

Infinite Possibilities

By

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FADE IN ON:

INT. JACKSON FAMILY LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Car horns BLARE just outside. Inside: chaos and dismal clutter reigns.

TAMARA (6) stands in the middle of a beer stained rug, nappy hair pulled into pigtails. A spiral notebook dangles from her hand.

She waves towards sister KENEISHA (16); an almost anorexic girl, inches of makeup on her face. A Walmart necklace gleams at Keneisha's throat - the infinity symbol with fake-gold paint.

TAMARA

Neisha! I finished my homework. Check it for me?

Keneisha shakes her head and turns away. She snuggles extra close to her boyfriend, twenty-something RYAN-G.

A wanna-be thug in training, Ryan's brown arms betray heavy tats. His fingers work feverishly - doling spoonfuls of brown powder into bags.

KENEISHA

Not now, Squirt. We're busy.

Tamara looks from the powder to Ryan. Back at her sister. Tries again.

TAMARA

Please? It's my AP class. Mrs. Glass. Algebra.

She holds the paperwork up: a maze of solved formulas fill the page.

Keneisha looks over Tamara's handiwork. Based on the glazed look in her eye, the numbers mean nothing to her.

KENEISHA

It's all fine, Little T.

TAMARA

You sure? You only looked a few seconds. Mrs. Glass says I need assistance.

Keneisha hugs her sister. Slyly uses the gesture to hide the ignorance on her face.

KENEISHA

I know you got it right. You the smart girl in the family.

Tamara jumps with joy; bumps the coffee table a bit. Ryan GROWLS at Keneisha, annoyed.

RYAN

Bitch, I'm doin' business. Move the rug rat away.

KENEISHA

(to Tamara)

Go to your room. Close the door.

TAMARA

There's more paper for you to see.

KENEISHA

To your room.

TAMARA

But...

KENEISHA

Later, T.

A pout blooms on Tamara's face.

TAMARA

You're with Ryan all the time. It's always "later" for me!

Keneisha sneaks a peek at Ryan, afraid that he'll take offense.

KENEISHA

Like he says. It's business.

TAMARA

I need help. We're family!

KENEISHA

The "family" needs the money. Books for your AP classes. Maybe even college. Someday.

She hands Tamara her homework. Pushes her sister away.

KENEISHA

Go do algebra. Leave us with chemistry.

Tamara SIGHS. She trudges towards her bedroom door. Her footsteps THUMP dramatically.

TAMARA

Okay. Fine. What you say.

A heavy BANG! hits the front door. Tamara spins around.

MALE VOICE

Police!!

Wood SHATTERS. SPLINTERS. The door EXPLODES. COPS in mid-night colored uniforms pour in like the black sea.

Tamara SCREAMS. She hits the ground, and covers her ears. Homework flies in the air.

Time turns to molasses. Everything moves slow-motion.

Ryan digs a gun from a sofa cushion, swings it towards the first cop he sees. GUNFIRE RATTLES across the room.

Riddling Ryan and Keneisha in seconds...

Tamara HOWLS and jumps to her feet.

TAMARA

Keneisha! Help me!

A RED-HAIRED COP dives in her direction. Drags her out of range, towards safety...

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - EVENING

Incredibly dirty - not to mention busy. COPS and OMINOUS SHADOWS loom everywhere.

Tamara cowers in a plastic chair. She shakes like a leaf, blood smeared on her face. Bits of fractured wood jut from her pigtails. Curled into a little ball, Keneisha's necklace trembles in her hand.

A FEMALE SOCIAL WORKER stares at her across a desk.

The red haired cop rests a gentle hand on Tamara's shoulder - pins the scared girl in place.

FEMALE SOCIAL WORKER

Have you contacted the relatives?

RED HAIRED COP

(shakes his head)

None that we know of. Mother and father - both deceased.

The social worker looks up - all business.

FEMALE SOCIAL WORKER
I hear she has a sister.

RED HAired COP
She did. But - news from the hospital...

He looks at Tamara.

RED HAired COP
Gone, as well.

FEMALE SOCIAL WORKER
Then we'll place the girl with Social
Services.

She takes off her glasses, squints into Tamara's face.

FEMALE SOCIAL WORKER
What's your name, Sweetie?

TAMARA
T...Tamara. My sister calls me "Little
T."

The social worker jots down details. Avoids Tamara.

FEMALE SOCIAL WORKER
Well, "Little T", we're going to take you
someplace safe.

TAMARA
What about my sister? Keneisha?

FEMALE SOCIAL WORKER
(beat)
I'm afraid... she went away.

Tamara stares at the woman. Tears well in her eyes.

INT. ADOPTION CLINIC - DAY

SUPER: Six months later.

A institutionally white lobby. A calendar hangs on the
wall: declaring August has arrived.

A quiet Tamara waits in the center of the room.

The tears have all dried. Keneisha's infinity necklace
shines at her throat. Like her tears, the blood's been
scrubbed away.

SARAH and BILL BRADLEY (40s) look down kindly at the girl. Each wears glasses, preppy clothes. Concerned expressions on their white faces.

Bill smiles at Tamara. An awkward, but pleasant demeanor.

BILL

I hear they call you "Little T." Would you like to stay with us, Tamara?

Tamara blinks at Bill. No response on her face.

SARAH

We have a very nice house, Tamara. I hear you like books. My husband Bill, here... he's a college professor. There's lots of books in our home. The living room. The study. Everywhere.

A flicker of interest in Tamara's eye. Bill spots her curiosity, is inspired.

BILL

You'll also have a sister. Our daughter's name is Annabelle.

TAMARA

(whispers)

I already have a sister. I don't need her replaced.

SARAH

We don't want to replace anyone, Tamara.

A look of pain on Sarah's face.

SARAH

I... we always wanted another little girl in the house. To make our family complete.

Tamara turns to Bill; expression guarded. Calculating.

TAMARA

Can I have books for school?

BILL

As many as you want.

TAMARA

You promise? For reals?

BILL
And I'll help you with homework. Every
night.

Tamara smiles. Just a bit.

TAMARA
What about math?

BILL
(grins)
That's my specialty. Science, too. I
teach something called "Alternate Wave
Physics".

Tamara steps forward cautiously, takes Bill's hand.

TAMARA
Okay. I'll try. For a week.

INT. THE BRADLEY'S STUDY - AFTERNOON

SUPER: MONTHS LATER

Mahogany furniture fills the room. A grandfather clock
TICKS in one corner. Extremely loud and foreboding.

Two little heads bend over an ornate desk. Their faces
inches from books, pens and papers.

The first is Tamara, still in pigtails.

The other student is ANNABELLE (7) - blonde with Barbie
length, corn-spun hair.

Bill watches over the girls' shoulders. Keeps an eye on
his students.

BILL
Tamara, you solved for a quadratic
equation! You're only seven. That's
amazing!

TAMARA
(distracted)
I'm six and three-and-a-half quarters.
I'm not seven 'til next week.

Annabelle glares at her, annoyed.

ANNABELLE
I don't know why you get a party. You're
not even family.

BILL

Annabelle! Watch your manners. What did your mother say about Tamara *last* time?

ANNABELLE

(recites)

That "Little T's my sister. Even though she's adopted..."

(mutters)

'Cause Mom couldn't have babies after me.

BILL

That's right. She's part of our family. So you should treat her with respect. Even more than your schoolwork...

He scoops the paper out of Annabelle's hand. Examines it in dismay.

INSERT: None of the equations are solved. A detailed unicorn is scrawled across the top. Rainbows doodled in every corner.

BILL

This isn't your homework assignment.

ANNABELLE

It's boring. I like to draw.

She glares at Tamara. Her face claims it's T's fault. Again.

ANNABELLE

Let the Geek do it. She thinks math is friggin' awesome.

BILL

Annabelle! Language!

TAMARA

(whispers)

No. Physics is what's awesome. I read a book yesterday. Called "Quantum Mechanics Explained".

BILL

You read the book in the living room?

Tamara hangs her head low; reluctant to admit to theft.

BILL

Come, Little T. What did you learn?

TAMARA
That... there's this thing, called
"Infinite Possibilities."

BILL
And you understood what it said?

TAMARA
Mostly. Every page.

Excitement lights up Bill's face.

BILL
You're a smart girl, Tamara. You know
that, right?

Tamara nods her head slowly.

TAMARA
Yeah. My sister said so. Every day.

Annabelle sticks out her tongue at Tamara. Tamara ignores
the gesture, looks away.

EXT. OUTDOOR STAGE - AFTERNOON

SUPER: Ten Years Later

A CROWD mills across a leaf-strewn lawn. It's College
Graduation. Gowned STUDENTS and FAMILIES everywhere.

Bill and Sarah wait in the front row, noticeably older.
Their eager eyes glued to the stage.

TEEN ANNABELLE lingers close by with PREPPY BOYFRIEND
GARY (20s). They both look perfect. Very bored.

A round fellow - DEAN WITTES - lumbers across the stage.
He reaches the edge, TAPS the mike.

DEAN WITTES
Welcome, graduating class of twenty five!
Here to provide the commencement speech,
please welcome Tamara Bradley - a shining
example of all that Droon College has to
offer. A brilliant Rhodes Scholar in
Quantum Physics - with a dazzling
intellect beyond her years!

He gestures to a line of nervous STUDENTS.

TEEN TAMARA steps into the spotlight. She's modestly
dressed, but beautiful. Pigtails redone in ornate braids.

She takes the mike, addresses the crowd. Eyes locked on her doting parents.

TAMARA

Thank you, Dean Wittes. I want to thank Droon College for all you've given to me. The opportunities. The education. The potential to "be all I can be".

She seeks out Bill, smiles into his face.

TAMARA

Especially my Dad. Professor Bill Bradley. He taught me everything I know. I wouldn't be who I am, if he hadn't taken my hand. A long, long time ago.

ANNABELLE

(whispers to Gary)

Brown noser.

GARY

Hey. Don't be racist to your sister.

ANNABELLE

Bullshit. She sucks up to Dad constantly. He never goes to my art showings. Just putters with "Little T" in his lab.

GARY

Anna, give it a break. Physics is a good science. I'd *kill* to be where Tamara is.

ANNABELLE

(giggles)

You don't have to kill anything, Gary. I'll just make sure you meet Bill.

Tamara's confident voice carves through the air.

TAMARA

And thanks to Mom. She was there for me. Every day.

Sarah Bradley blushes, waves. Clutches a hand to her chest just as Tamara's voice breaks.

TAMARA

And - thanks to my sister, as well.

Annabelle perks up, surprised.

TAMARA

Keneisha - this is for you. You always told me I was the smart one. You supported me all the time. And saved my life on that day. I wish... I wish you could see me now. But even if you can't, I still owe everything to you. You were the best sister in the whole wide world. I dedicate this speech to your memory.

Tamara's voice trails off. She hands the mike to Dean Wittes, and quickly descends the stage stairs.

Bill and Sarah race forward and hug her. Annabelle turns to Tamara. Glares.

INT. GYMNASIUM/RECEPTION GALA - LATER

A gym filled with beautiful people. STUDENTS and FAMILIES fill the space - champagne flutes in manicured hands.

Tamara toasts Bill and Sarah. Annabelle and Gary toy with their drinks nearby.

BILL

Here's to my girl, Tamara: The latest hire of Chronos Incorporated!

Tamara blushes, gulps champagne.

TAMARA

Well, being the daughter of the director helped me get the job...

BILL

Nonsense, T! It's your genius that earned you the post. No bias required from me!

Annabelle elbows Gary in the ribs. She CLEARS her throat, waves at Bill.

ANNABELLE

Dad, speaking of Chronos. Gary has something to ask you.

Bill turns to the couple in a daze.

BILL

Gary? Oh. Your boyfriend?

ANNABELLE

Yes. My "boyfriend." Gary. He's a physicist too. Remember?

She bats her eyes. Throws a meaningful look Bill's way.

ANNABELLE

I was thinking Chronos would have tons of opportunities. Gary graduated years ago. He's got more experience than Tamara. Totally.

BILL

(beat)

Well, he can submit to our career website. See if there's any match.

ANNABELLE

It's *my* understanding that networking from inside is best. Especially if Gary meets the director. One that's proven he's willing to even hire his own daughter...

BILL

Annabelle, don't insult your sister. Nepotism had nothing to do with her hire!

Annabelle squeezes Gary's hand for support.

ANNABELLE

I'm not insinuating anything, Dad. I'm just saying Gary's family is well established. In many ways. He's got a personal trust fund, and they've got a few million dollars in a Foundation. If he were to get a proper position with Chronos, I'm sure they'd be willing to donate. For you *and* Tamara's use.

Bill raises an eyebrow - intrigued.

Tamara fidgets in place. Annabelle smiles. Game, set and match. She's sure she'll win.

SUPER: THREE YEARS LATER

INSERT: A flurry of news articles fly by. Pictures of Tamara and Bill with graphs and tubes. No evidence of Gary in sight:

"Bill Bradley's Chronos cracks the Time Code! Quantum Physics Solves the Mystery of the Ages. Time Travel to be a Reality in the Future. Regulatory Commission Declared!

INT. CHRONOS LABS - AFTERNOON

A maze of computers and monitors. HISSING reverberates in the air. Tamara sits at a workstation.

A framed picture of Bill smiles from her desk. A white lab coat covers her slim form. Keneisha's infinity necklace glints in the lab's dim light.

Tamara yawns. Stretches. Looks around.

Determines she's completely alone.

A STRIKE of her finger turns the monitor "On". She TAPS in coordinates, skillfully fine-tuning the display.

The image flickers. Fuzzy. But horrifyingly familiar.

CLOSEUP: It's the Jackson's living room. Back on that fateful day.

ON THE MONITOR: Keneisha hugs Ryan. Young Tamara shuffles away. The door EXPLODES, vomits COPS inside. The air fills with muffled, digitized SCREAMS.

An older hand reaches over Adult Tamara's shoulder. It pauses the recording. *Freeze frame.*

Tamara swings around. It's Bill. He's older now. Looking gray. Not to mention, a bit appalled.

BILL

You're watching this again? After I asked you to be careful?

TAMARA

Dad, I... I'm sorry. I had to.

Bill drags a chair over and drops down. Infinite pity on his face.

BILL

You're picking at a scab, Tamara. I'm so, so sorry for what happened. But watching it doesn't help. And will never make it go away.

TAMARA

Keneisha... She would've been someone special. If only she'd had half the opportunities you gave me.

Tamara's voice catches in her throat. Bill dabs a hand to her cheek.

BILL

Never forget, you're my little girl. We saved you from this nightmare. Your mother and I don't want to see you in so much pain.

Tamara grabs Bill's hand, and holds on tight. All their fingers intertwine.

TAMARA

Dad, I know. But I need to process this. And see.

Bill nods. He turns off the monitor. Gently.

A door CREAKS open. FOOTSTEPS intrude on their moment.

It's Gary in a lab coat, accompanied by Annabelle. Ugly sneers on their faces.

Gary tosses his lab coat on a chair. Underneath is a designer tux. Annabelle CLEARS her throat to speak.

ANNABELLE

Daddy? Have you forgotten? The gallery opening's today!

Bill thinks hard.

BILL

About that.

ANNABELLE

You promised.

Tamara nods. Pulls away.

TAMARA

Dad, she's right. You should go. This is Annabelle's night. I'll just stay.

She peeks at her "sister." Annabelle SNORTS. Far from mollified.

ANNABELLE

Sure, Dad. "Little T" plays physicist with you every day. All I ask is one night out of the week.

She looks at Bill, conniving.

ANNABELLE

Of course Tamara doesn't want to come. But Mom and I want you there.

Besides, we have to talk about Gary's promotion. You know... to Chronos' Board of Directors?

Bill glances at Tamara. Awwwwwwkward.

TAMARA

Promotion, Dad? What's this about?

BILL

Well, it's... funding. Gary's family offered us an extra grant. In return for one - little thing.

TAMARA

Control over the Board? I thought you were against "buying favors"!

Bill grabs Tamara's hand. Whispers softly in her ear.

BILL

I promise. Chronos is still ours. Gary's promotion is in title. Only.

Annabelle scampers over to her boyfriend, gives his waist a playful squeeze.

ANNABELLE

We all know Gary deserves recognition. He's worked hard, all these years.

Anger burns in Tamara's eyes. Curses smolder under her breath.

TAMARA

Poor little rich boy with a Trust Fund. Didn't earn one damned thing in sight...

ANNABELLE

(snaps)

What did you say?!?

TAMARA

I said, uh - have a good night.

She ignores Annabelle. Turns to Bill.

TAMARA

Dad, it's okay. You should go. Spend time away from work. Have fun.

She kisses Bill's cheek, and pushes him away. Annabelle and Gary escort the old man towards the exit.

Tamara watches them go - a sad look on her face. The door HISSES close. The others leave.

...Tamara reaches for Gary's abandoned lab coat. Fishes a folded paper out of the breast pocket.

TAMARA

(mutters)

Gary, you're so obvious. I saw you at the ATM today.

She flicks on the monitor.

Code and bank logos flicker to life.

Tamara types in USERNAME: "Keneisha Jackson." It's an empty, brand-new account.

She follows up with a command: transfer funds.

Then copies the bank numbers on Gary's receipt. And schedules a wire - timed delay.

She swivels towards a second monitor - the one with the image of her family home. Not to mention, the raid.

A cluster of time coordinates glow in one corner.

Tamara jots them down. Carefully.

She logs into the back-end of the bank interface. Her fingers flow quickly - with a practiced hacker grace.

INSERT: The images on the monitor start to change. The room melts, looks more modern. Furniture changes from Salvation Army to Ikea. Better clothes morph onto the girls as well; less Old Navy. More Macys.

Next: Ryan's image disappears. As does every cop in the place. The splintered door rebuilds itself. All the violence redacted away.

Adult Tamara swoons, light-headed.

She looks at her hand. It's translucent. Her current self's fading away.

Equipment in the lab flickers as well. The fancy machinery vanishes... replaced with worn-out hardware.

Tamara squints at the happy face of Keneisha on screen. Whispers under her breath.

TAMARA

My life for yours, "Big K."

Light pulses. Tamara fades even quicker. Parallel reality drains away. She picks up the picture of Bill, kisses his frozen cheek.

TAMARA

Infinite possibilities. You were right.
I'll miss you, most of all. Good luck to
you and Mom. Enjoy both your new lives.

Tamara vanishes into thin air. Leaving a rag-tag,
obsolete lab in her place.

The exit door CREAKS open. Bill and Annabelle have
returned. Bill limps across the lab, confused.

He stares at the empty workstation - not comprehending
what he sees

BILL

I left this off. What's this image?

ANNABELLE

I dunno. Some strange girls.

Bill punches the workstation, frustration on his face.

BILL

This equipment's so useless. It probably
turned on by itself!

Annabelle grabs Gary's lab coat. She takes Bill's arm and
leads him away.

ANNABELLE

Come on. Gary's waiting for us in the
car.

BILL

That old junker? It's a trash heap. Even
more than Chronos...

ANNABELLE

It's not Gary's fault he's poor! His
family lost everything in '08.

BILL

I just wish you'd pick better boys. Not
to mention a respectable career.

Annabelle pouts, perpetually annoyed.

ANNABELLE

You still want me in Science. I hate
Quantum Physics - every math-stained bit!
Even *your* studies aren't successful. Why
do you keep doing this?

Their footsteps fade. They leave the lab behind.

ANNABELLE (O.S.)

Dad, did you read my friend's resume? You
know, Tamara Jackson?

BILL (O.S.)

Oh yes. That smart girl you told me
about. The one that went to your college.

ANNABELLE (O.S.)

Yeah. She comes from a wealthy family.
And I hear she digs quantum physics. You
and she would get along. REAL well.

BILL (O.S.)

Is she any good?

ANNABELLE (O.S.)

Good? Tamara's fucking brilliant! She's
got ideas about the problems in Chronos
theory that you positively have to hear!

Back on the monitor, the image resets. Replays.

Keneisha and Young Tamara wrestle. They GIGGLE and play
in their refurbished house. Both protected by layers of
time. Blissfully unaware of the change.

FINAL FADE OUT: