

# Just Like That!

A short play  
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 Member

SCENE 1

An African American mixed race man and an African American woman sit across from each other in the middle of what used to be their business. Now a burnt out shell in the minority business sector of St. Paul, Minnesota. 3 days after the riots brought on by the murder of George Floyd.

CHRIS  
Say something.

JUNE  
What?!

CHRIS  
Don't do this. Don't go there. Not right now.

JUNE  
There's nothing left! Nothing!

CHRIS  
I can see that! I can see that, alright. It's all gone. I can see that.

JUNE  
Did you call your mother?

CHRIS  
Why? What for?

JUNE  
I can't talk to you now, you're pissing me off.

CHRIS  
Where's the phone?

JUNE  
Is that a joke?

CHRIS  
The cell phone damn it!

JUNE  
Stop cussing at me!

CHRIS  
I'm sorry.  
(brings the tension down)  
No, really. I'm sorry.

Chris turns to the side and losses himself in the devastation around him.

JUNE  
It's in my purse.  
(Beat)  
Chris?

CHRIS  
Huh?

JUNE  
Honey it's in my purse.

CHRIS  
Oh.

He get's up go to the corner of the store. The weight of the world is on his shoulders as he makes the crossing. Outside we hear police and fire sirens in the distance. Suddenly he collapses on the ground and begins to weep. JUNE runs to him.

JUNE  
Baby don't, we'll get it back. We'll get it all back.

CHRIS  
So many years of work! So many memories?! This shit never ends.

JUNE

We'll make more.

She grabs the phone out of here purse and hands it to him.

JUNE

Here. Here's the phone. Call mom and let her know we're okay. She needs to know.

Chris gathers himself. Presses dial but it comes back busy.

CHRIS

It's busy.

(leaves message)

"Mom it's us. Call me back. Use June's number, I can't find my phone right now. Love you."

JUNE

Remember that old couch my grandpa gave us for our anniversary? We didn't have a place to lay our heads the first couple of months and grandpa...

She starts to cry.

JUNE

God I miss him. He would know what to say.

CHRIS

What time did the insurance man say -

JUNE

3:00

CHRIS

What time is it?

JUNE

2:35

CHRIS

Thank God for insurance companies.

JUNE  
(Mentally somewhere else.)

Yeah, thank God.

CHRIS  
Hey, you gonna be okay?

JUNE  
I'm not sure Chris. How long are we suppose to deal with this shit? I'm tired of living in two worlds on the same planet.

CHRIS  
I can't right now with you on this, Juney. Right now we have to focus on either rebuilding or taking the money and running outta here.

JUNE  
I knew you were gonna quit!

CHRIS  
Well fuck me! Sorry if I'm not inline with working to build something in order to have it torn down in one goddamn day by people who don't have a dog in the fight.

JUNE  
So there it is. The white part finally comes out!

CHRIS  
What the hell did you just say to me? Are you *kidding me* right now with that shit?!

They stare at each other. June knows she crossed the line.

JUNE  
I defaulted, huh?

CHRIS  
You think?

(beat)

It's easy though I know. All this shit is crazy. So many people in this country so racially and psychologically mixed-up about who they are and who we are. Look at us, baby.

He reaches out to her and pulls her in tight.  
They kiss a second and hold each other tight.

JUNE

How much money you got in the account?

CHRIS

Well, that's a cock blocker. Why are you asking me this, now?

JUNE

'Cause I wanna know.

CHRIS

How much money you got in *your* account?

JUNE

I knew it! You 've been spending it -

CHRIS

-on what June? What have I been spending my money on now?!

JUNE

Why won't you tell me then?

CHRIS

Damn woman! You on a roll today, huh?

JUNE

Then, what?

CHRIS

I've been making extra payments on the car.

JUNE

Ahh, shit! What?!

CHRIS

What?! What the hell is wrong with that? Extra payments equals car without a payment!

JUNE

We're going to need that money!

CHRIS

At least I haven't been buying beauty boxes on the internet every month!

JUNE

Nigga you know what?

CHRIS

Oh wait, a few minutes ago I was white. Now I'm a nigga? Which is it June?

JUNE

You know what, Chris?

CHRIS

Looks like you're exercising some black privileges right there.

(beat)

Okay, let's stop. We both know where this is coming from. We can't allow this situation to mess with us like this.

(beat)

I'm sorry, girl.

JUNE

You're right. Me too.

CHRIS

I'm gonna try mom, again.

JUNE

Okay.

CHRIS

Wait a minute. How much do you have in your account?

JUNE

\$8G's. You?

CHRIS

I got about - hold up.

Reaches in his pocket and pulls out an ATM receipt.

CHRIS

\$6,734.98. What about the joint account?

JUNE

A little over \$12G's. I checked last night.

(relief hits them both)

CHRIS

Okay.

JUNE

Okay.

They both hug again. But the surroundings bring them back down to earth quickly.

CHRIS

Shit!!

JUNE

It's alright. We'll make it

(beat)

Remember Tip?

CHRIS

Dog ate more than you and me combined. Why are you asking 'bout Tip?

JUNE

You think he's in heaven?

CHRIS

Honey, I -

JUNE

I'm okay. I was just wondering. Do you think he's in heaven or something?

CHRIS

I don't know, girl. I'm not sure they have a heaven for dogs. I mean how would I know?

JUNE

That's a terrible thing to say!



CHRIS

How am I suppose to know that? Where in the hell is this coming from?

JUNE

You always hated Tip! You never forgave him for peeing on your cashmere sweater.

CHRIS

That's not true! How could you say that?

She glares at him.

JUNE

You didn't care that he served you faithfully until he died.

CHRIS

He was blind, and deaf in one ear! Why would I hate him?! And it wasn't cashmere.

JUNE

Yeah, you say that now.

CHRIS

Really, June? This shit is not happening right now. You're not going to stand there and tell me I hated a deaf and blind dog for peeing on my merino wool sweater.

JUNE

Ha! See? I knew you hated him! Merino *wool* sweater.

CHRIS

This is stupid.

Dials his mom, again.

CHRIS

"Oh, hi mom. Yeah she's fine. No, nothing is left."

June runs over to a corner of the shop to cry.

CHRIS

"She'll be okay. No. No mom. No we don't need any money."

JUNE

How can you say that? Look at this place!

CHRIS

“She said it’s a real slap in the face. No, no the riot mom, not you - the riot! Yeah right, it is a horrible thing to have happened. How’s dad? No, no mom tell him it under control - yes. Yes. Hi dad. No we don’t need any money we’re okay.”

JUNE

What the hell? What’s wrong with a little charity?!

CHRIS

“No. No she said it’s nice how you care for me. For *me* dad! For *us*! I mean for us dad. Yeah, I love her, too. Okay, take care. Tell mom - hi mom. No, no. Hold on.”

He puts the phone on mute .

CHRIS

You wanna say anything to her?

JUNE

No. Not right now.

CHRIS

I think you should.

JUNE

Dog hater! Charity turner downer!

Chris turns and releases the mute on the phone.

CHRIS

“Mom I have to go. Please tell dad we love him. Love you both. Yes. No. No mom. Mom the insurance adjuster is here I have to go. Okay. Love you. Bye.”

(beat)

What-in-the-hell is going on with you, Juneey!

JUNE

Take a look around Chris! We have to start over but there’s not enough time now.

CHRIS

We have plenty of time, June!

JUNE

No, we don't! This couldn't have happened at the worst time.

CHRIS

What are you talking about? It's never a good time to murder someone when being video tapped.

June puts her face in her hands and shakes her head tensely.

JUNE

God are you so blind?

CHRIS

What is with you, today?!

JUNE

Nothing!

CHRIS

Bullshit there's more here than these riots and our business being burned down. What's wrong?! I don't deserve this shit right now!

JUNE

I'm pregnant!

CHRIS

And just like that, it's a new day! Ha!

(beat)

Look at us, baby!

He reaches out to her and pulls her in tight.  
They kiss then hold each other tight.

JUNE

Did you pay the house note?

BLACK OUT