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MORE PRECIOUS THAN JEWELS

by Mary Yarbrough

*Original  
Play*

**MORE PRECIOUS THAN JEWELS**

**SYNOPSIS**

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MORE PRECIOUS THAN JEWELS

Jewel Davis, is a 21 year old recovering drug addict. After returning home from a short prison stay and completing a year-long intense drug rehab, her family members has trust issues with her and Jewelz is worried but still determined to do the next right thing.

Encountering a few obstacles from her past, Jewelz finds her self amongst her old acquaintences. Will Jewelz fall victim to her past or will she realize how precious her sobriety is?

CAST (15)

JEWELZ-main character

REBECCA-mother(mom)

JACOB-father (dad)

JENEICE-sister

LIL JACOB-brother

Street Boys(5) POOKIE, LENNY, RAZOR, BREEZE and SCOOTER

MS. VENTURA-Probation Officer

DET. CALVIN BROWN- Narcotics

DET. LUKE TYSON-Narcotics

CHESTER-store clerk

RESA-active drug user

SCENES (6)

Scene 1 livingroom, TV remote, coffee table, two glasses

Scene 2 kitchen, table, chairs, counter and an additional door

Scene 3 bedroom, bed, dressers

Scene 4 makeshift outdoor, streets, and sidewalk

Scene 5 makeshift playground

Scene 6 corner store, counter and front door

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS (15)

JEWELA-early twenties, recovering drug addict, recently released from prison into a year long rehab, which she completed. Known for drug possession and criminal activity.

REBECCA-early fifties, married to high school sweetheart, mother of three and known to be a worrier.

JACOB-middle fifties, married to Rebecca, retired steelworker big and confident look (strong)

JENEICE-17 years old, high school student, nicknamed 'Neicey'

LIL JACOB-18 years old, just graduated high school, new job very easy going

MS. VENTURA-Probation Officer, late forties, wears glasses

DET. CALVIN BROWN-late forties-early fifties, narcotic squad

DET. LUKE TYSON-middle forties narcotic squad

CHESTER-late thirties, work in corner store, known for flirting with women

RESA-middle twenties, active drug user, old friend of Jewelz

STREET BOYS- teenagers, early twenties, thugged out look, loose clothing

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## SCENE 1 LIVINGROOM

Jacob Rebecca are lounging on the couch. Jacob is watching TV with the remote control in his hand. Rebecca is sitting close to him with a Danielle Steele book 'Family Album' in her hands, reading from it. There are two glasses of water on the coffee table. Jewelz enters the room and walks towards them.

JEWELZ-Hey Mom, Hey Dad! (to Dad) What ya watching?

JACOB-Football.

JEWELZ-Who's playing?

JACOB-The Steelers and The Cleveland Browns.

JEWELZ-I don't need to ask who's winning.

JACOB-You sure don't. The Steelers run over the Browns all day.

JEWELZ-And that's what they're suppose to do!(to mom) what you reading, mom?

REBECCA-(flips book over) Family Album by Danielle Steele. Did you enjoy your bubblebath?

JEWELZ-Yes Ma'am, I did. It was so refreshing. After a year of straight showers, I could have stayed in the tub forever!

JACOB-Then you would have been old and wrinkled like me.(smiles)

JEWELZ-You may be old but you're not wrinkled.

JACOB-(playfully)Watch your mouth calling me old!

JEWELZ-You said old first, I just agreed with you.(smiling, to mom) Hey Mom did Jenise go out?

REBECCA-No, Honey she's in the kitchen still cleaning up.

JEWELZ-(walks away towards the kitchen) I bet she could use some help, I'm a little bored.(holler over shoulder) enjoy the game Dad!

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JACOB-Mmmm-hmmm, if you stop interrupting me, maybe I can.

REBECCA-Aw hush old man, she's not bothering you.

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## SCENE 2 KITCHEN

Jenise is wiping down the table. She continues to wipe off all the kitchen furniture as Jewelz walks in.

JEWELZ-Niecey, Niecy, I came to help.

JENISE-Yeah right!, some perfect timing you got going on considering I'm done.

JEWELZ-Oh! mom just told me you were in here cleaning up. I thought you were outside doing your thing or something.

JENISE-No, not me I don't go out much. You know our folks like to keep us slaving at the homefront.(she start smiling)

JEWELZ-That I do know, but it's all in the name of love and I'm so glad to be home I don't even care to be their slave..  
(they hug each other)

JENISE-I'm glad you're home too. Look at you,(take a step back) you gained all your weight back and your face is so clear and pretty.

JEWELZ-(spins around) I know right but thanks sis, I gained some extra weight but I'm not mad. I'm very grateful today. I'm glad my judge sent me to the program instead of prison. He actually saved my life because I didn't know how bad off I was.

JENISE-I was so sad when you were away.

JEWELZ-(hugs) I was sad too, but it's ok now, cause I'm ok and I promised myself to never use drugs again.

JENISE-Don't say 'NEVER' too lightly. You know what they say when a person says never, it backfires.

JEWELZ-Well how about 'just for today', I'm not going to use drugs

JENISE-Pinky swear?(sticks out her baby finger)

JEWELZ-Pinky swear?(sticks out her baby finger)

JENISE-That sounds better. I love you sister. (they hug again)

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JEWELZ-And I love you more. Hey let me ask you something, do you have any of that allowance money stashed **50**. I can borrow a few bucks?

JENISE-(tilts head to side, twist her lips) No! I don't have any money for you to borrow.

JEWELZ-Well why are you looking at me like I got three heads?

JENISE-I don't know, I guess it just reminded me of before.

JEWELZ-Like when I used to ask you for money and take forever to pay it back?

JENISE-Yeah, that plus the fact that when you would leave the house we would'nt see you for hours and sometimes days on end.

JEWELZ-I know, I'm sorry I put yall through that but that's not why I asked you for money. I just want to walk to the store, that's all.

JENISE-Well I don't have any money. Ask Mom, you know she'll give it to you.

Rebecca walks in the kitchen headed for the sink with the two empty glasses.

REBECCA-Did someone say 'ask mom something'?

JENISE-Yes Ma'am, Jewelz asked me for some money but I don't have any so I told her to ask you.

JEWELZ-I only need a few bucks, mom, to go to the store, do you have it for your lovely daughter?(smiles)

REBECCA-(serious expression)Now what in the world do you need at the store that we don't have here?

JEWELZ-Probably just some ju-ju's and wham-wham's(smiling)

REBECCA-Ju-ju's and wham-wham's what in the heavens is that?

JEWELZ-Junk food, mom candy, wow, you are so old fashioned.

REBECCA-(waves her hand in the air) that don't mean I'm old fashioned. Jenise we have some of that in the pantry right?

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JENISE-I believe so.

JEWELZ-Well it don't matter if we do or if we don't, I want to walk to the store, really just go for a walk, and maybe stop at the store.

REBECCA-Its' still bad out there Jewelz. I don't think it's a good idea you going out there so soon of you coming home.

JEWELZ-I got to go out eventually mom, what are you saying?

REBECCA-Honey, it's too soon! I'm afraid something may happen.

JEWELZ-What, to me?

REBECCA NODS HER HEAD YES

JEWELZ-No mom, I won't allow anything to happen to me. My sobriety and my freedom means more to me than any one on those streets that are stuck out there.

REBECCA-(rubs her hands together) honey I don't know. I don't think you should go out in those streets, at least not now.

JEWELZ-Mom you just don't trust me. You can admit it. I want you to have faith in me. Isn't that what you always told us to practice, faith, mom.

REBECCA-Yes, and I still tell you guys to have faith, I'm no hypocrite. I'm just not sure at this time about you going out there in them streets, they doing the same things.

JEWELZ-I bet they are, but that don't have nothing to do with me. Not today! And going outside is something I'm going to have to face sooner or later anyway, so why not now?

REBECCA-(shakes her head no) Well if you must go can you take Jenise with you?

JEWELZ-Are you serious?

JENISE-Yeah I'll walk with you.

JEWELZ-(looks back and forth at them) Absolutely not! I don't need an escort. Mom look, I don't want to use drugs. This is my choice. I'm going to do the next right thing. Yall just got to trust me. That's it and that's all.



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REBECCA-What's wrong with Jenise going with <sup>you</sup> then?

JEWELZ-Cause she's only to watch me cause yall don't trust me and I feel like yall are double teaming me right now, my mom and my little sister, wow.

REBECCA-I just don't see what the big deal is?

JEWELZ-Oh nevermind mom, you'll always see it your way, this conversation isn' going anywhere.

**Jewelz walks out of the kitchen quickly and enters the livingroom**

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## SCENE 3 LIVINGROOM

Jewelz enters the livingroom and joins Jacob on the couch taking the spot her mother had earlier, she flops down hard with her arms crossed.

JEWELZ-Dad can I ask you something?

JACOB-(faces her)yeah, but what's wrong?

JEWELZ-Nothing really, but mom won't give me any money to go to the store unless I take Jenise with me but really she just don't <sup>trust</sup> me to go by myself. She thinks it's too soon for me to go outside.

JACOB-OK, and your question to me is?

JEWELZ-Two questions, Do you think it's too soon?

JACOB-Didn't you go outside to get home?

JEWELZ-(starts laughing)Enough said, now can you give me a few dollars?

JACOB-Now you trying to start a war. your mother gives you her version of 'if she give you her money' now you want me to just dig in my pockets and dish you out some cash?

JEWELZ NOD HER HEAD YES

I'm not going against your mother. It's been smooth sailing with us and she will never let me live this down if I give you money when she just said take Jenise with you.

JEWELZ-Dad that is so lame, I thought you were cool. You just don't trust me either. you can tell me no I'm a big girl.

JACOB-It's not that baby I do trust you.

Jewelz stands up puts her hands on her hips.

JEWELZ-No you don't, none of yall do but it's ok, I'm still going to stay clean regardless cause its what I want.

JACOB-First take your hands off your imagination when you talk to me! And secondly, if I say I trust you, then I trust you don't second guess me. Now do I make myself clear?

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JEWELZ-(puts her arms down to her sides)Yes Sir, I apologize  
dad. This is getting way bigger than it should. I'm  
going upstairs.(leaves the room),

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SCENE 4 BEDROOM

(Music playing behind door) Jewelz put her ear to the door, then taps lightly. No answer so she turns the door knob, peeps her head around the door then enters. Her brother, Lil Jacob is on the bed talking on his cellphone. He looks toward the door and put up his finger signalling Jewelz to wait a minute.

LIL JACOB-(talking into the cellphone)Carlie let me call you back in a few, I'm bout to holler at big Jewelz who's back in da house(smiling)..... no girl no stop it is so my sister I told you she came home.....you don't believe me?.....do you want to speak to her?(Jewelz shakes her head no)... I didn't think so, I'll call you back.....ok.. I promise(he closes his phone)

JEWELZ-I see that Carlie still be whiny, huh?

LIL JACOB-She's not as bad as she use to be. What's up big sis? You got your weight back. You a little fat, there?

JEWELZ-I got my weight back but I'm not fat at all boy!

LIL JACOB-Why you got on those young clothes? you know they don't fit you anymore.

JEWELZ-(turns around) Lies you then told, I'm hitting and holding in these jeans.

LIL JACOB-Don't do too much hitting , they might rip, they so tight.(laughs)

JEWELZ-Quit hating, get up and give me a hug.

Lil Jacob stands up and hug Jewelz real tight.

JEWELZ-Boy you smell good. Like a real man.(playfully smacks him on his shoulder).

LIL JACOB-I am a real man doing real man things(he rubs his imaginary chin hairs, then folds his arms across his chest)

JEWELZ-Real things like what?(she raises an eyebrow)

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LIL JACOB-Like working, paying bills and saving for my first ride,

JEWELZ-Straight up?(Lil Jacob nods his head yeah) that's what's up. I'm proud of you baby brother. So You're working full time?

LIL JACOB-Oh yeah, I'm Assistant Manager already.

They give each other a high five.

JEWELZ-They don't mess around at Rent-a-center do they?

LIL JACOB-Not when it comes to management.

JEWELZ-I see, you got a promotion awfully quick.

LIL JACOB-Six weeks, but I'm smart too. They know what it is.

JEWELZ-So mom got you paying bills?

LIL JACOB-Just our cellphones and I'm saving up for a car which her and dad is going to match whatever I save so I'm going to save alot.

JEWELZ-Yeah you are smart.(smiles)You going to get girl happy onceyou get a ride.

LIL JACOB-Naw I'll stick with Carlie I kinda like just her. She good people for the most part.

JEWELZ-The Whiner, but if you say so, well don't be making any babies.

LIL JACOB-I'm definitely not ready for them, trust me, I wear protection.

JEWELZ-You better boy! So listen your folks downstairs been giving me a hard time about going outside to the store.

LIL JACOB-Why's that?

JEWELZ-You know, not trusting my motives, thinking I'm going to go back in those streets and kill myself which I can't stress hard enough, that I'm about staying clean.

LIL JACOB-Prove them wrong, that's all.

JEWELZ-Oh I plan on it but it's going to take some time. Do you have sny money to give me so I can walk to the store.

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LIL JACOB-I thought you just said mom and them don't want you going?

JEWELZ-They don't trust to give me money unless niecey walks with me.

LIL JACOB-ERK ERK!

JEWELZ-My point exactly.

LIL JACOB-So you only talkin about a few dollars, like chump change right?

JEWELZ-That's all your big sister is asking for baby brother.

LIL JACOB-(lifts matteress up and pull out a wad of bills, hands Jewelz one bill)all I got are twenty's, you got to bring me some change back.

JEWELZ-Ok cool, do you want me to grab you something from there?

LIL JACOB-Naw I'm straight, just do the right thing and come back.

JEWELZ-Of course I'm going to do the right thing. I'm coming back so you can take me on a shopping spree(smiles)with all that loot,

LIL JACOB-I wish I had it like that to do cause those clothes you got on there are lit...tol.

JEWELZ-No they're not, I'll see you when I get back.

JEWELZ leave the house before she shut the door she hollers to her parents:

JEWELZ-Mom, Dad I'm going out, I'll see you guys when I get back.

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## SCENE 5 OUTSIDE STREET

Jewelz is walking slow when an unmarked police car rolls by her. She turns her head avoiding eye contact. The detectives stop their vehicle and roll the window down on the passenger side to start the process of harrassing Jewelz. Detective Brown is sittin on the passenger side while the other Detective, Tyson is doing the driving.

DETECTIVE BROWN-Well, well, well, look what than jumped out of the box?.....excuse me but don't you hear me talking to you?

JEWELZ-(looks over at the car)not really since you didn't address me by my name.

DETECTIE BROWN-I see you haven't learned anything with that nasty attitude, you could'nt wait to hit <sup>e</sup> these streets.

JEWELZ-I learned what I needed to learn and these streets are public property.

DETECTIVE TYSON-Let us catch you walking around here on this public property carrying drugs like you're known to do again, and we'll see how much you've learned Ms. Smarty.

JEWELZ-That's old news, look is there a reason why you're talking to me?

DETECTIVE TYSON-I ought to get out and search you.

JEWELZ-Why? cause I'm walking down the street minding my business.

DETECTIVE TYSON-For being a known convict<sup>e</sup>d drug felon loitering in this drug infested area.

JEWELZ-Sir Why are you harrassing me?

DETECTIVE TYSON-All the havoc and chaos you caused in this community you shouldn'tbe allowed to live here anymore.

JEWELZ-Well my parents own their house in this neighborhood and I'll be here for as long as they will have me.

DETECTIVE BROWN-With that attitude of yours we should take you in to the station fo<sup>e</sup> loitering.

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JEWELZ-Are you done because I need to be on my way?

DETECTIVE TYSON-Don't let us catch you slipping.

DETECTIVE BROWN-Or you're going to do some hard time. I would like to see you in prison with that smart mouth. Those gays would'nt take that to kindly. (both Detectives laughs).

JEWELZ-Ok I'm done with this conversation, I need to leave.

DETECTIVE TYSON-You're free to go for now but trust me we'll get you again one day.

JEWELZ-I trust in God that you won't. (walks away fast so they can not respond),



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## SCENE 6 MAKE SHIFT PLAYGROUND

Razor, Breeze and Scooter are huddled together shooting dice. Pookie and Lenny are on opposite ends of them standing a few feet of each other posing as lookouts for the police. Jewelz walks right towards Pookie but she doesn't recognize him.

Pookie-Yo Fish, you shopping to cop or dropping to flop?

JEWELZ-(keeps walking giving him a strange look) excuse me?

POOKIE-You heard what I said, what's your reason for walking through here then?

JEWELZ-(stops dead in her tracks)What? I need to have a reason to walk through this public playground?

POOKIE-If I asked you for one hell yeah!

JEWELZ-(continue to walk) Boy please!

POOKIE-(grabs her arm) Dig this.....

JEWELZ-(snatches her arm away and shout) BOY DON'T PUT YOUR HANDS ON ME, YOU DON'T KNOW ME!

The other dudes looks over in their direction to see what's going on and they walk over when they see it's a female.

RAZOR-(walking towards Pookie)What's going on over here Pookie?

BREEZE-Oh shoot, that's Jewelz!(walks over to her and give her a hug, to Pookie) back up dude cause you looking like you want some business.

POOKIE-I'm just doing the job yall gave me to do and that's to see if the broad wanted to shop?

JEWELZ-Look kid, I'm not you're broad, I'm...(Breeze cut her off by putting his hand up)

BREEZE-Alright yall, chill, I got this.(facing Jewelz)Damn girl you look good. When did you come home.?

JEWELZ-This morning.Who is these new kids on the block being so disrespectful?

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BREEZE-Don't worry about him, he ain't nobody. What's good girl?

JEWELZ-Nothing much just walking to the store, enjoying nature.

BREEZE-I heard that. You trying to get down? you know I owe you big time for keeping it one hundred and you know how we do the <sup>first</sup> is on me baby.

JEWELZ-I'm through with that stuff and you don't owe me anything I knew the consequences when I got involved but you could do me one favor and respect my sobriety.

BREEZE-I can respect that, but I'm talking about giving you some free shit, you don't have to use it you can sell it, every body need money, do you know how many people who are clean but still hustle drugs?

JEWELZ-That's not my concern, I'm only interested in me for today and you don't seem to hear what I'm saying so thanks to what you offered, but no thanks (starts walking away)

BREEZE-Jewelz wait just look (he reaches in his pockets and pulls out a plastic bag full of drugs) this wouldn't be no problem getting rid of, this is straight melt down baby. and look how big my rocks are?

SCOOTER-(pulls his drugs out the same way) Naw baby girl mine are way bigger than his, check it out?

RAZOR-(he copies them) come to me and I'll give you two for one that's how I'm doing it!

JEWELZ-All of yall are out of yall rabbit ass minds get the hell away from me (walks away fast)

SCOOTER-Why you get offended you rolled up on us.

JEWELZ-(talking over her shoulder) Yall hate to hear a person changes their life around cause that's money out of yall pocket. Poor souls, yall playing with the devil, I'm not peace out punks.

POOKIE-See I knew that broad was stupid, I should have blasted her when I had the chance.

Jewelz exits the stage and don't look back.

## SCENE 7 CORNER STORE

The store clerk Chester is standing behind the counter looking frustrated while his only non-paying customer is begging him for a favor that we can't hear.

RESA-So you're not feeling me today?

CHESTER-Go home and get some rest girl, you look tired.

RESA-If I go home to rest and freshen up, would you do that for me?

CHESTER-Maybe

RESA-That's not good enough.

CHESTER-Regardless if it's good enough or not you still got to roll, you been in here long enough not buying anything.

RESA-Please Chester I can't take this any more.

CHESTER-That's why you need to roll out like now

RESA-Why you making me beg like a dog?

CHESTER-You been making that your choice since I told you no from the door.

RESA-But you could have given me a few dollars to borrow that's the least you could have done considering our past!

CHESTER-(shakes his head) Man I'm tired of hearing it, get out of here Resa(points at the door).

Resa walks towards the door with her head down, she opens the door and Jewelz walks in, she looks and smiles.

RESA.Jewelz? hey girl long time no see (she walks back in the store ignoring Chester's stare)

JEWELZ-(smiles very briefly)Hi Resa, I see how you're doing?

RESA-Look at you all fat, it look good though like back in the day huh?

JEWELZ-(shakes her head yeah) I got a year clean and still on the roll, when you going to lay down?

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RESA-Don't start with that preaching. I been to rehab for your info anyway.

JEWELZ-You did'nt work the program then.

RESA-Yes I did, it just don't work for everybody.

JEWELZ-Oh it works you just have to want it to work.

RESA-(rocking on her feet)How you go to rehab ? I thought you were in jail.

JEWELZ-I was in both, but my judge sent me to rehab instead of prison andnot only did he saved my life but he helped me change my life.

RESA-That's nice, I'll change my life around one day, I guess I just ain't ready yet

JEWELZ-Try to get ready because that lifestyle don't get any better.(starts to walk away)I'll be praying for you.

RESA-Oh I can't get a hug?

JEWELZ-(walks back and hugs Resa) My bad homegirl, I'm busy trying to get my stuff so I can go home and chill.

RESA-I heard that. Can you let me hold a few dollars?

JEWELZ-Are you serious?

RESA-As a heart attack! This monkey ain't no joke, I'm trying to get me something so I can go home too.

JEWELZ-Resa(shakes her head)I don't have any money to give you and even if I did, I couldn't give it to you for that poison. But if you want me to buy you a soda or something, I'm sure Lil Jacob wouldn't mind?

RESA-Picture that, a darn soda, I don't want no soda, I want a hit and don't act like you don't know what I'm talking about.

JEWELZ-Please girl,(starts backing away)I'm definitely not going there with you.

RESA-(raises her voice) it wasn't poison when you was smoking it? Was it, girlie girl?

Chester turns in their direction to see what's going on while

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Jewelz walk away from Resa.

RESA-You acting real funny Jewelz, fake ass Jewels that's what you is!

CHESTER-Yo! now you harrassing my customers. Go find some where to go before I call the police, and I'm dead serious.

RESA-You can call whoever you want to call, I ain't did nothing wrong, now what?(puts her hands on her hips)

CHESTER-Girl if you only knew what you looked like, they would lock you up for your own good. You really need to leave.

RESA-Forget you, Chester the molester, you still ain't no good. You call the police and see if they don't lock you up for turning tricks in this store? I can't stand you.

CHESTER-(comes from around the counter)Get out of here and shut the door you crackhead.

Resa sticks up her middle finger at Chester

RESA-Your mother is a crackhead!(slams the door)

Jewelz walks up to the counter and put a few items on top.

CHESTER-Jewelz long time no see, How you doing?

JEWELZ-Hey Chester, Im alright How you doing?

CHESTER-Pretty good now that she's gone(nods his head toward the door)

JEWELZ-Yeah poor thing, she needs to make some changes in her life

CHESTER-I doubt it very much if she change any time soon, but it looks like you have(smiles)

JEWELZ-Yeah I made a change and seeing her made me realize how grateful I am today. Here you go(pushes her items toward him).

CHESTER-That's what I'm talking about, bringing music to my ears girl, and don't you look back?

JEWELZ-I'm not, too much at stake, trust me I'm staying focused.

CHESTER-(licks his lips)Well you look good, real good.

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JEWELZ-Thanks now can I pay for this stuff?

CHESTER-I can't give you a compliment?

JEWELZ-You did and I said thanks, but you're not ringing up my stuff that's been sitting here.

CHESTER-Shoot you can have it for free if we can do what we use t

JEWELZ-You're kidding me right?

CHESTER-Hell no! You know me I don't play with something like tha

JEWELZ-Chester don't disrespect me, I did that to myself for too long as it is, respect me for who I'm representing today, a changed person, OK?

CHESTER-That's not being disrespectful, if you look good, you loo good, I'm a man and if I want to hit it like I did before but under different circumstances, I'm going to say so.

JEWELZ-Well you got me mistaken right about now cause whatever I did in my addiction, I wasn't acting responsible and trickin' with you or anyone else for that matter is beneath me today!

CHESTER-Beneath you, so you think now that you're clean and sober you're better than me.

JEWELZ-I'm better than the conversation you're throwing at me now can I get this stuff paid for or not?

CHESTER-(pulls up his pants and grabs his crotch)The choice is yours(licks his lips).

JEWELZ-Man the heck with you, keep this stuff(walks away from the counter towards the door).

CHESTER-Aw girl come on, I'm just playing with you, here I'll ring you up.

JEWELZ-(walks back towards him) Don't play with me I'm no kid!

CHESTER-I can see that, can I at least give you my number just in case you change your mind.

JEWELZ-That's it forget you and this stuff(leaves the store and slams the door behind her).

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Resa is standing outside the store waiting on Jewelz.

RESA-Damn what happened in there?

JEWELZ-Oh shoot it's you again.

RESA-Yeah it's me again, look Jewelz I'm sorry for saying what I said in there, I was wrong.

JEWELZ-It's OK, I'm good.

RESA-Can I ask you something without you putting me down?

JEWELZ-As long as it's not about any bullcrap.

RESA-It's not, I promise. Remember the last time we were together you told me you would look out for me if I backed you up with that game you ran to Breeze about some dudes taking his package from you? Well you never did look out that's why I was asking you for a few dollars now.

JEWELZ-(hands on her hips) I don't remember nothing like that. Nor do I want to. Resa girl give yourself a break, I am not giving you a dime while you're still out here using, so do me a favor and stop hounding me for money, OK?

RESA-Why you acting all high and mighty?

JEWELZ-(starts walking away)Goodbye Resa, I'll see you when you get cleaned.

RESA-(hollering after Jewelz)You'll be back and when you do don't ask me for nothing!(walks away looking on the ground).

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## SCENE 8 LIVINGROOM

Jacob is sitting on the couch still watching TV. Rebecca is dusting the furniture and pictures in a nervous gesture.

JACOB-Honey can you please come and sit with me. Worrying isn't going to do any good. She said she'll be back and we just have to wait and see. There's nothing else to do but you got to take your mind off the situation.

REBECCA-(sits down next to Jacob)It's been over an hour and the store is only down the street, one block over. What is taking her so long?

JACOB-(takes Rebecca's hands in his and kisses them). Don't worry honey, she'll be home(kisses her forehead).

The telephone rings and Rebecca hurries from the couch to answer

REBECCA-I hope nothing bad happened.(grabs the phone) HELLO!(she says loudly).....No not at the moment, who's calling?.....  
(covers the mouthpiece and says to Jacob)it's Jewelz probation officer...<sup>(in the phone)</sup>...yes I am expecting her soon she just went to the store.....oh I see.....OK I'll let her know as soon as she gets in, thanks for calling.(hangs up the phone)  
oh my(starts wringing her hands together) she said she's on her way over here to talk to Jewelz.

JACOB-It's OK for the probation people to come by and do a home visit. Calm down Rebecca, stop getting yourself so worked up. Everything is going to be OK.

REBECCA-I'm afraid Jewelz won't come back and they'll put her back in jail(walks back to the couch and sits down)

JACOB-Jewelz isn't going back to jail. And she will be here. We got to have faith that's all. Isn't that what you always tell us? practice what you preach(gives her a big smile)

REBECCA-Yeah I guess you're right, but it's so hard to trust her so soon.

JACOB-Well we got to start sometime and it might as well be now.



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Jewelz rush through the front door and slams it shut behind her. Rebecca stands up and Jacob looks at her with a smile.

JEWELZ-Oh sorry, Hi guys

REBECCA-Are you OK?(walks toward Jewelz)

JEWELZ-Woo! yes I'm OK(hugs her mother) I love you so much!

JACOB-And she loves you. Now she can relax,

JEWELZ-Mother was you worrying about me while I was out?

REBECCA-Of course I was you were gone for so long and the store,  
(looks down at Jewelz).....you did go to the store?

JEWELZ-Yes but I did'nt buy anything see(pulls out the twenty dollar bill LiL Jacob had given her)

JACOB-(looks over at them)you walked down to the store over an hour ago and you did'nt buy anything. Why was that?

JEWELZ-My intentions were to buy something until ignorant ole Chester got disrepectful with me. I figured I wasn't going to spend my money in there, plus I mainly wanted to get some fresh air, and I got plenty of that.

REBECCA-He disrespected you?

JEWELZ- Yes mom but I handled him like a real lady.

JACOB-Did he get fresh with you, cause I.....(Jewelz cut him off by putting her hand up)

JEWELZ-It's OK dad trust me, but yeah mom he tried throwing my past up in my face and use it to his advantage.

JACOB-Do I need to go down there and beat some sense into his butt†

REBECCA-Now you calm yourself down, you ain't going nowhere to do nothing!

JEWELZ- Dad I handled him! I just rather not go there to shop especially if he's working.

JACOB-I ought to call George or the police and report him. This isn't the first time I then heard about that man's advances.

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JEWELZ-That's how he earned the name Chester the Molester, everybody knows about him and Mr. George still has him working there but..(Rebecca interrupts her)

REBECCA-Oh honey, your Probation Officer called. She's on her way here to see you.

JEWELZ-(looks at her watch) This late in the day?

JACOB-Oh yeah she's trying to catch you slipping.

JEWELZ-Well that's not going to happen, but it is kind of late for her to be coming and she didn't even tell me.

JACOB-They won't always tell you when they're coming. It's called a surprise visit.

JEWELZ-She would've been the one surprised if I wasn't here.

REBECCA-Don't go getting upset, she's just doing her job.

JEWELZ-Yeah in a sneaky way, but I'm cool with it. She probably going to ask me to pee in a cup for her, thinking I'm out using already, and I got to use it now but I'll wait for her. Did she give a time?

REBECCA-No she just said that she's on her way.(sits on couch)

JEWELZ-Well hopefully she won't take long. I don't know how long I'll be able to hold it. Maybe she was already in the neighborhood(looks at her watch again) let me go and give Lil Jacob his money back(leaves the room)

The doorbell rings.

REBECCA-I'll get it. That must be her.(opens the door)

MS. VENTURA-Hello, I'm Linda Ventura here to see Jewelz Davis. I called thirty minutes ago.

REBECCA-Hi, I'm the person you talked too. Please come in( she comes in carrying a large briefcase type bag). I'm Jewelz mother, Rebecca(they shake hands)Pleased to meet you(shouts toward the door where Jewelz left from)Jewelz your Probation Officer is here,(to Ms. Ventura) she'll be down in a minute you can have a seat.

Rebecca points to the lounge chair for Ms. Ventura to sit in.

MS. VENTURA-Thank you.(she sits the briefcase on the floor)

JACOB-(walks over to Ms. Ventura with his hands out) Hello I'm Jacob Davis, Jewelz father, thanks for coming.(Ms. Ventura starts to get up)Oh no you don't have to get up, just sit there and rest your feet(smiles)

MS. Ventura-Nice meeting you both(shakes Jacob's hand)Jewelz walks into the room.

JEWELZ-Hi Ms. Ventura what a pleasant surprise! Did you meet my parents?

MS. VENTURA-Well Hello to you too. And yes I did meet your parents. I do apologize for coming unannounced but I have some very good news that I couldn't wait to share with you, so I'm here on this loving evening to see you.(smiles atJewelz)

JEWELZ-Good news, I'm excited! Would you like to stay in here or go into the kitchen and sit at the table?

MS. VENTURA-The kitchen table would be better since I have some papers for you to sign.(precedes to get up)lead the way.

JEWELZ-Excuse us Mom and Dad, I'll be in the kitchen if you need me.(Jewelz and Ms. Ventura exits the livingroom),

## SCENE 9 KITCHEN

Ms Ventura is seated at the kitchen table with her briefcase sitting in a chair beside her. Jewelz is sitting across from her

MS. VENTURA-(pulls out a large plastic ziplock bag containing papers and a large urine test cup, and sits it on the table) First I have to take a urine sample from you, can you use the bathroom?

JEWELZ-Yes I thought you'd never ask. I been holding myself since my mom told me you were coming.

MS. VENTURA-Well let's not make you wait any longer.(she hands Jewelz a smaller cup that's clear) Urinate in this, then I'll transfer it into this(holds up the larger cup)which will give me a temporary reading then I can proceed with what I have to share with you, providing the test results are negative. (looks at Jewelz over her glasses)

JEWELZ-I haven't used anything, so I'm sure it will be negative. Do you come with me or not?

MS. VENTURA-Yes I have to come with you, it's procedure(puts on plastic gloves).

JEWELZ-OK, no problem, we have a bathroom right here(walks over to a closed door, opens it. Ms. Ventura stands at the doorway and watches Jewelz...Jewelz finishes then hands the small filled cup to Ms. Ventura and she pours the urine into the bigger cup and throws away the small empty cup)

MS. VENTURA-(sits large cup on table on top of paper towels) I need you to sign these papers, right here and initial here. (shepoints at the places, then hands Jewelz a pen)That shows I gave you the urine test. Now let's see(she looks at the urine cup to read the results)OK this says negative which is good now we can go on but you do know I still have to send this sample to the lab?

JEWELZ-That's cool.

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MS. VENTURA-(removes a thick packet of papers from briefcase)

The Probation Department is sponsoring a recovery house called the House of Hope, where recovering addicts and their children can receive counseling by trained specialists and social workers.

JEWELZ-But you do know that I don't have any kids?

MS. VENTURA-Yes I'm aware of that and that's one of the reasons you were referred besides being a recovering addict. Are you still with me?

JEWELZ-Yes.

MS. VENTURA-You were chosen as a candidate to be a monitor at the House which you will be paid starting at minimum wage with room to advance and the opportunity to further your education at no cost to you if you decide to do so.

JEWELZ-Wow that sounds great, so far, now what's the catch?

MS. VENTURA-There's really no catch plus it gets even better. We have an apartment building that has six one-bedroom units that comes furnished and rent-free to our upcoming staff. You've also been chosen for one of them but the catch to that will be you must stay employed at the House of Hope.

JEWELZ-Do I have to live there in order to work at the recovery place?

MS. VENTURA-Not necessarily, but if you want us to pay your rent then you must live in one of our units.

JEWELZ-Are these units one room or a full apartment?

MS. VENTURA-No, they are actually three rooms and a bathroom. And I did say fully furnished, didn't I?

JEWELZ-Yes

MS. VENTURA-You will have to bring the basics and any electronics you may want, we don't have any TV's or radios, but its like having your own apartment.

JEWELZ-So it's not like living in a program, I mean, I can get a phone, have my family and friends over, you know stuff like

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that.

MS. VENTURA-Yes, it will be yours and not like a program. The lease is for six months and you're free to renew it or move and although there are other units in the building, our unit must stay drug-free.

JEWELZ-Yeah that would go without saying. Will I submit urines to someone in the building?

MS. VENTURA-No, our units will be occupied by probationees, therefore according to the probation officer, he or she will determine when and how often to test them. As far as you're concerned, if you decide to take advantage of this opportunity I'll mostlikely ask you to sign a release form and have the designated person at the House of Hope send me your urine test results however often they would take them, which I'm sure would be random.

JEWELZ-Oh OK, so do that mean I won't have to report at the office?

MS. VENTURA-Well that depends, I may refer you to report by phone and that will be by landline only. The House of Hope has three shifts, one of them being a split shift, and I'm not sure the one that will be offered to you, I believe that will be covered during orientation.

JEWELZ-Is this place already in operation?

MS. VENTURA-No it's scheduled to open by the first of next month, but the apartments are available now.

JEWELZ-And tell me why I was chosen besides not having any kids?

MS. VENTURA-(pulls out another paper and reads from it) Being a first time offender of a non-violent crime, successfully completing a drug rehab of six-months or longer, little or no job history and having the potential or desire to become a productive member of society, which we gathered that last bit of information from your pre-sentence investigation report.

JEWELZ-Lucky me, huh?

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MS. VENTURA-Better than luck I think, it's a great opportunity. (hands Jewelz the thick packet of papers) This packet will tell you all about the House of Hope, all what I talked about, what they're offering and the job descriptions, pay grades and the Mission Statement. I'm leaving it with you so you can take your time and read it carefully maybe go over it with your parents then call me by next week with your decision.

JEWELZ-So where is it located?

MS. VENTURA-In a nice middle class neighborhood with lots of public transportation and not far from a shopping plaza with gazillion fast food restaurants.

JEWELZ-I think I'm interested already.

MS. VENTURA-This<sup>is</sup> definitely an opportunity to stay in recovery and prolong your sobriety.

JEWELZ-Yeah it really can't get no better than that!

MS. VENTURA-Do you have anymore questions for me?

JEWELZ-None I can think of at the moment.

MS. VENTURA-Feel free to call me if you do or if there's something in the packet that you don't understand.

JEWELZ-Will do.

MS. VENTURA-Ok so thanks for your time and I hope this was good news to you as it was for me bringing it to you?(gathers up her stuff preparing to leave).

JEWELZ-Yes it truly is and I thank you for coming, I know my parents will think so too, come I'll walk you to the door.

MS. VENTURA-That will be fine, keep up the good work.(they leave the kitchen).

## SCENE 10 LIVINGROOM

Jewelz is sitting between her parents finishing up reading the packet about the House of Hope.

JEWELZ-So what do yall think?

JACOB-It sounds very good almost too good to be true but coming from the Probation Office, I would take advantage of it.

REBECCA-Can you have the job and stay at home with us?

JEWELZ-Yes mom, but I think I would want to take one of their apartments, my first place(smiles).

JACOB-Yeah you got to move out sometime.

JEWELZ-And not paying rent will be groovy(does a little wiggle).

REBECCA-Don't go thinking you can do anything you want.

JEWELZ-I can as long as it's the right thing to do, I'm sure I can do it. I got faith and so do you mother!

REBECCA- I sure do and I trust you can do the right thing.

JACOB-This right here will help you build a good rapport with your Probation Officer and set good examples for yourself and your little sister.

JEWELZ-(stands up) That's right dad. I know I haven't been the best role model for my siblings but from this day forward I plan to better my life by putting God first, my recovery and of course my family, I love yall dearly and one day at a time I will fight that addiction cause I've discovered living sober is so much MORE PRECIOUS THAN JEWELS.

THE END