

DISTRICTLAND

by Cristina A. Bejan

DISTRICTLAND

© 2026 by Cristina A. Bejan

CAUTION: Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that performance of **DISTRICTLAND** is subject to payment of a royalty. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of The United States of America, and of all countries covered by the International Copyright Union (including the Dominion of Canada and the rest of the British Commonwealth) and of all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention, the Berne Convention, and of all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations. All rights, including without limitation professional/amateur stage rights, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all other forms of mechanical, electronic and digital reproduction, transmission and distribution, such as CD, DVD, the Internet, private and file-sharing networks, information storage and retrieval systems, photocopying, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved. Particular emphasis is placed upon the matter of readings, permission of which must be obtained from the Author in writing.

The English language stock and amateur stage performance rights in the United States, its territories, possessions and Canada for **DISTRICTLAND** are controlled exclusively by Next Stage Press. No professional or nonprofessional performance of the Play may be given without obtaining in advance written permission and paying the requisite fee.

SPECIAL NOTE

Anyone receiving permission to produce **DISTRICTLAND** is required to give credit to the Author as sole and exclusive Author of the Play on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play and in all instances in which the title of the Play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or a production thereof. The name of the Author must appear on a separate line, in which no other name appears, immediately beneath the title and in size of type equal to 50% of the size of the largest, most prominent letter used for the title of the Play. No person, firm, or entity may receive credit larger or more prominent than that accorded the Author.

DISTRICTLAND

Characters

Housemates living in a shared house in 2014 (i.e. the Obama Years) in Washington DC in a predominantly and historically African-American neighborhood undergoing recent gentrification, such as Shaw, Columbia Heights, Mount Pleasant, or Northeast (NE).

FRANK. Idealistic intern on the Hill, working for Richard, the Congressman. Asian male, age 22, Chinese Marxist, from Minnesota.

CHARITY. Hipster NGO worker. White female, age 25, bi-curious. Recently returned Peace Corps in Samoa. Works for an NGO championing indigenous rights. Cerebral. Went to Sewanee: The University of the South. Grew up in Johnson City, Tennessee. Spoken word poet.

DAVE. Unemployed Georgetown Law School grad. White male, age 26, from New England: somewhere predictable. Recently was working on some campaign. Kind of an ass – acts like he has it all figured out. Involved in the “progressive” leadership movement. Went to Yale undergrad with Katherine.

MARIA. Cuban-American. Rhodes Scholar. Female, age 25, type A, extremely uncomfortable with other people. Works in the State Department. Just wants to be left alone. Got roped into this house because went to high school in Johnson City, TN with Charity and needed to move to DC in a flash, definitely regretting it. Always glued to her phone. Opinionated. Part of the Presidential Management Fellows Program.

Other characters (can be doubled up):

A’ISHA. Lone DC Native. Hot African-American woman, age 30. Frank is totally in love with her. Spoken word poet.

ELOISE. French ennui-filled World Bank employee. White female, age 32. Every man in DC is after her.

RICHARD. Congressman Davis. White male, age 50. A notorious sexter. A man starved for intimacy and on a power trip. Definitely an ass.

HAMISH. IMF economist. Indian male, age 35. Looking for a wife, living the American Dream, dating Maria yet worships Eloise.

DISTRICTLAND

AFGHANI CABBIE. Infamous author of “The Confessions of an Afghani Cabbie: The Unbelievable Journey,” a real book by Hamed Abawi (afghanicabbie.com). The excerpt quoted in the play is from his book’s brochure. Middle Eastern/South Asian male, age 40s/50s/60s.

KATHERINE. Dave’s consultant friend from New York City. White female, age 26. Went to college with Dave at Yale, then did a master’s at Columbia. The type of girl who needs men’s attention all the time and is a terrible friend to other women.

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. White female, blonde, age 19-24. Represents the LSDB (the Lobby for Saving the Dogs of Bucharest).

WAITER. Young waiter at the restaurant where Richard and Maria lunch. Any gender, any age.

Time Frame

Over the course of one summer day in 2014.

DISTRICTLAND

DISTRICTLAND

**“Face Value DC” – a day in the life of today’s young Washingtonian
A satire of life in Washington DC, USA, 2014**

This play is a day in the life of a motley crew of young DC go-getter types living in a shared house in a transition neighborhood and the various DC “worlds” they inhabit. All is based (loosely) on fact and true stories real DC dwellers have shared.

INTRO: following a theme-song, such as Wale’s “Chillin.” In a really intense, borderline ridiculous, deep male voice – FRANK’s voice but much exaggerated.

Washington DC, United States of America
The Nexus of World Power
Where Deals are Brokered
And Dreams fulfilled
OR demolished
Rat Race and Ladder
Playground games
Muses, minds, monuments
Instant replay
Google me, Fool me, Rule me
Institution after institution,
Bureaucrats and Bureaucracy
From suburban strip-mall
To the MALL
Concrete urban jungle
The land of opportunity
The land of intensity
This land is your land
This land is my land

DISTRICTLAND

This is, yes, you got it
DISTRICTLAND

SCENE 1: 6 AM THE HOUSE – FRANK’S ROOM

Scene begins with hearing a rooster – and the blare of an alarm clock. A mountainous pile of business cards stands on top of Frank’s very messy desk, atop which also sits a Mac laptop. Frank wakes up, nearly falls out of his bed as he hits the alarm off.

SCENE 2: THE HOUSE – THE HALLWAY AND BATHROOM DOOR

Frank stumbles to the bathroom. En route, he runs into RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL who is emerging from the bathroom, looking around the hall and wondering where to go.

FRANK. *(Groggy.)* Can I help you?

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. *(Clearly hungover and out of it.)* Um, yeah – I, um – I don’t know ... yeah. *(She has no idea where to go.)*

FRANK. Are you looking for Dave’s room?

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. Oh yeah, *Dave*, yeah.

FRANK. *(Pointing down the hall.)* That way.

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. K, thanks. *(She trots off, Frank shuts the door to the bathroom.)*

SCENE 3: THE HOUSE – THE KITCHEN

CHARITY is up having tea and reading the newspaper. Frank enters in a suit.

CHARITY. *(Chirpy.)* Good morning, Frank!

FRANK. Morning. Dave’s got some girl – *(Frank grabs a banana out of the fruit basket, peels the banana, and starts to scarf it down, clearly in a rush.)*

DISTRICTLAND

CHARITY. Yeah, I know, cleaning up on Match.com again.

FRANK. *(With a mouthful of food.)* Gross.

CHARITY. She's hotter than Saturday's.

FRANK. Well, you're into blondes, so there you go.

CHARITY. True.

FRANK. But it's a weeknight?!

CHARITY. Never stopped him – also the luxury of unemployment.

(Frank looks confused. MARIA bolts in, grabs a granola bar.)

CHARITY. Hey Maria.

MARIA. Hi, guys, gotta run. *(Maria bolts out. Frank and Charity look at each other quizzically. Charity rolls her eyes.)*

FRANK. *(Changing the subject, not wanting to speak ill of anybody.)* I've never understood how you are always up so early

CHARITY. In Samoa, I woke with the sunrise.

FRANK. *(Shaking his head in disbelief and sighs.)* Oh, the Peace Corps...

CHARITY. You should really consider it! Changed my life –

FRANK. Hmmmmm. My parents would kill me.

CHARITY. Why?

FRANK. It's a first-generation thing – you wouldn't understand – *(Frank has finished his banana and goes to throw it in the garbage. Charity marginally flips out and intervenes, sweeping the peel from his hands.)*

FRANK. What?

CHARITY. Compost! Remember?!

FRANK. Oh, God, yes, so sorry!

CHARITY. It's ok – just, don't do it again.

FRANK. Fine, I gotta go!

CHARITY. Have a great day! Tell your congressman I am serious about the native issues in Minnesota: both the Ojibwe and Dakota Sioux basically have no rights – it is disgraceful.

FRANK. Okay Doubt it will make his radar. He still doesn't know my name, and he is really into this international animal rights thing, something about dogs I'll be late, Charity –

CHARITY. But you're just an intern, you are not even getting paid. Relax.

DISTRICTLAND

FRANK. *(Totally uptight.)* Relax?! Are you crazy?! My office has the highest turnover rate in Congress.

CHARITY. *(Laughing.)* Well – that is not your fault Ok, yes, this is DC – go!

FRANK. *(A second thought on his way out.)* Are you going to Dave’s progressive network thing happy hour later?

CHARITY. Ugh – that sounds like hell. Luckily, tonight is Sparkle.

FRANK. Right – yes, have fun!

CHARITY. *(Ironically.)* You guys network and progress well!

FRANK. Ok - Bye! *(Frank runs out the kitchen. Charity takes the banana peel outside.)*

SCENE 4: THE HOUSE – THE BACKYARD

Charity throws the peel in the compost, grabs the birdseed/pulls a piece of bread out of her apron and feeds the chickens in the coop, singing “Joyful Girl” by Ani DiFranco, softly.

CHARITY. *I do it for the joy it brings
Because I am a joyful girl
Because the world owes me nothing
And we owe each other the world
I do it because it’s the least I can do
I do it because I learned it from you
I do it just because I want to
Because I want to*

*Everything I do is judged
And they mostly get it wrong
But oh well
'Cause the bathroom mirror has not budged
And the woman who lives there can tell
The truth from the stuff that they say
And she looks me in the eye
And says ‘Would you prefer the easy way?’*

DISTRICTLAND

*No, well okay, then
Don't cry'*

*And I wonder if everything I do
I do instead
Of something I want to do more
The question fills my head
I know there's no grand plan here
This is just the way it goes
When everything else seems unclear
I guess at least I know*

I do it for the joy it brings...

SCENE 5: THE STREET ON THE WAY TO THE METRO

Frank is rushing down the street to get on the metro. Between him and the metro, A'ISHA crosses his path, crossing the street – it is like time stops. National Geographic voiceover begins. The rest of this action happens in slow motion. A'isha is dressed in a simple dress and sandals, natural hair, walks with confidence, like she owns the city. Eventually, she makes her way to the bus top and stands there waiting for the bus, checking her phone.

VOICEOVER. *(Frank's voice, or a doctored version of his voice.)* There she walks. Untouched and unafraid. In her natural habitat. The streets of the District of Columbia produced this rare beauty. And here she doth roam. She pauses to look, responsibly, in both directions, for traffic. There is none. With confidence and her uniquely urban survival instinct, she forges ahead. Her destination is the midpoint of her daily migration – her workplace. Day in and day out, her path is the same. She is a loner, never one to travel in a pack. The lone DC native now waits for her chosen means of transportation – the G2 bus – which will take her across town and away from – *(By now the bus has arrived and A'isha boards it. FRANK snaps out of his illusion.)*

DISTRICTLAND

FRANK. Me. – *(He looks at his watch.) Oh no! (Frank runs to the metro and disappears down the escalator.)*

SCENE 6: THE BOWELS OF CONGRESS

Frank is desperately trying to keep up with RICHARD as they both march through the underworld tunnel that connects the congressional offices to the Capitol. Frank's security badge is bouncing around as they rush. Frank's sole purpose during this walk is to serve Richard his cereal with a spoon. While this is occurring, Richard is also glued to his phone, rapidly texting. Utter silence.

SCENE 7: CHARITY'S NGO OFFICE

Charity is sitting at a desk, with a computer, answering phones. Looking really bored and miserable. Typical desk-job situation. She has a colorful notebook and pen and she is clearly writing every time she has a spare moment. Phone rings.

CHARITY. Hello, you've reached World Indigenous Initiative. How may I direct your call? *(Pause.)* She is not here right now. Would you like to be directed to her voicemail? *(Pause.)* Please let me connect you. *(She connects the caller and hangs up. Charity returns to her poetry writing. The phone rings again.)*

CHARITY. Hello, you've reached World Indigenous Initiative. How may I direct your call? *(Pause.)* Hello again, sir. *(Pause.)* She is on vacation, returning in a week. *(Pause.)* She is the only one responsible for Central America. *(Pause.)* No, there is no one else who could answer your question. *(Pause.)* I understand Nicaragua is very important. *(Pause.)* We work with indigenous communities from Canada to Peru. *(Pause.)* You are free to leave her a message, and she should get back to you. *(Pause.)* I am really sorry, but I cannot help you. *(Pause.)* If she doesn't respond, then I don't know what to tell you. *(Pause.)* How many times have you contacted us? *(Pause – shocked.)* Oh, my sincerest apologies, sir. *(Pause.)* No, I can assure you we don't have anything against the Miskito Indians. *(Pause.)*

DISTRICTLAND

Native rights are at the forefront of WII's agenda – the core of our mission. *(Pause.)* The executive director? I'll try. *(Pause.)* Please let me connect you. *(Charity connects him. Charity returns to her poetry writing for a bit. The phone rings again.)*

CHARITY. Hello, you've reached World Indigenous Initiative. How may I direct your call? *(Pause.)* Oh – hello again. *(Pause.)* All I can recommend is to leave a message. *(Pause.)* Her email is on the website. *(Pause.)* She *should* be in the building right now. *(Pause.)* She *should* get back to you. *(Pause.)* I am so sorry. I don't know what else to tell you. I can't do anything more to help you. *(Pause.)* My name? Charity. *(Pause – shocked, looks at the phone, he has hung up.)* Um, bye?! *(Charity puts the phone down and her head in her hands.)*

SCENE 8: A STARBUCKS NEAR THE WORLD BANK

ELOISE is seated across from HAMISH outside a giant Starbucks near the World Bank. Eloise is very foreign, serious, manicured, composed, and sophisticated.

HAMISH. Leaving? Already?

ELOISE. Not immediately. But I am so bored here.

HAMISH. I don't think you ever gave DC a chance.

ELOISE. I want to be in the field.

HAMISH. *(Sighing, nostalgically.)* Yes, the field. What are you thinking?

ELOISE. A World Bank appointment abroad.

HAMISH. What about the UN?

ELOISE. I'll leave the New York Cities to other people.

HAMISH. Yes, the field.

ELOISE. I'll tell Marcelo to talk to you, if I submit my resignation and my spot opens up.

HAMISH. Thank you.

ELOISE. It's fine.

HAMISH. Have you thought about other options – UN agencies, NGOs,

...

DISTRICTLAND

ELOISE. I have. World Vision, CARE, IMC, UNICEF, UNIFEM, UNDP, MSF, all of it.

HAMISH. I can't persuade you to stay?

ELOISE. Hamish.

HAMISH. What?

ELOISE. How many times do I have to tell you that it would never work?

HAMISH. But you are beautiful.

ELOISE. I am a smoker.

HAMISH. So?

ELOISE. And I could never stay in Washington, or this country – the ignorance, the arrogance, everyone dresses badly, and dare I mention the obesity?

HAMISH. Let me take you to something tonight.

ELOISE. What?

HAMISH. Something authentically Washington DC.

ELOISE. Ok?

HAMISH. You can read your poetry.

ELOISE. Really?

HAMISH. Give the city – give me one more shot.

ELOISE. But what about Maria?

HAMISH. She is not as sophisticated as you.

ELOISE. I don't mind that she is around, you know? Keeps me off the hook.

HAMISH. Eloise –

ELOISE. She is young though.

HAMISH. Give me time, please.

ELOISE. I don't know if I can stand it any longer.

HAMISH. One more try?

ELOISE. *(Shrugs.)* Fine.

HAMISH. Merci –

ELOISE. Rien, Hamish.

HAMISH. Find a poem.

ELOISE. I will.

HAMISH. You know, I'll miss you.

ELOISE. One city, one country, one moment at a time, please?

DISTRICTLAND

HAMISH. Indeed. *(Eloise takes a final drag, drops her cigarette, and steps on it.)*

SCENE 9: A RESTAURANT DOWNTOWN

Maria is running a little late, on the phone with her father. Richard is already seated at a table for two, browsing the menu. Maria rushes up to his table.

MARIA. I am so sorry I'm a little late, Congressman. Was on the phone with my father.

RICHARD. I would never want to interrupt a conversation between a father and daughter!

MARIA. You have children, right?

RICHARD. Yes, three. Two daughters, one son.

MARIA. I thought I remembered that. Wonderful, how old are they?

RICHARD. The girls are in high school. Jeffrey is in the fourth grade.

MARIA. Aw.

RICHARD. Jenny will be neurosurgeon. Abby wants to be an artist. *(Shakes his head, says the word "artist" as if it were alien.)* Between the two of them, I will have a normal daughter. Luckily, Jeff is interested in stocks and bonds already, the next Trump. Please, have a look at the menu. *(Maria turns her phone on silent, puts it in her bag, and very seriously considers the menu.)*

RICHARD. I recommend the fish.

MARIA. Ok. *(She puts the menu down, looks up.)*

MARIA. So, thank you so much for meeting with me. This is a crucial moment – I really need some mentorship.

RICHARD. So how is the job?

MARIA. Well, if you understand you are working in a bureaucracy – pushing papers all day, dealing with idiots – it's fine! Though my boss is going through a divorce and has at least one emotional breakdown a day. If I decide to leave, she is going to be so upset.

RICHARD. Hm.

DISTRICTLAND

MARIA. I don't know. Because of the PMF, I seized this position the instant I could. But now I am wondering if I should have gone to law school or into consulting, like all the other Rhodies.

RICHARD. Oh yes, you are a Rhodes – *(The WAITER approaches.)*

WAITER. What would you like to order?

RICHARD. Ladies first.

MARIA. I'd like the salmon please.

RICHARD. I'll have the same.

MARIA. And some tap water.

RICHARD. We could go for a bottle of wine? *(Looks inquisitively at Maria.)*

MARIA. Um, ok – I could have a sip.

RICHARD. The chardonnay please.

WAITER. I'll get right on it! *(Waiter exits.)*

MARIA. Thank you!

RICHARD. So, are you seriously considering a career in politics?

MARIA. Not as an elected official – no. I say that now, but who knows.

RICHARD. You know, you made quite an impression on me at the Cuban-American Forum. I am sure you could be a strong leader in your community.

MARIA. But I am not sure I want to limit myself like that. Or rely on the community – there is so much infighting and backstabbing there, I can't begin to tell you.

RICHARD. Which is why they could use a young leader like you. *(Looks pointedly at Maria.)*

MARIA. Thanks for the confidence. You know it is really kind you offered to give me some advice. I've found it so difficult to find true mentors after Oxford.

RICHARD. Everyone is jealous of and competing with you.

MARIA. Huh – maybe.

RICHARD. I know so. *(The Waiter returns, pours the wine, and departs. Richard and Maria start drinking. Richard does not initiate a toast but hurriedly starts his wine.)*

RICHARD. So, you might be off to law school?

MARIA. I've been accepted to Yale.

DISTRICTLAND

RICHARD. Excellent.

MARIA. Thanks.

RICHARD. And you already have a master's from Oxford.

MARIA. Two.

RICHARD. In what?

MARIA. Social Policy and an MBA.

RICHARD. And undergrad?

MARIA. Government at Princeton.

RICHARD. Ok, sorry it is taking me a moment to get your CV straight.

MARIA. *(Rolling her eyes.)* Oh, my CV – always the CV.

RICHARD. DC CV. What can I say?

MARIA. Anyway, I am not sure that Federal bureaucracy is my future.

RICHARD. Listen, I am going to a gala tonight at the Uzbek Embassy – I am very good friends with the Ambassador – I am going to ask him about maybe some short-term consulting for development projects there. Do you like Central Asia?

MARIA. Never been.

RICHARD. Sounds like you need a bit of adventure in your life.

MARIA. *(A little confused, raising an eyebrow.)* Uzbekistan? *(The waiter brings the food.)*

MARIA. My, that was fast! Thank you so much.

RICHARD. This is a cut to the chase kind of place.

MARIA. Evidently. I have never been here before.

RICHARD. Listen Maria, I need to tell you why I really asked you to lunch.

MARIA. Is mentorship not a sufficient reason?

RICHARD. The truth is that next time we meet, I am hoping it will be evening, we will have a few drinks, and it will become something physical.

MARIA. *(Absolutely shocked and taken aback.)* Um.

RICHARD. Surely you were aware of this possibility.

MARIA. *(Shaking her head.)* Um, no, no it had not crossed my mind.

RICHARD. So, what do you think?

MARIA. I think your wife is going to come after you with a shotgun.

RICHARD. *(Laughs.)* No, she is far too busy.

MARIA. Have you stepped out of your marriage before?

DISTRICTLAND

RICHARD. (*Thoughtfully.*) Yes. But mostly out of town.

MARIA. Do you do it often?

RICHARD. (*Pauses – looks at Maria meaningfully.*) No. Only when the opportunity presents itself.

MARIA. (*Eyes widen.*) Have you spoken with your wife about this?

RICHARD. No, I couldn't hurt her.

MARIA. What's the problem exactly?

RICHARD. There is none – I mean, I love my wife. It's just a sexless marriage.

MARIA. Oh.

RICHARD. Look, what I am proposing is not that uncommon – Dan Savage says we are not meant to be monogamous.

MARIA. Why did you marry her in the first place? Clearly, you did have a physical relationship – you produced three children.

RICHARD. We were best friends in grad school. I've never known mad passionate love.

MARIA. You're lucky. It hurts like a hell.

RICHARD. So, what do you say, Maria? Let's be adults about this.

MARIA. I say, you've made your bed, now lie in it.

RICHARD. I feel embarrassed now – I was just so enchanted when I first saw you at the Forum – and then to find out how accomplished you are. (*A pause, he looks at her in an examining way.*) Your teeth, did you wear braces growing up?

MARIA. Yes, briefly – why?

RICHARD. (*Impressed.*) Perfectly straight.

MARIA. Congressman, I am Catholic. I am also seeing somebody.

RICHARD. That dark guy who was with you?

MARIA. Yes.

RICHARD. I thought as much. You know, Maria, folks do this all the time.

MARIA. You do realize this is a very privileged problem you have, Congressman?

RICHARD. What do you mean? Everyone wants to *connect* with people.

MARIA. Most people are trying to put food on the table.

RICHARD. Depends –

DISTRICTLAND

MARIA. I am simply not the appropriate candidate. And with that, I thank you for lunch. It was delicious. I really must return to the office. Goodbye. *(Maria collects herself, gets up, has hardly touched her salmon or her wine. Richard has emptied his glass already, already on round two or three or four. Maria leaves.)*

RICHARD. *(Gruff, under his breath.)* Well, if you are going off to New Haven, you are a moving target anyhow. *(Richard pours himself another glass of wine and sips it as he watches Maria's ass as she walks off.)*

SCENE 10: DAVE'S ROOM

DAVE is asleep in his bed and his phone rings. Random Sleepover Girl is long gone by now – she had to go to work.

DAVE. *(Groggy.)* Hello? *(This is a split scene – KATHERINE is driving, changing all the lanes on the Beltway, working her way from outermost lane to the innermost, from Maryland towards the District, as she talks on the phone. She is wearing very large sunglasses, is well-manicured, and wears lots of make-up.)*

KATHERINE. Dave, you are not just waking up, are you?

DAVE. Yes, I confess.

KATHERINE. *(Heavy sigh.)* Fine. Good morning. I am on the Beltway.

DAVE. Great!

KATHERINE. I left New York around 9 – I am making good time.

DAVE. So, you are coming here?

KATHERINE. Yes, text me your address so I can put it in my GPS.

DAVE. Right, will do.

KATHERINE. All I remember is that you guys live in the ghetto.

DAVE. Katherine! This is prime real estate.

KATHERINE. Whatever, DC is ghetto.

DAVE. Easy for you to say Miss Manhattan McKinsey.

KATHERINE. It's "Ms." Why can't you live in Arlington, like all the normal people?

DAVE. No one would take me seriously politically if I lived in Arlington.

KATHERINE. Whatever.

DISTRICTLAND

DAVE. It's true! I have to be a DC resident.

KATHERINE. Again, whatever. Have you confirmed with the place for tonight?

DAVE. Yes, the bar in Dupont you mentioned.

KATHERINE. Perfect. Dupont is *not* ghetto. How many RSVPs?

DAVE. A fair few – I need to check Facebook for the latest.

KATHERINE. Anyway, I sent the invite to my entire alumni network.

DAVE. Good.

KATHERINE. You and I need to have a serious talk about PLN before the happy hour.

DAVE. Ok?!

KATHERINE. No, it's not bad. I just want to make sure we are on the same page, that's all. Talk about your employment options.

DAVE. Consulting, State, a Firm, more campaigning – I know we need to figure out what would best set PLN up for the future.

KATHERINE. Precisely. (*Annoyed at another driver.*) What the fuck?! Keep your distance asshole – sorry, these Maryland drivers are fucking insane.

DAVE. You could've taken the bus.

KATHERINE. You kidding? What's the point of having a car if you don't use it – I don't drive in the city obviously.

DAVE. Katie (*Vaguely frustrated.*), I'll text you the address.

KATHERINE. Good. Do it.

DAVE. Bye.

KATHERINE. Bye, Dave. (*Katherine in her car cuts out. Dave stretches, looks at his phone, checking the time and Facebook. As he gets out of bed, he discovers a business card on his bedside table – it's Random Sleepover Girl's – reads the back, she wrote "Call me!"*)

DAVE. (*Shudders.*) Damn. (*Dave tosses the card in the trash as he gets up and leaves his room.*)

DISTRICTLAND

SCENE 11: THE LOBBY OF RICHARD THE CONGRESSMAN'S OFFICE

There is muffled screaming coming from behind Richard's office door. Random Sleepover Girl is sitting on the sofa, very dressed up, with a notepad and pen on her lap and her smartphone in her hand – she is playing around on it – texting, tweeting – whatever. She is wearing ridiculous heels, a very short skirt, a revealing blouse and has a faux-mink brightly colored handbag. The muffled screaming continues. She cringes and looks very uncomfortable. After a while, Frank emerges from the office, looking shell-shocked.

FRANK. *(Voice possibly cracking a bit out of nervousness.)* Congressman Davis is ready to see you now. *(He then realizes he recognizes Random Sleepover Girl.)* Um, hello –

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. Yes, hi. Nice to see you again, and so soon. *(Richard emerges from his office, straightening his tie.)*

RICHARD. *(Impressed by what he sees in Random Sleepover Girl.)* Why hello, young lady.

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. Congressman, please allow me to introduce myself. I am here on behalf of –

RICHARD. Yes, the Lobby for Saving the Dogs of Bucharest – I know. Such a crucial issue. *(They shake hands in a very official, awkward DC manner.)*

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. I cannot tell you how distressed we all are with President Basescu's latest proclamation.

RICHARD. Oh, I know. It is such a travesty.

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. There are multiple NGOs facilitating the adoption of stray dogs from Iraq and Afghanistan – how can we, as a nation, overlook Romania?!

RICHARD. Agreed.

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. I mean, like, the Cold War happened before the War on Terror – first things first!

RICHARD. First dogs first. What Ceausescu created is a nightmare.

DISTRICTLAND

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. Basescu's latest effort is forced sterilization.

RICHARD. I am aware – Frank has thoroughly briefed me.

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. (*Glaring at Frank.*) Oh, I see.

RICHARD. How about we take this to my office – I met with Brigitte Bardot about this in Paris last month – you know it is of top priority for me and the people of Minnesota.

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. Thank you so much, Congressman. (*Richard retreats to his office. Random Sleepover Girl hangs back and whispers to Frank.*)

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. You can tell your housemate that he is an asshole.

FRANK. What – why?

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. I left my card and he hasn't called or texted or emailed or Facebooked me.

FRANK. That was this morning!

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. Um, yeah, like hours ago. And he said something about a Happy Hour later –

FRANK. He probably isn't even awake yet.

RANDOM SLEEPOVER GIRL. Well – whatever. (*She leaves the lobby in a huff into Richard's office with an attitude and slightly slams the door behind her. Frank is left totally thinking everything and everyone is crazy.*)

SCENE 12: A PARK, A BENCH

Maria is on the phone approaching the park, Hamish is sitting on a bench reading. When he spots her, he stands up and waves. Maria gets off the phone.

MARIA. Hey Hamish, how was your day?

HAMISH. Busy – you?

MARIA. Insane.

HAMISH. Was at the World Bank for a meeting – am thinking of changing jobs.

MARIA. What? You've been at the IMF this whole time.

DISTRICTLAND

HAMISH. Exactly. A change? Just considering ...

MARIA. Ok ... Let's keep talking about this as we walk. So which way is this gallery?

HAMISH. Just a couple of blocks up.

MARIA. You know (*Hesitantly.*), a friend of mine forwarded me a link today.

HAMISH. What do you mean?

MARIA. About the owner. From the Cuban diaspora press –

HAMISH. What?

MARIA. I am not so sure I should go.

HAMISH. But he has Klimt!

MARIA. Sure – apparently people think he is a spy.

HAMISH. Really?!

MARIA. Well, doesn't DC have the highest concentration of spies in the States? Not so surprising.

HAMISH. (*Deep breath.*) Well –

MARIA. I mean, if you really want to go, we can

HAMISH. No, it's ok. (*Pause.*) Maria, let's sit down.

MARIA. Ok? (*They sit down. Hamish takes another deep breath. Maria is very confused.*)

HAMISH. This isn't working for me.

MARIA. What isn't?

HAMISH. This.

MARIA. I am not sure I know what you mean.

HAMISH. I am used to ruling people out after three dates.

MARIA. We've been together for three months.

HAMISH. *Dating.*

MARIA. Longer than three dates.

HAMISH. Yes, I just am not certain.

MARIA. I thought we were enjoying each other's company?

HAMISH. I am looking for a wife.

MARIA. Ok.

HAMISH. And I just don't know about this – it doesn't feel right, somehow.

MARIA. What exactly is wrong with me?

DISTRICTLAND

HAMISH. *(Frankly.)* I am looking for a domestic goddess.

MARIA. *(Aghast.)* Domestic goddess?!

HAMISH. *(Innocently.)* Yes.

MARIA. *(Defensively.)* I have been really busy.

HAMISH. I know, but I just don't feel at home with you.

MARIA. How long have you been thinking this?

HAMISH. A couple of weeks now.

MARIA. You should have told me before.

HAMISH. I still wasn't sure. *(By now Maria is tearing up.)*

MARIA. Entirely premature. *(Hamish looks at her sheepishly and shrugs.)*
I am awesome, and you are crazy.

HAMISH. I know you are awesome. I don't want either of us to waste any more time.

MARIA. I was a waste of time?

HAMISH. No – I mean I don't want to waste any more of your time. Your time is valuable.

MARIA. No kidding.

HAMISH. I really care about you. I feel protective of you.

MARIA. Really?

HAMISH. Yes. *(Maria takes a deep breath and reaches in her purse and takes out a CD, presents it to Hamish.)*

MARIA. Well, I make mix CDs for people I care about – so here you go. I had made it for you.

HAMISH. Why?

MARIA. Just because.

HAMISH. *(Bewildered.)* Oh –

MARIA. Hamish, I think you are being premature and ridiculous – and don't worry, you will not be hearing from me.

HAMISH. Maria –

MARIA. Bye. *(Maria has gotten up and is walking away, reaching in and grabbing her phone and immediately dialing and calling Frank.)*

MARIA. Where are you guys at again? *(Pause.)* Yes, I know. I am coming after all.

DISTRICTLAND

SCENE 13: PROGRESSIVE LEADERSHIP NETWORK HAPPY HOUR

Katherine and Dave are at the bar, looking around with drinks, each have their smartphone in their hands. They are both dressed up, looking very professional. The bar is packed. Frank is just hanging around next to them – he definitely looks out of place.

KATHERINE. So far, so good.

DAVE. See? I told you –

KATHERINE. *(Looking around.)* Man, DC is ugly.

DAVE. But smart – the highest concentration of PhDs. And athletic. Totally Type A.

KATHERINE. Of course, of course, it is essential we have our base here. *(Abruptly turns to Frank.)* So, what exactly do you do?

FRANK. I work in Congressman Davis's office. 9th District, Minnesota.

DAVE. Frank is an *intern* and my housemate.

KATHERINE. *(Raises an eyebrow.)* When are you going to get your own place again, Dave?

DAVE. I was thinking of buying it actually – property values are only going to skyrocket.

KATHERINE. Real estate investor maybe, but you can't live in a shared house forever. I mean, let's get real. *(Switching topics.)* So, Congressman Davis's office – do you know Michelle Mitchell? She worked in his office for years. *(Frank shakes his head.)*

KATHERINE. What about Terry Jones? Congressman from Idaho – I believe his office is down the hall. *(Frank shakes his head.)*

KATHERINE. *(To Dave.)* Terry and I go way back. Samuel Smith? Also on the Hill, a press officer for Iowa – *(Frank looks dumbfounded.)*

KATHERINE. We hash together. *(Frank still looks dumbfounded.)*

KATHERINE. I *do know* a lot of people.

FRANK. Clearly – and, um *(Tentatively.)*, what do you do?

KATHERINE. McKinsey.

DAVE. Katherine and I were at Yale.

DISTRICTLAND

KATHERINE. Our parents were involved in the DNC when they were our age. Our families have known each other forever. Where are you from?

FRANK. Minneapolis.

KATHERINE. No. I mean, *originally*.

FRANK. I was born there.

KATHERINE. You know what I mean.

FRANK. *(Deep breath.)* My parents are from Beijing.

KATHERINE. Ah. And you went to Georgetown, right? That's how you two know each other?

DAVE. Sort of – we are on the same kickball team last summer. Georgetown Law is nowhere near main campus – *(Maria bursts in, sees her housemates, and rushes to the bar.)*

MARIA. Hi guys, so glad I found you. This place is packed. *(Seeing Katherine.)* Hi, I don't know you, my name's Maria – *(They officially shake hands in the DC way.)*

KATHERINE. Katherine. *(Looks over Maria's head and around as if there could be someone else more important to talk to. Failing to see anyone, she returns to focus on the screen of her smartphone.)*

DAVE. Thanks, Maria, I didn't think you could make it.

MARIA. I wasn't planning on it – but hey! I just got dumped – so there you go.

FRANK. What?

MARIA. Apparently, I am not a domestic goddess. It's fine.

FRANK. Oh no, I thought he was really nice.

MARIA. He is nice. He is so nice I made him a mix CD! I am such an idiot.

DAVE. *(Hardly containing his laughter.)* Mix CD? *(Katherine, looking up from her phone.)*

KATHERINE. You made someone a mix CD? That's hysterical.

MARIA. Why? *(Dave and Katherine look at each other knowingly.)*

KATHERINE. That is so 1995!

MARIA. Excuse me?

DAVE. The Playas Code.

MARIA. Playas Code?

DISTRICTLAND

DAVE. Seriously, if you want a guy now and here you got to operate by 2014 Playas Code.

KATHERINE. This is very helpful advice.

MARIA. Hold on, so what's the "Playas Code"?

KATHERINE. Everyone and everything is disposable.

DAVE. (*Knowingly.*) Always the next best thing.

KATHERINE. I am sorry, but this is so hysterical I must tweet it. One moment. (*Katherine tweets. Maria looks at her aghast.*)

MARIA. Dave and Frank, I have had it with your gender! Men and women cannot be friends. Frank, I had lunch with Richard today.

FRANK. Oh, yes, he told me – how'd that go?

MARIA. He propositioned me, that's how it went. Now I really know I need to leave DC. The guy before Hamish made me a PowerPoint presentation after two dates; Hamish suffers from inexplicable arbitrary male shutdown; and someone I think is going to be a mentor just wants to get in my pants. I've had it!

FRANK. PowerPoint presentation?

MARIA. That's a whole other story.

KATHERINE. So ... (*Looks pointedly at Maria – trying to remember her name.*)

MARIA. Maria.

KATHERINE. Maria, what do you do?

FRANK. Maria's at State.

DAVE. Maria is a *Rhodes*.

KATHERINE. (*Suddenly very interested in talking to Maria.*) Oh, really, what's your name?

MARIA. Maria Ortez. (*Katherine immediately googles Maria on her smartphone, talks to her as she does this.*)

KATHERINE. And what do you do at State?

MARIA. I work in a high-profile office, I can't really talk about it.

KATHERINE. (*Even more impressed.*) Oh, I see. Excellent. Do you know Max Williams? He was a Rhodie my year from Yale.

MARIA. The name sounds familiar –

DISTRICTLAND

KATHERINE. Max is great. He's up in New York now with me. Actually, I'll let him know I just met you. (*Katherine texts Max about Maria, while Maria is standing right there.*)

MARIA. Excuse me, I am going to get a drink. (*Maria goes to the bar to get a drink.*)

DAVE. So, anyway, in terms of national security, the future really is in the predator and the reaper drones, the rest is old-school.

KATHERINE. Passe, yes, I agree.

DAVE. I called Jeremy up the other day – I hadn't had to use him in a while – but he is writing that piece for the Post, and I really thought we could get a plug for PLN in there.

KATHERINE. Hold on – what did he say – why haven't you mentioned this yet?

DAVE. He said he'll try – it might be edited out. The CIA flipped out the last time he wrote about the drones.

FRANK. How does the PLN have anything to do with the DOD?

KATHERINE. Our highest objective is protecting the future of this country and that includes national security – we liaise with every government agency.

DAVE. And think tank. (*Maria returns with an orange juice in her hand.*)

KATHERINE. Playing it safe, I like that. Good Rhodes style. (*Maria looks confused.*)

DAVE. You know, I was at this Karaoke bar the other night, and Wolf Blitzer was there. And it was so sad, he couldn't sing karaoke.

KATHERINE. The price you pay for fame.

FRANK. I am not sure I get it – why can't he just sing something?

MARIA. No, I get what they are talking about. In DC, you can't let your guard down – you have to be constantly aware.

KATHERINE. So, Maria, where are you from?

MARIA. Tennessee. Johnston City.

KATHERINE. No, I mean, *originally*.

MARIA. Right. Cuba.

KATHERINE. Oh, wow.

MARIA. My father came over on a raft – met my mother in Miami when she worked as a secretary and he was a janitor. He took out her trash. I am

DISTRICTLAND

the eldest of five. My parents own a FedEx in Tennessee. I am an Aries. I went to Princeton on a full scholarship, where I played field hockey. I have two Oxford degrees, and I am a Presidential Management Fellow. And I only live with these guys because my best friend from high school who is a total hippie thought it would be a good idea. And I was moving to DC and desperately needed a place PDQ. Anything else you want to know?

KATHERINE. No, no, that's an impressive biography.

MARIA. How did your parents meet?

KATHERINE. They were introduced. At Harvard.

DAVE. My mother served my father dessert!

FRANK. I don't think my mother really had a choice. *(Katherine is continuing to look around.)*

KATHERINE. Maria and Frank, are any of your colleagues coming tonight?

MARIA. I try to avoid my office if I can help it –

FRANK. Same. God, Maria I can't believe that happened with Richard.

KATHERINE. Congressman Davis? Are you tempted? *(Maria looks at Katherine like she is crazy and does not dignify it with a response.)*

MARIA. *(Changing the subject.)* Guys, I feel kind of bad that I have no clue who our city council representative is. We should really look into that.

FRANK. Yeah, who's the mayor? Fenty?

MARIA. Now it is Vincent Gray – but he is in a bit of trouble.

(Disinterested in local conversation, Dave and Katherine return to each other to talk about PLN important things while continuing to look around for important people to talk to and checking their smartphones. Maria and Frank continue talking to each other.)

***THE PLAY IS NOT OVER!! TO FIND OUT HOW IT ENDS--
ORDER A COPY AT WWW.NEXTSTAGEPRESS.COM***