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Dear White People

By Justin Simien

ANCHOR :

A "race war" has erupted at one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious institutions.

Glued to this are our story's subjects, who we meet in...

2 A SERIES OF SHOTS 2

TROY FAIRBANKS, 21, Black. He drags a brush through his finger waves anxiously. The look of guilt is the only mark of imperfection in his privileged and chiseled demeanor.

ANCHOR (O.S.)

Outrage over an "African American

Themed" party organized by

predominately white students of Manchester University has resulted in rioting and property damages.

2A KURT FLETCHER, 21, white. No sympathy in his jaded blue eyes as he watches on an iPad in a lavish parlor room.

2A

ANCHOR (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Guests were invited to "liberate

their inner Negro, fry up chicken,

enjoy a sugar water concoction known as Purple drank and wear oversized Barack Obama T-shirts."

2B COLANDREA CONNERS (COCO), 20, Black with blue contacts adjusts the straight bangs of her weave to better see the small TV in her dorm. A smirk on her glossy pink lips.

2B

*

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Officials claim an investigation is underway to find those responsible for the event and subsequent riot.

2C SAMANTHA WHITE (SAM) 21, records the broadcast in an edit bay.

Despite her light skin, the Afro pick in her fro pompadour leaves little doubt she identifies as Black.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

In an effort to address diversity issues, the school appointed African American scholar Dr. Walter

Fairbanks as Dean of Students.

2D LIONEL HIGGINS, 20, Black, watches through dark rimmed

glasses in a bustling indifferent Dining Hall. A guilt pain his otherwise boyish face.

2.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Last year the Dean's office celebrated slight gains in diverse applicants but with many now calling for Fairbanks' resignation, that may have been pre-mature.

2E

DEAN WALTER FAIRBANKS, a well adorned Black man in his 2E 50's fights a panic as he watches in a stately office.

ANCHOR (CONT'D)

Up next, a cat that loves to water ski? That and more after the break.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

How could this happen?

TITLE CARD:

3

EXT. MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY - DAY 3

This sprawling impressive mix of Colonial, Gothic and Modern architecture is presented like a living brochure.

SUPERIMPOSE:

As we cut through the living brochure, we're presented with groups and programs. Their CRESTS and titles SUPERIMPOSED.

SERIES OF SHOTS - TOP ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

3A

White kids with "Trump" blazers and glares - DESMOND 3A SCHOOL OF BUSINESS.

3B

Kids with dark eye circles and unkempt hair stand before 3B the BING SCHOOL OF HISTORY.

3C

A cluster of skinny jeans and expressive hands before the 3C GOODMAN MEDIA SCHOOL. ONE BLACK KID stands in the back.

SAM (V.O.)

Dear White People. The minimum requirement of Black friends needed to not seem racist has just been raised to two.

4

INT. STUDIO BOOTH - DAY 4

Samantha White (Sam) watches the campus through a one way window with the cool but knowing gaze of someone much older. She gets off on sensing and pushing buttons - with a

subversive delivery style that borders on deadpan.

SUPERIMPOSE:

3.
SAM (CONT'D)
Sorry, but your weed man Tyrone
does not count.
She fades in JAZZ on her control board and leans back to
address a box of pamphlet sized books bearing the title
"EBONY AND IVY: A SURVIVAL GUIDE." One by one she scribbles
her autograph on the books.

5
EXT. ELLINGTON LIBRARY - DAY 5
SERIES OF SHOTS - NATIONALLY RENOWNED STUDENT GROUPS
Disheveled caffeinated writers of the MANCHESTER BUGLE.

5A
Casual Prepsters shoot us the finger - PASTICHE HUMOR INC.5A

5B
Hopping out of a taxi is Lionel Higgins. His sweet but 5B
insecure nature as plain as the unkempt fro on his head.

SUPERIMPOSE:

STUDENTS shove past him - one even slaps a flyer into his
already full hands. Lionel's a guppy. The kind that gets
eaten alive in a tank of sharks.
As Lionel gets to the door of a large Colonial style home he
checks his pockets. He's missing something. Shit.

LIONEL :

(knocking)
Kurt! You home?
Lionel dials on his cell and we hear the PHONE RING from
inside. Voicemail pops on with a voice other than Lionel's.
ANSWERING MACHINE
Hey boyssss, you've reached Lionel
Higginsss, the only bitch on
campussss who'll give you a
dickssscunt. That's right hunty,
the bigger the dick the less you'll
have to pay me to sssuck it.
The beep sounds. Lionel's in shock. Should he hang up? Or...

LIONEL :

Kurt. It's Lionel. I'm locked out.

As Lionel slides down the length of the door into a sit he unfolds the flyer he was just handed. It's a rendering of Sam White on a carton of milk with the caption:

"MISSING BLACK CULTURE -SAM WHITE TO BRING IT BLACK"

4.

6

EXT. MANCHESTER ROW - DAY 6

Signs scream out "ORIENTATION" as jazz music wafts from the laptops of a group of NEO BEATNIKS. As the music fades...

SAM (O.S.)

Dear White People, apparently Morgan Freeman in "Deep Impact" wasn't enough. Despite two terms Obama could cure Cancer and somewhere White folks will be embroiled in protest. And he's only half Black.

GABE, 24, white and ruggedly handsome in spite of his shaggy hair and "laundry day" flip flop clad ensemble, catches the end of this as he passes - grabs his cell phone and dials...

7

INT. STUDIO BOOTH - DAY 7

...Sam presses a button next to a red light on her controls.

SAM :

Talk to me.

INTERCUT with Gabe walking about on campus.

GABE:

What would you say if someone started a Dear Black People?

SAM:

(recognizing the voice)

No need. Mass media from Fox News to reality tv on VH1 makes it clear what white people think of us.

8

EXT. MANCHESTER COURT - DAY 8

SERIES OF SHOTS - POPULAR RESIDENCE HALLS

Manchester's white and rich elite before BECHET HOUSE.

8A

Athletes of many disciplines before WEBSTER HOUSE. 8A

8B

An eclectic group of Black students with some Latinos and 8B
a sprinkling of whites before ARMSTRONG / PARKER HOUSE.

COCO (V.O.)

I'm fucking pissed...

5.

11 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 11

Colandrea Connors (Coco) trains her unnaturally blue eyes
right at us from a Youtube page pulled up on an iPad. She's
got an entitled air about her. Even her cusses sound erudite.

COCO (YOUTUBE)

...I am! The whole point of
randomized housing is to mix shit
up. I'm out here trying to find the
Olivier to my Halle Berry, and
they've got me looking like an
extra on a Different World...

The video ends with a click. Looking up is HELMUT WEST, a
30's something Black man in dark rimmed glasses and trendy
everything. Too stylish for this place. If he's impressed,
it's barely perceptible.

HELMUT :

You call your Youtube show "Doing
Time at an Ivy League?"

He stares right at Coco, there in the flesh.

COCO :

In my second year of a four year
sentence. Wanted to go to New York.

SUPERIMPOSE:

HELMUT :

Yeah? And do what?

COCO :

Things my mama taught me not to.
You know get in a lot of trouble
and become famous for it. But alas
I didn't get into Tisch...

HELMUT :

Armstrong / Parker? That your
rooming assignment?

COCO :

Traditionally it's where the
hopelessly Afrocentric gather to
process their guilt over not going
to an HBCU.

(off Helmut's look)

Where the Negros be at.

HELMUT :

That's not where you want to be?
6.

COCO :

Bechet House is more my style.

HELMUT :

With the rich white kids.

COCO :

Excuse me?

HELMUT :

What part of Chicago you from?

COCO :

Hyde Park.

HELMUT :

What street?

COCO :

Seventy Eighth and --

HELMUT :

-- Seventy Eighth is Southside
sweetheart. And you know what they
say. You can take the girl out the
hood but --

COCO :

-- Ain't nothing hood about me.

HELMUT :

Thanks so much for coming in.
Coco gets up to leave. Tries to recover.

COCO :

So what's this show about anyway?

HELMUT :

Here's the way reality works
sweetheart, I'm the producer. I ask
the questions. Be in touch.
And with that Helmut hustles Coco out. He sits and ponders
before unmuting his iPad.

SAM (O.S.)

Dear White People I am here to
burst your post-racial little
bubble.

(MORE)

7.

SAM (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Yes Oprah may have her own network,
but Ann Coulter is still writing
best sellers, Black kids are still
getting shot for wearing hoodies,
and even here the few vestiges of
Black culture are under attack by
conservative groups, trustees and
yes our very own President
Fletcher.

Helmut double checks his app fighting a genuine grin.

HELMUT :

This is the school radio?

13 INT. ARMSTRONG / PARKER HALL - DAY 13

A pristine pair of Retro Jordans make their way through the
halls of Armstrong / Parker where Black students have lively
debates, flirt and bump the student radio.

SAM (O.S.)

Dear White People, thanks to the
new process of randomizing housing
assignments for Sophomores, some of
you may be jarred by an assignment
to Armstrong/Parker house.

The owner of the Jordans is revealed as Troy Fairbanks.

TROY :

Someone turn that trash off.

SUPERIMPOSE:

Even with his post workout sweat he looks like the cover of Jet. Troy exudes "approachable homie" as he spots a small group of WHITE SOPHOMORES who walk timidly down the hall.

TROY (CONT'D)

Newbies right?

The white sophomores nod their heads yes.

TROY (CONT'D)

Welcome to Armstrong / Parker, home of the dopest dining hall in all of Manchester. I'm Troy, Head of House.

SOPHOMORE :

What's up my brother?

8.

SAM (O.S.)

When encountering a Black person try and stay calm. Don't say things like "what's up" and "my brotha" That's not how you normally talk.

TROY :

Ya'll take care. Nice Jordan's bro.

Coco and SOFIA FLETCHER, a dewy-eyed, pink lipped brunette who exudes a kind of sexy boredom saunter down the halls.

SOFIA :

Your hair is so cute B. T. Dubs.

COCO :

You're so cute.

SOFIA :

Is it weaved?

Coco's face is a battle between fury and polite surprise.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

I saw "Good Hair" in Afro studies.

COCO :

(moving on)

Hey what house did you get?

SOFIA :

Huh? Oh Bechet bitch.

COCO :

Of course. The mere thought of a Fletcher anywhere else...

SOFIA :

Easy, it was the luck of the draw.
Daddy had nothing to do with it.
Coco rolls her eyes behind a smile.
SOFIA (CONT'D)

And honestly, if I had to pick
anywhere to be it'd be here.
Sofia eyes the delicious morsels of chocolate boys about.

COCO :

I'm down to switch if you are. You
get your Denzel. I get my Gosling.
9.

SOFIA :

Oh I got mines. Want to meet him?
They turn the corner to spot Troy greeting more new
Sophomores. Coco's caught off guard by his looks.

COCO :

Cute...
(off Sofia's jealous
glance)
...for a Black boy.
Troy sees Sofia and flashes his trademark grin. They kiss.

SOFIA :

Hey boo. This is my friend Coco.
She's new to the house.

TROY :

Hey I'm Troy. Welcome to Armstrong
/ Parker, home of the dopest --

SOFIA :

-- Are we on duty?

TROY :

Head of House is always on duty.

COCO :

Nice to meet you. I should get settled. Thanks Sof!

Sofia and Troy smile as Coco turns to go - and continue down the hallway. Coco sneaks one last glance at Troy's ass.

TROY :

Think I got time for a quick cut?

SOFIA :

You got it cut last week.

TROY :

It's a Black thing babe.

SOFIA :

Since when is OCD a Black thang?

TROY :

Don't say "thang" like that.

SOFIA :

Besides you've got a shift at the Politicos booth, then a shift at Orientation, then your advisor --
10.

TROY :

-- I'll just wear a hat.

SOFIA :

Then a movie maybe? Just us?

TROY :

Election night. Babe, come on.

Sofia holds her tongue. Troy ignores this as he spots...

TROY (CONT'D)

Yo, Kurt my man.

14 DINING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 14

...Kurt Fletcher - flanked by guys who share his cynical knowing glare. We recognize them from the "Pastiche" portrait from before.

As they chow down on Mac & Cheese in the Dining Hall - Kurt's glare burns particularly hot towards Troy who waves at him.

KURT :

Sis.

Sofia smiles at her brother Kurt. Troy covers the sting of his dismissal.

They both spot Sam's "Missing: Black culture" flyers.

TROY :

Is she kidding with this?

SOFIA :

You don't have to run again. Just because it's her doesn't mean -

TROY :

-- I can't let Sam and her wannabe Black Panthers take the House. The House needs me. This is who I am.

SOFIA :

It's who he wants you to be.

Troy smiles over his irritation. This is an old fight.

TROY :

Oh so you pick up a Psych class you think you Freud or something? Huh?

SOFIA :

A Freud reference. Sophisticated.

11.

TROY :

(seducing)

Fine Beck, Jung, Maslow...

Troy gets a kiss out of her as they pass a booth featuring stacks of Sam's "EBONY & IVY." The booth is manned by REGGIE, 21, Black - his fro top and preppy punk attire is both bohemian and radical.

Troy glares at Sam's picture on the book. It's on. There's a

history between Sam and Troy. Off Reggie's laptop we hear...

SAM (O.S.)

Dear White People, this just in.

Dating a Black person to piss off
your parents is a form of racism.

Sofia walks off as Troy hears snickers from around him.

REGGIE :

Yo Troy I forget. Is your major in
shucking or was it jiving?

TROY :

My major's in Jive. Minorin in
Shuck. You're still majoring in
trying to fuck my left overs right?

Troy walks off as Reggie and Kurt watch him join Sofia.

SOFIA :

You need a shower.

15 INT. TROY'S BATHROOM - DAY 15

Water runs while Troy takes a hit of weed from a pipe over
the toilet. He blows the smoke out an open window through a
paper towel tube with a dryer sheet attached to its end. He
jots something down on a notepad as he whispers...

TROY :

You went from ODB to Trey Songz...

16 INT. ARMSTRONG/PARKER DINING HALL - NIGHT 16

The hall is packed with STUDENTS - stylish and mostly Black.
Helmut West watches from the back.

TROY :

Artie, you know your success ratio
with the ladies went up like thirty
percent after I started edging you
up dog, come on. You went from ODB
to Trey Songz!

12.

The audience is in STITCHES at this last line. Everyone
except Sam, Reggie and their crew of afro'd bohemian
disciples (who we'll call the BOFROS). Sam records the
proceedings with a vintage Super 8 camera.

REGGIE :

That's his platform? Haircuts?

SAM :

Oofta is as Oofta does.

Coco, sneaks through the door. She's got the eyes of Helmut on her. What is he doing here? As Coco breaks eye contact she sits in the only open spot next to...

SAM (CONT'D)

Just because we're colored don't mean we run on colored people time.

COCO :

Boycotting hot combs don't make you an expert on "colored people" boo.

Coco wafts her silky hair over her shoulders and sits.

TROY :

No but seriously, I care about you guys. I care about this house. We had a great year last year and if it ain't broke...

Troy basks in his applause. Coco eats him up with her eyes. Sam doesn't want to get up - her breathing gets heavier.

REGGIE :

Just pretend like you're in the booth. Just you and the mic.

SAM :

Hate this shit.

As Sam gets up and passes Troy -

TROY :

You really think you can take this from me?

SAM :

Troy we live in a world where there's a Big Momma's House 3. I don't have a chance in hell. Thank God.

13.

Sam grabs the mic. Her voice shakes before the silent crowd.

SAM (CONT'D)

Troy my brother, it's broke.

The BoFros cheer and make noise on each line.

SAM (CONT'D)

Troy's a legacy kid. And yet it's under his watch that Armstrong / Parker, the bastion of Black culture here was gutted. By the Randomization of Housing Act. Second years of color no longer have a say in where they go. The culture that's been fostered in this house for two decades will be wiped out in two years.

Troy looks to see if the speech is working. As Sam warms up -

SAM (CONT'D)

This wasn't motivated by a desire to mix things up. Bring about racial and socioeconomic harmony. No, the Black kids are sitting together in the proverbial cafeteria and they must be up to no good.

Coco's eyes are in the back of her head.

SAM (CONT'D)

We sit together to protect ourselves. Over a century of houses grouped by sports affiliations, political leanings, majors, you name it. Black folks get their own house, suddenly we got a problem?

Students look at each other stunned. Are they turning? Sam delivers the next one directly at Sofia and Troy.

SAM (CONT'D)

This Act doesn't affect the other houses like it does ours. There are plenty of trustees, former coaches, and presidents watching out for the others. All we have is a Dean who'd rather please his massa -

TROY :

-- Yo that's enough of that Sam --

14.

SAM:

-- then stand up for his own. Look, I know ya'll ain't voting for me. Ya'll ain't ready and I didn't come here for that. The Black Student Union and I have brought a petition to repeal the Randomization of Housing Act. I plan on bringing it to the President and together we can bring Black back to Manchester. It'll be by the door.

Sam sits as claps trickle from the crowd. The BoFros go crazy -give her daps and all sorts of praise.

MARTIN, 20, a gentle erudite giant of a football player with neat braids tucked under a Fedora raises a hand.

MARTIN:

I assume everyone has the app I created by now?

REGGIE :

(aside)

It's a child's app...

MARTIN :

Good. Voting may commence.

Everyone takes out smart phones. Reggie hides his from view as he punches something in.

Troy spots the white Sophomores he greeted from before who give him a head nod. Troy's got this. After a moment...

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Okay. Looks like we've got ourselves a winner.

(devastated)

Sam White?

The blood drains from Sam's face and Troy's smile plummets into the floor as the two turn to look at each other.

TROY & SAM

Oh shit.

Reggie's grin is from ear to ear as Helmut walks over and slips a card to a still stunned Sam. Coco watches him go.

17 INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT 17

Right on the heels of Helmut's exit is...

15.

COCO :

So that's what you're looking for?

HELMUT :

I'm looking for good TV sister.

COCO :

I think I'd be good TV.

HELMUT :

You're at a great school, getting a great education. Be good at that.

COCO :

I am. And when I graduate early with an Economics degree from Manchester it will be the crowning achievement of my Black middle class parents' ambitions.

HELMUT :

Conflict is a commodity in my industry. Sam's got it. Do you?

COCO :

So you want me to start a fight.

HELMUT:

(exactly)

I don't want you to do anything you wouldn't otherwise do.

Helmut hands her his card. A fire sparks in Coco as he exits. He contemplates her. Fights a growing smile.

18 INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY 18

A fireplace rages behind Lionel who stares at the floor while the message plays over speaker phone.

SPEAKER :

...bigger the dick the less you'll have to pay me to sssuck it.

Dean Fairbank's mind ticks away behind a concerned glare.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Most everything's locked up, but we'll find another residence to move you to. Third time's a charm. (off Lionel's sigh)
What about Armstrong / Parker?
16.

LIONEL :

I don't know...

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

I might have an opening. Maybe it'd be good to be around...you know.

LIONEL :

Dean. The worst thing about high school, and believe me it was a long list, were the Black kids.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Maybe it's in your head. Sure, sometimes our folks can be intolerant around people like you.
Homo --

LIONEL :

-- I don't believe in labels.
Fairbanks just smiles. This is a sore spot and he backs off. Lionel glares up at a poster above Fairbank's desk: Students of all races on the steps of Ellington Library including Troy with the phrase "MANCHESTER: WHERE YOU BELONG" printed below. Troy's huge smile seems to mock him.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

You like jazz Lionel? Manchester's like jazz you know.

LIONEL :

This is a research school.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

And jazz is tension. The interplay of improvised solos all creating one song. Your problem is you've

got no instrument. No major, no affiliations, no solo son.

LIONEL :

I submit articles to the Independent Observer.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

No one reads the Independent Observer, my point is are you playing swing or bebop?

LIONEL :

You're mixing metaphors.
17.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Are you a sax or are you a trumpet?

LIONEL :

I hate jazz.
Fairbanks checks his watch. All out of ideas.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

I'll do what I can. Not a word of this in the Observer okay?

LIONEL :

What's it matter? No one reads it.

19 EXT. MANCHESTER - DAY 19

Lionel walks alone through the buzzing campus. He looks out to..

...a group of BLACK KIDS. He sees a version of himself amongst them - his hair a finger waved Ceasar fade, as he trades "No Homo's" with the others.

Lionel shakes it off. Peers over to a group of out and proud gay kids and sees a version of himself amongst them - his hair straightened and coifed in a fitted shirt laughing. Not right either. Where does he fit? By surprise...

GEORGE :

Lionel right?

GEORGE PIERCE, 24, an intellectual whose tattooed quotes from Nietzsche peek out seductively from under his button up.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

George. We had Civ last semester?

How you doing?

LIONEL :

Grood...Gate...I'm ah..

GEORGE :

Fan of your stuff. In the Observer?

LIONEL :

No one reads the Observer.

GEORGE :

You seen this?

George hands Lionel Sam's "Missing Black Culture" flyer.

18.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

The residents of Armstrong / Parker

just made her head of house. Am I

crazy or is there a there there?

LIONEL :

What made you come over here?

George holds up Sam's "Ebony & Ivy." Lionel takes it.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

I mean I'm glad you came -

GEORGE :

-- My staff? God bless them.

They're whiter than Michael

Jackson's kids. We're fucked if

anyone of them writes this story

and I will not let the transfers at

the Gazette do it first.

LIONEL :

The oldest one has his face.

GEORGE :

You're in the Black Student Union.

You probably know Sam.

Lionel shakes his head "yes" and "no" at the same time.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

You come up with a good angle? I want it in the Bugle.
Lionel eyes the bold "Bugle" logo on George's shirt.

LIONEL :

(aside)
Trumpet...

GEORGE :

Bugle. Focus. The only paper on campus with a national subscription base and an Advisor from the New York Times? Only so many ways a person can distinguish themselves at a place like this Lionel. You're good. You belong with us.
The way Lionel fights the smile creeping up his face - we know he's never heard these words. Never belonged any place. Doesn't hurt there's a handsome boy smiling at him either.
19.

20 INT. ARMSTRONG/PARKER DINING HALL - DAY 20

Troy and Sam sit across from each other at a table. Their opposite facing laptops and a world of tension put a wall between them.

TROY :

Get it yet?
Sam shakes her head yes.

TROY (CONT'D)

Good. You've now got the shared calendar, contacts, and official email.

Troy throws a smirk her way before pulling out a thick stack of papers.

TROY (CONT'D)

Oh and before I forget.

SAM :

Event requests for the year?

TROY :

Just this month. They need your approval. Also don't forget to pick your office hours. At least 20 per

week.

SAM :

That's absurd.

TROY :

You're in charge of a hundred residents now. And they need time to complain to your face. About noise. Leaky pipes. Gluten free options in the cafeteria. Etcetera.

SAM :

Troy. I didn't think I was going to win.

TROY :

And by the way petitioning the President on the Randomization of Housing Act isn't gonna do shit. None of the other houses are concerned.
20.

SAM:

Because they all have a legacy of rich and powerful allies on the board who will make sure that "random" works out to their advantage.

TROY:

And you think a petition is going to change that?

Troy gets up to leave as Reggie sits - suspicious. Sam's

phone buzzes:

21 INT. ARMSTRONG / PARKER - DAY 21

Lionel steps his way through the hall, a deer in headlights with a notepad. He flips through Sam's "EBONY & IVY" book...

SAM (V.O.)

The Armstrong / Parker dining hall is the epicenter of Black culture as it stands at Manchester. Only

here can you commiserate, celebrate
and discuss everything from Kanye
West lyrics to theoretical
relativism all in one sitting. Not
to mention find someone who can
actually do your hair.

ARMSTRONG / PARKER DINING HALL - CONTINUOUS

Lionel enters and takes a place in a line. He absorbs this
lively and somewhat alien dining hall.

Troy now holds court near the windows at a table of eight or
so friends including Martin and SUNGMI, a lip ringed Korean
art major.

MARTIN:

"We wuz robbed." That election was
suspect man.

Martin glares at Reggie and his giant souped-up Laptop. Sam
breaks this by sitting back down - her phone call ending.

SAM:

You call me the minute there's an
update. Love you too mom.

Sam hangs up. The call's really put her in a bad place. She
sits at a table of her Bofros - who we'll name by their hair.
21.

CURLS :

There is one other sister in my
Relativity class, I'll be damned if
our professor doesn't call me
Laretta every God damn time.

DREADS :

We all look the same.

REGGIE :

Programming professor gets me and
Martin here mixed up constantly.

MARTIN :

You should be so lucky.
Reggie glances over at Martin's Mac Air.

REGGIE :

Cute. You get that at Toys R Us?

Sam pulls out her Mac and her student ID card.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

You still using your ID number?

SAM :

I always forget passwords.

REGGIE :

You are begging to get hacked.

SAM :

Good thing the one evil techno-genius thinking like that is on my side.

Sam pushes aside all the paperwork on her table.

SAM (CONT'D)

So this is what the revolution looks like? Office hours and paperwork.

Sam pulls her camera out - starts to shoot the room.

REGGIE :

Winning was a happy accident. We want the reform repealed right?

CURLS :

Means to an end, sister.

22.

Sam feels the heat of her disciples' eyes on her as the topic of the day rages on with the entrance of Coco, who sits with a group of well manicured hot-ironed group of girls, white and Black.

COCO :

The talented tenth always has to bust its ass a little bit harder, but I don't see the benefit in blaming white folks for everything.

CURLS :

Who's blaming?

TROY :

I don't see the issue. I never had one. Never ran into any lynch mobs. Lionel takes a seat alone facing the action. Kurt and crew enter with plates of mac and cheese and sit in the heart of the conversation. Lionel avoids eye contact.

SAM :

Lynch mob is still there. Just re-branded itself.

TROY :

As what pray tell?

REGGIE :

The Republican party.

SAM :

Want to know how this world sees you? Go to a Young Republican's meeting and bring up Welfare.

SUNGMI :

Or Immigration.

LIONEL :

(aside)

Or gay equality.

KURT :

Bullshit.

MARTIN :

I agree. Got something to add?

KURT :

The biggest athletes, movie stars, hell your president is Black.

(MORE)

23.

KURT (CONT'D)

Sometimes I think the hardest thing to be in the American work force right now is an educated white guy.

SUNGMI :

You're not serious.

KURT :

You guys still got affirmative action, you're set.

REGGIE :

This shit.

SAM :

What are you doing in here?

KURT :

Obama. Leader of the free world got into Harvard on affirmative action. Know who's not president right now? The guy that didn't get in.

SAM :

On behalf of the colored folks in the room, let me apologize for all the better qualified white students whose place we're taking up. Kurt chuckles - a bit turned on by the argument. SAM (CONT'D)
You get lost? Bechet is that way.

KURT :

Yeah but what other dining hall gives you chicken and waffles? Dear White People right? Funny stuff. How haven't we staffed you yet?

SAM :

On Pastiche? Your uninspired humor magazine?

KURT :

We're a lot more than a magazine sweetie. SNL staff is basically half Lampoon, half Pastiche. Just like the network comedies. A flash of envy comes over Troy and Coco.

24.

SAM :

What gives you Clubhouse kids the right to come to our Dining Hall?
Kurt eats an exaggerated scoop of mac and cheese.
SAM (CONT'D)
You don't live here.

MARTIN :

Sam? What are you doing?

SAM :

You can't eat here.
Kurt eyes this new adversary. Enjoys a good challenge.

TROY :

Chill Sam damn. Let the man-
KURT & SAM
-- I got this.

KURT :

Who are you to put me out?

SAM:

(realizing)
I'm the Head of this house. And I'm doing things my way.
Sam shoots this last one to Martin. Kurt rolls his eyes to which Sam slams his tray to the ground.
Lionel scribbles down notes furiously on a notepad.

KURT :

You got any idea who you're -

SAM :

-- Yeah, I know who your daddy is. The same one who's been pushing to break up this House for a decade. What's wrong? Is he scared letting the Negroes gather in groups might start a rebellion on the plantation? You tell him from me...he should be.

Kurt looks into Sam's eyes and then his crew. They want out.

KURT :

Bad move.

25.

Kurt leads his crew out of the dining hall drawing a slight snicker from Lionel which draws Sam's eyes right to him. Something sparks in Lionel. He takes out his phone and texts

to GEORGE:

SAM :

You too.

LIONEL :

Me?

SAM :

Is this your house?

Lionel sinks - the eyes of everyone in the room on him.

Sam sits back down as a trickle of claps grow to a steady applause. Troy and his table look around baffled.

By the caution on Sam's face it seems the first time she's ever heard this sound directed at her.

A slight envy boils in Coco.

One last look to the room from Lionel before he slips out.

Locked out again.

23 INT. COCO'S ROOM - DAY 23

Coco scrolls Sam's "Dear White People" Youtube page. 75K Subscribers. She presses play on the latest video.

SAM (O.S.)

Dear White People, stop dancing.

Two seconds. 600K views.

COCO :

The fuck?

Coco exits and opens her own "TIME AT AN IVY LEAGUE" page. 2K subscribers. Her latest video is at 10K views. Alright... She presses record. Let's the camera rest on her briefly...

COCO (CONT'D)

Muffins. I hate to do it, but Imma have to get real Black with you.

(comes to mind)

So the other day, a girl had the

nerve to fix her mouth and ask me
if my hair was weaved.

(after a moment)

Weaved. Weaved bitch?

(MORE)

26.

COCO (CONT'D)

First of all if you're going to fix
your mouth to ask me something like
that, say it right please? It's
weave. Noun. Present tense. Second
of all don't assume just because
you see a sister with some hair
it's a weave. Is it? Clearly. If a
bitch could grow straight Indian
hair directly out her own head I
wouldn't have just overdrafted my
account paying for this shit but
that ain't your business. Are those
your lips sweetie? Sweet heart is
that really your skin? These white
girls and these tans I swear to
God, they're starting to look
darker than me.

Coco pauses it. Her mouse hovers over the check box next to
"private." Instead she plays it back...and hits "publish."
She clicks back through to Sam's last video and hits "reply."
As the red light on her computer's web cam turns green...

COCO (CONT'D)

Dear White People. What do I think
about it?

24 INT. SCREENING ROOM - DAY 24

Sam with arms folded watches as Gabe (Sam's caller from
earlier) presses play on a DVD. Horrified students watch...
...a Black and white 1920's style silent movie, complete with
Dialogue Cards and dramatic PIANO MUSIC.

SERIES OF SHOTS - ON THE SCREEN

- A) OBAMA speaks at a debate
- B) DIALOGUE CARD: "We are the change that we seek."
- C) A FAMILY in white-face go ape-shit
- D) DIALOGUE CARD: "HE'S READING OFF A TELEPROMPTER!!!!!!"
- E) More intercut footage of Obama speaking with actors in
white-face reacting. Until...
- F) DIALOGUE CARD: OBAMA WINS A SECOND TERM!

G) A WHITE-FACE CROWD goes nuts in the streets - scream into camera - loot buildings and shoot themselves in the head.

27.

H) Dialogue Card: "FIN"

PROFESSOR BODKIN, late 40s, with a "seen it all before" demeanor hides a grin and lets the room settle.

PROFESSOR BODKIN

Okay. Does anyone have any comments for Sam's "Rebirth of a Nation?"

All of the kids are too scared to comment. Except...

PROFESSOR BODKIN (CONT'D)

Gabe, go ahead.

GABE :

I dig the "silent movie" thing, but it's a little self-congratulatory.

Light on story and frankly thematically dubious.

PROFESSOR BODKIN

Okay. Anybody else?

SAM :

What?

SAME PLACE - MOMENTS LATER

As students filter out of the class...

PROFESSOR BODKIN

Sam?

SAM :

Before you say anything might I remind you that I sat through Birth of A Nation, Gone With The Wind, and Tarantino week without protest.

PROFESSOR BODKIN

And might I remind you that I read all fifteen pages of your unsolicited essay on why Gremlins is actually about suburban white fear of Black culture.

SAM :

The Gremlins are loud, talk in slang, are addicted to fried chicken and freak out when you get

their hair wet.

28.

PRESIDENT BODKIN

My only problem with your movie is that it was late. The silent projects were last semester Sam. You were supposed to have emailed your sound treatment over Summer.

SAM :

I've been getting footage.

PROFESSOR BODKIN

This is your senior thesis Sam, where the hell is your head at?

SAM :

I've got Radio, BSU, this Head of House thing -

PROFESSOR BODKIN

-- Do you want this? Cause if not, don't waste my time here -

Sam pulls out the Super 8 camera from her satchel.

SAM :

-- Look this thing might as well be my right hand Professor. I was busy this summer that's all.

PROFESSOR BODKIN

With everything but your major? While your peers are taking internships, making short films...

SAM :

My dad. He's sick. Had to go home.

PROFESSOR BODKIN

If you need some time off, take it. But if you want to make it to next semester --

SAM :

-- I do --

PROFESSOR BODKIN

-- Pull it together. This is Manchester.

Sam wants this. It's in her eyes as she holds her tongue.

25 EXT. MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY - DAY 25

Sam exits the theater and spots Gabe talking to some guys.

29.

SAM :

Thematically dubious?

GABE:

Well what was that supposed to be about exactly?

SAM :

You're thematically dubious!

Gabe rolls his eyes and catches up with her.

SAM (CONT'D)

Since when do TA's give critiques?

GABE:

You invoke Minstrelsy for shock value, but to what end?

SAM:

To invoke the same feeling I get when I turn on the TV and see some so-called reality star shuck and jive for ratings egged on by no doubt white producers. Or the sassy Black secretary with no backstory or character development aside from their skin color.

GABE :

So it's a tit for tat? *

EXT. GOODMAN MEDIA SCHOOL 2 - DAY *

SAM *

You're honestly saying that art * can't be reactionary? *

GABE *

You're reacting to a work made * almost a hundred years ago. *

SAM *

Yes because fear of Black men being * involved in the United States *

Government is a completely *
antiquated concept. No social *
relevance whatsoever today. *

GABE *

Frankly I just think sometimes its *
better to hold a mirror up to your *
audience than to drop an *
ideological piano over their head. *
30.

SAM :

Frankly I just think works that deal with the African Diaspora through a
post-modern lens are outright rejected unless they're
handled by a white artist.

*
*
*
*
*
*

GABE :

African Diaspora? Really?

*
*

26 INT. DAVIS HOUSE - DAY 26

The war rages as the two continue up a flight of stairs.

SAM :

Blackface is alive and well in our
culture. Who primarily buys hip-hop? Watches Housewives of Atlanta?
The same homogenized images of Black people over and over again?
White people Gabe.

GABE :

Who goes to see Tyler Perry movies?

SAM :

We're an underfed community. None
of this changes the fact that the vibrancy, the complexity of Black
culture has been distilled into
commodities and marketing schemes to be bought and sold-GABE
--to the detriment of the so called
"real thing." Got it.

And into a room...

INT. GABE'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Gabe slams the door.

SAM :

I am indistinguishable from the so-called "urban" images used to amuse and market to white America.

GABE :

And the commodification of culture
is uniquely oppressive to Blackpeople?

31.

Sam nods fervently as Gabe grabs and unbuttons her jeans.

GABE (CONT'D)

So when Kanye raps about Louis V
and Rolexes and Classical Art,
exactly what exploited pocket of
Black America are those references
being mined from?

Sam can't get her shirt off fast enough.

SAM :

On your knees.

Gabe kneels below frame as Sam closes her eyes in ecstasy.

CUT TO BLACK.

27A INT. GABE'S ROOM - EVENING 27A

Sam's eyes pop open - a startled scream escapes her lips.
She's surprised at first to see Gabe beside her in bed, the
outside spoon. They're both naked. Her pompadour frayed.

GABE :

What? You dream in "Cosby" again?

SAM:

My hair was so straight. My sweater
so big. I told you about that?

Sam's phone buzzes. Gabe grabs it and sees Reggie's photo pop
up. He swallows his envy and hands it to Sam. She doesn't
answer. Silence as it hits her voicemail.

GABE:

Hey so...this whole "Head of House"
thing. Congrats?

SAM :

Yeah, it's...it's.

GABE:

Weird, right? Never took you as a student politician...

Reggie's photo again - New Voicemail. A regret in Sam's eyes.

SAM :

Yeah, well...

Sam rolls out of bed. Gabe thinks twice before he asks it.
32.

GABE :

Sam? What are we doing?

She badly wants to give him the answer he wants. Instead...

SAM :

Fucking.

28

INT. STUDIO BOOTH - DAY 28

Reggie stares at Sam with stars in his eyes as she effortlessly addresses the campus in between bits of jazz.

SAM (V.O.)

Dear White People. Please stop touching my hair.

29 INT. GARMIN CLUB HOUSE - DAY 29

Lionel at an ancient oak dining room table listens to the broadcast over his laptop. Makes studious notations...

SAM (V.O.)

Does this look like a petting zoo to you?

Lionel gets an IM: "George: Hey handsome, how's the story?" To which Lionel writes: "Going great sexy." Lionel deletes "sexy" and replaces it with ":)" before hitting send.

29A BAR DIVIDE 29A

Across from Lionel is Kurt flanked by his eager but self-conscious right hand GORDON - and MITCH, swagged out varsity crew captain and connoisseur of all things Black culture. They wear "PASTICHE" gear, hunch over a glowing iPad and scroll through a series of student group photos in the Yearbook. Kurt stares off into space, turns up the GANGSTA RAP playing from a nearby blue tooth speaker.

Kurt pours shots of Jack which Gordon eyes with caution.

GORDON :

Kurt it's three.

MITCH:

Y.O.L.O. my nigga!

Everyone takes the shot.

33.

GORDON :

We don't even have our new staff yet. Why are we planning this?

KURT :

Everyone wants to be on our staff that's the easy part.

MITCH :

We're going to make staff bids on Game Night, and the RSVP's are through the roof for that.

KURT :

Yeah but Halloween is our premiere party. The waitlist is already a hundred deep and it's going to take a lot to outdo this summer.

MITCH :

Cinco de Mayo was epic.

INSERT:

A black and white photo of Kurt and crew dressed in Sombreros and Mexican stereotypes at a wild pool party. The title reads... PASTICHE PRESENTS "WETBACK"

GORDON :

How about the Young Republicans?

KURT :

Too close to the Tea-Party.

INSERT:

Photo of Kurt and crew dressed as famous female political

conservatives - brandishing rally signs with misspellings and cups of tea. The title reads... "PASTICHE'S TEA PARTY"

MITCH :

Yo we need an East vs West hip hop party. Get the honeys in here.

GORDON :

"The honeys?" You're from Vermont.

KURT :

Guys what's the Pastiche motto?

GORDON :

"Sharpen thy sword."

34.

MITCH :

Our motto is a euphemism for masturbation?

GORDON :

It's a reminder that satire is the weapon of reason. So who on campus is being unreasonable?

MITCH :

Sounds like a reminder of how gay you are.

GORDON :

Was that even a reasonable attempt at a quip Mitch?

MITCH :

Hey Gordon, say reasonable again.

SAM (O.S.)

Dear White People, knowing Lil' Wayne lyrics no longer earns you an Honorary Black Card. It just reminds me how often you say the word "nigga" when no one Black is around as is required in reciting said lyrics.

Kurt turns up his music and shoots Lionel a look, who plugs headphones into his computer and looks down.

KURT :

The hell does Sam think she is?

MITCH :

Like Spike Lee and Oprah had a pissed off baby.

Kurt shares a glance with Mitch and Gordon - they're leaning towards the same idea.

KURT :

Could we?

GORDON :

How?

Kurt turns his heat towards Lionel - has a bone to pick.

KURT :

Hey Lionel. Talked to the Dean today.

(MORE)

35.

KURT (CONT'D)

We had a very enlightening conversation. I just want to say...

I'm sorry about the voice message.

29B DINING ROOM 29B

Kurt and his crew cross over to Lionel's table. Kurt unzips his pants silently.

KURT (CONT'D)

Do you accept?

Lionel removes the headphones and turns to Kurt, just as he starts flopping his dick around off screen. Lionel quickly looks in the other direction. Kurt's friends crack up.

GORDON :

Please put that away.

KURT:

You got to talk to these people in a language they'll understand.

Lionel shoves his headphones back on over his fro.

LIONEL :

Pathetic.

KURT:

(yelling)

Wherever he ships you off to, be sure to pack a sense of humor with you, kay bro?

Lionel drowns them out. He flips through Sam's "Ebony & Ivy" book to a section called...

SAM (V.O.)

The Paper Bag Tests.

As Lionel reads we swish pan to...

30 DREAM DINER 30

...an abstract Diner set. Sam at the counter addresses us.

SUPERIMPOSE:

SAM:

The Tip Test. You hit up Jelly's for a snack. Your waitress mistakes you for someone who looks like you (Black) who once ran up a thirty dollar bill and left a dollar tip.

36.

WAITRESS, over it, crosses frame and glares coldly at us.

Lionel takes a seat at a booth with Sam across from him.

SAM (CONT'D)

You watch all the other customers order before you do...

Waitress huffs her way over to Lionel.

LIONEL :

Pastrami sandwich on rye.

SAM :

...then proceed to wait no less than forty minutes for your food.

A wall-clock advances forty, before the food and check come.

SAM (CONT'D)

How do you tip? A...

LIONEL :

Forty minutes? Man she's lucky I leave her forty cents. You do a good job, maybe you'll see a tip.

SAM :

B...

LIONEL :

Doris was tripping, but fifteen percent is the least I can do.

SAM :

Or C...

LIONEL :

I reject the stereotype that African American's don't tip. I'm leaving her twenty, no twenty five, just to prove I can!

CUT TO:

Lionel's back in reality. He ponders the scenario.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

C?

He turns the book upside down and reads the small print on the bottom of the page. "A) ONE HUNDRED" "B) OOFTA" and his answer "C) NOSE-JOB."

37.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

Nose-job?

31 EXT. MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY - DAY 31

The campus has settled into the semester as students trudge back and forth to class.

SAM (V.O.)

Dear White People in a shocking reversal using the term "African American" is borderline racist now.

32 INT. DEAN FAIRBANKS OFFICE - DAY 32

Dean Fairbanks and PRESIDENT HERBERT FLETCHER, 50's in an even better suit than Fairbanks listen to the radio.

Fairbanks eyeballs Fletcher - tension between the two.

SAM (O.S.)

Turns out if you're too worried about Political Correctness to say

"Black", odds are you secretly just want to call us niggers anyway and truth be told I'd rather you just be honest about it.

PRESIDENT FLETCHER

Free speech my ass.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Stalin quotes for two hundred?

PRESIDENT FLETCHER

You're joking about this?

DEAN FAIRBANKS:

I'm sorry, was I supposed to take "Free speech my ass" as a legitimate suggestion?

PRESIDENT FLETCHER

This is your office's issue Walter. Especially after that episode with Kurt in the dining hall.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Every race issue is my issue.

PRESIDENT FLETCHER

It's a student issue. You are the Dean of students aren't you?

The two share an old and heated glare.
38.

PRESIDENT FLETCHER (CONT'D)

The Times has been watching us like a hawk. Last thing we need is some "race war" on newspapers across the country. How do you think our donor base will feel about that? Our fundraiser is four weeks away.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

How bad is this deficit of yours?

PRESIDENT FLETCHER

Worse. But let me tell you something. If this blows up any further? It's on you Walter. Racism is over in America. And if anyone's still dealing with it, it's the --

I don't know Mexicans probably.

Troy pokes his head in. Fairbanks cuts the radio off.

PRESIDENT FLETCHER (CONT'D)

Come on in.

TROY :

President Fletcher.

PRESIDENT FLETCHER

Son, call me Herb.

Fairbanks grits his teeth as Fletcher exits and Troy sits.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

President Fletcher tells me his son
got his ass handed to him.

Troy hates this game.

DEAN FAIRBANKS (CONT'D)

Bout time. Can't tell you how many
instances I had to defend Armstrong
/ Parker when I was Head of House.

TROY :

Sam's out of line. Kurt's alright.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

But you're supposed to be better
than alright. Since when do we lose
elections Troy?

TROY:

The Housing Act passing without a
fight didn't help.

39.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

What have I told you about excuses?

TROY :

Pops my course load is full anyway.

I'm head of Econ Board, I'm

thinking about Pastiche.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Pastiche? On Kurt Fletcher's staff?

TROY :

You know to round out the res?

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

I'll be God damned if twenty years from now you have to end up working for that dumb asses son.

TROY :

(put in his place)

Yes sir.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Fletcher and I graduated a year apart. He barely made it through. I graduated Summa cum Laude. Now look who's President and who's Dean.

TROY :

What's the difference?

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

A couple hundred grand a year. Understand what I'm saying? Now what happened between you and Sam to make her come after you anyway?

TROY :

Sofia. You remember Sofia? Daughter of the President. Psych major. "Has the world ahead of her Troy."

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

I don't like your tone boy.

TROY :

Sorry sir.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

So you lost the House. On to the school presidency then. The light in Troy's eyes dims a bit.
40.

DEAN FAIRBANKS (CONT'D)

It'll be good to show this campus
is capable of electing someone like
you as school president.

TROY :

Someone like me?

33 INT. TROY'S BATHROOM - NIGHT 33

Troy hovers over the toilet - smokes weed while the shower
runs - exhales through his paper towel / dryer sheet
apparatus. He jots down on a notepad and LAUGHS to himself.

TROY'S APARTMENT - SAME TIME

Sofia has her face to the floor - peering underneath the
bathroom door. She can see Troy's feet. What the hell?
Off the SQUEAK of the shower being cut Sofia jumps up.

MOMENTS LATER:

Troy bounds out the bathroom in his undies. Sofia on the
couch pretends to have been watching television.

TROY :

Babe. Hat or no hat?

Troy stands before her in his undies holding a Kangol. He
eyes her oversized T-shirt.

TROY (CONT'D)

Are you wearing that?

SOFIA :

I don't have to be.

Sofia yanks Troy to her by his underwear to kiss his navel.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

Hey boo...why don't we put some of
your new found free time to good
use? It's been a while since...

TROY :

What's with all this boo stuff?

SOFIA:

...since you fucked me with your
big Black cock.

Troy pulls away.

41.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

It used to turn you on when I

talked like that. Is it me?

TROY :

(yes)

I love you.

SOFIA :

Is it Sam?

TROY :

Can we please just, get ready?

SOFIA :

Why? I hate my brother's friends.

Troy thinks over his next words carefully.

TROY :

You're not going to go with me?

SOFIA :

You'd go without me?

Troy tries to flash a charming shrug.

SOFIA (CONT'D)

You're my guest!

Sofia gathers some books and heads for the door.

TROY :

You can hang out while I'm -

SOFIA :

-- Okay, what's with you and my brother? Are you in love with him?

Is this like, some DL shit?

Sofia storms out.

TROY :

"DL shit!?"

34 INT. FOREST - NIGHT 34

Lionel walks up the darkly lit stairs of a very old building. He reaches a door marked "Newsroom."

35 INT. NEWSROOM - NIGHT 35

Lionel looks around the dimmed office. There is music and light coming from a room past all the cubicles...

42.

36 INT. BULLPEN - NIGHT 36

...An office filled with computers. George and a few other EDITORS scream with laughter - beers and pizza in hand. GEORGE does a beat on his desk while...

GEORGE:

I keeps it clean

Ya know what I mean.

I drinks my Vodka straight,
like I'm a fiend.

ANNIE, a strawberry blonde laughs in George's lap. Lionel's envy shows.

ANNIE :

Wait, quiet I want to hear this.

Annie turns up a Youtube video of...

COCO (O.S.)

If I could grow straight Indian
hair out my head -

ANNIE :

Ohmigod, this is going on Facebook.

Annie swivels in her chair only to SCREAM BLOODY MURDER at the sight of Lionel.

LIONEL :

Relax the Negro at the door is not
here to rape you.

Annie laughs. The mood is drunk and light.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

So this is what editors do?

GEORGE :

We're taking a break, what are you
doing here?

LIONEL :

You wanted me to drop in and tell
you how the story was coming?

GEORGE :

Yeah like this week. It's Saturday
night. You got nowhere else to be?

LIONEL :

It was this or the new Madea movie.
43.

GEORGE :

Dear God. Where does Madea go this
time? Dialysis?

37 EXT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT 37

Sam, flanked by Reggie and the BoFros are in mid rant.

REGGIE :

Man fuck Tyler Perry.

SAM :

Like, can we have a movie with, you
know characters in them? 'Stead of
stereotypes wrapped in Christian
dogma?

REGGIE :

Why is every educated person
inherently evil? Why this Nigga
gotta be in a mutha fucking dress
all the mutha fucking time?

SAM :

How come the only Black movies
Hollywood wants to make are ones
with mummies in fat suits or Black
women in pain man?

All of this is directed at a TEENAGER in the box office.

TEENAGER :

Most people are here to see Fang 9.

(after a beat)

Kelly Rowland's in it?

The group throw up their hands and groan in protest.

38 INT. KURT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 38

Game Night and Kurt's house is filled with smoke, music, and
rich kids who play cards at various tables.

Coco, in a banging jumpsuit scans the room for prospects. A
few eyes from the WHITE BOYS start to flicker her way. This
perks her up, as she arches her back slightly...

...only to see their eyes follow the WHITE BRUNETTE HIPSTER

GIRL who has entered behind her.

Coco catches herself in the mirror. What don't they see?

38A CARD TABLE 38A

44.

Troy deals cards at a table - the game is Texas Hold Em. Troy holds court - much to Kurt's chagrin. The mood is playful.

There's a brief eye contact between Troy and Coco.

39 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 39

A huge "Boycott Sal's Pizzeria" poster hangs on the walls of Sam's chic dorm surrounded by other street art. The BoFros and a few cool residents of Armstrong / Parker hang about. Underground hip hop permeates the room. Sam refuses a joint coldly from Reggie - her eyes fixed on "SCHOOL DAZE" which plays on her 36' flatscreen.

SAM :

How 'bout you stop stereotyping yourself and put that shit out?

This ain't "Friday."

REGGIE :

Yo Sam. We got to talk about the protest. When are we are bringing the Housing fight to the prez?

Sungmi takes a seat next to Sam. Some kids hop up and start grooving it out when a new song pops up on the playlist.

SUNGMi :

The House voted down sponsoring the rally.

REGGIE :

What do we need it sponsored for?

SAM :

Demonstrations can get shut down if a House doesn't sponsor them.

REGGIE :

Like the House you're head of?

Sam shoots Reggie a glare. He backs off.

SUNGMi :

Hey Sam, I read "Ebony and Ivy."

What's with the Oofta, Nose-Jobs,
One Hundred stuff? I miss
something?
Sam smiles.

SAM :

You want me to break it down?
45.

40 INT. KURT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 40

Troy deals another hand with Kurt, Mitch and Gordon. Troy's
homeboy swag is thicker than usual.

MITCH :

Yo my perfect Friday night is
whiskey and my T-Bone Walker
records, real talk.

TROY :

Who the fuck is T-Bone Walker?
40A INTERCUT WITH SAM'S APARTMENT: 40A

SAM :

Only a few ways colored folks
survive at a place like this.

MITCH :

Uh only a pioneer of electric and
jump blues bro. Know your roots.

TROY :

White folks always be on stuff like
decades too late and act like they
discovered some shit.

SAM :

"Oofta" is the jazz age term for
Bojangle types who Blacked it up
for White audiences.

MITCH :

Don't sleep on T-Bone man.

TROY :

Rock, Jazz, Blues - Nigga whatchu

got on right now?

MITCH :

Public Enemy my Nig-

TROY :

--Yo watch that man.

GORDON :

You just called him -

TROY :

-- Ya'll get Country Clubs we get
to say Nigga.

Everyone at the table erupts in laughter. Except Kurt.
46.

GORDON :

And golf? And all our girls?

TROY :

Whatchu mean all your girls?

GORDON :

Dude, between OJ, Tiger, Wesley
Snipes and uh, Troy over here...

TROY :

Yo. It's a word for that.

Reparations.

More Kurt-less laughter from the table.

TROY (CONT'D)

Forty white bitches and a mule.

Perfectly executed. Troy grins as the table erupts.

SAM :

An Oofta modulates his Blackness up
or down depending on the crowd and
what he wants from them.

MITCH :

Kurt?

KURT :

What?

GORDON :

Kurt.

Troy watches this exchange closely.

GORDON (CONT'D)

Troy. You thinking about Pastiche?

TROY :

That's the magazine right?

GORDON :

For starters.

MITCH :

What other "magazine" you know has
a first look deal at NBC? The third
biggest Youtube channel. Talk show.
Platinum comedy record homie!
47.

GORDON :

Couldn't you see him on the talk
show Kurt?
Kurt looks at his cards.

KURT :

I fold.
41 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 41
A small crowd's formed around Sam.

SUNGMI :

Okay, and a nose-job is a wannabe?
42 INT. KURT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 42
Coco finishes her drink and catches Mitch and Gordon as they
start up a Youtube video on their iPad. The previous game is
over. They watch "Dear White People - 1,378,480 views."
42A INTERCUT WITH SAM'S APARTMENT: 42A

SAM :

Sort of. Nose-jobs smooth their
Black edges and try to blend.
Coco runs her fingers through her straight hair.

GORDON :

You seen this one?

SAM (YOUTUBE)

Dear White People using Instagram.
You have an iPhone and go on hikes.
I get it.

COCO :

Ugh.

Gordon and Mitch turn and notice Coco. Mitch eyes her curves.

GORDON :

Not a fan?

Coco makes a "no" face.

MITCH :

Sup ma?

COCO :

Don't talk like that.

48.

GORDON :

Hey I know you...

Coco is taken aback as Gordon punches up her video and plays it back. She hovers over them.

COCO (YOUTUBE)

Muffins. I hate to do it, but Imma
have to get real Black with you.

Coco a bit embarrassed scans the view count.

SAM :

A Nose-job's worst fear is that
their "Blackness" might cause a
fuss or draw undue attention so
they apologize for it or use it to
self deprecate.

COCO :

Forty thousand views already?

GORDON :

Looks like someone submitted you to
Buzzfeed. Taking off...

Coco leans over them and scrolls down. The first comment is

from a HELMUT:

MITCH :

You wan' a drink a sun'in?

COCO :

Let me guess you're from Ohio?

MITCH :

Vermont.

GORDON :

What do you have against Dear White People?

Coco smiles and slyly clicks to her next video.

COCO (YOUTUBE)

Dear White People. How do I feel about it? Well for one it's Blacker than thou propaganda from a bougie Lisa Bonet wannabe who smells like patchouli and frankly I can't believe we're letting Sam get away with it.

49.

Mitch and Gordon's mouths are ajar. Coco studies the view count...26,758. A pride strikes Coco.

43 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 43

As the impromptu party dies down...

SUNGMI :

Okay and One Hundred?

REGGIE :

Keeping it One-Hundred! Being Black as hell just cause.

Sam rolls her eyes.

SUNGMI :

But what about just being you?

SAM :

Like I said...

44 INT. NEWSROOM - NIGHT 44

Lionel's got the eyes of the Bullpen on him. Annie's really warmed to him - her hands play with his afro.

ANNIE :

You don't mind do you?

SAM (V.O.)

There's only a few ways a person of a color can survive at a place like this...

LIONEL :

Of course not.

GEORGE :

Alright so then what?

LIONEL :

So then Sam says "What, is your daddy scared the Negroes are gonna start a rebellion on the plantation?"

George goes CRAZY at this.

GEORGE :

To Kurt Fletcher!?

LIONEL :

Yeah. Yes. Yup.

50.

GEORGE :

We've got a news item but there's something bigger here. It's a profile piece on Armstrong / Parker and Sam White's pseudo revolution.

ANNIE :

What's the headline?

LIONEL :

Outdated nationalist seeks purpose starts race war?

Lionel's joke hits, but he feels gross for saying it.

The image of Sam shaking her head in the dinner FLASHES before Lionel briefly.

GEORGE :

Beers in the corner. Bang out the news item tonight and we'll work on the profile piece for next week.

Lionel grabs a beer and takes a seat at one of the open computers. George starts up a beat on his desk as he and Annie stare at Lionel expectantly.

LIONEL :

What are you doing?

ANNIE :

All Bugle staffer must freestyle. It's law.

GEORGE :

You want to be a staffer right?

LIONEL :

(awkward)

My name is Lionel

Kind of like a lion

King of the jungle

Indigenous to Africa...

The beat has long since stopped.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

Sorry.

45 INT. KURT'S KITCHEN - NIGHT 45

Troy heads into the kitchen just as Kurt heads out.

51.

TROY :

Yo man, you know I wasn't talking about Sof back there with whole forty bitches thing. I was just --

KURT :

-- trying to get on my staff?

TROY :

I never really thought about -

KURT :

-- Bullshit. Game Night is where we make our bids for the new staff. It's why everyone's here. You were practically about to bust out a tap dance.

TROY :

I'm a Poly Sci major man. I just came to hang out.

KURT :

My staff likes you. A lot.

TROY :

But you don't.

KURT :

This thing with you and Sof...

TROY :

I'm good to her.

KURT :

Our dad's have been playing a game of chess off and on since 1972.

TROY :

What and Sof is the White queen?

KURT :

You're a pawn. And I think it's time you get off the board bro. Troy takes this in.

KURT (CONT'D)

Here's the deal. Every year we throw a party. The point is to mock the self important and moronic entities of the campus. The way to get staffed is to write an invite for the party.

(MORE)

52.

KURT (CONT'D)

Our invites are legendary, we make Gawker, the Post, tons of blogs every year. If your invite is the one that goes out, you're guaranteed a spot on the staff. The runners up are voted on by the rest of us.

Troy catches eyes with Coco who gives him a seductive glance.

45A LIVING ROOM 45A

Coco turns back to her now enamored crowd. She's in her element with these boys at her feet.

COCO :

I just think having good hair and carrying on with a degree of sophistication doesn't make me a traitor to the race.

MITCH :

Want to know why they used to call me Black Mitch?

GORDON COCO :

Absolutely not. No one called you that.

KITCHEN:

Just as Gordon, Mitch and Coco approach...

TROY :

Okay. And what's this year's theme?
Kurt rolls his eyes instinctively.

KURT :

Still working on that...

TROY :

The party's a couple weeks away.

GORDON :

Yo Kurt. I want you to meet someone.

COCO :

You guys got a party coming up?

Coco smiles at Kurt, before flicking her eyes over Troy.

53.

46 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 46

Sungmi is one of the last to clear out of Sam's apartment as the party winds down.

SUNGMI :

Hey, about the rally. You could still get the permit anyway Sam and go against the board. Most people consider that political suicide though.

REGGIE :

We got to rally Sam. Time is now.

SAM :

Use your head Reggie. You think a rally is going to change things?

REGGIE :

It'll do a hell of a lot more than a radio show or views on Youtube.

Everyone gets quiet. Sungmi takes this time to exit.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Look, we got power Sam and it's time we used it. We earned it.

SAM :

We? I didn't see you running for shit Reggie.

The Bofros trade looks as Reggie storms out. Sam waits a beat and rolls her eyes.

47 EXT. ARMSTRONG / PARKER QUAD - NIGHT 47

Sam walks after Reggie.

REGGIE :

Tired.

SAM :

Don't "one word" me.

REGGIE :

Why you got to snap at me all the time? I'm around you like twenty four seven. Like your lap dog. I don't even usually get down like that with no red bone chicks man.
54.

SAM :

Don't call me that.

REGGIE :

Come on, I thought your ass was Puerto Rican when I met you.

Sam turns to go.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Oh so you can dish it out but you can't take it?

SAM :

I'm taking my ass home.

REGGIE :

Come on Sam. You know how I feel about you.

SAM :

How am I supposed to know how you feel about me?

REGGIE :

You know what? Forgive me if I see something in you. Something inspiring. Something folks like me can get behind.

Reggie puts his hands on Sam's belt and pulls her in to a kiss as a group walks by. Over Reggie's shoulder Sam sees...
...Gabe look back at her. He's heartbroken. She pretends not to be affected and sinks into a kiss from Reggie.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Tell me you'll set up the rally.

SAM :

I'll set up the rally.

48 INT. KURT'S KITCHEN - NIGHT 48

Kurt, Gordon, Mitch, Coco and Troy all trade glances.

GORDON :

Are we sure about this?

KURT :

It's ironic. Bold. And don't tell me I'm the only one who thinks Sam White's little movement needs to get cut down to size.

55.

Agreement Coco's gaze. Uncertainty in Troy's.

KURT (CONT'D)

Looks like you got your Hip Hop party Mitch.

MITCH :

'Bout time. It's going to be huge man, fucking epic.

Kurt holds back a smile.

KURT :

Boys, we've got a lot more mingling to do. We'll be in touch. And Troy? Get off the board bro.

Troy chews on this as Kurt leads his group out. Troy smiles, goes to exit.

TROY :

Nice seeing you.

COCO :

Where's Sofia?

TROY :

I have no idea.

COCO :

Trouble in paradise?

Troy shrugs and heads to the party.

COCO (CONT'D)

Figures.

(off Troy's

incredulousness)

Nothing. I'm sure you've got something else fair and petite and...fair lined up for that drink.

TROY :

What's that supposed to mean?

COCO :

It's fine. I'm not even really into Black dudes anyway.

TROY :

I'll have you know I'm an equal opportunity employer, okay?
56.

COCO :

And what kind of jobs are you hiring for mister?
Coco's stiletto rubs the side of Troy's calf.

TROY :

Aren't you and Sofia --

COCO :

-- I'm an accessory to Sofia. Can't ever shake the feeling I'm an assignment for that Afro Studies Minor of hers.

Troy nervously glances out at the crowd and then back towards this dangerous and tempting creature before him.

COCO (CONT'D)

I'm sure you have no idea what I mean.

49 EXT. MANCHESTER YARD - NIGHT 49

Lionel and George walk through the campus at night. George waves goodbye to Annie as they pass Bechet House.

LIONEL :

She seems really cool.
George just smiles.

GEORGE :

Did we go too far? You're in

Armstrong/Parker right?

LIONEL :

No. Garmin.

GEORGE :

Fancy.

LIONEL :

George I'm not exactly down with Sam and I'm not in the BSU. I got kicked out of Armstrong / Parker same as Kurt. But I'm going to write a good story, okay?

GEORGE :

I hope so. I want a Bugle on your chest by the end of the month.

Lionel fights a smile as his heart beats through his chest.
57.

They reach the front of Lionel's house. George runs his hand through Lionel's hair. Mitch, smoking on the porch with some other kids - trade glances.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Your fro's so gnarly.

LIONEL :

I'm growing it out.

GEORGE :

Night Lionel.

Lionel heads up his stoop - past the snickers and glares of Mitch and company.

MITCH :

Party's not over.

LIONEL :

I live here.

MITCH :

Sorry bro. Invitation only.

LIONEL :

It's two in the morning.

Mitch shrugs as humiliation floods over Lionel.

Lionel sighs and slumps on the steps outside the door. He scrolls through his phone for a contact...OFFICE OF THE DEAN. Starts an email.

50 INT. TROY'S BEDROOM - MORNING 50

Troy's Kangol sits in the ground, besides his undies, and besides a bright pink thong.

Coco's pink painted finger nails travel through the creases of Troy's immaculate abs.

TROY :

Coco huh?

COCO:

Colandrea doesn't exactly pass the resume test, you know? I mean couldn't you fucking die? My parents should've just named me Ghetto-ass-hoodrat-anisha. Do you...indulge?

Coco fiddles in her purse - pulls out a joint.

58.

TROY :

It's ten am.

Coco lights it and takes a drag. She hands it to Troy.

TROY (CONT'D)

I don't mess with that stuff.

Coco sees right through him as Troy hits it like a pro.

COCO :

Sure about that?

TROY :

Sure you don't like Black guys?

COCO :

Girl like me is just a placeholder for ya'll at a place like this.

TROY :

I'm not like that.

COCO :

I don't think Sam would agree.

TROY :

That was different.

COCO :

No it wasn't. Poor thing, she was light skin-ded and everything.

TROY :

Yo, it wasn't like that alright?

Troy's tone sobers Coco a bit. She places a hand on Troy's.

TROY (CONT'D)

My pops. He wanted me with Fletcher's daughter. They've been in competition ever since they went here. Pops hates that Fletcher ended up President and he got stuck as the Dean.

COCO :

So your upbringing may have actually fucked you up more than mine? That's hot.

Troy laughs and takes the joint back.

59.

COCO (CONT'D)

The hell is the difference between a Dean and a President anyway?

TROY :

Apparently four hundred years of unreconciled oppression.

COCO :

He's not going to like you running with the Pastiche boys is he?

TROY :

If I even get tapped.

COCO :

You will. And you should do it.

They all land somewhere big, some before they even graduate. I've seen you in front of a crowd Troy. I bet you could be famous.

TROY :

That what you want? To be famous?

COCO :

I want people to know my name.

TROY :

Which one?

Coco's phone buzzes with a message. It's Kurt.

COCO:

(reading)

We want you. Come by Ellington tomorrow at eight.

(to Troy)

Anything?

Troy checks his phone. Nothing. A decision weighs in Troy's eyes as Coco throws on a shirt and gets up to go.

COCO (CONT'D)

You're going to have to stand up to him sooner or later Troy.

52 EXT. ARMSTRONG / PARKER QUAD - DAY 52

Troy and Sofia stand still amidst the bustle. Devastation marks her pretty face.

SOFIA :

You said you loved me.

60.

TROY :

I like you a lot.

Salt meet wound. She wants to go, but something nags at her.

SOFIA :

What do you do in the bathroom?

When you leave the shower running?

Was it just to get away from me?

Troy wagers his answer and decides to confess.

TROY :

I smoke weed and write jokes.

Puzzled by the man before her and too hurt for more, Sofia just turns and walks away. Troy watches her go just as...
...Lionel passes by. The two share an awkward glance before Troy turns to enter the house.

53 INT. ARMSTRONG / PARKER HALL - SAME TIME 53

Lionel shyly trudges down the hall of Armstrong / Parker. He turns to see Troy behind him. The two avoid the other's gaze. As they both head up the stairs, Troy notes it strange that they're headed in the same direction.

53A UPSTAIRS 53A

Lionel heads to a door at the end of the hallway and opens it with a key. Troy's already at the door when he looks up and realizes Lionel's just entered his apartment.

54 INT. TROY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 54

TROY :

The hell are you doing?

LIONEL & TROY

This is my apartment.

TROY :

The hell it is.

LIONEL :

The Dean said it was the only opening.

TROY :

Head of House doesn't share.

61.

LIONEL :

But you're not Head of House.

Still stings. Troy heads into his room and closes the door leaving Lionel alone in the living room.

57 INT. ARMSTRONG/PARKER DINING HALL - DAY 57

Lionel sits alone in front of another bowl of soup. Eyes the different cliques of mostly Black students. Dreads walks past and shoots a head nod. Lionel uncomfortably shoots one back.

DREADS :

Stay Black, my brother.

LIONEL :

Sure thing?

Lionel watches as Kurt and Troy walk together towards the entrance - suddenly chums. Troy's getting good news and gladly shakes Kurt's hand.

KURT :

Need your submission by Thursday.

TROY :

You got it bro.

The two try and enter, when immediately Dreads slams a GONG in the back of the hall - prompting the whole of the dining hall to turn and throw paper balls at Kurt.

KURT :

The fuck?

Sam grins from a table comprised of Martin, Sungmi and her other support staff. Martin is visibly annoyed.

TROY :

Yo!

Troy takes some of the brunt of this and walks with the humiliated Kurt back out of the Dining Hall.

Lionel watches with a smirk as Troy talks Kurt down on the other side of the entrance. Lionel catches eyes with Sam briefly who shares the same smirk.

He realizes Sam's actually looking at Reggie, perched behind him at a table flanked by Curls and Dreads. They address him.

REGGIE :

Finally made it in.

62.

DREADS :

Been moved around a lot right?

CURLS :

You must have been terrified when you saw "Armstrong/Parker" written on your moving assignment.

LIONEL :

I was just finishing up.

REGGIE :

Do Black people scare you?

LIONEL :

(realizing its true)

No.

REGGIE :

You're too scared to even ask
anyone for a cut.

LIONEL :

I'm growing it out.

DREADS :

No. I'm growing it out. You're
fostering an ecosystem.

REGGIE :

How come you don't come to BSU?

LIONEL :

I listen to Mumford and Sons and
watch Robert Altman movies. You
honestly think I'm Black enough for
the union?

DREADS :

Yo, I love Robert Altman. Mutha
fucka goes in.

CURLS:

(after a beat)

We're not all homophobes you know.

Black folks?

Lionel's eyes dart around. How did she know?

DREADS :

I'm bumping Frank Ocean right now.
I don't give a fuck. Imma still eat
at Chik Fil A though. Them nuggets
good as hell.

63.

LIONEL :

I'm late for class.

REGGIE :

You're the "Black voice" of the Bugle now. We're just trying to decide if you are friend or foe.

Reggie pulls a folded copy of the Bugle from under his arm. Sam's on the front page with the headline "WHITE STUDENTS TOLD TO 'GET OUT' BY LIONEL HIGGINS."

REGGIE (CONT'D)

We got to protect our girl.

Reggie motions over to a stressed out Sam as she argues over something with Martin at another table.

LIONEL :

I'm not on staff. Not until I make good on my assignment, I'm just --

REGGIE :

-- Assignment? What's the story?

LIONEL :

They want me to do a profile piece on Black culture at Manchester.

REGGIE :

Of which you are so clearly an expert.

Shame floods Lionel's face.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

So what's harder man? Being Black enough for the Black kids or the white ones?

LIONEL :

Being neither.

Another GONG sounds with another shower of paper balls. This time it's for...

...Gabe, who's stuck outside. He makes eye contact with...

GABE :

Sam! Really Sam?

She just looks away. Reggie eyes him coolly.

64.

58 INT. CLASSROOM - DAY 58

Professor Bodkin watches over a small class as the students fill in essay questions. Sam's eyes are glued to a window... Outside below the Brofros pull up in an SUV. They hop out and start pulling out rally signs and bullhorns. Sam's eyes dart back to the clock as Gabe watches her watch the time.

59A EXT. MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY - DAY 59A

Sam bounds out of a building on her way to the parking lot. From behind her...

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Running late.

Sam pauses and turns to see him.

DEAN FAIRBANKS (CONT'D)

For your little rally?

SAM :

Forget your sign Dean?

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Do you honestly think this is in the spirit of Armstrong / Parker house?

SAM :

The role of the counter culture is to wake up the mainstream to --

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

-- I've got furniture older than you. Counter culture? Is that what you think this is? That show of yours?

SAM :

What about my show?

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Your show is racist.

SAM :

Black people can't be racist.

The Dean is rendered speechless at this statement.

65.

SAM (CONT'D)

Prejudice? Yes. But not racist.

Racism describes a system of disadvantage based on race. Black people can't be racist since they don't benefit from such a system.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Do you read the school papers?

SAM :

Is the New York Times a school paper?

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Your antics are making press Sam and press like this keeps men like President Fletcher up at night.

SAM :

Warm milk?

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

He's building a file on you.

SAM :

It's not my fault your son couldn't beat me in an election.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

I'm sure it was hard growing up. Wondering which side you fit into. Feeling like you have to overcompensate perhaps?

SAM :

If that's true, I'm not the only one Dean.

Sam walks off in a half jog - Fairbank's last words resonate more than she'd like.

Gabe, making his way outside just catches her exit.

59B EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY 59B

Huge canvas signs with the words "WHITES ONLY" are strewn about the pavement, along with bullhorns and picket signs. Sam takes these in while the Brofros feverishly unpack the SUV.

66.

REGGIE :

There you are! We supposed to start at noon.

SAM :

I told you I had class.

There's a vibration in Sam's pocket. Her phone says "MOM." She cuts it off and picks up a "white's only" sign.

REGGIE :

Those are going up on Gillespie.

Good right?

Sam shrugs in the affirmative but it's too much. Reggie sees a doubt in her eyes.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Yo. What's that? You're not getting cold feet are you?

SAM :

No. I mean how long do I have to talk anyway?

REGGIE :

You're kidding right? You're sort of the keynote.

SAM :

Yeah but...you know I think the whole Malcolm X thing is your lane Reg. I'm just not -

REGGIE :

-- They came to hear you Sam. Grab a bullhorn. Turn it on.

Sam is struck by the command. Stuck between wanting to curse and comply another buzz in her pocket yanks her attention to

her phone. Sam checks: "IT'S ABOUT DAD. CALL ME"

Sam turns for some privacy. She makes eye contact with Gabe who's just happened upon the parking lot.

GABE :

What is all this?

SAM:

(on phone)

Hey. In the middle of---

Okay. Okay. Okay.

67.

Tears well up in Sam's eyes as she shakes her head no and heads away from the parking lot and passed Gabe.

When Reggie looks up and catches eyes with Sam. His tilted look of indignation asks her what she's doing.

REGGIE:

Sam?

Sam takes in the scene and decisively turns to go. Reggie's heart sinks as a bewildered Gabe goes to chase after her.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Sam!

60 INT. ARMSTRONG / PARKER HALL - DAY 60

Reggie flanked by the BoFros bangs on Sam's door.

REGGIE :

Yo, what the hell Sam?

61

INT. SAM'S ROOM - DAY 61

The banging continues as Sam sits on the edge of her bed. The tears have dried. Gabe paces behind the bed.

GABE :

You want me to tell them to go?

SAM :

You're so tough.

GABE :

I will.

SAM :

I want you to wait until they've

gone and then head home.

GABE :

I'm trying to be here for you.

SAM :

Can you be somewhere else for me?

61A HALLWAY 61A

REGGIE :

Sam! I know you're home.

68.

61B SAM'S ROOM 61B

GABE :

What do you see in him?

SAM :

The only eligible single brother on campus.

GABE :

Wow. Okay.

SAM :

I get it. Your parents owned in Harlem or something? You watched "Do The Right Thing" in high school and you want to prove to the world you're down?

GABE :

I want to be down? How long does it take to get your hair like that?

REGGIE (O.S.)

Sam. We want to talk.

SAM :

Reggie I will call you later damn!
(to Gabe)

You don't know what you're talking about. Girls like me-

GABE :

--what? Have to pick a side? I'm
sick of your tragic Mulatto
bullshit Sam!

SAM :

You can't say Mulatto.

GABE :

Mulatto! Mulatto! Mulatto!

MORE BANGING:

SAM :

Window. Go out the window.

GABE :

I'm sorry if I can't be your Nubian
prince on my Black horse ready to
take you back to fucking Zamunda!
69.

SAM :

That's not a real African country.

GABE:

Can I please get some credit for a
solid "Coming to America"
reference?

Sam tries not laugh at this.

GABE (CONT'D)

This isn't you Sam.

SAM :

No? And who am I?

GABE :

You're this...girl...

SAM :

Perceptive.

GABE:

Who...likes to argue with me about
every fucking thing. And I hate it

because we both know you're smarter than me. Your favorite director is Bergman, but you tell people its Spike Lee. You love bebop, but you've got a thing for Taylor Swift. I know because my Mac picks up your Mac's library.

SAM :

And I was so careful...

GABE:

You like to use phrases from the thirties and wear clothes from the fifties and hairstyles from the sixties. You like to watch me when you think I'm sleeping. And trace the outlines of my face.

Sam fights any signs of this moving her. Another BANG.

GABE (CONT'D)

You're more "Banksy" than "Barack" but you've been co-opted as some sort of revolutionary leader or something? But really you're an anarchist. A beautiful writer, artist, filmmaker, shit starter. And beautiful, in general.

70.

Sam's heart beats through her chest. Her phone rings: "Mom."

SAM :

Yeah? Yeah? Yeah. It's okay. Get some sleep.

Sam hangs up. A silence hangs - followed by a loud EXHALE from Sam as she let's go of the tension she'd been holding.

GABE :

Everything okay?

SAM :

(happy tears)

His condition's stable.

GABE :

Good. That's good Sam.

Gabe goes to exit just as Reggie BANGS again.

SAM :

Gabe!

Gabe opens the door to the very shocked Bofros and Reggie...

GABE :

What!?

...and brushes right past them. Sam gets up and stares down the heartbroken looks on her disciples' faces.

SAM :

I'm sorry.

And with that she closes the door right on Reggie.

62 EXT. ELLINGTON TERRACE - NIGHT 62

Coco and Helmut look out over the campus from the glowing terrace atop the Library. They sip on coffee's.

HELMUT :

New videos are picking up steam.

COCO :

Told you I was good TV.

HELMUT :

The show I'm scouting for... It's called Black Face / White Place. It's reality. Like a "True Life." Each episode centers on a different one of "us" in a sea of "them."
71.

COCO :

Interesting.

HELMUT :

Interesting? You think they want interesting? Dignified stories of triumph and survival?
(off Coco's naive shrug)
They want the "authentic urban experience" which is basically network talk for bitching and weave

snatching. I'm telling you this because the network is looking to take one of the subjects to series. I got one episode. One shot to find that subject. So if we do this...

COCO :

...we do it all the way. I'm guessing Sam turned you down.

HELMUT :

I think so. She called me a Bojangling Oofta, whatever that means. Everything else she said would've been bleeped on tv.
(off Coco's laugh)
So look, forty thousand hits on Youtube is good. It's not great.

COCO :

I'm about to get a whole lot more.
63 INT. KURT'S HOUSE - DAY 63
Coco sits before a video camera. The room is dim.

KURT :

We don't have anyone like you on staff and you had a great idea. We brought you here to -

COCO :

-- I want to MC it. Your party.

KURT :

We're here to tell you what we want.

COCO :

You want me and in order to get me, you have to let me MC.

(MORE)

72.

COCO (CONT'D)

And I want to do a live video blog from my Youtube account.

BACK TO:

64 EXT. ELLINGTON TERRACE - DAY 64

HELMUT :

They'd let you do that?

COCO :

They got no choice. They need me -

BACK TO:

65 INT. KURT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 65

COCO :

-- cause without me ya'll look like
a bunch of privileged assholes.

KURT :

We don't let people video blog our
events...

COCO :

...You got a week to put this thing
together boo boo. What's it going
to be?

CUT TO:

66 EXT. ELLINGTON TERRACE - DAY 66

Helmut looks at Coco with a shocked gleam in his eye.

COCO :

You look surprised.

HELMUT :

It's just...

67 INT. TROY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 67

Troy and Lionel both type furiously at their computers in
their rooms. Troy on his invite - Lionel on his article. They
each look at the other in alternate intervals.

HELMUT (V.O.)

...not everyone is as camera ready
as you.

67A LIONEL'S ROOM 67A

73.

Lionel pauses the episode of STAR TREK THE NEXT GENERATION on his TV and heads to...

67B KITCHEN 67B

...bar divide. Pours a bowl of cereal. He glances into Troy's room. He's also got Star Trek on. Could it be? Troy, feels Lionel's eyes on him and quickly switches it to Basketball.

67C TROY'S ROOM 67C

Troy types in "KURT FLETCHER" in the "To" field and "PASTICHE SUBMISSION" in the subject field. He hits "send" and swallows the lump in his throat.

68 INT. DEANS OFFICE - DAY 68

Troy gingerly enters into the Dean's office. Martin and Dean Fairbanks talk in hushed tones around Fairbanks' desk.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Martin, would you share with Troy what you shared with me?

MARTIN :

The server that processes the voting results for House Elections has shut down the A.P. database. Saw it this morning. Apparently the intermediary program is on a refractile loop.

TROY :

I'm a Poly Sci major man.

MARTIN :

Sam currently has 445 votes. That's 200 more than she had last week during the actual election.

TROY :

There's not even that many residents in Armstrong / Parker.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

She cheated. Hacked the system.

69 INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY 69

Sam sits before a giant fireplace - twice as large as the Dean's. She faces President Fletcher and fights nerves.

74.

SAM :

I wouldn't even begin to know how to do something like that.

PRESIDENT FLETCHER

Is your little war really this important?

Sam shifts gears slightly - he wants something from her.

PRESIDENT FLETCHER (CONT'D)

I understand the pressure to stand for something at an institution like this but you're barking up the wrong tree okay?

70 INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 70

MARTIN :

Had to have been Reggie. Dude's in my programming class. Good. Just forgot to turn his program off.

TROY :

Wow.

MARTIN :

You're the rightful Head of House.

TROY :

(shit)

So great.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Martin, let me talk to Troy for a bit. I appreciate this.

71 INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 71

Sam glares at Fletcher.

PRESIDENT FLETCHER

Your advisor tells me you're

hanging on by a thread in your major. Perhaps it's time to reprioritize.

SAM :

You're trying to frighten me, but I think you're the one who's scared.
75.

PRESIDENT FLETCHER

And I think you long for the days

where Blacks were hanging from

trees and denied actual rights.

Then you'd actually have something

to fight against.

A swell of emotion behind Sam's steel eyes.

PRESIDENT FLETCHER (CONT'D)

You will be facing two hearings in the coming weeks that could end in either Probation or Suspension. One on the merits of your show, the other on your election to Head of House.

Sam is truly scared by this.

PRESIDENT FLETCHER (CONT'D)

Your responsibilities to your house are suspended. Your show is done for. And another one of your illegal "demonstrations" will only make matters worse. This is a critical time for this school.

SAM :

You damn right it is.

PRESIDENT FLETCHER

We don't have an intolerance problem here. Except for the one I'm looking at.

72 INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 72

Troy and his father are alone.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

You didn't tell me you and Sofia had a misunderstanding.

TROY :

Who did?

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Her father. She was very upset.

(off Troy's silence)

Troy. What sort of vision do you have for yourself?

76.

TROY:

Get my degree. Then Law School and then -

DEAN FAIRBANKS:

--And what's that got to do with partying with Kurt? With smoking weed and writing jokes?

Panic flashes over Troy.

DEAN FAIRBANKS (CONT'D)

Okay, so what? Is it the spotlight Kurt gets? You want to be on...tv or something? You know how many Black men waste their lives to get on TV? Be rappers and ball players?

TROY:

(wanting it to be true)

Dad no. I want what we always talked about. Maybe have my own firm someday? Run for office. Make a difference. Wife. Kids. I want all that. I really really do.

DEAN FAIRBANKS:

And the drugs? God damn it Troy I taught you better than this. I have been in academia a long time, I've seen a lot of things. The men who really run this world? You got no idea what they see when they see you. You are not going to be what they all think you are. You will not give them that satisfaction, you hear me?

TROY :

Yes sir.

73 INT. PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS 73

Sam steps out of Fletcher's office into the waiting room. Kurt is there. He stands and the two silently stare the other down as Kurt enters his father's office.

A SECRETARY picks up a ringing phone - prompts her to exit the room. Sam watches her sign for a delivery outside through the window.

Sam slips behind the office door - quietly pushes it open and listens in.

77.

PRESIDENT FLETCHER

I know about the party. You picked a hell of a time.

KURT :

What party --

PRESIDENT FLETCHER

-- You're cancelling Kurt. End of story.

75 INT. BULLPEN - DAY 75

Lionel walks through the empty office - slows down as he overhears...

GEORGE (O.S.)

Lionel's story on the would-be protest outside of Gillespie is running tomorrow and I'm also having Lionel work on a profile piece of Armstrong/Parker like you suggested. Really break down what's going on.

Lionel gingerly approaches the door to see George finish up a phone call.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Right. It's almost like they recycle so much from their past - Music, food, fashion, and now turbulence.

This leaves a bitter taste in Lionel's mouth.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Thank you so much. Okay, take care.

George can't fight his grin as he looks to Annie.

ANNIE :

Well?

GEORGE :

That was our Times advisor. He said it's stories like these that get editors recommendation letters.

Lionel knocks on the door. Annie and George are startled but reassured when they see who it is.

78.

LIONEL :

The Negro at the door didn't scare you this time.
Annie smiles and heads for the door.

ANNIE :

Lionel please. You're only technically Black. G, going to French. You want me to hold your seat?

GEORGE :

Thanks.
Annie smiles and walks out.

LIONEL :

You need something? Saw your e-mail.

GEORGE :

Yeah, I need someone to do the Donor's function on Saturday. Small dinner for the school's big givers. Administration wants a little coverage.

LIONEL :

That's Halloween night.

GEORGE :

Right, which is why no one else will take it.

LIONEL :

Ah. Thus the new guy.
George gathers his backpack and walks over to Lionel. Gets close.

GEORGE :

On my way to class, but you can stay and check out last year's piece. You'll do fine.

LIONEL :

I don't know. Are there going to be

any racially fueled outbursts at
this thing?

GEORGE :

Never know right?

79.

It's clear Lionel wants to say something else. George too.

LIONEL :

Am I a good writer?

GEORGE:

You'll get better. And we need you
right now.

LIONEL:

You're just a big recommendation
away from landing the Times.

GEORGE :

God I hope so.

Lionel looks down. He is being used. Turns to go, just as -

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Hey.

-- George grabs Lionel unsure what he wants to say. So
instead he just kisses him.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I'm glad we finally got that Bugle
on your chest.

Lionel's all mixed up.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

There's a big party the night of
the Donor's event. Call me after,
maybe we can hang?

LIONEL :

Yeah. Sounds good.

George heads out - leaving Lionel perplexed.

76 INT. TROY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 76

Troy stares at his reflection in a mirror as he lifts his durag
to reveal his perfectly curled finger waves. He's getting
ready for something.

His phone buzzes with a notification: "Message from:
PASTICHE"

Troy nervously clicks it open. As he reads...

80.

KURT (V.O.)

Dear White People. Are you tired of your hum drum, Wonderbread existence of accidental racism and wishing you could sip on Henny out yo crunk cup without a Bitch giving you the side-eye? Course you are.

MONTAGE:

As our subjects get ready for their evening.

Troy goes back to combing over his finger waves, finding and correcting imperceptible imperfections.

KURT (V.O.)

For all those looking to unleash their inner Negro from years of bondage and oppression Pastiche proudly presents "Dear White People" our 89th annual Hallow's Eve Costume Party - tonight at 10 Pacific Time or 5 Colored People Time. Sorry for the short notice, but let's keep it one hun-ed. You've had us on your calendar for weeks.

76A

Lionel stares into a mirror in an ill fitting suit 76A combing out his unwieldy fro. He flinches in pain as he fluffs out each section.

KURT (V.O.)

Dudes must rock FUBU, Ecko, Rocawear, or Sean John. XXXL is the smallest size T-Shirt you can wear, preferably with a collage of Barack Obama and Tupac on it. Stunner Shades, chains, and Blue-Tooth devices sticking out yo ears are also encouraged.

76B

Coco pulls a blonde curly wig over her natural hair. She 76B smooths her tendrils to frame her face, almost pale with foundation. She begins on her eyes.

KURT (V.O.)

Ladies, we need to see huge hoop earrings, long nails, and cheap tight clothes.

(MORE)

81.

KURT (V.O.) (CONT'D)

A proper hood rat starts fights, speaks loudly, and when she can't think of the word she's trying to say just makes one up, such as "edumicated." Feel free to fry up some chicken, bring Kool-Aid, Watermelon, 40s, Henny, and of course Dat Purple Drank. No bougie bitches allowed.

76C

Sam removes the pins and the black power Afro pic holding up her pompadour fro hair-do, and lets it fall flat around her ears. She takes in her image in the mirror.

KURT (V.O.)

Naturally there will be a freestyle rap competition so bring it, get yo shine on and join us for the party of the year! Oh and Nigga Nigga Nigga Nigga. Boy that felt good.

77

EXT. GILLESPIE HALL - NIGHT 77

Laughter and music from the well to do event wafts outside while Troy dressed in a slick Armani tux hangs by the entrance. He smokes on Coco's one-hitter from before. Lionel steps out in his ill fitted suit, a camera in hand. The two are surprised to see each other.

LIONEL :

Funny seeing you here.

TROY:

Father likes to show me off at all the Donor functions. The dessert course is usually my cue to take a breather while they talk shop.

(friendlier)

The trick is to dazzle them into forking over their estates just

before they kick the bucket.

Lionel could just leave. Instead he accepts the olive branch.

LIONEL :

So...Picard or Kirk?

TROY :

Kirk. Wait...

LIONEL :

I saw you watching Star -
82.

TROY :

-- Yo what happens in the crib
stays in the crib. Not trying to
get my card revoked.

LIONEL :

Hey, some could argue that a show
with Whoopi Goldberg, Michael Dorn
and Kunta Kinte himself is a pretty
Black show.

TROY :

Yeah? That work out for you?

LIONEL :

No. No it did not. At least not in
High School. I bet there's a statue
of you at your High School.

TROY :

I was beloved. Won't lie.

LIONEL :

Did they know you were a trekker?

TROY :

My pops left a paint by numbers
template for success at that High
School. All I had to do was fill in
the blanks. Football captain.
Valedictorian. Prom King.

Lionel sees a sadness in Troy.

TROY (CONT'D)

So what? You're growing that out?

LIONEL :

I think it's gaining sentience.

TROY :

It's...out there.

LIONEL :

It's like a black hole for white people's fingers. They're obsessed.

TROY :

You know I cut hair. Why didn't you ask me?

LIONEL :

You're I dunno...you?

83.

Behind Lionel, George and Annie pass by the steps to Gillespie.

GEORGE :

Li! You ready man?

LIONEL :

No costumes? I got a tux for this.

ANNIE :

We just got out of the staff room.

GEORGE :

Yeah, we're going as overworked.

LIONEL :

Where is it?

ANNIE :

Garmin House. On third I think?

LIONEL :

Third and Basin. I know it.

Before Lionel jets to join them.

TROY :

Yo man. If I'd gone to your High School, I'd have had your back.

Lionel smiles and heads after his new friends.

78 EXT. KURT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 78

Lionel pauses before his old home - now filled with the chaos of a wild party. Lionel clears his throat and heads in.

79 INT. KURT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 79

The party is dark and rambunctious. Lots of white kids in costume. Some as fairies or ninjas or Spiderman - but most as pimps and thugs. As Blaxploitation characters. As Barack Obama and Condi Rice. As Shaft, Ice Cube, and 2 Chainz.

It's a lot for Lionel. Cups are handed to them filled with "Purple Drank." Everyone downs the stuff.

INT. GILLESPIE HALL - NIGHT

Troy is being appreciated by an ancient COUPLE.

TROY :

...my own firm. Maybe run for office. Make a difference you know?

84.

The couple smile. A buzz draws Troy's eyes to his phone - photos from "Dear White People" pop up in his news feed.

80 INT. KURT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 80

Lionel watches as Gordon and other Pastiche crew nervously put up flyers and posters. They seem caught off guard. Lionel glances at the posters - it's Kurt with a large Afro wig mimicking Sam's "Missing Black Culture" flyers.

LIONEL :

This is kind of fucked up. Right?

GEORGE:

Pastiche. The world's most erudite boneheads. Who wants another round? Come on Lionel, help a brother out.

LIONEL :

Kitchen's this way.

80A ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS 80A

Coco enters the party - blinged out like Nicki Minaj. She's feeling herself as she's handed a drink.

She's got eyes on her - for the first time like this at a party. But she sees the same thing Lionel saw. Her confidence starts to fight a shame that creeps up beneath her party face. She switches her iPhone to video mode...

COCO:

Hey there muffins. How do I look?
Why are white folks so obsessed with being Black? And why are Black folks so addicted to Blonde Barbie doll weaves? Honeys it's a strange symbiosis we're here to explore...
Coco's voice cracks as she stares into her own image on her iPhone. She pauses it and takes a breath.

80B HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS 80B

Lionel leads George through the dense crowd towards the kitchen - George pulls Lionel into a hallway and into...

80C BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 80C

...the bathroom and up against the door. George inhales Lionel's lips. Runs his fingers through Lionel's hair.

85.

LIONEL :

Ouch.

GEORGE :

Sorry.

LIONEL :

It's okay. Can't wait to cut all this off.

GEORGE:

Don't you dare.
George plunges his fingers into Lionel's fro once again. Pulls a touch too hard.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

I could eat you like a Hershey's.
This sets something off in Lionel.

LIONEL :

I'll be right back.
Lionel breaks George's grasp and heads out the bathroom...
LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

...and back out into the party. He's trapped in a nightmare of caricatures and reveling students. Can't breathe.

EXT. KURT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Lionel squeezes his way outside. Something goes off in his head as he starts walking away from the party.

Just then Kurt arrives in front of the house with some friends. Looks at Lionel then at the house.

KURT :

What the hell?

81 INT. ARMSTRONG / PARKER - NIGHT 81

Lionel paces the halls. His mind churns as he passes the dining hall. Sam and Reggie are engaged in something intense.

DINING HALL:

SAM :

For a genius dude you're a fucking idiot.

86.

REGGIE :

I did it, we did it for you.

SAM :

I didn't ask for it Reggie. I look like I betrayed this house.

REGGIE :

Yeah? Well you betrayed me.

Sam gets up and storms out - brushes past Lionel.

LIONEL :

Sam? Can we talk?

Sam turns back around fiercely.

82

INT. KURT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 82

A turntable is uncovered and rolled out - as a DUDE DRESSED LIKE SERENA WILLIAMS starts up a MYSTIKAL record.

The crowd starts to get live now.

Coco continues to make her way through the party - her face visibly perturbed by the time she reaches the kitchen. She continues out back...

83 EXT. KURT'S BACKYARD - NIGHT 83

...and sits pulling out a cigarette. She sees Annie put on a long straight Black wig and brag to friends...

ANNIE :

Hey who am I? "Bitch it's weave.

Noun. Present tense ho!"

Right in the gut. She's playing Coco. Coco grabs her phone...

84 INT. KURT'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 84

Kurt stumbles about the party in a daze. Drunk? Folks give him props while he searches for and spots Gordon with the others. His phone rings.

KURT :

Yeah?

INTERCUT :

COCO :

Kurt, it's me. I can't do this.

87.

KURT :

Okay, I'm fucking confused.

85 INT. SAM'S ROOM - NIGHT 85

Lionel sits across from Sam.

SAM :

What do you want me to do? Go over there and yell at them?

LIONEL :

Have you heard you yelling?

SAM :

This house is filled with folks willing to take up after a cause Lionel. Believe me. Never would have guessed you'd be one of them but...

LIONEL :

For the first time in my life, I can't just sit around and do nothing. How can you?

SAM :

If I'm caught being a part of
anything like this...it wouldn't be
good for me right now okay?

Lionel gets up and walks towards the door.

SAM (CONT'D)

I'm done being everybody's angry
Black chick.

Sam looks down as Lionel gets up and heads out.

Sam's focus shifts to her Super 8 resting by the door and
then to a bullhorn directly across from it. Her mind ticks.

86 INT. ARMSTRONG / PARKER HALL - NIGHT 86

Lionel exits and paces down the hall. He walks by the dining
room - taken over by Reggie, the BoFros, and a mix of other
students mostly from ARMSTRONG / PARKER.

86A DINING HALL - CONTINUOUS 86A

Lionel gingerly walks in the room. He's still an outsider
here - but something's changed in him.

88.

LIONEL :

Hey. How's it going. Hi.

No one answers him - just stay to their own conversations.

Lionel spots a familiar face...Sungmi.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

Hey...what is this?

SUNGMI :

Black Student Union.

Lionel smiles shyly. He should've known that.

Reggie, Curls, Dreads and the Bofros hang out at the front.

DREADS :

Your call then man.

REGGIE:

(to everyone)

Alright ya'll - thanks for coming
out tonight. Looks like Sam's not
making it so...let's just call it.

The crowd starts to talk amongst themselves, get up and
leave. Just then Lionel stands and before he can think...

LIONEL :

Uh. Excuse me. Hi. I'm Lionel. Some of you...none of you probably know me. I've never been to a meeting. But I just came back from a party on campus and I think you should know about it.

Lionel's nerves can be heard in his voice now. He's got the judging eyes of the room fixed silently on him. He sees an open laptop on a desk.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

Anybody mind if I?

Reggie shifts a bit as Lionel goes to the laptop and pulls up the party on Facebook. The crowd gathers around as Lionel browses through the photos.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

I mean...I don't know. This is fucked up right?

REGGIE :

Alright brother. What's the plan?

89.

Lionel realizes the eyes aren't judging. They're mobilizing. Ready for action. Lionel steels himself.

LIONEL :

We go over there. Now.

CURLS :

Think there's enough of us?

SUNGMI :

You know you don't have a monopoly on being a pissed off minority. Latino's United is meeting across the hall. Asian American League too.

(off the stares)

You guys got better snacks.

87 INT. GILLESPIE HALL - NIGHT 87

Troy scrolls through an endless amount of Facebook uploads from the party. Forties, bad Afro wigs, fake asses. Shoved in between two RICH OLD WELL TO DOS at a long table covered in empty plates and glasses - Troy looks across to

his father, in mid exaggerated guffaw with President Fletcher.

TROY :

Dad...

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Not now Troy.

TROY :

It's important. There's something happening on campus. I might've...

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

You're being rude son.

Dean Fairbanks turns away. Troy ponders a moment and then-

TROY :

Oh am I? How about I tell your precious donors and anyone here who'll listen about the kind of a school it is they're giving to?

The Dean can feel the eyes of the Donors and the President on him - an outrage comes over him as he pulls Troy aside.

90.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

I don't know who you think you are young man but you don't get to talk to your father any kind of way.

TROY :

All I say to you is yes sir and no sir! Look I should've brought this up before but --

(off Fairbanks dismissal)

-- listen to me!

Dean Fairbanks tries to cover this moment with a smile.

88 INT. KURT'S KITCHEN - NIGHT 88

Kurt, still dazed, huddles with his core Pastiche group.

KURT :

What?

GORDON :

Yeah dude. We all got it. I mean,
everything's cool right?

A noise in the other room startles them...

88A LIVING ROOM 88A

...It's Reggie who knocks over a bowl of chips. Dreads argues
with a few people. Martin rips shades off a kid's face. The
party swarms with BSU kids and their Latino / Asian allies.
A SMASH yanks Kurt's attention back to the kitchen...

88B KITCHEN 88B

...where Lionel smashes bottles of liquor in the sink.

KURT :

Lionel?

Kurt yanks the booze from Lionel and shoves him.

KURT (CONT'D)

The fuck you think you're doing
man?

Lionel shoves Kurt into the bar divide. A few of the BSU kids
flood into the kitchen and hold Kurt back.

KURT (CONT'D)

That all you got?

91.

LIONEL :

We're putting an end to this Kurt.

KURT :

Fuck you I'm calling the cops.

MARTIN :

Half of this crowd is under 21.

A loud AMP sound alerts everyone to the DJ platform in the
Living Room.

88C LIVING ROOM 88C

Mitch has taken over the mic.

MITCH:

Gimme that mic

Before I slap ya

Looking for some dykes,
that wanna another chapta.

If you do me slow,

you can do me faster,

I'll pass you to the Nigga on my right, he gets you after.

LIONEL :

Kurt-

KURT :

-- Why don't you tuck your tail between your legs, run and tell the Dean and get the fuck out.

Lionel sinks from this attack while his posse from BSU watches helplessly as the party goes back into full swing. Lionel turns to go and spots...

...George who joins Annie, fresh beer in hand. But right behind George is...

...Sam, having just arrived with her camera in hand pointed at the rap battle. She winks at Lionel.

Lionel turns around - summons something from deep inside.

Lionel steps onto the DJ platform and snatches the mic out of one of the rapper's hands.

LIONEL:

Heyyyy! Hoooo! Heyyy! Hooo!

92.

The crowd is with it - thinks it's part of the show as Lionel proceeds to freestyle terribly...

LIONEL (CONT'D)

My name is Lionel,

Some people call me Li.

Lots of people think

that I talk kinda white.

Well that's alright.

Yeah that's cool.

I'd rather you think I'm white,

than tap dance for you.

With that Lionel takes the mic and SMASHES it on the wall. He then takes the turntable by his hands and flips it over.

Sparks fly - the amp goes crazy - the crowd is in shock.

Lionel grabs a speaker tower and slams it to the ground.

Lionel's off the platform now. Kurt grabs him - Reggie pushes Kurt away in his defense.

Gordon grabs Reggie - A FIGHT BREAKS OUT.

More equipment is slammed to the ground and stomped on as the party disintegrates into chaos.

Sam dodges fights to capture it all with the camera.
Art is being ripped from the walls. Dishes being smashed on
the ground. Arguments come to physical blows.
The steel in Sam's gaze fades. Replaced by...heartbreak?
And then she spots...
...Coco squeezing her way through the crowd for the door.
Sam's camera and mic stay trained on Coco.

COCO :

What? Say it. Come on.

Sam stays silent.

COCO (CONT'D)

This may come as a shock, but these
people don't give a fuck about no
Harriet muthafuckin Tubman. They
pay millions of dollars on their
tans, their lips, their asses, Jay-
Z tickets, you name it, cause they
wanna be us.

(MORE)

93.

COCO (CONT'D)

So they got to be for a night. I'm
not about to go out into the
streets in protest of a Halloween
party.

Sam keeps her mouth shut and her camera rolling as Coco
realizes it's herself she's trying to convince.

Coco storms off. Sam exhales and lowers her camera. This is
new for her. Keeping her mouth shut.

89 EXT. KURT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 89

Coco trudges down the side walk - yanks off her hair, her
lashes, her bling - shedding the shame of the night.

90 EXT. KURT'S YARD - NIGHT 90

Kurt hustles Lionel out into the yard. Kurt shoves him to the
ground.

KURT :

Dude. I know you can't help it...

Lionel just gets back up again only to be slammed down.

KURT (CONT'D)

...but why are you such a fag dude?

Lionel spits in Kurt's face and pops right back up again. We
see it in his eyes - he'll never give up.

Kurt's hand is on Lionel's collar. He pushes him down again. Kids are all around - some from the BSU - some from Pastiche - some from the Bugle. Everyone holds an opposite party back. Lionel looks over at his audience and then into Kurt's eyes. Lionel leans in and kisses Kurt on the mouth long and hard.

LIONEL :

Finally got me where you want me.

Kurt's in shock. He looks at his crew who laugh at him.

Lionel sees the surprise in the eyes of his new supporters as well. No time to soak this in though. Kurt's let up. For a moment. Lionel turns back to Kurt and PUNCHES him in the face. The BSU kids go CRAZY in support.

The shock gone - Kurt damn near knocks Lionel out.

The world goes all slow motion and out of focus. Lionel sort of makes out that Kurt is yanked off him.

94.

Kids run in different directions - Flashlights fill the yard - One is shone directly on Lionel. CAMPUS SAFETY GUARDS and a couple POLICE OFFICERS surround him.

91

INT. KURT'S HOUSE - NIGHT 91

The motor on Sam's Super 8 ticks away. The party is at a complete standstill.

Troy enters and looks around in disbelief. Makes eye contact with Kurt who is being held by a Campus Safety Officer.

Dean Fairbanks enters and stands in the middle of the chaos. Sam tip toes in for a close up and holds out a small mic.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

What is all this?

92

INT. AUDITORIUM - NIGHT 92

A SERIES OF SHOTS FROM A MOVIE BEING PROJECTED ON A SCREEN

We see the Dean looking about the party with disappointment.

CUT TO:

92A

KURT looking bewildered outside his house after the 92A party. We hear BOOS from a crowd. The carnage is devastating. Windows are blown out - trash and destroyed furniture on the lawn. Ash where fires were put out.

KURT :

I didn't do this. Sam. I had nothing to do with this.

CUT TO:

92B MORNING NEWS 92B

ANCHOR :

What some are calling a "race war" has erupted at one of the nation's oldest and most prestigious -CUT

TO:

92 GILLESPIE FORUM now filled with students who sit before 92 Dean Fairbanks and President Fletcher for a Town Hall. Everyone wears a look of outrage.
95.

DEAN FAIRBANKS:

We don't condone this egregious event and are investigating its origins. The president and I are looking at ways to address issues of Diversity at Manchester.

REGGIE :

HOUSING REFORM!

Applause breaks out amongst the crowd. But so do boos.

CUT TO:

93
VARIOUS SPOTS AROUND CAMPUS. Students address the camera. 93

MITCH:

I'm sorry but it's bullshit. Yo this is how we get down. If you can't take a joke in this day and age? The fact we can joke about it proves we've moved on you feel me? This is an attack on free speech! We're the victims here!

CUT TO:

93A
A series of Busts have been PAINTED IN BLACK FACE outside93A

of Armstrong / Parker where Lionel address the camera...

LIONEL:

It's hard enough for us to even get into a school like this. Let alone succeed. Find our way. This is only a debate because of who Kurt's dad is, which just proves the point. All you did was have a radio show and look what happened to you.

CUT TO:

93B

COCO as she talks directly to camera. 93B

COCO:

I know this may come as a shock, but nobody gives a fuck about no Harriet muthafuckin Tubman...they wanna be us. So they got to be for a night.

CUT TO:

96.

93C

A POSTER featuring Troy rendered like the famous Shepard 93C Fairy Obama posters with the words "A NEW HOPE" written at the bottom as well as "TROY BROUSSARD FOR PRESIDENT." This gets some more applause from the crowd watching.

TROY :

Of course I got my dad involved. It was the right thing to do. I didn't mean for all this to happen. All the posters and everything.

SAM (O.S.)

But you'd welcome it? A shot for school president.

TROY :

I think...I'd make more than few people happy if I ran.

CUT TO:

93D

RADIO BOOTH - where Sam puts her headphones on. She 93D
lingers.

SAM (V.O.)

Even though I'd been expressly
forbidden to do so, I wanted to do
one last show. Something to sum up
the moment. To savor in the pop of
the post racial bubble just burst.

SAM :

Dear White People...

SAM (V.O.)

I wanted to react.

Sam takes in a thoughtful breath before...

SAM :

...Know what? Nevermind.

She fades in a melancholy piece of Be-Bop before hanging her
headpones up as the title on the projected movie fades in:

"...BLACK FACES BY SAMANTHA WHITE"

Sam stares nervously at the screen as the lights come on,
when all at once the room BREAKS INTO APPLAUSE. Sam turns to
see that the entire room is on it's feet including Prof
Bodkin and Gabe.

97.

94 INT. DEAN'S OFFICE - DAY 94

Dean Fairbanks loosens his tie, flanked by several SCHOOL
OFFICIALS. They've been here for hours listening to...

KURT :

Once I heard what the group was
planning, I sent out an email to
the staff to cancel it. You have
the email printed in front of you.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Who's this?

Kurt turns to a SUITED MAN next to him.

KURT :

My lawyer.

CUT TO:

94B We'll be cross cutting between several of these sessions. 94B

COCO :

So when I got the invite and saw everyone clicking "yes" I figured it was back on.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

You were hoping to make the staff?

COCO :

...

CUT TO:

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

At what point in time did you show up to the event?

94C Sam sits with arms folded. 94C

DEAN FAIRBANKS (CONT'D)

Samantha. Please.

SAM :

Why am I even here?

CUT TO:

KURT :

94 Guys throw parties at the house all 94 the time.

98.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

We know you were planning this.

KURT :

Your son tell you that?

CUT TO:

94D Fairbanks stares down his son. Troy is silent and anxious.94D

DEAN FAIRBANKS:

(reading)

"...wishing you could sip on Henny

out yo crunk cup without a Bitch
giving you the side-eye?"
(and then)
You write this Troy?
Troy looks up at his father embarrassed.

TROY :

No. Mine wasn't chosen.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

But you wanted to be?

TROY :

What I wanted didn't matter then.
Why should it matter now? I told
you about the party, remember?

CUT TO:

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

94 The invite came from the Pastiche 94
Facebook account.

KURT :

I loathe Facebook.
An OFFICIAL whispers something in Fairbanks' ear.
KURT (CONT'D)
You've got to believe me.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

You've used that line on me before
this year Mr. Fletcher. When a
homophobic message mysteriously
appeared on a voice mail line you
shared with a roommate.

CUT TO:

99.

DEAN FAIRBANKS (CONT'D)

What were your intentions when you
went back the second time?

LIONEL :

To stop it.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

By any means necessary?

LIONEL:

Someone once told me...Manchester is like jazz. I don't know much about jazz. But from what I can tell, when your solo's up, you better blow.

Fairbanks fights a smile.

CUT TO:

94C SAM 94C

All I did that night was hit record brother.

The Dean takes a gulp from a glass of water. He stands and looks out his huge windows onto the campus below.

CUT TO:

94E

The Dean has Facebook opened on his computer. Officials 94E are taking a break. Drinking water. Discussing the day. The Dean tries a few passwords.

CUT TO:

94C DEAN FAIRBANKS 94C

Want to hear something strange?

The Dean turns from the window.

DEAN FAIRBANKS (CONT'D)

The Pastiche group page hadn't been used for months, until the invite went out.

CUT TO:

94E

The Dean tries a different password. Still invalid. 94E

CUT TO:

100.

94C SAM 94C

Fascinating.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Well what's interesting is how easy it was to access the group before the note was sent. The password was "Pa\$tiche" spelled with a dollar sign according to Kurt. Seems recently it's been changed.

CUT TO:

94E The Dean tries one more. It works. 94E

CUT TO:

94C DEAN FAIRBANKS (CONT'D) 94C
Couldn't figure it out at first. Then I thought to try something. Five, seven, eight, three, five, twenty six, one, nine, four, six. Eleven numbers. Just like our student ID numbers. Just like your student ID number.

SAM :

As much as you hate him, you will stop at nothing to protect your master and his boy.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Did you send out the invite Sam?

SAM :

That invite, whoever sent it should've been met with derision and outrage. Instead, a hundred people showed up and they pulled out posters and decorations and costumes they'd made for just such an occasion.

Sam and Dean Fairbanks at a stalemate.

Silence falls in the room. The Dean's mind ticks.

95 EXT. MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY - DAY 95

A pack of EMERALD BUGLE newspapers hit the stand with the

headline:

EXPULSIONS MADE"

101.

Next to it is another stack of papers from the INDEPENDENT OBSERVER. The headline reads: "EBONY & IVY: CAN THERE BE HARMONY? BY LIONEL HIGGINS."

George picks up a copy of the Observer and starts to read...

96 INT. TROY AND LIONEL'S APARTMENT - DAY 96

Lionel flips through his own article as well. A satisfied grin on his face as a razor makes its way through his hair.

LIONEL:

2 Chainz? Shaft? While endless complex depictions of whites, white men in particular exist - there aren't that many versions of us in the culture.

His locks waft towards the ground as Troy styles a fresh and fearless fro-hawk atop Lionel's head.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

Culture has a powerful way of telling people what they can and can't be. For people of color the options are rather limited.

TROY:

Next James Baldwin up in here. Wait hold on a sec.

Star Trek is back from commercial break. Troy and Lionel watch in silence.

97 EXT. MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY - DAY 97

Gabe is just about finished with Lionel's article too. Looks up just in time to see...

GABE :

Hello Sam.

Sam sneers at his formalities.

GABE (CONT'D)

Read about Armstrong / Parker.

SAM:

Yeah. Prez made an executive withdrawal. Armstrong stays Black.

GABE :

Congrats?

102.

SAM:

(with a shrug)

Getting too dramatic man. Thinking about getting an apartment off campus. We'll see.

GABE:

Sam going against the grain?

Shocked. How's papa White?

SAM :

He's recovering.

GABE :

Good. Well...

Gabe fights the urge to hug her.

SAM:

We were actually on the phone last night for hours. First time we talked since the bypass. He was putting up a strong front. Teasing me about being so worried. Then came the stories about me as a little girl I'd heard a thousand times. About how independent I was. Gabe smiles politely. Senses she needs a moment.

GABE :

Want to talk about it?

SAM:

My mother worked nights so he would take me to school. And it pissed me off because he would follow me all the way to homeroom. Every time he tried to hold my hand I'd scream and pull away. He thought I was just being...difficult.

A hint of recognition in Gabe. Is this about them?

SAM (CONT'D)

But it was the kids. And the parents and the teachers. They'd

see this Black girl and this white man and wonder what we were doing together. Even at nine I could feel their eyes on me. Especially at nine. It brought tears to my eyes. Gabe's stone face melts at this.
103.

SAM (CONT'D)

I was just a bratty girl, didn't know any better but-- The thought of losing him-- You know? I just feel so bad. How awful am I to do that to him? To anyone I love?

Gabe gets it. This is an explanation. An apology, to him. His arm is on her shoulder now.

GABE :

I'm sure he forgives you.

SAM :

Think so?

Gabe nods. Sam's normal defenses come back up lest she cries.

SAM (CONT'D)

So anyway. I didn't mean to say all of that. I don't know why I did.

GABE :

Sam. Where are you going?

SAM :

I don't know. Lunch?

Gabe starts to walk with her.

GABE :

Isn't it Mac and Cheese day at Armstrong/Parker?

SAM :

Think they'll let you in?

Gabe smiles. They walk a bit. Then he grabs her hand. Sam lets the moment happen. Squeezes his back. They look into each others' eyes.

Don't even notice as Reggie and the Bofros pass them by.

98 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 98

Coco sits across from Helmut. He's got his eyes on a Youtube clip from Sam's movie featuring Coco.

COCO (YOUTUBE)

I know this may come as a shock,
but they don't give a fuck about no
Harriet muthafuckin Tubman...

104.

HELMUT :

Two hundred thousand views. Look
they even auto-tuned it.

With a click Helmut pulls it up.

AUTOTUNED COCO (YOUTUBE)

Muthafuckin Tubman! Muthatfuckin
Tubman! Don't give a fuck about no
muthafuckin Tubman!

Coco's not sure what to think.

HELMUT :

Couple months, that's how long
shooting for an episode takes. We
recommend you cut your course load
in half to accommodate the
schedule.

COCO :

Half?

HELMUT :

Trust me it it'll read "full-time"
in the episode. If...once we go to
series, we might have to figure out
a summer schedule.

COCO :

For shooting?

HELMUT :

For uh...classes and stuff. Won't
be graduating early anymore
sweetheart.

Helmut shifts a contract over to Coco.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

Five grand for the episode. Twenty

each if you get picked up for series. What do you say?

Coco stares at the contract and back at Helmut.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

Trust me sweetie it's the same out there as it is in here. Good news is? Against all that damn white you and I? We pop. Think I wanted to be the go-to producer for all things Black?

105.

Coco shrugs.

HELMUT (CONT'D)

Tell you what's worse though. Being that broke Nigga stuck on the south side of Chicago. Hundred and Fiftieth street.

Coco takes a deep breath. Stares right into his eyes -
99 EXT. MANCHESTER - DAY 99

Coco exits a building and spots Troy up ahead. He's flanked by his former enemies turned supporters, Reggie and the other BoFros. They all carry Troy's "New Hope" posters.

COCO :

Made some new friends?

Troy shrugs as Coco grabs for his hand. He pulls away and shares a glance with Reggie, who doesn't approve.

COCO (CONT'D)

Fine.

TROY :

Come on Coco.

COCO :

Fuck you.

Coco starts to walk ahead.

TROY :

My dad saw your videos. He's a little worried about --

COCO :

-- how it'll look. With your campaign and all. What's your best

friend Reggie think?

Troy motions for Reggie to go on ahead.

TROY :

We had fun, alright?

COCO :

I get everyone else wants you to win Troy. But do you?

Troy doesn't know how to answer that. He stares at the triumphant, winning version of himself on his poster.

106.

Coco's eyes shift longingly as she walks ahead - unsure of who she is at the moment and who she will be in the next.

Watching her is Lionel and Sam - sitting with Gabe and Sungmi. They both know that look well...

SAM :

Hey Lionel. With me out and Troy moving on - A/P's going to need a new head of house.

LIONEL :

Think there's a story there? Who do you think it'll be?

Sam and Sungmi share a glance and stare right at Lionel.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

What? No.

SUNGMI :

Everyone loves you. Won't be hard to rally the vote.

SAM :

Yeah. We got you man.

Lionel takes in this moment. One of complete acceptance.

100 INT. FLETCHERS OFFICE - DAY 100

Fairbanks turns from the window in Fletcher's office to join him at his desk. They're all ears as they look across to...

HELMUT :

Let me get this straight. First you tried to break up the Black house.

Then you took down the sister with

the little radio show. And after all that, your kid throws a Blackface party?

FLETCHER :

Now wait a minute!

HELMUT :

You thought you were having money problems before? Wait till cable gets their hands on this story. Bill Maher is gon' fuck you up!

FLETCHER :

I have heard enough -
107.

HELMUT :

-- Wait I'm sorry. Look from where I'm sitting this place is a goldmine.

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

What?

HELMUT :

For one we got to show the events that led up to the party -

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

-- That already happened.

HELMUT :

Well yeah, but we can reenact --

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

-- reenact?

HELMUT :

Documentary term...Look, I can start putting together an overall deal today. I'm talking real money! Turns out the one thing America likes in it's reality more than

ignant Black folks, is crazy racist
White people!

DEAN FAIRBANKS :

Now you look here. This is an
honorable institution. The idea
that we would so much as entertain
this suggestion -
Fletcher holds his hand up. His turn to speak.

FLETCHER :

How much we talking?
Fairbanks' outrage turns to resignation as Helmut, the one
winner here smiles. Dollar signs in his eyes.
100 CUT TO BLACK. 100