

DEPTH PERCEPTION

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INT. ART GALLERY LOBBY - NIGHT

An opening reception. Guests mill around a buffet table, nibbling, talking, drinking, everyone having a fine time.

SANDY MARCOS (40) drifts in from the street. Her DESIGNER DRESS is torn, makeup smeared. A BANDAGE wraps her arm.

BRIANA, the host, calls to Sandy from 20 feet away.

BRIANA

Where have you been?

Briana moves closer, and Sandy's appearance sinks in.

BRIANA

...Where have you been?

SANDY

Should've stayed in the cab.

BRIANA

Oh, oh... come on.

INT. ART GALLERY LADIES ROOM - LATER

Sandy's trying to fix her makeup. Briana works on her hair.

BRIANA

That bandage is oozing.

SANDY

You have any duct tape? Ha!

BRIANA

I have a Valium, and you're taking it.

SANDY

I'm fine. I just...

She steps back from the mirror, takes in her torn dress. Her eyes tear up, and the freshly applied mascara runs.

SANDY

Look at my Nicole Miller. A week's pay! And I was gonna meet cute guys tonight...

BRIANA

Let me see... I never go anywhere
without a needle and thread. And
it's not as bad as it looks.

This gets a grim laugh from Sandy. Briana looks a question at
her. Sandy wipes her eyes and shakes her head.

SANDY

I've been hearing that all day.

INT. DRESS SHOP - DAY

Sandy stands in front of a full length mirror, modeling the
Nicole Miller dress. Even without the dress, Sandy would turn
heads: trim and muscular. With the dress, she's a vision.

SANDY

Ohhhhh, yeah. Oh yeah.

She twirls, imaginary flirtations playing over her face. She
lifts the price tag...

SANDY

Holy buckets...

SALES GIRL (O.S.)

It's not as bad as it looks.

Sandy looks up at the sales girl, working nearby.

SANDY

I'm seeing four figures here. Four.

SALES GIRL

Well... We have a sale tomorrow. 50%
off. Good as you look, be a shame
not to give it to you now.

Sandy beams.

SANDY

You take Discover?

INT. SANDY'S HOUSE - LATER

Sandy is talking on the phone with Briana.

SANDY

It's amazing. It makes me look like
Julia Roberts with fewer teeth.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. ART GALLERY DISPLAY SPACE - SAME TIME

Briana is unpacking huge boxes of framed artwork.

BRIANA
Better bring protection.

SANDY
Why would I... oh, you mean
"protection."

BRIANA
Mmm Hmm.

SANDY
Say, that 'hood is a little, uh...

BRIANA
Crunchy around the edges, yeah. But
it's not as bad as it looks. Still,
you should take a cab. 'Kay?

SANDY
What time do the hot guys show up?

BRIANA
They're lining up right now, honey!

INT. TAXI CAB - EVENING

Sandy sits anxiously in the back of the cab, dressed to kill. Traffic is grid-locked, and she is steaming mad.

CABBIE
It's not as bad as it looks!

SANDY
We haven't moved in ten minutes!

She throws some cash at the cabbie and gets out.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUING

Sandy is wildly out of place, her stunning appearance at odds with the seedy neighborhood. She approaches a TRICKED OUT CAR, four young TOUGHS leaning against it. The car's stereo screams at jet engine volume.

Sandy's eyes scan the Toughs, but she keeps going. As she comes even with the car, the four men move as if on cue. One gets in her face, the others surround her.

TOUGH 1
What's the hurry, baby?

TOUGH 2

Yeah, how about you visit a while.

SANDY

Guys, I got a place to be.

She starts to walk around them, but they grab her like a toy and shove her against a wall behind a dumpster. She spins and catches herself, trying to protect her dress. She whirls.

SANDY

FIRE! FIRE! HELP ME!

They laugh. You couldn't hear a grenade over their stereo. Sandy opens her purse, holds out her wallet.

SANDY

About two hundred. All yours.

TOUGH 3

Whattcha think happened to her eye?

TOUGH 1

Bet her honey popped her one.

TOUGH 2

Think there's just, like, a hole?
That could be nasty...

They chuckle, move closer. Sandy tries one more tactic.

SANDY

You don't see too well, do you? You don't see that I'm in a designer dress but flat shoes. You don't see I spent an hour putting on makeup, but my nails are down to nothing. You sure as hell don't see the callouses. Maybe you could put it together, but you just don't see!

TOUGH 1

Tell ya what I see. A party!

He presses her against the wall, clutches at her crotch. His friends cheer him on. HE TEARS OPEN THE NECK OF HER DRESS.

TOUGH 1

Oooo, I do that?

TOUGH 3

It's not as bad as it looks, baby.
Got some duct tape in the car!

They laugh again. The music pounds. SANDY SHIFTS. HER FACE IS A BLANK MASK - A FLASH OF MOTION - A MAN SCREAMS... ANOTHER.

INT. ART GALLERY DISPLAY SPACE - NIGHT

Sandy emerges from the ladies room, her makeup restored. Briana has performed admirable surgery on the dress.

BRIANA

Go have a drink, hon. I'll be right out. (calls to a guest) Hey, you!

Sandy walks across the gallery space. Guests turn to look at her. They point, some whisper to friends.

The gallery is filled with ENORMOUS BLACK & WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS of Sandy performing karate moves: iron hands, blurring feet, perfect form and balance.

It gets quiet as she passes. She blushes, lowers her head.

INT. ART GALLERY LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Sandy steps to the buffet and regards an unlikely punch: mangled fruit and tumor-like lumps of sorbet in a murky liquid. She fills a cup, sips. Amazingly, she likes it.

HUNK (O.S.)

What's with this punch? Work in progress, you think?

Sandy turns to see a GORGEOUS HUNK (40) beside her. She smiles. He smiles back.

SANDY

It's not as bad as it looks.

She hands him a cup of punch, and they walk into the gallery.

THE END