

Absolution

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EXT. A JHB SOUNDSTAGE - DAY

ANDREW, leaning his lanky body on a car door (holding balloons with flowers and a gift bag) outside of a sound stage. His eyes show excitement and expectation. ROSE (Nun#2) walks out of the sound stage door towards Andrew. Her body language is morose, her mascara is slightly smudged but her smile is illustrious, a legitimate excitement to see Andrew.

ANDREW  
My love.

ROSE  
(skips over)  
Baby.

They share a tight embrace. Andrew looks down in to her eyes.

ANDREW  
What's wrong? Had a tough scene?

ROSE  
Something like that. I'll tell you  
all about it later.

ANDREW  
No problem.

ROSE  
I'm just really glad that you're  
here.

ANDREW  
Happy anniversary.

ROSE  
Happy anniversary baby.

ANDREW  
(Sarcastically)  
Do you want to let go of me so I  
can take you to dinner?

CLOSE UP:

Rose shakes her head slightly and a burdened look fills her face.

ROSE  
No.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - TWILIGHT

WAITER #1 is a young man in his 20s, he's excitable and keen to do his job. He greets the young couple as they make their way to entrance.

ANDREW

I made a reservation under the  
surname Ndlovu.

Waiter #1 finds their names on the list.

WAITER #1

Right this way Sir.

Rose and Andrew are led to their table. The waiter places menus on the table. Andrew pulls a chair for Rose and they continue to sit down across from each other.

ROSE

Thank you.

ANDREW

(Stares longingly)

I might be the luckiest guy in the  
world.

ROSE

Yes you are.

ANDREW

You're perfect.

ROSE

You're just saying that to get in  
to my pants.

ANDREW

You see right through me.

They share a laugh.

ANDREW

I still can't believe that you're  
mine.

ROSE

I don't think that's how this  
works.

Andrew seems puzzled.

(CONTINUED)

ROSE (CONT'D)

I belong to myself and so do you.

ANDREW

And you hate the idea of two people belonging to one another.

ROSE

I don't get it, that's all.

ANDREW

It's a pretty basic concept.

ROSE

No (beat) it's the whole premise that bothers me. Even in normal relationships people don't really have parts of themselves that they share exclusively with their partners.

ANDREW

Except for sex.

ROSE

That presupposes monogamy or faithfulness.

ANDREW

Way to have faith in love.

ROSE

If we had faith in love, we wouldn't need to own each other.

ANDREW

(sarcastically)

Fine, fine, fine. I'll share you with the world.

ROSE

(rolls eyes)

You already do.

Comfortable silence. Waiter #1 makes his way over to the table.

WAITER #1

Can I begin taking your orders?

ROSE

Can we get a bottle of white wine?

(CONTINUED)

ANDREW  
And sushi for starters.

WAITER #1  
To share?

ANDREW  
Yes please.

Waiter #1 begins to walk away.

ANDREW(CONT'D)  
(To Waiter)  
Wait let me ask you something.

ROSE  
Baby, don't.

ANDREW  
It'll only be a second.

Rose lets out a heavy sigh.

WAITER #1  
It's not a problem sir.

ANDREW  
(Dramatically)  
What happened to love? What happened to the stories of Osiris, who was torn asunder by his brother? Only to have the love of his life scour the desert in search of the fragments of his body. All so that she could put him together once more and cast him into the constellations.

Rose lets out another deep sigh.

ANDREW(CONT'D)  
What happened to ...

ROSE  
When you're done embarrassing me, I have something important I'd like to tell you.

WAITER #1  
I'll go get your order ready.

Waiter #1 walks off.

(CONTINUED)

ANDREW

(To Rose)

What's up?

ROSE

I have no real way of saying this,  
so I'll just come and say it. I've  
been toying with the idea for a  
while and I'm converting to  
Christianity.

Andrew let's out a belly laugh. Rose does not look amused.

ANDREW

What does that even mean?

ROSE

It means I believe in God now or a  
least something like that.

ANDREW

You're a porn star Rose.

CLOSE UP:

A slo-mo shot of Rose's face with hyper-focus on her face  
and a blurred background.

VOICE OVER:

ANDREW

And action.

The sound of a clapperboard.

NUN #1

You have disappointed me and even  
worse you have broken the vow you  
have taken before God.

ROSE

I'm so sorry, I have fallen to  
temptation and lusted after a man.

NUN #1

Not just any man, you have seduced  
a man of the cloth and made him  
break his vows for your selfish  
desires.

ROSE

(Feigning fear)

I know and I deserve to be  
punished.

(CONTINUED)

NUN #1

I will give it to you now.

The sounds of moans and spanking can be heard.

JUMP CUT:

ROSE

(Sarcastically)

Thank you Andrew, I had completely forgotten.

ANDREW

I just don't think your new found God will approve of your lifestyle.

ROSE

I don't think that's my lifestyle anymore.

ANDREW

I (beat) don't (beat) I don't even know what's an appropriate response to this.

ROSE

There was a moment today during shooting where I felt dirty for the first time and I never want to feel like that again.

ANDREW

Haven't been a christian for 3 hours and you're already trying to guilt yourself in to heaven.

ROSE

Fuck you Andrew.

ANDREW

Are you done doing that too?

ROSE

Of all the times to be an ass you choose this one.

ANDREW

I'm sorry.

POV:

Andrew holds her hand from across the table.

(CONTINUED)

ANDREW(CONT'D)

Does this mean you're done for good.

ROSE

Yeah and I think you should be too.

Andrew retracts his hand.

OVER THE SHOULDER:

ANDREW

Hey, I still love what I do.

ROSE

Bullshit, you never went to film school to direct pornos. You want more than this.

ANDREW

Well, more than this won't pay a single bill right now and adults can't rely on the holy spirit to put food on the table.

ROSE

Your condescension is truly awe inspiring.

ANDREW

How are you even planning to help out with the bills from now on?

ROSE

I make a decision that fundamentally changes the way I relate to the world and you're worried about the bottom line.

ANDREW

I think Jesus ran out of his 5 loaves and 2 fishes a long time ago so someone has to.

ROSE

Maybe I'm tired of living in a world where 5 loaves and 2 fishes is not enough anymore.

ANDREW

Praying to a bearded man in the sky won't change how the world works.

(CONTINUED)



ROSE  
I'm not a child who needs the world explained to them. Also, assuming that people of faith are all backwards says a lot more about you than it does about them.

Rose is visibly upset. Waiter #1 makes his way to the table.

ROSE (CONT'D)  
Why do we assume that we know people simply because...

WAITER #1  
Here's your wine and your platter.

ROSE  
(beat)  
Thank you.

WAITER #1  
Are you guys ready to order your mains?

ROSE  
Not right now, could you give us a couple of minutes?

WAITER #1  
No problem.

Waiter #1 walks off.

ANDREW  
Okay, maybe I'm going about this the wrong way. I just don't want you joining a cult.

ROSE  
You're downgrading an entire religion to a cult.

ANDREW  
Pastors are driving Bentley's and congregants are worshipping them. I don't know what to tell you.

ROSE  
And you'd much rather they worship you.

ANDREW  
I don't know why you're giving me attitude when I'm just concerned about you.

(CONTINUED)

ROSE

Are you?

ANDREW

I am. Are you telling me that you can't see that?

ROSE

I just find it hard to believe because in all the questions you've asked, none of them have involved me. It's about the dynamic of Christianity and it how relates to our shared world but not about me or how I feel.

ANDREW

I just assumed that you were grown enough to make that decision for yourself and I'm concerned about the implications.

ROSE

You claim to have faith in me and in the very same breath you assume I don't understand the implications.

ANDREW

Well, I don't.

ROSE

It means I have a desire to help the homeless, support the downtrodden and pray to a God that I don't understand yet and probably never will.

ANDREW

That's quite the mission you have for yourself.

ROSE

I can't believe you're trying to take the moral high ground here.

ANDREW

I just believe in individualism and that no human being ever does what they don't want to do.

(CONTINUED)

ROSE  
You think I'm selfish.

ANDREW  
You, Mother Teresa and Jesus.

Rose stares deeply in to Andrew's eyes with contempt.

ANDREW(CONT')

I'd like to live the normal life  
that me and my girlfriend agreed to  
live.

ROSE  
What part of our life is normal?

ANDREW  
What part of it isn't?

ROSE  
I meant as humans. We created this  
society and called it reality but  
if we created it surely we can  
change it at will.

ANDREW  
You want to change the world.

ROSE  
Just myself.

ANDREW  
Sounds more like you'd like to  
change me. Would you like me to  
turn in to a believer who questions  
nothing and supplicates their  
intelligence for the sake of a  
promise of eternal life?

ROSE  
(Infuriated)  
You selfish piece of  
(beat)  
Your support Andrew. I ... I wanted  
your support.

Rose waves down Waiter #1.

ROSE (CONT'D)  
(To Waiter)  
Can we get the bill?

Waiter #1 walks off.

(CONTINUED)

ROSE (CONT'D)  
I can't do this with you right now.

ANDREW  
Happy anniversary.

Long solemn silence. Waiter #1 returns with the bill.

WAITER #1  
Here's your bill.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. ROSE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Two weeks later.

Andrew lies on a couch and Rose walks past him to the kitchen.

ANDREW  
Look who finally made it out of bed.

ROSE  
You know I don't find you amusing before my morning coffee, right?

ANDREW  
I used to be the world's funniest man to you.

ROSE  
Apt use of past tense.

Rose switches on the coffee machine.

ANDREW  
Do you hate me?

Coffee machine gets louder.

ROSE  
Huh?

ANDREW  
(Louder)  
Do you hate me?

Rose walks over to the couch in order to hear better.

(CONTINUED)

ANDREW(CONT'D)

Rose, do you think we hate each other?

ROSE

No, I just (beat) haven't had my morning coffee.

ANDREW

I love you.

Rose gently kisses Andrew on the forehead and walks back to the coffee machine.

ANDREW

May I have a cup?

ROSE

Sure, how do you want it?

ANDREW

(Beat) How I usually have it.

ROSE

(Sarcastically)

Coming right up, sir.

Andrew flips through some channels on TV before deciding on sport. Rose comes back with coffee.

ROSE

Here you go.

ANDREW

Thank you.

ROSE

Mind if I ask you something?

ANDREW

Sure.

ROSE

When last have you seen a sunset?

ANDREW

I don't really remember, maybe 2 or 3 months ago. That's an odd question to pair with coffee.

ROSE

I just remember how happy they used to make you.

(CONTINUED)

ANDREW

I guess people grow out of certain things.

ROSE

They don't always have to.

Andrew looks longingly in to his cup before placing it on the table.

ROSE (CONT'D)

Get it off your chest.

ANDREW

I think I just miss when I liked sunsets.

ROSE

It's still up to you whether you find them beautiful or not.

ANDREW

They don't seem the same anymore. Maybe I've seen one too many.

ROSE

You just need something new to appreciate about them.

ANDREW

Maybe I should find other things beautiful and one day I'll look over at a sunset and find it breathtaking again.

ROSE

I don't think the man who loved sunsets would forgive you for that.

ANDREW

That man doesn't exist anymore.

ROSE

The one thing that is certain in life is change.

ANDREW

Change and death.

ROSE

Death is the ultimate change.

(CONTINUED)

ANDREW

Kind of freaks me out though.

ROSE

Change isn't all that bad.

ANDREW

I meant death.

ROSE

Why?

ANDREW

The idea that we've explored the ocean, traversed the skies, been to space and we can't tell what happens when a human being dies.

ROSE

You fear the abyss.

ANDREW

I can deal with the concept of nothingness or at least the concept that I won't ever understand nothingness.

ROSE

Then what's the hang up?

ANDREW

The finality of it all. All things retain their place in the universe except our consciousness.

ROSE

That's the job of the soul.

ANDREW

That's it right there. That's my hang up with God too. He created a system and then completely betrayed its rules.

ROSE

God being an omnipresent being means he can be above his own rules.

ANDREW

He created human beings and gave them the ability to reason freely. He turned around and created a

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANDREW (cont'd)  
system of life contrary to their  
reasoning and logic. Sadistic if  
you ask me.

ROSE  
He did it to show us he's above us  
and our understanding.

ANDREW  
(scoffs)  
An almighty being needs to show  
mere mortals that he is above them.

ROSE  
If he didn't, not many people would  
believe he is.

ANDREW  
Sounds like God has an ego.

ROSE  
Sounds like you do.

ANDREW  
Why is that when we question the  
existence of a downright  
unbelievable deity, we're egotistic  
or unreasonable?

ROSE  
That's the whole concept of faith.

ANDREW  
With all this faith going around,  
God still doesn't seem happy.

ROSE  
It was never to make him happy, but  
to make us happy.

ANDREW  
Do Christians look happy to you?

ROSE  
Do existentialists look happy to  
you?

ANDREW  
Poetic one-liners aren't your  
forte.

(CONTINUED)



ROSE  
Sarcasm disguised as whitt isn't  
yours.

ANDREW  
I don't know why we bother.

ROSE  
Because we're inquisitive and  
simultaneously stubborn.

ANDREW  
I meant that I'm not sure why we  
bother being together when we  
clearly don't like each other.

ROSE  
I don't always like you but I love  
you.

ANDREW  
I don't think that's always enough.

ROSE  
I guess so.

ANDREW  
Is this over?

ROSE  
I don't know.

ANDREW  
I guess we have a lot to think  
about.

ROSE  
Yeah.

Long solemn silence

ROSE (CONT'D)  
You haven't touched your coffee.

Andrew stares at his mug.

CLOSE UP:

The camera focuses on the mug.

ANDREW  
I'm lactose intolerant.

Fin.