

JUNIPER'S PLAYBOOK

"CALLING AN AUDIBLE"

Written by

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TEASER

INT. JUNIPER'S BEDROOM - EVENING

We close up on JUNIPER "JUNE" SOTO (23, Puerto Rican), who is in the middle of performing a monologue from William Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*. She is almost in tears as she gives it her all.

JUNIPER

Though he hath fall'n by prompture
of the blood,
Yet hath he in him such a mind of
honour,
That, had he twenty heads to tender
down on twenty bloody blocks, he'd
yield them up, before his sister
should her body stoop
To such abhorr'd pollution.
Then, Isabel, live chaste, and,
brother, die:
More than our brother is our
chastity...

Suddenly, her father JON SOTO (50s, PUERTO RICAN), yells from the living room:

JON

JUNE!! THE GAME STARTS IN TWO
MINUTES!

Juniper breaks character, we see her phone recording from a ring light.

JUNIPER

(to herself)
Shit shit shit

JON

YOU WANT ME TO PRESS PAUSE?

JUNIPER

NO I CAN'T BE BEHIND. THEY NEED ME.

She wipes her eyes and presses the button to stop recording. She receives a text message from her manager PATRICIA "PATTY" SMITH (50s).

Patty: "Just a reminder - I'm going to need this self-tape by 9 PM. They keep a harsh deadline, so we need to submit ASAP."

She checks the time on her phone, it says 6:58, the game starts at 7. She debates doing the monologue again.

JUNIPER (CONT'D)
Mmmm, it's good enough.

She then presses record again and quickly goes back to her spot on the wall. She smiles.

JUNIPER (CONT'D)
Hi! My name is Juniper Soto, I'm five feet tall, and I'm based in Hoboken, New Jersey. Non-Union.

After a few seconds she drops the smile and stops the recording. She runs to her bed as we watch her throw on a Little Rock Legends NFL jersey and a matching baseball cap with the same logo. The back of the jersey has the name "Hawkins" on it.

COMMENTATOR 1
It's one minute until kickoff and I'm sure Legends fans are hoping for a more positive outcome tonight.

COMMENTATOR 2
Indeed they are, starting the season with a loss last week definitely isn't something you want to see from a team who almost won the AFC Championship...

Juniper flings open her bedroom door and dashes down the hallway, her phone in hand.

JUNIPER
HAS IT STARTED?!

JON
30 MORE SECONDS

As she runs down the stairs she trips on the last step and stumbles to the floor. Her phone lies a few feet away from her.

JUNIPER
(wincing, to herself)
Damn it.

JON
JUNE? ARE YOU OKAY?

JUNIPER
YEAH! HOW MUCH TIME LEFT?

JON
ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE ALRIGHT...

She starts getting up.

JUNIPER
(interrupting)
IM GOOD!

Juniper grabs her phone, checks the time, and still manages to run to the living room within 7 seconds. Her dad is sitting on the couch wearing a shirt that says "Soto's Tires".

JON
That was a pretty hard fall June...

JUNIPER
SSSHHH.

COMMENTATOR 2
The Legends have won the coin toss and have chosen to defer. They will kickoff after this commercial break.

Juniper takes a sigh of relief, pumping her fist.

JUNIPER
(to the TV)
Good decision boys

She sits next to her dad.

JON
I could've paused it while you were auditioning.

JUNIPER
It's okay, that was like my fifth take of that monologue anyway.

JON
You feel good about it?

A beat. She's thinking of something honest to say.

JUNIPER
Yep! I'll feel even better if my boys come through tonight. LETS GO LEGENDS LETS GO HAWKINS!!!

The game starts, and Juniper is locked in.

END OF TEASER

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The game is 21-16, with the Legends trailing this entire time. There are only 3 minutes left in the fourth quarter. We hear the commentators on the TV begin to talk about Juniper's team.

COMMENTATOR 1

I mean we gotta agree that Colton hasn't had this bad of a start in a while. Last week he was missing players downfield, throwing all over the place, and tonight he seems worse.

COMMENTATOR 2

You're right and I'm assuming as a fan, you're not quite sure you're watching the same team that was close to going to the Super Bowl last year.

Juniper is incredibly annoyed by their comments.

JUNIPER

(yelling at the tv)

Oh oh so it's Colton's fault that his guys are just not looking up at the ball?? Oh so COLTON is supposed to catch his own throws now? Okay. Yeah. Understood. No makes sense.

Jon laughs.

JON

I mean they've got a point, he definitely hasn't been playing as well as he was last year...

JUNIPER

OKAY BUT HE'S NOT THE ONLY PROBLEM

Jon is taken aback with her intensity.

JUNIPER (CONT'D)

Sorry I'm just stressed.

On the TV screen, we see Legends quarterback COLTON HAWKINS (23-26, MALE) jog onto the field. He's leading the huddle as they come up with a play. Juniper looks at him in awe and amazement.

JUNIPER (CONT'D)

Just look at him, dad. He's so nice and kind and such a good leader to his teammates. He's just the best. He doesn't deserve the hate.

JON

I'm sure he'll turn this around June.

Juniper's little sister ELIZABETH "LIZZY" SOTO (21, Puerto Rican) waltzes in the living room. Her short brown hair is somehow perfectly wavy even though she's ready for bed. She's wearing a Sonic the Hedgehog T-shirt and wide-legged blue and white striped PJ pants. She adjusts her glasses as she carries her laptop in the other hand.

LIZZY

Sooo how's the game?

JUNIPER

(sinking into the couch)
Bleugh.

JON

June's boy isn't doing so hot...

JUNIPER

Ummm, Colton is *always* hot

LIZZY

And losing...

JUNIPER

And has the best passer rating...

LIZZY

And has a girlfriend...

JUNIPER

Not anymore! I checked her account and also stalked her posts and she deleted everything and unfollowed him too....
AND he unfollowed her back. And he was seen at a club the other day making out with some random girl soooo yeah he's single now.

Lizzy laughs. Juniper checks her phone. She panics as she sees that it's 8:52. Commercials are still being played.

JUNIPER (CONT'D)

Ummm I'll be back.

She runs to the bathroom near the living room.

INT. BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

She quickly watches the previous seven takes of the monologue she did earlier, but she doesn't have the option to be picky right now. She sends Patty her best video at 8:56 along with her slate.

JUNIPER
(to herself)
Okay okay, it's all good.

She hears that the game is back and runs out of the bathroom. Her dad and Lizzy aren't paying attention to it. There's only a minute and a half left.

LIZZY
(to their dad)
Do you wanna see the proposal I'm working on?

JON
Sure! What's this for?

LIZZY
It's for an internship I'm applying for this semester.

Juniper can't be bothered by this side conversation.

JUNIPER
Game's back on!

LIZZY
We have eyes!

Juniper rolls her eyes and makes fun of Lizzy's remark.

LIZZY (CONT'D)
(back to their dad)
Anyways, It pays pretty well, like \$25.00 an hour so I really hope I get it!

JON
Oh that's great, did you tell your mom?

COMMENTATOR 1
With only a minute left, the Legends still have a chance to tie it and bring it to overtime.

LIZZY
No not yet, where has she been?

Juniper's stress about the game and equal annoyance with this side conversation is starting to show on her face. She receives another text from Patty but ignores it.

JUNIPER
(stressed)
C'mon c'mon you got this Colton.

JON
(to Lizzy)
Upstairs, just working on things..

JUNIPER
Dad look! Only 45 seconds left!

COMMENTATOR 2
He throws to Williams again, only a five yard gain.

JUNIPER
How was that not a first down?!

Thirty seconds left in the game.

COMMENTATOR 1
Last play for the Legends,
everything is riding on this pass
by Colton.

Juniper starts to rub the symbol on her hat. Jon notices.

JON
A new ritual I see?

Juniper ignores him.

LIZZY
(turning to Juniper)
Do you want to read what I'm
working on?

Juniper is glued to the screen. Now a missed call from Patty.

COMMENTATOR 1
Colton is scanning the field...

LIZZY
June?

JUNIPER
 (turning to Lizzy)
 Lizzy shush!

LIZZY
 God it's not a big deal.

Juniper refocuses on the TV.

COMMENTATOR 2
 He throws it near the end-zone to
 Lewis AND...

JUNIPER
 (under her breath)
 Please...

COMMENTATOR 2
 It's batted away by the defense!
 The Titans win 21-16.

Juniper slumps into the couch.

JUNIPER
 (defeated)
 Damn it.

LIZZY
 Oof.

JON
 Aw man, sorry June.

A beat.

LIZZY
 Sooooo is Colton *still* hot?

Juniper takes a deep sigh, then covers her face with her hat.

INT. JUNIPER'S BEDROOM - MIDNIGHT

Juniper is now in her pajamas, wearing glasses, scrolling through her headshots, acting website, and resume on her computer. She's on the phone with Patty.

PATTY (O.S.)
 I've put a lot of faith in you
 June. Most managers would've
 dropped you with the way you've
 been slacking off.

JUNIPER

I know I know I'm sorry Patty, but
I really gave this one my all...

PATTY

Your all? You sent me your video
only a few minutes before the
deadline, you're lucky I was
prepared...

JUNIPER

I'm sorry it was just, the game and
I was stressed out and I promise it
won't happen again.

PATTY

The game? June, it's been almost
three years with only a few
callbacks here and there. I have
other clients getting work. This
needs to be your only focus or else
we'll have to move on.

JUNIPER

I understand Patty, I'm sorry.

A beat.

PATTY

I know, I know you've been trying.
Listen, there's an open call for a
new musical that's looking to have
an Off-Broadway run. I know the
casting director.

JUNIPER

Okay.

PATTY

I think I can get you an
appointment, but only if you think
you can give it your all.

JUNIPER

I will! I promise Patty I'll give
everything I have in me.

PATTY

Okay, I'll look into it. I'll send
over any material to prepare if
they get back to me.

JUNIPER

Okay, thank you.

As soon as the call ends, she closes her laptop taking a deep breath in and out. She turns around, looking at the vision board hung above her headboard. All across, we see printed photos ranging from her dream acting awards, fashion inspirations, acting roles, and the Little Rock Legends symbol with a picture of Colton next to it. She looks at Colton's picture.

JUNIPER (CONT'D)

It's been a rough day.

Suddenly, Juniper imagines Colton sitting next to her.

COLTON

You don't gotta tell me twice.

Juniper brings her knees to her chest, wrapping her arms around them.

JUNIPER

I mean, I know we're still good at what we do. You go through training, and you compare yourself to others and sure sometimes there's setbacks, but that doesn't mean you're suddenly "bad" now, right?

COLTON

Yeah! I mean, on days like today it's hard not to believe that. Like on that last play, I knew exactly where I had to throw it, and I saw us tying the game and going to overtime but then...well.

JUNIPER

I just...

She looks at her vision board again

JUNIPER (CONT'D)

I've loved performing since I was a kid. I never used to be late to submit auditions or learn lines. But I figured, maybe spending less energy on it, or not putting in so much work will make the no's feel better. But it doesn't. I just look sloppy, cause I kinda am.

Colton looks at her, putting his hand on her shoulder

COLTON
Hey, it's just one audition, you'll
bounce back.

She scoffs.

JUNIPER
Tell that to literally everyone
else in my life.

A beat. Then he faces her again.

COLTON
June, if you're still my number one
fan, I'm your number one fan. Okay?

She smiles at him, we close up on her.

JUNIPER
Okay Colton.

When we go back to a medium shot, he's disappeared. She sighs as she looks back at the board, then down at her phone. It's almost midnight. She grabs her phone and gets up from her bed.