

RED ONION  
written by  
Iris Almaraz

3866 Dozier St.  
310-365-1615  
irisalmaraz@gmail.com

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - MAILBOX - DAY

VERGIE, 45, Mexican-American woman, with sad eyes and a plain face. Her beige skirt and baggy blouse call for no-one to pay attention to her.

She retrieves the overflowing mail, jammed into the mailbox. The mail has not been picked up in over a month.

Vergie walks along the middle-class home's white picket fence, reading the different envelopes.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - GARAGE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Vergie opens the garage door revealing a disaster of stored family items that have long been forgotten.

She looks over the pile and stacks of stuff. She mindlessly opens a bill marked FINAL NOTICE. It is her fathers's last cell phone bill.

Unsure where to start in the garage, she turns to the mail in her hand. The last phone call on the bill is repeated six times in a row on May 9th, 2023. Her eyes focus on the date.

Vergie dials the number on the bill.

CUT TO BLACK.

OVER BLACK.

We hear SASHA, 45, sexy demanding dominatrix voice.

SASHA (O.S)

Suck on those toes, you little  
sissy boy!

SISSY BOY, male, breathing heavy in ecstasy.

SISSY BOY (O.S.)

Oh yes, thank you! Please Miss.  
Sasha, let me clean them up.

SASHA (V.O.)

Those are dirty toes!

SISSY BOY (V.O.)

Oh yes Miss. Sasha, my favorite!

FADE IN:

INT. SASHA'S HOME - LIVING-ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

We see Sasha, 45, African-American woman, full figured with brightly colored clothes. She folds towels with a cordless head set on. She talks into the mouth-piece.

SASHA

Lick those stinking pantyhose.

SISSY BOY (O.S.)

(breathing heavy)

What kind are they?

SASHA

Control top, Queen size, reinforced toes. The kind the ladies at church wear.

Sissy Boy pants.

SASHA (CONT'D)

Smell em.

SISSY BOY (O.S)

(sniffing)

Oh, thank you, thank you.

SASHA

I've been wearing them all day. Five inch heel pumps; grocery shopping, nail salon...

Sissy Boy's breathing and excitement grows.

SASHA (CONT'D)

Even to the gym!

That got him! He moans louder, thanking her.

SISSY BOY (O.S)

Oh that did it! Thank you. I needed that!

SASHA

No problem honey. I'm glad I could help.

SISSY BOY (O.S)

You really did! Same time next week?

SASHA

For sure sweetie, kisses!

CLICK! - call goes dead on headset. Sasha continues folding towels.

BEEP! - RECORDED VOICE MACHINE introduces next call.

VOICE MACHINE  
You are receiving a PSO in 3,2,1.

SASHA  
Hi honey, this is Sasha, who's  
this?

DEBBIE, the PSO dispatch, voice comes through.

DEBBIE (O.S)  
Hey Sasha, it's Debbie with  
dispatch. Do you have a sec?

Instantly, Sasha drops the sexy voice.

SASHA  
Hey Debbie, what's up?

DEBBIE (O.S)  
Can you look up a receipt number  
for me?

SASHA  
Yeah, gimme a sec.

Sasha sets the folded towel onto of the stack.

INT. SASHA'S HOME - COMPUTER DESK - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Sasha scroll through PSO (Phone Sex Operator) invoices.

SASHA  
What'd you say the date was?

DEBBIE (O.S)  
May 9th, 2023.

SASHA  
Okay, got it, and the receipt?

Sasha scrolls down the days list.

DEBBIE (O.S)  
274369... There's actually several  
calls he made that day.

SASHA

Oh yeah, I remember this call, no name on the invoice though.

DEBBIE (O.S.)

George, he looks like he was one of your regulars.

SASHA

Really? I didn't recognize this guy. He kept crying, then hanging up. He called right back with new receipts.

DEBBIE (O.S.)

Right. Well... We've never had this happen, but his daughters on the line and she'd like to speak with you.

SASHA

What?

DEBBIE (O.S.)

His adult daughter. George had a stroke that day and she thinks you were the last person to talk to him.

SASHA

George? George... I wish I could remember what this guy was into. Those calls on May 9th were different.

DEBBIE (O.S.)

Yeah well, I think that's why his daughters calling.

Sasha covers her mouth in disbelief.

SASHA

Oh shit... alright, yeah of course.

DEBBIE (O.S.)

Okay, is it cool if I log you off so you don't get calls?

SASHA

Yeah, no problem.

DEBBIE (O.S.)  
K, I'll put her through.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - GARAGE - DAY

Vergie sits in the middle of a pile of open boxes, flipping through old family photos. Her cell phone on a ledge BEEPS!

DEBBIE (O.S.)  
Hi Vergie, I have Sasha on the line.

SASHA (O.S.)  
Hi Vergie, how you doin today?

VERGIE  
Not good Sasha.

SASHA (O.S.)  
What's goin on girl?

Vergie focuses on a photo. She sighs.

VERGIE  
I noticed on my dad's last phone bill this number over and over. The date popped out. It was the day he had a stroke. So I just called to see if you remembered any thing he may have said.

INT. SASHA'S HOME - LIVING-ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Sasha grabs a stack of towels.

SASHA  
Yeah I remember because... Okay the way this PSO -

VERGIE (O.S.)  
PSO?

SASHA  
Phone Sex Operation.

VERGIE (O.S.)  
Oh, okay.

SASHA  
The way this PSO works...

INT. SASHA'S HOME - HALL - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Sasha carries the towels to a cabinet.

SASHA (CONTINUES)

... is that, the callers preorder blocks of 15 minutes. When they call, they can use receipts for increments of 15, 30, 45 or 60 minutes. After an hour they have to call back with new increments.

VERGIE (O.S.)

I thought that was a 90's thing.

SASHA

Oh there's still plenty of hornie men who need someone to talk to. And I'm a hell of a lot cheeper than a therapist.

VERGIE (O.S.)

You are cheeper than a therapist.

Sasha walks to a bedroom decorated for a 10 year old boy.

SASHA

Right? And They get a discount if they buy blocks of time in bulk. So it's like a sex therapy sales rack.

INT. SASHA'S HOME - KID BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Sasha gathers toys scattered about, returning them to shelves.

VERGIE (O.S.)

So my dad already had a lot of prepaid receipts.

SASHA

Yeah, I'm sure of it.

VERGIE (O.S.)

He called before?

SASHA

I feel terrible but I can't place him. Sometimes it takes a few clues for me to recognize the guy and what he's into but this call... was... just different.

VERGIE (O.S.)

Like how?

SASHA

Well, what struck me was that he paid for an hour, talk about his life for a few minutes, then he'd start crying, hang up, then call back for a prepaid hour all over again... he did this several times.

Sasha sits on her son's bed, holding a teddy bear.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - GARAGE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

VERGIE

When he talked about his life do you remember what he said?

SASHA (O.S.)

Yeah, it was about his wife a lot. Sounded like she was from a long time ago though.

VERGIE

That would've been my mom.

INT. SASHA'S HOME - KID BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

SASHA

Did she die?

VERGIE (O.S.)

No, she's still very much alive. They divorced years ago, though.

SASHA

Ohhhh... he sounded like she was no longer around.

VERGIE (O.S.)

He remarried. A really lovely lady. But I don't think he got over the divorce.

SASHA

I don't think so either. I had no clue there was a new wife.

Sasha gets up and exits the boy's room.



INT. SUBURBAN HOME - GARAGE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Vergie wipes dust off a box she is about to open.

VERGIE

My parents had a big sex life. When we were kids, they had a lot of... friends. They use to go to this night club, called the "The Red Onion", my brother later found out it was a swinger club.

SASHA (O.S.)

In the 70's?

VERGIE

That's right.

Vergie looks through more photos, birth certificates with baby feet-prints and old keep sakes like wedding invitations, birth announcements, and kid's birthday invites.

SASHA (O.S.)

Those were the OG's.

VERGIE

Times were really good or really bad. There were fights about these friends, then someone you're calling Uncle Johnny is gone and never to be seen again.

SASHA (O.S.)

Uncle Johnny is always a bad sign.

VERGIE

The fights. My brother and I would hide outside under the window and listen.

INT. SASHA'S HOME - KITCHEN - REFRIGERATOR - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Sasha pulls an uncooked slab of frozen meet out to defrost.

SASHA

I think my sister and I hid in that same spot a few times ourselves.

She transfers the meet on the counter.

INTERCUT BETWEEN SASHA and VERGIE

VERGIE

Did he say anything that may have sounded like he was molested as a child?

At the sink Sasha runs water to wash the dishes.

SASHA

I didn't hear anything to indicate that, but that doesn't mean there was or wasn't.

VERGIE

Sure, that makes sense.

SASHA

Wish I could remember what his thing was. I just... I didn't recognize him.

VERGIE

Guess they tell you a lot more than they would a therapist.

SASHA

Girl, I know more about men than any woman should.

VERGIE

I can imagine.

SASHA

Some men wait until their wives are asleep, just to tell me things they can't tell anyone else.

VERGIE

Sasha... at the end... can you remember the last thing he said?

Sasha stops to think for a minute.

SASHA

There was a lot of crying.  
(she closes her eyes)  
He couldn't stop. And then he just hung up. Vergie, your dad didn't have a stroke, did he?

VERGIE

Oh god Sashsa, I don't know why he did it!

SASHA

Wow, I'm really sorry. I didn't hear any indications.

VERGIE

None of us did.

SASHA

That must've been why he spent all those receipts.

VERGIE

What?

SASHA

He must've wanted me to get paid for them. If only I could remember what his thing was.

VERGIE

When I called, I had to listen to various messages from women before I got to Debbie.

SASHA

That's how they promote the operators.

VERGIE

I'm glad my dad had you to talk to that day.

SASHA

I am too.

VERGIE

I've already taken up too much of your time. If my brother wanted to talk to you, would that be okay?

SASHA

Of course.

VERGIE

Thank you Sasha.

SASHA

You're welcome Vergie.

VERGIE

Byebye.

SASHA

Bye.

INT. SUBURBAN HOME - GARAGE - DAY

Vergie looks around at the mess. She puts photos back in a box with her dad's phone bill on top. She closes the box.

INT. SASHA'S HOME - KITCHEN - REFRIGERATOR - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Sasha pulls out a bag of carrots and a LARGE RED ONION.

Her son KEVIN, 10, a vivacious happy child runs in with his backpack on, returning from school.

KEVIN

Mom! I only need help with math and history, then can I go outside?

SASHA

You go ahead and play baby, mamas running behind on dinner. Dad'll be home soon. He can help you then.

Kevin runs out excited. Sasha chops the red onion, then looks out the window. Kevin runs around the yard with TWO FRIENDS. A lone tear falls from Sasha's eye.

INT./EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - GARAGE - DAY

Vergie scans the messy garage one last time. She takes a deep breath and releases it. She pulls the garage door shut with a loud thud.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END