

MERCY

draft 12.12.20

---

Julius Rea

6117 San Pablo Avenue  
Emeryville, CA, USA 94608  
Phone: (925) 864-9351  
Email: [julius.rea@gmail.com](mailto:julius.rea@gmail.com)

This script is copyright protected and may not be reproduced, distributed or disseminated  
without the prior written permission of the author.

## Characters

**Vivienne:** 40s; African-American female; a raw nerve; also plays "Mama 2" and "Viv" when designated

**Jonathan:** 40s; African-American male; a calm storm; also plays "Father" when designated

**Connie:** 30s - 40s; African-American female; an optimistic addict; also plays "Constance" and "Mama 2" when designated

**Kyra:** late teens; African-American; a burgeoning adult; also plays "Janet" and "Younger Connie" when designated

**Kenny:** child, 18 (played by adult); African-American (or mixed); a quiet critic; also plays "Kyra," "Johnny," "Younger Jonathan" and "Daddy" (when designated)

**Jack:** 20s - 40s; a playful addict

## Auxillary Characters / Voices

Police officers (2)

Protestors

## Scene and Setting

Two neighboring apartments in a walk-up building in Oakland, CA (1: Dec. 2008; 2: Jan. 2009; 3: Feb. 2009)

An apartment in Minneapolis, MN; a waiting room in San Francisco, CA; a sidewalk in Oakland, CA (4: Dec. 2019)

## Notes

- The apartments are in a walk-up apartment complex. There are two sets of stairs in the hallway: one towards the ground floor and one towards the third storey.
- "/" represents the start of the following line
- "-" represents a sudden stop
- "\*" represents two character talking simultaneously
- Kenny is played by an adult at all times
- Dialogue is made to overlap



*In Connie's apartment:*

*Clothes everywhere and a plastic bottle of alcohol by the couch.*

*In Jonathan's apartment:*

*A crooked Christmas tree, a couch, a coffee table and a monitor by the door. Jonathan's daughter, KYRA, decorates the tree and is on the phone.*

*JACK enters from downstairs and tries to open Connie's locked door. He tries to jiggle the knob before knocking.*

JACK

Connie... Connie!  
(pause)

Fuck.

*Jack exits upstairs.*

KYRA

(pause)

Yeah, well it is what it is. I told you about her- Hold on. Hello? Hi, Viv. Yeah, I'll see you in a bit. Call me if you need to be let in. Bye. Hello? Brandon. You fucked up... Oh, what about Aimee? Daya? Bree? See. You're dumb. Stop fighting it.

*JONATHAN enters wearing an ankle monitor, adjusting his pant leg to cover it. He is wearing clothes for a job interview.*

KYRA

Yeah, and that's what you get for hanging out with people at State.

JONATHAN

Kyra.

KYRA

Every time! They're always doing too much.

JONATHAN

Kyra.

KYRA

Haha, fuck you!

JONATHAN

Watch your mouth.

KYRA

Sorry. No, not you.

JONATHAN

Get off the phone.

KYRA

Hey, call you back in a sec. What?

JONATHAN

*What?*

KYRA

(corrective)

Yes.

JONATHAN

Whatchu gonna do about school?

KYRA

Wanna talk right now?

JONATHAN

I'm heading out.

KYRA

Can you leave twice in one day?

JONATHAN

It's fine.

KYRA

Uhh... where are / you going?

JONATHAN

30 minutes to get down there. Maybe... 40 minutes

KYRA

Where are you / going?

JONATHAN

I'll be back by 7 / hopefully.

KYRA

Where are you / going?

JONATHAN

I'll be right back.

KYRA

You already had a job / interview.

JONATHAN

Can dinner be ready when I get back?

KYRA

Are you sure it's okay to leave?

JONATHAN

I'll be fine.

KYRA

Really?

JONATHAN

Yes.

*Jonathan walks towards Kyra, eventually moving past her to look out the window.*

JONATHAN

Where were you trying to go?

KYRA

Just chilling.

JONATHAN

Where?

*Kyra moves towards the couch as Jonathan passes her.*

KYRA

Dunno yet.

JONATHAN

Who's driving? Anyone driving?

KYRA

No? I don't know.

JONATHAN

(beat)

Be back here by eleven.

KYRA

What?

JONATHAN

Ten.

KYRA

Are you serious?

JONATHAN

You heard me.

*Kyra sucks her teeth.*

JONATHAN

Kyra.

KYRA

Sorry.

*Kyra stands.*

JONATHAN

Where are you going?

KYRA

(pauses)

I wanna finish the tree.

JONATHAN

Be back by 9.

KYRA

Well, I might as well stay in now.

JONATHAN

Good. So... what are you making for dinner?

KYRA

Chicken?

JONATHAN

You know what'd I really love? Crab cakes. That sounds good.

KYRA

I loved mom's crab cakes.

JONATHAN

I think yours are better than hers. Honestly.

KYRA

Really?

JONATHAN

Yeah. Could you make them?

*A siren in the distance. Connie enters her apartment from the other room of her apartment and then exits, heading upstairs.*

KYRA

But I'd have to go to the store/

JONATHAN

Great.

*Jonathan sits and checks his pant leg to cover the ankle monitor.*

KYRA

Vivienne and Kenny are / coming over soon.

JONATHAN

Goddamnit.

KYRA

You. Can't. See. It.

*Jonathan turns for a moment.*



JONATHAN

The tree's looking good.

KYRA

I'm almost done.

JONATHAN

Make sure you get the angel.

*Kyra silently screams before continuing to decorate.*

*Beat.*

KYRA

I like Pace a lot and Loyola. But I'll definitely save the most money just going to State. Well Laney, then State. I think Loyola might give me more than Pace. They both have dance and business management, but Pace is in New York so that could be cool. And there's always Fisk.

JONATHAN

You're going to State.

*Music starts from the apartment upstairs.*

KYRA

What?

*Jonathan stands.*

JONATHAN

Fuck! Shut up!

KYRA

What the hell?

JONATHAN

I know you've been- Jack, shut up!

*The music stops.*

KYRA

Jack in the crack...

JONATHAN

You can stay here and save money... And what do you  
wanna go to Fisk? In the South? / C'mon...

KYRA

Come on!

JONATHAN

You have a place here. You have friends here. You can  
work. It will be cheaper. What's your problem?

*Jonathan starts to exit.*

KYRA

Where are you going?

JONATHAN

A friend needs some bail money.

KYRA

What? Who?!

JONATHAN

No one that you know.

KYRA

And you're the only person who can help? You're not  
supposed to leave the house!

JONATHAN

My PO said I could go.

KYRA

Really?

JONATHAN

Really.

KYRA

Really?

JONATHAN

Yes.

*Kyra walks over to the window.*

KYRA

You better leave soon.

*VIVIENNE and her son, KENNY, enter the hallway from downstairs. Vivienne has a purse; Kenny has a backpack.*

JONATHAN

I can't leave until 3 minutes before 5. I told my PO that I'd be gone from 5 to 7.

*Vivienne knocks on the door.*

JONATHAN

Who's that?

KYRA

Vivienne and Kenny.

JONATHAN

Wait, what?

*Jonathan stands up straight, fixing his clothes again, and adjusting his pants to cover the monitor.*

KYRA

Vivienne. And Kenny. I just said that they were coming.

JONATHAN

How long are they gonna be here?

KYRA

He's just here while she runs an errand.

*Kyra opens the door to let Vivienne and Kenny in.*

KYRA

Hey, Kenny!

KENNY

Hi.

JONATHAN

You're getting big.

VIVIENNE

What do you say?

KENNY

Hello.

VIVIENNE

Thanks, Kyra.

KYRA

Yeah.

VIVIENNE

I'll be gone just for a little bit.

*Jonathan leans down to Kenny's level.*

JONATHAN

Loosen up a bit- but stand up straight. And hey, smile... There you go. Hey, what time is it?

VIVIENNE

4:57.

JONATHAN

I gotta go. Viv, stay for dinner. Kyra's making crab cakes.

VIVIENNE

Maybe.

JONATHAN

See you soon.

VIVIENNE

You too.

*Jonathan exits the apartment; Jack enters from upstairs and passes by.*

JONATHAN

Hey Jack.

VIVIENNE

Crab cakes?

JONATHAN

Keep it down.

KYRA / JACK

Maybe...

VIVIENNE

Oh well, maybe we'll stay. How much homework do you have tonight?

*Jack exits. Jonathan starts hyperventilating.*

KENNY

I dunno-

KYRA

How's school going?

KENNY

O.K.

KYRA

Are you ready for Christmas?

VIVIENNE

Yes, he is. Did your dad talk to you about Kwanzaa?

KYRA

No.

VIVIENNE

We might come over here to celebrate it.

KYRA

Huh.

*Jonathan punches the hallway wall, now calm enough to leave. Simultaneously, Connie enters the hallways from upstairs and see him. Jonathan does not notice Connie as he exits.*

*A beeping sound from Jonathan's apartment starts.*

*Connie quickly enters her apartment, locks the door, and sits on the couch.*

VIVIENNE

What was that?

KYRA

Did it come from outside?

VIVIENNE

(To Kenny)

Was that you?

KENNY

No.

KYRA

Huh...

*Kyra opens the door, checks the hallway, and returns.*

KYRA

Guess it was nothing.

KENNY

I hate the beeping.

KYRA

Don't worry about it.

(to Vivienne)

How's Connie?

VIVIENNE

(pause)

She's fine.

*Beat.*

*Vivienne pulls out a \$20 bill from her purse and hands it to Kyra. Connie pulls out a pill bottle and takes a few, slightly nodding off.*

KYRA

I don't need it.

VIVIENNE

Crab isn't cheap.

KYRA

Yeah...

*Kyra takes the money.*

VIVIENNE

Kenny, try to do some homework okay. Be back soon.

*Vivienne exits.*

KYRA

So, you got homework?

*Kenny nods.*

KYRA

Come on.

*They exit the living room. Vivienne takes a deep breath before approaching Connie's apartment and knocking on the door.*

VIVIENNE

Connie... Connie! Wake up!

CONNIE

Viv?

VIVIENNE

Connie, open the door.

CONNIE

Hold on-

*Connie quickly kicks the alcohol bottle under the table.*

VIVIENNE

It's just me.

CONNIE

Hold on. Hold on.

*Connie lets Vivienne into the apartment.*

CONNIE

What, uh, what time is it?

VIVIENNE

Just past 5.

CONNIE

What? Oh my god... Where's Kenn/

VIVIENNE

He's fine.

CONNIE

Where is he?

*Vivienne starts to slowly circle the room.*

VIVIENNE

Next door.

CONNIE

Okay/

VIVIENNE

Where were you?

CONNIE

I was... I must have... uh, I fell asleep.

VIVIENNE

(beat)

I don't need your help watching Kenny anymore.

CONNIE

Vivienne, c'mon... it's these new pills.

VIVIENNE

Those?

CONNIE

Yeah...

*Connie grabs the pill bottle and gives it to Vivienne.*

VIVIENNE

When did you take these?



CONNIE

I don't know.

VIVIENNE

Well, I called you at 11-

CONNIE

I didn't know that they'd just- take me out.

VIVIENNE

Where'd you get 'em?

CONNIE

The doctor.

VIVIENNE

For what?

CONNIE

They help me sleep.

VIVIENNE

So, when did you realize that you couldn't pick up  
Kenny from school? Before or after you took...

(Reading)

Flexeril.

CONNIE

Viv/

VIVIENNE

Stop.

*Vivienne places the pill bottle on the table.*

CONNIE

Did something happen/

*Vivienne starts cleaning.*

VIVIENNE

I didn't know that it was 17 blocks between the school  
and the house. I know that because he told me. After  
walking home.

CONNIE  
Oh/

VIVIENNE  
Oh.

*Kenny enters the living room, sits on the floor,  
and starts doing homework.*

CONNIE  
Viv... he's gotta walk home sometimes.

VIVIENNE  
That's not your decision.

CONNIE  
Please stop cleaning...

*Vivienne stops.*

CONNIE  
I made a mistake. Mama was right-

VIVIENNE  
God, let it go, Con...  
(Stops the bottle)  
What is that?

CONNIE  
What?

VIVIENNE  
That.

*Connie grabs the alcohol bottle but Vivienne  
snatches it.*

CONNIE  
Vivienne-

VIVIENNE  
Stop.

CONNIE  
Vivienne, I'm fine.