

Directing Draft 1

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

A classmate presents invites to her 21st birthday party in a very flamboyant manner (Confetti and dancing)

GIRL (20, Type A personality, aspiring First Female President) looks on with envy; whips open her very organised planner and pens down something furiously. We glimpse a brightly outlined birth-date.

She strides out of the classroom with determination.

EXT. WET MARKET - DAY

Girl strides past her FATHER (late 40s, coarse yet humourous, enjoys making sculptures with fruits) working at the fruit stall.

GIRL

Pa! Sorry I can't help you at work today. Many things to do. Heading home first.

Father hacks his knife into a large fruit.

EXT. VOID DECK - DAY

Top down shot of GIRL carefully folding birthday invite.

Girl sits on the void deck floor with her legs sprawled and neck craned over, surrounded by a hundred over obsessive compulsively placed birthday invites. Crazy look on her face, disheveled with paint/marker smudges.

YOUNGER SISTER (6 years) looks on.

YOUNGER SISTER

Jie, what are you doing?

Younger Sister clutches barbie doll to her chest.

GIRL

I'm preparing birthday invites for my 21st. And I'm sending invites to our grassroot ministers as well!

Girl speaks without lifting her head to look at Younger Sister.

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YOUNGER SISTER

Wow! The minister is really coming?

GIRL

Of course they will! I'm sure they remember me from junior grassroots leaders workshop... And... and when I'm become our first female president, they'll be so glad they were even invited!

Younger Sister kneels down to pick up one of the cards. Girl suddenly whips her head up and screams.

GIRL

Don't touch it! You'll ruin it!  
Everything needs to be *perfect*.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Posters of ministers/leaders and quotes line the girl's wall. Her room is very neat. Photos of her receiving awards/certificates from ministers are tacked at her desk.

Stickers are also stuck at her desk; and they seem to suggest that she designed her own political party logo (also present on her birthday invites).

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Living room in a mess. Newspapers and cardboard scattered across; the family obviously preoccupied with some major project.

Girl rips a day off the calendar and squeals.

GIRL

It's only a week away! It needs to be perfect! Faster everyone!

Mother peels fruits.

Younger Sister cuts crepe paper.

Father is reclined on a rattan chair as BROTHER (16 years, artistically inclined) seems to cover his face in plaster; casting his father's face to make a sculpture.

Jump cuts of days on calendar being torn away until finally  
: Birth date.

## INT. FUNCTION ROOM - NIGHT

(Slow motion) Balloons part, revealing a lavishly clad room. Girl stands in the middle of room, and turns to face the camera. She is all smiles, dolled up in a white gown and thick make-up.

She mouths "Thanks for coming!", and ushers the camera further into function room. People around her clap and throw confetti. A pinata hanging from the ceiling comes into frame.

A bat swings into frame, hitting the pinata.

Blood and viscera pour out of the pinata. Blood splatters onto the girl's white gown and stains it.

She grabs her stained dress and screams.

## EXT. VOID DECK - NIGHT

(Match cut) Girl sits in the middle of a long table. She wears a party hat/tiara, and a forlorn expression.

FRIEND 1 and FRIEND 2 approach the girl gingerly. We only see the lower half of the friends' bodies as the camera's focus remains on the girl's face, who is seated.

FRIEND 1

We're going to leave first okay?

FRIEND 2

Thanks for... inviting us

Friend 1 and Friend 2 exit the void deck.

FRIEND 2

(in hushed tones)

Omg worst birthday party ever...

Lighting in the void deck is dim and dull; starkly different from the girl's imagined setting prior to this.

Multicoloured disco lights rotate slowly in the background and light up her melancholic face. The table is loaded with half eaten dishes, and sparsely surrounded by people. The guests are scattered, disengaged, or talking amongst themselves. Elderly folk sit in background. A projector screens a photo montage of the girl in the background. Balloons arching over a photobooth burst in background, and people exclaim.

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MOTHER

Pa! Told you already, don't chop  
the durians near the balloons!

Mother rushes over to salvage the photobooth; father is chopping open durians at the corner of the void deck with Little Sister.

Brother marvels at the decorations he made for the party; showing it off to his friends. Amongst them is a paper sculpture of a minister that the girl admires, holding up a sign that reads "Happy 21st".

Girl fiddles with a fork. An embarrassing baby photo of her is framed on the table; she slams it down.

She gets up and stumbles across the space. She leans against a wall; seeking refuge away from the dying crowd. The projector flashes scenes of her life across her face. A grimace spreads across her face; she sobs.

*It's my party (and I'll cry if I want to)* plays in the background.

MOTHER (O.S.)

I'm sorry we couldn't get the  
function room... you know it's too  
expensive...

GIRL

He never came. The minister never  
came. And it's all a mess.

Mother leans on the opposite side of the pillar/wall.

MOTHER

But your family came, and we love  
you very much. I hope you can know  
that.

In the distance, little glowing dots grow larger and larger.

The light flashing from the projector brightens; Happy Birthday song cued and words 'Happy Birthday to you' project across the girl's face.

Father, Brother and Sister emerge from the carpark, approaching the void deck; cake in hand and singing. Father, dressed up as a minister. Brother holding cake, sister with sash that reads: Ms President). The trio end with a dance and formation, presenting her with the sash.

Girl can't help but break into a laugh; her scowl disappears.

Cake is placed down on the table; girl joins in and dances with her entire family. The cake has a barbie doll in the centre of it (the little sisters' barbie), and wears a blazer and mini sash that also reads: Our President.