

ERIC

"Teacher's 'Vette"

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INT. TOWNSEND HOUSE - DAY

SUPER: "SOMEWHERE IN TENNESSEE, LONG, LONG AGO"

YVETTE TOWNSEND, a short, heavy-set, black woman, sits at the kitchen table, eating a bag of chips, and looking depressed. Her husband, TAD TOWNSEND, a short, balding, chubby, black man, hovers over her and NAGS.

(NOTE: All of the people in this scene talk in a Southern accent.)

TAD

I don't get you, Yvette! You don't cook, you don't clean, you don't go to school, you don't even shop! All you do is sit around, eat, and sleep! Why should I have to keep coming home to that? I could've married Henrietta Esser! Henrietta Esser! I work all day at the plant, and you let this house and our farm waste away! Then you drink up all the milk! You know I like milk! What the heck's wrong with you, Yvette? Huh? Huh?

Yvette gets up.

YVETTE

You're right, Tad. I'll be back.

TAD

Hey, don't walk away from me, woman! I ain't done! Yvette!

Yvette enters the living room and heads to the front door. She passes her teenage daughter, GLORIA, and a MAN sitting on the couch.

YVETTE

I'm going to the store to get some milk, Gloria.

GLORIA

Uh, Mom...?

YVETTE

Seriously, I am.

MAN

Uh oh, that's the same line I used on my wife.

GLORIA

You mean, "ex"?

MAN

Whatever, she will be soon!

Yvette does a double-take.

YVETTE

Mr. Brown, what are you doing here? We had our parent-teacher conference last week.

MAN/MR. BROWN

Just droppin' off your daughter's homework!

YVETTE

Right.

She exits.

GLORIA

Lemme slip into somethin' more comfortable.

She caresses Mr. Brown's shoulder and goes to her bedroom.

MR. BROWN

Don't matter, it'll be slippin' off very quickly.

EXT. TOWNSEND HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Yvette gets in her car.

YVETTE

I'm getting milk, and I'll be right back.

She pulls off.

INT. YVETTE'S CAR

SUPER: "100 MILES LATER"

YVETTE

I'm getting milk, and I'll be right back.

SUPER: "500 MILES LATER"

YVETTE

I'm getting milk, and I'll be right back.

SFX: DING chime from the car.

YVETTE (CONT'D)
Dang, running on "E" again.

EXT. GAS STATION - LATER

Yvette stands outside her car. She takes a squeegee, dips it in soapy water, and washes her car with it. A WOMAN parked in her car behind her, HONKS her horn.

WOMAN
Aw, girl, just go to a car wash!

YVETTE
(scoffs)
And waste four dollars? That's money for food!

WOMAN
People need to get gas out here!

YVETTE
Me too! I'll be right back!

INT. GAS STATION - CONTINUOUS

Yvette enters the gas station. She walks past the dairy section, then stops.

YVETTE
Guess I better get the milk and head back.

She turns around and walks back to the dairy section. She sees an empty shelf, where milk is supposed to be. A LADY, wearing a big coat, walks away.

YVETTE (CONT'D)
(to the lady)
Hey! You just grabbed that milk!

LADY
I don't know what you talkin' 'bout.

YVETTE
The milk that's in your pocket! That's the last one!

LADY
 (sotto voce)
 Look, I'm short of money! Keep quiet, and
 I'll give you some!

CHIEF LANNON, a tall, heavy-set cop bursts in the store
 with a gun pointed at the lady.

CHIEF LANNON
 Freeze!

The lady tries to run off.

CHIEF LANNON (CONT'D)
 I said, "Freeze!"

Yvette grabs the milk from the lady with one hand, and
 the lady's arm with the other hand. They both PLOP to the
 floor. Lannon runs to them and places handcuffs on the
 lady.

LADY
 I was gonna share!

CHIEF LANNON
 (to Yvette)
 Ma'am, you just helped apprehend one of
 Wisconsin's most wanted!

YVETTE
 I did?

CHIEF LANNON
 This girl robbed multiple banks, set her
 ex-husband on fire, and bounced a whole
 lot of checks! Do you realize how many
 lives you saved?

YVETTE
 No, but tell me more!

The three of them walk away and leave the milk bottle on
 the floor.

INT. POLICE STATION - LATER

Chief Lannon walks Yvette around the police station.

CHIEF LANNON
 Well, that's the tour. Are you sure you
 ain't a cop?

YVETTE

Yeah! I don't know the first thing about being one!

CHIEF LANNON

Hey, we'll train ya, if you're interested. But as far as I'm concerned, you saved my life. You don't have to do a damn thing!

YVETTE

Really?

CHIEF LANNON

Or do something! Truthfully, I'm retiring, so I really don't care. Have a seat.

Lannon exits. Yvette sits at a desk.

YVETTE

Wow!

She lies back in the seat, sleeps, and SNORES.

SUPER: "MILWAUKEE, WI, PRESENT DAY"

Yvette, now known as OFFICER TOWNSEND, wearing her usual cop uniform, lies back in the same chair at the same desk, sleeping and SNORING. Enter ERIC NELSON, 16, with PABLO McNAIR, 8, who approach the counter.

ERIC (O.S.)

Officer Townsend? Officer Townsend!

Townsend quickly wakes up and gathers papers together.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Hey, hey! You can't fire me, I quit!
Wait, check that, I'm gonna need that unemployment money!

ERIC

Officer Townsend, it's us!

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Aw, kids, what do you want?

ERIC

Pablo's dog ran away. Can we post some "Missing" fliers around the hood?

OFFICER TOWNSEND
 Sorry, Eric, not my jurisdiction.

ERIC
 But you work in this station.

OFFICER TOWNSEND
 (sighs)
 Fine. Do I have to do anything?

ERIC
 No.

OFFICER TOWNSEND
 Then go ahead! Let me get back to work.

Pablo's sister, POLLY, 11, runs to the kids.

POLLY
 Pablo, I found Arlene! She was trying to hump the Morrisons' dog again.

PABLO
 Oh, good!

OFFICER TOWNSEND
 Finally! Hey, no need to thank me, kids.

Townsend goes back to sleep and SNORES.

ERIC
 (dryly)
 Work hard, kids, so you can grow up to be just like her.

The kids exit. CHIEF OAKLEY, a male cop, calls out.

CHIEF OAKLEY
 District 8, front and center!

Townsend quickly wakes up again.

OFFICER TOWNSEND
 Aw, I'll never get enough sleep!

She and other COPS gather around Oakley and DETECTIVE CARTER, a female cop.

CHIEF OAKLEY
 At ease, folks. I'm not supposed to say anything yet, but say hello to the newest detective, your friend Carter!

The cops APPLAUD and CHEER, as does Townsend, but reluctantly.

COP #1
Congrats, Carter!

DETECTIVE CARTER
Thank you!

COP #2
(shakes Carter's hand)
Nobody better than you!

GRETCHEN "GRETCH" JACKSON calls out from the holding cell.

GRETCH
Best person that ever arrested me!

DETECTIVE CARTER
Thanks, Gretch!

OFFICER TOWNSEND
Hmmp.

CHIEF OAKLEY
All right, everyone, break. As you were.

The crowd exits. Townsend follows Oakley.

OFFICER TOWNSEND
Uh, Chief, can I talk to you for a moment?

Oakley faces her.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)
(chuckles)
Carter, huh? Am I right?

Oakley stares at her.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)
I mean, she's great! She always bring in those day-old kringles. The store always says they're still fresh, but I can tell. Anyway, she hasn't been here nearly as long as I have!

CHIEF OAKLEY
She's a model cop in the community. She does all she can. She even got time to finish her degree. Duly noted on the day-old kringles, though.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

So that's what this is about, Chief?
School? I've been to school.

CHIEF OAKLEY

Yeah, about that, I thought you said that
you had your degree. I looked at your
record for years and couldn't find
anything!

Townsend pauses, then picks up her cell phone.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

911, what's your emergency?

CHIEF OAKLEY

From your cell phone?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

(to Oakley)

I know, right?

(laughs nervously)

People and their...autocorrect! Excuse
me.

Townsend hurries away.

INT. SCHOOL - LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Eric and other boys change clothes in their locker room.
ARNOLD ALLEN, 16, walks by in nothing but a towel.

ERIC

Arnold, you're the only dude I know who
takes a full-on shower. Before gym class!

ARNOLD

Cleanliness is next to godliness.

(sniffs)

And it smells like you'll be going to
hell.

Arnold walks to his locker. Eric shakes his head. His
best friend, DENNIS "DIMMEY" ROBERTS, 16, white,
approaches him.

DIMMEY

So those kids finally found their dog?

ERIC

Yeah. Found her on the street. Who needs
a smartphone?

DIMMEY

I know, right? Like the time I tried to look up a store to get wonton wraps for my dad's diner. Now, all of my Pandora ads are in Chinese!

Eric drops a roll of socks on the floor. It rolls near Arnold, who puts on his shirt and takes his towel off. Eric grabs the roll.

ERIC

(to Arnold)

Sorry.

Eric stands up, glimpses at Arnold, then turns away. His eyes widen, and he drops his roll of socks again.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Oh...my...god.

SFX: Bell RINGS.

The kids exit.

DIMMEY

What's with you, Eric?

ERIC

(shakes his head)

Nothing. Just after school, I need to have as much sex as I can!

Eric walks away.

DIMMEY

Isn't that already our thing?

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - DAY

Students sit in the room. Professor RHONDA NELSON-JAMES, Eric's mother, addresses them.

RHONDA

So, as I was saying yesterday...

SFX: Loud SNORING.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Who is that?

MARTY O'DELL, a football player, wearing his jersey, answers.

MARTY

You mean Chaz?

He points to CHAZ TREPUR, who lies out over two seats and SNORES. Marty's girlfriend, GINA RICHARDS, a cheerleader, wearing her uniform, looks at Chaz.

GINA

(to Marty)

Chaz is in college now?

RHONDA

Oh, yeah! I heard he gave a great valedictorian speech! But I was actually referring to the other side of the room.

Rhonda walks over to that side of the room and finds Officer Townsend SNORING and sleeping with a pillow.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

'Vette??

Townsend quickly awakens, stands up, and gives a hand salute.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Attention to muster, sir!

RHONDA

What are you doing in my class?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

This is your class? You're a teacher?

RHONDA

Professor!

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Oh, I never knew you worked!

RHONDA

I could say the same about you! Why are you here?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

I need some course credits so I can graduate and finally get promoted. So I enrolled here. And I heard that the star football player Marty O'Dell was in this class.

Marty chuckles.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)
So I knew this class would be a breeze!

MARTY
(smiles)
Yeah!

RHONDA
Well, okay. Let's get back to our lesson.

Rhonda walks back to the front. The students gather their notes. Marty quickly shoots up from his desk and looks at Townsend.

MARTY
(angrily)
Hey!

GINA
(pats Marty)
Shhh, it's okay, honey. Sit down.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Rhonda sits on the floor. Hands of an unseen person are braiding her hair.

RHONDA
So 'Vette is in my class now. I don't know how I'm gonna teach her. I'm surprised she lasted as long as she did when she was enrolled before! You know what I'm saying, girl?

The hands belong to Rhonda's husband, and Eric's stepfather, MATT JAMES. He wears an apron over his clothes and sits on the couch behind Rhonda.

MATT
Yeah, but stop calling me, "girl"!

RHONDA
Sorry, dear, force of habit.

EXT. NELSON HOUSE - SAME

Eric approaches the front door.

ERIC
I didn't mean to look. It's a nice package, that's all. I don't like him. I'm dating Berniece.
(MORE)

ERIC (CONT'D)

It's just a nice package. It don't make me gay. Nothing wrong with being gay. But I'm not gay! Right? Maybe I should talk to Matt.

Eric enters the house and finds Matt and Rhonda there.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Matt, I got a problem. Got a minute?

MATT

Hey, Eric, I just finished making the crepes.

(singsong voice)

Get them while they're hot!

ERIC

Uh, never mind.

He goes to his room.

MATT

(shrugs)

What?

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - DAY

Rhonda sits at her desk. Officer Townsend and Gina approach her desk. Townsend drops an apple on the desk.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

An apple for the teacher!

GINA

Oh, you gotta be kidding me!

RHONDA

She does have a point, Ms. Townsend.

Marty brings Rhonda a tray of hot food.

MARTY

A prime rib dinner for the professor!

Rhonda looks at the food.

RHONDA

No au jus? Come on now!

MARTY

Sorry, Professor.

RHONDA

Take your seats, everyone.

Everyone sits down. Rhonda points her stick to a chalkboard.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

Today, we're taking it back to basics.
(points and reads)

"Communication."

(enunciates)

Com-mun-icat-ion.

(regular voice)

Which means, "The art of communicating."

The class looks at each other confused. Officer Townsend raises her hand.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Uh, Professor, what's going on here?

MARTY

Yeah, I can't help but to feel a little insulted here.

GINA

(shushes them)

Could ya'll save the questions for the end, please?

(writes in her notebook and speaks aloud)

"Art of communicating." Hey, Professor, what works are you citing from this?

RHONDA

Ms. Townsend, I just want to make sure we're on the same page, since you're a late entry.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Oh, believe me, I can catch on. I have attended college for many, many years!

RHONDA

Fine. We'll go back to what we talked about yesterday.

GINA

Aw, man!

(to Townsend)

You really should see her after class instead of interrupting our learning!

RHONDA
 Now, who can tell me the six
 communication types that we went over?

Marty raises his hand.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
 Mr. O'Dell?

MARTY
 That would be non-verbal, verbal-oral-
 face-to-face, verbal-oral-distance,
 verbal-written, and, uh...man, I just had
 it.

Townsend raises her hand.

RHONDA
 Ms. Townsend?

Townsend stands up.

OFFICER TOWNSEND
 Formal and informal, Professor!

RHONDA
 Very good, both of you!

Townsend sits down.

MARTY
 (to Gina)
 Townsend's good, huh?

GINA
 Yeah? Well, why don't you go out with
 her, then??

MARTY
 Don't be like that, Gina. You're very
 smart, too.

GINA
 Hmmph.

RHONDA
 Now, what about the formula for clear
 communication?

Gina raises her hand.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
 Ms. Richards?

Gina stands up.

GINA

Yeah, are they serving meatloaf in the cafeteria again today?

Rhonda GROANS.

INT. SCHOOL - RESTROOM - DAY

Dimmey faces a mirror and fixes his hair. Eric rushes in the restroom and runs up to him.

ERIC

Dimmey!

DIMMEY

Eric! Don't run up on people in the bathroom!

ERIC

Listen.

He looks around.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(sotto voce)

Have you ever noticed...Arnold?

DIMMEY

(sotto voce)

What are we talking about here?

ERIC

Okay. In the locker room, I might have...accidentally looked at his...you know.

DIMMEY

Oh, okay. That's not a big deal.

ERIC

Actually, it is!

DIMMEY

What?

ERIC

Okay, don't make me spell it out, but...Arnold's...you know...is...well...pretty, uh, big.

DIMMEY

What now?

ERIC

Okay, it's humongous!

DIMMEY

No way!

ERIC

And I can't get it out of my mind!

DIMMEY

(scoffs)

The guy who writes his own dictionary for fun? Arnold? Get out of here!

ERIC

Well, it ain't that hard to believe. You know what they say about black men.

DIMMEY

That's just a myth. If that were true, then you'd...

ERIC

Hey, hey! I have a pretty nice size.

He straightens out the belt on his pants.

DIMMEY

I'm just sayin'.

ERIC

Why you lookin', anyway?

DIMMEY

I'm not! It should be already out there if it's big enough, and...forget it.

Arnold enters. He wears his usual Poindexter-type gear: slacks, sweater, and glasses.

ARNOLD

Fellas.

Eric looks shocked and exits the bathroom.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Eric speechless? Keep up the good work!

Arnold fixes his hair in the mirror. Dimmey stands next to him and tries to peek over in his direction.

RHONDA
Hers and Gina's.

MATT
Well, I'm gonna go pick up dinner.

RHONDA
I thought they were delivering it.

MATT
Yeah, but then, they wanted to charge a delivery fee, gas mileage, convenience fee, debit card fee, and fee-charging fee. I'd rather pick it up myself!

Matt leaves.

RHONDA
Those "fee fees" will get ya every time.
She flips a page.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
Hey, this paper ain't that bad.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Rhonda reads the last page.

RHONDA
I can't believe it. Yvette wrote this!
This is the best paper I've ever read!
It's really good!

PAUSE.

RHONDA (CONT'D)
Oh, crap, I'm dead!

She PLOPS her head down on the table.

INT. ROBERTS HOUSE - DIMMEY'S BEDROOM - EVENING

Dimmey and his girlfriend, CONNIE McDOWELL, 16, sleep in Dimmey's bed. Dimmey quickly awakens and shoots his body up.

DIMMEY
Arnold!!

Dimmey looks around. Connie wakes up.

CONNIE
Should I even ask?

DIMMEY
No, dear.

He lays back down.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

Eric kneels underneath the grand piano and tries to tune it. Dimmey paces back and forth.

DIMMEY
Eric, you were right!

ERIC
I know! This is awful!

DIMMEY
Not for him.

Eric crawls out from underneath.

ERIC
Wait. Maybe we're being silly.

DIMMEY
Eric, I called Arnold's name while I was in bed with my girl! I almost walked out!

ERIC
Yeah, we can't lose our girls over this. We need to get some counseling or something.

DIMMEY
Okay. I know just the person.

INT. DR. SYD'S OFFICE - LATER

Dimmey stands in the outdoor office of DR. SYD the mole, who wears a white lab coat, and his assistant, and Dimmey's pet duck, OLIVER. Dr. Syd and Oliver roll on the ground and LAUGH.

DIMMEY
Alright, guys! You know, that's not very professional!

Eric walks in. Dr. Syd and Oliver point and LAUGH at him.

ERIC
 (to Dimmey)
 You told them about me, too?!

DIMMEY
 Let's get outta here!

Eric and Dimmey quickly walk away. Dr. Syd and Oliver continue LAUGHING. Arnold approaches them.

ARNOLD
 Excuse me, Dr. Syd, do you take walk-ins?

They STOP laughing. They both stand up in front of Arnold, whose front, lower body is in line with their view. Their eyes widen.

OLIVER
 (speaks telepathically as usual)
 No, sorry, we're closed.

They walk away slowly.

OLIVER (CONT'D)
 Daaaamn!

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - NIGHT

Rhonda and Matt sit at the bar with their drinks. IKE, the bartender, calls out.

IKE
 Okay, dudes, last call for alcohol!

RHONDA
 (to Matt, sotto voce)
 What alcohol?

IKE
 (to Rhonda)
 I heard that!

MATT
 I still don't get what the problem is. Other than wrapping my head around the fact that Yvette wrote something good.

RHONDA
 Don't you get it? If I give Yvette an "A", everyone will think it's just because she's my girl.

MATT

So give her a "B".

RHONDA

But that's not fair to her or anyone else. I can't lose my integrity!

MATT

The life of a professor. See, this is exactly why I stopped at a bachelor's degree. That and I ran out of money. You're still not answering those calls, like I said, right?

RHONDA

Can't hide from the IRS forever, dear.

MATT

But I'm havin' fun tryin'.

Officer Townsend enters the bar area.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Rhonda? What a surprise! Hey, ya'll, my favorite professor who happens to be my best friend and soror! Ike, get her whatever she wants!

RHONDA

This has nothing to do with me grading your paper, does it?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

No, of course not, girl! In fact, hey, everybody! It's a celebration! I'm about to get my degree! Drinks on me!

The patrons CHEER.

IKE

(to Townsend, sotto voce)

Rail?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

"Hail" yeah. On second thought, it's a special day. Get them whatever they want, too. Put it on the policemen's tab!

The patrons CHEER.

IKE

"Policemen's tab"?

OFFICER TOWNSEND

You gonna keep asking questions, or you gonna get you a drink?

IKE

(raises a glass)

Like, cheers, even!

The rest of the bar raises their glasses and drinks.

INT. SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

Eric and Dimmey get their books from their lockers. Arnold approaches them.

ARNOLD

Fellas.

Eric and Dimmey look at each other, SLAM their locker doors, and quickly walk away.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Thinking before you speak, huh? Well, I can't wait all day!

He chuckles, then stops and follows them.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Look, guys, what's up? Why you acting all weird? Today, I mean.

Eric and Dimmey stop and face Arnold.

ERIC

It's personal, all right?

DIMMEY

You have a big package, but we don't swing that way!

Eric hits Dimmey's arm to quiet him down.

ERIC

(to Arnold)

It's not personal.

ARNOLD

Look, you think I don't know that? That's why I wear my pants two sizes too big. I want to be appreciated for being me!

DIMMEY

Well, good luck with that!

ERIC

Speaking of that, Arnold, you have, uh, a lot to offer. Why do you act the way you do?

ARNOLD

Contrary to what anyone else says, I happen to like myself!

DIMMEY

So you're not interested in any girl around here?

ARNOLD

No! Well...other than Shana.

ERIC

(sighs)

Oh boy. Arnold, remember we tried that. You chickened out.

ARNOLD

I know, so just let it go! And I don't need you to keep sweeping in here to save the day, Eric! That's tired!

Arnold walks away.

DIMMEY

Maybe he has a point.

ERIC

Oh yeah? Do you wanna get your girlfriend back, or not?

DIMMEY

Yeah.

ERIC

Then we gotta get him off your mind and onto Shana's!

DIMMEY

And how do we do that?

ERIC

Follow my lead.

They follow Arnold.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Arnold, check it out.

ARNOLD

(sighs)

What is it?

ERIC

You like to study, right?

ARNOLD

Who doesn't?

ERIC

Right.

He pulls out his phone and presses a button.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I just sent you all the links to Black Twitter. Study them tonight, and it'll make you a more attractive person to Shana tomorrow.

DIMMEY

(to Arnold)

Okay, and here.

Dimmey does the same thing as Eric.

DIMMEY (CONT'D)

Since Shana's half-white, there's all the links to White Twitter.

Eric and Arnold look at him puzzled.

ERIC

Or, "Twitter".

DIMMEY

But you people get to have...

Eric and Arnold look at him angrily.

DIMMEY (CONT'D)

Never mind.

ARNOLD

I think I can do this. Shana won't know what hit her! Metaphorically, of course.

Arnold walks away. Eric and Dimmey SLAP and shake hands.

ERIC

All right!

DIMMEY

Yeah! We'll be back to having sex in no time!

Students stop walking and stare at them puzzled. Eric and Dimmey quickly let go of their hands.

ERIC

(to the others)

Mind your business! Get outta here!

The students resume walking. Eric and Dimmey spot Connie and BERNIECE WILLIAMS looking at them puzzled, then turning and walking away.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Except ya'll! Come back!

Eric and Dimmey chase after them.

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - DAY

SFX: Bell RINGS.

Rhonda addresses the class.

RHONDA

See you tomorrow.

The class begins to exit. Marty, Gina, and Officer Townsend approach Rhonda.

MARTY

Wait, Professor, what about our papers?

RHONDA

Oh yeah. I'm still grading them.

MARTY

Okay, 'cuz it's been a while.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Yeah, I gotta know if I'll be able to graduate! I don't wanna have to go back to Tennessee and face my slutty daughter, my nagging husband, and the woes of family life!

She turns to Marty and Gina, who look at her.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)

Oh, hey, lovebirds!

GINA

Don't worry, Officer, I'm sure you got the best grade in the class, ain't that right, Professor?

RHONDA

No, that's wrong, Gina. I grade very fair, and I promise I'll have them graded soon.

GINA

Even mine, Professor Nelson-James?

RHONDA

Gina, you gave me an algebra paper again!

Rhonda leaves.

GINA

(calls out)

So, partial credit?

EXT. SCHOOL - PLAYGROUND - DAY

SHANA JONES, 17, sits at a table and reads. Berniece and Connie slowly walk behind her.

BERNIECE

(loudly)

Connie, have you seen Arnold lately?

CONNIE

(loudly)

Yeah, he's been looking good!

Shana looks back at them, then continues reading.

BERNIECE

Man, if I wasn't taken, I'd go out with him!

CONNIE

Me too!

SHANA

Uh, girls, what's going on?

BERNIECE

(normal voice)

I think Arnold has a crush on you, Shana.

SHANA

Arnold Allen?

CONNIE

Yeah, you'd be perfect for him!

SHANA

I don't know.

BERNIECE

What's to figure out? Ya'll both get to school early.

CONNIE

You both prepare the teachers' lessons.

BERNIECE

You would be perfect nerds in love!

SHANA

I don't think I'm looking for anyone right now. I'm more focused on my studies.

Eric and Dimmey approach them.

ERIC

Oh, Shana, that line never works!

SHANA

But I do need to focus! I'm about to graduate!

BERNIECE

(to Eric)

I told you this wouldn't work.

ERIC

Look, Shana, you don't have to marry him, just go out with him once!

Shana SIGHS.

ERIC (CONT'D)

(to Shana)

Now, he may be a little shy when he comes around, so be nice to him.

Arnold sashays to the table. He wears a basketball jersey over a T-shirt, sagging jeans, and a doorag.

ARNOLD

Ay, what up, ya'll?

(to Shana)

And how you doin', Miss Jones?

THE OTHERS

Arnold??

ARNOLD

What's the prob? Ya'll ain't never seen a brotha before?

ERIC

I've never seen you as a brotha!

ARNOLD

(to Eric)

It's all thanks to you, "Air"! Now, excuse me a moment.

(to Shana, grabs her hand)

Shana, my lovely, fine, Amazon goddess, would you do me the honor of going out with me this evening?

SHANA

(smirks)

Uh, yeah, sure!

ARNOLD

I'll pick you up at 7. You won't be sorry!

He kisses her hand and sashays away.

SHANA

Wow!

DIMMEY

Yeah, he's even looking good to me!

Connie looks at him puzzled and walks away.

DIMMEY (CONT'D)

Connie, wait!

ERIC

Dimmey, you really gotta chill with that.

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM - DAY

The students gather and sit in their seats. Rhonda walks to the front.

RHONDA

Good afternoon, class. Where's Ms. Townsend?

GINA

It doesn't look like she's here. Hey, my
Marty-poo's not here, either!

(frowns)

I knew it!

RHONDA

Actually, the last part you said goes
with my announcement. Class, to help out
with the lessons and the workload, I got
me a TA. He'll be going over my lessons
on some days.

(calls out from her left)

Come on out!

Marty enters and walks to the front of the class. He
wears a leisure-suit-styled jacket over his jersey. The
class GASPS. Gina GASPS and smiles.

MARTY

Hello, class!

RHONDA

And he graded your papers, too.

A STUDENT raises her hand.

STUDENT

(points to Gina)

Did he give Ms. "Bring it On" here an
"A"? I'm sure she didn't have to do much!

Gina frowns at her.

MARTY

Uh, Professor?

RHONDA

(to Marty)

That's your problem now.

She grabs a paper from a pile on the desk.

RHONDA (CONT'D)

I'm going to look for Ms. Townsend!

Rhonda exits.

MARTY

Okay, class, who can summarize the lesson
that the Professor went over yesterday?

Gina raises her hand.

MARTY (CONT'D)

Yes, Gina, they're serving subs in the cafeteria today.

Gina puts her hand down and smirks.

MARTY (CONT'D)

(smirks)

Professor warned me about you.

Gina gives a mock smirk.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - EVENING

Arnold, still wearing his new gear, walks in with Shana.

ARNOLD

Shana, lemme tell ya, there won't be no need to have your friends fake-call you tonight. We're gonna have a great time! Dinner first, then a movie!

SHANA

Please, Arnold, I wasn't even considering doing that!

She turns her head to Eric, Berniece, Dimmey, and Connie sitting in a far-away booth, hiding behind some menus. Connie sticks her thumb out and smiles. Dimmey puts Connie's hand back down. Arnold and Shana sit at a table.

ARNOLD

Order whatever you want on the menu, babe!

SHANA

Okay!

The owner, TIMMY ROBERTS, white, approaches their table.

TIMMY

Arnold, is that you?

ARNOLD

In the flesh!

TIMMY

Wow, okay! Well, do you guys need more time to order?

SHANA

Yeah.

They look at their menus.

ARNOLD

Hey, Timmy, whatever happened to that
"Mama Latanya's Pancake Syrup" you had
here?

TIMMY

Oh, that. I talked to Mama Latanya. Some
people thought the brand name was
offensive, so she changed it.

He points to a spot on the menu.

ARNOLD

"Brad"??

TIMMY

It's the least offensive name there is!

SHANA

(scoffs)

Oh, Timmy...

TIMMY

Hey, what do you want from me? I like all
syrups the same! Stop attacking me!

Timmy runs away.

ARNOLD

I don't think he's coming back.

SHANA

Anyway, I'm liking this new you, Arnold.
Question is, do you like it?

ARNOLD

Oh, yeah, girl! It's dope! Real dope!

He rubs his eyes.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

My fault, it's these contacts.

SHANA

I wear 'em, too. It takes a little while
to get used to them.

Arnold squints a little.

ARNOLD

It's all good. You know, Shana, from the moment I saw you, I thought that you were sick!

Shana looks at him puzzled.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

(normal voice)

"Sick" meaning "well", I mean.

(slight pause)

"Well" meaning "fine".

(slight pause)

"Fine" meaning pretty! Anyway, I knew I had to...uh, be cool...come with the real, you know what I'm sayin'...refine my, uh, dopeness, and, uh...

He rubs his eyes.

SHANA

Arnold, come up for air!

ARNOLD

Oh, thank god!

He EXHALES, takes off his doorag, and tosses it over to Shana's side. He takes out his contacts and puts on his reading glasses.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

I thought I was going to die! Shana, this isn't me!

SHANA

I know that! Why change, anyway? I like you the way you are.

ARNOLD

You do?

SHANA

Yeah!

ARNOLD

Well, I like you, too.

SFX: Romantic music PLAYS.

They both get out of their seats and kiss each other on the lips. They sit back down.

SFX: Needie SCRATCHES on a record. Music STOPS. They both BREAK INTO LAUGHTER.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Oh my god, what was that?

SHANA

I don't know!

ARNOLD

No way!

SHANA

Uh uh! Never again!

ARNOLD

Whoa! Hey, no offense, Shana!

SHANA

None taken! Look, I'm gonna eat at home.
I'll see you around.

ARNOLD

Okay. Hey, don't tell anybody!

SHANA

I won't if you won't!

Shana leaves and continues laughing. Arnold continues laughing as well. Eric, Dimmey, Berniece, and Connie approach his table.

ERIC

Hey, Arnold, we saw what happened.

BERNIECE

Yeah, sorry about that.

ARNOLD

It's okay, guys. This is confirmation on who I really am. So thanks.

DIMMEY

Yeah, that's a good attitude to have.
Let's go get the car, Eric.

ERIC

Alright.

Eric and Dimmey exit. Berniece and Connie begin to follow them out.

BERNIECE

Hey, are you and Dimmey, you know, doing it again?

CONNIE

Yeah. He screamed out his own name, but
it's a lot better than screaming out
Arnold's!

The girls exit. MARY, a girl dressed similar to Arnold's
nerdy ways, approaches Arnold's table.

MARY

Hey, Arnold. Sorry it didn't work out
between you and Shana.

ARNOLD

It's quite alright. Guess I wouldn't know
love if it stared me in the face!

MARY

(smiles)
You sure about that, Arnold?

ARNOLD

You mean...?

They both stare at each other.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

(smiles)
Mary, I...

A tall, buff, long-haired BOY, teens, approaches Mary.

BOY

(deep voice)
Mary, you ready to go, babe?

MARY

Yeah, boo. Later, Arnold.

Mary and the boy hold hands and exit.

ARNOLD

Who was that Tarzan-looking fool?

He crosses his arms.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

That's wack, yo.

INT. POLICE STATION - LATER

Rhonda gives Officer Townsend her paper.

RHONDA

Here you go, 'Vette! You got an "A"!

OFFICER TOWNSEND

For real? This is great! Wait, this has nothing to do with us being girls, does it?

RHONDA

No! I hired a TA, and he graded it!

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Who, the dumb jock?

RHONDA

Yeah! I mean, "no"! And he's actually pretty smart! And so are you.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

All right! Now I can graduate! Thank you, girl!

RHONDA

Thank you, girl! Later!

Rhonda exits.

OFFICER TOWNSEND

Promotion, here I come!

She tosses her paper behind her, PLOPS in her chair, reclines back, sleeps and SNORES. Gretch walks out of her holding cell with a rugged-looking gentleman.

GRETCH

Don't wait up, pig!

OFFICER TOWNSEND

(sleepy voice)

Just close the door behind you.

Gretch closes the cell door. She and the gentleman leaves.

OFFICER TOWNSEND (CONT'D)

And turn the light off, Mommy!

She continues to sleep and SNORE.

INT. DUMBECK MANSION - LATER

Shana enters her residence, holding Arnold's doorag. She runs into her sister, ELEANOR DUMBECK, 16, white.

ELEANOR
Hey, sis, what you got there?

SHANA
The remains of "Arnold the Pimp".

ELEANOR
(gasps)
Did you kill him??

SHANA
You might say that. He's back to his
normal, nerdy self.

She sits down on the couch.

SHANA (CONT'D)
And hopefully, he'll find someone who'll
like him for him.

ELEANOR
And all he has to offer, too! I hear he
has a big penis!

Eleanor exits.

SILENCE.

Shana turns her head in Eleanor's direction. Her eyes
widen.

SHANA
Wait, what??

THE END