

From a low angle, making giants of our subjects, we see a GRAND HARP being played by ALICE COLTRANE (36) with her husband JOHN COLTRANE (45) playing TENOR SAXOPHONE beside her. They are floating through the air passing a DRUMMER playing TRAPS on the side walk and passing 12 AFRICAN AMERICAN BYSTANDERS arrested by the spectacle, watching with awe, until we land on the BASS PLAYER standing beside three African American Teenagers; TJ (18,) DISCO (16,) and K-TOWN (19,) who are unaffected by the spectacle.

ROLAND
(OFF CAMERA) What if
Coltrane had lived
longer?

DISCO
Huh?

Roland (42,) African American, enters the frame wearing a odd combination of BLAZER, SWEATSHIRT, and DARK PANTS with a TRUCKER BASEBALL CAP atop an uneven afro. He holds a PINT OF LIQUOR covered in a paper bag.

ROLAND
What if John Coltrane had lived?
Where would we be right now? How
would music sound right now?

K-TOWN
Jazzman, on one.

ROLAND
Rahsaan Kirk passed at 42. Eric
Dolphy passed at 36. Clifford
Brown was 25, Charlie Parker was
34, Lee Morgan 33, Charlie
Christian 25, and Billie Holiday...
Lady Day... my heart and soul. She
was only 44 years old. These
bright lights few to close to the
sun.

TJ
Big Mike was what, 24? Wookie was
17. DeAndre was 19, Four Drop was
25, Space Out was 15, Kavon was
20... we out here dying right here,
right now. The fuck I care about
John Coltrane?

ROLAND

I know jazz isn't part of your everyday world like it was for my generation. These musicians and composers I mentions were like Gods for the culture. The first time I heard Coltrane, I could physically feel my mind expanding, man.

DISCO

I'm trying to listen to some rap, feel me? You can keep your old ass jazz, Jazzman.

Roland is stunned for a moment.

ROLAND

Hold that thought.

DISCO

You tryin to get served or what? We ain't out here for your history lessons.

Roland breaks into a sprint to his home.

THE JAZZ ENSEMBLE starts up again.

Roland returns with a BOOM BOX, excited. Displaying the boombox proudly, he presses play. *India* live by John Coltrane sounds out of the box.

DISCO (CONT'D)

The fuck?

ROLAND

This is the immortal John Coltrane on saxophone.

The MUSIC SLOWS DOWN AND COMES TO A HAULT, just a few seconds into the song.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Batteries.

DISCO

So what you need?

ROLAND

I'm going to get some batteries and play you this music. This is important. *India* was recorded in 1961 at the village vanguard.

(MORE)

ROLAND (CONT'D)

And you caught a moment of it, you can feel the intensity of these musicians' mastery. Now, I know y'all love bass heavy music with your rap, Coltrane brought in Reggie Workman to join Jimmy Garrison, two of the great bass players, with Workman playing a drone type bass-line bringing in the drone of the Indian instrument the tambura.

TJ

Jazzman on zoot.

ROLAND

Man, this was so innovative and creative, such an important moment in jazz. Really before Coltrane, only the collaboration between sitar master Ravi Shankar and Bud Shank on flute showed the beauty of this fusion of jazz and Indian music, but Coltrane brought more blues into it with the blues scale heavily blending with the Indian scales. Look here, I'm going to play you this song, it's important for you to get this history. I used to do the same thing with my son. He's about your age now.

TJ

He plugged? Who he ride with?

ROLAND

Hahahahahahahah, he's in a different world.

TJ

So where he at?

Roland is set into a trance.

CUT TO:

4

INT. ROLAND'S ROOMING HOUSE APARTMENT 47TH ST. - DUSK

4

Tiffany and Roland sit on his single bed in his room. The room is filled with mostly items that were once discarded that don't have enough value to pawn or sell;

A PAINTING OF A WOMAN WITH AN AFRO IN A CRACKED FRAME, AN AFRICAN DRUM SHELL WITH NO HEAD, AN OLD TWEED COVERED ARMCHAIR, A STILL LIFE PAINTING WITH NO FRAME, MAGAZINE PHOTOS OF BILLIE HOLIDAY, JOHN COLTRANE, BETTY DAVIS (FUNK SINGER,) SPIRITUAL GURU PHOTOS OF RAMANA MAHARSHI, SWAMI MUKTANANDA, MEHER BABA, RAMA KRISHNA AND SRI ANANDAMAYI MA.

TIFFANY

Oh my God, my dogs are barking,
feels so good to take them shoes
off. Your cassette player work?

ROLAND

Yeah, what do you want to play?

TIFFANY

It's a surprise.

Tiffany hits the CRACK PIPE FASHIONED FROM A RADIO ANTINAE, then pulls a cassette from her purse, it has no case.

Roland smokes the remnants of the pipe-load and loads the cassette. PERCUSSIVE 808 introduces the song with Tiffany singing.

ROLAND

This is your music?

TIFFANY

Everybody say it's going to be a
hit!

Tiffany HI FIVES Roland.

ROLAND

This is incredible. You know, you
can really sing! Lot's of people
talk about singing, and you know...
you might humor the and internally
be doubting they will ever pursue
it in any meaningful way, but
you... wow! I'm so proud...

Tiffany springs up from the bed and looks out the window.

TIFFANY

Why they keep calling my name?

ROLAND

Who?

TIFFANY

You hear that?

ROLAND

Hear what? Pause the song.

TIFFANY

Someone out there screaming my name.

ROLAND

I don't hear anything.

TIFFANY

Are you messing with me?

ROLAND

No. I'm not sadistic.

TIFFANY

See, there it goes again.

ROLAND

Tiffany, I really don't hear anything from out there other than the regular sounds. You may be getting paranoid from the rock. Let's cool out.

TIFFANY

It's not the rock. In fact let me take one more draw.

Tiffany sits down and gently, patiently takes another draw from the pipe.

ROLAND

You might make this paranoid feeling worse.

Tiffany interrupts her draw with laughter.

TIFFANY

See here, all your gurus on the wall are just staring at me smiling. (to the photos on the wall) Hello, there's nothing to see here, just two friends enjoying some cocaine together if that's alright by you.

Roland laughs and takes a moment where his eyes roll back in his head and he straightens up into a meditative posture.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Ah shit, I done sent you to guru land.

She takes another draw from the pipe.

ROLAND

There's not judgement from the awakened, Tiffany. There's only unconditional love.

TIFFANY

I know absolutely nothing about no unconditional love. Never received it. Never gave it. That's fucked up.

ROLAND

You receive it from me.

TIFFANY

So what is it? You don't think I'm attractive?

ROLAND

I think you're so beautiful.

TIFFANY

So you think you get me high enough, eventually I'ma give you some?

ROLAND

Not at all. I genuinely enjoy your company, that's all. I enjoy your friendship. I love your voice. I love your laughter.

TIFFANY

Shut up. I don't want to cry.

Roland is quiet and just looks at Tiffany until she starts to sob a little.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

I smoke so I don't have to cry, and you're fucking my shit up.

ROLAND

It's okay.

TIFFANY

I said stop talking! See, now they're calling my name again.

Tiffany springs up and tries to open the window.

ROLAND
It's locked. Relax, nobody is
calling your name.

TIFFANY
I told you to stop talking to me.

She unlocks the window and jumps out. Roland stands up,
watches her walking away and closes the window. Slowly, he
takes a draw from the pipe.

26 INT. ROLAND'S ROOMING HOUSE APARTMENT 47TH ST. KITCHEN - 26
NIGHT

Parker sits at the kitchen table and COWBOY, (63) African
American, tries to light a CIGARETTE on the gas burner of the
STOVE by leaning into the flame very slowly and seemingly on
some kind of opioid. Roland is serving TWO PLATES of EGGS AND
CORN TORTILLAS. Cowboy keeps resetting, backing off the
flame, then slowly descending, occasionally drooling. Roland
splits an AVOCADO with a KNIFE and serves each plate. He
sprinkles a lot of PEPPER and HOT SAUCE on his plate and sits
down.

ROLAND
I don't know if I would have ever
appreciated Mexican food like I do,
if I had stayed in New York.

PARKER
There's a ton of Mexican spots in
New York. Thanks, Pop.

Parker nods toward Cowboy with a look of confusion.

ROLAND
Cowboy, you're disturbing my son,
man. Let me get that for you.

Roland holds a lighter to Cowboy's cigarette and Cowboy
smokes and walks out of the kitchen.

PARKER
Is he on horse?

ROLAND
He takes some opioid medication.
Maybe too strong a dose. How long
have you been vegetarian?

PARKER

Just since this past summer. These Rasta cats made me rethink cheese steaks and beer. I haven't been drinking at all for like five months.

ROLAND

Still smoke grass though.

PARKER

Yeah. Nobody calls it that anymore.

ROLAND

Around here they call it doja.

PARKER

Ganja is my favorite term.

ROLAND

The way humans consume beef is unsustainable. I'm happy eating a vegetarian diet. I'm just omnivore because of circumstance. We're in a food desert in this neighborhood. I have to walk twelve blocks to a small Mexican grocery store that only has a few vegetables.

They eat in silence for a moment. Roland finishes his plate, springs up and washes it immediately.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

I don't believe in leaving dishes in the sink.

Parker continues to eat.

PARKER

You ever think about moving back to Brooklyn?

ROLAND

What would I do in Brooklyn?

PARKER

What are you doing here?

ROLAND

I'm writing my book.

PARKER

Okay.