

CYNDEE

(SORTA BASED ON THE GIRL WITH THE EVIL STEP SISTERS)

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. BROOKLYN, NEW YORK - MORNING

The borough is waking up.

MONTAGE OF BROOKLYN

SANITATION WORKERS (40s) are throwing heavy garbage bags into the backs of their trucks.

COMMUTERS (all ages) on the train are zoned out, some sleeping, some watching movies on their phones or listening to music.

STORE OWNER (70s) is sweeping the sidewalk in front of his business, his BODEGA CAT runs inside from a night out.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Once upon a time in the most lit borough of them all, Brooklyn, ayyyy resides our heroine Cyndee. Unlike the classic tale Cinderella, our girl spells her name C-y-n-d-e-e, that's one Y, two E's and one hundred percent 'round the way girl.

INT. PARSONS SEWING LAB - NIGHT

Cyndee (Afro-Caribbean American early 20s, personal style that looks expensive without being expensive) is finishing a denim jumpsuit. She yawns and nods off with her head on the sewing table. TRAVIS (early 20s, heart of gold) enters and looks for Cyndee.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

That fine specimen of a straight cisgender man is Travis, he is studying at Brooklyn Law School. Travis and Cyndee have been together since their freshman year at Brooklyn Tech, but now with their crazy schedules, they're growing apart.

Travis walks over to Cyndee and gently shakes her awake.

TRAVIS

C'mon babe.

CYNDEE

I need more blush organza!

Cyndee looks around and realizes she's in the sewing lab.

TRAVIS

Let's get you home.

CYNDEE

No, I'm sorry I can't. This jumpsuit won't fit my model tomorrow so I have to pull out this zipper, sew it back in with more seam allowance, and finish the hem.

TRAVIS

You can't be here alone, it's not safe.

CYNDEE

Babe, what choice do I have?

Travis picks up a sketch of a beautiful ball gown, with an ethereal, Cinderella look to it.

TRAVIS

What's this?

CYNDEE

It's just an idea I have for a ball gown.

TRAVIS

Babe, I know nothing about gowns, but I know this is amazing.

CYNDEE

Really?

TRAVIS

Yes, really.

CYNDEE

Maybe one day I'll get to wear it to the MET Ball, but today I must focus on my jumpsuit.

TRAVIS

Finish it at home, I'll help you carry your stuff.

CYNDEE

If it were only that simple. Travis, babe, please go home.

(MORE)

CYNDEE (CONT'D)

I promise I'll jump into a Lyft or something.

TRAVIS

We can't afford a Lyft or something back to Brooklyn.

CYNDEE

I'll hop on a Citi bike.

TRAVIS

To Brooklyn?

CYNDEE

Travis, this can't not be done by eleven am. I'll be home before your head hits the pillow, I promise.

They kiss and Travis reluctantly leaves.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Alas, they have been down this road one too many times.

EXT. PARSONS SEWING LAB - NIGHT

Travis exits, he lays down on the couch outside of the lab. He sets the alarm on his phone and tries to get comfortable.

EXT. NYC NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

ANASTASIA and DRIZELLA TREMAINE (early 20s, homely looking) are white girl wasted, the sisters pour out of a black high-end SUV, the paparazzi are all over them.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Anastasia and Drizella Tremaine the nieces of Dominic Tremaine, the head of fashion empire Haus of Tremaine, their only skills are being mean and spending money.

INT. PARSONS SEWING LAB - MORNING

Cyndee is asleep, her finished jumpsuit looks impeccable. We hear the commotion of STUDENTS laughing and chatting right before they burst into the lab. Cyndee sits up so quickly, she hits her elbow against the table. Anastasia and Drizzella do their walk of shame right into the lab. Anastasia is the more composed of the two, Drizella on the other hand looks a mess, her hair needs some gel and a good detangling brush.

DRIZELLA

Fuuuuuuck it's bright in here.

Drizella searches her Pucci jacket for her Valentino sunglasses, she puts them on crooked. Anastasia sees Cyndee working.

ANASTASIA

C'mon, we have some bubbles to burst.

Anastasia makes a beeline for Cyndee, Drizella follows. She tries to steady herself on tables and chairs along the way.

ANASTASIA (CONT'D)

Slept in the lab again did we?

CYNDEE

And what's your excuse for walking in here looking like roadkill on a stick?

ANASTASIA

You're so poor I don't know why I even bother with you.

The class gets quiet, no one wants to be the target of the sisters' attention. Anastasia and Drizella notice Cyndee's jumpsuit at the same time.

ANASTASIA (CONT'D)

There's no way you made this by yourself.

Anastasia and Drizella circle Cyndee's jumpsuit like sharks.

CYNDEE

Some of us have talent, while others have handouts.

Cyndee holds up her hands like she's holding talent and handouts in each hand like a scale.

CYNDEE (CONT'D)

Talent, handouts, talent, handouts, see the difference?

ANASTASIA

This is a knockoff, I'm almost sure it's a Wang design.

DRIZELLA

Vera or Alexander?

ANASTASIA

A mash up perhaps, remember Milan Fashion Week about two years ago?

Anastasia and Drizella walk away.

DRIZELLA

No, but I do remember the twin models from Off-White, now that was a weekend!

CYNDEE

Good fucking riddance.

INT. PARSONS SEWING LAB - LATER

STUDENTS are working hard on their designs, Anastasia and Drizella show no signs of talent. Their garment is a basic slip dress. The INSTRUCTOR (ala the late style icon ANDRÉ LEON TALLEY) walks around inspecting the students' work.

INSTRUCTOR

Everyone, gather round Cyndee's station please. The jumpsuit is technically not couture and rarely bespoke, but wow such perfection.

The STUDENTS inspect Cyndee's jumpsuit. The INSTRUCTOR moves on to another work station.

INSTRUCTOR (CONT'D)

And what do we have here darling?

JACKSON aka JAX enters the workroom (20s, transgender woman from Georgia, more Bankhead than Buckhead). Anastasia and Drizella menacingly circle Cyndee, Cyndee stands her ground, the tension can be cut with a knife.

JAX

Wait, what'd I miss?

SUPER: FIVE YEARS LATER

INT. PAULO'S BUILDING - BROOKLYN HEIGHTS - MORNING

Paulo MENDES (early 30s, Afro-Brazilian, model handsome) lives in a high rise building with a great view of Manhattan. He is shirtless and riding full speed on his Peleton exercise bike, the onscreen trainer is leading the class.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

(sighs)

Paulo Mendes, heir to the exalted Brazilian fashion house, Maison B. His net-worth is between Yoncé and Saudi, educated at the London School of Fashion and Wharton, and yes, he can totally get it!

(growls)

VIDEO BIKE TRAINER (V.O.)

Here's an extra twenty percent.

Paulo's bike's angle increases. His video screen RINGS, he presses a button and his father FLAVIO MENDES (mid-60's vintage handsome, heavy accent, Afro-Brazilian) pops up on the bike's screen.

FLAVIO

Hello my love.

PAULO

Hey dad.

FLAVIO

Have you looked through the sketches for the Met Ball? We need to choose our show stopper!

PAULO

Femme Future Fantasy? Where does Bolton come up with his ideas?

FLAVIO

Never mind, we need to knock Wintour's socks off. Paulo, did I ever tell you that you're my favorite son?

PAULO

I'm you're only son dad.

FLAVIO

Which makes the choice as they say a no-brainer. So, you've gone on quite a few dates-

PAULO

Almost twenty-five-

FLAVIO

Yes, but who's counting? Any good news to report? Am I going to be a father-in-law soon?

PAULO  
Dad, you'll be the first to know.

FLAVIO  
At the very least there must be  
someone who can be a date for the  
ball, no?

PAULO  
Not in that bunch.

FLAVIO  
(laughs)  
It is good to have a sense of  
humor, but my son you haven't been  
on the red carpet or in the public  
eye for over a decade. You have to  
make your re-entry into the world  
of fashion as they say, a big  
splash!! And what better accessory  
than a beautiful woman on your arm?

PAULO  
Dad...

FLAVIO  
You can't blame a father for  
wanting some grand babies  
perhaps... no?

PAULO  
Goodbye dad.

FLAVIO  
You're impossible, goodbye my love.

Paulo ends the call, the instructor comes back on the screen  
and he pedals faster.

INT. CYNDEE AND JAX'S APARTMENT/BROOKLYN - BEDROOM - MORNING

Cyndee lives in a cramped, D.I.Y. chic, one bedroom apartment  
with Jax. Her small bedroom is messy, the door hits the bed  
when you try to open it and her walls are covered with  
sketches and pictures from past MET Balls, like Rihanna's  
"Pizza" dress. Cyndee's phone alarm goes off, she burrows  
deeper under the covers.

INT. CYNDEE AND JAX'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - MORNING

Cyndee is wearing a shower cap, she's falling asleep.



JAX  
Incoming!

Jax is masculine presenting when she goes to work. Jax rips back the shower curtain. Cyndee uses her tiny washcloth to try and cover herself.

CYNDEE  
Will you stop doing that?!

JAX  
Baby girl, that cootch must be clean by now!

Jax closes the curtain.

JAX (CONT'D)  
You came in pretty late last night.  
Did you finally get dicked down?

CYNDEE  
Did you?

JAX  
A debutante never tells.

CYNDEE  
Well, as per usual Drizella and Anastasia left all of their work for me to do.

Jax studies her pores in the mirror.

NARRATOR (V.O.)  
Yup, you heard that right. After graduating from Parsons, Cyndee landed a coveted position at Haus of Tremaine, which unfortunately put her right in the cross-hairs of her archenemies Uday and Qusay Tremaine.

JAX  
Uncle or not, Dominic likes you better, you should say something.

Cyndee pokes her head out of the shower.

CYNDEE  
Dominic is not going to choose me over his nieces, and if I get fired how are we gonna afford this beautiful chateau?

Cyndee goes back to showering.

JAX

You ain't never lied this hovel is expensive as fuck. What are you doing tonight? Come with me to a mini-ball, a Kiki, so I can practice my skills.

Jax starts voguing.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

(ala a ball commentator)

Yes bitch, yes bitch go! Take it to the floor, let these bitches know!

Cyndee pokes her head back out of the shower.

CYNDEE

I have been waiting forever to be invited into your world. Imagine me, Cyndee-rella going to a ball. No thanks, the last time we went out in the midweek I woke up in a stranger's bed in Harlem.

JAX

And? Shit, you're welcome, those brothers be fine up in Harlem.

CYNDEE

If I say yes, will you leave so I can finish my shower in peace?

JAX

You're the best, see ya later bitch, breakfast is on the counter.

Jax leaves and Cyndee goes back to showering.

CYNDEE

We have got to fix the lock on that fucking door.

Jax sticks her head back into the bathroom.

JAX

Now what's that my sunshine, my only sunshine? You make me happy when times are gray...

CYNDEE

Nothing mi amore.

Jax leaves.

INT. PAULO'S CONDO - KITCHEN - MORNING

Paulo is dressed for work. His style is simple, but expensive, he's standing at the island in his kitchen drinking coffee and scrolling through MET gown sketches. Paulo's ONE NIGHT STAND (early 20s, model beauty) walks over wrapped in a bed sheet, she puts her arms around Paulo.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Uh, who dis?

ONE NIGHT STAND

Wanna spend the day together?

PAULO

I'm leaving in fifteen and your Uber arrives in five.

ONE NIGHT STAND

Maybe we can do dinner tonight? I know this new-

PAULO

Look, this is what it is right?

One Night Stand heads to the bedroom to get dressed.

NARRATOR (V.O.)

Ruthless, but sexy, I like it!  
(growls)

INT. CYNDEE AND JAX'S APARTMENT - LIVINGROOM - MORNING

Cyndee rushes out of the apartment and a moment later she rushes back in.

CYNDEE

Breakfast, breakfast, breakfast.

Cyndee goes to the kitchen counter, there is a pop tart wrapped in aluminum foil.

INT. HAUS OF TREMAINE CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

The Haus of Tremaine is not only a revered fashion house like de la Renta and Valentino, it is also a full fledged media company with a magazine, podcast, YouTube channel, and atelier with about ten seamstresses onsite.