

FOREIGN







LOGLINE

A love story between two women from different nationalities exposes America's broken immigration system.



SYNOPSIS



JULIA SOUZA (late 20's), an aspiring Brazilian singer, completes her week of training as a waitress at The Pub - a popular bar in Brooklyn. After her shift, DAVIS (50's), the bar owner, calls her into his office to further discuss the job. He digs into personal questions and, knowing that Julia is undocumented, discloses how she could buy a fake social security number. Although aware that a refusal jeopardizes her chance of getting the job, Julia denies his offer. Furious with her attitude, Davis gets aggressive and assaults her. Jobless and shaken, she roams the streets of Brooklyn until she reaches her apartment.

The next day, after a few unsuccessful attempts to land a new job, Julia goes to her favorite nightclub, La Espera Latino Club. She tries to forget about the assault on the dance floor but dancing is not enough. At the end of the night, Julia hooks up with a woman in the bathroom. The casual sex makes her feel briefly alive. On her way home from the club, Julia notices Laurie, a charming local restaurant. Inside, BARBARA (50's), sits by herself, stirring her drink.

Julia wakes up and decides to try her chance and see if Laurie has any job openings. There, she meets GIA (20's), the bartender, who tells her that the owner is looking for a new waitress. During their interview, Julia recognizes Barbara as the woman drinking by herself from the night before. Julia reveals her immigration status, and Barbara hires her under the table. At home, Julia shares the good news with her beloved roommate IAN, (40's) a queer visual artist who once was a successful Drag Queen.



Julia befriends Barbara. Their realities couldn't be more different, but the chemistry between them is palpable. After a hectic night at Laurie, Barbara stays to help Julia close the restaurant. The two are a little tipsy when Barbara kisses Julia, who, taken by surprise, politely excuses herself.

The next morning, Barbara calls Julia into her office, and before she starts to apologize, Julia initiates another kiss. The two women make love and begin to live a profound story. Barbara tells Julia she's a divorcée and a mom. Julia confides that she moved to New York to pursue a career as a singer, but her aspirations have faded.

Julia doesn't tell Barbara about all her past ghosts, so when Davis shows up at Laurie and Barbara introduces him as an old friend, Julia panics and leaves in the middle of her shift.

She finally opens up to Barbara, revealing that Davis assaulted her. Furious, Barbara, confronts him. She investigates ways to regularize Julia's status and learns that marriage is an option. As their love grows, a new turn of events shifts their focus. RICHARD (60's), Barbara's landlord who is selling the building where Laurie is located, has found a potential buyer: Davis.

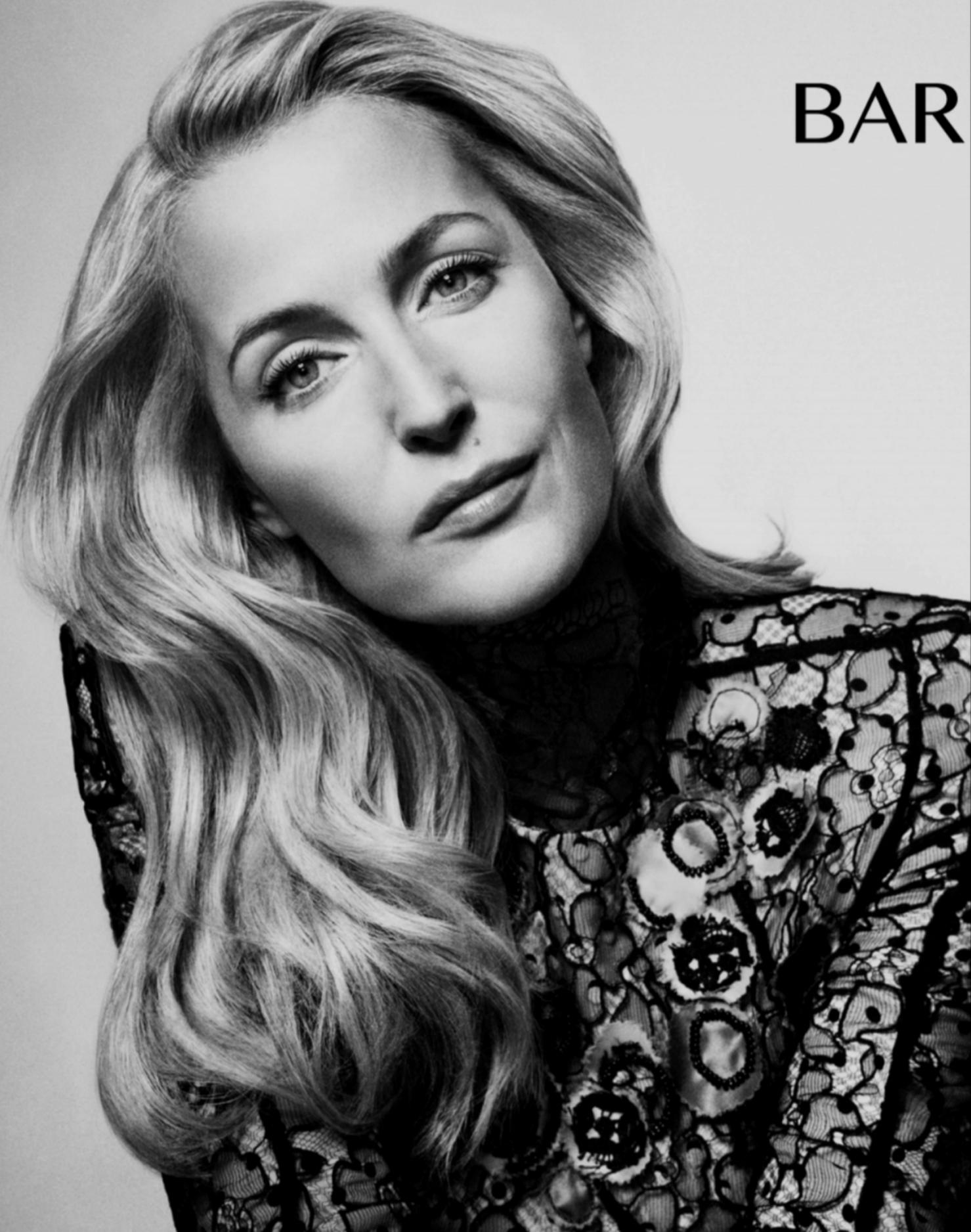
Barbara and Julia take the courage to expose Davis to Richard, in hopes Richard will discontinue negotiations with him. In doing so, they find out that Richard has already sold the building to someone else.

Vindictive and unsure if Julia has been publicly defaming him, Davis denounces her to Immigration and Customs Enforcement. As Barbara waits for Julia in her apartment to celebrate Richard's decision, ICE officers knock at Julia's door, detaining her. She now faces deportation.



JULIA

BARBARA





IAN



DAVIS





VISUAL STYLE

VISUAL STYLE







THEMES

IMMIGRATION

EXT. JULIA'S BUILDING — CONTINUOUS

Julia looks. She realizes what's going on, sprints. OFFICER 1 catches her. Julia slips out of his grasp and escapes. OFFICER 2 knocks her down. BACKPACK drops. Julia on the floor. Preventing her from screaming, the men drag her away. Stillness on an empty, dimly lit street. The leaves dance with the wind, welcoming the fall.



LGBTQ+

INT. LAURIE — BASEMENT — BARBARA'S OFFICE — DAY

They stare at each other. Something shared in the look. Julia kisses her. Barbara kisses her back. Julia's eyes wander down to Barbara's skirt. She unbuttons Barbara's blouse and slides her mouth down Barbara's belly. Julia is low enough and kneels down. She kisses over Barbara's skirt and slips her hands under it. Julia lies on the floor and removes her top. Barbara's body is pulled in her direction. Barbara on top of her. Julia embraces her. They make love.

INT. JULIA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Pop music on, it's a party! Julia and Ian drink WINE and dance. They both suddenly walk really 'campy' and act extravagantly. Ian keeps his head high and sips his drink. After a glamorous spin, Julia spills her wine, and they both laugh. The mess can't stop them!



LGBTQ+



INT. THE PUB - DAVIS' OFFICE - NIGHT

As Julia backs away. He grabs her by the neck and pins her against the wall. She fights him. He throws her back against the wall. Julia hits her head. Freezes.

***Foreign* unveils, through the love story between two women – a young Brazilian and a middle-aged American – the meaning of the "other", in this case, the foreigner.**

***L'enfer, c'est les autres.* The famous Jean-Paul Sartre's sentence talks about our tendency to see others as responsible for transforming our private world into public hell. Such idea dialogues with the persecutory illusion, which, for instance, triggered terrible historical events like the Holocaust. Building on that idea, Toni Morrison, in *The Origin of Others*, states that "Language can encourage, even mandate, surrender, the breach of distances among us, whether they are continental or on the same pillow, whether they are distances of culture or the distinctions and indistinctions of age or gender, whether they are the consequences of social invention or biology"**

To direct *Júlia's* journey is to dig into my own experience as a Brazilian woman. In *Foreign*, we leave behind the portrait of suffering housemaids, and the overused story of the virile, macho immigrant. The film investigates the delicate and "subtle" life of an immigrant. A life that consists of happy moments and romantic ties. *Foreign* reinforces Ai Weiwei's idea that "nationality and borders are human-created barriers to our intelligence and all other sorts of possibilities."

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT