRAT GUY #1
Who's Du Bois?

FRAT GUY #2
A famous history dude, obviously.

FRAT GUY #2 (CONT'D)
They should put Blake's name on it
instead. Isn't your great grandma
like famous or some shit?

BLAKE
Ha. Something like that.

Blake finishes his beer and tosses it on the ground. He walks over to the sign, unzips his pants, and pisses all over it.

COP
Freeze!

Three Campus Police Officers surround Blake. His piss stream halts as he turns around. He takes a deep breath...

BLAKE
You gotta be-

INT. OLD HICKORY UNIVERSITY - PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY
JACKSON HAYNES, Blake's father, early 50s, red in the face...

MR. HAYNES
kidding me!

Mr. Haynes screams at a well dressed man sitting behind a desk. Blake relaxes on the couch opposite - legs spread. Old Hickory University merchandise and signage fill the walls.

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
Expelled? For having a little
harmless fun with his friends?

PRESIDENT ALEX MCKEE, white haired, early 60s, crosses his arms then uncrosses them.

PRESIDENT MCKEE
My hands are tied here, Mr. Haynes.
Drugs, alcohol, public indecency,
vandalizing school property, he's
lucky we didn't call the actual
police.

Mr. Haynes shakes his head.

MR. HAYNES
I can't believe I flew all the way
from New York for this...

He takes out his phone and dials. President McKee sits up.

PRESIDENT MCKEE
Who are you calling?

MR. HAYNES
The foundation...

President McKee shifts his weight.

PRESIDENT MCKEE
Mr. Haynes -

MR. HAYNES (ON PHONE)
Yes, Barbara - cancel any and all
ACH transfers to Old Hickory
University. Have counsel draft a
letter of termination. Float the
news to our connect at the paper.
Let's get in front of the story.
Also, get the Dean of Angola
University off the phone. Thanks.

He hangs up and turns to President McKee.

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
So much for that 15 million dollar
pledge. Let's go Blake.

Blake's lips perch up, as if to say "told you so."

He storms out of the office with his father.

EXT. OLD HICKORY UNIVERSITY - ADMISSIONS BUILDING - DAY

Blake and his father exit the building. Mr. Haynes takes out
his phone, dials...

MR. HAYNES (ON PHONE)
Hey Barbara, I'm gonna need a box
at the Pelicans game tonight. What?
Absolutely not. No one goes near
the books but me. Thanks.

He hangs up.

BLAKE
Did she say anything about Angola?

Mr. Haynes pushes his eyebrows together...

MR. HAYNES
What? Oh yeah, no. That whole thing
was fake.

BLAKE

What?

PRESIDENT MCKEE

Mr. Haynes!

The president, out of breath, calls out from behind. Mr. Haynes smirks at Blake before turning around.

PRESIDENT MCKEE (CONT'D)

A word?

Mr. Haynes struts towards President McKee. The two chat out-of-earshot from Blake. A few awkward moments pass before Mr. Haynes struts back to Blake.

MR. HAYNES

Walk with me.

The two walk away from the building. Blake lifts up his arms, begging his dad for the scoop...

BLAKE

And...

MR. HAYNES

It's taken care of. Just some community service in Angola and you're in the clear.

BLAKE

Community service? You've gotta be kidding me.

Mr. Haynes grabs his son by the collar and pulls him close.

MR. HAYNES

You pull some shit like this again and your cut off, you hear me?

BLAKE

Come on, Dad. It's not that big of a deal

Mr. Haynes pulls his son in closer, more aggressively...

MR. HAYNES

If this leaked it'd be catastrophic for our brand. The press is just itchin' to find ways to cancel people like us.

Mr. Haynes let's go of his son...

BLAKE

Okay. Okay. I'm sorry. So where do
I have to do this community
service?

MR. HAYNES

I made a deal with McKee.

BLAKE

Huh?

MR. HAYNES

Might be time to brush up on your
family history.

Mr. Haynes chuckles and walks off. Blake squints,
dumbfounded. Then it clicks. His eyes go wide...

BLAKE

Oh no...

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY - MOVING

Blake drives his black and chrome Audi down a lonely two lane
country road. He passes a country convenience store, Angola
University, and a sign that says "Historic Haynes House NEXT
RIGHT." Blake puts on his right turn signal.

INT. PROFESSOR SNOWDEN'S OFFICE - DAY

Professor Snowden paces the tiny office. Britney slouches
back in the leather chair behind the desk.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

How'd I do?

BRITNEY

Welllll...

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

That bad?

BRITNEY

You did come off a little cuckoo.
But intriguing. Definitely
intriguing.

Britney snatches up a copy of "Sarah Haynes and the Lost
Confederate Treasury" from the desk.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)
Is this the smoking gun? When does
it come out?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
You still don't believe in this
stuff huh?

BRITNEY
I just don't see the point is all.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Historians interpret the past.

Britney bites her lower lip.

BRITNEY
The only thing history majors
interpret is the unemployment
office...
(whispers)

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
What was that?

BRITNEY
Nothing!

EXT. ANGOLA UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - DAY

Britney tours the business school campus with JESSICA, a
pretty, white, finance 'try-hard' who works part-time in
admissions...

JESSICA
The Business School is one of the
best in Louisiana. Behind Old
Hickory, of course. We have the
finest amenities on campus. Eight
state of the art class buildings. A
private library. A student center.
A state of the art gym. Stock
ticker in every room, of course.

BRITNEY
Of course.

Britney nods her head as if this was the info she needed.
They pass several buildings with the name Haynes plastered on
the front.

JESSICA
You trade?

BRITNEY

Huh?

JESSICA

You know, securities, crypto, NFTs?
What's your poison?

Britney's mouth falls open. This is a foreign language to her.

JESSICA (CONT'D)

What'd you say your current major was?

BRITNEY

Um. History.

JESSICA

Ah. Yikes. Smart move to switch. No money in knowing Abraham Lincoln's birthday.

BRITNEY

Except if you're playing trivia...

Jessica looks at Britney, dumbfounded - she doesn't get it.

JESSICA

Anyways, two-thirds of business graduates receive Associate offers from the big players in New Orleans. Haynes Capital is the most competitive program.

Britney lets out a sarcastic laugh.

BRITNEY

Of course it is.

JESSICA

Excuse me?

Britney clears her throat and nods her head reassuringly.

BRITNEY

I said of course it is. Makes sense.

(serious tone)

JESSICA

Right. Well, yeah. 90k base. Plus bonuses. I'll be starting there in the fall.

Britney's eyebrows shoot up at this info. The two arrive at the end of campus.

JESSICA (CONT'D)
Alright, let's get you back to admissions and get your transfer paperwork started.

Jessica and Britney walk towards the admissions building.

INT. ANGOLA UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM - DAY

Professor Snowden lectures to 30-40 students. He's extremely animated - using his hands as he talks. His energy is in a different stratosphere than his students.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
There are some crazy, twisted, dangerously insecure people in this world. Always have been. Any of you ever have a crazy classmate growing up? Crazy friend? Crazy relative?

Some giggles in class.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)
I'm serious. Everyone can think of that one person who if you found out they blew up frogs with fireworks on the weekends, you wouldn't be surprised...

Some smiles. Some head nods...

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)
Now imagine those people owning human beings.

A silence falls over the room.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)
It's a scary thought, I know.

Professor Snowden takes off his BELT and holds it as if it's a whip.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)
Imagine giving that person one of these.

He moves an empty chair to the front of class. He whips the empty chair with all his might. A high pitched snap is heard on impact. The entire class jumps.

Professor Snowden whips the chair over and over and over again. He stops to catch his breath - observing the class's response...

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)

Imagine this...torture...for no reason at all. Just because. And it's perfectly legal.

He regains his composure and puts his belt back on.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)

These are the harsh realities of the slave system.

He looks at his watch.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)

That's all for today.

Students begin to pack their things and walk out of class.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)

Remember, my signing's tonight at the campus bookstore. Will anyone be stoping by?

The students ignore him as they file out of the room. Professor Snowden frowns then notices a flyer drop from a group of students exiting the class.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)

Hey...hey, you dropped...

But the kids are gone.

Professor Snowden bends over and picks up the flyer. It reads..."Summer Tour Guides Needed at The Historic Haynes House."

He smiles...

INT. ANGOLA UNIVERSITY - CAMPUS BOOKSTORE - NIGHT

Professor Snowden sits at a foldout plastic table with copies of his new book, "Sarah Haynes and the Lost Confederate Treasury," stacked nicely on top. A marquee sign reading "Pre-Release" is propped up to his left.

Professor Snowden looks around helplessly.

A young student walks up to the table.

Professor Snowden sits up and flashes a contagious smile. The woman smiles back.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Good Evening! Interested in a signed copy?

STUDENT

What? Oh, no thanks. Do you know where the bathroom is?

Professor Snowden's excitement deflates.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

It's over by the coffee shop.

STUDENT

Thanks.

Professor Snowden sits alone once again - his head down.

BRITNEY

I'll take the lot!!!

Britney slams a 20 dollar bill down on the table. Professor Snowden grins from ear to ear.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Look who it is!

BRITNEY

I'd like a signed copy, please.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Coming right up! This one's on the house.

Professor Snowden signs the front cover of his book, slides the 20 dollar bill inside, and hands it to Britney.

BRITNEY

You are too kind!

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Oh one more thing.

Professor Snowden digs in his bag and pulls out a folded piece of paper. He hands it to Britney...

BRITNEY

What's this?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Your summer plans...

Britney opens it and reads, "Summer Tour Guides Needed at The Historic Haynes House." She laughs.

BRITNEY

Are you asking me to go undercover??

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

No, not undercover. Just, you know, under the radar. No one over there knows you. It'd be our perfect way in.

Britney crumples up the flyer and throws it at her grandfather.

BRITNEY

Nope. No way.

Professor Snowden tosses it back.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

There's something in that house, Brit.

Britney rolls her eyes.

BRITNEY

Oh yeah?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

There's gotta be...A letter, a journal, a sketch, a photograph. Something. Anything that ties the family to the Gold. That's all we need.

BRITNEY

All you need.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

This involves you too.

BRITNEY

No it doesn't. Last I checked, we don't have the same last name.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Just think about it...

Professor Snowden offers up the flyer. Britney takes it and heads towards the exit.

BRITNEY
As intriguing as it sounds, I'm not interested in spending my whole summer cozying up on a cotton plantation in a slaveowner's house.

She tosses the flyer in the trash can on her way out.

EXT. HAYNES MANSION - DAY

An enormous Antebellum Mansion at the mouth of the Mississippi River (the same one from the opening flashback). An unimpressed Blake drives his Audi up a long cobblestone driveway.

EXT. HAYNES MANSION FRONT DOOR - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Blake walks up the steps, takes a deep breath, and reaches for the front DOOR - it's locked. He looks around and tries again - aggressively yanking at the handle.

The door won't budge.

He looks through a window and lifts up his hands in frustration. He reaches for the door a third time, grits his teeth and shakes the door knob.

CLICK. The door unlocks and opens. EMILY, an older docent, 70s, stands in the doorway. Her wrinkly face is filled with disgust. She points to a large sign next to the door that reads "RING THE DOORBELL! PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH THE HISTORIC DOOR!"

BLAKE
Oh. Sorry. I'm here to see Warren Flanagan. I'm Blake Haynes...

A smile wipes away Emily's frown.

EMILY
Mr. Haynes! My apologies sir. We weren't expecting you until later this afternoon. Come inside.

The two walk through the front door...

INT. ANGOLA PLANTATION HOUSE - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

The entry hall is the epitome of Victorian Style. Red Venetian glass fills every transom window, both interior and exterior. 20 foot ceilings. Hand carved cornice.

Blake shuffles his way past dozens of ornate Marble statues. The two walk to the right of a grand wooden staircase. Blake peers up the stairs and sees a 10 foot tall portrait of his great great great grandmother, Sarah Haynes.

Blake and Emily make their way into the Grand Salon.

EMILY

You know, I met your father once.
I'm sure he doesn't remember.
Surely not.

BLAKE

Is that so?

EMILY

Yes. Yes. Well, welcome to the
largest antebellum house in the
country.

BLAKE

Thanks. It's been years...

Blake walks around, owning the space.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

So where's Warren?

MR. FLANAGAN (O.S.)

Blake!

Mr. Flanagan enters from the west wing, smiling from ear to ear.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

Ah. Long time no see kiddo. So
great to have a Haynes back in the
house.

He gives Blake an unwelcomed hug...

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

How was the drive from New Orleans?

BLAKE

Not bad.

Mr. Flanagan nods. The two just kinda stand there. Neither knows what to say - it's a bit awkward.

MR. FLANAGAN

Well, come come. Let's give you a tour and get you up to speed.

Mr. Flanagan takes Blake on a tour of the entire house. They make their way through the Grand Salon.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

The house was built in 1850 by your great great grandparents, James and Sarah Haynes. At the time, this was the largest house in the country.

BLAKE

So I've heard.

MR. FLANAGAN

Let's start with the grounds.

EXT. ANGOLA PLANTATION RIVERSIDE - DAY

MR. FLANAGAN

The mansion sat at the edge of the family's 5,000 acre cotton plantation. Right at the mouth of the Mississippi River. Down stream from New Orleans.

EXT. ANGOLA SLAVE HOUSE - DAY

A ragged brick building with a old sign that reads "Slave House."

MR. FLANAGAN

Here's where it gets uh sticky. These are the slave buildings. Your family owned over 900 slaves, making them one of the largest slave owners in the country. This is part of the self-guided tour so no stress no stress. Moving on...

INT. WINTER PARLOR - DAY

Mr. Flanagan and Blake enter a small sitting room full of original wooden furniture. A chocolate marble fireplace hugs a wall and an ornate gasolier hangs from the ceiling.

MR. FLANAGAN

When James Haynes died in 1855,
Sarah became the wealthiest widow
in the country.

INT. CENTRAL PARLOR - DAY

Yellow upholstered chairs and couches sit underneath a painted ceiling. The room resembles the atrium of an Italian courtyard...

MR. FLANAGAN

She never remarried though. A little odd if you ask me. Instead she turned this place into a money machine.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Seven mahogany bookcases line the walls. A chess set, fake cigars, period books all lay on a large rectangular mahogany library desk...

MR. FLANAGAN

From 1855-1860 Sarah Haynes tripled the family's net worth - taking it from 1 to 3 million dollars. And that's not even accounting for inflation.

INT. FORMAL DINING ROOM - DAY

A twenty foot dining room table is set for twenty four guests. Underneath is a vibrant red floor cloth...

MR. FLANAGAN

Now her sons helped run the plantation of course but all evidence points to her being the head honcho.

INT. SECOND FLOOR GALLERY - DAY

Mr. Flanagan and Blake stand on a Faux marbled floor and examine a portrait of Robert E. Lee and Jefferson Davis. Mr. Flanagan points at them.

MR. FLANAGAN

Friends of the family. Rather controversial, I know. But they're originals. Originals indeed.

Mr. Flanagan shrugs.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

She was quite the woman, you know. Risked her life to save the family fortune during the Civil War.

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

Original scenic, green wallpaper. A 10 foot tall bed frame centered against the interior wall. Blake and Mr. Flanagan examine a civil war SWORD on display.

MR. FLANAGAN

She tricked the Union Army into helping take her cotton to market. She promised them that she'd sell her cotton in Union-occupied New Orleans. But instead she snuck the cotton onto private naval vessels and shipped it off to London. There it sold for MILLIONS.

BLAKE

I remember learning about that as a kid.

MR. FLANAGAN

It's always a crowd pleaser on tours. The family spent quite a lot of time in Europe after the war. We call it the Grand Tour. She really saw it all. It's a trip I hope to take myself one day. Magnificent.

Mr. Flanagan stares off into the distance - lost in a daydream.

BLAKE

Cool cool.

He snaps back to reality.

MR. FLANAGAN

So - feeling good about everything?

BLAKE

I guess?

MR. FLANAGAN
Here's the official script.

Mr. Flanagan pulls a thick packet of papers out of his back pocket and hands it to Blake.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)
Oh and your name tag.

He hands Blake a name tag that reads "Historic Interpreter"

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)
Listen, I've got some work to do.
Any questions, Emily can help.
She's been here for decades. Have
fun! So great having a Haynes back
in the house.

Mr. Flanagan walks back from where he came from. Blake looks down at the script.

BLAKE
Great.

Blake eyes the confederate sword. He reaches for it when...

EMILY
Careful!

Blake jumps and swings around.

EMILY (CONT'D)
It's still sharp.

Blake walks past Emily and out the door. He whispers to himself...

BLAKE
Then why on earth is it on display?

INT. BANK DEPOSITORY - NIGHT

Britney follows her grandfather into a vault filled with thousands of safety deposit boxes. They're alone. Professor Snowden opens a box and takes out two metal combination safes. They sit at a table in the center of the room.

BRITNEY
Is this the part when you tell me
you work for the CIA? Cause I've
seen this movie before.

Professor Snowden sets the dials on each safe. He puts on a pair of white gloves. Hands Britney a pair. Professor Snowden lifts the lid of each box and swivels them around to face Britney...

Inside each box is a gold coin that reads "Confederate States of American 1861."

Britney's eyes light up.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)
Is this what I think-

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Yes.

BRITNEY
Is it from the-

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Yes.

BRITNEY
You found the confederate treasure?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
No. Of course not.

Britney examines the coin with the curiosity and excitement of a child. A close up of the coin before we fade out...

TITLE CARD READING "1864 - ANGOLA, LOUISIANA"

EXT. ANGOLA PLANTATION WHARF - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

(Picking up from where the last flashback left off)

Two enslaved men and one enslaved women (same group as prior flashback) push the last WAGON of cotton onto the wharf but the wagon buckles.

The younger man (16) rushes to the side of the wagon and steadies the load.

On his walk back to the front, the young man trips and lands on his face.

The two nearby Union Officers laugh hysterically. The young man, embarrassed, picks himself up and rushes the wagon forward.

As the wagon crosses onto the wharf, an entire bale of cotton tumbles over.

The sound of COINS CLINKING fills the air on impact. The union officers continue to laugh. It's unclear if they heard the coins or not.

Two golden coins roll out from the fallen bale - well within the officer's view.

Upon seeing the mishap, the Overseer grabs his whip from his belt and steps toward the wharf.

Amanda puts her hand up, halting the overseer in his tracks. She floats over to the wagon and elegantly scoops up the coins - ice water in her veins.

The officers are oblivious - still laughing.

Amanda slips the coins into her pocket and helps lift the bale back onto the wagon.

Deep within the bale we see a partially hidden 3x5ft wooden chest with "BANK OF RICHMOND" painted on the side.

The group looks over their shoulders as they quickly hide the chest within the cotton.

Amanda gently places her hand on the cheek of the young man who fell.

AMANDA
Steady, my son.

The two hold each other's gaze.

EXT. ANGOLA PLANTATION HOUSE - DAY

Sarah looks down towards Amanda. Her right hand is locked around her son's wrist. Her knuckles, white.

EXT. ANGOLA PLANTATION WHARF - DAY

Amanda walks off the wharf - looks up to the house and nods reassuringly towards Sarah.

EXT. ANGOLA PLANTATION HOUSE - DAY

Sarah lets out a breath and releases her grip on her son. She continues to watch Amanda - a longing gaze.

EXT. ANGOLA PLANTATION WHARF - DAY

The Overseer looks up to Sarah then back to Amanda. He grinds his yellow teeth as Amanda walks by.

The two enslaved men look at Amanda - eyebrows drawing together. Amanda looks away from them. She's alone - standing between her enslaved family on the wharf and Sarah at the house.

TITLE CARD READING "PRESENT DAY"

INT. BANK DEPOSITORY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

We pick up where we left off. Britney, sitting with her grandfather, examines the gold coins...

BRITNEY

If you didn't find the treasure,
then how did you...

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Sarah Haynes gifted your great great grandmother these two coins before she died. They've been passed down from generation to generation ever since.

BRITNEY

How did Sarah get her hands on the treasure?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

That's the mystery. She had to have stolen it. There's no other way Amanda could have-

BRITNEY

How much are they worth?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

A lot. But it's not about the money.

He slides one box closer to Britney. Britney looks up at her grandfather - eyes peeled.

BRITNEY

Why?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

It's safer if we split them up.

BRITNEY

No I mean why haven't you said anything? To me. To the press. To the Haynes family.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

There's no hard evidence tying these coins to Sarah Haynes.

BRITNEY

That's so stupid. They obviously came from her.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

The family would discredit the story in seconds. We need more.

Britney picks up the coin and looks at it closely.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)

You getting inside the mansion is our only hope.

BRITNEY

I need some time to think about it.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

It'll be a piece of cake.

BRITNEY

I don't know about that. I'm not the best at walking on eggshells.

INT. GROCERY STORE - NIGHT

Britney puts a carton of eggs in her basket. Blake struts through the front door, takes off his sunglasses, and whips his brown hair back (sexy Michael Bay slow motion entrance). Britney's mouth falls open. She's thirsty - but not for water.

Britney creeps behind a shelf of bottled water and watches Blake as he grabs a 6 pack of beer and heads to the register. The cashier looks closely at Blake's name tag as he rings up the beer...

CASHIER

Historic Interpreter? What's that mean?

BLAKE

Just a glorified tour guide.

Blake hands the cashier a 20 dollar bill.

CASHIER
Gotcha. Where at?

BLAKE
Haynes House Museum.

Britney gasps. She clasps her hands around her mouth and ducks behind an aisle. Blake and the cashier look around. The cashier shrugs his shoulders.

CASHIER
Weird. Here's your change boss.

INT. HAYNES MANSION - SARAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

Blake gazes around the ornate room - the coast is clear. He wraps his hand around the handle of the confederate sword. He tries to lift it but it's attached to the display case and won't budge.

It's completely silent when...

RING RING. The doorbell scares the living shit out of Blake. He impulsively yanks the sword causing the entire display to fall to the ground.

The sword detaches from the display on impact...

BLAKE
Shit shit.

Blake picks up the display and places it back on the desk. He lightly places the sword on top. The damage is unnoticeable.

The doorbell rings again. Blake's head swings toward the door.

INT. ENTRY HALL - DAY

Blake looks around. No one's in the mansion. Blake peers into the Grand Salon...

BLAKE
Emily? You in here?

RING RING. The doorbell rings a third time...

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Ah fuck it.

Blake walks back into the entry hall and answers the door...

Smiling in the doorway is Britney. She's clutching her book "Souls of Black Folk" by WEB DuBois. Blake freezes up - muted by her beauty. It's awkward.

Britney clears her throat...

BRITNEY

Uh hi?

BLAKE

Hi. Sorry. Hi.

Britney looks around, confused...

BRITNEY

This is the Haynes Mansion, right?

The life returns to Blake's eyes as he remembers that he's the house's newest tour guide.

BLAKE

Oh shit. Sorry. Yes it is. Come in.

INT. GRAND SALON - DAY

Blake leads Britney into the room. He searches around then whispers to himself...

BLAKE

Alright. I guess we're doing this.

He takes out the script that Mr. Flanagan gave him and turns to face Britney...

BLAKE (CONT'D)

So - welcome to the Haynes Mansion.
My name's Blake by the way. Blake
Haynes.

Britney's eyebrows jump after she hears Blake's last name. Blake reaches out his hand and flashes a flirtatious smile.

BRITNEY

Britney.

The two shake hands.

BLAKE

Welcome to the Haynes mansion,
Britney.

Blake throws his left arm into the air, gesturing to the house in dramatic fashion. Britney's eye's narrow...

BRITNEY
You already said that.

BLAKE
Right. Well welcome.

Blake looks down to the written tour...

BLAKE (CONT'D)
This house was built in the 1800s-ish by Sarah Haynes. At the time it was the largest...in the country. People would travel many miles to see the beauty here. Sarah was an amazing woman too. Made millions of dollars and risked her life to protect the family fortune. This...was her house. The largest house in the country, I believe.

Britney frowns.

BRITNEY
Question.

BLAKE
Uh yeah shoot.

BRITNEY
How exactly did she make her money?

Little droplets of sweat appear on Blake's brow - he knows where this convo is going...

BLAKE
Mainly from uh planting and such.

BRITNEY
What'd they plant?

Blake clears his throat...

BLAKE
Like Cotton I believe. She owned a bunch of cotton plantations and such. She actually went on a rather daring adventure to protect-

BRITNEY
Did she plant the cotton herself?

Blake scratches the back of his neck, revealing some armpit sweat.

BLAKE

I don't believe so. The family had a bunch of uh slaves you know. Which is unfortunate but it's how it was back then.

BRITNEY

How was it back then?

BLAKE

Uh people just had slaves back then, ya know.

BRITNEY

How many enslaved persons did Sarah have?

BLAKE

I'm not actually sure. But I know it was a lot.

BRITNEY

Do you know any of their names?

BLAKE

The slaves?

BRITNEY

Yes, the enslaved people.

BLAKE

I don't know. They may not have had names.

Britney tilts her head to the side.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Well - I mean they had names. Of course they had names. I'll just have to uh check that...

Blake looks down into his script. He blinks rapidly and avoids eye contact with Britney. A tightness behind his eyes. He rubs the back of his neck.

MR. FLANAGAN (O.S.)

Blake!

The sound of heavy stomping emanates from the gift shop. Blake turns.

Emily and Mr. Flanagan carry a large antebellum writing DESK into the room. They each sport a set of white gloves. Blake lets out a breath - he's been given a lifeline.

BLAKE
Oh thank god.
(whispering)

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Mr. Flanagan!!

MR. FLANAGAN
Come help me with this would ya?
Emily can finish the tour.

BLAKE
Absolutely!

Blake, smiling now, turns to Britney...

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Emily's literally been here for 50 years. She'll have all the answers.

BRITNEY
Thanks, Blake.

Britney nods to Blake's script.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)
Study that script.

She winks. Blake blushes as he walks away. Emily sets down her side of the desk and walks over to Britney, a wide smile on her wrinkly face.

Blake takes Emily's place by the desk.

MR. FLANAGAN
Good to finally have some muscle around here.

BLAKE
What's this?

MR. FLANAGAN
Sarah's writing desk.

BLAKE
She was a writer?

MR. FLANAGAN
In her own right. Big journaler.

Blake bends down and grabs a hold of the desk.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)
It's an original so be careful.

BLAKE
Where we headed?

MR. FLANAGAN
Front door. We're loaning it to the
County Museum for a few weeks. Kind
of a shame since we just got our
hands on it.

Blake and Mr. Flanagan carry the desk through the entry hall.

BLAKE
What do you mean?

MR. FLANAGAN
Family in New Orleans had it for 75
years. Old man bought it at an
estate sale. We ID'd it about 15
years ago but they refused to sell.
Anyways, the old man died last year
and none of his kids wanted it. So
home it came.

MONTAGE - HAYNE MANSION - VARIOUS

- A) Blake walks back into the mansion, brushing his hands together. He spots Emily's tour and listens in from a distance - A slack expression on his face.
- B) Mr. Flanagan joins the tour. Gives an anecdote while pointing to a fire place.
- C) Mr. Flanagan, Emily, and Britney all laugh together. Blake peers from behind the gift shop door.
- D) Britney points to her book while delivering a monologue. Emily and Mr. Flanagan nod their heads with a fixed gaze.
- E) Britney shakes Mr. Flanagan's hand. Both are smiling and maintaining strong eye contact. Britney walks out the front door.

END OF MONTAGE

INT. ENTRY HALL - DAY

Mr. Flanagan closes the door behind Britney. He shakes his head back and forth - grinning. He turns to Blake.

MR. FLANAGAN

Now SHE knew her stuff. I wish all guests were that knowledgeable.

Blake chuckles...

BLAKE

Well I wish I would've gotten her number.

MR. FLANAGAN

You can ask her out on Monday...

BLAKE

What?

MR. FLANAGAN

She's our newest tour guide.

Blake's jaw drops...

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

Turns out she was looking for a summer job.

He walks by an insecure Blake and pats him on the back.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

Oh! One more thing.

Mr. Flanagan whips back around and tosses Blake a key.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

To the house.

BLAKE

Okay? Why?

MR. FLANAGAN

Well it's your family's house isn't it?

BLAKE

I guess..

MR. FLANAGAN

I'll be a little late on Monday.
Gonna need you to open up shop.

BLAKE

Ah. That's it.

MR. FLANAGAN

The alarm code is Sarah's birth year.

BLAKE

And what's that?

Mr. Flanagan laughs...

MR. FLANAGAN

Very funny!

Mr. Flanagan walks out. Blake looks at the key.

BLAKE

Great...

INT. BRITNEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Britney rushes through the front door.

BRITNEY

Grandpa! You here?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (O.S.)

In my office.

Britney skips through the house and through the office door.

BRITNEY

You're not gonna believe it...

Behind the desk sits Professor Snowden. He's examining one of the Confederate Gold Coins with a magnifying glass. He looks up at Britney.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

What is it?

BRITNEY

You're officially looking at the Haynes Family Mansion's newest Historic Interpreter.

Professor Snowden sits up.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

You applied for the job?

BRITNEY
Hired on the spot!!

Professor Snowden pumps the magnifying glass into the air with excitement. He puts the coin into a heavy duty metal protective case and makes his way from around the desk to hug Britney.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Fabulous news darling. Fabulous.
I'm so proud of you. First order of
business. We need eyes on Amanda's
portrait.

BRITNEY
It wasn't on display...

Professor Snowden scoffs.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Of course it wasn't. God forbid
they acknowledge the truth. They've
probably got it down in
collections. There's something
hidden in that painting Brit. I'm
sure of it.

BRITNEY
I'm on it.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
That's my girl.

BRITNEY
Oh one more thing. There's a Haynes
working at the house.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
What? Who? The kid?

BRITNEY
Yeah, his name's Blake. A little
naive but very cute.

Professor Snowden jumps out of his chair.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Shit! Okay. Okay.

He paces the room...

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)
It'll be fine. It'll be totally
fine.

BRITNEY

Jesus. Why are you freaking out?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

You'll just have to keep your distance.

BRITNEY

I know grandpa. I'll be careful. I promise.

INT. BLAKE'S CONDO - MORNING

A modern condo that's way too big for a college student. Pizza and beer dirty the marble kitchen counter.

Blake's fast asleep in his king sized bed. An alarm shocks him awake.

He groans, rolls over, and shuts off the alarm. He checks his phone and sees 10 missed texts. They read...

"Brooo you're missing a rager at Tanner's right now. When are you coming back to the city?"

Another reads

"Tanner's is lit brodie!! Where you at???"

Blake closes out his phone and screams into his pillow.

INT. BLAKE'S BEDROOM - MORNING - LATER

Blake puts on a name badge in front of his mirror. It reads, "Blake Haynes - Historic Interpreter." He lowers and shakes his head.

EXT. HAYNES MANSION - FRONT DOOR - MORNING

Blake meanders up to the front door. Britney's there waiting.

BRITNEY

Good morning Mr. Haynes.

Blake smiles.

BLAKE

Ha. Just call me Blake. You're here bright and early.

BRITNEY
It's my first day!

BLAKE
I heard. Welcome aboard matey.

Blake salutes Britney, immediately regrets it. He grabs a key from his pocket and unlocks the front door.

BRITNEY
They already gave you a key?

BLAKE
Well my family owns the place so...

BRITNEY
Right. I forgot.

The two awkwardly walk inside. An ALARM BOX starts to beep. Blake flips on the lights. The beeping continues. He walks over to the alarm box and scratches his head.

He types in a number - it continues to beep. He types in another number - it beeps faster.

BLAKE
Uhh...

He types in a third number and...

A shrieking alarm goes off causing both Blake and Britney to jump.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Damnit.
(screaming over the alarm)

BRITNEY
I thought you owned the place???.
(screaming)

BLAKE
What year was Sarah born?
(screaming)

BRITNEY
What?
(screaming)

BLAKE
WHAT YEAR WAS SARAH BORN?
(screaming louder)

Britney puts her hands on her hips and frowns. She walks over to the alarm and types in four numbers.

The alarm shuts off immediately. Britney turns to Blake...

BRITNEY
1817

BLAKE
Congratulations. You passed your first test of training!

Blake grins from ear to ear. Britney rolls her eyes.

INT. HAYNES MANSION - GRAND SALON - DAY

Blake scrolls through his phone. He sits on an old, blue upholstered wooden chair near the front door. Britney walks up to the window and peers out. She looks at him and then down at the chair.

BRITNEY
That's an original.

Blake jumps up.

BLAKE
Oh shit.

He stands next to Britney.

BRITNEY
So we just wait for people to show up?

BLAKE
Yup. They rarely do though.

BRITNEY
Where's Emily and Mr. Flanagan?

BLAKE
No clue.

Blake continues to scroll through his phone.

BRITNEY
Well who's going to give the tours today? You?

Blake looks up.

BLAKE

What's that supposed to mean.

BRITNEY

No offense but You barely knew a thing on Friday. And you didn't know Sarah's birth-

BLAKE

Listen, listen. THIS...

He gestures to their surroundings...

BLAKE (CONT'D)

It's my family's history. I don't need a script to give a tour.

Blake looks back down to his phone. Britney raises her eyebrows.

BRITNEY

Right. So when was this house built again?

Blake looks back up. A blank expression. Then a smile.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

Thought so...

Britney pulls a script out from her bag and hands it to Blake.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

Here. Study mine.

BLAKE

Don't you need it?

BRITNEY

I've already got it memorized.

Blake takes the script and looks over it for a beat. Britney looks back out the window. Blake murmurs under his breath.

BLAKE

Teachers pet.

BRITNEY

Slacker.

The two glance over at each other and grin.

EXT. ANGOLA UNIVERSITY HISTORY BUILDING - DAY

A quiet, empty campus. An old, two-story University Building. A sign in front that reads "History Department." Britney walks through the front door.

INT. ANGOLA UNIVERSITY HISTORY BUILDING - DAY

Britney knocks on an office door. A voice from behind the door...

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD

Come in!

Sarah enters a sea of books and scattered papers. PROFESSOR WHITFIELD, 30s, bookish, sits behind his desk...

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD (CONT'D)

Ah Britney! What a surprise. I don't think your grandfather's coming in today...

BRITNEY

I wanted to see you, Professor.

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD

Oh. Okay. Take a seat.

Britney sits down...

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD (CONT'D)

What can I do for you?

BRITNEY

I uh. I need a letter of recommendation.

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD

Of course.

He swings his chair over to his computer and opens up a Word document.

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD (CONT'D)

What's the job?

BRITNEY

It's for a transfer application...

Professor Whitfield turns...

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD
You're transferring? It's not Old
Hickory is it?

Britney laughs.

BRITNEY
Hell no. I'd have to take out a
million student loans just to pay
for one day of tuition there.

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD
Thank goodness.

BRITNEY
It's just for the Angola business
school. They need a letter of
recommendation from a faculty
member in my current department.
And since you're my history
advisor...

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD
What about your grandfather?

BRITNEY
I was worried about nepotism, ya
know?

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD
Makes sense.

Professor Whitfield turns back to his computer...

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD (CONT'D)
So what does he think about the
major change?

BRITNEY
He's fine with it.

She lowers her gaze...

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD
It makes sense, practically.
History majors have never really
fared well in the job market. Who
do I make this out to?

BRITNEY
Dean Carmello, please.

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD

Plus you can always make loads of
money in finance and read history
books in your spare time.

BRITNEY

True...

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD

I'm glad your grandfather was
understanding though. He can be a
bit uh...passionate if you know
what I mean.

BRITNEY

You're preaching to the choir!

The two smile.

INT. ANGOLA MUSEUM - DAY

A small building with a plaque that reads "Angola Museum."

Blake and Britney follow Mr. Flanagan through the Museum. All three wear white gloves. Britney's WEB DuBois book is visible in her side body bag.

The group enters into an exhibit titled "Antebellum Angola." 19th century pieces of furniture are scattered around the room. Each piece has an ID card with additional information. The writing desk is in the front display. The group looks around but no one's there.

BLAKE

So like. Can we just take them?

Mr. Flanagan scratches his head.

MR. FLANAGAN

The lease is technically up.

BRITNEY

And security did let us in.

Mr. Flanagan shrugs then turns to Britney and Blake...

MR. FLANAGAN

You two start with the portrait in
the back. I'll see if I can hunt
down the curator.

Mr. Flanagan walks out. Towards the back of the room is a portrait of a young black woman wearing a white cotton dress and bonnet. Britney's mouth drops. Her voice shaky...

BRITNEY
I...I didn't know that was here.

BLAKE
The painting?

BRITNEY
Yeah.

BLAKE
I didn't even know it existed. Who is she?

The two walk over to it.

BRITNEY
Amanda Hemings Snowden.

BLAKE
Who?

A tentative smile builds on Britney's face as the surprise sinks in.

BRITNEY
She was one of the Haynes family's enslaved. It was said she never left Sarah's side. Went everywhere with her until...
(beat)

BLAKE
Until what?

BRITNEY
Well, until she didn't.

Britney takes a step forward and examines the painting.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)
This is the only portrait ever made of one of the family's enslaved.

BLAKE
How do you know so much about this?

Britney shakes her head and flashes a fake smile.

BRITNEY

Just a big history nerd. Come on
let's grab it.

Britney takes off her shoulder bag and sets it on the edge of a nearby glass enclosure. As Britney turns, the bag slides off the exhibit and is launched across the floor. It lands at Blake's feet. Britney gasps. She lunges forward but Blake beats her to the punch. He picks up the book.

BLAKE

Relax Derek Jeter. Why do you
always have this anyways.

Blake carelessly flips the book over, examining it. He tries opening it but he fumbles with the leather book strap. Britney tries to yank the book away. Blake resists at first but lets go on Britney's second yank. The book slingshots into the portrait.

It's a direct hit.

The impact detaches the frame from the wall.

CRACK.

The gilded frame snaps as it slams into the concrete floor. Pieces of wood fly in every direction. Blake and Britney look at each other, eyes wide.

In runs Mr. Flanagan. He pauses. Voice trembling.

MR. FLANAGAN

Sweet mother of god.

He darts over to the fallen panting, the big man has never moved so fast in his life. He kneels next to the painting. Examines the damage.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

What on earth happened?

Britney is about to fess up when Blake steps forward.

BLAKE

It was me sir. I thought I could
carry it on my own...

Britney, stoic, doesn't say a word. She looks at Blake in a way she never has before, a wistful smile pokes through.

Mr. Flanagan scours over the painting. He exhales and leans back.

MR. FLANAGAN
The painting's fine.

Britney's brow narrows...

BRITNEY
What do you mean? It's cracked in half.

MR. FLANAGAN
The frame's not original. Only the canvas. And the canvas looks good as new. Take a look.

Britney kneels down and closely examines the canvas...

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)
Not a scratch. I'll make arrangements for this. You two grab the writing desk.

Blake turns and Britney stands up. Mr. Flanagan gestures to Blake.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)
Oh and Blake...

He turns.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)
Be careful this time would ya?

Blake grins and nods.

INT. HAYNES MANSION - SARAH'S BEDROOM - DAY

Blake and Britney gently drop the writing desk next to the confederate sword. Britney's side bag is draped around her body. The two brush off their hands - a job well done. Blake eye's Britney's side bag.

BLAKE
A question for you.

BRITNEY
Okay...

BLAKE
Can I borrow your book?

Britney hesitates...

BLAKE (CONT'D)
I'll leave my white gloves on, I
promise.

Britney pushes her lips out, squints an eye - considers the request.

BRITNEY
Do you even know who WEB DuBois is?

BLAKE
You do know I'm college educated,
right?

BRITNEY
And what college would that be?

BLAKE
Old Hickory.

Britney chuckles and slightly shakes her head.

BRITNEY
Ah. Makes sense.

Blake smiles back...

BLAKE
What?

BRITNEY
Who was he then?

BLAKE
Who? DuBois?

BRITNEY
Mhmm....

BLAKE
I'd know more if you let me borrow
it...

BRITNEY
Maybe you should get your own
book...

She turns towards the door.

BLAKE
A second question then...

She turns back to Blake.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Can I take you out tonight?

Britney releases a flirtatious smile.

EXT. ANGOLA COUNTY FAIR - TICKET BOOTH - NIGHT

Classic small town county fair. A family plays the Ball and Bucket toss. A young couple rides the Ferris Wheel. Large men compete in a pie eating contest.

Blake and Britney are next in line at the ticket booth. She has on her trademark side body bag. Her WEB DuBois book pokes out the top. Blake walks up to the cashier...

BLAKE
20 coins please.

CASHIER
That'll be twenty dollars.

Blake hands the cashier a 100 dollar bill. He receives his change along with 20 plastic gold coins. Britney laughs to herself.

BLAKE
What?

BRITNEY
Oh nothing.

EXT. ANGOLA COUNTY FAIR - DAY - LATER

Blake and Britney eat cotton candy as they meander through the fair.

BRITNEY
You do know your grandmother was the largest slave owner in the country, right?

BLAKE
I think you're missing a couple greats in front of the grandmother...

Britney smirks...

BRITNEY
That's beyond the point.

BLAKE

What's the point?

BRITNEY

It's as if we skip over slavery on
our tours. We barely talk about it.

Blake shakes his head up and down, not disagreeing.

BLAKE

Have you always been this into
history?

BRITNEY

You could say that. It's in my DNA.

BLAKE

What do you mean?

BRITNEY

My great great grandmother was a
slave. Plus my grandfather's a
history professor.

BLAKE

Woah. That's wild. I had no idea.
Where does he teach?

Britney's revealed too much. She scratches the back of her
neck. Fumbles to find the words...

BRITNEY

Oh uh...just a small school up
north. Anyways, what's your deal?
Your family basically built this
town so you've obviously got
beaucoup bucks.

Blake chuckles.

BLAKE

Just getting my finance degree then
working for the business I guess.

BRITNEY

Taking over the family cotton
plantations?

BLAKE

Very funny. But no. We do
commercial real estate investing
now.

BRITNEY

Riveting. So riddle me
this...you're crazy rich, you go to
school an hour away, you're
majoring in finance, and your easy
on the eyes...so why on earth are
you working at the Museum?

BLAKE

You think I'm easy on the eyes?

Britney rolls her eyes.

BRITNEY

Oh my god.

Blake smiles. The two pass a giant "Ring the Bell" game where you slam a RUBBER MALLET in hopes of ringing the bell.

Blake reaches into his pocket and pulls out one coin.

BLAKE

Let's see what you got.

Blake hands the coin to the carnival worker. Britney picks up the rubber mallet. She winds up with ease and slams the mallet down with earthquaking force. The bell rings immediately.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Holy shit.

BRITNEY

10 years of softball.

BLAKE

I'm impressed.

A GREASY PUNK storms by with a group of not so kind-looking friends. The Greasy Punk bumps Britney's shoulder - knocking her off balance. Blake turns...

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Hey, watch where you're going
asshole.

The Greasy Punk turns and gets in Blake's face.

GREASY PUNK

What was that pretty boy?

Blake steps up to the challenge.

BLAKE

I said - watch where you're fucking
going.... Asshole.

The Greasy Punk stares into Blake's soul - every facial muscle, clenched. Blake looks the punk up and down.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Swing. I dare you.

The Greasy Punk chickens out. He backs away. Blake snickers and shakes his head.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Thought so.

Blake turns and walks back to Britney, who's still holding the rubber mallet. The Greasy Punk looks to his friends then back to Blake. He grits his teeth, pushes back his greasy hair, steps forward and winds up for a haymaker cheap shot. Just as he winds up....

SMACK.

Britney rocks the Greasy Punk in the face with the rubber mallet.

LIGHTS OUT.

The punk instantly drops. His friends rush over to him and drag him into the grass. Brit and Blake turn to face each other. Fireworks explode in the background - neither notice. Blake bites his lip. Britney drops her mallet and the two pounce on each other for a hot, steamy make out session under the fireworks.

INT. BLAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Blake and Britney have slow, passionate sex on the bed. Blake is on top. He caresses the side of her face and locks eyes with her before lusting in for a kiss. Heavy rain is heard and seen from the bedroom window.

TITLE CARD READING "1864 - NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA"

EXT. NEW ORLEANS ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Heavy rain falls on a cobblestone street. Sarah and Joseph, lit by moonlight, are huddled in an alleyway. They're leaning against a brick, colonial building.

SARAH
Is it done?

Joseph nods.

JOSEPH
Leaving for London at Dawn.

SARAH
And the gold?

JOSEPH
On board. Packed in the center.

A Union officer walks by the alley. The two look in the opposite direction.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
(Whispers)
The captain's worried about the
Union blockade...

Sarah pulls out a satchel from under her jacket. She hands it to Joseph. He looks inside - wads of GREENBACKS. He quickly hides the satchel in his jacket.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
Will it work?

SARAH
Them yankee boys care more about
money than winnin this war.

JOSEPH
I don't know, mom. I'm not ready
for this. It just-

SARAH
It'll work, Joseph. You have to
trust me.

JOSEPH
What if the Union army finds the
Gold and-

SARAH
It'll work.

JOSEPH
But what if the Captain turns us in
and we-

SARAH
It'll work.

JOSEPH
I don't know, mom. What if-

Sarah slaps her son in the face. He looks down in shame. Water droplets, or maybe tears, roll down his cheeks.

Sarah shakes her head with disappointment and peels off onto the street.

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - NEW ORLEANS - LATER

Amanda sits alone in the dark room. The firelight glimmers off of two GOLD COINS she's twirling in her hands. The front door flies open. Sarah rushes in. Amanda hides the coins in her pocket and comes to Sarah's service...

AMANDA
Good heavens. You're soaking wet.

She takes off Sarah's jacket and hangs it up on the coat rack.

SARAH
Everything's on schedule.

AMANDA
Your plan might actually work.

Sarah grabs Amanda's hands and brings her in close.

SARAH
You mean, our plan. And yes.
There's no doubt.

Sarah and Amanda gaze trustfully into each other's eyes.

A loud KNOCK comes from the front door. Amanda jumps back. A voice emanates from behind the door...

AGGIE
Shall I run you a bath Miss Haynes.

SARAH
Not tonight, Aggie. Thank you.

Aggie's footsteps dissipate down the hall.

AMANDA
There is something I've been meaning to tell you.

Amanda pulls out the two gold coins.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

They fell out on the wharf. It was
too risky to put them back. I...I
wasn't sure what to do so I...I
just. For safe keeping.

Amanda thrusts her hand out - the coins lay in her open palm.
Sarah looks down at the coins then back up to Amanda. She
gently folds the coins into Amanda's palm.

SARAH

They're safer with you. Show no
one. Tell no one.

AMANDA

Of course.

Sarah rushes to gather her things

AMANDA (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

SARAH

(whispers)

I must travel with the gold.

AMANDA

But I thought Joseph-

SARAH

He's not ready. I'm leaving at
first light. Angola will be in your
care while I'm away.

Amanda takes a deep breath and nods. Sarah grabs Amanda's
wrist.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I trust you...

Sarah's grip tightens around Amanda's wrist. Amanda looks up.

SARAH (CONT'D)

With everything.

Sarah's grip tightens even firmer around Amanda's wrist.
Sarah looks down at Amanda's quivering hand and releases her
grip. She regains her composure and caresses the side of
Amanda's face.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I can't do this without you.

TITLE CARD READING "PRESENT DAY"

INT. BRITNEY'S HOUSE - MORNING

Britney sneaks back into her house - creaking the front door closed. She tiptoes up the stairs. Her hair's a mess and her makeup's smeared. This is clearly a walk of shame.

She's almost past the top step when...

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Brit?

She freezes and cringes her eyes in shame...

BRITNEY

Heyyy. Grandpa.

Professor Snowden emerges from the kitchen. He takes big sip of coffee and adjust his robe.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Have a nice night?

BRITNEY

Um...

He takes another sip of coffee.

(beat)

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

I meant to text you. It just uh it got really late and uh...

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Don't you have to get ready for work?

BRITNEY

Yes, of course.

Britney turns back up the stairs...

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Any luck on the painting?

BRITNEY

Yes! I found it!

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

And???

BRITNEY
I'm gonna get a closer look today!

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Well, get to it.

He takes another sip of coffee and smiles as Britney trots to her room.

INT. HAYNES MANSION - BASEMENT COLLECTIONS - DAY

Britney cracks open the door and tiptoes in. She looks around. It's dark and packed full of 19th century artifacts - chairs with arms missing, ripped wallpaper, cracked mirrors.

The broken frame that housed the Amanda Hemings Snowden PORTRAIT sits on a work table near the back of the room. The original canvas is next to the frame.

Britney puts on gloves, picks up a magnifying glass and starts examining the frame and canvas. She flips the canvas over and carefully examines the back...

There's nothing there.

She drops the painting and exhales all of her disappointment. A voice bellows from behind her...

MR. FLANAGAN (O.S.)
Can I help you?

Britney turns.

BRITNEY
Mr. Flanagan! It's me.

MR. FLANAGAN
My goodness, Britney! What on earth are you doing down here? I thought someone broke in.

Britney gathers herself and walks over to Mr. Flanagan.

BRITNEY
No. No. I'm so sorry. I was looking for you when I stumbled upon this. I was just looking around.

MR. FLANAGAN
Well I'm glad you put on the gloves. You've gotta be extra careful down here. This is where we store our most fragile pieces.

Britney zooms past Mr. Flanagan - barely making eye contact.

BRITNEY
Right. I'm sorry I should've asked.
Anyways, see you upstairs.

Britney walks out the door. Mr. Flanagan's eyebrows squish together. He taps his index finger against his lips.

MR. FLANAGAN
Britney?

She turns...

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)
What'd you need?

BRITNEY
What?

MR. FLANAGAN
You said you were looking for me?

BRITNEY
Oh! Right.

She lets out a nervous chuckle.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)
Just curious if we were opening on
the 4th of July? Wanted to check
before I made plans, ya know?

MR. FLANAGAN
No - we're closed. Our hours should
be on the sign out front.

BRITNEY
Right. Right. Thank you! See you
upstairs!

Britney darts out of the room. Mr. Flanagan strokes his chin.

EXT. HAYNE'S MANSION - DAY

Britney and Blake exit the mansion - kissing at the front steps before splitting off in different directions.

BRITNEY
7 o'clock?

BLAKE
On the dot.

BRITNEY
I'll be ready.

She winks at Blake as she walks to her car.

INT. BRITNEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Britney glides through the front door.

BRITNEY
Grandpa, I'm home!

She peers into her Grandfather's office. He's knee deep in research. The GOLD COIN is on his desk.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)
Working late tonight, huh?

Professor Snowden looks up in a daze. He glances down at his watch. His eyes widen.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Rats.

He jumps from his seat and gathers his things.

BRITNEY
What?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
I'm late to the alumni dinner.

Britney smirks...

BRITNEY
Sounds fun.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
It won't be. But some heavy hitters from the New Orleans Tribune will be there.

Britney nods.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)
The book's gonna need media support.

Snowden attempts to tidy up his desk. He puts the GOLD COIN in the safe, closes the door, and turns the latch to lock it. He quickly turns and flies past Britney and out the door.

BRITNEY
Good luck!

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Thanks. See you later tonight.

Britney follows him out. We linger in the empty office and see the SAFE DOOR creak open. It didn't latch....

INT. BLAKE'S CONDO - NIGHT

Blake walks in the front door and hears his dad talking in the living room...

MR. HAYNES (O.S.)
It'll be cause for an audit,
Warren. We'll be ruined. Regardless
it's defamation. They'll cancel us
if it publishes. Yeah, the lawyers
will handle it eventually but what
about the court of public opinion?
He needs to know that you can't
fuck with my family and get away
with it. No, he wouldn't take any
of my calls. Why do you think I'm
here? Well that too.

Mr. Haynes notices Blake walk in.

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
Hey kiddo!!

MR. HAYNES (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)
Gotta go.

He hangs up.

BLAKE
Dad...I didn't know you were coming
into town.

MR. HAYNES
An appointment popped up last
minute. Plus Manhattan gets so
humid in the summer.

BLAKE
Well that's why we have a place in
Vermont.
(whispers)

Mr. Haynes gestures to the mess Blake's made in the condo.

MR. HAYNES
I see you've made yourself at home.

Blake puts some dishes in the sink - desperately trying to clean up a little.

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
Relax. I'm just giving you a hard time. How's the community service going? Warren says you're a natural tour guide.

Blake chuckles.

BLAKE
Warren's just blowing smoke up your ass. The mansion's really not that bad though. Learning a lot.

MR. HAYNES
You know, I'm surprised your here on a Saturday. Didn't want to go and see your friends in the city?

Blake shrugs.

BLAKE
Eh. The drive is such a hassle. Plus, I'm keepin busy.

MR. HAYNES
Well, hang in there. The fall semester be here before you know it.

Mr. Haynes looks at his watch.

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
I wish we could grab dinner but I'm taking the jet back to JFK at 9.

BLAKE
It's all good, pops. I've got plans anyways.

Mr. Hayne's eyebrows shoot up.

MR. HAYNES
Plans huh? Well be careful - girls around here would give their left arm to get knocked up by a Haynes.

EXT/INT. BRITNEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Blake rings the doorbell. He adjusts his tailored button down shirt with his left hand while trying not to drop the flowers in his right. Around his chest is a side body bag. Britney answers. Blake awkwardly stretches out the flowers.

BLAKE
For the pretty girl.

She smiles.

BRITNEY
I prefer tulips but...these will do.

She accepts the flowers and gives Blake a kiss. She notices the bag...

BRITNEY (CONT'D)
Is that a murse?

BLAKE
A what?

BRITNEY
A man purse. A murse.

Blake laughs.

BLAKE
It's a bag! I needed one to carry my books and my backpack was too big.

BRITNEY
Your what now?

BLAKE
My books!

BRITNEY
And here I was thinking you couldn't read!

BLAKE
You inspired me. What can I say?

BRITNEY
Look at you! Blake Haynes - the scholar! Do these books have pictures in them. Let me see.

Britney reaches for the bag and pulls out two books. The first is "The Souls of Black Folk" by W.E.B Du Bois and the second is "Black Reconstruction in America." She looks up to Blake - impressed.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

Okay. Okay. Is this new 'Woke Blake' supposed to impress me?

Blake shifts his weight to the side.

BLAKE

What? No, no not at I all. I wasn't. You know, I'm not...

BRITNEY

I'm kidding! Come inside.

Blake exhales, wipes the sweat off his forehead, and walks in the house. Britney trots up the stairs.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

I'm almost finished getting ready. Five more minutes. Make yourself at home.

Blake looks down at his bag, suddenly feeling insecure about it. He shakes his head - regretting the purchase.

He wanders around the house before coming across a cracked door. He pokes his head inside...

It's Professor Snowden's office. A large wooden desk sits at the far end. Books and papers are scattered throughout. Blake goes inside.

He sees photographs of Britney and Professor Snowden on an end table.

On The bookshelf, Blake sees several books including "The Hunt for Confederate Gold," "Jefferson's Gold," "The Mystery of the Confederate Gold Uncovered," and finally "Sarah Haynes and the Lost Confederate Treasury."

He pauses at this last book and gives it a closer look. The cover reads "written by Jarvis Snowden." Blake puts the book down and notices a black, 4x4 steel SAFE behind the desk.

Blake takes a couple steps towards it.

The SAFE's door is ajar.

Blake looks around then opens the door and peers inside.

He sees a golden glare dancing off of an object towards the back of the SAFE.

He reaches inside and takes out a small metal display case.

He flips the case around and see's a gold coin shimmering FACE UP on a jewelry cushion.

Blake picks up the coin and gets a closer look. Inscribed on the front is "Confederate States of American 1861."

His eyes widen...

Blake places the coin back onto the cushion, FACEDOWN. He slides the coin case back into the safe and closes the door.

He looks over to the picture of Jarvis and Britney and scratches his head - eyes narrowing.

He shrugs and then exits the room.

EXT. ANGOLA SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Blake and Brit walk along the sidewalk - both eating gigantic ice cream cones.

BLAKE

So do you live in that house all alone?

BRITNEY

I live with my grandfather. Just until I finish school.

BLAKE

Let me guess. Majoring in history?

BRITNEY

I was but just changed my major to Finance!

BLAKE

Finance?? Just when I thought I had you figured out. I thought you loved history?

BRITNEY

I did. I mean, I do. It's just. Not practical, ya know?

BLAKE

Practicality's overrated.

BRITNEY

For you maybe. But we don't all
have your money and name.

BLAKE

What's in a name?

BRITNEY

Everything, Blake. Everything.

BLAKE

I'll say this. Being here. Meeting
you. It's making me really think
more about history. I mean it's in
my DNA too. Except my family's not
really...not really on the right
side of things if you know what I
mean...

BRITNEY

You can't change the past, Blake.
But you can learn from it.

Blake nods...

BLAKE

Let me ask you. What do you think
about this whole confederate Gold
thing that's been going around?
Apparently some guy wrote a book.
My dad's pissed.

Britney stumbles - almost tripping over her own feet.

BRITNEY

Uh yeah I mean I think it's
possible. Who really knows what
happened 170 years ago.

BLAKE

True.

An awkward silence as the two walk and eat their ice cream.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

You're right though.

BRITNEY

About what?

BLAKE

There really needs to be more about
slavery on the tour.

(beat)

Blake and Britney lock hands and gaze into each other's eyes.

INT. BRITNEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Britney gleams as she walks through the front door. Her grandfather is sitting on the couch reading. He looks up at her.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Uh oh.

BRITNEY

What?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

I know that look.

BRITNEY

I don't know what you're talking about.

Britney smirks.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

What's his name?

Britney hesitates...

BRITNEY

Blake...

Professor Snowden laughs.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

I'm serious. Someone's making my granddaughter all giddy. I want to know who!

BRITNEY

I already told you Grandpa. Blake.

Professor Snowden closes his book.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Haynes?

Britney shakes her head up and down.

BRITNEY

He picked me up and we went for ice cream. He's actually a really nice guy.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

He came here?

BRITNEY

Yeah, what's the big deal?

Professor Snowden jumps out of his seat and rushes towards his office. Britney follows.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Did he come inside?

BRITNEY

Yeah?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Was he in my office?

BRITNEY

Uh no. I mean I don't know. I had to finish getting ready and...

Professor Snowden blasts past his desks and towards the SAFE. He notices the door's ajar. His shoulder's slump.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

It's open...

He slowly opens the SAFE door and examines the coin...

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)

He knows...

BRITNEY

No he doesn't. He wouldn't snoop around.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Then why was the door open?

BRITNEY

Because YOU probably forgot to lock it!

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Then why is coin faced down when I left it faced up?

BRITNEY

That could've easily been you and you just don't remember.

Professor Snowden take a closer look at the coin.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Finger prints. Did you touch this
without gloves?

BRITNEY
No, I would never...

The realization hits them both at the same time.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
God damnit.

BRITNEY
I didn't mean to-

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
We can't risk him telling his
father.

BRITNEY
What do we do? Take the coins back
to the bank?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
The bank's not safe enough. Damnit!

Professor Snowden slams his fist down on the desk.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)
A press conference! Yes. We need to
schedule a press conference. I need
to call the school.

Professor Snowden searches for his phone.

BRITNEY
But the evidence? I thought you
said we needed more?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
We do. But we don't have a choice.

He finds his phone and begins to dial when...

KNOCK KNOCK.

Both of their heads swing to the front door. Professor Snowden locks the coin in the safe and turns to Britney.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)
Stay here.

INT. BRITNEY'S FRONT DOOR - NIGHT - LATER

KNOCK KNOCK.

Professor Snowden cracks open the door and reveals a smiling Mr. Haynes. He's proudly holding Professor Jarvis' new book in his hands. Britney is nowhere in sight.

MR. HAYNES
Good Evening, Jarvis.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Evening Jackson.

Mr. Haynes displays the book.

MR. HAYNES
Autograph?

Professor Snowden doesn't react.

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
You wouldn't take my calls.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
I'm aware.

MR. HAYNES
Why?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
I'm very busy this evening. You'll
have to excuse me.

Professor Snowden shuts the door but Mr. Haynes blocks it with his foot. He leans into the cracked door...

MR. HAYNES
On Monday we're filing for
injunctive relief. And we'll win.
Not one of these will go on sale.

Mr. Haynes slides the book through the crack.

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
Open it.

Professor Snowden accepts the book and opens it. Within the front cover is a check for \$50,000.

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
A years salary. Don't fight the
injunction, Jarvis. Let it die.

Mr. Haynes walks away. Professor Snowden follows him out onto the front porch.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Jackson.

Mr. Haynes turns. Professor Snowden puts the check into the book and tosses it back to Mr. Haynes.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN (CONT'D)
I'll see you in court then.

Mr. Haynes' jaw tightens. He steps towards Professor Snowden until he's inches from his face.

MR. HAYNES
Why? It's Libel. You can't prove a damn thing.

Professor Snowden smiles.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
Some of us aren't so eager to forget the past. Are you afraid your family's sins will return to haunt you?

Mr. Haynes shoves Professor Snowden with enough force to move an elephant. He falls back into the house and onto the ground. Mr. Haynes advances into the house just as Britney springs from the office. Mr. Haynes stops and smiles at Britney.

MR. HAYNES
Clumsy old man. Tripped over himself.

Mr. Haynes tucks the book into his jacket, accidentally revealing a handgun. He looks down at the professor and smirks before walking back out the door. Britney runs over to help her grandfather.

BRITNEY
Are you okay, grandpa? What happened?

Professor Snowden takes a deep exhale and smiles as he stands up.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
I'm okay, sweetheart.

BRITNEY
Why are you smiling?

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
He doesn't know about the coin.

He takes his phone back out and starts to dial.

BRITNEY
So can the press conference wait? I
can look harder. I'm close grandpa.
I can feel it.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN
It's only a matter of time. We need
to do it as soon as possible.
There's no other way. We need to
get ahead of this.

Professor Snowden brings the phone to his ear.

INT. CURATOR'S OFFICE - HAYNES MUSEUM - DAY

Mr. Flanagan is reading "Sarah Haynes and the Lost
Confederate Treasury" at his desk. Blake pops his head into
the office.

BLAKE
Hey Warren, happy Saturday. Any
idea where the 40 watt bulbs are?
The lights in the small study are
out.

Mr. Flanagan doesn't answer - still reading.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Mr. Flanagan?

He finally looks up.

MR. FLANAGAN
Sorry. Um I think we have a few in
the gift shop. Under the register.

Blake notices the book.

BLAKE
Whatcha reading?

MR. FLANAGAN
Some conspiracy theorist professor
at Angola wrote a fairytale about
your family's fortune. Don't worry
we're filing a law suit.

BLAKE

I heard about that. The book that is. Not the lawsuit.

MR. FLANAGAN

The author is having a big press conference on Monday morning. I'm trying to figure out why.

Mr. Flanagan opens up the front cover and shows Blake a photograph of Professor Snowden.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

If you ever see this guy trying to get into the mansion, don't let him in.

Blakes notices the man from the pictures in Britney's house.

BLAKE

Wait THAT'S the author?

MR. FLANAGAN

Yeah. Why? Do you know him?

BLAKE

I'm pretty sure that's Britney's grandfather.

Mr. Flanagan sits up.

MR. FLANAGAN

What?

BLAKE

Yeah I saw a million pictures of them together at her house. They live together.

MR. FLANAGAN

Interesting.

Mr. Flanagan strokes his chin while Blake contemplates...

BLAKE

Why wouldn't she say anything?

MR. FLANAGAN

Maybe she was embarrassed.

BLAKE

Yeah that's possible, I guess. His office was full of books on the confederate treasury.

(MORE)

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Man, I should've put two and two together. Especially with the coin and all.

MR. FLANAGAN

Coin?

BLAKE

Yeah, he has a gold confederate coin. It was hidden in his safe.

Mr. Flanagan's brows furrow...

BLAKE (CONT'D)

The door was open. I just peaked inside.

MR. FLANAGAN

Was the coin real?

BLAKE

I don't know.

MR. FLANAGAN

It's probably just a replica he uses to inspire his crazy theories.

Blake laughs.

BLAKE

You're probably right.

Blake heads for the door...

BLAKE (CONT'D)

I'll see you up there.

MR. FLANAGAN

Yup.

Blake exits. Mr. Flanagan types "Jarvis Snowden Family" into google. Up pops several pictures of Professor Snowden and Britney at various events. He scrolls. We see a newspaper article with the headline, "Local Professor takes custody of his granddaughter following accident." Mr. Flanagan lunges for the phone.

MR. FLANAGAN (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Can you put me through to Mr. Haynes please. It's Warren Flanagan. Thanks.

Mr. Flanagan taps his knee up and down as elevator music plays over the phone.

MR. HAYNES (O.S.)

Yeah?

MR. FLANAGAN (ON PHONE)

We've got a problem.

INT. BRITNEY'S HOUSE - DAY

Professor Snowden writes a speech out on notecards. The safe is closed behind him. Britney pokes her head in...

BRITNEY

Headed to work. I'll help you prep when I get home.

PROFESSOR SNOWDEN

Sounds good. Love you.

BRITNEY

Love you too grandpa.

Britney exits.

EXT. BRITNEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Britney pulls her car into the driveway. She notices all the lights in the house are off. She wrinkles her brow and peers into the window as she walks to the front door.

INT. BRITNEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Britney slowly steps into the dark house.

BRITNEY

Grandpa? You here? Why are all the lights off?

She turns on the lights and looks around...

Nothing out of the ordinary. She puts her bag down on the couch and slowly walks through the house. She pushes open the office door and SCREAMS.

Her grandfather's corpse is facedown in a giant puddle of blood. Britney rushes to his side. She jumps back when she feels his ice cold skin.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

Grandpa! Grandpa! Wake up.

(in tears)

She checks his pulse...nothing.

Britney can no longer control her tears - wiping them with bloody hands.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)
Come back. Come back to me.

She looks around and notices the office is an absolute mess. Books and furniture are thrown all over the place. There was an obvious struggle. Britney runs around the desk to find the 4x4 safe OPEN and EMPTY. She looks on the desk.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)
No. No. God please no.

She shuffles through all the papers and books on the desk. Nothing.

The coin is gone. The notecards too.

INT. BRITNEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Two police officers interview Britney on the couch.

COP 1
Do you know anyone who might have
wanted to harm your grandfather?

Britney's expression is lifeless. She shakes her head "no."

COP 2
What about the safe?

Britney doesn't respond.

COP 2 (CONT'D)
What was in it?

BRITNEY
I don't know.

The cops nod.

COP 1
We're deeply sorry for your loss.
We'll let you know if we find
anything.

The cops exit. Leaving Britney alone in the dark house. She notices her WEB DuBois book poking out of her bag. She gently opens the book and reveals a secret compartment hidden within its pages.

Within the compartment is a small protective box. She opens it and reveals the 2nd Confederate Gold Coin.

Her jaw clenches as her sadness turns to anger.

INT. HAYNES MANSION - GRAND SALON - DAY

Mr. Haynes walks through the front door. His face is ghost white and his hands are shaking. He looks like he hasn't slept in weeks. Mr. Flanagan stands on a ladder - somberly painting the cornice.

Mr. Haynes straightens himself up and clears his throat.

MR. HAYNES

The lawsuit's officially been filed. We'll see how 'ol Jarvis holds up in federal court. You ready for this press conference? My PR team is on standby.

Mr. Flanagan puts his brush down. His face is drooped in a deep sadness.

MR. FLANAGAN

You haven't heard?

MR. HAYNES

Heard what?

MR. FLANAGAN

Jarvis was murdered last night.

Mr. Flanagan climbs down the ladder.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

I tried calling...

MR. HAYNES

Oh my god! What happened?

His expressions are melodramatic.

MR. FLANAGAN

Burglary gone wrong looks like. He was shot in the chest.

(beat)

Britney found him.

Mr. Haynes' chest caves in.

MR. HAYNES

Oh my god. That's terrible.

The front door slams shut. Both men turn and see Britney standing in the entry hall. Mr. Flanagan rushes over to her.

MR. FLANAGAN

Britney. Good heavens. How are you holding up? What can I do for you?

BRITNEY

I'm fine.

MR. FLANAGAN

What are you doing here? You should be home.

Britney eyes Mr. Haynes.

BRITNEY

Long time no see.

Mr. Haynes clears his throat.

MR. HAYNES

I'm...I'm so sorry for your loss.

He can barely make eye contact with her.

BRITNEY

I'm sure you are.

MR. HAYNES

Jarvis was a productive member of this community. He will be missed.

The front door slams shut ones again. Everyone turns and sees Blake. He runs over to Britney.

BLAKE

Britney! I just heard on the news.

He gives her a big hug. She doesn't hug back.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Here, let's get you home.

BRITNEY

I'd like to stay here and work.

She looks towards Mr. Flanagan.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

If that's alright? It'd be good to stay busy.

MR. FLANAGAN
Of course. Whatever you need. I
could use a hand with the cornice.

Mr. Flanagan smiles. Mr. Haynes clenches his jaw.

MR. HAYNES
You've been through a lot, sweetie.
I think it best if you head home
and get some rest. Isn't that
right, Warren?

Mr. Flanagan doesn't take the hint...

MR. FLANAGAN
It's really no problem at all. I'll
keep an eye on her.

BLAKE
Yeah, dad I'll stick around too. No
worries.

Mr. Haynes glares at Mr. Flanagan. Time to go alpha.

MR. HAYNES
You know what, why don't you all
take off.

MR. FLANAGAN
But the museum?

MR. HAYNES
I'm closing the museum for the day.

It's now clear who works for who.

Mr. Flanagan purses his lips and narrows his brow.

BLAKE
But Dad, I think-

BRITNEY
It's fine, Blake.

She flashes a smile at the group.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)
I'll see you all in the morning.

Britney exits. Blake and Mr. Flanagan begin to follow when...

MR. HAYNES
Blake, Warren....a word.

The three form a circle. They wait for Britney to leave. Mr. Haynes addresses Mr. Flanagan first...

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
She is not to step foot in this
house again, understood?

MR. FLANAGAN
You want me to fire her?

MR. HAYNES
Whatever you have to do.

MR. FLANAGAN
But she's the best interpreter
we've ever had. Why-

Mr. Haynes shoves a shaky finger in Mr. Flanagan's chest...

MR. HAYNES
Don't you dare question me.

Mr. Flanagan's mouth falls open - he's speechless.

Mr. Haynes turns to his son...

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
Pack up your things and head back
to the city. You'll finish out your
community service there. And you're
not to see her again. Do you
understand?

BLAKE
Dad. What the hell. Her grandfather
just died. She has no family.

Mr. Haynes is nearly in tears.

MR. HAYNES
She wants to ruin us, Blake. I know
it. Just like her grandfather. Why
else lie about her relationship to
him? Why else come here the day
after he...after he passed away.

MR. FLANAGAN
You mean after he was murdered?

Mr. Haynes shoots Mr. Flanagan a look that could kill.

MR. HAYNES
Out. Both of you.

Blake and Mr. Flanagan exit. Their postures, slouched. Mr. Flanagan takes one last look at Mr. Haynes. He strokes his chin and exits.

Mr. Haynes stands alone in the Grand Salon. He reaches into his pocket and takes out the gold confederate coin. He clenches it in his fist and bursts into tears.

INT. BRITNEY'S HOUSE - DAY

Britney sits alone in her grandfather's office. She's combing through his books. Looking for answers. The family's Legacy rests on her shoulders.

She pauses and looks towards the spot where her grandfather died...

KNOCK KNOCK.

She jumps back in her chair - eyes bulging. Deja vu from the night before. She grabs a envelope opener from the office desk and approaches the front door. She moves closer to the peep hole when...

KNOCK KNOCK.

She jumps again.

BLAKE (O.S.)
Brit! You in there? It's Blake.

Britney lets out a sigh of relief. But she quickly regains her guard. Who can she trust?

BRITNEY
What do you want?

BLAKE
I just want to make sure you're alright. You won't answer any of my texts.

Dead silent...

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Can I come in?

A tear falls down Britney's face. She clenches her fist.

BRITNEY
Go away.

BLAKE

Come on, Brit. Don't be like this.

BRITNEY

Get off my property or I'm calling the cops.

Blake shakes his head in disbelief. Why is she being like this? He backs away from the door.

BLAKE

I'm sorry. I'm here if you need me.

BRITNEY

I said go away!

BLAKE

I mean like you can call me if you need me.

BRITNEY

Don't call me. Don't text me. I never want to talk to you again. We're done.

Blake draws his head back quickly - his posture crumbles.

BLAKE

Can't we just-

BRITNEY

Fuck off, Blake! Go back to Old Hickory, where you belong.

Blake opens up his mouth to speak - he's got nothin...

He slugs back to his car and drives off.

EXT/INT. CAR - PARKED - SAME TIME

Mr. Flanagan watches the previous action unfold from his car. He's leaning back so Blake can't see him as he drives off. The coast is clear.

Mr. Flanagan gets out of his car...

INT. BRITNEY'S HOUSE - DAY

Britney is back sitting at her grandfather's desk. She's examining the coin with a magnifying glass. She slams the magnifying glass down. What is she even looking for?

RING RING.

Her cell phone rings on the desk. She hesitates then picks it up...

BRITNEY

Hello?

MR. FLANAGAN

Britney. It's Warren Flanagan.
Listen. I know about the coin...

Britney's mouth falls open. Which coin is he talking about?

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

Blake told me he saw one in your grandfather's office. I told Mr. Haynes. We figured it was a replica but then your grandfather called a press conference and...

Britney doesn't respond.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)

Listen, I don't know what happened but your grandfather and I were once classmates. Even friends. I was wondering if I could maybe take a look at that coin?

BRITNEY

Why should I trust you?

MR. FLANAGAN

I'm not a Haynes. I'm a Historian. And it appears I might not have all the history here.

Britney takes a deep breath.

BRITNEY

Okay. Where can we talk?

MR. FLANAGAN

How about your house?

BRITNEY

What time?

MR. FLANAGAN

I'm already here.

KNOCK KNOCK.

BRITNEY
Jesus.

INT. BRITNEY'S HOUSE - DAY

The front door swings open revealing Mr. Flanagan. He's holding a picture frame the size of his torso. He flips it around...

It's the portrait of Amanda Hemings Snowden, Britney's great great grandmother.

MR. FLANAGAN
Two originals were painted in 1860.
I figured at least one of them
belonged with you.

BRITNEY
But Mr. Haynes...

MR. FLANAGAN
Doesn't have to know.

Britney smiles as she takes hold of the painting.

INT. BRITNEY'S HOUSE - DAY - LATER

Britney pours two cups of coffee.

MR. FLANAGAN
Do you have a picture of it?

BRITNEY
He did but they're all gone.

MR. FLANAGAN
What about his computer? Did you
check it?

BRITNEY
They took that too.

MR. FLANAGAN
Who.

BRITNEY
Whoever killed him.

Some silence as the heaviness in the room becomes evident.

MR. FLANAGAN
Why wouldn't he come forward
earlier.

BRITNEY
He needed a link between the coin
and the Haynes family.

MR. FLANAGAN
Smart.

Britney glares at Mr. Flanagan...

BRITNEY
He was convinced there was
something hidden in the mansion...

MR. FLANAGAN
Like what? A treasure map?

BRITNEY
A letter or some document. I don't
know. Anything I guess.

MR. FLANAGAN
I've combed over every item in the
collection countless times. I've
never found a shred of evidence
connecting the family to the gold.

BRITNEY
And everything's in the museum
collection, right?

MR. FLANAGAN
It is now. Ever since we got back
Sarah's writing desk...

Britney's head perks up.

EXT. BRITNEY'S FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Britney races out the front door with Mr. Flanagan following
behind...

MR. FLANAGAN
I've already inspected it! There's
nothing there!

BRITNEY
Prove it!

The two run to Britney's car...

EXT/INT. HAYNES MANSION - NIGHT

Blake's Audi zooms down the street. His music is blaring. He finishes his beer and tosses the empty bottle on the floorboard next to three others..

He rips the car's parking brake and drifts until he comes to a skidding stop in front of the mansion.

He opens another beer and stumbles to the front door.

INT. HAYNES MANSION - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Blake unlocks the door and stomps in...

BLAKE
Grandma, I'm home!!!

He takes a large sip from his beer and burps as he disarms the alarm. He stumbles his way into Sarah's Bedroom. He plops down face first onto the historic bed. He lays still for a second then gets up...

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Jesus. Not comfortable at all.

He walks over to Sarah's WRITING DESK and plops down on the ornately carved wooden chair behind it. He sits up straight, mocking the formality of the time...

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Amanda dear, fetch me my feather pen.

He shakes his head...

BLAKE (CONT'D)
So messed up.

Blake grabs another beer bottle from his 6 pack.

Time for his party trick.

He angles the bottle cap on the edge of the desk.

While holding the bottle with his right hand, he slams his left hand down on top of the bottle.

CRACK.

A massive wooden chunk is torn off the desk.

Blake freezes - his face turns pale. He jerks his head around - no one's there. He hops down onto his knees and tries to put the pieces back in place.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Come on come on.

It's not working.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Damnit.

Blake squints at the desk - something within the missing chunk catches his eye. He turns on his phone's flashlight and looks closer.

We see a hidden compartment underneath the desk.

Blake reaches his hand inside the compartment. He digs around and pulls out a stack of old parchment letters.

He looks through them - eyes peeled. He begins to read the one on top...

JOSEPH (V.O.)
For too long I've lived with the sins of my mother. And the cost is more than I can bear. She couldn't burn the papers herself for her memory lived within them, so she turned to me. "No one must ever know," she said. Nay the strength to destroy. Nor the courage to publish. I store them here. The burden is now yours... - Joseph Haynes. Dec. 1924

Blake places the cover letter on the desk and reads on...

We see a long diary entry dated, December 6, 1899...

SARAH (V.O.)
I haven't much time left. I aim to leave this world with a clear soul. Regret has poisoned my life. It's infected every inch of my being. Today marks the 10 year anniversary of Mr. Davis' passing in London, it seems proper to start there...

TITLE CARD READING "1865 - ATLANTIC OCEAN"

EXT. BOAT DECK - ATLANTIC OCEAN - TWILIGHT

Waves crash onto the vessel. Men run around barking orders at each other. In the front of the boat stands Sarah. Her dress flowing in the wind. The CAPTAIN approaches from behind..

CAPTAIN

I must take you down to your quarters. It's too dangerous up here.

Sarah doesn't acknowledge the man. She stares straight ahead. She lifts up her hand and points.

CAPTAIN (CONT'D)

What is it?

Land is visible in the distance...

SARAH

Tell your men to prepare for port. We unload right away.

Sarah walks down into the cabin. The captain stands alone.

INT. LONDON BANK VAULT - DAY

Golden light dances off of Sarah's smile. She faces a vault filled with massive amounts of gold.

A BANK CLERK approaches from the side.

BANK CLERK

Mrs. Haynes. Your Bill of Sale.

He hands Sarah a document...

BANK CLERK (CONT'D)

3,000 Bales of cotton for 857,000 dollars. Paid in gold.

The Bank Clerk hands Sarah another document.

BANK CLERK (CONT'D)

Your deposit slip. 50 Gold tons.

SARAH

And how much is that?

The Bank Clerk smiles...

BANK CLERK
1,857,000 Dollars, Miss Haynes.
Minus our commission.

SARAH
Commission?

INT. GOLD FOUNDRY - DAY

The Confederate Gold Coins are melted and formed into gold bars.

INT. LONDON BANK VAULT - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

SARAH
Of course.

EXT. BANK - DAY

Sarah exits through the front door. On the sidewalk waits a dirty, sea-worn man.

SARAH
Good morning, Captain. We set sail
in the morning.

The CAPTAIN nods..

CAPTAIN
Of course.

SARAH
And I'll need you to draft me a
letter...

Sarah hands the Captain a small sack of gold coins...

EXT/INT. HAYNES MANSION - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

Blake continues to read...

SARAH (V.O.)
Then there was the problem of Mr.
Davis' cut. But I made quick work
of that...

INT. JEFFERSON DAVIS' OFFICE - DAY (FLASHBACK)

President Jefferson Davis sits rigidly behind a desk flooded with maps and correspondence. Sarah Haynes stands stoically in front of him - her expression, cold.

SARAH

The storm was too heavy. The captain needed to lighten the load. The bales were dumped into the ocean. We lost...everything.

Sarah hands President Davis a letter...

SARAH (CONT'D)
From the captain.

He reads for a moment and then slams his fist down on the desk.

JEFFERSON DAVIS
Damnit!

Sarah smirks. Davis regains his composure.

JEFFERSON DAVIS (CONT'D)
My apologies. This misfortune is not your fault. I promised your husband I'd look after you. But now I fear I will be unable to look after myself.

SARAH
Don't you worry about me, Mr. Davis. The south may fall but the Haynes family will rise.

EXT/INT. HAYNES MANSION - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

Blake reads on, eyes wide...

SARAH (V.O.)
It was time to head home to see my family. To see Amanda. I couldn't get home fast enough...

EXT. ANGOLA PLANTATION - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Six carriages roll down the dirt driveway. Sarah rides a horse in front of the procession. The horse gallops at full speed towards the house. Sarah's hair flows in the wind. Her gaze, searching.

Amanda emerges from the house. She smiles upon seeing Sarah. Sarah fires back a longing gaze.

INT. ANGOLA PLANTATION HOUSE - SARAH'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah and Amanda roll around in bed, kissing passionately. With Amanda on top, Sarah places her hand on top of Sarah's head and gently pushes her under the covers and between her legs. Sarah moans as she climaxes.

INT. ANGOLA PLANTATION HOUSE - SARAH'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Sarah and Amanda lay in bed, looking up to the ceiling. Amanda rolls onto her side, facing Sarah.

AMANDA

Any news on the war?

Sarah hesitates...

SARAH

I've been thinking. Why don't we spend a few years overseas.

AMANDA

Years?

SARAH

Yes and depending on how things go. Maybe we find a new home there.

Amanda sits up...

AMANDA

You want to leave, for good?

SARAH

It'd do the family good to get out of this blood stained country for a while.

AMANDA

But my family...

SARAH

They'll be looked after here at Angola

Sarah exhales deeply and rolls onto her shoulder. She pulls the covers up and closes her eyes as she falls into a peaceful slumber.

Amanda stares at the ceiling - her chin and lips, trembling.

INT. ANGOLA PLANTATION - SLAVE BUILDINGS - NIGHT

Amanda frantically wakes up her husband, CHARLES and their two children, GEORGE and LUCY (16 and 12).

AMANDA

Get dressed. Hurry. We leave tonight.

CHARLES

Huh? What happened?

AMANDA

She's splitting us up, Charles.
Wants to take me to Europe.

CHARLES

Oh no...

AMANDA

Take them to the outer swamp. I'll get us two horses. If I'm not there by morning, you take the kids and run. You run straight to Fort Jackson. You hear? You'll be safe within Union lines.

CHARLES

Yes ma'am.

She gently places her hand on her husband's cheek and kisses him softly...

AMANDA

I love you.

CHARLES

I love you too, baby.

Amanda digs through her bag and pulls out the two gold confederate coins. She hands them to her son.

AMANDA

These are from the confederate treasury. Guard them with your life. They may be our only weapon.

She kisses her two children then looks at Charles.

AMANDA (CONT'D)

See you soon.

Amanda darts out of the cabin and into the night.

INT. ANGOLA PLANTATION HOUSE - SARAH'S ROOM - LATER

The room is dark. Sarah's in bed alone. She's abruptly awoken by her son, Joseph.

JOSEPH
Mother! Mother! Wake up!

He shakes her awake.

SARAH
What is it, son?

JOSEPH
It's Amanda.

Sarah is instantly alert. She looks to the side of her bed, empty.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
She tried to run away. We caught
her stealing horses. Her family's
gone.

Sarah gets out of bed and begins to dress.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)
What do we do?

SARAH
Release the hounds.

Joseph swallows.

JOSEPH
And Amanda?

SARAH
Bring her to me.

Joseph is confused...

SARAH (CONT'D)
Now!

He jumps and darts out of the room. Sarah's gaze is cold and hard.

INT. ANGOLA PLANTATION HOUSE - ENTRY HALL - NIGHT - LATER

Sarah, now fully dressed, stands stoic in the center of the dimly lit room. Amanda is thrown through the front door - it slams shut behind her. Joseph peers into the house through a side window. Amanda regains her balance and looks up at Sarah. The sight of Amanda softens Sarah's posture - she's clearly conflicted.

SARAH
Where'd they go?

Barking dogs are heard in the distance. Amanda starts to cry. Sarah steps closer...

SARAH (CONT'D)
You must let the past go. We can
start anew in London. You, me,
Joseph. A family...

Amanda continues to cry...

AMANDA
I can't leave them.

Sarah moves in close. She puts a hand on Amanda's cheek. She turns away. Sarah takes a step back.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Just let us go. I'll take your
secrets to the grave. I promise

A single tear falls down Sarah's face. The two lock eyes...

Sarah turns and exits the room - walking through a dark doorway.

Amanda looks around, unsure what she's supposed to do.

Out of the same dark doorway emerges, the Overseer...

He unclips the WHIP hanging on his waist and slowly walks towards Amanda...

OVERSEER
Boy I been lookin forward to
this...

She runs towards the door and tries to exit but it's locked.

CRACK.

The Overseer whips Amanda in the back. Chunks of skin scatter on impact.

Amanda falls to her knees. The Overseer whips her again. And again. And again. The overseer then misses and accidentally cracks the red venetian glass in the center of the door. Shards of glass fall down onto Amanda. The overseer looks around to see if Sarah saw the damage. No sign of her. He continues...

Joseph watches, mortified...

Amanda, hunched over on all fours, notices a shard of red glass near her right hand. She grabs it...

The Overseer moves in close. He reels in his whip - making a tight loop. The hounds bark in the distance...

OVERSEER (CONT'D)
Them dogs ain't eaten in days.

He wraps it around Amanda's neck and yanks her up to her feet.

OVERSEER (CONT'D)
Your family should make a fine meal.

He turns her around and leans back into the door - squeezing the life out of her.

The Overseer smiles as he strangles Amanda - getting off on the struggle when...

SLICE. The sound of glass entering flesh.

The Overseer's expression deflates into shock. His face turns pale white. His grip on Amanda loosens and she jolts free.

Blood oozes from the Overseer's gut.

Before the Overseer has time to react, Amanda, in one fluid motion, yanks the glass from his gut and slices his neck wide open.

The Overseer drops to his knees before keeling over, dead.

Amanda takes a deep breath. She drops the glass and turns around...

SLICE! A SWORD fully impales Amanda - entering through her stomach and exiting out her back. Blood spurs from her mouth.

Amanda looks up from her wound and sees Sarah, tears pouring down her face.

Amanda stutters as if she's about to say something when her gaze turns vacant and all life leaves her body.

She slides to the floor.

Sarah drops the sword and kneels beside Amanda's dead body.

She leans over and explodes into a painful cry.

Sarah looks up at the window. A horrified Joseph stares back...

INT. ANGOLA PLANTATION HOUSE - SARAH'S ROOM - NIGHT (PRESENT DAY)

Blake reads the letter at Sarah's desk. His hand covers his mouth. Tears well up in his eyes...

SARAH (V.O.)

Joseph never looked at me the same again. I ordered him to find Amanda's family and retrieve the coins, but he never did. I don't think he ever tried...

Blake wipes his tears.

MR. HAYNES

Freeze!

Blake jumps onto his feet and turns around. His dad's standing in the doorframe. A gun aimed at his head.

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
Jesus. Blake. It's you.

Mr. Haynes exhales and holsters his gun.

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
The alarm was disarmed I thought it was...

He notices the damaged desk and letters...

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
What in god's name-

BLAKE
It was an accident.

Mr. Haynes looks at the letters in Blake's hand...

MR. HAYNES
What's that?

He reaches for the letters but Blake steps back - wary of his father.

BLAKE
It's all true...

MR. HAYNES
What are you talking about?

BLAKE
The gold.

Blake holds up the letters.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
It's all here.

Mr. Haynes reaches out his hand...

MR. HAYNES
Give it here, son...

EXT. HAYNE'S MANSION - NIGHT - SAME TIME

Britney and Mr. Flanagan come to a skidding stop in front of the mansion and hop out of the car. They see Blake's Audi and Mr. Haynes' G Wagon.

MR. FLANAGAN
They're already here.

BRITNEY
Hurry.

They rush to the front door...

INT. HAYNE'S MANSION - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Britney and Mr. Flanagan tiptoe closer to Sarah's room.

BLAKE (O.S.)
Did you know?

MR. HAYNES (O.S.)
Of course not. And we still don't
know anything for certain.

Britney and Mr. Flanagan peek into the room...

BLAKE

She said it herself. She stole the gold. Smuggled it to London. Melted it down....Murdered Amanda.

Britney and Mr. Flanagan look at each other, eyes wide.

MR. HAYNES

Those haven't been authenticated. We don't know who wrote them. It could all be made up.

BLAKE

It was hidden in her desk-

Blake's dad snaps. He pleads with his son...

MR. HAYNES

We could lose everything! Do you not understand that? We'll be cancelled. If this comes to light, we're finished. The government will open our books. They'll be nothing we can do to stop them.

BLAKE

So what? We have nothing to hide.

MR. HAYNES

YOU have nothing to hide.
(screaming)

A blank stare from Blake...

BLAKE

Wha...What do you mean?

Mr. Haynes shakes his head in desperation.

MR. HAYNES

We need to take care of this right now.

He reaches out his hand...

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)

Give it here, son.

MR. FLANAGAN

Don't do it, Blake.

Mr. Flanagan pops out from behind the door.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)
Come on, Jackson. It's over. The
world deserves to know the truth.

Blake's caught in the middle of his Father and Mr.
Flanagan...

MR. HAYNES
Son...

Blake looks at his father.

Mr. Haynes gently nods. His arm still outstretched.

Blake inches toward his father.

BRITNEY (O.S.)
He's going to destroy them.

Blake stops as Britney eases out from behind the door.

BLAKE
Brit...

BRITNEY
You're family's done terrible
things. It's true. But that's not
you. You're different. This is your
chance to be on the right side of
history.

MR. HAYNES
Oh give me a break. We don't know
if any of this is real. You're
gonna need more than a letter...

Britney takes out her book. She opens it up and takes out the
coin.

Mr. Haynes' mouth drops open...

BRITNEY
Oh you thought we only had one?

Mr. Haynes looks at his son...

MR. HAYNES
Blake. Come on now. Hand me the
goddamn letters.

Blake looks to his father then to Britney then back to his
father.

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
Now!
(screams)

Blake jumps. He no longer recognizes his father.

BLAKE
I'm sorry, dad.

Blake hands the documents to Mr Flanagan. Mr. Haynes rubs his hands through his hair.

MR. HAYNES
No. No. No.

MR. FLANAGAN
Come on, let's go. The shows over.

As Brit and Mr. Flanagan begin to walk towards the door, we hear a...

CLICK.

It's the sound of a gun cocking.

MR. HAYNES
Don't take another god damn step...

The group turns.

They see a trembling Mr. Haynes pointing a gun directly at them. Tears of streaming down his face.

Mr. Flanagan shields Britney with his body. Blake backs off to the side.

BLAKE
Dad, what the hell.

MR. HAYNES
Quiet, son.

He can't keep his arm steady.

MR. HAYNES (CONT'D)
This is your fault.

Mr. Flanagan lifts up his hands.

MR. FLANAGAN
Listen, Jackson. It's not worth it.

MR. HAYNES
I'm not a killer. I'm not a fucking killer.

MR. FLANAGAN
No one said you were. Now put...the gun...down.

MR. HAYNES
I...I can't.

Britney peers out from behind Mr. Flanagan. She's in tears...

BRITNEY
Is this what you did to my grandfather too? Murdered him in cold blood?!

MR. HAYNES
It was an accident. I didn't mean to...to...

Blake's gaze darts up to his father.

BLAKE
What?

MR. HAYNES
It was an accident. He wouldn't give me the coin. He attacked me!
It was self defense!
(in tears)

BRITNEY
Bullshit!
(crying)

MR. FLANAGAN
Put the gun down, Jackson. This isn't you...

Mr. Haynes is in tears. He lowers the gun a few inches...

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)
The world deserves to know the-

BANG.

Mr. Haynes shoots Mr. Flanagan in the chest.

Britney screams. Mr. Flanagan falls to the floor. Blood puddles around his body.

Mr. Haynes shakes uncontrollably. His eyes are bloodshot.

The diary entries are still in Mr. Flanagan's grasp.

Britney lunges for them.

Mr. Haynes points the gun at her and puts his finger on the trigger.

He squeezes when Blake grabs the gun and points it away from Britney.

BANG.

The gun fires - nearly hitting Britney in the face.

Blake tries to wrestle the gun from his father. Britney gains her composure and joins the fight, trying to help Blake wrestle the gun away from his father.

But Mr. Haynes is too strong. He overpowers both of them.

Mr. Haynes pistol whips Blake and Britney in the face - Blake takes most of the impact. They drop to the ground. Blake is out cold but Britney remains conscious.

Moaning is heard from behind. Mr. Haynes turns.

Mr. Flanagan rolls onto his back.

He's still alive!

Mr. Haynes walks towards him.

Britney looks around the room until her gaze lands on the UNION SWORD attached to the display case.

Mr. Haynes lifts his gun and points it at a bleeding Mr. Flanagan.

MR. FLANAGAN (CONT'D)
P...please. You don't have to do this.

MR. HAYNES
I'm sorry old friend. But I'm afraid I do...

He starts to squeeze the trigger when...

SLICE.

Britney cuts Mr. Haynes arm clean off.

The amputated arm, which still clutches the gun, falls to the floor.

Mr. Haynes is in shock.

Blood pours from the wound. The reality of what just happened hits him and he screams in pain.

Britney's knees buckle. She drops the sword.

Mr. Haynes snatches Britney's neck with his left hand.

He squeezes, crushing Britney's windpipe. She tries to fight him off but he's too strong.

She's just about to fall unconscious when...

BANG. BANG. BANG.

Three bullets hit Mr. Haynes in the chest. He stumbles back, wobbles a bit, then drops.

Mr. Flanagan, still on the floor, holds the smoking gun.

Blake regains consciousness and stands up.

BLAKE
Wha....What..

He see's his father bloody and gasping for air. He rushes to his side. Blake grabs his father's hand. Mr. Haynes gathers enough strength to muster a few words to his son...

MR. HAYNES
I...I'm sorry son...

He lifts his hand up to his son's cheek. A brief, touching moment before all life leaves his body.

Blake cries next to his father's corpse.

Britney hugs him from behind.

The diary entries are scattered around the room.

TITLE CARD READING "10 YEARS LATER"

INT. ANGOLA UNIVERSITY - LECTURE HALL - DAY

An older Britney, dressed in a blazer and pencil skirt, stands in front of a projector screen the reads "Britney Snowden Baker - The Dark Side of American History Why It's Critical to Understand Slavery - PhD Dissertation Defense." 10 teachers sit in the first row - including Professor Whitfield in the middle. They each hold a copy of Britney's dissertation...

BRITNEY

Slavery was instrumental to the formation of the United States. In fact, slavery has been legal in the United States for longer than it's been illegal. African American History IS American History. They're one and the same. But this aspect of our country's history has been whitewashed. Stripped from textbooks. Softened in family discussions. And why? Because the subject makes people "uncomfortable." 10 years ago I was involved in a historical discovery. The TRUTH about the stolen confederate treasure. The media spun this "truth" into an inspiring hero's journey. One ambitious woman's daring adventure smuggling stolen gold across enemy lines. What a log line! Am I right? But life isn't a movie plot. Despite all of our efforts, the truth - the REAL truth - has been whitewashed by the press. Missing from the tale are the 900 enslaved men and women whose labor elevated Sarah Haynes' economic status to such a level that she was able to make deals with Jefferson Davis. Missing are the enslaved who picked the cotton Sarah used to hide the Gold from the Union Army. Missing is Amanda, Sarah's enslaved nurse and LOVER who kept every one of Sarah's secrets until she was murdered by the one woman she swore to protect.

Britney owns the silence in the room. Making eye contact with her professors and colleagues.

BRITNEY (CONT'D)

Families, schools, museums, and historical sites need to expand their narratives. It's time the stories of the marginalized complete the American story.

A brief pause then the room erupts in applause.

Sarah smiles - thrilled by the response.

The applause dies down and the row of professors whisper to each other.

Professor Whitfield leans forward into his mic...

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD

Congratulations, Britney. Your grandfather would be so proud.

Britney covers her face. Tears stream down her face. Professor Whitfield and the rest of the faculty smile and clap.

BRITNEY

Thank you.

PROFESSOR WHITFIELD

So, tell us. What's next?

Britney grins...

EXT. ANGOLA PLANTATION HOUSE - MORNING

Reporters are scattered in front of the house - anxiously holding their microphones. Everyone is gathered around an empty podium in front of the mansion.

INT. ANGOLA PLANTATION HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Blake peaks through the front window. He looks older, more mature. He turns to Mr. Flanagan in the entry hall...

BLAKE

Look at them. Wide eyed. Excited.
They look at me like I'm him.

MR. FLANAGAN

They need someone to help sell
papers.

BLAKE

And to think, he was convinced they would vilify us.

MR. FLANAGAN

I guess tax evasion is no longer front page news. A treasure hunt is. No one could've predicted the public's reaction.

BLAKE

It's not right. I don't deserve it.

MR. FLANAGAN

Deserve what?

BLAKE

The attention. The fame. The money. Any of it.

MR. FLANAGAN

You're not your father. What you've done with the foundation speaks for itself.

BLAKE

It's not enough.

MR. FLANAGAN

It's a start.

He brushes lint off his blazer and trousers...

BLAKE

It's a start.

Blake shakes out his arms and jumps up and down.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Ugh. I'm nervous.

Mr. Flanagan puts his hands on Blake's shoulders.

MR. FLANAGAN

You got this.

He looks at Mr. Flanagan and nods. It's go time...

EXT. ANGOLA PLANTATION HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Blake walks out the front door. Mr. Flanagan follows close behind.

In front of the mansion is 25-30 members of the press. They're nervously chatting. Blake walks straight up to the podium. The crowd hushes...

BLAKE

Good morning. Thank you all for coming. Good morning. Good morning. Let's get right into it... The Hayne's Historic Mansion will officially be reopening in the fall.

Cheers in the crowd.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Our primary guided tour will be titled "Journey to Jubilee." It will explore the stories of the African-Americans who were brought to, and born at, Angola Plantation. Many men, women, and children were present here from enslavement to freedom. They endured, and we want to honor them by telling their story.

Blakes looks back to Mr. Flanagan...

BLAKE (CONT'D)

With that said, It's with great sadness that I announce, After 50 years of service to this property and to my family, Warren Flanagan will be stepping down as Curator.

Murmurs heard throughout the crowd.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

He plans to spend his retirement overseas.

Blake looks back to Mr. Flanagan and smiles...

BLAKE (CONT'D)

The foundation's decided to kickstart his retirement with a fully funded Grand Tour of Europe. His trip will replicate the same Grand Tour taken by Sarah Haynes in 1866.

Mr. Flanagan's eyes go wide with surprise. He flashes a smile that can't be contained.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
But Warren's not leaving just yet!
He's kindly agreed to stay with us
throughout the summer, in an
advisory capacity, to ensure a
smooth transition.

Blake looks around...

BLAKE (CONT'D)
I will also be stepping down as
Director of the Haynes Mansion.

REPORTER 1
Why? What happened?

REPORTER 2
Why?

BLAKE
I'll be taking more of an active
role within the Haynes Family
Foundation with the goal of leaving
this world in a better place than I
found it.

Even more murmurs...

REPORTER 1
Who's taking your place?

REPORTER 2
Who will be the new curator?

Blake smiles.

BLAKE
I'm beyond excited to announce our
new Director AND Curator, Doctor
Britney Snowden Baker...

Blake looks up to the mansion as Britney emerges from the front door. The crowd explodes in applause. Her powerful presence intoxicates the crowd. Light bounces off her golden, coin necklace.

She revels in the love and walks down to the podium. She shakes Blake's hand and moves in front of the podium, her hands behind her back...

BRITNEY
Any questions?

Every reporter's hand shoots up to the sky. Britney smirks.

REPORTER 1
Doctor Baker!

REPORTER 2
Doctor Baker!

REPORTER 3
Doctor Baker!

Britney points to Reporter 3...

BRITNEY

Yes?

REPORTER 3

Will the new tour cover the
confederate gold?

BRITNEY

There would be no gold story
without the help of the enslaved.

REPORTER 3

Is that a yes?

Britney smiles...

BRITNEY

Yes.

The reporters look relieved.

REPORTER 1

Dr. Baker!

BRITNEY

Yes.

REPORTER 1

I can't help but notice your coin
necklace. Is that thee coin?

Britney rolls her eyes.

BRITNEY

A replica of course. A gift from my
fiancé.

She flashes an engagement ring and looks back towards
Blake...

REPORTER 1

Dr. Baker, is there something
you're not telling us?

Britney smirks. Blake swoops in from the side and kisses her
on the lips. Cameras flash. Everyone cheers. Mr. Flanagan
claps. Blake and Britney laugh in each other's arms.

One last picture is taken of the two - freezing them in a
blissful image just as we...

FADE TO BLACK.

