

Filthy Lucre

written by

Sarah Clement-West

[sarahclementwest@gmail.com](mailto:sarahclementwest@gmail.com)

EST. NAOMI'S FRONT YARD - DAWN

SUPER: Freemanville, Louisiana

A quiet picturesque coastal town.

Mossy tree limbs sway in the breeze as the trees stand guard over the ever changing Bayou Teche.

EXT. NAOMI'S STREET - DAY

A gloved fist wielding a hammer stakes a sign into the ground that reads 'Harrington Enterprises LLC. Luxury Lakefront Development Coming Soon.'

INT. NAOMI'S KITCHEN - DAY

Old floral wallpaper and dark wood paneling.

NAOMI (Confident, businesslike, mid-30s, African American) twirls a pencil in her hand. She notes answers on an unfinished crossword puzzle.

The clue on the crossword reads: *money, especially when gained in a dishonest or dishonorable way.*

Chewing on her lower lip, she looks at the clock on her wall.

Past due bills are in a neat pile on a console table along with unsigned legal documents from Harrington Enterprises with her name on them.

Naomi glances at the documents. An epiphany! She hastily fills in the last answer...

TITLE CARD: FILTHY LUCRE

Naomi glances back at the clock.

NAOMI  
Yes! Six minutes flat!

The beep beep beep of a construction vehicle disturbs her elation.

She peeks out of her shutters across the street. There is a small construction village that seemingly evolved overnight.

She slams the crossword puzzle down.

INT. NAOMI'S BEDROOM - DAY

A neat and tidy bedroom. Naomi rushes in and puts on flats.

EXT. NAOMI'S STREET - DAY

Naomi picks up a pair of shears on her front porch. She walks to the edge of her property pretending to trim hedges while staring intently at the construction across the street.

'Harrington Enterprises LLC. Luxury Development Coming Soon.'

NAOMI

What's he trying to do, buy up the whole town?

She makes a bee line for the construction site office. In the distance workers operate a small army of bulldozers, excavators and dump trucks.

Naomi tries the site office door. It's locked.

She spots a rock, uses it to break the lock then enters the trailer.

INT. CONSTRUCTION SITE TRAILER - DAY

Inside are hardhats, uniforms and hand tools for the construction workers.

She looks around and discovers rolled-up blueprints on the foreman's desk.

She unfurls the plans and gasps.

NAOMI

He can't do this!!!!!!

She begins to take pictures on her cell phone. The plans are large and bulky she takes photos like a grid. Someone is at the door. She quickly puts on a hardhat and construction vest. The door opens.

CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN

Hey, who the heck are you?!

NAOMI

I...I'm the city inspector and I've already noticed quite a few violations.

CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN  
We just got started, what  
violations could possibly -- ?

NAOMI  
I'll stop you right there. For one,  
no lock on your trailer.

CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN  
Uh...uh...but...

NAOMI  
That's right. Anyone could just  
walk right in here.

CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN  
I'm calling the police.

NAOMI  
Please do. Call Lieutenant Barty  
Comeaux and tell him I have a list  
of violations starting with your  
broken lock.

CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN  
... Uh, ok.. look just give me time  
to correct everything then.

NAOMI  
If your plat review hasn't been  
approved then this whole thing will  
be shut down anyway. That needs to  
be checked first. I'll need photos.

CONSTRUCTION FOREMAN  
Sure, take all the photos you need.

NAOMI  
Hold this edge down.

Construction foreman holds down the furled up plans.

Naomi snaps a few photos with her phone then puts it away.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
We'll get back to you.

Naomi gets home and looks at the photos she took. The shots  
are good. It's clear what Harrington Enterprises is up to.

Raze every last house in town including her house and diner  
and put up his luxury development.

She saunters over to her dresser. We see two engraved crystal trophies from Streamline Garment Industries, Top Financial Analyst Of The Year, 2016 and 2017 Naomi E. Jackson.

A photo of her and a roguishly handsome man (DR. BOOKER Webster wearing a Stetson Ivy cap).

She peruses the photo, frowns, and turns it face down.

The picture frames on her console table sport yellowing photos of her grandparents, herself and cousin.

EXT. BREAUX BRIDGE RURAL ROAD - DAY

Naomi drives, everything about her is clenched.

INT. DINER KITCHEN - DAY

She enters the backdoor of her diner and slams it shut. She drops her bag on the table with a loud sigh.

RALEIGH (a matter-of-fact, no-nonsense, sixtyish African American male, has worked at the diner for 30 plus years) looks her way. He is scrambling eggs for an order.

RALEIGH  
You're late...  
(a beat)  
Order up!!

NAOMI  
I'm the boss.

RALEIGH  
Table ten has a question.

NAOMI  
You couldn't answer it?

Raleigh flips eggs effortlessly onto a plate while watching tv.

RALEIGH  
You're the boss.

INT. DINER- DINING AREA - DAY

Diner bustling with children, and men and women in service uniforms. Naomi walks over to table ten.

NAOMI

Hey, Mr. Pete, how are y'all doing?  
Raleigh said you had a question.

MR. PETE

Hey, Naomi. We're good. I want to  
know can people book the whole  
diner for an evening?

NAOMI

Why sure Mr. Pete. Got a party  
coming up?

MR. PETE

Yeah, a going-away party. We're  
taking the buyout money from  
Harrington Enterprises and moving  
out.

Crash! Her tray clatters to the ground.

MR. PETE (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

She kneels down to pick the utensils up off the floor.

NAOMI

Jake Harrington got to you didn't  
he? He's buying up all the property  
in this town.

MR. PETE

Yes indeedy, never saw that much  
money in my whole life.

NAOMI

The town will be empty in a month  
if this keeps up.

MR. PETE

Can we book the diner for next  
Friday, or are you selling too?

NAOMI

No sir, I'm not selling and yes,  
you can book the diner. Why don't  
we all celebrate this town's death.

Outside a school bus pulls up. All the kids in the diner make  
a noisy run for the front door.

NAOMI (CONT'D)

Did you guys enjoy breakfast?

CHILDREN  
(overlapping)  
Bye Ms. Naomi. Bye...

NAOMI  
I'll take that as a yes. See y'all  
tomorrow.

INT. DINER KITCHEN - DAY

Naomi stomps in.

NAOMI  
I could just ring his neck.

RALEIGH  
Who, Pete?

Naomi washes veggies spilling water everywhere.

NAOMI  
No, Jake Harrington. That man needs  
to be stopped. He's buying up the  
whole town and for what? Some  
stupid expensive luxury  
development. Who can afford that?

RALEIGH  
What can you do? He's president of  
Harrington Enterprises and the  
richest man in town.

NAOMI  
Doesn't mean he can't be stopped. I  
keep praying that somebody would  
intervene and knock him off his  
high horse.

RALEIGH  
Word is he's got criminals and cops  
in his pockets. Gonna be hard to  
stop that man.

Naomi huffs.

NAOMI  
I noticed table seven is empty. Did  
Mr. Clemons come in early?

RALEIGH  
Didn't come in at all. Heard he's  
getting worse.

NAOMI

Ah, shame. I'll add a plate to the pile for him.

After the breakfast rush, Naomi and Raleigh prepare meals-to-go in Styrofoam plates. She puts the plates in her car.

EXT. VETERAN'S #1 HOUSE - DAY

She rings the doorbell, a to-go plate in hand.

EXT. VETERAN'S #2 HOUSE - DAY

She knocks on the door, a to-go plate in hand.

INT. NAOMI'S CAR - DAY

She continues until the pile of Styrofoam plates dwindle.

EXT. MR. CLEMONS'S HOUSE - DAY

Naomi knocks on the screen door. MR. Clemons (80s) rolls to the door in a wheelchair. He has a baseball cap on that says "Vietnam Veteran." He lets her in.

MR. CLEMONS

Good morning Naomi.

NAOMI

Good morning Uncle, didn't see you at the diner. How you doing today?

Naomi steps into...

INT. MR. CLEMONS'S HOUSE - DAY

MR. CLEMONS

Ohh... my arthritis actin' up but I'll live. How are you 'cher'?

Mr. Clemons reaches for a pill bottle. He tries to open the bottle with gnarled hands.

NAOMI

Been better. This town is hemorrhaging people, the diner's in financial trouble. I hate not being able to help people. Don't know how grandma and grandpa did it.



Naomi takes the bottle from him and opens it. She loosens caps on a few bottles and places them back on the table.

MR. CLEMONS

Back in the day 'cher', your grandma and grandpa got a lot of help from the people in this town. Things *sho* ain't like they used to be. Keep the faith. God'll provide.

NAOMI

My grandparents left us an awesome legacy of land and a business. The diner is a blessing in this town.

Naomi looks around the kitchen. She sees crumbs on the floor. She grabs a broom and makes a little pile of the mess. Finding a piece of cardboard she sweeps the pile onto it and pours the lot in the trash can.

MR. CLEMONS

Thank you cher. I can't do any of my housework nowadays.

NAOMI

Happy to help. You know it took three generations and over one hundred years of hard work for my family to get the title deed to that property. Now I'm supposed to just sell to some white-collar criminal and thank him for taking it off my hands?

MR. CLEMONS

Things *sho* were different back then. 'Yo' grandma always bragged about how smart you are. You'll figure it out with God's help.

NAOMI

Sorry for talking your ear off. I'll see you in the morning.

Mr. Clemons reaches into his pocket and hands her a couple of twenty dollar bills.

MR. CLEMONS

Here you go it's not much but...

NAOMI

Oh, no I couldn't. Like you said, God will provide.

MR. CLEMONS

Look 'cher', I won the blackout last night at bingo. I know you're handing out free lunches to all them vets and school kids. I was blessed to win this, I want you to have some of it. God provides through all His children.

NAOMI

Money coming out of the blue like that is a blessing. Thank you!

MR. CLEMONS

Be careful out there. I've been hearin' bout a lot of gang activity. That drive-by yesterday, a young man was shot up real bad.

NAOMI

I heard. I'll keep my eyes open.

Naomi takes the money. As she leaves she walks past Mr. Clemons's bank statements. A quick assessment then she puts the money he gave her on the table. He doesn't see her.

EXT. NAOMI'S DINER - EVENING

After a long day Naomi walks toward her car and spots a heap of trash on the ground. She approaches the trash in frustration.

NAOMI

Don't they have trashcans at their own houses?

She picks up a medium size brown paper bag along with the trash. It's heavy, she opens it to find stacks of hundred dollar bills.

A little gasp escapes her lips.

She looks around anxiously, puts the bag of money under her drivers seat and gets in.

EXT. STREET - EVENING

Naomi drives. An officer flags her down as she approaches a roadblock: police cruisers with lights flashing, officers, and barricades. She brakes.

An officer approaches her window.

POLICE OFFICER  
Evenin' ma'am.

NAOMI  
Evenin' officer. Everything ok?

POLICE OFFICER  
May I see your driver's license?

NAOMI  
Sure, sure. Of course.

Naomi pulls her car visor down and feels for her license. She hands it to the officer. He looks at it, then at her, then at the license again.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
(laughing nervously)  
I was a few pounds heavier when the photo was taken.

POLICE OFFICER  
Thank you, ma'am. Y'all take care now. Been some shootings in the area lately.

Naomi anxiously reaches for her license as he runs his flashlight in the interior of her vehicle.

NAOMI  
Thank you, officer.

INT. NAOMI'S HOUSE - EVENING

Naomi enters her house quickly, locks the door behind her and pulls the shades down.

She kneels near her bed and starts to count the money on the floor. She makes stacks.

NAOMI  
(in disbelief)  
One hundred thousand dollars...

There's a knock at her door. She freezes. Another knock, louder and more insistent.

NAOMI (CONT'D)  
(a little too loudly)  
Just a minute!