

RACHEL. We're here to uphold the Civil Right's Act of 1960.

Just last week we successfully registered six Negroes in this county / alone.

ABBY. Define successfully.

RACHEL. Their papers are in.

ABBY. So are yours
and mine.

RACHEL. Point is I don't have time to be marking seating arrangements.

ABBY. That's why I don't answer the phones.

We need a secretary in here to deal with all that mess.

RACHEL. That's why we hired you.

ABBY. Hired?

You referring to that dismal check you hand me every month?

RACHEL. Everybody has to do their part for the / Cause.

ABBY. Cause. /

My concern lies in what this *Cause* is doing to my pockets.

I have a law degree.

RACHEL. Pre-law.

ABBY. Well ain't you overflowing with charm today.

This is supposed to be a transition job for me.

RACHEL. Abby, this isn't a job,
it's a calling.

ABBY. Sweetie, well you done dialed the wrong number.

RACHEL. Where was all this mouth when you were fresh outta college begging for an internship?

ABBY. When I agreed to bestow my talents here after I graduated
it was predicated upon your promise of more agency
– a chance to flex and climb. Never did you say I'd be
pushing papers and orchestrating field trips.
I'm sorry, Rachel, but tedious work bores me.
I'm a visionary.

RACHEL. In due time. Is that not what I said?

ABBY. You said, soon.

That's what you said.

*(Quoting RACHEL.) The man who does more than he is
paid for will soon be paid for more than he does.*

RACHEL. Napoleon Hill.

ABBY. He might've said it to someone else but *you* said it
to *me*.

It's you I hold accountable for my lack of *receivable*
accounts.

RACHEL. How's it going, job training the teenagers?

You created that program and now you're bored by it?

ABBY. I love the challenge of constructing the big ideas.

It's the day-to-day implementation that puts me to
sleep.

RACHEL. How can I help?

ABBY. Money.

RACHEL. Those sit-in, pickets and marches, you love to
applaud, are mighty expensive.

Bail money and actual lawyers, Abby.

So for us

this is community activism.

Grass roots.

ABBY. That's what I'm down to...hot combing my own
roots.

Look at these delicate hands.

They are forming ugly muscles!

RACHEL. What a travesty.

ABBY. You tease but I'm serious.

Put my name on the marquee at the beginning of the day or

don't fix your lips to ask me for anything else.

Ma Rainey says she was worth half the door and ten percent more.

RACHEL. That was entertainment, show business –

ABBY. Business is business.

(RACHEL hands ABBY a marker.)

RACHEL. Here's a marker and all the paper you need.

Write Abigail as big as you like to see it and paste it outside this office door

if it makes you feel any better.

ABBY. You thank I won't?

You thank I'd find your suggestion childish,

prompting me to land on the conclusion that your proposal was simply a response to my

infantile rant.

(Beat.)

BUT YOU'RE WRONG!

(ABBY takes the paper and writes her name obnoxiously huge. Catches a whiff of RACHEL and sniffs harder.)

What's that smell?

RACHEL. It's vanilla.

ABBY. What did you do, drown yourself in it?

Smells like a botanical garden in here.

RACHEL. Don't come in here trying to dress me down this morning.

Go outside and smell that air.

It smells mighty good.

It smells like progress.

Today is the day before tomorrow

(ABBY reveals her sign to RACHEL before taking it outside.)

and tomorrow has got MY name written all over it.

ABBY. Mine looks better.

RACHEL. Five hours and forty-two minutes before she arrives.

ABBY. A star is etched in memories eternally.
Nobody ever remembers the ensemble. So.
Yeah. Ponder on that.

(ABBY leaves, returns.)

RACHEL. Air's a bit thinner today.
Wouldn't you say?

ABBY. I've never met someone so concerned with the climate.

Let alone a person who hardly steps foot outside.

RACHEL. *(Pointedly.)* Wouldn't you say?

ABBY. I'd say it's hot and sticky.
Feels like July in March.

RACHEL. Which means we made it through February.
(As if she's quoting someone great.) Remembering the need for meat stews at Christmas makes the July Four fruit salads taste sweeter.

ABBY. You just throw words in the air,
hope they catch some logic 'fore dey drop, don't you?

Gon' make yo' little point directly and leave me be, woman.

RACHEL. The Civil Rights Movement will enhance the future of this country and all its people.

Tomorrow will never look like today or yesterday.

And we're doing our part to make certain of it.

It's repugnant when anyone regards it as less than.

We're designing a proud history, Abby.

ABBY. Well, I'd like to *design* my Cadillac to run.

Need gas for that

need money for gas.

RACHEL. You need what now?

Since when has your father let a desire of yours hit the ground? Spoiled is what you are.

ABBY. Trust, his well with me can run dry.

Very hollow and dry.

And I'm not spoiled,

just...accustomed.

(RACHEL wipes her brows and darts her eyes towards the windows.)

RACHEL. Do I ask for much? / No.

ABBY. Yes.

RACHEL. Just that today, everyone come to the office.

Ten past nine. Where is Sarah?

ABBY. In her skin I suppose.

RACHEL. I'll ask you to leave that nastiness at the door.

ABBY. Wish I could, but -

Ahhh! Oo-oo-oo-oo Ssss!

(ABBY grabs her stomach.)