

THE DIVERSIFICATION OF NOAH MILLER

by
Adam Cole-Kelly and Sam Pitman

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INT. BERGER BROS BURGERS - DAY

NOAH MILLER (35), a warm, likable, handsome white guy, sits at a table with a BURGER in front of him. He talks into a television camera.

NOAH
From the looks of this bacon
cheeseburger, Arik and Yoni Berger
don't keep kosher, but I'm not
complaining.

Two yamulke-toting, bearded guys, ARIK and YONI, stand behind Noah and give a thumbs up to the camera.

Noah lifts the succulent burger to his mouth and sinks his teeth into it. Burger juice trickles down his face as he chews.

NOAH (CONT'D)
When it comes to burger research,
these guys have really done their
"jew" diligence.

Noah looks to his female producer, DEB, standing behind the camera. She shakes her head.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Let's try that again.

Noah looks back into the camera. He then points to Yoni's necklace.

NOAH (CONT'D)
This burger gets "chai" marks from
me.

The camera man and the sound guy CHUCKLE. Deb shakes her head again.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Too insider? Ok. Ok. For real this
time.... That's one delicious
burger. For News Channel 4 and New
York Magazine, I'm The Urban Chow-
boy, Noah Miller. See you next
time.

DEB
That's a wrap. Thanks everyone.

Noah walks off camera towards Deb.

NOAH
A little piece of me dies every
time I say 'Urban Chow-boy.'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DEB

A little piece of me thinks you
shouldn't complain considering you
eat food for a living.

NOAH

(tongue in cheek)
Don't forget my adoring fans.

Deb playfully hits Noah.

DEB

Get out of here. Don't you have a
party to prep for?

NOAH

(to the room)
That's right. I expect to see all
of you at my place tonight. Seven
o'clock sharp.

Noah ad-libs good byes and members of the crew pat him on
the back as he walks out of the restaurant.

INT. MSNBC STUDIO - NIGHT

KEITH OLBERMANN sits behind his desk and delivers his
"Special Comment" into the camera.

KEITH

Typically I reserve this forum for
unleashing my outrage at
proprietors of injustice,
immorality, hypocrisy, and all
things wrong. But on this day I
have no venom to spit, only hope
and love to embrace. And if that
seems overly schmaltzy to you,
Bill-O, or any of my other
dedicated viewers, then clearly
you don't understand the magnitude
of what we are witnessing. How
fitting that today, nearly 70
years to the day after the birth
of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a
black man has been sworn into
office as the president of the
United States. Perhaps the
greatest realization yet of Dr.
King's dream is the man who in a
couple of minutes will take the
stage behind me. President Barack
Obama is post-racial America. Yes,
Mississippi, post-racial.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KEITH (CONT'D)

We're living far closer to King's color blind ideal than even the most optimistic civil rights champions imagined they might see in their lifetime, and I, for one, am proud to say that I am proud to be an American. As we look back...

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - SAME

We pull out to see that Keith Olbermann is being watched on a large wall-mounted plasma TV.

Noah's inauguration party. Well-dressed yuppies mill about the party, drinking and enjoying the festivities in Noah's beautiful apartment.

Noah sits on a couch in front of the TV. His 8 month-old son JASON sits in his lap. He puts his arm around his other son, 4 year-old MICAH.

NOAH

People are gonna ask you boys where you were on this day for the rest of your life.

MICAH

But I'm right here, Daddy!

Noah kisses Micah on the top of his head then leans down to Jason.

NOAH

Can you say 'Obama?' O-ba-ma?

An attractive, well-dressed woman leans over the couch. This is LIZ MILLER, Noah's wife.

LIZ

Honey, he tried to eat your iPod today. I think you're reaching a bit.

Liz playfully taps Jason's nose and joins her family on the couch.

NOAH

Do you think we should have done dim sum instead of tapas?

LIZ

Don't do that. Everybody's having a great time.

NOAH

I know, but I just feel like it would have been even better if...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIZ
(interrupting)
Noah, you always think everything
could be better. The grass is
perfectly green right here. Now
shut up.

On the TV, President Obama takes the podium and begins
SPEAKING. The room quiets down.

NOAH'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - HOURS LATER

Noah stands at his stereo, scrolling through songs on his
heavily chewed-up iPod. He finds a winner, smiles and
hits play.

The Notorious B.I.G.'s '*MO MONEY MO PROBLEMS*' pumps out
of the speakers and the merry crowd begins bopping along.

PETE PAPANICALOU, Noah's best-friend, runs over. Pete is
loud and abrasive but lovable. He gives NOAH a bear hug.

PETE
How awesome is this?

NOAH
It's fucking incredible. I
just...I just...

Noah searches for it.

NOAH (CONT'D)
I just wanna hug a black person,
y'know?

Noah and Pete survey the crowd at the party. Every single
person there is white. They look at each other. Pete
opens his arms.

PETE
Settle for a hairy Greek?
(beat)
Or I guess we could go hug your
door man.

NOAH
Who, Ray? He's not black.

PETE
Somebody should tell him that,
cause he sure talks like he's
black.

NOAH
What does that even mean, to talk
like you're black?

Pete flashes Noah a look as if to say, 'give me a break.'

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH (CONT'D)
(caving)
OK. Fine. He does.

A buzzed Liz approaches and starts to dance with the two of them as the celebratory night continues.

INT. THE COMEDY CELLAR - NIGHT -- WEEK LATER

Noah and Liz sit at a table in a crowded comedy club with Pete and his ditzy blonde date NICOLE.

CHRIS ROCK stands on stage doing his act.

PETE
Wow! How'd you know he was going to be here?

NOAH
The guy who covers comedy at the mag had the inside scoop.

Nicole LAUGHS at one of Rock's jokes.

NICOLE
This is so beyond. I've loved him ever since his TV show.

Nicole turns towards the stage and does the Arsenio Hall arm pump and HOOT. Noah and Liz look at Pete who shrugs sheepishly.

On stage, Rock continues his act.

ROCK
...and I love all these cracka-ass-crackas who think that just cuz they voted for Obama they're automatically not racist. You guys know who you are. Same motherfuckers who think they're down with the black community just cuz they watched a season of 'THE WIRE' or own one Biggie album.

Liz, Pete, and Nicole LAUGH heartily. But to Noah, this isn't funny.

INT. 14TH STREET Y, BASKETBALL COURT - DAY -- WEEK LATER

Ten 30-somethings play an intense game of hoops. Noah and Pete are on opposing teams. Noah gets the ball, drives hard to the hole, and hits a reverse lay-up.

Pete dribbles down the court and heaves a three-pointer that gets stuck in between the rim and the backboard. Everybody GROANS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PLAYER

Nice shot, Ehlo.

A circle of players gather underneath the hoop. They take turns jumping up to try to dislodge the ball. Nobody can jump high enough.

Noah shakes his head in disbelief. He turns to Pete.

NOAH

Not one person in this group can touch the rim.

PETE

Nope.

Noah thinks about it.

NOAH

Have we ever had a black guy play in this game?

PETE

Yeah. Of course. Roger brought that guy Harold once.

NOAH

When?

PETE

'97, I think.

NOAH

So that's it? In 15 years of playing in this game we can only remember one black guy?

PETE

Well I remembered one. You can't remember any.

NOAH

Does that strike you as odd?

PETE

We don't have many black friends.

NOAH

Many or any?

PETE

Neither, I guess.

A SHORT BLACK JANITOR with heavy work boots and about 30 keys hanging from his belt sets down a broom and walks underneath the basket.

With astonishing ease he jumps up and knocks the ball loose. Without saying a word he walks off the court and returns to his broom.

INT. BRYANT PARK GRILL - DAY

A power lunch scene. Noah, casually dressed, sits at the bar. From left to right in front of him on the bar sit: his laptop, a plate of food, and his son Jason.

Noah takes a forkful of food into his mouth. He chews contemplatively. He starts typing on his computer, pauses and looks to Jason.

NOAH
Sublime or heavenly?

Jason drools.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Mouth-watering! Well said.

Noah's cell phone RINGS. He checks to see who's calling. He answers and puts the phone up to Jason's ear.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Say hi to Mommy.

Jason licks the phone.

INT. J.CREW OFFICES - SAME

Liz paces around her office wearing a headset. She flips through design sketches on an easel pointing to certain pages. Her ASSISTANT takes notes.

INTERCUT BETWEEN LIZ AND NOAH

LIZ
Noah. Noah. NOAH!

Noah brings the phone to his own ear.

NOAH
Hey, you.

LIZ
Seriously, honey, you gotta stop putting me on the phone with the kid who can't talk, at least when I'm at work.

NOAH
Fine, fine. What's up?

LIZ
I just got a call from Micah's school...

INT. NURSERY SCHOOL CLASSROOM- - DAY

Noah and Liz sit in tiny chairs in front of Micah's white teacher, Mrs. Yates.

MRS. YATES
Alright. Now before we get
started, do either of you guys
have to go to the bathroom?

LIZ
No. I think we're ok.

NOAH
Well, I guess I could.

Liz glares at Noah.

NOAH
I mean, no. We're both fine.

MRS. YATES
Way to cooperate! For using words
instead of hitting, you both get a
gold star.

Mrs. Yates grabs two gold star STICKERS, stands up, and
places a star each on Liz and Noah's sleeves.

LIZ
(agitated)
Mrs. Yates, can you please tell us
why we're here?

MRS. YATES
I love that you're ready to learn.
So Micah, your wonderful, special,
son, has taken a peculiar interest
in our newest student, Antoine.

Noah and Liz look at each other.

LIZ
I knew it, he's gay.

MRS. YATES
Oh my, no. It's just that Antoine
happens to be our only African-
American student...

NOAH
(excited)
Well then that's a good thing that
he's trying to befriend him.

MRS. YATES
Yes, friendship is a wonderful
thing. That's why we're sitting
here in the friendship triangle.
But with Micah and Antoine it's
more like... Micah follows him
around... everywhere.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. YATES (CONT'D)

And, well, then today Micah covered his face in brown magic marker because he said "that's what Antoine does everyday."

Liz smirks.

LIZ

I don't want to be insensitive, but he's four years old. Is this really a big deal?

MRS. YATES

He also pinned Antoine down and attacked his face with an eraser in an attempt to 'clean up his dirty face.'

Noah buries his face in his hands.

LIZ

That's no good.

MRS. YATES

No, but it has given us an opportunity. I've spoken with Antoine's parents and they'd love us all to sit down and talk this out. Make everyone more comfortable.

LIZ

Actually, that would make me much less comfortable. Please let them know we're very sorry, but we'll handle this at home.

MRS. YATES

Your choice makes me sad, but it is yours to make. Now may I ask you a question?

LIZ

Sure.

MRS. YATES

Does Micah have any other African-American playmates outside of school?

NOAH

Not really.

LIZ

No.

MRS. YATES (CONT'D)

I see. Do you guys ever have any of your friends of another race over to your house?

LIZ

What are you getting at?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MRS. YATES

It seems Micah's behavior stems from a lack of exposure. Now we don't normally give out homework assignments in nursery school, but I think it might be good, for you and for Micah, if you diversify your social circles a bit.

INT. SUBWAY CAR - DAY

Liz and Noah ride in a crowded subway car.

LIZ

That condescending, judgmental, bitch. Who the hell does she think she is!? Where does she get off insinuating that we're racist?!

A HEAVYSET BLACK WOMAN standing next to Liz eyes her suspiciously.

LIZ (CONT'D)

(to the black woman)

I'm not! That's why I'm so mad.

(to Noah)

Why aren't you more upset?

Noah stares ahead blankly.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Noah?

Noah snaps out of his daze.

LIZ (CONT'D)

We should sue her ass. I think we have a case.

NOAH

I think she might be right.

LIZ

What?

NOAH

Think about it. Is Micah ever around any, uh,...

(whispers)

...black people?

LIZ

He's with Blanca all the time.

NOAH

Our housekeeper? She's not...

(whispers)

...black.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIZ

Well nobody's actually...

(whispers)

black.

(beat)

She's brown though.

NOAH

I don't know. I just feel like I'm starting to realize that my life may not be what I've always thought it was.

LIZ

Not this again.

NOAH

I've always fancied myself so liberal and into diversity and everything but when I actually examine my life, it's not there.

LIZ

Give me a break Noah. You do appreciate diversity, and so do I, but just because it so happens that most of our friends are...

(whispers)

white, doesn't make us bad people.

NOAH

No, but this is getting out of control. I don't want my only interaction with black people to be emails from Barack Obama.

LIZ

I think you're making too big a deal out of this.

NOAH

I just can't handle the idea of our kids being raised in an environment where they're only surrounded by people who look, and dress, and talk exactly like us.

Liz looks at the gold star still stuck to Noah's sleeve.

LIZ

Would you please take that gold star off of your sleeve. This train isn't going to Auschwitz.

Noah hangs his head, dejected.

NOAH

Maybe that's what I deserve.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LIZ

Now you're just being ridiculous.

NOAH

Well something feels wrong. I
can't just ignore it.

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREET - NIGHT

Noah and Pete walk down an oddly quiet city block.

PETE

Where'd you say you heard about
this thing?

NOAH

Internet.

PETE

I'm all for getting politically
involved, but this...

Pete looks at their surroundings

PETE (CONT'D)

...feels like the start of a rape
porn.

NOAH

Rape porn?

PETE

It's not as bad as you'd think.

They approach a building with a steel door where a sign
reads "SPREAD THE BLACK - Meeting Tonight - Downstairs."

PETE (CONT'D)

Exactly what kind of an
organization is this?

INT. SPREAD THE BLACK MEETING - MOMENTS LATER

Noah and Pete head down a staircase and into a cold,
dimly-lit basement. A small group of black people sit on
folding chairs facing a platform. Noah spots two open
chairs near the front of the room. They slowly make their
way to the seats. All eyes are on them- the only white
people in the room. Noah self-consciously sits down.

He turns to the nerdy looking black guy next to him.

NOAH

(super friendly)
Hey. How you doing?

Noah extends his hand for a shake.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH (CONT'D)

Noah Miller.

The guy just stares at Noah's hand. Noah nods and turns towards the platform.

The LEADER of the meeting walks onto the platform holding a white MANNEQUIN wearing a tee shirt that reads "White Devil."

Noah swallows nervously.

The leader addresses the room.

LEADER

Good evening my brothers and sisters.

The leader unsheathes a machete from his belt and violently beheads the mannequin.

The small crowd cheers their approval.

Noah sprints out of the room. Pete, spellbound, remains seated.

INT. WESTVILLE RESTAURANT - LATER

Noah and Liz dine at a table set for three. Liz chows down while Noah stares at his meal.

LIZ

You're not gonna eat?

Noah checks his blackberry.

NOAH

I really think Pete's dead.

LIZ

It was that bad, huh?

NOAH

They murdered a dummy!

LIZ

I'm sorry you had to go through that.

NOAH

I just wish I didn't always feel this way about something.

LIZ

Me too, but I may have reacted a tad defensively the other day. Maybe you're right this time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

Did you just say I'm right?

LIZ

I'm around people of different races at work everyday. It's not something I ever think about. But your job isolates you. The only people you share an office with everyday are Micah and Jason.

NOAH

So what then?

LIZ

I don't know. Maybe it's as simple as...

Pete rushes over to the table and takes the empty seat.

PETE

That was fucking awesome!

NOAH

Are you crazy? They hated white people!

PETE

Not all white people. I mean white people like you, for sure. But Leon was a really interesting dude.

NOAH

Who is Leon?

PETE

The guy with the machete.

Pete starts eating off of Noah's plate.

LIZ

Anyway, as I was saying Noah, maybe for you, it's just as simple as trying to make a friend.

NOAH

A black friend?

PETE

Ha!

NOAH

What?

PETE

You? Make a black friend? I don't think so. Maybe an Asian, but black people are way out of your league.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NOAH
Black people and white people
aren't that different, Pete.

PETE
Whatever you say, buddy.

NOAH
I can make a black friend.

Liz puts her arm around Noah.

LIZ
I think you can do it too, honey.
Who wouldn't like you?

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Noah enters the lobby. The door is held open for him by his gregarious, wannabe-black doorman, RAY.

Ray gives Noah an absurdly elaborate handshake.

RAY
What's good, family?

NOAH
Not much, Ray.

Noah heads across the lobby toward the elevator. He reaches for the elevator call button but stops short and heads back over to Ray.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Hey, Ray, you're uh, you seem like
you're probably um....this is
kinda weird but, you have black
friends, right?

RAY
Oh, most definitely, son.

NOAH
So, where do you guys hang out?

RAY
Who, me and my peoples? We kick it
anywhere that keeps it real.

Noah sighs, unsatisfied.

NOAH
Of course you do. Thanks, Ray.

Ray winks at Noah.

RAY
Anything for you, my dude.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noah walks back towards the elevator.

EXT. SYLVIA'S SOUL FOOD RESTAURANT, HARLEM - NIGHT

Noah gets out of a taxi. He looks up at the street sign. 127th street and Malcolm X Blvd. He heads down the block where he sees a long line of people waiting outside the famous Harlem soul food institution.

As Noah nears the back of the line he begins to notice that the restaurant goers aren't who he hoped they would be: A family of heavy-set white mid-westerners in 'I heart New York' sweatshirts. An Asian couple posing for a picture next to the Sylvia's sign. An elderly woman's tour group full of fanny-pack-sporting grannies.

INT. SYLVIA'S SOUL FOOD RESTAURANT, HARLEM - LATER

Finally inside the restaurant, Noah stands in front of the black HOSTESS at her podium. He looks around the room.

HOSTESS

Can I help you?

Noah sees that the clientele inside is no different from the tourists he saw outside.

NOAH

I'm afraid not.

EXT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - NIGHT

Noah and Pete stand in front of the giant MSG Marquee. It reads "TONIGHT ONLY: KANYE WEST."

INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - LATER

Kanye rocks the arena. At their seats, Pete does the robot as Noah scans the crowd.

All around them are screaming WHITE teenage girls. In the seats directly next to Noah a 15 year-old couple passionately makes-out. The boy attempts to stuff the girl's hand down his pants, but she forces his hand onto her breast instead. The make-out session continues uninterrupted.

Noah reaches for his beer only to see a 16 year-old kid swipe it and run down the aisle chugging it with his friend.

Noah sinks down in his seat.

EXT. THE CAGE BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

A sunny spring day at the famed West 4th Street basketball court. Throngs of spectators lean on the 20 foot tall chain link fence that surrounds the outdoor black top. Inside the cage ten athletic African-Americans play a fast and furious game of street ball.

Noah, in his hoops gear, stretches on the sideline.

EXT. THE CAGE BASKETBALL COURT - LATER

Noah now sits slumped against the fence. He's clearly been waiting a long time to get in the game.

Mike, a sinewy, black, 30-something approaches Noah.

MIKE

Hey man, we're short one for the next game. You wanna play?

Noah springs to his feet.

NOAH

For sure.

Mike shakes Noah's hand.

MIKE

I'm Mike.

NOAH

Noah.

MIKE

Alright Noah, let's see what you got.

Noah heads onto the court with Mike.

MIKE (CONT'D)

You look really familiar.

NOAH

You watch Channel Four News?

MIKE

No. I think I've seen you play ball at the Y. I play right after you guys sometimes.

NOAH

Oh nice.

MIKE

You got a decent little game.

Noah lights up, turns to Mike and puts on the charm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

Thanks. With a body like that you
must be a whale of a power
forward.

Noah, completely enthralled in his conversation, doesn't
see a basketball on the court directly in his path.

NOAH (CONT'D)

So, you play here often?

And with that, Noah steps square on the ball. The ball
skids forward and Noah flies backwards. He crashes down
onto the court, slamming his head against the cement.

Noah, out cold, lies face-up on the asphalt.

EXT. THE CAGE BASKETBALL COURT - LATER

As Noah hobbles away from the court, he holds an ice pack
to his head. He stands at the street corner, dejected

All of a sudden it begins to pour. Noah looks to the sky.
Could it get any worse? Noah searches for a cab.

EXT. THE CAGE BASKETBALL COURT - LATER

Noah is now completely drenched. Finally, an available
cab pulls towards the curb. Just as Noah heads for the
back door a BLACK MAN gets to the cab first.

NOAH

Hey, that's my cab.

BLACK MAN

No. Actually it's my cab.

NOAH

No way. He definitely stopped for
me.

BLACK MAN

Oh, so it's like that still? Cab
can't stop to pick up a black man?

NOAH

(defeated)

Forget it. Just take it.

The Black Man gets in the cab. Noah hangs his head.

The cab starts to pull away, but then stops. The rear
window lowers.

BLACK MAN

Get in.

INT. CAB - MOMENTS LATER

Noah sits in the cab with the Black Man. This is RASHON DAVIS (35). Rashon is nattily attired and handsome.

RASHON
That was my bad.

NOAH
Don't worry about it. Maybe you
were there first.

RASHON
Oh, I was definitely there first.
I was talking about playing the
race card.

The African CAB DRIVER turns around.

CAB DRIVER
Where's my first stop?

RASHON
(to Noah)
I'm sure I'm further uptown than
you. Where you headed?

Noah thinks about it.

NOAH
Why, where are you going?

RASHON
I'm up on 123rd and Riverside.

Noah recognizes an opportunity.

NOAH
Oh, actually I'm headed a bit
further uptown than that. I'll
drop you first.

The cab driver turns back around.

RASHON
You live in Harlem?

NOAH
No.

RASHON
Didn't think so. Only two reasons
white folks head north of 125th.
Dinosaur Barbecue or Sylvia's?

NOAH
Yes.

RASHON
That wasn't multiple choice.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

Um, I meant...

Noah is interrupted by the Taxi TV MONITOR in the back of the cab. It plays Noah's most recent TV food review.

RASHON

I knew you looked familiar. Matter of fact, I ate at Berger Brothers last week after your review.

NOAH

Oh yeah. What did you think?

RASHON

Burger was pretty good. Well cooked. Decent bun. But homemade ketchup? Now that's just stupid.

NOAH

I hear ya. It doesn't get any better than Heinz.

RASHON

For real. I love Heinz so much you could call me John Kerry.

Noah looks at Rashon, confused.

RASHON (CONT'D)

Read a paper, man. He's married to Theresa Heinz.

NOAH

Oh yeah, that's right.

RASHON

But I'll still go back. It's right next door to where I work.

The cab driver turns around again.

CAB DRIVER

You want me to stay on Tenth or take West Side Highway?

RASHON

Doesn't matter to me.

NOAH

I think at this hour you're much better taking...

Noah looks at the cab driver's ID picture and name: *Mpolondo Mukamba*. Noah then glances at Rashon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NOAH (CONT'D)
(to Mpolondo)
You should just go whichever way
you think is best. Far be it from
me to tell you how to do your job.

Noah proudly smiles at Rashon who awkwardly smiles in return.

INT. CAB - LATER

The driver pulls up alongside a modern high-rise. Rashon opens the door and gets out. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a ten dollar bill.

RASHON
Here you go.

Rashon tries to hand Noah the money.

NOAH
Don't worry about it. I got it.

RASHON
What? A black man can't afford to
pay for his own cab?

NOAH
(flustered)
No. I was just saying... I
mean....

RASHON
Relax. I'm just playing. Thanks
for the ride.

NOAH
Oh. Ha. Good one... John Kerry!

Noah's joke falls completely flat.

RASHON
Ok then.

Rashon closes the door and the cab takes off.

MPOLONDO
Sylvia or Dinosaurs BBQ?

NOAH
You can just take me back
downtown.

INT. CAB - LATER

The cab pulls up to Noah's building. He starts to get out when he notices Rashon's UMBRELLA in the back seat.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - DAY

Noah and Liz sit on stools at their kitchen counter. Rashon's two dollar, black, available-on-any-street-corner-in-Manhattan umbrella lies on the counter in front of them. They stare at it.

LIZ

You can't.

NOAH

I think I have to.

LIZ

It's beyond creepy.

NOAH

No, it's a nice gesture.

LIZ

Imagine if you shared a cab with a guy and he showed up at our house a week later with a piece of trident that you left in the taxi. You'd call the cops.

NOAH

No. I would thank him.

LIZ

You would not! Admit it, you have a crush on this guy and it's making you act all crazy.

Noah stares at the umbrella.

NOAH

I think he might be the one.

LIZ

So you're just gonna show up at his office? That's something a serial killer would do.

NOAH

Actually, I'm not even sure where he works. He just said it's next to Berger Brothers.

Liz rolls her eyes.

EXT. BERGER BROS BURGERS - EVENING

Noah stands, umbrella in hand, on the sidewalk in front of Berger Bros. He looks at the building directly to the left of Berger Bros: CAFFEINE COMPUTER FIX.

Then he looks at the building directly to the right of Berger Bros: POPEYE'S FRIED CHICKEN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He scratches his head. He takes a step towards Popeye's then stops. He shakes his head, turns, and walks towards Caffeine Computer Fix.

RASHON (O.C.)

Noah?

Noah turns around to see Rashon and DARRELL, another black guy, walking out of Popeye's together. They each carry a soda and a gym bag.

NOAH

(off-guard)

Hey.

Rashon and Darrell approach Noah.

RASHON.

(to Darrell)

This is that food guy I told you about.

(to Noah)

This is my employee, Darrell.

Noah shakes Darrell's hand.

DARRELL

I'm also his cousin. Rashon thinks he's funny.

NOAH

So you guys work together. Cool.

RASHON

Yeah, I opened up the store five years ago, and Darrell's been along for the ride since day one.

NOAH

I gotta say, so many new trendy restaurants try to do fried chicken these days, but in my humble opinion, you guys still do it best.

Rashon and Darrell look at each other confused. Then they notice their Popeye's cups. They CRACK UP.

Noah chuckles awkwardly, unsure of what's so funny.

RASHON

(to Darrell)

Oh man. This fool saw us coming out of Popeye's and thought we worked there?

DARRELL

(mocking)

Would you like biscuits or cole slaw with that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Noah's face turns red.

RASHON

That's too funny.

(to Noah)

Nah man, we were just grabbing
some sodas. That's my place over
there.

Rashon points to Caffeine Computer Fix.

RASHON (CONT'D)

It's a computer repair slash
coffee shop.

NOAH

Wow. I feel like an ass. I'm so
sorry.

RASHON

Hey, I'm sure whoever owns that
Popeye's is a rich bastard.

(beat)

You back for another Berger
Burger?

NOAH

Oh, no. Actually I came here to
bring you this...

Noah hands Rashon the umbrella.

RASHON

What's this?

NOAH

It's your umbrella. You left it in
the cab.

RASHON

That's not my umbrella.

NOAH

Oh. It was in the cab, I
thought...

DARRELL

Hold up. You came here just to
give him that crappy umbrella
that's not even his? Please tell
me you live on this block.

NOAH

I don't but, uh, it's cool, I was
in the neighborhood anyway.

Darrell nods, unconvinced. The three of them stand
silently for an awkward beat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

NOAH (CONT'D)
(sheepishly)
Anyway, sorry for the
misunderstanding - both of them.
Nice to meet you Darrell.

Noah turns away. Rashon watches him sulk off.

RASHON
Uh... Noah, you play ball, right?

Darrell hits Rashon. Noah turns around.

NOAH
Yeah, why?

RASHON
We lost our tenth for our game
tonight. We're on our way right
now. You want in?

NOAH
That's really nice, but I'm
supposed to be home at...

Noah checks his watch.

NOAH (CONT'D)
...ah, screw it. I'm in.

DARRELL
(whispers to Rashon)
Are you sure this guy isn't a
serial killer?

NOAH
I can play in these sneakers, but
I don't have shorts or a t-shirt.

RASHON
Somebody will have extra gear.

INT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - NIGHT

Noah, Rashon and Darrell enter the gym. On the court,
seven other black guys warm up.

RASHON
(to the group)
Hey, do any of you guys have a
spare shirt or a pair of shorts
that my man here can borrow?

Massive 6'9" ANDRE steps forward.

ANDRE
I got a shirt.

5'3" TYRONE also pipes up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TYRONE
I have some shorts.

Rashon turns to Noah.

RASHON
See. All set.

INT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - LATER

All nine black players shoot around and shoot the shit.

DARRELL
(to Rashon)
What's taking him so long?

Rashon shrugs. Just then the door to the locker room swings open. Everybody on the court turns to look, and their jaws collectively plummet as they see --

Noah, whose enormous borrowed white t-shirt hangs down past his knees, making it look like he's not wearing shorts.

DARRELL (CONT'D)
(to Rashon)
I told you there was something wrong with this guy.

Noah trots over to Rashon and Darrell, his shirt-dress flows as he moves.

Rashon gestures towards Noah's mid-section.

RASHON
What's the deal, man?

Noah begins to lift his shirt up, but Darrell smacks his hand down.

DARRELL
Yo, nobody wants to see your junk.

NOAH
No, I'm wearing shorts, they're just a bit too tight to tuck this shirt into.

Noah lifts his shirt up to reveal nut-hugging shorts that leave absolutely nothing to the imagination.

Everybody GROANS and turns away in disgust.

DARRELL
I said we did *not* want to see your junk, man.

NOAH
My bad.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RASHON

Let's just start the game up.

RALPH, a mean-looking dude, aggressively steps up to Rashon and Noah.

RALPH

Just make sure this pasty-ass homo isn't on my team.

NOAH

(to Rashon)
He's not referring to me, is he?

RASHON

Nah.

INT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - LATER

The ten guys play a competitive pick-up game. Noah continues to look ridiculous in his shirt-dress.

Noah's team has the ball. Noah stands unguarded along the three point line. No one passes to him.

INT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - LATER

Noah is open on the perimeter and again his teammates fail to pass him the ball.

INT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - LATER

Rashon dribbles on the left side of the court and spots Noah wide open at the three point line. He passes Noah the ball.

Noah sets to shoot, but gets trigger shy. He looks to pass even though he's unguarded.

RASHON

Knock that down.

Emboldened, Noah shoots the three pointer and --

SWISH. He drains it. As he trots back on defense he extends a fist to give Rashon a bump. However, Rashon goes for the traditional high five. Their hands touch awkwardly.

INT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - MONTAGE

Noah nails a jumper from the baseline.

Andre and Noah make eye contact. Noah throws Andre a perfect alley oop pass. Andre throws down a vicious dunk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rashon and Noah backpedal on defense. This time Noah goes for the high five and Rashon attempts the first bump. More awkward hand touching.

Darrell feeds Noah a beautiful bounce pass as Noah cuts to the basket. Noah lays the ball in. Ralph chews out his teammate who was supposed to be defending Noah.

Noah's teammates all give him props as they head back on defense.

INT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - LATER

All the sweat-drenched players catch their breath as Rashon ties his shoe at the top of the key. He picks up the ball.

RASHON

Game point. Ball in.

Rashon passes the ball to Darrell who swings it over to Noah. Noah fakes a shot and then blows by his defender. He heads in for the game winning lay-up when, out of nowhere, Ralph clobbers him. Noah hits the floor with a THUD and grimaces in pain.

Everyone on the court cringes, taken aback by Ralph's unnecessarily hard foul.

NOAH

I'm alright.

Sprawled on the floor, Noah extends his hand to Ralph, looking for help getting up.

Ralph sneers at Noah, ignores his hand, and walks away.

Darrell comes over and helps Noah to his feet. Rashon heads after Ralph and gets in his face.

RASHON

What's the matter with you? That was some bullshit.

RALPH

Point game, no easy buckets. Get the hell out my face.

Rashon collects the ball to resume play.

Ralph walks right up to Noah and pushes him in the chest.

RALPH (CONT'D)

I got this scrub now.

The game starts up again. Noah gets the ball in the post. He takes a few dribbles, trying to back Ralph down. Draped all over Noah, Ralph barely gives an inch.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noah pivots around Ralph, and puts up a difficult turn around jumper off the glass. The ball sails through the net.

Noah's team wins. His teammates rush over to congratulate him.

RALPH (O.C.) (CONT'D)
Offensive Foul. No basket.

DARRELL
(incredulously)
Offensive foul?

RALPH
Yeah, he hooked me.

RASHON
I've been playing in this game for fifteen years, and there has never been one offensive foul called, ever.

RALPH
Well I just called one.

NOAH
C'mon dude, you know I didn't foul you.

RALPH
Shut your mouth, punk. This isn't even your game.

RASHON
It's not your game either, Ralph.

DARRELL
Yeah, man. And your breath always stinks like cucumbers. What's that about?

RALPH
So that's how it is? You guys are all gonna take this little bitch's back instead of mine?

Ralph looks to the other players. They're all silent.

RALPH (CONT'D)
Fuck all ya'll!

And with that, Ralph tears off his sweaty tank top, throws it on the floor and marches out of the gym.

DARRELL
Oh shit! That's my ride home.

Darrell runs after Ralph.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DARRELL (CONT'D)
Yo Ralph, wait up buddy!

EXT. KENNEDY HIGH SCHOOL - LATER

Rashon and Noah ad-lib goodbyes to the other guys.

RASHON
You weren't half bad out there.

NOAH
You're really good too.

Rashon takes a business card out of his wallet and hands it to Noah.

RASHON
Right. So, if you wanna run again,
let me know.

From the street a car horn HONKS.

Rashon and Noah make their way towards a Nissan Maxima. The driver's side window rolls down. We see the driver, KIM (25) black and beautiful.

KIM
C'mon honey, we gotta go.

Rashon leans down and plants a big kiss on Kim's lips.

RASHON
Hey, baby
(to Noah)
Noah, this is my girlfriend, Kim.

NOAH
Nice to meet you.

KIM
How you doing?

RASHON
And that little man sleeping in
the back is my son, Antoine.

Noah peers into the backseat where a light-skinned black boy, roughly Micah's age, sleeps. This is ANTOINE.

NOAH
Did you say his name was Antoine?

RASHON
Yeah, why?

NOAH
Just double-checking. How old is
he?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RASHON

Four and a half.

NOAH

Pre-K.

RASHON

Yeah, over at Duhon... it's actually right by those courts where I ran into you the other day.

NOAH

Oh yeah, I hear that's a good school.

RASHON

Top notch education, but a little white-bread for my taste- no offense.

NOAH

None taken.

RASHON

Don't get me wrong, I'm cool with white people, it's just Antoine was recently the victim of a hate crime and the parents of the kid who did it didn't even have the decency to sit down with us. Fucking Bigots.

(beat)

Sorry, didn't mean to get worked up. What about you, kids?

NOAH

Yes, uh, but speaking of which, I see a cab over there, and I'm late for um, uh, a family obligation.

Noah WHISTLES loudly and a passing cab breaks.

NOAH (CONT'D)

I'll be in touch.

Noah scoots off to the cab.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Micah and Jason sit at the kitchen table. Liz clears their dishes. Micah wears a button-down shirt with a tie and blazer. Noah walks through the front door in his sweaty clothes.

MICAH

Daddy!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

Hey buddy.

Liz turns from the sink to see Noah.

LIZ

Nice of you to make it.

NOAH

Sorry honey.

Noah walks to Liz and gives her a kiss.

LIZ

Well, make yourself useful and go
grab the cake from the freezer.

Noah walks over to the freezer and pulls out a semi-circle shaped ice-cream cake. He brings it over to Liz who puts four regular sized candles and one HALF-SIZED CANDLE into it. Noah lights the candles and they present the cake to Micah.

NOAH AND LIZ

(singing)

Happy half-birthday to you. Happy
half-birthday to you. Happy half-
birthday, dear Micah. Happy half-
birthday to yoooouuuuu!

Micah blows out the candles. Noah and Liz CLAP and Jason BANGS on his high chair tray excitedly.

Micah stands up on his chair.

MICAH

Look Daddy, I got half dressed up
for my half birthday.

Micah's shirt is tucked into his cookie monster underwear.

NOAH

What are you talking about? You
look totally dressed up to me. I
might wear that same outfit to
work tomorrow.

MICAH

You have cookie monster underpants
too, Daddy?

NOAH

Of course I do!

MICAH

Guess what, Mommy made half dinner
half breakfast for dinner.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NOAH

She did?

Micah nods emphatically.

MICAH

We had p'sghetti and waffles and
meatballs with syrup.

LIZ

It was quite the feast, too bad
you missed it.

(beat)

Micah, don't let your cake melt.

Micah dives into his ice cream cake. Noah sidles up to
Liz.

LIZ (CONT'D)

So was the game everything you
dreamed it would be?

NOAH

Well, you want the good news or
the bad news?

LIZ

Bad first, obviously.

NOAH

Turns out my guy Rashon is the
father of the black kid Micah
tried to erase.

LIZ

What? That's terrible! Did he
freak out when you told him who
you were?

NOAH

I didn't tell him.

LIZ

Didn't he figure it out? He must
know Micah's name.

MICAH

My name is Micah Adam Schlumovitz.
I live at 335 West...

Micah continues to RECITE his personal info in the
background.

NOAH

Sure, but Micah's dad is Noah
Schlumovitz. He knows me as...

(corny TV voice)

Noah Miller for News Channel 4.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

LIZ
Way to dodge that bullet.
(beat)
What's the good news?

NOAH
Now more than ever, I know
Rashon's going to be my black
friend.

LIZ
Did I miss something?

NOAH
No. Think about it. It's meant to
be. What are the odds that I wind
up sharing a cab with this guy?
I'd thought I'd found my black
friend and now he's poised to be
my black enemy. I have to win him
over!

LIZ
But you have to tell him who you
are.

NOAH
I will. Next time I see him.

LIZ
Ok, just make sure your little
courtship doesn't get in the way
of any more family stuff.

Jason throws his melted cake pile on the floor.

NOAH
It won't happen again. But you
know this is important to me. It's
about my identity.

Liz rolls her eyes.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Excuse me if I don't want our kids
growing up in a world where
everyone looks and acts like...
Tom Hanks.

LIZ
Tom Hanks?

NOAH
Whatever. He's white. You get what
I'm saying.

LIZ
I guess.

But Liz still seems annoyed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Noah gives Liz his best puppy dog face.

NOAH
I was thinking, after I clean up
out here, maybe I'll hop in the
shower and slip into something
more comfortable...

Noah leans in and kisses Liz's ear.

NOAH (CONT'D)
(seductively)
Perhaps my cookie monster
underwear?

Liz softens.

LIZ
(sexy)
You know how much I love your
cookies.

MICAH
I want Daddy's cookies too!

Noah and Liz look at each other and LAUGH.

INT. NEW YORK MAGAZINE OFFICES, NOAH'S OFFICE - DAY

Noah sits in a small office with FRANK the baby-faced
intern. Frank wears a blindfold.

Noah hands Frank a green M&M. Frank chews it carefully.

FRANK
Green.

NOAH
This is insane. Are you sure you
can't see through that blindfold?

ED (65) Noah's boss, sticks his head into Noah's open
office door. He notices the blindfolded intern.

ED
Is there a hostage situation I
should be concerned about?

NOAH
You gotta check this out. This kid
can tell what color an M&M is just
by tasting it. It's wild!

ED
Very impressive, Frank. We don't
pay you, right?
(to Noah)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ED (CONT'D)

Two things: Momofuku just opened a soul food place uptown and I need you to go review it.

NOAH

Ok. And?

Ed thinks about it.

ED

That's it. That was two things.

NOAH

No, that was one thing.

ED

Momofuku just opened a soul food place and two, I need you to go review it.

FRANK

Technically, that is two things.

NOAH

Thanks, Frank.

Ed starts to leave but stops just short of the door. He turns back to Noah.

ED

Oh yeah, and I almost forgot, I got a call from the producers at NBC, they've decided to let you shoot your pilot.

NOAH

Shut up.

ED

Congratulations.

(beat)

Come to think of it, maybe that was the second thing.

NOAH

That's amazing! Come here and give me a hug!

Ed rolls his eyes but can't deny Noah his hug. They embrace.

In the background, Frank wobbles around blindfolded, searching for Noah and hugging the air.

INT. IZOD CENTER, NEW JERSEY - NIGHT

The home of the New Jersey Nets. On the court the Cleveland Cavaliers battle the Nets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noah sits next to Pete at the courtside scorer's table.

NOAH
I have mixed feelings. The last
thing I want to do is offend him.
What do you...

On the court, Vince Carter slams home a dunk. Pete pushes
a button on the microphone in front of him.

PETE
(deep voice into mic)
Viiiiince Caaaaaarter, Jammy Time!

Pete's voice is heard throughout the arena. He is the
public address announcer. He turns to Noah.

PETE (CONT'D)
You were saying?

NOAH
What do you think?

PETE
I think anybody would be psyched
to go with you when you're
reviewing. Great meals, tons of
food, and it's free. What's not to
like? Your company aside.
(into mic)
LeBron James for three.
(to Noah)
Hell, I've never turned it down.

NOAH
I'm just concerned it might come
off too forward... or racist.

PETE
Nah, guys love free food, that'll
totally overshadow the fact that
you're wooing this dude.

On the court Yi Jianlin commits a hard foul.

PETE (CONT'D)
(into mic)
Foul on Yi Jianlin, HIII-YAA!
(to Noah)
And as for the racism, I don't
really see it.

NOAH
I don't know, man. Inviting a
black guy to eat soul food feels a
little...

Noah searches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PETE

...cliché?

NOAH

Kind of. It just feels like I'm reinforcing a stereotype.

PETE

(into mic)

Nets timeout.

(to Noah)

I can't stand this. People are way too sensitive. You know why there's a stereotype that black people like soul food? Because tons of --

A FAT WOMAN walks in the aisle behind Pete and bumps him forward causing Pete to hit the button on his mic.

PETE (CONT'D)

(into mic)

-- black people like soul food.

A smattering of APPLAUSE sounds throughout the arena. A BLACK MAN sitting in the lower section stands up.

BLACK MAN

You know that's true!

Pete turns to Noah.

PETE

See what I mean?

NOAH

So what? You're saying all stereotypes are true?

PETE

No, but there's usually some basis in reality for 'em. Besides, assuming someone likes soul food isn't offensive- regardless of their race. Soul food is pretty much universally adored. Now if you were inviting him to join you for beginner's swim-lessons, that would be offensive.

NOAH

So you're sure he won't think I'm a racist?

PETE

Not until you tell him you're the father of little Strom Thurmond.

NOAH

Thanks. I feel much better now.

INT. RASHON'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - DAY

A clean, spacious, modern apartment. Large windows present a beautiful southern view of Manhattan.

Rashon paces in the apartment while on the phone.

RASHON
(into phone)
Um. I guess so. Sure.

Rashon hangs up the phone.

INT. RASHON'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Rashon enters. His adorable girlfriend Kim lies in bed reading the newspaper. She looks up.

KIM
So who's that you're going out with?

RASHON
That dude Noah who played ball with us the other day. The food critic.

KIM
The creepy umbrella guy?

RASHON
Yeah, him.

KIM
So he asked you out?

RASHON
I mean not 'out' out. He gets to bring someone with him when he reviews a restaurant. He seems nice enough.

KIM
Sounds real nice.
(beat)
Is he gay?

RASHON
No.
(beat)
Not that I'm aware of.

EXT. MOMOFUKU SOUL - NIGHT

Rashon stands on the sidewalk waiting in front of the restaurant. A husky blonde WOMAN walks up to Rashon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN
(man's voice)
What's up, Rashon?

Rashon looks at the woman, confused.

RASHON
I'm sorry. Do I know you?

WOMAN
It's me, Noah.

Rashon gets a closer look, and underneath the lipstick and wig, it is indeed Noah. Rashon takes a step back.

RASHON
Listen, yo. You got the wrong idea. I'm not into dudes or trans-dudes or... look, I'm not sure what you like to be called, but-

NOAH
(interrupting)
I forgot to tell you that I do my reviews in disguise, didn't I?

RASHON
Um, yeah. You did not mention that.

INT. MOMOFUKU SOUL - LATER

Noah and Rashon sit across from each other at a table for two in the hip, hot, happening dining room.

NOAH
...yeah, I used to go with just the fake mustache, but eventually people caught on. If I'm recognized, it completely compromises the review, so I had to take it to the next level.

Rashon takes Noah's full outfit in.

RASHON
That's next level alright.

NOAH
One more thing, my lady voice isn't too convincing, so I'm gonna have to ask you to do the ordering.

RASHON
You serious?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

Yeah, and we need to try one of everything.

RASHON

Everything?

The WAITER walks over to the table.

WAITER

Are you two ready to order?

Rashon looks at Noah for confirmation. Noah nods.

RASHON

We're gonna start with an order of all the appetizers, and then, uh, give us all the entrees too.

WAITER

Are you expecting others to join your group?

Noah shakes his head no.

WAITER (CONT'D)

I shouldn't tell you this, but there's no way you can eat all that.

Rashon looks to Noah for help. Noah shrugs.

RASHON

Well, technically it's not just us.

(beat)

She's eating for two.

The waiter looks at Noah who beams with pride.

WAITER

Congratulations, ma'am. I'll put your order in right away.

The waiter walks away.

NOAH

Well played.

INT. MOMOFUKU SOUL - LATER

Noah and Rashon's table overflows with food.

NOAH

So, there's something I probably should have told you earlier.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RASHON

Other than the fact that you dine
in drag?

NOAH

Yes. Other than that.

Noah takes a sip of his beer.

NOAH (CONT'D)

You see, well, how do I put this?
My son...

And Noah stops mid-sentence. His attention drifts to a
neighboring table where an OLD LADY sits, blatantly
staring at Noah with a huge smile. Noah looks back at her
and her smile widens as her stare intensifies.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Shit. I think this woman
recognizes me.

RASHON

Who?

And with that, the old lady gets up and approaches their
table.

OLD LADY

I just had to come over here and
talk to you.

NOAH

That's...

OLD LADY

I just think now more than ever a
relationship like yours represents
the best of this country...

The old lady reaches out and clutches Noah and Rashon's
hands.

OLD LADY (CONT'D)

...It makes me proud to be an
American, coming out to a
restaurant and seeing a beautiful
mixed couple just sitting here,
with nothing to hide. Who knows,
maybe your child could be
president too someday.

Just then, a young black woman, DAWN, walks by Noah and
Rashon's table.

DAWN

Rashon?

Rashon struggles to free his hand from the old lady's
grasp.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RASHON

Dawn. What are you doing here?

DAWN

Eating dinner...

Dawn looks at Noah disapprovingly.

DAWN (CONT'D)

...with my *boyfriend*.

RASHON

No. See Kim knows I'm here. This is just my *friend* No...

The old lady re-grabs Rashon's hand.

OLD LADY

No you don't son. This is 2009. You do not have to be ashamed to be dating outside of your race. Go ahead. Tell her. Say it loud and proud.

DAWN

Dating!? Oh hell no! How could you two-time Kim?

RASHON

It's not like that. I don't even know this old lady.
(to Old Lady)
No offense.

DAWN

Save it.

Dawn takes out her phone and SNAPS a picture on her cell camera. Noah stands up.

NOAH

Alright, this has gone too far.

Noah removes his wig.

NOAH (CONT'D)

It's ok. I'm a guy.

Dawn GASPS.

OLD LADY

Yes, it is ok! Gay. Straight.
Black. White. Young.
(to Rashon)
Old.

RASHON

Listen lady, we are not together.

The waiter walks over with a huge tray full of food.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

WAITER

Oh my god. You're the Urban Chow-boy.

OLD LADY

(to waiter)

Young man, that is no way to speak to a fruit.

Noah gently puts his hand on the old lady's shoulder.

NOAH

Actually, ma'am, I think the term fruit is a little passé as well.

DAWN

(to Rashon)

Hold up. You're on the DL with the food guy? This is twisted. I need another picture.

WAITER

(to Noah)

Do you mind if I get a picture with you as well, Mr. Chow-boy?

EXT. MOMOFUKU SOUL - LATER

Noah and Rashon stand outside.

NOAH

I'm so sorry about all that. I feel terribly.

RASHON

It was hectic for a minute there. But that's the craziest night I've had in a while. It was fun.

NOAH

Really?

RASHON

Yeah. Only thing that bothered me was that salty chili. Damn shame too, cause I love me some chili.

Noah thinks for a second.

NOAH

Well my wife makes a mean chili. Maybe you and Kim could come over for dinner sometime.

RASHON

Just let me know when. I never turn down chili.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rashon shakes Noah's hand and starts to walk away. Noah watches him leave, then stares at the ground.

NOAH
(blurts out)
My son hate-crimed Antoine.

Rashon stops, turns around.

NOAH (CONT'D)
I have a kid in pre-K at Duhon too. Micah. He's the one who colored his face brown.

RASHON
What? That's your son? You're that parent?

NOAH
I know it sounds bad, but he's just a kid and we were just embarrassed.

RASHON
He tried to erase Antoine's color.

NOAH
Well when you put it like that, yeah but...

RASHON
(interrupting)
This whole time I was saying to myself, don't blame the kid. It's probably the parents. You know what, I was right.

Rashon leaves. Noah stands, at a loss.

INT. LEISURE TIME BOWLING ALLEY - DAY

Rashon, Kim, Darrell and Aaron bumper bowl. Antoine rolls his ball off a bumper and knocks over a few pins. A '2' flashes on the score-monitor. Antoine pumps his arms above his head triumphantly. He walks over to Darrell.

ANTOINE
(singing)
Nah, nah, nah, nah boo-boo, I just got a two-two!

DARRELL
(upset)
No way 'Toine, that was a foot fault. I'm not counting it.

Darrell grabs his ball and prepares to roll.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KIM
(to Rashon)
You know it would be nice to have
some couple friends.

RASHON
So because you want couple friends
we should forgive these people and
go to their dinner party?

KIM
They clearly feel awful about what
happened. How many times has the
man called to apologize?

RASHON
Too many.

KIM
Don't be nasty. They're trying to
make it up to us. Besides, you
said you guys had fun.

RASHON
I don't know. He's a weird dude.

KIM
Please, he couldn't be any weirder
than Darrell.

They look at Darrell who celebrates a strike by doing the
worm down the lane.

RASHON
Fine. But I'm only doing it for
the chili.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, DINING ROOM - EVENING

Noah scurries around the room frantically setting the
table. Pete and his new trashy-looking, blonde date
VICTORIA look on from the couch.

NOAH
(frazzled)
Can you guys give me a hand?
They're gonna be here any minute.

PETE
What's the big deal? The table
wasn't set when we got here, and
you didn't seem to give a shit.

NOAH
It's different.

Noah holds up two seemingly identical wine glasses.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH (CONT'D)
Which wine glasses do you prefer?

VICTORIA
You're asking the wrong gal. I
drink straight from the box.

Noah puts down one of the glasses.

NOAH
Ok. These ones.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Liz stands over the stove stirring chili. The kitchen is a mess. Food, dirty pots, and pans cover all the counter space. Noah enters.

NOAH
I think Pete's date might
embarrass us tonight.
(beat)
I don't know about this shirt
either. Are you sure I look cool
enough?

LIZ
Cool enough? Really? Are you
afraid your new friend won't sit
with you in the cafeteria?

NOAH
Funny you mention that. Did you
know that school cafeterias are
often used to measure the degree
to which self-segregation occurs
in a natural environment?

Liz stops stirring the chili.

LIZ
Have you been doing research? You
are so not cool.

Liz starts pouring raisins into the chili.

NOAH
(yelling)
What are you doing? There's no
raisins in chili!

LIZ
(frustrated)
Well excuse me. Lest you forget,
I've never made chili before. And
I'm feeling just a little bit of
pressure because somebody claimed
that I make the best chili ever.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noah rushes over to Liz and puts his arm around her.

NOAH
I'm sorry. You're right. I got
carried away. I had to pull out
all the stops and I knew he was a
sucker for chili.

LIZ
It's ok. I'm happy to do it. But
you need to chill out. You're
running around here like a
complete maniac. Take a deep
breath and calm down.

Noah takes a deep breath.

NOAH
Ok.

Noah kisses Liz on her head.

NOAH (CONT'D)
I'm gonna go finish setting the
table.

Noah heads for the door. He stops and turns back towards
Liz.

NOAH (CONT'D)
What made you think of raisins?

Liz hangs her head.

LIZ
(shamefully)
Pete's date suggested it.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - LATER

Noah opens the front door and in walk Rashon and Kim. Liz
stands next to Noah.

LIZ
Thank you guys so much for coming.

KIM
Thanks for having us.

Kim smiles warmly.

NOAH
Again, I'm so so sorry about...
all that stuff.

KIM
It's ok.

Kim not-so-subtly nudges Rashon.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RASHON
(rehearsed)
We would like to put everything
behind us and move on.

NOAH
Oh man. That's great. I'm so
relieved.

Noah gives Rashon a big hug. Rashon stands stiffly.

Noah and Liz lead Rashon and Kim into the apartment where
they ad-lib hellos and introductions with Pete, and
Victoria.

Micah enters the room in his pajamas. He approaches the
group with his hands behind his back.

KIM
You must be Micah.

Micah nods.

NOAH
What's that behind your back, pal?

MICAH
I wanted to say sorry to Antoine's
parents for being erasist. I'm
giving them George.

Micah reveals a stuffed Curious George Monkey from behind
his back and presents it to Rashon.

KIM
Thanks sweetie.

RASHON
A monkey, huh?

LIZ
Look how late it is. Micah, time
for bed.

Liz carries Micah out of the room.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Liz re-enters the room.

KIM
Sorry we were a little late. Your
doorman wouldn't let us up right
away.

LIZ
Oh no. Did he give you a hard
time?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Liz tries to save face.

LIZ (CONT'D)

They give all our guests a hard time.

RASHON

Actually he loved us. Wouldn't leave us alone. He was hugging us, talking our ear off about his bluetooth...

Pete smirks.

PETE

Sounds like wigger Ray.

NOAH

(off wigger)

Hey! Hey! Hey! Easy, Pete. C'mon. That's not ok. You can't say that.

(to Rashon)

I'm really sorry.

PETE

What? What did I say? Wigger?

NOAH

Pete! Stop.

Rashon looks uncomfortable.

KIM

It's cool. He was kind of a wigger.

NOAH

(embarrassed)

Oh.

Awkward silence.

VICTORIA

What's a wigger?

KIM

A wigger is like a white person who basically acts like they're "black." You know, like Turtle.

PETE

Eric Nies, Simon Rex, Danny Masterson, Taryn Manning, Seth Green in Can't Hardly Wait.

RASHON

How about Michael Rappaport?

LIZ

Good one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

VICTORIA

(loudly)

Oh! I get it. Wigger! A white ni-

NOAH

(interrupting)

Who wants some chili?

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, DINING ROOM - LATER

Everybody sits around the table with steaming, full bowls of chili in front of them. Rashon takes a spoonful and chews it. Noah and Liz watch him with great anticipation.

NOAH

So?

Rashon swallows.

RASHON

Raisins in chili...

Noah deflates.

RASHON (CONT'D)

...my favorite!

Noah perks up.

LIZ

I don't make it any other way.

Liz winks at Victoria.

Rashon raises his glass.

RASHON

Compliments to the chef.

Everybody CLINKS glasses and drinks.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - LATER

Liz stands at the sink washing dishes. She hands them to Kim who dries them.

KIM

This is fun. We don't spend enough time with other couples.

LIZ

Having children will do that to you. Is Antoine your only child?

KIM

Oh. I'm not Antoine's mother.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Victoria enters the kitchen and begins rummaging through various drawers. Kim and Liz look at her, puzzled.

LIZ

Can I help you find something,
Victoria?

VICTORIA

Yeah, where do you guys keep your
cigarettes?

LIZ

Uh, we don't keep cigarettes. Noah
and I don't smoke.

VICTORIA

No way! Really?

Liz nods.

VICTORIA (CONT'D)

Ok, I'm gonna run out and pick
some up. You need anything?

KIM

No thanks.

Victoria exits.

KIM (CONT'D)

Was that a joke!?

LIZ

That's Pete Papanicalou. Always a
different girl, never a dull
moment.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - SAME

Rashon, Pete, and Noah lounge. Victoria rushes out of the
apartment, accidentally slamming the door behind her --

Noah's GUITAR, leaning against the wall, begins to fall
from the impact. Noah jumps to his feet and rescues the
guitar before it hits the ground.

PETE

Phew. Imagine if that had broken
and you wouldn't be able to NEVER
play it again.

RASHON

You're a musician, Noah?

NOAH

I dabble.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETE

More like he tries to learn a new instrument every other week.

NOAH

It's a nice thing to be able to play an instrument.

RASHON

That's funny.

NOAH

Why?

RASHON

It's just such a white thing to say.

PETE

Totally.

RASHON

You guys and your hobbies. Silly.

Noah places his guitar back against the wall.

NOAH

(embarrassed)

Pete was just exaggerating. It's nothing really.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - SAME

Liz and Kim continue with the dishes.

LIZ

...I guess that explains why your boobs are up by your chin and mine dangle past my belly button.

KIM

Don't be fooled. You have no idea how hard this bra is working.

LIZ

So four years, huh? That's pretty serious.

KIM

It is, but I'm definitely ready for the next step. Rashon though, I'm not so sure.

LIZ

Guys never want to settle down. I had to stop sleeping with Noah for him to propose.

Kim laughs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KIM

It's different with Rashon.
As a divorcee, he's a little bit
scarred to say the least.

LIZ

I'm sorry, that sounds like a
tough situation.

KIM

Yeah, I'd like to think I'm pretty
understanding but I know that
won't last forever.

(beat)

But I like him hanging out with
Noah. A happily married man can
only be a good influence.

All of a sudden Victoria bursts through the door wearing
her coat. Liz and Kim are startled.

VICTORIA

I'm so sorry. Did you guys say you
wanted a pack or a carton?

INT. RASHON'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rashon and Kim cuddle in bed. Rashon kisses Kim's ear.

KIM

So that was really fun. I like
them a lot.

RASHON

Uh-huh.

KIM

We should take them out sometime.

Rashon continues his kissing, barely listens to Kim.

KIM (CONT'D)

They seem so happy, don't they?
Like they have a great marriage.

RASHON

Mmm-hmm.

KIM

You want that, don't you? For us
to be that happy.

Rashon stops his kissing and looks up at Kim.

RASHON

Baby, we are that happy. Besides,
we have lots of things going for
us that they don't have.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KIM

Like what?

RASHON

For one, your fine ass.

Rashon starts kissing Kim again, this time on her neck, but Kim pushes him away. She turns her back to him and turns off the bedside lamp.

KIM

Not tonight.

RASHON

Really?

Kim smiles to herself.

KIM

Really.

INT. NEW YORK MAGAZINE OFFICES - DAY

Noah walks into a small conference room. Deb, his producer, and Ed, his boss, sit at a table.

NOAH

Sorry I'm late. I had the kids.

Noah takes a seat.

DEB

No biggie. We're only meeting about your pilot that you've been dreaming about for, oh I don't know, forever.

NOAH

I know, I know, I'm sorry.

ED

So where are you going to shoot this thing? Hot new restaurant? Established institution?

DEB

Nevermind where we're shooting. What are we going to do for 22 minutes? That's ten times longer than we're used to.

NOAH

Don't worry about that. I've got plenty of ideas. I've been planning this thing for forever, remember?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ED

Opportunity of a lifetime, Noah.
We need to make sure this thing is
so good that the network has no
choice but to pick it up.

DEB

No pressure or anything.

(beat)

I'm free tonight if you want to
get started. We could scout a
place, grab some food, talk
segment ideas.

NOAH

I can't tonight. I have plans.

INT. NEW YORK CITY TAXI - NIGHT

Noah sits in the backseat with Liz. She looks out the
window at the surroundings.

LIZ

Who is Madea and why is she going
to the moon?

(looks at Noah)

Where are you taking me?

NOAH

It's a surprise.

LIZ

Ooh. Wifey likey. What did I do to
deserve this?

INT. SUGAR'S BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Noah leads Liz into the packed bar. The predominantly
black crowd stands elbow to elbow but no one seems to
mind as they happily party to thumping hip-hop MUSIC.

Noah sees Rashon and Kim through the mass of bodies. He
gives them a dorky salute/wave then turns to Liz.

NOAH

They called today to invite us.
How awesome, right?

LIZ

Seriously? Don't get me wrong,
Rashon seems like a perfectly nice
guy but I was really looking
forward to a night alone.

NOAH

But I didn't think I could afford
to pass up this opportunity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIZ
(sarcastic)
No. Of course not. Clearly you
made the right choice.

NOAH
(oblivious)
I knew you'd understand.

Noah and Liz make their way over to the bar table that
Kim, Rashon, and friends are standing around.

KIM
You guys are just in time. Check
it out. Darrell's about to bring
the house down.

Liz and Kim kiss hello.

NOAH
What song is he doing?

RASHON
It's hip-hop night, but the crowd
goes bananas for dancehall. I'm
guessing some Sean Paul.

On stage, dreadlocked M.C. CHUCK SNUGGLES, taps the
microphone.

CHUCK SNUGGLES
What up? What up? Thanks for
coming out to Sugar's, the number
one spot for New York's livest hip-
hop karaoke jam. I'm your M.C..
Y'all know who I am, right?

In unison, the crowd responds "SING IT!"

Chuck flips a switch on the bottom of his mic.

CHUCK SNUGGLES (CONT'D)
(sings in distorted
auto-tuned voice)
M.Ceeeeeeee. Chuuuuuck
Snugglllllllllles.

The crowd goes wild.

CHUCK SNUGGLES (CONT'D)
Make some noise for my man coming
to the stage next. He rips it
every time out here. Give it up
for Darrell.

Darrell heads onto stage and Chuck hands him the mic. The
baseline to Sean Paul's dancehall anthem 'LIKE GLUE'
kicks in. Immediately the crowd starts dancing their
asses off.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Liz turns to Noah.

LIZ
I'm guessing their Beatles
selection is limited.

Kim overhears Liz.

KIM
The Beatles your go to?

LIZ
It's a bit cheesy, but 'GOOD DAY
SUNSHINE' every time.

KIM
No, I love that song. It's so
happy.

LIZ
My all-time favorite.

Liz and Noah look on in awe as Darrell nails every last
unintelligible lyric.

RASHON
(to Kim)
C'mon, baby.

He takes Kim by the hand and they start dancing next to
the table.

Liz and Noah stand silently with each other.

LIZ
Dance with me.

NOAH
I need a few in me before that
happens.

LIZ
You're the worst. I'm going out
there on my own. And you know what
they say, 'once you go black...'

On stage, Darrell stirs the crowd into a frenzy with his
impassioned rendition of the chorus.

DARRELL
(sings)
*Well I don't really care what
people say. I don't really watch
what dem waan do. Still I got to
stick to my girls like glue. And I
mon nah play number two.*

Liz joins Kim and Rashon on the dance floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

KIM

C'mon Noah. Aren't you gonna
unleash your inner Timberlake?

Noah puts up his hands as if to say, no thanks.

LIZ

He hasn't had enough to drink yet.

RASHON

White folks love to get drunk
before they dance. That way y'all
have an excuse when you're off
rhythm.

LIZ

Not me. I never miss an
opportunity to shake what my mama
gave me.

Liz and Kim sandwich Rashon. They all dance.

Noah picks up a random drink from the table and pounds
it. He picks up another and does it again.

INT. SUGAR'S BAR - LATER

Noah stumbles a bit en route to the bar. He rests his arm
atop the bar and leans his head against his fist. An
attractive black female bartender approaches him.

NOAH

Gimme a, uh...

BARTENDER

Amstel Light?

NOAH

Actually, yeah. How'd you know?

She serves him an Amstel.

BARTENDER

Racial profiling.

NOAH

What?

BARTENDER

Look around, there are only a
handful of white people up in
here...

Noah scans the bar. In a sea of black he spots several
white faces, each one with an Amstel Light pressed to
their lips.

Noah cringes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

Yikes. Are we really that predictable?

BARTENDER

Pretty much. I mean, every karaoke night we get a few white folks looking for their adventurous night out to tell their friends about. They mostly just stand on the sidelines, sipping their Amstels, but hey, we're happy to take their six bucks a bottle.

She looks at the Amstel Light in Noah's hand.

BARTENDER (CONT'D)

That'll be six bucks.

Noah thinks about it.

NOAH

You know what? Screw this. Give me the blackest drink you have.

BARTENDER

The blackest?

Noah nods and the bartender replaces his Amstel with a Heineken.

NOAH

Really? Heineken?

BARTENDER

Yup. Black people love Heineken. It's our champagne of beers.

INT. SUGAR'S BAR - LATER

Noah returns to the table with two Heinekens. Liz stands there by herself.

NOAH

Where are Rashon and Kim?

LIZ

On stage. Where's my Amstel? I hate Heineken. It's too dark.

This triggers something in Noah. He sets the beers down and marches towards the stage.

LIZ (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

INT. SUGAR'S BAR - MOMENTS LATER

Kim and Rashon are on stage singing Nelly and Kelly's 'DILEMMA.' Rashon wears a BAND-AID on his face a la Nelly. They're almost too cute as they sing the duet.

RASHON

(raps to Kim)

*I just can't leave alone. So tell
me ma what's it gonna be she
said...*

KIM

(sings to Rashon)

*You don't know what you mean to
me. No matter what I do, all I
think about is you. Even when...*

Noah jumps up on stage interrupting Kim. He's drunk.

RASHON

What are you doing?

NOAH

I want to sing, or rap, or
whatever.

The music stops and the crowd starts BOOING.

RASHON

What's wrong with you?

NOAH

I'm fine. I just want to do a
song.

RASHON

Ok. It's your funeral.

Rashon hands Noah the microphone. Noah walks to the side of the stage and whispers something to Chuck Snuggles.

Rashon and Kim step off the stage and watch on from the front row. Liz joins them. She grabs a shot from the tray of a passing cocktail waitress and slams it.

CHUCK SNUGGLES

(with auto tuner)

You better represent, my duuuuude.

Noah stands alone on stage, staring out at his restless audience. The faces in the crowd look back at him disapprovingly.

GUY IN CROWD (O.C.)

Yo, suck it man! No homo.

The intro to the Notorious B.I.G.'s 'JUICY' starts playing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

(raps)

*Yeah, this album is dedicated to
all the teachers that told me I'd
never amount to nothin', to all
the people that lived above the
buildings that I was hustlin' in
front of that called the police on
me when I was just tryin' to make
some money to feed my daughters,
and all my peoples in the
struggle, you know what I'm
sayin'? Uh-ha, it's all good baby
bay-bee, uh.*

A subtle MURMUR of slight approval begins in the crowd. Rashon and Darrell nod their heads along with the beat.

On stage Noah begins to strut around with growing confidence.

NOAH (CONT'D)

(rapping)

*Now I'm in the limelight cause I
rhyme tight!*

Noah's increased confidence on stage has won over the crowd. Everybody dances as vigorously as they have all night.

Loving every second of it, MC Chuck Snuggles pumps his arm up and down as the crowd and the beat undulate.

Noah's really feeling it now. He moves to the front of the stage to further engage the audience.

NOAH (CONT'D)

(rapping)

*Uh, and if you don't know, now you
know... NIGGA!*

Rashon stops dancing.

RASHON

(to himself)

Oh shit.

The music cuts out and everybody freezes.

NOAH

(oblivious)

Where my ladies with the chorus?

The entire crowd glares at Noah with disdain. Liz buries her face in her hands.

NOAH (CONT'D)

(pleading)

What? It's the lyrics!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

A HEINEKEN BOTTLE sails from the crowd towards Noah's head. He ducks it and the bottle SHATTERS.

GUY IN CROWD (O.C.)
Don't waste a Heineken!

From the crowd a HERCULEAN BLACK GUY (HBG) gets up on stage and gets up in Noah's grill.

HERCULEAN BLACK GUY
You shouldn'a did that.

Rashon quickly jumps on stage and gets between Noah and HBG.

RASHON
It's cool. He's my boy

Noah's face lights up.

NOAH
Really?

As Rashon turns to respond to Noah, HBG decks Rashon with a ferocious punch.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Hey! That's my boy!

And Noah punches HBG in the face with all his might, but HBG doesn't even budge. It's as if Noah didn't touch him.

HERCULEAN BLACK GUY
You really shouldn'a did that.

HBG cocks back his massive fist...

INT. ESSEX ALE HOUSE - NIGHT

A swollen-faced Rashon sits in a booth. Kim lies next to him slumped over, passed out.

RASHON
I don't know which was more
unbelievable you punching that
beast or your white-ass saying
'nigga.'

Noah- black eye, busted-lip, bloody nose and all- sits across from Rashon. Liz sleeps on his shoulder. An impressive collection of empty pint glasses litter the table.

NOAH
No, what was unbelievable was when
you said I was your boy.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RASHON

I was just trying to save your
dumb ass.

Noah shakes his head and chuckles.

NOAH

How could they think I'm a racist?
I'm Jewish. I'm a minority too.

RASHON

How was the crowd supposed to know
you were Jewish?

Liz lifts her head up grogily and without opening her
eyes--

LIZ

Cause of his little dick.

Amused at herself, Liz smiles, drops her head and begins
SNORING.

NOAH

Ignore her, she's totally
hammered.

Rashon grins.

RASHON

Don't worry, Kim's the same way
when she's wasted: brutally
honest.

Noah raises his glass to toast Rashon's zinger. They
knock glasses and spill beer all over the table.

NOAH

All I'm saying is, Jews and
Blacks, we've both had it pretty
rough.

RASHON

I gotta be honest with you, I
don't really feel comfortable with
you lumping Jews and Blacks
together...

NOAH

(trying to save face)
No, I just meant...

RASHON

Because realistically, Jews have
had it way worse.

Noah emphatically SLAMS the table with both palms.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NOAH

Give me a fucking break! The Holocaust was like a cozy night at a bed and breakfast compared to slavery.

RASHON

Are you insane? 6 million people. 6 million!

NOAH

(under his breath)
If it even happened.

RASHON

Not to mention, you guys were slaves to Pharoah well before we were slaves.

NOAH

It's as simple as this. Which makes you cry more Shindler's List or Boyz in the Hood?

RASHON

Boyz in the Hood's not about slavery.

NOAH

I'm just talking black people, man. I cried way harder when Ricky got shot then when you see that little red dress dead girl.

RASHON

That's preposterous.

Rashon lifts his beer to take a sip, but can't.

RASHON (CONT'D)

Why'd you have to go and bring her up?

The WAITRESS walks over to the table.

WAITRESS

You guys ok? Can I get you another round?

NOAH

Yes please!

The waitress walks away. Noah stares at Rashon. They're both clearly drunk.

RASHON

What?

NOAH

You're black.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Rashon lifts his hand and looks at his skin.

RASHON

It appears I am.

NOAH

Y'know, we've never talked about the fact that we're in a mixed-race relationship.

RASHON

Simmer down. It's only been a couple dates- and most of them were horrible.

Rashon takes a swig of beer.

RASHON (CONT'D)

Before you, I hated white people.

Noah, mid-sip, lets his mouthful of beer fall gently back into his glass, in order to respond.

NOAH

(hurt)

Hey, that's not cool.

RASHON

No what's not cool is how white people always use black people. Antoine's mom is white. We were supposed to spend our life together, but she was only with me to piss off her parents.

NOAH

That's fucked up, man.

RASHON

Nothing gets to white folks like their daughter getting knocked up by a nappy-headed bro.

Liz lifts her head, but keeps her eyes closed, again.

LIZ

(groggily)

I was with a bro in college. His penis was gigantic.

Liz puts her head back down.

RASHON

But not you, Noah, you're different.

NOAH

(defensive)

My penis isn't that small.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

RASHON
(slurs his words)
No, no. I'm talking about this.
Us. I can tell you like me for me,
not just cause I'm black. You
might just restore my faith.

Even through Noah's drunkenness, this makes him uncomfortable. He smiles weakly, nods and raises his beer.

NOAH
Cheers.

INT. NEW YORK MAGAZINE OFFICES, NOAH'S OFFICE - DAY

Noah sits at his desk examining his appearance through his computer's built in camera. He applies the finishing touches to the Bin Laden-like fake beard on his face and stands up.

Pete enters the office.

PETE
You going to review a cave or something?

NOAH
Just trying out a new look. What's up?

PETE
Was coming to see if you wanted to grab lunch, but I guess you're going on a review.

NOAH
Yeah. Sorry man.

PETE
You meeting Liz?

NOAH
Actually Rashon.

PETE
Yeah? Another soul food place?

NOAH
Nope. Greek place.

Pete is taken aback.

PETE
Really? A Greek place?

Noah heads for the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH
I gotta run, but I'll catch you
later.

Noah exits leaving Pete alone in the office, slightly stunned and wounded.

MONTAGE SET TO MICHAEL JACKSON'S '*BLACK OR WHITE*'

Noah, in Bin Ladin beard, and Rashon dine at a festive GREEK RESTAURANT. The waiter brings out a plate of flaming cheese. Rashon and Noah are delighted.

A beautiful summer day at a bustling, outdoor, public pool in Harlem. Throngs of happy black families hang out in and around the wading pool. Noah stands in the water and liberally applies sunscreen to his face. He offers some to Rashon who declines with a laugh. Next to them, Micah and Antoine splash each other playfully.

Central Park. Noah teaches Rashon how to throw a frisbee.

Rashon and Noah watch tv in Noah's living room. On screen, host Seth Rogen signs off as the credits roll on '*SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE*.' Noah turns off the TV. Rashon looks at Noah like he's crazy, snatches the remote from him, and turns the TV back on. The opening credits of '*SHOWTIME AT THE APOLLO*' play. Rashon nods his head to the theme song.

A gorgeous summer afternoon at the beach. Noah carries Micah into the ocean. Rashon and Antoine look on from the shore. Noah turns and invites them into the water with a wave. A visibly nervous Rashon politely declines.

Noah films his TV segment from Rashon's store Caffeine Computer Fix: picture Starbucks meets the Apple Genius Bar. Noah bites into a scone. From behind the counter Rashon gives a thumbs up to the camera.

'*BLACK OR WHITE*' starts to fade out as Noah and Rashon leave the store and walk down the street together.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Noah, Liz, Micah, and Jason sit around the table, ready to start dinner.

LIZ
This is great. It's been too long
since we've all eaten together.

MICAH
What's anal?

Liz, mid sip of water, does a spit-take.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MICAH (CONT'D)

Alison Levy says her mom is anal.
So she has to clean her room twice
a day.

The doorbell RINGS. Liz looks at Noah, confused.

NOAH

Oh. It must be the Snyders.

LIZ

Our neighbors? Why?

NOAH

I ran into them earlier and
invited them to stop by for
dinner.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - LATER

Noah removes some plates from the cupboard. Liz paces
angrily.

LIZ

Why the hell are they here?

NOAH

Shhh! They might hear you.

LIZ

So what? I don't care about them.
Which is why I don't understand
what they're doing in our dining
room.

NOAH

I thought it would be nice.

LIZ

But we've been happily ignoring
our neighbors for years. Who's
Sunday Style section am I gonna
steal now? I can't rob 'em if I
know 'em. You're ruining
everything.

NOAH

Well, Rashon's so friendly with
all his neighbors. They're always
stopping by to borrow milk and
stuff. It's a nice sense of
community.

EARL SNYDER, the elderly neighbor, sticks his head into
the kitchen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EARL
Hope you guys don't mind, I went
ahead and changed your older son's
diaper.

NOAH
Thanks, Earl.

Earl nods and ducks back out.

NOAH (CONT'D)
See. Neighbors are great!

LIZ
Micah doesn't wear diapers!

Noah shrugs.

NOAH
It's the thought that counts.

Liz GRUNTS with frustration and storms out.

INT. NEW YORK MAGAZINE OFFICES - AFTERNOON

Conference room. Noah, Deb, and Ed sit around the table
silently typing away at their laptops. Frank, also at the
table, sits blindfolded and unwraps Starburst. Deb looks
up.

DEB
Frank, they all taste different.
It's not impressive.

Frank rubs his fingers over a RED STARBURST.

FRANK
I'm not tasting them. I'm trying
to figure out the flavor using my
sense of touch.

Noah looks up at the clock. He starts to gather his
things and stands.

NOAH
Sorry guys, I gotta run. I'm late
to pick up Micah.

ED
We still have a ton to do here.

DEB
Where's Liz?

NOAH
I promised her I'd get him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ED
Dammit, Noah! This is New York Magazine, not People. You need to put your work first. Get someone else to do it.

INT. NEW YORK MAGAZINE OFFICES, HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Noah paces the hallway, on his cell phone.

NOAH
(into phone)
Sorry honey... I'm not neglecting my family. This is work.
(beat)
I called Rashon but he didn't pick up. I left a message.
(beat)
Will you try Pete? They're waiting for me... Thanks. Sorry.

EXT. NURSERY SCHOOL, PLAYGROUND - DAY

A handful of children horse around on a jungle gym next to the school.

Rashon enters the playground and spots Antoine and Micah hanging upsidedown from the monkey bars. Rashon playfully grabs them and carries them off towards the street, one in each arm. They squirm as he tickles them.

Suddenly, a loud whistle BLOWS repeatedly.

A black SECURITY GUARD sprints towards Rashon, whistle in mouth, a look of violent determination on his face.

SECURITY GUARD
(screaming and running)
Amber Alert! Amber Alert! Amber Alert! Amber Alert!

Rashon sets the kids down and turns just as the Security Guard barrels into him, slamming him to the concrete.

Mrs. Yates rushes over to Rashon, who is pinned to the ground.

MRS. YATES
What's going on here?!

SECURITY GUARD
This man was trying to abduct these boys.

MRS. YATES
This is Mr. Davis.
(points to Antoine)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MRS. YATES (CONT'D)

He's Antoine's father.

(points to Micah)

And he's on Micah's pick-up list.

The Security Guard helps Rashon to his feet.

SECURITY GUARD

(to Rashon)

Sorry about that, sir. Black man... white child... I just assumed. You know how it goes.

RASHON

I do now.

The Security Guard nods and returns to his post.

MRS. YATES

I'm really sorry about that, Mr. Davis.

LITTLE GIRL (O.C.)

Stop peeing on me!

MRS. YATES

Excuse me.

Mrs. Yates runs off.

PETE (O.C.)

So you made Micah's pick-up list?

Rashon turns to see Pete standing behind him.

PETE (CONT'D)

That's pretty legit. I guess Noah's mission is complete.

RASHON

Huh? What are you talking about?

PETE

Forget it. Ready to go, Micah?

Micah isn't paying attention. He and Antoine play with pebbles on the ground.

RASHON

Wait. Noah asked me to pick up Micah.

PETE

Well, Liz asked me to do it.

RASHON

Ok. Maybe we should call Noah to sort this out. Just to be safe.

PETE

Dude, it's chill. Let's go Micah.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Rashon holds Micah's hand.

RASHON
Speaking as a parent, I think...

PETE
(interrupting)
Don't lecture me, man. Speaking as
Noah's real friend, of nearly 20
years I might add...

RASHON
Real friend? What's that supposed
to mean?

PETE
Y'know what, just take him. This
is dumb. Later guys.

Pete walks off.

EXT. NEW YORK MAGAZINE OFFICES - DAY

Noah greets Rashon, Micah, and Antoine.

NOAH
Thanks a million.

RASHON
No problem. I ran into Pete there.
Apparently Liz called him.

NOAH
Oh yeah. How'd he seem?

RASHON
Fine, I guess, but he was saying
some weird stuff...

NOAH
Yeah, Pete's been a bit moody
lately.

Noah picks up Micah.

RASHON
Yeah, maybe that's it...
(beat)
So, working you hard, huh?

NOAH
Yeah, I'm trying to get a lot done
these next few weeks before the
4th. We always go to Liz's parents
for a week.

RASHON
Yeah, we usually go to Kim's
brother's estate down in Atlanta.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANTOINE

Uncle Ty-ty wears dresses. He's silly.

RASHON

(to Noah)
Don't ask.

NOAH

Well, speaking of clothes, I may need your help with something this weekend.

RASHON

I'm around.

INT. BARNEY'S NEW YORK - DAY

Noah and Rashon browse through shirts on a clothing rack. Rashon pulls out a striped shirt.

RASHON

How about this?

Noah shakes his head.

NOAH

Stripes are no good on camera.

RASHON

Remind me why you're not doing this with your fashion designer wife again?

NOAH

She's great, but she dresses me too conservatively. I need every detail of this pilot to be fresh, including my outfit.

RASHON

Alright then, let's make it fresh.

INT. BARNEY'S, FITTING ROOM - LATER

Rashon sits on a leather couch outside of a changing stall. Noah emerges from the stall wearing a crisp white shirt tucked into a pair of khakis. He struts toward Rashon holding his arms out proudly.

NOAH

So?

RASHON

Liz dresses you more conservatively than that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

What are you talking about? This is a slim-fitting shirt. It's hip.

RASHON

You look like a Docker's model.

NOAH

Thanks.

RASHON

Wasn't a compliment.

INT. BARNEY'S, FITTING ROOM - LATER

Rashon remains on the couch. Noah exits the changing stall this time donning a broad-shouldered, 4-button, mustard-colored suit. Rashon stands up.

RASHON

Now that's what I'm talking about!

NOAH

I look like Steve Harvey.

Rashon gives him a once over.

RASHON

Yeah, you're right. You do look kinda ridiculous.

(beat)

I've got another idea.

INT. BARNEY'S, FITTING ROOM - LATER

Noah walks out of his changing stall sporting some flattering charcoal slacks, converse sneakers and a bright purple crew-neck sweater. Noah looks sharp.

Rashon takes in the outfit.

RASHON

Hmmmm.

NOAH

Sweater is a bit much, right?

RASHON

Gimme a second.

Rashon walks out of the fitting room. Noah stands and checks himself out in the mirror in various poses. Rashon re-enters holding a scarf. He hands it to Noah.

NOAH

I can't wear this, it's way too warm out.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RASHON

It's a summer scarf, just try it,
I think it'll work.

Noah puts the scarf on. Rashon CLAPS it up.

RASHON (CONT'D)

That's it. That's your outfit.

NOAH

Why would I buy this? I can't pull
it off. I look stupid.

RASHON

Trust me, it's fresh. Just wear it
with confidence.

NOAH

What do you mean?

Rashon puts his hand on Noah's shoulder.

RASHON

Noah...you got to *own* it to *own*
it.

Noah looks at himself in the mirror with a self-assured
posture.

NOAH

Yeah?

RASHON

Yeah.

INT. 14TH STREET Y, BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

Noah's "white" basketball game. Players shoot around on
the court.

Noah enters the gym wearing shorts, a tee shirt, and his
summer scarf. He sets his bag down on the sideline. Pete
walks over.

PETE

Nice of you to show up.

NOAH

I know, I know I'm late. I just
have a lot of shit going on.

PETE

Like what, trying to make your
neck gay?

NOAH

(shaking head)
I knew you'd give me a hard time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PETE

Yeah, well I'd hope you'd give me a hard time too if I dressed like an asshole.

NOAH

See that's your problem, man. Why does it make me an asshole because I'm doing something different? Sorry I'm not conforming to your narrow view of what's acceptable.

PETE

You need to calm down and get off your damn high horse.

The other guys in the gym become aware of the escalating tension between Noah and Pete. They stop shooting around to observe.

PETE (CONT'D)

I'm just busting your balls. That's what friends do, remember?

NOAH

You call it busting balls, I call it being insecure and judgemental.

PETE

The hell is your problem, dude?

NOAH

Y'know what, forget it. I'm outta here.

Noah picks up his bag and heads towards the door.

PETE

Don't be a dick. You're leaving us one short.

NOAH

I'm sure you can find a tenth. Just use your cookie cutter.

PETE

(yelling)
Fuck off.

Almost at the exit, Noah stops.

NOAH

(yelling)
Why don't you ask him?

Noah gestures to the adjacent court where a guy in a wheelchair is shooting baskets.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

NOAH (CONT'D)
Oh wait, lemme guess he doesn't
fit your mold either.

Noah leaves.

EXT. 14TH STREET Y, BASKETBALL COURT - MOMENTS LATER

Noah walks out of the building and onto the sidewalk. He pauses and looks back, clearly conflicted. He heads back towards the gym when -- his phone RINGS. He stops and answers.

NOAH
(into phone)
What's up, Rashon... Really?
That's great... Oh... Right now?

Noah thinks for a second then turns back towards the street.

NOAH (CONT'D)
...Sure. I got nothing going on...
I'll see you in 15.

INT. CASTRO PUB - DAY

Noah walks into the cozy confines of a restaurant. The place oozes charm. Immediately, Noah is overcome by the heavenly aroma that fills the place. An elderly LATINA WOMAN walks by carrying three steaming plates of beautifully presented, mouth-watering entrees.

Noah spots Rashon seated at the bar and walks over.

NOAH
Hey.

Rashon turns around.

RASHON
Nice scarf, you're really owning
that.

NOAH
Thanks.
(beat)
So what's the deal with this
place? It looks awesome.

RASHON
I feel bad, I should've told you
about it earlier. If you like
Cuban, I think it could be perfect
for the pilot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

Are you kidding, Cuban is my favorite. I used to go to Gitmo just for the Ropa Vieja.

RASHON

Anyway... this is Kim's favorite place. The owner loves her like a daughter. It's only been around a couple of years. Great food, good scene but still under the radar.

NOAH

Sounds promising. Is the owner around?

RASHON

(shouting)

Flor!

The elderly Latina woman from before waddles over. This is FLOR.

RASHON (CONT'D)

This is mi amigo Noah I was telling you about.

Flor smiles warmly at Noah.

FLOR

Nice to meet you Senor Chow-boy.

RASHON

That name really sticks, huh?

Noah forces a smile.

NOAH

Nice to meet you too.

RASHON

Listen, I gotta get back to work, but Flor, take care of this guy, he's a good friend.

FLOR

Don't you come back here til you marry that beautiful mamacita.

RASHON

(smiling)

Adios, Flor.

Rashon heads for the door. Noah heads after him, catching him just before he leaves.

NOAH

So Kim told Liz that you guys aren't going to Atlanta for the 4th anymore.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RASHON

Yeah. Her brother had to go to
L.A. for work.

NOAH

Well Liz and I would love for all
of you to join us at her parents.

RASHON

That's ok. We wouldn't want to
impose.

NOAH

I insist. Besides I could use some
more allies up there. Her parents
are unbearable.

RASHON

You need to work on your sales
pitch.

EXT. EDELSTIEN HOUSE - DAY

A gigantic Connecticut home with perfectly manicured
lawns, a large pool and tennis court sit just off placid
Long Island Sound.

Noah and Micah splash around in the pool. Liz and her
mother, SHERI, sunbathe while watching Jason.

Liz's father, WALT, lines up a shot on the nearby putting
green. He's mid back swing when ---

The doorbell RINGS.

Walt shanks his putt.

WALT

(mutters)
Sunnuva bitch!
(shouts)
I'll get it.

INT. EDELSTIEN HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Walt opens the front door to reveal Noah, Kim, and
Antoine all smiles standing with their luggage.

WALT

We take deliveries around back.

RASHON

Oh, actually...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WALT
(to Rashon)
And I must say, bringing your
family with you while on the
job...
(shakes his head)
...very unprofessional.

Rashon and Kim look at each other, not sure what to do.

RASHON
I'm Rashon and this is Kim and
Antoine. We're guests of Noah and
Liz. I'm sorry. We thought they
told you we were coming.

WALT
Oh. You're Lizzie's friends.
Forgive me. She didn't mention you
were Negroes.
(beat)
Welcome! Please make yourselves
comfortable.

Walt leads them into the house.

RASHON
(to Kim)
I don't know about this.

KIM
We're doing it for Noah. He warned
us.

Rashon takes a deep breath.

EXT. EDELSTIEN HOUSE - LATER

The tennis court. Noah and Kim play doubles against
Rashon and Liz. Walt smokes a cigar and watches from the
sideline.

Liz hits a backhand winner.

WALT
That a girl, Lizzie! Who taught
you that backhand?

Liz smiles and points at her dad.

Noah serves a near ace, but Rashon makes a spectacular
running return for a winner.

WALT (CONT'D)
Helluva return, Rashon. Shame
about that Arthur Ashe, huh?

RASHON
Uh, yeah. The man was a legend.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIZ
Dad! Why are you bringing up
Arthur Ashe?

WALT
What? All I'm saying is it's too
bad we lost such a fine athlete to
the gay cancer.

LIZ
DAD!!!

On the court, Noah turns to Kim.

NOAH
I'm so sorry.

KIM
Hey, parents say dumb stuff.
That's just how it goes.

Walt and Liz argue on the sideline.

WALT
(to Liz)
...why would they be offended?
They're blacks, not gays!

EXT. EDELSTIEN HOUSE - EVENING

The back porch. The whole family congregates for a
barbecue. Noah and Rashon man the grill. Noah flips some
meat.

NOAH
Do you think I have enough
sausage?

RASHON
Not according to your wife.

NOAH
Can't believe I just set you up
like that.
(beat)
And I told you...she was just
busting my balls that night.

RASHON
Your itty bitty, teeny tiny,
balls.

Noah shakes his head and pours some beer over the meat.

NOAH
Sorry about Walt. I know I warned
you, but he's in rare form.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RASHON

Whatever. At least he seems more
'behind the times racist' than
'full of hate racist.'

A glass CLINKS several times.

Walt bangs a knife against his high ball of scotch.

NOAH

(to himself)
Oh god.

Liz stands near Kim.

LIZ

(to herself)
Oh god.

Walt raises his glass.

WALT

I just wanted to thank everyone
for making it to our 4th of July
celebration. Lizzie, we love
seeing you and our beautiful grand
kids. It's nice to meet your
lovely new friends. We're always
pleased to open our home to all
sorts of people. And Noah... it
appears you're still part of the
family.

Noah fake smiles.

As Walt's SPEECH drags on, Liz pulls her mother aside.

LIZ

Mom, you have to do a better job
keeping Dad in check.

SHERI

It's ok, honey, that's only his
fourth drink.

LIZ

That's not ok. But I'm not even
talking about his drinking. He's
offended our guests numerous
times. He's acting like he's never
been around black people.

SHERI

Well, not socially- but don't you
worry. I'll take care of it.

Sheri walks right up to Kim and puts her arm around her.
Liz can barely watch.

Walt's speech winds down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

WALT

...and who knows Noah? If this
pilot thing happens, maybe you'll
work more than two minutes a week.

Walt raises his glass.

WALT (CONT'D)

Happy July 4th.

SHERI

(shouting)
...and mazel tov to Obama!

Sheri squeezes Kim affectionately, and then winks at her daughter.

Liz dies inside as Kim awkwardly nuzzles up to Sheri.

INT. NOAH AND LIZ'S CAR - NIGHT

Micah sits in the back seat and picks his nose. He offers the booger to Jason who doesn't respond. Micah eats the booger himself.

Noah drives, looking straight ahead. Liz sits stiffly. There's palpable tension.

NOAH

I don't think it's good for Micah
and Jason to be around them.

LIZ

They're my parents.

NOAH

But...

Liz looks to the kids in the back.

LIZ

Not now.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Liz unpacks her suitcase as Noah sits in bed, distractedly flipping through channels with the remote.

LIZ

Believe me, I was more appalled by
their behavior than anyone.

NOAH

I seriously doubt that.

LIZ

It was utterly and completely
reprehensible.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIZ (CONT'D)

But my parents, through their own fault, haven't been around many people who aren't Jewish, let alone white. It's just ignorance. But hey, at least my mom gave a shout out to Barack.

Noah gets off the bed. Stands up.

NOAH

Talk about ignorant. I got news for you, Lizzie. Mentioning our president's name does not excuse their behavior.

LIZ

Of course not. I was just kidding.

NOAH

Were you really though? The fact that those people raised you must have rubbed off on you a little. I mean you're constantly complaining about me spending time with Rashon. Why is that, Liz?

LIZ

I'm not even dignifying that with a response.

NOAH

What? Did I strike a nerve? Kind of like Micah's teacher did?

Liz's frustration mounts.

LIZ

Do you even hear yourself right now? Because you sound a lot like a dick.

NOAH

You're awfully defensive.

Liz throws a shirt to the ground.

LIZ

You're damn right I am. See, I don't give a shit who you spend time with. But I do give a shit when you start neglecting your family. And you're accusing me of being racist for that?

NOAH

No, your parents are the racists. You're just disturbingly content with your homogeneous existence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

LIZ
FUCK YOU, you condescending prick!

Liz walks to the door and swings it open.

LIZ (CONT'D)
Get the hell out of here. I can't
be anywhere near you right now.

Noah and Liz stare at each other.

NOAH
Ditto kiddo.

Noah walks out of the room. Liz SLAMS the door shut.

EXT. NOAH'S APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

Ray the doorman stands under the awning, smoking a cigarette. Noah storms out of the building, nearly knocking over Ray.

RAY
Damn, son! You look mad heated.
You a'ight?

NOAH
I'll live.

INT. DEWEY'S PUB - NIGHT

Noah sits alone at the bar and guzzles a Heineken. He sets the empty bottle down and peels off the label.

On the bar, his blackberry vibrates. He checks a text. It reads:

Party @ Darrell's. You should come. Tell Liz we're dancing.

INT. DARRELL'S APARTMENT, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Noah walks down the hallway with one Heineken party keg in his left hand and another balanced on his right shoulder. As he drunkenly zig zags down the hallway he sips from the open tap.

Noah stops in front of an apartment, looks at the door and realizes he has no free hand to knock. Naturally, he knocks with his head instead.

An OLDER BLACK MAN opens the door. Noah hands him the unopened party keg.

NOAH
Here you go, man. It's party time!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Older Black Man takes the keg and studies it.

DARRELL (O.C.)
Yo, Noah. Down here.

Noah turns to see Darrell down the hall, waving Noah towards his apartment. Noah looks back to the Older Man.

OLDER BLACK MAN
Well thank you very much.

He shuts the door in Noah's face.

INT. DARRELL'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

Darrell leads Noah into the party where cool thirty-somethings mingle, drink, dance and lounge. Noah surveys the scene, doesn't see Rashon and shrugs his shoulders. He lifts his party keg above his head and starts drinking from it again.

Rashon taps Noah on the shoulder from behind. Noah swivels around, while still drinking from the keg.

RASHON
(teasing)
What? You don't think black people
can afford cups at their parties?

Noah stops drinking.

NOAH
No man, you're finishing this keg
with me tonight. Just us two.

RASHON
(hesitant)
OK... you alright, buddy? Where's
Liz?

NOAH
Huge fight. It's bad.

RASHON
You wanna talk about it?

Noah, now drinking from the keg again, shakes his head no. As he does, beer pours all over his face.

Rashon takes the keg from him.

RASHON (CONT'D)
You better let me have this.

INT. DARRELL'S APARTMENT - LATER

Rashon and Noah sit on a couch passing the keg back and forth. Noah stares at all the people dancing in front of them.

NOAH

This is awesome. Nobody ever dances at the parties Liz and I go to. Everybody's too uptight.

RASHON

I seem to recall you not dancing at karaoke?

NOAH

I'm different now. I've seen the light.

Rashon looks at Noah's half-open drunken eyes.

RASHON

I'm not sure you can see anything right now.

Noah spots a smoking hot, scantily clad black woman dancing. This is PAM. Noah stares.

NOAH

I see that Aphrodite Tightly.

RASHON

I don't know what that means, but that girl is crazy.

NOAH

(still staring)
Crazy hot. She could totally be in a Ludacris video. You know her?

RASHON

I hooked up with her for a minute right before I met Kim.

NOAH

I think I feel like dancing.

RASHON

You're on your own there. I'd rather keep my distance.

INT. DARRELL'S APARTMENT - LATER

Rashon and Kim stand in the corner. Rashon takes a sip from the keg.

KIM

Is that really necessary?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RASHON

If I don't drink it, Noah will,
and he's already extremely faded.

They see Noah, sloppily grinding Pam on the dance floor.

KIM

Y'know, you could pour it out.

Rashon looks at her incredulously.

RASHON

This is Heinken!

Noah and Pam's dancing gets increasingly steamy.

RASHON (CONT'D)

Should I go pull him away?

KIM

I think he's alright. It's Noah.
He's just blowing off steam.

RASHON

Yeah but she's not the type to
keep things PG.

KIM

How do you know?

RASHON

That's Pam.

Kim searches for it.

KIM

You mean the Pam you used to sleep
with?

RASHON

That was a long time ago.

KIM

(with attitude)
Uh huh.

On the dance floor, Pam bends over and shakes her ass in
Noah's crotch.

RASHON

I can't watch this.

Rashon heads out towards the dance floor.

KIM

Rashon...

But Rashon is gone. He winds through the dancing bodies
over to Noah and Pam. Pam now has one leg wrapped around
Noah's back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Rashon tugs at Noah's shirt.

RASHON
C'mon, man. It's time to go home.

NOAH
No way, dude. Dancing is
incredible!

Pam thrusts into Noah and winks at Rashon. Rashon pulls
their intertwined bodies apart.

NOAH (CONT'D)
What's your problem?

PAM
(to Rashon)
Hater.

RASHON
My problem is you're drunk off
your ass, not to mention married.
Let's go.

Rashon takes Noah's arm to lead him away, but Noah breaks
out of Rashon's grip with surprising violence.

NOAH
I said I'm fine. Leave me alone.

RASHON
Easy now.

NOAH
Why doesn't anybody let me do what
I want to do? First Liz, now you.
You're supposed to be my real
friend.
(beat)
I wish I never found you.

Rashon reaches for Noah's arm again, but pauses.

RASHON
What do you mean found me?

Noah drunkenly wobbles.

NOAH
Big whoop. I was looking for a
black friend... y'know what forget
it, it's done now.

The wheels are turning in Rashon's mind.

RASHON
You were looking for a black
friend?
(realizing)
So that's what Pete meant...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

RASHON (CONT'D)
your mission complete. So what,
I'm some sort of quota to you?

NOAH
No, I mean, kind of, well it's not
exactly like that.

RASHON
Exactly what the fuck is it like
then?

NOAH
Uh...

RASHON
(cuts him off)
Just tell me, were you using me or
not?

Kim moves to the front of the crowd that has gathered
around this confrontation.

NOAH
It's not that simple.

RASHON
Well it is to me.

Rashon shoves Noah in the chest.

RASHON (CONT'D)
Get the hell out of here!

Noah wants to explain, but under the glare of the
disapproving room he's at a loss. He lowers his head and
makes his way out.

Kim steps up to Rashon.

KIM
What just happened? Was that about
her?

Kim looks at Pam with disdain.

PAM
(instigating)
Maybe it was.

RASHON
Shut up, Pam.
(to Kim)
It had nothing to do with her.

KIM
(with attitude)
Oh no? Then what's this all about?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

RASHON
(distraught)
See, a couple weeks ago when I
went to pick up Micah, Pete
Papanicalou was there...

KIM
Pete Papanicalou!? What the hell
are you talking about?

Rashon shakes his head.

RASHON
Forget it. It's too complicated.
Let's just go.

Kim looks at Pam.

KIM
It doesn't look that complicated
to me.
(to Rashon)
Why don't you stay. I'll go.

Kim starts to walk away.

RASHON
Kim, wait.

KIM
I don't want to wait anymore. I'm
sick of waiting.

Kim storms out of the party.

PAM
(perky)
So how you been?

Rashon ignores her and goes after Kim.

INT. PETE'S APARTMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Noah stares at the door in front of him, takes a deep
breath and knocks.

No answer.

Noah knocks again.

PETE (O.C.)
This better be good.

Pete opens the door, wearing nothing but tighty-whities.
He notices Noah's rough condition.

PETE (CONT'D)
Everything ok?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

Not really.

GIRL (O.C.)

Pete hurry up, I'm sopping wet!

NOAH

Oh, I didn't realize you had company. I'll get outta here.

PETE

No way, don't worry about it, I'll get rid of her. C'mon in.

INT. PETE'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS

Pete and Noah enter the living room.

PETE

Just gimme a second.

Pete heads for the bedroom. Noah sits on the couch.

Within seconds, wild MOANS of passionate lovemaking fill the apartment. Noah grabs a magazine from the coffee table and leafs through it, trying to distract himself.

A final masculine GRUNT reverberates off the walls. Immediately, a cute BLONDE GIRL emerges from Pete's bedroom, adjusting her clothes. Pete follows her out, still sporting only underwear.

BLONDE GIRL

(to Noah)

G'night.

She turns, pecks Pete on the cheek and lets herself out. Pete takes a seat next to Noah on the couch. Noah scoots away from Pete's hairy, almost entirely naked body.

PETE

So what's up? You look upset.
Someone steal your scarf?

Noah smiles.

NOAH

I owe you an apology. I got way too angry over a fashion accessory.

PETE

Dude, it wasn't about your queer scarf.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH

Then what? Because it feels like everybody has a problem with everything I do. Why are people so resistant to change?

PETE

Hey, I'm all for change. I'm into new girls all the time.

Pete winks at Noah

PETE (CONT'D)

Know what I'm saying?

NOAH

Not really.

PETE

I'm saying I fu-

NOAH

(interrupting)
No dipshit, I get that, but how's it relevant?

Pete stands up and paces, deep in thought. He stops.

PETE

Put it like this. You're a basketball player, right? What do all great players have in common?

NOAH

They're black?

PETE

No, well yes, but that's not the point. They all have great fundamentals. But the legends don't stop there. Magic had his no look passes, Jordan incorporated his fade-away. And those things elevated their games to the next level. But do you think at any point, they said, "hey I've got this great new fade-away now, so guess what, fuck you fundamentals!"?

Noah mulls this over.

NOAH

I feel like an asshole.

PETE

It's great that you've become so tight with Rashon. To be honest, we could all stand to diversify our lives.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

PETE (CONT'D)

The fact that you actually did it
is awesome. But you can't say
"fuck you" to your fundamentals.

Noah nods.

NOAH

I need to get home.

Noah stands up. He gives Pete a BIG HUG.

NOAH (CONT'D)

Sorry I've been a dick. Thanks for
being such a good friend.

(beat)

Are you hard right now?

PETE

Little bit. Popped a Levitra
earlier. It's not you.

NOAH

That's a relief.

They hold their embrace.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, HALLWAY - NIGHT

Noah peers into his bedroom and sees Liz sleeping. He
thinks about going in, but turns around.

INT. NOAH'S APT, MICAH & JASON'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Noah silently closes the door behind him. He watches his
boys peacefully sleeping. He smiles.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, MICAH & JASON'S ROOM - LATER

Noah sleeps on the carpet, cuddled up against a giant
stuffed SNUFFLEUPAGUS.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - MORNING

Liz sleeps alone in the bed. On the bedside table the
BABY MONITOR CRACKLES. Liz tosses in her sleep.

From the baby monitor we hear:

NOAH (O.S.)

(singing)

*Good day sunshine. Good day
sunshine. Good day sunshine.*

Liz rolls over and slowly opens her eyes. She hears Noah
singing The Beatles hit 'GOOD DAY SUNNSHINE' and looks
confused. She then hones in on the baby monitor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (singing)
*I need to laugh, and when the sun
 is out. I've got something I can
 laugh about.*

Liz gets out of bed and picks up the baby monitor. The SINGING continues as she exits the room.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

As Liz walks down the hallway she not only hears the music from the monitor, she begins to hear the faint sounds of its source as well.

Liz nears the door to the boy's room, behind which the music is clearly emanating.

She opens the door.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, MICAH & JASON'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Liz enters to see --

Noah, Micah, and Jason all dressed in colorful Sgt. Pepper Beatle's outfits, complete with mop-top wigs. Micah "strums" his 'Guitar Hero' guitar. Jason, in his high chair, shakes a mini-tambourine. Noah stands centered and plays the guitar.

NOAH
 (singing)
*She feels good, she know she's
 looking fine. I'm so proud to know
 that she is mine.*

Noah smiles at Liz.

NOAH AND MICAH
 (singing)
*Good day sunshine. Good day
 sunshine. Good day sunshine. Good
 day sunshine.*

Noah finishes the song with one final strum.

NOAH
 Bring it home boys.

Micah jams Hendrix style on his fake guitar and Jason happily bangs his tambourine.

Liz CLAPS.

LIZ
 Bravo! You kids are amazing.
 (to Noah)
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIZ (CONT'D)

You? You were a bit pitchy. A tad off.

NOAH

Yeah, I've been off for a while.

LIZ

You could say that.

Noah sets his guitar down, walks up to Liz, and takes her hands.

NOAH

I'm sorry I was such a jerk.
That's over. I swear.

Liz looks into Noah's eyes.

LIZ

It's a cheap move using the kids.

NOAH

I know.

Noah kisses Liz.

MICAH

Kiss party!

Micah runs up and kisses Jason.

INT. NOAH'S APARTMENT, KITCHEN - LATER

Micah eats pancakes at the table. Jason mashes food with his hands. Liz sits next to Noah.

LIZ

So things with Rashon are bad?

NOAH

I think we're done.

LIZ

Kim too.

NOAH

What?

KIM

I spoke to her late last night.
Apparently they got into a fight
at the party and then it spilled
into the whole marriage issue
and... they broke up.

Shaken by the news, Noah is non-responsive.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LIZ

Did you hear me? I said they broke up.

Noah stands up.

NOAH

I have to do something.

INT. CAFFEINE COMPUTER FIX - DAY

Noah enters through the front door. He walks towards the back, past the couches filled with latte drinking customers.

Rashon stands behind the counter helping a middle-aged WHITE WOMAN with her IPOD SHUFFLE. Noah walks up behind her. Rashon notices him.

WOMAN

I know I downloaded my Michael Bublé album, but I just can't find it on here.

Noah grows impatient and walks in front of her.

NOAH

You have to get back together with Kim.

WOMAN

Excuse me.

RASHON

I'm with a customer.

NOAH

This is more important than a customer.

WOMAN

Sir. You need to wait on line like everyone else.

Noah doesn't even acknowledge her.

NOAH

Rashon. You need to be with Kim. Trust me.

RASHON

You need to get out of here.

WOMAN

This is unacceptable.

Noah whips around and faces the woman. He points to her iPod.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH
How much did this cost you?

WOMAN
Uhh. About 50 dollars.

Noah snatches the iPod from her, chucks it to the ground, and stomps on it. He pulls a 100 dollar bill out of his pocket and hands it to her.

NOAH
Here. Go buy yourself two.

The woman stares at the remains of the shuffle on the ground.

WOMAN
But all my music was on there.

Noah looks at her.

NOAH
(regretful)
That's my bad.

RASHON
Ma'am. I'm so sorry. We'll help
you get all your music back.

Rashon grabs Noah by the arm and pulls him back behind the counter.

INT. CAFFEINE COMPUTER FIX, STORAGE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Rashon drags Noah into a cramped storage closet filled with coffee beans and computer parts.

RASHON
Are you insane? That's my
customer. You can't pull that shit
here. This is my place of
business. What are you doing here
anyway? My life no longer concerns
you.

NOAH
You have every right to be mad at
me. I'm so sorry. But I'm telling
you, you have to work things out
with Kim. I know you're scared,
but she's not going to leave you.

RASHON
That's funny, she already did.

NOAH
That's because she thinks you're
never going to marry her. You're
crippled by your past, I get it.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH (CONT'D)

And I'm sure what I did makes it even harder for you to trust, but believe me when I say that Kim is it for you. As your friend, I need you to know that.

RASHON

You're not my friend.

INT. CAFFEINE COMPUTER FIX - SAME

Outside the storage closet, Darrell bangs on the door.

DARRELL

Yo Rashon? What the fuck are y'all doing in there?

RASHON (O.C.)

Coming right out.

INT. CAFFEINE COMPUTER FIX, STORAGE ROOM - SAME

Rashon reaches for the door but Noah gets in his way.

NOAH

Listen to me. I am your friend. You and Kim? That doesn't affect me. I'm here for you. That's friendship.

Rashon shakes his head.

RASHON

But you used me, man.

NOAH

I wanted a black friend, is that such a crime? And that was only the very beginning. Everything since then, that's all been real. Why would I be here if I weren't your friend?

INT. CAFFEINE COMPUTER FIX - SAME

Darrell and the White Woman customer stand at the front of a small crowd of employees gathered outside of the storage closet. They all strain to eavesdrop.

The storage closet door suddenly opens. The crowd jumps back. Rashon and Noah walk out and look at all the faces staring back at them.

Everyone is silent.

WOMAN

So, are you gonna take him back?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Rashon looks at Noah and then back at the crowd

RASHON
Get back to work, slackers.

The crowd disperses, except for Darrell who approaches Rashon.

DARRELL
I knew you couldn't stay mad at him.

RASHON
I said get back to work, fool.

Darrell nods to Noah and walks off.

INT. ESSEX ALE HOUSE - NIGHT

Rashon and Noah sit across from each other in the same booth as last time. Rashon thoughtfully sips his beer then puts it down.

RASHON
Whatever it is, it's gotta be spectacular.

NOAH
(agreeing)
Totally unprecedented.

They each take another slow sip of beer, and set their glasses down simultaneously.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Because she's really mad.

RASHON
(agreeing)
Like, really, really mad.

They go back to their beers once more.

NOAH
I think I got it.

RASHON
(hopeful)
You think you got it?

Noah thinks it over for another second.

NOAH
Yeah, I got it.

EXT. CASTRO PUB - NIGHT

A sign in front of the restaurant reads: **CLOSED FOR
FIESTA PRIVADA**

INT. CASTRO PUB - SAME

The restaurant is filled with festive decorations. Flor passes out mojitos to the happy guests. The crowd includes: Noah's co-workers Deb, Ed and Frank; Basketball buddies Andre and Tyrone; Liz's parents with Jason; Micah, atop Darrell's shoulders; the elderly neighbors, the Snyders and doorman Ray.

Noah and Liz stand near the entrance greeting guests. Pete walks in with ABBY a new blonde date. Pete hugs Noah.

PETE
I'm proud of you, kid.

NOAH
Thanks buddy.

Abby looks around the restaurant.

ABBY
(to Noah)
Your apartment is gorgeous!

Noah pats Pete on the back as he and Abby make their way to the bar.

Kim walks through the front door with a handsome BLACK MAN. Kim hugs Liz.

LIZ
I'm so happy you came.

KIM
Of course.

Noah kisses Kim on the cheek.

NOAH
Thanks for being here. It means a lot.

KIM
You know I'm a big fan.

Noah hugs her.

KIM (CONT'D)
Is he here?

NOAH
No. He's not coming.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Noah turns and looks at the man standing with Kim.

KIM
Oh, I'm so sorry. Guys, this is my
brother Tyler.

Kim's brother is TYLER PERRY. He shakes hands with Noah
and Liz.

TYLER
Nice to meet you both.
Congratulations.

NOAH
Thanks so much for coming.

Kim and Tyler head further into the room.

NOAH (CONT'D)
Didn't you say her brother was
some really famous actor or
something?

LIZ
That's what she said, but I've
definitely never seen that guy
before.

Noah shrugs.

Behind them, loud SCREAMS are heard. Noah and Liz turn to
see all of the black party-goers and doorman Ray crowded
around Tyler.

RAY
(screaming)
I'm buggin out! I'm buggin out!
I'm buggin out!

Noah checks his watch.

NOAH
(to Liz)
It's time.

LIZ
(shouting)
Ok everybody. It's about to start.
Quiet down.

The crowd turns to face a large wall-mounted projection
screen.

On the screen credits roll and --

TV ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
*Thanks for watching 'Howie do it'
on NBC. Stay tuned for the
premiere of 'Noah Eats New York.'*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Everybody in the restaurant APPLAUDS.

On screen, Noah stands in front of Castro Pub wearing the outfit Rashon picked out for him, summer scarf and all.

NOAH

(on screen)

Today we're checking out the Cuban gem 'Castro Pub.' I'll introduce you to the lovely owner and head chef, Flor Hernandez. We'll take a peek inside the kitchen, see how they cook up all the tasty flavors. And we'll even have candid conversations with some of the regular customers.

(beat)

I'm Noah Miller, and I'm about to eat New York.

A slick produced opening credit sequence plays.

INT. CASTRO PUB - LATER

All eyes in the crowd are glued to the TV. Flor grins bashfully as she sees herself on camera.

On screen, Flor and Noah wear matching chef hats. They simmer some beef in the kitchen. Noah looks into the camera

NOAH

(on screen)

Get right up to your TV screen and take a big whiff.

(Noah sniffs)

You guys smell that?

(beat)

No? Well trust me. It smells absolutely incredible.

(to Flor)

Any chance you'll tell us what spices you marinate this meat in?

FLOR

(on screen)

Sorry, family secret.

NOAH

(on screen)

Looks like I'm going to have to marry Flor to get this recipe.

The crowd at the party LAUGHS. Noah winks at Flor who blows a kiss in return.

INT. CASTRO PUB - LATER

On screen, Noah stands in the middle of the dining room.

NOAH

(on screen)

*We've seen how they make the
inventive dishes here at Castro
Pub, now let's go see how they
turned out.*

Noah walks up to a couple, dining at their table.

NOAH (CONT'D)

(on screen)

So, how you guys doing?

*At the party the room buzzes with excitement. The show is
a big hit. Noah and Liz share a look of anticipation.*

Back on screen, Noah stands at the couple's table.

NOAH (CONT'D)

(on screen)

Enjoy the rest of your meal.

Noah walks away from the couple.

NOAH (CONT'D)

(on screen)

Let's go talk to someone else.

*Noah makes his way to a table in the back of the
restaurant where a man sits by himself. As Noah gets
closer, we see that this is Rashon.*

NOAH (CONT'D)

(on screen)

Eating alone tonight, sir?

Kim, seeing Rashon on screen, freezes.

RASHON

(on screen)

Actually, I'm waiting for someone.

NOAH

(on screen)

*It's getting pretty late. How long
are you planning on waiting?*

RASHON

(on screen)

*Forever. She's worth it. See this
is her favorite restaurant, and I
have something important I want to
ask her, so until she shows up,
I'll be right here.*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

NOAH
(on screen)
Good luck with that, pal.

Noah looks into the camera.

NOAH (CONT'D)
(on screen)
*And I hope you at home stay right
here too. We'll be back after this
short break.*

As the show goes to commercial on the screen in the background, everyone shifts their attention to Kim. In turn, she looks to Noah. He replies with a shrug.

Kim slowly turns toward the back of the restaurant. The crowd parts, clearing a path that reveals Rashon, sitting at the same table as he did on screen.

Kim stands, unable to move, overcome with emotion. Tyler gently nudges her forward. As Kim approaches Rashon, he gets down on one knee.

Rashon SNAPS his fingers. From around the corner, Antoine comes running out with a RING BOX. He hands it to Rashon. Kim's eyes fill with tears.

KIM
This better not be a joke.

RASHON
Kimberly Perry, make me the
luckiest man alive and be my wife.

KIM
Of course.

Rashon places the ring on her finger. He stands and they kiss.

KIM (CONT'D)
How long have you been here?

Rashon smiles.

Everyone congregates around the happy couple and ad-libs congratulations.

Rashon spots Noah standing a few feet away, taking it all in. Rashon walks over to him.

RASHON
Nice show.

NOAH
Better ending.

Rashon gives Noah a big hug.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

RASHON

Thanks man.

NOAH

For a friend... anytime.

INT. CASTRO PUB - LATER

Liz stands on the bar with a microphone in hand.

LIZ

Let's get this party started.

Beenie Man's dance hall anthem '*WHO AM I*' booms over the restaurant speakers. Rashon, Kim, Antoine, Micah, and even Noah start dancing with the rest of the crowd.

LIZ (CONT'D)

(singing)

*Whoah nah nah nah nah. Sim simma.
Who got the keys to my Beemer? Who
am I? The girls dem sugar!*

End credits roll as Liz rips the mic and rocks the house.

THE END