

It's All in the Mix
A DJ play
by
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It's All in the Mix

Time: Now and also maybe a couple years before

Place: Bay Area, a space with a DJ set-up, two turntables and a mixer, near it are crates full of records and a pair of headphones. It transforms between an off-the-grid record store, house parties, bars, clubs, and the spaces in between.

Note: Whenever June isn't in a scene, she should be someplace on stage, in her space, perhaps her apartment, mixing music, as if each song picked, each scene, is a song in her mix.

Characters:

JUNE, a young woman in her twenties, aspiring to be a DJ

BIZ, a young man in his twenties, a local DJ genius who works at a record store

PAT, a young man in his twenties, a local DJ part of Biz's crew, his best friend

ACT ONE

PROLOGUE

(In the black, the start of a mix of songs like “Gorgy Porgy” by Toto, old school hip hop, modern R&B, and dance music. Lights slowly reveal a DJ, whose identity is unknown, getting into said mix – adjusting the levels, cueing the tracks, scratching, etc. Lights reveal JUNE as the DJ. She steps forward.)

JUNE

See, everyone wants to be a DJ. It's the lifestyle. It's the atmosphere. It's the feeling you get being able to play a track only a select few remember. It's the feeling of finding something new and playing it for people and bringing everyone together on that dance floor. You can go out there now and find any type of DJ, any type of place to suit what you're looking for. And at each party, each scene, you always got all the people who think they know it all. You got the people who will tell you about shit that blows your mind. Ways to mix a record into another, play this epic set, making it a night to remember. And those who try to cut you down. Tell you where you should and shouldn't be. See, when I came up, it was set and defined, who you were gonna be before you even stepped a foot into the back, where the turntables are. Like an old school love song, I'll take you back. I'll take you there, back to the beginning of another time when I was on the other side. Looking up from the dance floor wondering if I had what it takes.

SCENE ONE

(Transition from the Prologue into the club. Music spins back to the beginning of the track. Lights further reveal a packed night with everyone rallying, having fun, dancing, etc. It's the height of the night. PAT stands in front of the booth, MCing with the mic.)

PAT

All right, everybody, let's make some noise for my man, the DJ of the hour, Biz!

(Applause. BIZ, the DJ, transitions into another song that changes up the flow, “I Got The” by Labi Siffre.)

That's right, that's right, party people. You feelin this tonight? Huh?

(Applause.)

Bringing you back with a classic track, some Labi Siffre. You know about it? C'mon!

(The track continues to play. Scratch intro to the next track. Then a rewind of the record. A liminal space and time. Characters move in and out like a memory. JUNE approaches BIZ. Music/sound like a far-off ambient echo.)

JUNE

You're the DJ from that club other night, aren't you?

BIZ

Yeah, that was me. You can call me Biz.

JUNE

June.

BIZ

June Bug.

PAT

June Bug.

(A crowd chants, "June Bug! June Bug!" mixed with the soft beat of Black Ivory's "You and I". BIZ and JUNE stand, connected through sound. BIZ steps down to the DJ booth. He and JUNE slow-dance, frozen in this moment of time and space.)

BIZ

I should have played this for you from the start.

(They look at each other. Sound morphs. They part.)

SCENE TWO

(Music transforms softly into Bobby Caldwell, "What You Won't Do for Love," playing in the background. The time and space shift into Hard To Find Records, a hard-to-find record store that's barely noticeable from the street, about six months prior. It's a slow day. BIZ is at the counter, killing time by looking at a DJ equipment catalog. PAT hums/sings along with the song. JUNE enters. The store bell jingles. BIZ and PAT look up then go back to their activities. JUNE gauges the shop and starts to look through records, getting into it. PAT notices her while looking through records as well. He

moves to a stack of records closer to her. She is oblivious to his play.)

PAT

You need help?

JUNE

No, I got it.

PAT

Lookin for something for your man?

JUNE

(half-laughs)

No... I don't gotta boyfriend. I collect records is all.

PAT

Ah... Well, I'll leave you to it then.

(PAT hands BIZ a stack of fliers. He looks over at JUNE, talking loud enough so she can hear. BIZ notices JUNE in the shop.)

PAT

Yeah man, this club is gonna be dope. The guy who owns the place is totally down to let us play whatever we want.

BIZ

Man, that would be tight. Bring out the crates!

PAT

I put together these fliers. We just need to get people there. I mean if this night works out, we could get a Friday or Saturday spot. Let's do this hip hop funk boogie thing, man.

BIZ

C'mon man, you think people are gonna stick around long enough to want to listen to my old school shit?

PAT

Fuck them. It's happy hour anyway. You can't lure a stable crowd in at a happy hour gig. It's just not gonna happen. People are gonna come by, drink for a bit, but you know they're on their way to something else. It kinda doesn't matter what we play. We'll just be doing it for fun, you know? When do we ever get to play what we want?

BIZ

True. Here, I guess.

PAT

Record store doesn't count. Who listens to us here but a bunch of other record nerds. Store's like a relic, man. Think about it, if we make the night whatever we want, we can bring in our own people. Build up a presence. A crowd that appreciates what we want to play. Not playing to some crowd that doesn't know shit about what they like. People that make their decisions based on whatever's on TV, whatever people are pushin'.

BIZ

You're right. I mean that would be nice not to have some random girls coming up to you like "You got any Lady Gaga?"

BIZ and PAT

"Fuck no!"

(They laugh.)

BIZ

Yeah man...

PAT

All right, I gotta go. 'member that girl last Saturday at the gig? She and me got to talking and uh... well, she works over at Denny's, right? So, I'm gonna go get some breakfast. Think she gets off soon. You know what I'm saying?

(PAT laughs exaggeratedly. BIZ chuckles. He gives BIZ a pound.)

PAT

But, hit me up later. And don't forget to promote this gig.

(PAT points JUNE out to BIZ and hands him a flier, pushing him in her direction. His cell phone rings.)

Ooh! That's her. Gotta go.

(On the phone)

Hey girl, where you at? You are, huh? I was just on my way over there.

(PAT leaves the shop. BIZ looks up, noticing JUNE. They make eye contact. JUNE gives him the record. BIZ checks the records for scratches, judging JUNE by each record he selects.)

BIZ

Dorothy Ashby... wow. Didn't even know we had this.

(beat)

You know about her?

JUNE

Dorothy Ashby? Awh, c'mon! She's been sampled all over the place. Can't believe you have an original here. I been searching all over for this.

BIZ

\$11.23. You spin?

(JUNE hands him some cash. He gives her change. A slight awkward pause.)

JUNE

Me? No... I'd like to though... You were the DJ playing over at that club on 6th the other night?

BIZ

Yeah, that was me.

JUNE

What do you spin?

BIZ

(smiles)

Well...good music isn't just one genre. Play all kinds of stuff from soul to jazz, modern funk to old school, early hip hop and R & B. I listen to a lot of other stuff too. You know, whatever moves you. Makes you feel something.

JUNE

I'm June by the way.

BIZ

(smiles)

Huh, like June Bug? You can call me Biz.

JUNE

(teasing)

Cuz you're all about business?

(BIZ gives her a look.)

Never mind...

BIZ

We don't get a lot of girls in here...

JUNE

(laughs)

Yeah, I can tell.

BIZ

(Indicating her record.)

You wanna hear this record, June Bug? You can play it over there.

(He indicates the DJ booth, walking over. She follows. She takes out the record putting it on the platter. BIZ hovers over her, making sure she's doing it right.)

BIZ

It's all hooked up to the mixer, see? You slide the crossfader to this side to hear your track.

(JUNE cues up the track and lets it play. They listen to music.)

So you gonna be a DJ superstar, then?

JUNE

Of course.

(BIZ cues up the record on the other turntable and mixes it into the Dorothy Ashby track.)

BIZ

You know about this?

JUNE

S.O.S. Band? C'mon.

BIZ

(Laughs)

Okay, okay. Your turn.

JUNE

My turn?

BIZ

Yeah, play another record. Something you think I don't know.

JUNE

Oh, that's how it is now? Okay, get ready.

(JUNE looks through the records and picks out a funky track.)

BIZ

Oh, I'm ready.

(She cues up the record on the other turntable. The transition might be awkward, but the selection is impeccable. BIZ listens trying to figure out what it is.)

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BIZ

Oh shit! Is this...
It can't be Kleeer...

JUNE

Try again!

BIZ

Change?

JUNE

Nope.

(BIZ looks at her, amazed/surprised that he doesn't know the track.)

Steve Arrington.

BIZ

Wow... Let me see that?

(He reaches for the album.)

You won, for sure. Huh... I can't believe I didn't know this!

JUNE

Great track.

BIZ

No kidding. You found the gem today.

JUNE

Gem?

BIZ

You know, like the hidden treasure.

(He smiles at her. She smiles back. A moment where neither of them really know what to say next. JUNE gathers her things. BIZ stands, taking one of the fliers PAT gave him earlier.)

BIZ

So... you should come to this night we're DJing at later. It'll be fun. Lots of stuff you'll like.

(beat.)

I'll be DJing.

SCENE THREE

(Inside a packed club in Oakland. PAT is MCing the night. BIZ is just finishing up. JUNE walks in.)

JUNE

This party's the same as any other. There's a ton of people huddled into these groups. There's this guy over here who's being loud, trying to prove his shit to everyone.

There's this girl who's wearing clothes that are way too tight and way too revealing and just laying it all out there, as if that's the only thing that makes her feel good.

There's the people that came to dance, and the people that came to drink, and the people that came to look good. All those looking for a hook-up. All those avoiding something. All those looking for the answer.

And then there's Biz. And there's me. And it's like we're in some different universe, different plane than everyone else, sometimes. Because I walk in this party, and he's the first pair of eyes I see. And everyone else just disappears. The world disappears. He looks up and sees me, and I can tell, even when he's looking away, that he's smiling inside.

PAT

Party people make some noise!

(Applause.)

That's right. Y'all know who it is on the ones and twos, give it up for Biz, everybody!

(Applause. BIZ plays one last song by the Jackson 5, "Show Me the Way to Go." He comes away from the DJ booth. PAT stands by him, patting him on the back. JUNE approaches.)

JUNE

Hey, Biz, what's up?

(Silence. BIZ pretends he doesn't hear her, has a front up. PAT motions to BIZ to turn. JUNE touches BIZ on the shoulder. BIZ turns.)

BIZ

Oh, hey... June Bug...

JUNE

That was really good! You played some really great tracks there-

BIZ

Thanks.

JUNE

Yeah, uh, are you done spinning or-

BIZ

No, just a break. I'll be back in a second.

(BIZ walks off with PAT trailing, laughing at him.)

Shut up.

JUNE

Uh, okay, well, I'll see you in there I guess.

(Later. BIZ continuing with his set playing a deep cut, something slower with a fat bass sound, think Erykah Badu "Gone Baby Gone". JUNE watches and sips a drink. PAT approaches.)

PAT

So, you just go into a club all alone like you're a badass.

JUNE

Excuse me.

PAT

Like you're all fine and what not.

JUNE

Well...

PAT

I'm just noticing, that's all. That's the point, isn't it? For me to notice. For people to notice.

JUNE

Maybe not you specifically.

(BIZ rewinds the track back to the beginning and plays that sick intro once more. You hear "Oh!!"s from the crowd. A beat. PAT smiles. Starting over.)

PAT

Hey.

JUNE

Hi.

PAT

You look pretty cute tonight.

JUNE

Uh...thanks I guess.

PAT

No, I mean, at the shop you look pretty normal, but you...look good.

JUNE

Thanks.

PAT

You're at the shop a lot these days, huh.

JUNE

I like the store all right.

PAT

Yeah, the selection of music there is unmatched. All over the bay. It may be a hole in the wall, but pretty much everything in there is hand selected for quality. Never met a girl into record collecting. That's pretty hot.

JUNE

That's hot?

PAT

Yeah, you know, just cuz girls usually aren't into music like guys are. You don't meet too many girls that can talk shop.

JUNE

Oh...I guess.

PAT

You know how it is. Usually if a girl's in that store, she's either getting something for her man or she's lost.

JUNE

Well, I know my way around.

PAT

Just curious. I figured obsessive music collecting was more of a guy thing.

JUNE

(sarcastic, trying to blow him off.)

Okay.

(JUNE tries ignoring PAT, listening more intently to BIZ's mix. PAT notices this.)

PAT

I mean, it's a good thing, right? Cuz girls aren't that manic. It's this never ending search.

(PAT sits closer to JUNE.)

Dimly lit record store. Stacks of records all over the place. Jazz, funk, hip hop, soul, you name it. You go in there to find the perfect record. The gem no one else has. Searching for the right song like it's pure gold. It calls to you, this music. Gets inside of you and that song, owning that song, completes something that's missing.

(beat.)

You feel that when you look for records?

JUNE

(uncomfortable, awkwardly scooting her seat back)

Yeah...

(JUNE stands to leave, she begins to walk away.)

PAT

You do, huh.

(beat.)

You gonna stick around for my set? I got some songs you might like to hear.

(The music slows down to a halt, as if while a song was playing you turned off the record player. Time shifts. Later on in the party. PAT and BIZ stand off to the side watching the party in motion.)

PAT

You realize there were more than a hundred people there at that tiny-ass club last week? Friend of mine said we're people's "go-to" thing now. Think about that.

BIZ

Yeah

PAT

I mean we could be more than just some local DJs. We could be "the" local DJs.

BIZ

I never thought about it like that. It's just something fun to do.

PAT

C'mon man, no one even buys records anymore. They just download whatever they need, play it on Serrato. And here you roll up in here every single time with these crates of records.

(Chuckles.)

Store's like a museum...

(BIZ shrugs. PAT waits a second for a response.)

PAT (cont'd)

Well?

BIZ

Well, what do you want me to say? It pays the rent and it's easy to do. I can work on music on the side. How is that bad?

PAT

Man, we don't need to be doing this side gig shit. You with your store thing. Me with deliveries. We could be making money spinnin' at a place everyone's gonna be sure to go to. You know that spot over on Market? That night, "Nocturnal"? They got a DJ battle going on for a resident spot in a month. We need to be promoting our shit to people and get a decent following together. And not just me promoting it. Don't play that shy card, Biz.

BIZ

I promote our nights.

PAT

Yeah, but you always look all pissed off when you do, like, "Come see this night, asshole. No? Well, fuck you!" Always talking to the dudes too. You never talk to girls and you know the girls will attract the guys, so start with them. Skip the guys.

BIZ

Pssh. Whatever. What about you? You're chatting everyone's ear off so they take the flier just to get rid of you.

PAT

They take them don't they?

BIZ

Yeah, but we want them to come out too.

PAT

Regardless, we need to get our name out there. Maybe throw one more DJ in for a pretty tight crew. Maybe Eddy.

BIZ

Eddy?

PAT

He's not that bad.

BIZ

(makes a face.)

I'll think about it.

PAT

What's to think about? You see what it's like for us. We got this. Who cares what he's like. It doesn't matter anyway. We're gonna win that battle and get that spot and then I can fucking quit that fucked up delivery gig. Fuck, man. I hate that shit.

BIZ

All right, all right.

PAT

See, it's different for you-

BIZ

I don't know about that...

PAT

No, but you got your own thing going on. With the store and shit. You're all set. I get it, you're all nostalgic about this record collecting stuff, but I want more for myself, man. I need to be creating my own opportunities, man. I know that's what's next. I mean, really this is the break we've been waiting for.

BIZ

Hey man, how's that mixer working out?

PAT

So much better. For real. The level's aren't all wack like that other one. Thanks, man. I appreciate what you did to it.

(PAT pats BIZ on the back. They walk off.)

SCENE FOUR

(A couple days later at the record store. JUNE is alone in the store, with BIZ in the back. She walks up to the DJ booth, places the record on the platter, turns the turntable on and cues up the record. She fades in the music, then listens, looking at the album. Music plays for a while then BIZ enters.)

BIZ

Hey, June Bug...

(JUNE turns suddenly, startled.)

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JUNE

Oh, hey!

BIZ

I scare you?

JUNE

No, no, I was just-
(She smiles.)
Okay, yeah, a little.

(BIZ smiles. He puts away records.)

BIZ

You like that night?

JUNE

Yeah, I-

BIZ

You have fun?

JUNE

Yeah, it was fun.

BIZ

Cool...

(beat.)

We've been working hard to get this presence, you know? Like apparently we're this go-to thing now for people.

JUNE

Yeah, I like going there.

BIZ

It's cool, cuz we can play what we want. Usually, well, in the past, whenever I'd get these DJ gigs it'd always be the manager or the club owner saying, "play this, play that". Not there though. You can do whatever you want. It makes a difference, you know.

JUNE

I can imagine.

BIZ

Cuz, like I could play something that people start to really feel.

(beat.)

You like that kinda music?

JUNE

I like funky things. Like Bootsy Collins...

BIZ

Yeah.

JUNE

And Sly Stone...

BIZ

Yes!

JUNE

Like that album, "Time"? That is so funky and people never play it. They always play the stuff everyone knows like "Dance to the Music."

BIZ

I know! Yeah, but then you play something like "If You Want Me to Stay" and people are like nodding their heads, you know. I do that all the time. You gotta play with people's expectations. That's how you make a good mix. It's not just the beat-matching and the flow, you gotta play things that make people go, "Oh, shit!" "I forgot about that!" or, "What is this?" you know?

JUNE

Yeah.

(BIZ grabs a record and walks over to the turntables.)

BIZ

Let me play you something.

(He cues the record without looking at her.)

I think you'll like this.

(A soulful love song plays. JUNE listens. BIZ listens, trying not to be obvious that he's watching her reaction to it.)

JUNE

This is beautiful.

BIZ

(A little nervous.)

Yeah...

(They listen. BIZ gets fidgety. Finally, he makes his way over to turn off the song. JUNE stops him with her hand.)

JUNE

No, don't. I like this. Let it play.

BIZ

You do?

JUNE

Yeah, I do.

(A moment. Interrupted by PAT entering the store.)

PAT

Heeeey!

(BIZ stands and greets PAT.)

BIZ

What are you doing here?

PAT

In the neighborhood...

(PAT walks over to the turntable. He looks at JUNE, then BIZ, maybe getting a better sense of the situation. He looks down at the record.)

PAT

What is this shit?

(He laughs. BIZ takes off the record. PAT puts a hip hop record on the platter, cues it up quickly and let's the beat drop. The sound is explosive. Like Dead Prez "Bigger that Hip Hop".)

BIZ

Ohhhhhh!

PAT

That's right!

(JUNE puts the record BIZ was playing back in the sleeve, looking at the album cover.)

PAT

Hey June.

(JUNE looks up a little surprised.)

JUNE

Oh, hey.

BIZ

So, aren't you working now?

PAT

Yeah, but there was this delivery down the street, so thought I'd pop in. I gotta talk to you about that DJ battle though. Apparently there's gonna be all these record label folk and industry people there. This thing's big, man.

BIZ

Huh.

PAT

Those other DJs don't got nothing on us though. I mean, we're the ones always pushing the scene to the next level. Like who introduced THAT HOT NEW TRACK way before KMEL and all that shit was ever even playing it. We did, that's who.

BIZ

True.

(BIZ looks to see what JUNE's doing. PAT does too. BIZ turns back and notices PAT looking.)

BIZ

Whatever happened with Denny's?

PAT

Well, you know how females are...

BIZ

Right...

PAT

No matter. You know how I do my thing. We keep doing these gigs over in the East Bay, you know, well be like kings! Girls flocking to us. People wanting to be around us all the time. Then,

like I said man, all it is, is a hop-skip-and a jump over to the City. Get big over there too. Spin at Nocturnal. All those folks coming out for that. Way of the world, man. It's the natural order of things. Talent can't sit around for too long.

(JUNE walks up to the decks with a record or two in hand. She motions to BIZ if she can play it.)

BIZ

Yeah, go for it, June Bug.

PAT

Anyway, man, I'll swing by later.

BIZ

Yeah, we'll figure it out.

(PAT exits.)

SCENE FIVE

(Like some type of fast-forward time warp, with JUNE playing music at the turntables. BIZ and PAT enter and exit. They talk. They go through records. Sometimes they but her off and play a record, she returns and continues to play. Her skills growing exponentially.)

JUNE

Being a DJ is like being an archeologist. You unearth these obscure records at the most random times. You kinda know generally where to look. You got Amoeba for when you're looking for pretty much anything. You got THIS PLACE when you need to find some old soul and funk – it's pricey, but pristine. You got, of course, SUCH AND SO for all your imports and limited releases – be prepared to spend the big bucks there, but that is where you get something that every other record collector will look at you like you are a god. You gotta hit up the flea market at Ashby on the weekend for that jazz and psych rock. There's THIS OTHER PLACE for when you need a quick fix, but they've got a reasonably priced selection too. And then there's HARD TO FIND records, with Biz manning the counter. Everything always fully stocked, in pristine condition, organization on point. It's a small place and usually there's only six people in there when it's busy, but that's where you a diamond in the rough. Original pressings of rare records. It's where it's at, and no one, except the people truly in the know, know about this shit. So, if you're here, you're already in deep.

(Time paces back to normal. Several weeks later. JUNE mixes from one record into another, almost beat-matching. BIZ is at the counter, watching what she's doing. He suddenly walks over.)

BIZ

Here, June Bug, let me show you something.

JUNE

What?

BIZ

How to beat-match.

JUNE

Really?!

BIZ

Yeah, just watch.

(BIZ digs through records and selects one, then cues it up.)

Ok, well, I mean, it's definitely all about song selection – being a good DJ. But it's also about how you transition into songs. You can do a lot of subtle shit that will make people hear a song different. Or set something up, so when you drop that gem you found, people will explode. Like, this – what I'm gonna show you – is pretty simple, but watch.

(BIZ plays Chris Brown's "She Ain't You" as he talks over the music.)

Everyone knows this song, right?

JUNE

"She Ain't You."

BIZ

You can heighten people's expectations if you can change it up a little...

(He selects another record, SWV's "Right Here", from the crates, cues it and blends it into "She Ain't You." He cuts over to the intro "Right Here", getting into his element. He selects another record, "Human Nature" by Michael Jackson, from the crates and cues it.)

JUNE

(Trying to think of the song)

Oh! This is...

(JUNE watches intently as BIZ cuts to "Human Nature" from "Right Here". He's in the zone. He looks up, realizing he hasn't been describing what he's doing.)

BIZ

So, I don't know, something like that I guess...

JUNE

I get it. You're kinda hoping from song to song.

BIZ

Yeah. Sometimes it's just blending together something you think sounds cool with something else. But you do it right, you can make some haters love disco or whatever they thought they hated. Even if there's no other lyrics to the song than "I Feel Love".

(Pause.)

You wanna try mixing? Just pick two records. It doesn't matter what they are.

(JUNE makes a "yeah, right" face and selects two records. She plays one and cues the other up. She tries beat-matching, but the records aren't quite synched. She cuts the sound out before you can really even hear the blend.)

JUNE

Ugh! This is so frustrating.

BIZ

Just try it again.

(She rewinds to the beginning of the song and tries again. Still not working. Still cutting off before it's loud enough to hear. She turns off the turntables on the beat.)

BIZ

Well... it's not that bad...

JUNE

Biz...

BIZ

Well, it sounded like you had it for a second. Just play it all through the monitor.

(JUNE shows him what she's doing. She turns on both turntables and plays the first record.)

JUNE

So I got this track, right?

(She cues up the second track to the beginning of the song. She moves the crossfader to the middle so we can hear both songs as she mixes in the second track with the first. They are synched at first.)

JUNE

And then I want to mix in this one.

BIZ

Oh, that's tight!

JUNE

Right? But, so here's what I've been doing...

(As the songs play together, JUNE adjusts the levels.)

JUNE

Right after this part, I've been mixing it in gradually, but then the beats start getting muddy.

(The songs lose their synchronicity. JUNE moves the crossfader to the second track and lets it play.)

BIZ

Right... Well, the problem's with the songs. One speeds up while the other stays the same. See, it's actually progressively changing tempo during the song. Let me see that.

(JUNE hands him the sleeve for the second record. BIZ reads it intently.)

BIZ

This band has a real drummer. It's not electronically created like the other one. The beat's created digitally. Doesn't matter how great a drummer you are, it's never gonna be as precise as a computer. You gotta pitch adjust as the songs play against each other. That's gonna be pretty hard. You gotta sorta chase the beat of first one, by speeding up this and slowing down that. Good luck with that.

JUNE

Oh...

(BIZ continues to look at the record she selected. JUNE watches.)

BIZ

This is one of Pat's favorite songs... You know Pat? My friend that's a DJ?

JUNE

Oh, yeah. We met the other night.

BIZ

Mmm.

(half-laughs.)

Yeah, Pat... he's always chattin up girls at the shows. It's like dude, can't you calm that shit down every now and again?

JUNE

(Laughs.)

Maybe the girls he talks to like it.

BIZ

They do?

JUNE

Well, I don't know... not every girl, but some girls like that type of thing.

BIZ

Huh.

(beat.)

Yeah, I'm not good with that. You know, talking with girls.

JUNE

What do you think this is?

BIZ

No, I know. But it's usually not like this... You're different.

(JUNE shrugs.)

Like you kinda just go after shit. You're not all aggressive, but you know what you want.

JUNE

Yeah, I guess... Not always.

(beat.)

So, I was thinking about making this mix...

BIZ

Yeah, whachyu gonna put on it? Make it like a funk mix or something?

JUNE

Maybe some soul too. A little R & B. A little hip hop.

BIZ

B. Jwanouskos

It's All in the Mix

Sounds nice... I'd like to hear that.

JUNE

Well, maybe I'll make one for you.

BIZ

For me?

JUNE

(flirting)

Yeah, introduce you to all this music you don't know about.

BIZ

(laughs.)

We'll see about that.

(pause. JUNE gathers her things to leave.)

Hey, you coming to our party later tonight?

JUNE

Of course. I'll see you then.

(JUNE exits.)

BIZ

Yeah, see you.

SCENE SIX

(Later at a house party in the city. Dusk, just a bit of light left from a sun that's set. BIZ and PAT set up the DJ booth.)

PAT

Party's gonna be big tonight. We gotta be on it.

BIZ

I know.

PAT

(curious)

That girl coming? "June Bug"?

BIZ

She might.

(beat.)

Why?

PAT

Just curious.

BIZ

This should be set now. Turn on the sound.

(PAT flicks some switches and plays a classic hip hop track, like Warren G, on the turntables. BIZ smiles. PAT and BIZ nod their heads to the music.)

PAT

Man... tonight's gonna be tight. I can tell.

(He takes a deep breath in.)

Can't you feel it?

BIZ

(Chuckles, shaking his head.)

I guess so.

(PAT grabs BIZ's shoulders and shakes them.)

PAT

I'm telling you!

BIZ

(Shrugs PAT off)

Okay, okay... I got you.

PAT

It's like you play the right song to begin with, and everything else just sets itself into motion. I'm telling you. And I played the right song tonight. This is gonna be a good night, Biz. Trust me on that. Because this song is dope. Tonight's gonna be dope. You gonna challenge that?

BIZ

(Nodding along to the music)

The song is dope.

PAT

You take a song like this and you open doors with it. I'm telling you.

BIZ

You say so.

PAT

I do say so. I can feel it in my blood. And if I can feel it, they're gonna feel it to. How can you not feel the electricity of tonight? And what do you think it's like to be the first person here, listening to this shit.

(Like a fast-forward through time, JUNE enters the party. Looking around and listening to the music pumping sound from the speakers. People dancing, talking, laughing, drinking.)

PAT

Everyone here coming for a good time. Coming expecting something to happen. Like at any moment it will, so you gotta keep on your toes for it. That moment. You know, when it all comes together and you realize something's happening around you. With you. It's not just you there at this party, listening to these two dudes play music. It's you, there for some purpose that's about to happen.

BIZ

Man, you're fuckin' trippin' again.

PAT

Hey... I'm telling you, it's gonna happen. You watch, Biz.

(He puts his arm around BIZ's shoulder.)

Maybe you'll get laid tonight.

(BIZ pushes his arm off. PAT starts laughing.)

BIZ

Pssh.

(Fast-forward: later in the night at the house party. PAT is spinning. Dance music playing loudly. The party's in full swing. BIZ is leaning against the wall, watching the crowd, drinking a beer. Looking out of place, in his own world. JUNE enters and watches BIZ, then taps his shoulder.)

BIZ

Oh! Hey. You just get here?

JUNE

Uh, no, I got here about an hour ago. You were spinning. Didn't you see me out there dancing?

BIZ

Oh...Yeah, I did.

JUNE

You don't really dance do you?

(BIZ shrugs. An awkward pause. BIZ sips his beer. JUNE clears her throat. She leans against the wall, next to him. BIZ notices. They look out at the crowd, listening to the music.)

JUNE

So...uh, you played a good set...

BIZ

Thanks...I wanted to mix some funk tonight... Bootsy Collins

JUNE

Yeah! I heard it.

(Sings like Bootsy)

"I'd rather be with you-oo, yeah, I'd rath-er be with you..."

(BIZ laughs.)

JUNE

That song rocks. I love Bootsy.

BIZ

Bootsy Collins' is the shit. 'member you said you liked that at the store...

(beat.)

You having fun?

JUNE

Yeah...I am... I just-

BIZ

What?

JUNE

You ever feel like you don't know where to put yourself?

BIZ

What do you mean?

JUNE

Well, like you're standing there watching the action, but not really part of it?

(beat.)

I don't know, maybe I'm crazy. Forget it-

BIZ
(Interrupts.)

No, I get that. I get that all the time, actually.

(beat.)

For the record, you're not crazy.

(JUNE smiles. BIZ smiles back. He takes a sip of his beer, then hands it to her. JUNE takes it and drinks.)

JUNE

Which record?

BIZ

Huh?

JUNE

You said, "For the record", which one do I get? For not being crazy.

(JUNE takes another sip of the beer, then hands it back to BIZ.)

BIZ
(Smiles)

Oh, uh...I don't know. Which one do you want?

(BIZ takes a sip of the beer.)

JUNE

Hmm...

(JUNE thinks.)

Bootsy of course.

BIZ

Not Bootsy!

(He laughs.)

BIZ

Well, if you want it, it's yours.

(BIZ hands her the beer and kneels down next to his records and searches for the Bootsy Collins single.)

JUNE

You're gonna give your Bootsy Collins record.

BIZ

Yeah, why not?

JUNE

Well, I was just kidding, I didn't mean-

BIZ

(Interrupts)

No, no. I want you to have it.

(BIZ finds the record and gives it to her.)

BIZ

What can I say...maybe I would "rather be with you."

(He laughs awkwardly. She does too. They both look down/away.)

JUNE

(Smiles.)

Oh.

(beat.)

Thanks.

(JUNE takes another sip of beer. BIZ and JUNE watch the crowd, listening to the music.)

BIZ

Hey, uh... do you want to do me a favor?

JUNE

Sure, what?

BIZ

Ah nothing never mind...

JUNE

No, what is it?

BIZ

There's this DJ battle at the end of the month. For a resident spot. We're gonna go for it, me and Pat. We're trying to build up this crowd, you know, so we got supporters there too, so they can see that people want to come and see us.

JUNE

Yeah, that makes sense. You guys are good.

BIZ

I mean, it's really cool that you've been coming out here, to these things. I'm not-

JUNE

What?

BIZ

I'm just not so great at talking to people, as you can tell.

JUNE

Nah... you're fine...

BIZ

Anyways, you want to help us promote our shows? Be like our promoter?

JUNE

You want me to do that?

BIZ

Yeah, you... have a way with people. Like you're pretty easy to talk to. Pat, he, well, I don't know. He thinks he's all that but he's kind of a-

JUNE

Loud mouth?

BIZ

Right. You said it.

(Pause.)

So, you wanna help us then?

JUNE

Yeah, of course.

BIZ

Man, that is great. This is really cool of you.

(BIZ reaches into the record crates and takes a whole stack of fliers out and gives them to JUNE. She looks at one.)

JUNE

Yeah, it's no problem. I mean, you just give out fliers and stuff, right?

BIZ

Yeah, get people to come out. Get them excited about us.

JUNE

Should be simple enough.

BIZ

Thank you.

JUNE

It's really no problem. I'm good at this, you know?

BIZ

Yeah?

JUNE

Sure, maybe you can out DJ me, but I could out flier you.

BIZ

(Grins)

You're probably right.

(Track that's been playing mixes with the next and on beat cuts over to the new song.)

SCENE SEVEN

(Later in the night. BIZ is spinning. JUNE watches, dancing to the music, letting it take hold of her. BIZ looks up, watching her. She sees him and smiles. BIZ smiles back and adjusts level – makes the sound warmer. PAT dances nearby JUNE. He holds a drink, listens to JUNE from afar.)

JUNE

(To an unseen party-goer)

Yeah, this DJ? He is great. Just the music he picks is spot on. Who else brings E-40 and Sylvia Striplin all under one roof? Yeah, you heard that Warren G they started off with? It brought me so back. Back to middle school dances and shit. Yeah, he's local. Him, and this other guy, the other DJ, Pat. The one playing before. They play around here all the time. You should check it out. Take this.

(JUNE hands out a flier. PAT approaches.)

JUNE
(to herself)

Easy.

PAT
(to himself)

Yeah, easy...

(BIZ cuts between tracks, priming the next song. Shouts of "OHHHH!" from the crowd.)

PAT
You needa be somewhere, June?

JUNE
No, Pat.

PAT
Why don't you stick around then? Take a break.

(PAT indicates sitting at a table nearby. They sit. He offers her some of his drink. She refuses. He takes a sip. BIZ looks up from the DJ booth and notices PAT sitting with JUNE. He mixes in a new song – one with a familiar intro/beat. The crowd cheers.)

PAT
So, Biz teaching you to be a DJ superstar or something?

JUNE
Yeah...So? It's like everyone is so surprised by this.

PAT
(sitting back, observing)
Uh huh... I'm not denying that there aren't girls out there that really dig music. Really get into a certain band or singer and play it over and over and over again. But DJing... see, the whole reason you do it is to get people dancing. Get girls dancing. It's that connection you have with people. The connection with the songs. You're connecting the songs together, you see? Now, whenever I've seen a chick DJ, it ain't like she's bad, per say, it's just... well, how do I put it... People don't want to look up and see a woman behind the decks. They just don't.

JUNE
You think people care that much?

PAT

Look, if the girl's up there. The guys are all looking at her thinking "This chick don't know shit" and at the same time, they probably want to fuck her. It's a catch 22.

JUNE

Okay.

PAT

Hey, I'm being honest. And the women? They're listening and judging her and secretly maybe they're jealous, but they're like "Fuck this bitch, she don't know shit" too. See what I'm saying? Girl DJs...they fuck up the flow. Fuck up the natural order of things.

JUNE

Natural order? It's like you're saying girls don't have the DJ gene or something.

(PAT shrugs. JUNE stands to leave. PAT grabs onto her arm.)

PAT

Hey, wait. Could you hold on a second? I didn't mean it like that.

JUNE

You gonna give me my arm back?

PAT

Please, just sit down. I'm sorry.

(JUNE sits down.)

Look, I'm trying to help you out. I mean, this shit isn't easy. I'm not going to lie to you. And I for one, am not gonna make this easier for you-

JUNE

Here we go.

PAT

You're different. I get that. Not everyone one's gonna see that. You ever see a girl up there DJing?

(No response.)

Well, have you?

JUNE

No.

PAT

I have. Most of the time she's just using whatever she's got physically to make her presence known. But she don't mix well and her choices in music are obvious. I'm not trying to sugar-coat it for you, here. That's just how it is. This is what you're getting into.

JUNE

Who's to say I don't got something more than that?

PAT

Listen... it's gonna take more than just a love for music to be a good DJ. When I started out playing all I had was three records, one turntable and a mixer. All I did was just scratch all day. That's all I did. One turntable. Scratch. What I learned is that with enough money, anyone can be a DJ. You go out there, buy yourself a phat set-up. You buy a shitload of records not paying attention to price. Some pricey headphones. The best shit money can buy. And apparently, you're a DJ. Everyone's a DJ these days. And the real DJ? He's dead and buried. Gone like the professions of another time. Remember the milk man? Of course not. Who the fuck ever seen a milk man? Not me. But that's what I am. A milk man DJ relic.

JUNE

There's a lot of people out there that care about the mixes DJs make.

PAT

And becoming DJs.

(JUNE shrugs. PAT takes a sip from his drink and sits back, watching BIZ mix in the next song.)

JUNE

Let me ask you something, Pat. If you know everything about being a DJ and who's supposed to be good at it or whatever, then what about when you started? You tryin' to tell me that you never had to prove yourself to everyone else?

PAT

(Sighs)

That's exactly what I'm sayin', girl. I mean, you act like you can just walk into a record store, wander around like you know the place, pick out a couple obscure records and that you're all ready. It's not like that, you see-

JUNE

(Interrupts)

You're trying to tell me I can't do it.

PAT

(Shrugs)

You ain't the first.

JUNE

Not trying to be the first, or the best. I just like it is all.

PAT

Fair enough.

(PAT takes out a cigarette and plays with it. He watches JUNE nodding to the song BIZ's playing, looking at BIZ spinning.)

PAT

You know...my man Biz doesn't just "get" with girls.

JUNE

(Scoffs)

Oh yeah? I'd love to hear where this is going. Why's that you think? He like a DJ priest or something. Took a vow of celibacy? Or – god forbid – is he gay?

PAT

No, see, Biz just never hooks up with girls. And I can't figure that shit out. I mean, if all these fine ass girls are coming up giving us their numbers and shit every time we spin. All these women acting like we're the answer. Why isn't he gonna hit that?

JUNE

And you do.

PAT

Hey man, pussy's pussy.

(Beat. He puts the cigarette in his mouth.)

Sorry, didn't mean to "offend" you.

(JUNE shakes her head. PAT takes a lighter out of his pocket.)

PAT

I got this theory about it – why Biz never goes out with girls.

(PAT flicks his lighter on and off.)

JUNE

'Course you do.

PAT

Get ready, honey, this is gonna be good.

JUNE

Break it down, Pat.

(PAT removes the cigarette from his mouth, using it to make his point.)

PAT

See by rejecting the girls who approach him, he saves himself the rejection he might face later.

JUNE

That's deep.

PAT

Fuck you.

JUNE

No really, I mean compared to your exploits with women he must seem pretty asexual.

PAT

Hey, I'm a man, I have needs. You gotta act according to those needs sometimes.

JUNE

Not like us women.

PAT

Men are different.

(beat.)

Even Biz acts upon his needs. You haven't noticed that? Well, I have.

JUNE

Oh yeah?

PAT

And I like his approach too. I think it's pretty clever. Not what I'd do, but to each his own. Funny little game he has when he gets interested in someone, he gets close to her under the pretense that he's teaching her. Gets to spend all this time with her showing her the ropes. Making he see him as the big man with all the answers. And to her, maybe he does.

(PAT twirls the cigarette in his fingers, watching for JUNE's reaction. BIZ looks up, watching PAT and JUNE interact.)

JUNE

I'm not sure you what you want me to say.

PAT

You don't need to say anything, hon. I know all about it.

JUNE

You do, huh? You're the expert on women around here.

PAT

I don't claim to be an expert at anything.

JUNE

Huh. Well, that's funny, Pat, cuz I don't either.

(JUNE exits. The music cuts to a new song.)

SCENE EIGHT

(Later at the party. Well after midnight. Party's getting rowdy and breaking up at the same time. BIZ leans on the wall next to the DJ booth. PAT approaches BIZ near the DJ booth.)

PAT

'sup. My turn?

BIZ

Nah, man, it's still Eddy. You got like another hour or something.

PAT

Fuck, man... Really? Eddy?

BIZ

(Shrugs)

It's his house.

(beat.)

You're the one who wanted him to be the third member of our crew for this DJ battle.

(beat.)

He better not fuck up my needles.

(beat)

This party sucks, man. I wanna get out of here.

PAT

Shiiiiit, man! I got this new single gonna kill it.

BIZ

If you mean make the party die, then you're right, fool.

PAT

Whatever, nobody like your old school shit anyway. They'll just be happy to hear something made in this decade is all.

BIZ

Everybody like my old school shit. Don't even front. I saw you out there dancing.

PAT

Pssh. Whatever. Pat don't dance.

BIZ

Yeah he do.

PAT

Then he must have moves.

(PAT does a dance move. The two laugh.)

BIZ

You're stupid.

(beat.)

Say, uh...speaking of dancing, you seen, June?

PAT

One from the shop tryina talk about being a DJ...?

BIZ

Yeah, man, June. You know who she is. Wasn't she just over here talking to you? I got her to promote our shit, so you better play nice.

PAT

Oh, yeah...I was talking to her a second ago.

(PAT takes out a cigarette and fiddles with it.)

BIZ

(Nonchalant)

Oh, yeah? What she have say?

PAT

Nothing much. She left.

(BIZ glares. PAT tries to ignore BIZ, puts the cigarette in his mouth and fiddles with the lighter.)

BIZ

What'd you do?

PAT

(Feeling BIZ's glare.)

What, man? It's not always me. Some girls are just too sensitive. You know how it is.

(BIZ shakes his head and looks away. PAT watches BIZ. BIZ feels his stare.)

BIZ

What?

PAT

You can't act all nonchalant around me. Known you too long for that shit to have any effect.

(beat.)

What's up with you and your girl anyway? She's always at the shop. She's at our shows and parties too. And now she's promoting our shit. She your new little cheerleader groupie lollypop or something?

BIZ

(Shrugs)

She just likes music. She knows her shit. But she's just a friend. What?

(PAT makes a "yeah, right" face and places the cigarette behind his ear.)

PAT

Damn, you really need to get laid. You're too serious about this shit. You're over here getting hella girls coming up to you like every night and you're trippin'! I don't know why you do this to yourself. Girls who are friends are not off limits.

BIZ

Just forget it. You wouldn't understand. You don't even have any girls that are friends. Fuck man, sometimes I think you'd fuck anything that moves.

PAT

Not rocket science, Biz. Just girls. I'm just saying I coulda had her by now.

BIZ

(Tense laugh.)

What's that supposed to mean?

PAT

Just sayin', dude. She was chatting me up just a second ago. Didn't you see that? I just wasn't sure of your guys' deal is all. You know... thought I'd double-check. But it's cool. I know you're into her. So, I'll back off. This one's all yours.

(BIZ is silent.)

PAT

Damn, you're a sensitive muthafucka. Hey, I'm just joking.

(PAT puts his hand on BIZ's shoulder.)

Listen though; it's all this energy thrown at you like you're a god. You ever feel like it's a front? I mean what's the difference between her and all the girls over there by Eddy. You see them? They don't really care what he's playing. The guy is shit! It's the fact that he's over there behind the turntables playing music. It's a thing they have sometimes. Doesn't make any difference if you consider her a friend.

BIZ

She seems genuine. I don't think that's what she's about.

PAT

"Seems" being the key word there-

BIZ

(Annoyed, trying to change the subject)

All right.

PAT

I mean, it's whatever. You want to cupcake with your girl. It's cool, man. Do whatever. She just seems a little weird to me is all.

(beat.)

But anyway, you heard about our thing Sunday? Gonna be dope. Lotta buzz for it. We're getting names for ourselves, I'm telling you. We just need to stick with it, you know. Fuck girls! They're like anchors, man. Weigh you down. Keep shit stagnant. We need to continue to move forward to get where we want to be, out of this mess with DJ gigs that pay for shit. Fuck working in the store. Fuck deliveries. This is a whole new level.

BIZ

I don't know, man.

PAT

Just trust me. We do this, we're on our way. And you know that DJ battle happening in a couple months? We're gonna set ourselves up. Get something that sets us apart, you know.

That's really what's missing. We need something that's gonna stick in people's heads. Think on it.

BIZ

I will.

(Crossfade.)

SCENE NINE

(Out at a packed club, a couple weeks later. JUNE hands out fliers to people. BIZ is spinning, about ready to hand it off to another DJ. PAT stands nearby, talking with BIZ.)

PAT

It's getting to be big. It's getting there, Biz. Exactly what I was telling you about.

BIZ

I have to admit you're right. I mean this is big. We could have a shot at this resident spot.

PAT

Of course we do. Come on, man, I told you this would work. I told you I knew what I was doing.

BIZ

Hey, but you have to admit, she's good. She's getting tons of people out here.

PAT

Yeah, she's all right.

BIZ

Come on, she's good.

(PAT does a "so-so" motion with his hand. JUNE walks up.)

JUNE

Hey! I think I'm almost out of these.

PAT

We have more.

(He hands her another stack and joins people on the dance floor, dancing. JUNE's getting into the music too.)

JUNE

Oh, okay... well, I think I was just gonna chill for a bit. Maybe dance. You... wanna join me?

BIZ

Uh...

PAT

Come on, Biz. Celebrate. This is the three of us doing things.

BIZ

Yeah... okay.

(BIZ joins in. BIZ and JUNE dance together at first, connected. PAT does some sort of silly move to get JUNE dancing with him. She laughs and gets more into the music. BIZ watches JUNE dance with PAT, then leaves. PAT dances closer to JUNE. JUNE notices BIZ isn't there anymore and stops dancing.)

JUNE

Where'd he go?

PAT

He always does that. Don't worry about him. Sometimes he just likes to be by himself.

JUNE

I'm gonna find him.

PAT

Just leave him be. He gets this way. Trust me.

JUNE

You don't think he's mad?

PAT

About what? Us dancing? We can dance. We're friends.

JUNE

Yeah...

PAT

I mean there's nothing wrong with being friends who dance, is there?

JUNE

No, I guess not.

(PAT does an exaggerated dance move. She laughs and starts dancing again. Progressively during the next conversation, PAT dances closer and closer to JUNE to the point of discomfort.)

PAT

I think it's pretty cool that you're helping us.

JUNE

Yeah?

PAT

You gotta way of going up to someone and flashing them a look. Like there's some kind of mystery you've got going on behind your eyes.

JUNE

(Laughs.)

Pat, does this really actually work with girls?

PAT

What are you talking about? I'm telling you the truth.

JUNE

Right...

PAT

You don't believe me?

JUNE

Well...

PAT

I'm just noticing the way you are. You draw people in, they can't help but want to get to know you more.

JUNE

Oh, I don't know about that...

PAT

I do. So what's this secret you got?

(He holds JUNE while they continue to dance. She tries to feel comfortable with this for a second, but clearly doesn't. She pushes away.)

JUNE

Uh... I gotta go.

(JUNE walks off the dance floor to look for BIZ. PAT stops dancing, watching her leave. He shakes his head, laughing to himself, and starts getting back into the music. Music fades to low.)

SCENE TEN

(About twenty minutes later. Outside the club, an alley. BIZ leans against the wall. Distorted sound and muffled bass echo from the club. JUNE enters.)

JUNE

Hey! Biz?

(BIZ doesn't answer. JUNE fake-laughs.)

I was looking for you for like twenty minutes.

(pause.)

You were out here the whole time?

BIZ

This DJ fucking sucks. I don't know why Pat always wants to bring him in to do shit with us.

JUNE

Maybe you should look for another one.

BIZ

What are you doing out here?

JUNE

I could use a break. Just thought I'd-

BIZ

Looked like you were having a good time.

(BIZ doesn't look at her. JUNE watches him, a bit hurt.)

JUNE

I mean, we were all just having fun, right? Just getting into the music a little. Dancing. That's what you do at a club, Biz. You dance, talk to people, have fun. Maybe talk with a girl you like.

(BIZ starts to walk away. JUNE follows.)

So, I don't get what your deal is. You're the one controlling the whole atmosphere in there when you're DJing. It's this social function, but you don't even socialize... There's nothing going on between me and Pat-

BIZ

(Stops in his tracks. Yells.)

I know!

(beat. Quieter.)

I know, okay? I don't need anyone to- You don't need to say anything to me about it. He's my friend. I know how he is. Who he is.

(BIZ sighs. He leans back on the wall. Silence.)

JUNE

Well... can I help?

BIZ

(sad laugh.)

No, you can't... This is just how it is. This is just how I am. I- Just- Just stop prying.

(BIZ walks off. JUNE watches him go. The music goes out.)

END OF ACT ONE.

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

(A week later. At lights up, JUNE is making a mixtape. Records all over the place. She experiments with different songs. We hear snippets of love songs like William Bell's "I Forgot to Be Your Lover", Roberta Flack and Donny Hathaway's "Closer I Get to You", ending with a "Light" by Common - including the Bobby Caldwell sample within in the song).

JUNE

A mix starts out like anything else. It's this story, see: a beginning, middle, and end. And you gotta know where to place each song. That's important. They flow from one to the other and make the overall mix convey this message. It's whatever you want it to say. It can be about love or heartbreak. It can be about telling the truth, and how hard that is. It can be about you, how you feel. And a truly good DJ knows how to do this seamlessly, while also keeping people on

their toes. You do this right, and you can make some haters love disco – or whatever they thought they hated.

See, finding the perfect song is like finding the perfect thing to say. You give someone this mix and it's like you're describing in detail everything that's in your heart. I wish I could do that, but I get there and I look at his face and I can't say anything. I can only feel what's right and what isn't working. I don't know how he feels, but he must enjoy my company, right? Or else why'd he be showing me all this stuff all the time?

Mixing – creating this message, this letter, I play what I truly feel. Maybe that's more important. To be clear about where you're coming from rather than trying to guess at what someone else is thinking or how they feel about you. Because this, what's happening between us, it's not something you can just tell another person just like that. It's not this thing that you can put in words so easily. Up here though, I go from the Isley Brothers to Otis Redding. I go from Jennifer Lara to Desmond Decker. I search across the universe looking for the perfect song with the perfect feel that says exactly what I've been dying to say.

(JUNE takes the finished mixtape, puts it in her bag and heads out the door.)

SCENE TWO

(Midday at the record store. JUNE flips through records and takes out one every so often to check it for scratches. BIZ prices new arrivals at the counter. He looks over at her. She looks up. He looks back at his work. A lingering silence. BIZ looks up at her again.)

So...	BIZ
So.	JUNE
	<i>(BIZ sets down the pricing gun to look for a record over near JUNE.)</i>
What're you feelin' today?	BIZ
Huh?	JUNE
What you wanna listen to?	BIZ

JUNE

Oh... I don't care. Put on whatever you want.

BIZ

Okay...

(BIZ continues to search for something. He stands next to JUNE and leans over, plucking out a record in front of her.)

BIZ

Excuse me.

(JUNE looks up. BIZ smiles. He walks over to the turntables and cues up the record on the turntables and plays "Can't Stand the Rain" by Ann Peebles. JUNE and BIZ listen to the record for a second. BIZ watches JUNE for a reaction.)

BIZ

You feelin' it? I know, I know... Ann Peebles.

(beat.)

She's got some presence, y'know?

(beat.)

Like you can tell she's been through some shit?

(JUNE stops to listen to the music.)

JUNE

This is what you're into these days?

BIZ

Nah...just today. I just thought of this song. I knew I'd have to play it at some point during the day. I mean, really, I'm probably gonna have to play this song a couple more times before I feel past it. And that's the thing too cuz I could be playing this for weeks. Or months. Finding a way to work it into every mixtape, every time I play a club or party... Cuz if I got really obsessed with it, I'd be trying to figure out a way to work it into everything I do. I'd be with my boys like "Ann Peebles is the shit!" Just claiming it, I'd know that's it. That feeling. The song. It'd be me by then. My motto for life, "I can't stand the rain."

(beat.)

Then one day I'd realize I haven't played that song in a year. And I'd be right back down that path again. Listening, repeating day by day, remembering the time I was all about Ann Peebles.

JUNE

That sounds frustrating.

B. Jwanouskos

It's All in the Mix

BIZ

No...not really...More comforting actually.

JUNE

I could see that.

(JUNE and BIZ listen to the song.)

BIZ

Listen, about the other night...

JUNE

(Interrupts)

I wanted to give this to you.

(JUNE hands him a mix CD.)

BIZ

A mixtape?

JUNE

It's not great...I mean the beatmatching. The transitions... there's a couple hiccups here and there, but I started playing this song the other day and thought you'd really dig it. And then that made me think of this other track and another and so on...before I know it, I had this whole mix going on.

(beat.)

Anyway, you gotta hear this track.

(JUNE plays the mix starting with "It Ain't Whatcha Got" by Jimmy McGriff and Junior Parker.)

BIZ

That's actually really dope.

JUNE

"Actually?" Thanks for the vote of confidence, Biz.

BIZ

No, I just – well, you know...you're just getting into this stuff. I'm just surprised is all.

JUNE

"Surprised?"

BIZ

Fine, impressed. Impressed that you're getting really good diggin' for gems.

JUNE

"Diggin' through the crates of my soul to find clarity" like Common says.

(They laugh at the recognition that they both know what each other is talking about. The mix CD transitions to a new track. JUNE hesitates, gauging BIZ's reaction. BIZ listens to the transition.)

BIZ

You're getting pretty good, June. Seriously. You should think about making a DJ mix to pass onto promoters and club owners. You're ready to do all that.

JUNE

Really?

BIZ

Well, you want to, right? I mean, be a DJ?

(beat.)

That's why you're here all the time, isn't it? That's why you're helping us promote?

(JUNE shrugs.)

JUNE

So, when do I get my mix?

BIZ

Huh?

JUNE

Well, aren't you gonna return the favor? That mix you gave me before was just your promo CD, you said so yourself. I made this for you. Now, you owe me.

BIZ

Uh...yeah...I guess I do, huh?

JUNE

That's right, and it better not be some crap either.

BIZ

No, no, I'll make something you like. Trust me.

PAT
(offstage)

Yo, Biz, check it out, man! I just entered us in the DJ battle next week.

(PAT comes rushing in. JUNE and BIZ break their gaze.)

JUNE

I better get going.

BIZ

Hey, June, you wanna spin tomorrow?

JUNE/PAT

What?

BIZ

Well, I was thinking she could take over for Eddy.

PAT

Are you serious?

BIZ

I mean, that's cool, right? He was supposed to go on at nine. No one comes out that early anyway.

(To JUNE)

You don't mind do you?

JUNE

Are you kidding? Of course! That would be really cool. Man, I gotta go practice!

BIZ

I'll call you.

JUNE

Yeah? Okay, great!

(JUNE exits. PAT glares at BIZ.)

BIZ

What?

PAT

Nothing.

BIZ

Awh, c'mon. Eddy's not going to be there. Plus he sucks anyway. That slot's always a bitch to fill.

PAT

(laughs.)

Well, you're right about that.

(beat.)

BIZ

You were talking about a draw the other day. So, here it is.

PAT

Right, June's the draw. Are you out of your mind? She's barely knows what she's doing.

BIZ

But she has good taste. You can't deny that. And just listen a sec to this mix.

(BIZ turns up the music. He and PAT listen to JUNE's mix.)

PAT

That's her.

BIZ

Yeah, man, that's her. That's what I'm trying to tell you. She's ready.

(PAT shakes his head.)

PAT

What about you?

(beat.)

Forget it. Okay, fine, but she fucks this up? It's on you.

(beat.)

Hey man, wasn't June looking for a new mixer? I think gonna sell that mixer you gave me a while back. That cool with you? I mean I appreciate the work you did on it. Used to sound like shit.

BIZ

Oh...yeah, sure... you need money or something?

PAT

You know.

(pause.)

She mentioned something the other day about having a shitty Numark. This'll be better.

BIZ

Uh... yeah, I mean, she'd probably dig it.

(Pause.)

PAT

So... you got her number?

BIZ

Well, I...

PAT

(PAT smirks.)

Never mind. I'll get it.

(PAT walks out. BIZ watches him go, listening to June's mix. He looks at the stereo system then stops the CD. Pulling out records from the stacks, getting ready to make his own mix.)

SCENE THREE

(In front of the record store, the next morning. PAT dressed in his delivery uniform with a mixer in his hands. JUNE follows.)

JUNE

So, you don't want it anymore?

PAT

Well, I don't really need it now that I got the new one. Knew you were getting into DJ stuff. When I came up other DJs would hook me up with their old shit. So, here you go. I'll sell it for a hundred.

JUNE

Nice...that's really cool of you, Pat. Thank you.

(PAT nods uncomfortably. JUNE hands him the cash.)

PAT

So, you're pretty serious about this, then?

JUNE

Yeah...I was supposed to use this for trying to pay down student loans...but, you know, sometimes you can't pass up an opportunity that presents itself.

PAT

Yeah. You're right about that.

JUNE

So, I guess you're pretty excited for tomorrow, huh? Your night's coming together.

PAT

(Sighs.)

Yeah, not really like I thought it would, but whatever. It'll be fine.

JUNE

Yeah...so, I mean, I don't have to spin if you don't want-

PAT

Nah, it's cool. It'll be pretty light then.

JUNE

Anyway, I appreciate it. I think it will be really cool to finally spin somewhere.

PAT

You know what you're gonna play?

JUNE

I gotta think about it.

(BIZ approaches. PAT notices him coming and gives JUNE a hug.)

PAT

Cool, well, I guess I'll see you tomorrow.

JUNE

(surprised by the hug)

Oh, okay...

(PAT exits. BIZ unlocks the door to the store. JUNE approaches.)

BIZ

Hey.

JUNE

Oh, hey, Biz! Look what I got!

BIZ

Pat give you that?

JUNE

Yeah, wasn't that nice?

(JUNE holds it out. BIZ takes it and examines the mixer.)

BIZ

Yeah, nice... it's a good mixer. Vestax is pretty much the brand. The crossfader sort of sticks, but you won't really need to worry about that unless you plan on scratching.

(beat.)

Used to be mine.

JUNE

Yours? I thought-

BIZ

Yeah, I gave it to Pat once I got a new one. Nice to see its being passed onto someone else who'll put it to good use.

(BIZ hands her back the mixer and enters the store. He puts on a record and stares at it. JUNE approaches him.)

JUNE

Something wrong?

BIZ

Huh? No, nothing. Just thinking about what I'm going to play tomorrow.

(JUNE nods. She steps closer to him and puts her hand on his shoulder.)

JUNE

You'll be fine.

(Silence. A moment. BIZ stands. JUNE removes her hand.)

JUNE

I better go.

BIZ

Wait a sec.

(BIZ goes into the back. He emerges with a mix CD.)

Almost forgot.

(He hands her the mix.)

Your mix.

(JUNE takes it and looks at it.)

JUNE

Thank you.

BIZ

Let me know what you think.

JUNE

(Smiles.)

I will.

(JUNE exits the shop with the mixer and the mixtape. Cross-fade.)

SCENE FOUR

(JUNE's apartment later that night. She listens to BIZ's mix realizing that they're love songs. She moves closer to the speakers sitting next to them. She puts her head against the speaker feeling the music.)

(Crossfade.)

SCENE FIVE

(The next day at the club, just before nine PM. JUNE carries with a big shoulder bag full of records and her own headphones. BIZ is setting up the sound system.)

BIZ

You need help?

JUNE

I got it.

(JUNE puts down the crate and her bag. She pulls out her headphones and wears them around her neck. She starts to flip through her records, looking for the right record. BIZ watches her.)

BIZ

So, what are you gonna play?

JUNE

Uh- I don't know. Just some funk I guess. It's early enough, people aren't really gonna be dancing yet.

BIZ

Yeah, but you want to build the energy up for us, right?

JUNE

Yeah, I got it covered.

BIZ

Okay...

(pause.)

I got this Fatback band record you could borrow. I'm probably not gonna play it in my set.

JUNE

I brought a bunch of things.

BIZ

It'll be cool. Trust me people won't even be listening most likely.

JUNE

Thanks.

BIZ

No, I mean, it's like what you said, there just chillin' until-

JUNE

The "real" DJs start spinning?

BIZ

No... fuck... I was just trying to- Forget it.

(Silence.)

BIZ

Good luck.

(He walks off. JUNE is alone with the turntables. She flips through a stack of records, taking some out and moving them to the beginning of the stack. Unsure of what to play and then finding the exact right record. A series of scratches and samples. Sounds echo and the lights flicker on JUNE.)

SCENE SIX

(The club, later that night nearing the end of JUNE's set. BIZ sits in the back room of the bar listening to the music. PAT enters from the main club area. He takes out ear plugs.)

PAT

Fuck, man... Loud in there.

BIZ

Well? Did she mess up or something?

PAT

I don't know that it was that great. She's playing this Orlando Julius track now. There was no one around except the bartender and one or two people at the bar. So, I mean, she was pretty much all alone. She plays some Sly Stone and four more people come in. They were into it, I guess. Things start getting more rowdy at the bar. I will admit she was into a bit of a groove. She started playing this track – not sure what it was. Something I hadn't heard before... And then, I don't know what happened.

(The music becomes ambient sound as people dance in slow motion. PAT watches JUNE adjusts the equalizers and bright light emanates from her being. BIZ looks through the walls like he can hear her.)

PAT

But I swear as she cued up the next track, light radiated from her hands. Like she put everyone in a trance as we're just watching, dancing, believing in the message from the music.

(beat.)

If it weren't for these ear plugs, I would have gone deaf.

BIZ

What do you mean?

PAT

She was good. Real good.

Oh... BIZ

But you heard all that. PAT

Yeah, I did. BIZ

I think you might be onto something with her. PAT

What? BIZ

For the DJ battle. People would come all over to see that. I never thought I'd say this, but she's a tough act to follow. PAT
(beat.)
Anyway, you're next.

Oh, right... BIZ

(BIZ exits to the main bar area.)

SCENE SEVEN

(Later in the night, after BIZ's set. JUNE stands in the outside room, waiting. BIZ approaches her.)

Sounded good. BIZ

You too. JUNE

Yeah...I kinda fucked it up though. Played the wrong song. BIZ

(Silence.)

JUNE

I don't think anyone noticed. Wanna sit?

(They sit. BIZ nervously taps his foot. JUNE touches his leg. BIZ stops jittering.)

BIZ

Sorry. I- never mind.

JUNE

What?

BIZ

Nothing.

(Silence.)

BIZ

So, did you like being out there?

JUNE

Yeah... it was amazing. You know, you play all this music for people just thinking these are songs I'm into, and to have them dance it? To get into what you're playing, it's...kinda cool.

BIZ

It's fun to find a record and play it for people. Sometimes it's all I can do to wait for the chance I get to play something for someone.

JUNE

It kinda makes the find that much more special.

BIZ

Exactly.

(Pause, not necessarily awkward, but not exactly comfortable.)

BIZ

I like what you played. Shuggie Otis, "Island Letter"... that was a good pick – where you went with that.

JUNE

You think so? I feel like everyone has a theory about it – About how to create a good mixtape. Some people like the music to build and build, then bring it down. Others say you can't put more than one song of the same artist on the same mix-

BIZ

Unless it's a mix of songs all by the same artist.

(They laugh.)

Yeah, but you gotta say something with your mix. I mean, song selection is key, and yeah, the transitions, the tricks, they're important, but you don't got something to say, some feeling to build, then it's just a bunch of random songs together. Your mixtape was good, by the way. I really liked what you put on it.

JUNE

Well, it usually takes a long time. I put a lot of thought in it I guess. I guess I play it off like it doesn't, but usually, when I give mixes to folks, I may have made it like a month ago. When I make a really good mix, there's a part of me that kinda wants to keep it.

(beat.)

So if you know I owe you a mix, you should probably call me on it cuz more than likely. I still have it in my possession. In fact, I'm probably still listening to it. I have a mix for a friend of mine that has taken me three years to create. Three years.

(A moment.)

I didn't see you out there.

BIZ

I was listening out here.

JUNE

Why?

BIZ

I don't know... it's... I never know what to say to people, you know? Like if I'm up there, it's cool. Second I get down here, it's... I don't know. It's like I'm not that guy anymore. I could be anyone here.

JUNE

You could be here with me...

BIZ

(sheepish at first)

Sometimes it's better to be no one, not even around, then everyone else. You're someone else and they don't expect you to be that guy that's up there. It's just how it is, I guess.

JUNE

I don't believe that.

BIZ

You don't?

JUNE

I believe you can be whatever you want to be.

BIZ

I'd love to think that, but history proves me wrong.

JUNE

Maybe you just haven't gotten to the part of the story where something changes.

(Silence. A moment that lingers.)

BIZ

You didn't see anything?

JUNE

I saw everyone there having a good time. Dancing, you know. I felt really confident with everything I played. Like I had a message. Didn't you hear that?

BIZ

Yeah, I did.

JUNE

I don't understand-

BIZ

But how are you this good this fast, this able to say everything – to play everything how it sounds in your head and there it is out there for people, and you're playing it. I hear it, but why can't I watch you do it? Pat can and I can't?

JUNE

You heard me right?

BIZ

Yeah, I mean, I thought that the transitions were really good, you built it up so that it was-

JUNE

But what did you think, Biz? The songs I picked.

BIZ

I...really liked it, June. I really like you-

(JUNE leans in and kisses him. BIZ hesitates. JUNE opens her eyes. BIZ stands and steps back.)

BIZ

I'm sorry... I gotta go.

(BIZ leaves.)

SCENE NINE

(BIZ plays records inside the bar, concentrating intently on everything, as if trying to say something through the music he plays.)

(Simultaneously, outside the club, in the alley. JUNE sits on a bench alone with a beer in her hand. She's drunk. She stares off into space, as if given up. PAT enters and shakes out a cigarette. He looks over at her, a little surprised.)

JUNE

What?

PAT

What yourself.

(beat.)

Pssh...You're drunk.

(Silence. JUNE takes the last swig of beer and tosses it front of her. It shatters.)

JUNE

(Sarcastically)

Oops.

(beat. Referring to Pat's cigarettes.)

Can I have one?

(PAT shakes another cigarette out for her. Inside, BIZ throws in a sample into his mix.)

PAT

You're not spinning anymore?

(JUNE fiddles with the cigarette, doesn't respond. PAT lights his cigarette.)

PAT

Okay...so, what are you doing out here? I thought you'd be with your boy.

JUNE

You mean your boy?

(PAT rolls his eyes. BIZ scratches over the song.)

PAT

Here.

(He lights her cigarette.)

JUNE

You know what I hate?

PAT

What?

JUNE

People who try and be something they're not.

PAT

(laughs)

That's funny.

JUNE

What is.

PAT

Nothing. Go on.

(BIZ cues up the next track in his headphones, beatmatching. PAT and JUNE listen from outside.)

PAT

I guess Biz is in his element tonight.

(beat.)

You were too.

(JUNE doesn't respond. Her cigarette is all ash.)

PAT

Hey, June! You want to smoke that or put it out?

JUNE

Oh, sorry.

(JUNE puts out the cigarette.)

PAT

You hear what I said?

JUNE

No.

PAT

I said you were good out there.

JUNE

I know.

(beat.)

Thanks.

(beat.)

I don't need to get your approval by the way. I don't need anyone's approval to do this.

PAT

Didn't say you did. It's called a compliment.

JUNE

You act like it though. You all act like it. Like you're "letting" me DJ. "Let her play..."

(beat.)

You know, you're a fucking asshole, Pat.

(PAT shrugs. He sits next to JUNE on the bench and sighs. He puts out his cigarette and takes a flask from his pocket and takes a swig. JUNE looks over and smirks.)

JUNE

Give me that.

(JUNE grabs the flask and takes a drink.)

PAT

Whoa... you always take what you want?

JUNE

Don't you?

PAT

Sometimes.

(beat.)

Sometimes I don't have to. Sometimes it falls right in my lap.

JUNE

What do you do in that case?

PAT

What can you do if something just falls in your lap?

JUNE

You could put it back where it belongs.

PAT

What if it belongs with me?

(JUNE leans her head back on the building and closes her eyes, listening to the song BIZ plays. She puts PAT's flask up to her forehead. PAT watches her.)

PAT

What are you doing?

JUNE

My forehead's hot.

(Beat, she grabs his hand and puts it on her forehead.)

Feel.

PAT

Uh...yeah, pretty warm.

(PAT takes his hand back. JUNE opens her eyes. BIZ takes the record off the platter and puts it away. He looks for another song.)

JUNE

I said hot. Not "pretty warm." See, when a girl does that, what are you supposed to do?

PAT

Well...

JUNE

You know, you're just like Biz.

PAT

Pssh... right.

JUNE

Out here away from everything. All alone.

PAT

There's a lot of things you don't have to deal with when you're alone. Other people for one.

(beat.)

Besides, so are you.

JUNE

So, what's your deal?

PAT

I asked you first.

(beat. JUNE looks at him like "When?")

When I first came out here I asked you how you were doing and then you launch into "You're a fucking asshole, Pat."

(JUNE laughs.)

People paint this picture of me like I'm this bad guy, and I'm just trying to do my thing. I don't see what's wrong with that, but everyone else does. So, who's wrong, me or them?

JUNE

(Giggles)

You.

PAT

Uh... okay, Miss "June Bug". But you know, if anyone should be on my side, it should be you.

You should know what I'm talking about. And what it's like to deal with everyone else thinking you're trying to get something out of it.

JUNE

Is that what people think? That I'm trying to get something? That's what Biz thinks. Like I'm just using him, or-

PAT

Or maybe you just really like DJs.

(JUNE looks at PAT. BIZ finds the next track. He stands and tweaks the levels of the music.)

PAT

I don't know what Biz thinks. I've never understood that guy. We grew up together, you know. He stayed with me for a while... when things got bad for him. With his family, you know? We had this garage out in back where we set it up with all this sound equipment. We'd play music,

practice scratching, make mixes, make beats all night long. All the time. That's what we did. Came from nothing. Look at us now.

(beat.)

You don't know what that's like. To try so hard for something and always have it slip through your fingers.

JUNE

I know what that's like.

PAT

Yeah, whatever.

JUNE

Whatever yourself.

PAT

See the thing about Biz is... well, he plays every song like it counts for something. And you know, when you're told that you can't do that for so long, it doesn't matter what kind of drive you have to change a situation. It's not gonna happen. No matter what you do about it.

JUNE

Like a self-fulfilling prophecy.

(Silence. PAT looks over at her.)

PAT

Pssh... Why you even out here talking to me in the first place? You're usually Miss I'm-Too-Good-For-You.

JUNE

(JUNE looks back, concerned.)

I never said that.

PAT

Yeah, you act like it though...

JUNE

I think you're just used to things coming easy for you.

PAT

You tryina make it hard?

JUNE

(JUNE looks away.)

No, I just- I thought I was right about something, but I guess not. My first song was the last song on his mix. Song by Shuggie Otis called "Island Letter," I guess this is a return to sender... It's stupid. Like I was trying to tell him how I felt through my mix.

(beat.)

Why does everything you feel end up being so hidden? Masked. Like it's not worthy of seeing the light of day...

PAT

It's not that. You just get used to protecting yourself. Or others.

JUNE

From what?

PAT

Well, if I have to tell you that then there's a lot you don't know about people.

JUNE

Like you do.

PAT

I do. I've been around. I see things. How people are.

(beat.)

I mean... you're the one acting like you gotta be right all the time. Always on top.

(JUNE looks through the walls and sees BIZ. He looks up and sees her. He listens to the next track in his headphones. PAT sits closer to JUNE.)

JUNE

Yeah?

PAT

Yeah.

(PAT leans over and kisses JUNE. She opens her eyes, leaning back against the wall, resting the beer on her forehead again. She stands suddenly.)

JUNE

I gotta go.

(PAT stands and reaches for her hand.)

PAT

You do, huh?

(She turns. They look at each other. He kisses her. PAT's flask falls and shatters into echoes that blend with the sound of BIZ's mix.)

SCENE TEN

(The next day at the record store. BIZ listens to JUNE's mix on the sound system. PAT enters.)

PAT

'Sup man.

BIZ

Hey.

PAT

That was some show last night, huh? There were a lot of people at that party. Your girl, June, was good.

BIZ

I thought you said she wasn't that great.

PAT

Well, you know what I mean. She got a lot of people dancing to her set. People were into her even it being that early. Set that shit off!

BIZ

Yeah.

(Uncomfortable silence. BIZ prices records, not really aware of what he's doing. PAT watches him.)

PAT

Hey, man, you all right?

BIZ

I'm fine.

PAT

Okay... Hey, that battle on Saturday, I think we add June as our third DJ in the line-up.

BIZ

What?

PAT

You see it, right? She's building a presence fast, so we need to be up on that. It's just common sense. You were right about her, she's the draw.

(Silence.)

BIZ

I don't know... Seems like you just want to use her to-

PAT

(interrupts)

Yo, this is our shot! What's the difference between us and all those other crews nothing. Add her, and then that's something. There's no other female DJs in this battle. She is the only one. All the girls are gonna be cheering her on cuz she's a girl and the guys think they have a shot with her. She's like this untouchable, you know. It's perfect.

(Pause.)

We're you even listening? What's up with you, anyway?

BIZ

What do you mean?

PAT

You've been all mopey since last week. Doing this shit all the time.

(He mimics BIZ staring off into space.)

BIZ

I don't know.

(beat.)

So you want me to call her?

(PAT shakes his head, like "what don't you get?".)

What, man? I mean all the sudden you're all buddy buddy with her after all this shit about her being this DJ cheerleader thing. I mean what do you want me to say to you?

PAT

I am so fucking sick of playing this game with you. Tell you how to do everything. And I keep telling you but you do nothing. You act like it's okay to just sit on your ass.

(beat.)

Hey man, you don't ask her about this, I am. And you know she's gonna say "yes" to me.

(BIZ shakes his head. He goes back to what he was doing, trying to ignore PAT.)

Well, go ahead. Say what you want to say. You never do anyway. It's always this disapproving look. This shaking your head. Like I'm the one doing wrong. I'm this fucking puppy who ain't

house trained yet. Some shit like that. You look at me like I shit on the carpet again. Well there it is, Biz, you gonna pick up my shit again?

BIZ

No, you're just gonna keep on saying random, fucked up things like that. Shit you know pisses me off. You gotta rub it in all the time that you're better at getting girls, you're better at networking. You're off socializing while I'm setting shit up...

PAT

I'm making things happen while you act anti-social.

(beat.)

See, I don't get why you're acting like this is brain surgery or something. You like her, go talk to her. Go fuck her. Whatever you want to do. It's done. But don't fucking throw away this opportunity for us because you have some mental hang up. That's ridiculous.

BIZ

You don't get it.

PAT

You keep saying that, but what's to get? She's a girl, Biz, they are all the same. There's no sense in trying to make it more complicated than it is. You're just wasting my time with this shit.

BIZ

I'm wasting your time.

PAT

You're always wasting my time, man! Jesus, I get us gigs, you sit on your hands like there's this alignment that needs to happen with the stars. It's a chance for us to start building up everything we've been trying to do all these years. All the work we put into promoting things. The work you had June do too, to promote our nights... Shitty side jobs to pay the rent. It counts when we make shit happen. But it doesn't when you just let things pass you by like they're always gonna happen and always gonna be there for you to take. You're over here acting like you're on the playground playing house with some girl. "Here, let me give you another mixtape." It is a waste of time.

BIZ

Maybe you should spend more time making a decent mix. You wouldn't need to use me to get where you wanna be.

PAT

Please... Man, I'm not even going to bother responding to that. Because you know you're just talking out of your ass and making excuses now. I'm tempted to just start doing this shit on my own.

BIZ

Why don't you? I'm not stopping you. See how far you get by yourself. You drag me along to all this shit you wanna do so you can get ahead never asking me what I want. What I care about.

PAT

You know what you're gonna do? Just sit around here making five or six different mixtapes. What does that even mean to you, Biz? You think your mixtapes mean dick to her? They don't mean shit. You know why? Because she's just interested in the fact that you're the DJ that's anti-social and suddenly you're paying attention to her. Like she fixed you.

(beat.)

It's like all the girls hanging around the turntables or dancing on the floor so you can see them. Doing whatever it takes so you can see them. You know what happens when the DJ's not going home with her? She's going home with his friend. That's how it goes, man. I shouldn't have to explain this to you.

BIZ

Anything else you want to say, Pat? Why don't you lay all the cards out?

(PAT walks away.)

PAT

You know what? This isn't worth it. I'm not talking to you anymore.

BIZ

You did, didn't you? Because you could and because she was there.

(beat.)

That's fucked up.

PAT

She came to me. I didn't have to do anything.

BIZ

Fuck you.

PAT

It's true.

(BIZ pushes PAT.)

BIZ

No, fuck you. You think I care what happened? I don't fucking care, Pat. I really don't. That's not the issue here. It's you. You knew the whole time how I felt about her. You couldn't just let me do my thing, could you?

PAT

(chuckling to himself.)

Your "thing" takes forever, Biz. Sometimes a girl wants a real man.

(BIZ punches PAT in the face. PAT catches himself. Complete mood shift he looks back at BIZ. They stand off.)

PAT

Okay.

(PAT shakes his head and walks away, hands up in the air.)

BIZ

So, you're just gonna walk away from me then?

(PAT turns and gets in BIZ's face.)

PAT

What do you want me to say?

(Pause. Show down.)

You want me to tell you how it was?

(They stare at each other.)

Are we done, then?

BIZ

We're not done.

PAT

Didn't think so.

(PAT leaves the store, slamming the door. June's mix plays on. BIZ stops the music and throws the CD out of the sound system.)

SCENE ELEVEN

(Later, at the record store. JUNE enters the shop sheepishly with her record bag, looking for BIZ. She doesn't see him. She walks over to the turntables and puts headphones on, listening to music in a daydream. BIZ enters from the back, seeing her before she sees him. He's having trouble containing

his anger. He walks over to her and turns off the turntable. She looks up.)

Biz! JUNE

What are you doing here? BIZ
(Coolly)

I have to talk to you... JUNE

Oh yeah? What about? BIZ
(sarcastic)

Look, the other night... JUNE

(She can't look at him. BIZ notices.)

You can't even look at me, can you? BIZ
(fake-laugh)
(Beat.)

I mean, I thought Pat was a lying sack of shit, but you can't even look me in the eye. Wow. Wow!

Biz, listen- JUNE

I just never thought you'd do something like this. That's not who I thought you were. BIZ

I'm not, I just- JUNE

"You're not" what? BIZ

I didn't- JUNE

BIZ

"You didn't" what?

(beat.)

So, you're gonna act like I'm dumb now?

JUNE

No, I-

BIZ

I'm this fool. Hanging on you. Waiting for something. I don't know what. You're just gonna act like this didn't even happen?

(JUNE is silent.)

BIZ

Well, I want to know what happened. I want to know what the fuck you were thinking. Did you think that this was a game? You think you can just fuck around with people's hearts?

(BIZ sees the Bootsy Collins record he gave her in her bag and grabs it.)

You think I'm just like this all the time. That I just give shit away like it doesn't matter? Like I just share all this stuff with people.

JUNE

(Angry)

I don't know... How are you then?

(Pause. BIZ looks at her, utterly speechless.)

BIZ

I thought you were a different girl, June. But you're a fucking liar, like all-

JUNE

(interrupts)

All the rest. Yeah, that's right. All us women are liars, Biz. It's all our fault all the-

BIZ

(interrupts)

Shut up! Just shut the fuck up. You think you know the next thing I'm gonna say, but you don't! I never judged you June. You came in and wanted to DJ and I thought that was cool. You seemed like you were into stuff, so I shared it with you. Maybe that's not how it works for other people, but that's how it works for me. You act like you know everything about me, but-

JUNE

(overlapping)

I don't know anything about you. You never tell me anything!

BIZ

You don't know shit about what it means to be in love with someone! You don't know shit about what it means to be a DJ and you don't care either. That's worse. You think you can walk in acting like you know everything in the world. You slide in and pretend like you're real.

JUNE

You sound like Pat now, Biz...

BIZ

(Yells)

Don't!

(beat. Restraining himself.)

Don't even say his name. Don't even talk to me about him. I take it back. I don't want to hear what happened. I hope you're happy. I hope you enjoyed yourself.

JUNE

Happy? Is that what you think I am? You think I'm happy? You think that I just played you the whole time... that I was into Pat or something?

(beat. JUNE approaches him.)

Biz, I tried so hard. I put myself all the way out there for you. I listened and hung on to your every word. Looking to you for everything. All the answers. And you never had any of them. I came to you last night, Biz, and you rejected me. Rejected me. All the time you did that too. Just walked out on me. Stopped talking to me. I tried to say something, you'd just push it away like it was nothing. I tried to tell you how I felt about you, Biz. You ran out on me.

(JUNE touches his hand. A moment, then he pulls away.)

BIZ

So, you sleep with my best friend. That makes a lot of sense, June. Lot of sense.

JUNE

But I-

BIZ

(interrupts)

Don't insult me by trying to deny it. Pat told me enough.

JUNE

Pat lied.

BIZ

Stop acting like I'm just oblivious to everything that's going on!

JUNE

You know, Biz, maybe he's not really your friend, Biz. You didn't even ask me what happened. My side of things. You know why he lied? Because guys do that when they talk about girls they wanna fuck. Guys like to brag about what girls they got. It's this thing. Like I'm some type of toy. Like I'm some type of accomplishment. Who can get me first, is that it?

(BIZ shakes his head. He tosses the record back at her.)

BIZ

Here, keep this. It didn't mean anything to me anyway.

(BIZ exits to the back room, slamming the door behind him. JUNE watches him go, then bends down to pick up the record he threw. She cries. Simultaneously, outside in the alley behind the store, BIZ paces back and forth he punches the wall of the building, then covers his tears. JUNE walks up to the turntables, playing the song from the beginning of the scene again over the speakers til it comes to an end, when it loops and loops.)

JUNE

My mix says more than you know. My mix can say everything I can't. My mix will make you cry and my mix will make you dance. My mix will make your heart twinge in pain at the recognition of love. Pain at the recognition of loss. My mix is everything it should be without the bullshit words to get in the way. Dark and smokey rooms. Turntables in the back. My mix is what heals me and pulls me together. My mix is my every thought. My every word. My every prayer.

(A scratch intro to the next song.)

SCENE TWELVE

(The night of the DJ battle. JUNE carries a crate of records and a messenger bag with more. She wears headphones around her neck. PAT sees JUNE.)

PAT

Need help? Looks heavy.

JUNE

I carry my own records.

(JUNE sets down her records and her bag.)

PAT

You know, you're the only female DJ in the whole line-up.

JUNE

"Female DJ..." Like I'm this animal.

PAT

So you're gonna do this?

JUNE

Look I'm not here cuz you called me. I entered in on my own. I'm here cuz they called me. I don't need you to get where I want to be. I don't use people to get what I need.

PAT

You think Biz is gonna show? If I know him, then probably not. Probably shouldn't have said nothing about us.

JUNE

There is no "us."

PAT

You know, I was thinking about that night...

JUNE

It was a mistake.

PAT

It kinda seemed like it wasn't. One minute I'm outside and the next thing you're kissing me-

JUNE

That's not how it happened.

PAT

How can you be sure? I mean, There was a connection, wasn't there? There's always been a connection. You gonna argue that?

(JUNE is silent.)

All right then. See? There had to be some connection.

JUNE

You know what happened? I played the wrong song, that's all. You know, when you're spinning and you're cueing up the next track, and you accidentally play the wrong song. It changes everything. I messed up.

PAT

(smirks)

I'm your wrong song. I like that. I can live with that. Sometimes the wrong song can be exactly what you need.

JUNE

And sometimes it ruins everything.

(PAT shrugs.)

I don't know why the fuck you're talking to me right now. I know what you told him.

PAT

What?

JUNE

Don't act like you don't know! You told him we slept together.

PAT

I never said that. He may have picked up something based on-

JUNE

You're such a fuckin' snake.

(PAT shrugs. He grimaces.)

PAT

Look, I'm doing you both a favor. He's messed up and you'd just mess him up further until he pushed back and got all weird on you. He does that, you know, that's how he is with girls.

JUNE

Fuck you, you don't know everything.

PAT

Yeah? I know enough.

JUNE

You don't know shit about this! You just needed to be on top. You needed to be the one in control. Here you say that about me, but truth is, you're the one with the issues.

PAT

You can say whatever you want. Doesn't faze me. And yeah, I do like to be on top.

(He grabs for her waist. She pulls away.)

JUNE

You're a horrible friend.

PAT

Whatever. I know what he needs.

(JUNE shakes her head.)

PAT

Pssh... okay, "Good luck."

(PAT starts to walk away.)

JUNE

I thought you could have been a friend to me too, you know. I didn't think you'd get this low.

PAT

Ha! What do you know? You come in looking how you do. Acting how you do. Like you can just slide in on all the work we've done. Like you've earned it. You haven't earned shit.

JUNE

I don't act above everyone. I don't know why you see me that way! I'm joke to you aren't I? Like what do you call a girl DJ? Girl walks into a record store, into a bar, into a club with a bunch of records. What does she do? She plays a good set. Ha ha.

PAT

Because how's a girl like you gonna come in and just be catapulted into success. It's bullshit!

JUNE

I'm working for it all the time. That's all I do! You don't see me practicing every day. Saving up everything I have to buy another record. Come out to clubs to promote this shit because I believed in it. Believed in both of you and what you were trying to create! And you turn on me like I'm-

PAT

(interrupts)

Yeah? What's your job? What's she gotta give up in order to make this DJ thing work?

(beat, he waits for a response. She says nothing.)

Yeah, that's what I thought. I'm over here doing this delivery shit on a daily basis. Biz is over there at that record store nine to five. You're-

JUNE

I'm in school.

PAT

I don't give a shit! I'm sick of people comin in here tryin to learn about being DJs and miraculously getting the money to spend on this shit. Out of no where. Like you're Houdini. You

a magician now? Yeah? That it? You just got a money tree in the back you go pick whenever times get rough? I don't have that. Biz doesn't have that. And see, that's why you're different. That's why when you come in here and say you're ready to go and you set up all that fancy equipment, that's why no one believes you. Not cuz you're a girl. Not cuz you're this DJ superstar, all born to DJ. It's cuz you don't know what it means to practically die for something because THAT's the thing that means most to you in this world. What is it that means most to you? Biz? Pssh... See, that's why you're doing this and you're pretending like it's because you were called. You're not, honey... you're just not.

JUNE

Wow.

PAT

You think you can learn this shit overnight when it's a lifestyle. It's a way of life. You either a DJ or you aren't.

JUNE

It's that simple...

PAT

Yeah! It is!

(A heated moment.)

Look... just go home. Give yourself a chance to save some face. Not chase some guy – thinking becoming a DJ's gonna get him to notice you. Have some self-respect.

(beat. Chuckles to himself.)

You know, I gotta say, if that was your deal then you didn't exactly go about that too well either.

(JUNE sits. After a moment, PAT puts his hand on her shoulder. JUNE shrugs him off.)

JUNE

You don't know me or my life. Anything I've been through and the sacrifices I make...

PAT

All right... fine. You're right. I never saw behind the scenes in June's life. Except for one time. One time where she came to me. You came to me. And what was that? Who was that that I saw? Cuz out here you're all...like that. And back on that night, you were...

JUNE

What?

PAT

Vulnerable. Like you needed someone to just push you a little more in the direction you were headed. You were never that way with me.

(beat.)

Look, I try to help women out as much as I can. I'm just trying to help.

JUNE

Funny way of helping.

PAT

People don't always know what they need.

(Song cuts to the next track, building the tension in the mix, Hall and Oates, "I Can't Go For That". BIZ enters from the side-alley carrying a crate full of records. JUNE approaches.)

JUNE

Biz!

PAT

So you show up?

BIZ

I'm here, right?

PAT

I can see that. See you got all your crates with you...
(beat.)

We gonna spin? Looks like you're about to bounce.

BIZ

I'm here on my own.

PAT

What?

(Heated silence.)

All right, that's cool.

BIZ

You with him now? Guess you just buy into anything he says...

(PAT laughs to himself and rolls his eyes. He sits back and watches the situation, amused. BIZ looks over at him, annoyed.)

JUNE

What? No! I'm here on my own too. They accepted my mix. Remember? The one I gave you?

BIZ

Oh.

(Silence.)

JUNE

You're not gonna say anything?

BIZ

What do you want me to say?

JUNE

I don't know... I thought you'd at least be a little bit happy for me.

BIZ

I mean... yeah, it's great.

JUNE

Thanks.

BIZ

(shrugs, as if he feels bad and wants to say something else)

I don't know...

(BIZ shifts as if about to leave. JUNE catches him.)

JUNE

Yeah, you really don't, huh? You kinda just walk away and give up. You say "that it's never gonna happen." And it does, doesn't it? So, then you're right, I guess.

(beat.)

You never really thought I could make this happen because you can't. You don't know how to believe in yourself, so you can't do believe in anyone else. That's sad, Biz.

BIZ

That's just how it is.

JUNE

But it's not though. It's only how it is when you say that.

(BIZ looks away. JUNE continues to look at him, as if she were pleading for his understanding.)

BIZ

June, I-

(She waits, then smiles reluctantly.)

JUNE

Goodbye, Biz...

BIZ

Why's it gotta be "goodbye"?

PAT
(chuckles)

Always with the songs...

BIZ

Man, shut up. What do you know? When have you ever had more than some bullshit to give to people. You better bring you're "A" game tonight. Not gonna hold back on this one. Got a couple gems tonight too. Really gonna kill it.

PAT

If you mean make people die, then you're right.

BIZ

I'm gonna make people see.

PAT

People ain't gonna see shit. It's not what it's about.

BIZ

That's exactly what it's about. See, that's something you never got. You don't understand that when you play songs together, when you mix song together, you're telling people something. You may be content to have a crowd of sheep ready to hear whatever wack shit is next, hanging on every song like it's gonna solve something, make everything better. But I could never get down with that. The music I play for people? That's to heal things. That's to show people something different. Something better. What if things really did get better? We're doing nothing out there most of the time but pushing music, these songs-

PAT

Fuck yeah we are, and tonight's it, man. Don't you see? We're almost there. This is what it takes to make it big.

BIZ

No, it doesn't. There's no more "we", okay? Now's my chance to say what I need to say. On my own.

PAT

Have it your way. You never cared about any of this before. Never said anything about all this shit.

BIZ

So if I never cared, then why'd you ask me to do this in the first place? Why get me to do something I don't give a fuck about? With you it's all about show, but I do this cuz I love the music, and cuz I want people to hear some good shit they never heard before.

PAT

I thought you liked doing this shit together.

BIZ

I did, man, but it's changed. You know that. Can't you see it's different now? It was going downhill for a while.

PAT

Remember when we were in high school? I had that set-up in my garage. We'd be in there for days, man. Remember that? How we'd go to a party and suddenly we're the ones everyone's looking to for a good time. No one's ignoring us. All those kids' parties that we never went to? Suddenly we're taking their money to give them a good time. Remember that? How's this any different? It's the same thing here. We're showing them how it's done.

(PAT grabs BIZ's shoulder.)

C'mon, man...

(BIZ shrugs him off.)

BIZ

Get off me. I'm doing this on my own. I need to.

PAT

(Hurt, covering it with anger)

Need to what, man? Back down? Run away? Get scared again? Look at you! You're on your way out!

BIZ

I'm not on my way out!

PAT

That's your thing, Biz! You let yourself get scared. Like always. I come to the rescue. I scare everyone away for you. All the hoes and the fakes and the phonies. All of them who come here and who you can't deal with. I get to deal with that shit while you do the disappearing DJ act.

BIZ

Not tonight.

PAT

But it's this thing, right? Like you're the bigger man if you're like that. Like with June. If you're the friend... If you never have the hook-up it makes you the better person, right? And I'm the bad guy. Cuz you're the one treating them with respect, huh? Cuz you're not sleeping with them. Cuz how could that be respectful if you're there lying naked with another woman. Showing everything you have, Biz. Baring your soul.

JUNE

Man, you know none of this shit ever happened with me. Why don't you tell him the truth, Pat? Just be a friend for once.

PAT

The fuck you know about being a friend? You there when the shit was so bad that all we had was each other and playing music at parties to get by? No. You were there studying in your little room. Trying to improve yourself because you had the luxury to do so, rather than it being about survival. That's the difference.

JUNE

See, but a friend would never act the way you do. And Biz knows it. Right?

(BIZ looks between them.)

PAT

See, here I see her messing up your life. She comes in, our friendship goes out. You know that, right? I mean can't you feel that happening? I don't get it. I don't get why it's like that, but it's happening regardless. So, why her instead of me?

(BIZ doesn't respond.)

PAT

(Yelling)

Why her instead of me!

BIZ

It's not about her.

PAT

But it is, though, isn't it. Okay, you got it, Biz. Here it is...

(PAT leaves. Scratch intro to the next song.)

SCENE FIFTEEN

(Later, height of the night. PAT is spinning a great set. JUNE waits by the stage. BIZ approaches, he's next.)

JUNE

So I guess it's just you and me left.

BIZ

I guess so.

(Long, awkward pause. Thumping music from the speakers. Sound is palpable.)

JUNE

You think I'm real now?

BIZ

This will be different than anything you've done before. This isn't some type of small time, "I'm gonna prove myself for people" gig. This is you, the equipment, your records and the crowd. That's it. All that's left between being some local DJ to being the kind of DJ everyone knows, everyone talks about. So, yeah, you ask me if you're real? After this, there's not much more "real" than you can get.

JUNE

What are you gonna play?

BIZ

All the songs I should have before. Everything I should have said. All the things I should have told you. Everything I felt.

(Like his imagination, his future mix is now, we hear all the songs he would have played, including "Maybe Tomorrow" by the Jackson 5.)

It's just what has to be done.

(A roar of applause from the crowd. BIZ steps forward and takes over the turntables from PAT. PAT steps aside and watches, then steps down. He looks at JUNE, then walks away.)

(PAT walks off. Fast-forward to the end of BIZ's set. It's incredible. JUNE watches him intently, trying to remain poised.) His last song is next. BIZ drops an old school slow jam by Black Ivory "You and I." The crowd goes wild. The lyrics drop. BIZ looks at JUNE. Slow motion. JUNE steps up to the DJ booth. BIZ reaches out for her hand to help her up. She

reaches for him. They stand stuck in time, where they are both connected through sound. They folds into one another, slow dancing.)

BIZ

I should have played you this from the start. I should have told you how I felt.

(JUNE doesn't respond.)

Given you my heart...

(The song fades mixed with the crowd yelling out "June Bug! June Bug! June Bug!" JUNE steps back. BIZ and her look at each other. He smiles. He steps down from the booth, holding her hand, as before. They remain stuck in time for a moment, waiting for one another.)

(Light builds and flashes. Crossfade).

SCENE SIXTEEN

(Some place in the back where the turntables are. BIZ talks to someone.)

BIZ

When she played I listened but the music was so loud that I thought my ears would bleed from the pressure. I think she blew the speakers. And I looked at her engulfed in flames of the highest kind, cuz she was on fire. She wasn't here anymore. The crowd swallowed her whole and I'm standing off to the side. In the back. My stationary, forever place. To watch her go from me and fly off somewhere I've never been, could never go. But I'd just be happy to know that I finally said everything in my heart...

JUNE

If I could play one song it would be the one to change everything. To right everything. To put everything in its place. To wipe the slate. If I could play one song that would connect everyone's hearts, bodies, and souls, we would all be together listening to one thing. One moment in time that you feel and when you hear the beating of your heart and start to move. If I could play one song, it wouldn't have to prove anything because it just was. Just existed without anyone saying anything about it because when it's there it's the only thing making sound.

(JUNE in silhouette at the DJ booth so that we see her form as a DJ god. Sound loops out to an echo and then fades.)

(Black-Out.)

END OF PLAY.

