

INT. COMPANY RECEPTION AREA - NIGHT

There is a buzz in the room as the MAYOR, 55, portly but polished, arrives. He is greeted by many. His celebrity is obvious.

A PHOTOGRAPHER is there taking random pictures. He snaps some of the mayor.

One of the scholarship committeepersons who visited Dawn at her game approaches the Mayor.

COMMITTEEPERSON

Welcome, Mr. Mayor, we're so thrilled you could make it.

MAYOR

I wouldn't miss it. Not many companies in the private sector show such a dedication to today's youth. You should be proud.

COMMITTEEPERSON

Well we're even more proud of our finalists. These youngsters represent the best and brightest African American students from across the state.

The mayor makes contact with Dawn, waves her over.

MAYOR

Yes, I've read their profiles, very impressive. I can't help but be biased though toward one of my own. Dawn is quite something.

Dawn joins them. The mayor puts his arm around Dawn's shoulder. The photographer sees and takes a snapshot. The male nominees watches from across the room.

COMMITTEEPERSON

Yes, she is.

Miles Jones, 36, tall, handsome, powerful walks over to join the conversation.

MILES

Good Evening, Mr. Mayor.

MAYOR

Miles. I was just saying how impressed I am with your scholarship.

MILES

Well, thank you. And I'll bet you're quite proud of Dawn.

The mayor nods. Dawn smiles.

MAYOR

I am. We're all rooting for her.

He takes a sip of his drink.

MAYOR (CONT'D)

Do you think now would be a good time to talk over your bid for those city contracts.

MILES

A perfect time. Let's go to my office.

Miles shows him the way. Dawn watches them walk away. The male nominee MICHAEL GATLIN, 18, attractive, thin, and fit approaches Dawn. He holds a glass with Coke. It has a stirring stick with cherries on it.

COMMITTEEPERSON

Oh hello, Michael. Dawn have you met Michael? He's another of the four finalists.

DAWN

No, I haven't.

MICHAEL

Would you like a Cherry Coke? Real cherries.

DAWN

No thank you.

The committeeperson looks from one to the other.

COMMITTEEPERSON

Well, I'll let you two get acquainted then.

She walks away.

MICHAEL

So, it looks like you have an in with the mayor.

DAWN

I work with his office.

MICHAEL

Does it require a lot of late nights?

DAWN

Excuse me?

MICHAEL

A pretty girl like you? There has to be a reason he's taken an interest.

He takes the stirring stick out of his pop and bites the cherry off of it.

DAWN

Maybe he just wants to see someone who has worked really hard to be able to go to school.

Michael takes a sip of his pop.

MICHAEL

That's sad.

DAWN

What's sad?

MICHAEL

To the rest of us this scholarship is something we need on our application to get us into Ivy League schools. To you, it's the money you need to go to school at all.

DAWN

You see that door over there?

Michael looks toward an exit door.

DAWN (CON'T)

Use it.

MICHAEL

You're sassy too. I like that.

DAWN

You're jealous.

MICHAEL

Maybe.

DAWN

I'm going to win this scholarship, and I'll have earned it.

MICHAEL

Maybe.

DAWN

Got'a go.

Dawn glares at him as he takes the stirring stick out of his pop and sets it down on a nearby table.