FADE IN:

INT. KITCHEN -- MORNING

TIFFANY, a ten year old Black girl, covertly pours vodka down the kitchen sink, then quickly returns to her bowl of cereal.

Realizing the red vodka label is now off center, she hops up to fix her mistake before her father, DALE enters.

TIFFANY
Morning Daddy.

Dale kisses her forehead, then grabs the carton of orange juice from the fridge. Dale reaches for the vodka.

DALE
Where the hell is my vodka?

TIFFANY
Daddy you finished it last night.

DALE
I aint stupid!

GAIL, the matriarch enters.

GAIL
What are you fussing about this early?

Dale slams the vodka bottle on the counter top, dashes the OJ into the sink.

As he storms out,

TIFFANY
Don't forget tonight!

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE -- AFTERNOON

The analog wall clock, 4:15

Dale rubs his temple, as if to rub away an headache.

A co-worker pops in,

CO-WORKER
I thought you left with the others

DALE
What?

CO-WORKER
Happy-hour down at O'Malley's, want to share a cab?
Dale checks his watch.

INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM -- LATER

Tiffany sings "Black Butterfly", recorded by Deniece Williams in 1984. She closes her eyes.

Back stage, MR. SIMS, black male, late 30's, flips a round copper medallion over and over with his thumb and index.

Dale stumbles into the back of the auditorium, tripping to the floor.

DALE
Why the hell it's so dark in here?

Dale hear the crowd shush him.

DALE (CONT'D)
Shh, your damn self.

Gail scurries over to gather Dale.

On stage Tiffany continues to belt out beautiful notes, unaware of Dale.

GAIL
Come on let's sit down.

DALE
Is that my baby sanging?

GAIL
You're missing it, sit and be quiet.

DALE
Let's dance baby.
(re Tiffany)
Sang Tiffany! That's my girl.

In the middle of the aisle, Dale pulls Gail into a dance, trying terribly to sing along with Tiffany.

The commotion in the crowd breaks Tiffany's concentration. She open her eyes to see Dale's drunken spectacle.

Tiffany runs offstage.

GAIL
You wont ever change!

She pushes Dale in the chest and he goes flying into someone's lap.
INT. GIRLS RESTROOM -- MOMENTS LATER
Tiffany sobs inside the stall.

EXT. GIRLS RESTROOM -- CONTINUOUS
Mr. Sims taps on the door.

    MR SIMS
    Tiffany? Tiffany are you in there?

He pushes the door ajar, he hears Tiffany sobbing.

    MR SIMS (CONT'D)
    I'm coming in.

INT. GIRLS RESTROOM -- CONTINUOUS

    MR SIMS
    You were great.

    TIFFANY
    He ruined it. I practiced day and night.

    MR SIMS
    There will be other recitals.

    TIFFANY
    I'm not inviting him.

Mr. Sims rolls the copper medallion through his fingers.

    MR SIMS
    Don't say that. Never give up hope.

EXT. GIRLS RESTROOM -- CONTINUOUS
Dale staggers towards the door.

    DALE
    Tiffany! Tiffany where are you?

INT. GIRLS RESTROOM -- CONTINUOUS
Dale pushes the door open. He sees Tiffany legs under the stall, he charges at Mr. Sims

    DALE
    You bastard!

Dale attacks in a drunken rage, Mr. Sims manages to keep Dale at arms length.

    DALE (CONT'D)
    You're a pedafile!

Tiffany hears the commotion inside the stall.
TIFFANY
Daddy stop it! Just leave.

DALE
(breathless)
I'm sorry, T-baby. I promise to make it up to you.

TIFFANY
You always say that.

MR SIMS
You can have a life outside the bottle.

DALE
What. You dont know me, you dont know us.

MR SIMS
I know inside the bottle is where hopes, dreams, and disappointments live. Inside the bottle seems to be a safe place, where the pressure seems to dissipate, the agony of yesterday goes numb. But it's all an illusion. Inside the bottle life is blurred. You can live life outside the bottle.

Mr. Sims hands Dale the copper medallion.

DALE
What's is this.

Dale reads the inscription.

MR SIMS
I celebrated three years of sobriety. Life inside the bottle never changed for me, it never changes for anyone.

Tiffany exits the stall. Dale drops his head in shame.

TIFFANY
Please Daddy.

Dale wipes his eyes. He extends a handshake to Mr. Sims.

Tiffany wraps her arms around Dale's waist.

FADE OUT: