



DEAR WHITE PEOPLE v.3

"Chapter One"
[301]

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SAM

The who now?

X

But... if *The Atlas* didn't lead you to the bell tower, what did?

LIONEL

Well, I was researching The Order and came across a few notable locations where I thought the meetings might take place.

SAM

And I drew an X on the iPad, so... you're welcome.

X

What?

Lionel holds up his iPad with the map. X rolls his eyes.

X (CONT'D)

(pointing to iPad)

That's not the bell tower. We're actually over... here.

X zooms in on the map to where they really are.

SAM

That's why we kept getting lost.

LIONEL

To be fair, when she drew the "X," it really felt like a "wow" moment.

*

X

You're telling me you two stumbled onto this?

*

SAM

Well... the clues still led us here. In a sense, it's like destiny.

X

Yes, well, in a sense, destiny is a figment of the human imagination and this totally sucks.

(off Sam's pout)

(MORE)

X (CONT'D)

The process of correctly following the clues to The Order initiates you to what The Order is about. There's so much you haven't learned. Essential knowledge needed for one of our only secret societies.

X thinks for a beat. He pulls out a dilapidated chalkboard from the junk in one of the corners of the belfry.

X (CONT'D)

Fuck it. I don't want to wait another decade. Here's what you--

Sam raises her hand.

X (CONT'D)

--Yes?

SAM

Are there snacks?

X

No.

LIONEL

Can we Postmates?

*

X rolls his eyes and draws a pyramid on the board. He circles the apex.

*

THROUGH A SERIES OF DISSOLVES, we move through X's lesson:

X

...Because an increased scarcity in a capitalist system will necessarily lead to a more vicious and heartless form of competition.

Sam and Lionel squint to follow and take notes.

TIME DISSOLVE TO:

The board is filled with more notes as X drones on.

X (CONT'D)

...And this, the pyramid, encompasses everything. Race. Creed. Class. It's a skeleton key to understanding the world around you...

*

3

INT. BELL TOWER - BELFRY - LATER (FN1)

3

Lionel pokes Sam, who has dozed off.

*

X

...Which is why it is absolutely imperative that we examine our society in material terms as opposed to in the dialectic. You understand? Okay. That's it.

SAM

Can I... Are we joining The Order now?

X

Only when you can consider the pyramid through the eye of God.

LIONEL

Okay. And how do we do that?

X

Kill the narrator.

SAM

Whoa, murder?

(off their looks)

Oh, metaphorically. Got it.

LIONEL

You do? How do we metaphorically murder the narrator?

X

That is up to you.

Sam searches for her words.

LIONEL

I'm out.

(off X's surprise)

We came all this way for more riddles and hoops? After all that, just more of the same?

SAM

You're right... it's like the third season of a Netflix show.

The two turn to go.

X

Wait. Please. The Order! It's dead.

SAM

What? Then what are we doing here?

X

I need you to revive it. Please. So much depends on it.

Sam and Lionel eye X and then each other. They turn to go. X is crestfallen. He throws his chalk at the wall.

EXT. QUAD - DAY (D1)

CLOSE ON Sam, as if she'd been remembering the previous. WE HEAR the dreamy track she's bopping to. She looks peaceful lying in the lush spring grass.

CHYRON: Three months later.

FROM HER POV, looking up at a crystal blue sky, WE SEE AL step into frame. Sam removes an earbud, and we join Al's pitch in progress.

AL

--Because what these monsters are doing is bullshit. If we can make this a sanctuary schoo--

*
*
*

SAM

Al, slow down...

AL

I need you to sign this petition--

SAM

--Soft pass.

AL

Wait... are you telling me Sam White is refusing a call to action? Samantha "Blackface Party" White? The very same Samantha who orchestrated--

SAM

--Are you just going to keep repeating my name until I sign?

AL

Will that work?

SAM

Al, I love the cause. I do. Your heart is in the right place, but trust me when I say, petitions don't do shit.

*
*
*

AL

I can't believe I'm hearing this from Samantha "Petitions" White.

SAM

Okay, now it's a hard pass.

Sam puts her earbuds in. The clouds in the sky almost appear to form an X. Sam puts her shades on as WE STAY WITH AL.

TITLE:

**DEAR WHITE PEOPLE V.3
CHAPTER I**

Disillusioned, Al half-heartedly talks to PASSERSBY.

AL

Hey, do you have a minute?

An ASIAN WOMAN shakes her head no.

AL (CONT'D)

Cool cool cool.

(next person)

Hi. I was wondering if I could get you to sign--

A WHITE DUDE pretends he can't see him.

AL (CONT'D)

Aiiight. Fine. Act like you can't see me, I'm about to be Casper the Unfriendly Ghost in these streets.

Al takes a beat, feeling defeated. Just then, Al spots JAMES, who's on the phone, and makes a beeline for him.

AL (CONT'D)

Hey, James. Sign this--

As anyone but Al can see, James is on the phone. He scowls.

JAMES

(into phone)

No, Mom. I'm fine.

(MORE)

JAMES (CONT'D)

I've come back from worse. Remember the B minus I got sophomore--
(off a loud response)
Mother, I'm not settling. It's just a difficult course and...

Al is growing impatient. He leans toward the phone.

AL

(louder than necessary)
Yo, James, my nigga, I got your weed!

James hangs up in a hurry and stares daggers at Al.

AL (CONT'D)

Oh, my bad. I didn't mean to interrupt. But also, I'm seeing my weed guy later today so--

JAMES

--No thanks, Al.

AL

Look, I need you to sign this.

James takes one look at the petition and scoffs.

JAMES

Why would I sign this? I may not agree with everything this administration does, but I'm going to need a job eventually, and I can't have my name on a list.

*
*
*
*
*

Al makes a chicken noise.

*

JAMES (CONT'D)

Okay, now you're embarrassing yourself.

*
*

WE STAY WITH James as he walks away.

AL

(calling after)
Yeah? Well your line up looks like Stevie Wonder did it. Now who's embarrassing?

JAMES

Still you!

Distracted, he bumps into a hurrying COCO.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Sorry!

COCO

Watch where you're going, Black Ben Carson.

JAMES

Just so you know, I've been independent since Orange Armageddon. Though I still hold true to the conservative--

COCO

--Why are you still talking to me?

JAMES

I've been meaning to text you. CORE needs to present some ideas at Black Caucus today. So I was thinking, what would Coco like?

COCO

Being left alone as she walks?

JAMES

(plowing on)

What if we raise money for local underprivileged kids?

This lands on Coco. He's not going where she thinks he's going, right?

JAMES (CONT'D)

I mean, we could take these kids raised on the wrong side of the tracks by working single mothers, you know, like you, and send them to private schools and--

COCO

--James, I'm going to need your mouth to stop immediately. It knows not of what it speaks. Now I gotta go.

(MORE)

COCO (CONT'D)

I have summer fellowship applications, Queensfield for Political Theory later, and an ocular migraine developing that I'm relatively sure comes from looking at your face. It's just another routine meeting, so handle it, 'kay?

JAMES

Yeah! I can definitely run things, I have a lot of ideas--

COCO

--Calm down, Napoleon. It's one meeting. Now go count your money or torture immigrants or whatever you people do in your free time, I'm late for my faculty advisor.

WE CONTINUE WITH Coco...

INT. GARMIN HOUSE - KURT'S ROOM - LATER (D1)

...Who rolls off KURT, having just finished the sex. As they catch their breath, Kurt laughs.

KURT

Admit it. I'm the best "advisor" you've ever had.

Coco doesn't respond. She is already up and getting dressed.

KURT (CONT'D)

Starting to look forward to our "hump days."

Coco makes a face.

KURT (CONT'D)

What?

COCO

You gave it a name?

KURT

Appropriated a name. Wednesdays just seem to always be the day--

COCO

--It's the only hole in my schedule.

KURT

That's what she said.

(off Coco's look)

...Is something I won't say right now.

COCO

You're catching feelings.

KURT

That's the cruelest thing anyone has ever said to me, babe.

COCO

And you just called me "babe."

KURT

I call everyone "babe"! Because everyone hates it, and I find that amusing.

Coco rolls her eyes.

KURT (CONT'D)

You'd love it if I fell for you. Instant power couple. Feared and envied because, you know, we're both kinda dicks. And best of all, our couple name. "Koco."

(off Coco's confusion)

With a "K." "K-o-c-o."

COCO

This is stress relief for me. It shouldn't get stressful.

Coco exits. WE STAY WITH Kurt. On his face, WE CAN SEE she may be right: Kurt might have real feelings for her.

Kurt leads a *Pastiche* pitch meeting with the writers (COLIN, JEFFREY, NATE, etc.). New among them are ABIGAIL (the only woman), who sits at a computer typing notes, and TROY, who sits with the guys. The moment feels tense...

TROY

How dare you. You think that's funny? It's a gross and dehumanizing stereotype. Not all black men have giant dicks.

(MORE)

TROY (CONT'D)
(long beat)
Just me.

Everyone laughs as Troy cuts the tension.

COLIN
(through laughter)
You asshole! I was terrified!

TROY
I'm sorry, Colin. But when you generalize like that, it makes me and my gigantic dick feel... I don't know, ordinary.

Abigail rolls her eyes. Kurt tries to regain command.

KURT
Alright, guys. As much as I love discussing Troy's dick, we only have a few more minutes. Pitch gauntlet? Pitch gauntlet.

Kurt starts a timer and the group begins pitching rapid fire. Abigail, as if on cue, takes notes.

COLIN
A "help wanted" ad from the Empire looking for someone who can plug exhaust valves in space stations.

The group lustily boos. Some throw paper at him.

ABIGAIL
What about--

JEFFREY
--A fake interview with the librarian in the stacks. All the questions are about literature, but she spins every answer into a plea for students to stop fucking there because she's so sick of cleaning up jizz.

This gets a mix of cheers and "eh's."

ABIGAIL
A comic strip where--

KURT

--A news story where Fozzie Bear's spin-off gets cancelled because of racist tweets.

This gets cheers from everyone including Troy.

TROY

An over-the-top op-ed begging people to think of the white "victims" of affirmative action.

(off the room's intrigue)

Like... why should poor Michael have to slum it at Cornell so that Malik Jamal Jackson can put Winchester on his resume? As if that's going to get white people to call him back.

This gets big cheers. The timer goes off.

KURT

Okay. Listen up, guys.

Abigail hangs her head at the mention of "guys."

KURT (CONT'D)

Jizz stacks, affirmative action op-ed, and obviously Fozzie Bear are approved. Go write. As for everybody else, but especially Colin and his tired *Star Wars* bullshit: be better!

The meeting wraps up. Abigail sidles up to Troy.

TROY

Hey, Abigail.

ABIGAIL

It's weird, right?

(off Troy's look)

You know. Us being the only ones. "Token Time with Troy and Abby"!

TROY

People call you Abby?

ABIGAIL

They do not.

(then)

At least they listen to you.

(MORE)

ABIGAIL (CONT'D)

When I talk, it's like they just hear the sound of Hillary Clinton's fake laughter.

Before Troy can reply, there's a KNOCK at the door, and Kurt answers it. It's Al with his petition.

KURT

Yes! Perfect. So I need some good Indica. Some real heavy melt-into-the-couch shit. I've got midterms.

AL

Yeah bet, man. But hey, can you just sign this petition real quick? Maybe post it in the next issue?

KURT

Nah. Not really a petition kinda guy.

*
*

AL

That's fucked up, man. You know your problem? You use people. You get what you want and then throw them away like a piece of--

KURT

--So... are you still selling me weed or?

AL

Nigga, in this economy? One gram or two?

KURT

Three, please.

Troy pulls Al aside.

AL

Eh, Troy! I need you to help me get this petition in the next issue.

TROY

Al, it's a good cause, but this is a humor magazine.

*
*

AL

What? Come on. What happened to Troy-bama?

TROY

That nickname died with Thane last year.

AL

Oh my God, his death was hilarious. But yo, I need your help.

TROY

Aren't you tired of playing Buggin Out on every social issue?

AL

Buggin Out?

TROY

Do The Right Thing? "How come there ain't no brothers on the wall?"

AL

Oh yeah no, I mentally deleted all my Spike Lee references when he started shit-talking young black directors.

TROY

You've never seen it, have you?

AL

I have not.

TROY

Al. What's the point?

These words land on Al as Troy walks away.

AL

Hey, Troy.
(off Troy's look)
You need any this week?

TROY

Still got an eighth left. I'm good.

Melancholy in Al's eyes as he turns. Abigail runs up and grabs the petition.

AL

Thanks.

ABIGAIL

I also need some weed.

7

INT. ARMSTRONG-PARKER - LOUNGE - A LITTLE LATER (D1)

7

Al enters in a hurry. He's running late for Black Caucus.

AL
(as he turns the corner)
Hey, sorry I'm late, I just--

As he turns the corner, he finds the room is almost entirely empty. The only people there are James, KELSEY, and BROOKE.

AL (CONT'D)
Yo, did I miss Black Caucus? Where
the fuck is everybody?

JAMES
I'm here.

AL
Sorry, what I meant was, where the
fuck is everybody who matters?

JAMES
You know what? History is made by
those who show up, and we're here.
I took the liberty of putting
together an agenda and--

BROOKE
--I don't think so.

KELSEY
Yeah, sorry, no.

Awkward beat. Well, this meeting sucks.

BROOKE
Okay, I'd hate to make this very
depressing meeting even more
depressing--

KELSEY
(earnest)
Oh no. It feels like you're about
to, though.

BROOKE
Yeah. Well, I was working on a
story for *The New Independent*...

JAMES

You and Lionel haven't published anything in months--

BROOKE

(snapping)

--Talk to Lionel about that!

(then, bringing it back)

Anyway, the plans to rebuild Davis House have been put on hold. The administration is keeping A-P integrated for the foreseeable. They like the optics.

KELSEY

Oh. Well, that's not so bad. I kinda like having a roommate.

(then, off Al's look)

But it seems like I should care about it.

AL

Yes! We all should! Why am I the only one out in these streets trying to change things?

Long beat.

JAMES

Again, I have some very viable--

AL

(clapping on each word)

--It's a no fam.

Al texts Sam: **"Why ain't you at Caucus? No one's reppin BSU!"**

INT. BLAKEY HALL - GABE'S ROOM - SAME (D1)

WE FOLLOW the text to Sam, who writes back: **"Sorry. I'm totally buried right now."** She puts her phone down and WE SEE what exactly she's busy with. She's watching a TV SHOW called *THE WET NURSE DIARIES*.

ON SCREEN, WE SEE WHITE WOMEN in BLUE ROBES and WHITE HEAD-SCARVES. WE FOCUS on a pretty white woman, JULY, who is participating in a disturbing sex ritual with a WELL-DRESSED MAN and his WIFE.

JULY (V.O.) (ON SCREEN)

It didn't use to be like this. I was a lawyer.

(MORE)

JULY (V.O.) (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)

I went to pilates, enjoyed "Pumpkin Spice Season," and got annoyed when *La La Land* didn't win Best Picture. I can't believe we argued about the fucking Oscars.

Sam's phone BUZZES again. It's Al. **"Also, seeing my weed guy tonight. Get your orders in."** Sam types back: **"Ooooh. Them weed gummy bears though..."**

She turns to GABE, who types away at his computer.

SAM

Babe. You want anything from Al?

GABE

I'm good.

ON TV: Now July is standing in a dark room with a GROUP OF WET NURSES. She turns to the only black wet nurse, AUGUST.

JULY (ON SCREEN)

Can you believe this is happening?
I mean, this used to be America.

AUGUST (ON SCREEN)

(shady af)

I know. Injustice. In America. Who could have guessed?

GABE

Isn't this show a little "White Feminism-y" for you? Plus, I heard that actress who plays July is in an actual cult and doesn't see the irony.

SAM

Yeah, it's like "watch any documentary about your 'church,' boo." But seriously, I'm addicted. Me and my dad watched the first season and would call each other with theories and all that shit.

Gabe sees that the memory of her father hits Sam hard.

Before Gabe can say anything, there's a DING on his computer. ON HIS SCREEN: An email from a camera rental house. His card was declined. He grabs his phone, dials a number, and slips out.

9

INT. BLAKEY HALL - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS (D1)

9

GABE'S MOM (ON PHONE)

Gabriel.

GABE

Hey, Mom. The credit card keeps getting declined. I can't rent the cameras for my thesis.

GABE'S MOM (ON PHONE)

Yeah. Well. I guess now is as good a time as any.

GABE

For what?

GABE'S MOM (ON PHONE)

It's that asshole Delaney's fault. You remember him? Came to every fundraiser reeking of liquor--

GABE

--Mom. What are you talking about?

GABE'S MOM (ON PHONE)

Well... Dad's run into some tax issues. The way Delaney set up their little venture. It's very complicated but... things are bad, Gabe. Really bad. In spite of the new tax bill I guess we support.

This hits Gabe hard.

GABE

Oh. Um... you seem like you're coping?

GABE'S MOM (ON PHONE)

Well, I drink during the day now, so... the little things, you know?

GABE

(treads lightly.)

Mom. What am I supposed to do about my thesis?

GABE'S MOM (ON PHONE)

What do other kids do?

Gabe breathes deep as this question hits him.

10

INT. BLAKEY HALL - GABE'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER (D1)

10

Gabe enters, covering with a smile.

SAM

Okay, am I an asshole for skipping
BSU? I just want this fictional
white lady to be free so bad.

GABE

Aren't you supposed to be working
on your junior thesis?

SAM

I am...

GABE

Are you though?

Gabe laughs and kisses her. They cuddle on the floor.

SAM

Yes! This is part of my process.
Lying in the grass. Lying in bed.
Watching TV. It might look like
procrastination, but couldn't it
also be inspiration? It's like your
favorite book.

GABE

A Farewell to Arms? How?

SAM

Hemingway wandered the city. I'm
wandering!

GABE

My wanderer.

More kisses before Gabe gets back up.

GABE (CONT'D)

Alright. Back to your "process."

Gabe gets back on his computer. He looks at the email one
more time before closing the window. Just then, Sam suddenly
has a realization.

SAM

Oh shit, I am an asshole. Quick.
Winchester radio!

Gabe types up the site on his computer. Clicks "PLAY LIVE."

GABE

Oh shit, Joelle's first show!

Gabe turns it on. Music.

SAM

Guess she's running a little late.

Gabe sizes Sam up.

GABE

This isn't a little weird for you?

Sam shifts a bit. It seems like it's a little weird.

SAM

Not at all.

GABE

I mean... I'd get it.

SAM

I'm good, Gabe. For real. I mean, I put her on the show. She can take it places I can't. I just... I can't do it anymore.

GABE

That Rikki chick really got in your head, huh?

Before Sam can counter:

JOELLE (V.O.)

I know you've missed it. But don't worry, melanin is back on the mic. Dear White People, get your breadcrumbs off my mac and cheese.

Sam and Gabe chuckle. Sam's laughter is more sweet than bitter. She's proud. WE FOLLOW JOELLE'S voice to...

JOELLE

In fact, stop abusing bread by turning it into crumbs at all. What did bread do to you?

REGGIE sits on the couch. Impressed by his girl.

JOELLE (CONT'D)

So think about that while I put on this record. You're listening to *Dear White People* with Joelle Brooks. Same title, new spin.

And with that, Joelle throws on a record. Reggie kisses her.

REGGIE

You are so good at this.

JOELLE

Really? It didn't feel rambly? I want it to be fun but important--

REGGIE

--Stop. You're perfect. And bread is too good to be crumbed. It's a travesty.

Joelle smiles and leans in to kiss him.

JOELLE

I knew I liked you.

The two break from the kiss. Reggie's in full-on flirt mode.

REGGIE

Though, if you're nervous, I could hop on the mic with you.

JOELLE

Oh yeah?

REGGIE

Yeah. We could tell everyone about us in a big way. Make 'em all jealous at once.

Joelle laughs.

JOELLE

You're dumb.

REGGIE

Is that a "yes" or...

JOELLE

Ah...

Joelle doesn't know what to say. She's not ready for that. Reggie reads her reaction and covers his disappointment well.

JOELLE (CONT'D)

You know I'm in this, right? I just need to go step by step.

He smiles and nods. He does know. These two have something good going even if there are the faintest of cracks in their facade. Joelle turns back to the mic.

JOELLE (CONT'D)

(into mic)

So, the show is going to be a little different with your girl. We're going to touch on the major issues, both political and pop cultural. I'll have guests who know all about the Supreme Court and guests who think the Supreme Court should be the name of a Diana Ross-themed *Drag Race* challenge.

Suddenly, there's a LOUD KNOCK on the station window. Before Reggie or Joelle can answer, Al just enters.

AL

Yo, can y'all talk?

JOELLE

(for Al's benefit)

But all my future plans will have to wait, people who are listening to this live radio broadcast.

(back to the mic)

Here's some soul while I figure out what the hell Al wants.

AL

Oh, my bad. Hey, can y'all sign--

Reggie grabs the petition and signs.

REGGIE

--We got you.

(to Joelle)

J-squiggle, B-squiggle, right?

JOELLE

Yeah, but I give the "s" at the end a little flourish.

AL

You guys aren't gonna read it?

JOELLE

We're signing it, aren't we?

AL

Is this some *Black Mirror* shit? Is my brain inside a computer learning a lesson? You guys used to care!

Awkward beat. Reggie and Joelle look at each other.

JOELLE

Hashtag self-care?

AL

Ugh. Everybody is acting so different from the traits they've previously established!

REGGIE

Al. We still care, my dude, but people change. If everyone stayed exactly the same, life would be predictable and tedious. Like the third season of a Netflix show.

AL

You know no one was at Black Caucus from BSU today?

JOELLE

(genuine)
Wait... really?

AL

Well I suppose y'all wanna light up while civilization crumbles, so...

REGGIE

(handing money)
A heady Sativa.

Al nods and leaves. Reggie heads back over to Joelle.

JOELLE

Nobody was at Caucus?

Reggie quiets her concern with a kiss.

JOELLE (CONT'D)

Okay, I'm new to this, but I'm pretty sure I'll eventually have to talk on this talk show, right?

Reggie laughs.

JOELLE (CONT'D)

I have an idea. The show's done in 45 minutes, but if you want to have some fun, we are all out--

REGGIE

--I got you.

Reggie runs across campus toward a MOBILE HEALTH TRUCK. He spots Al in the distance having no luck with his petition, but time's a-wastin'.

Reggie KNOCKS. No answer. KNOCKS again. The door opens to LIONEL and D'UNTE, a shady, articulate black grad student.

D'UNTE

Reggie, please! This is a very professional bus.

REGGIE

Sorry, D'unte. I was just... I wanted some... You know...

D'unte hands him some condoms.

D'UNTE

Have fun.

REGGIE

(as he runs off)
Thank you, bro!

D'unte closes the door, and WE STAY WITH him and Lionel.

It looks like a miniature version of a doctor's office. Posters for various sexual health initiatives line the walls.

D'UNTE

Sorry about that. You were saying.

LIONEL

More like not saying, right?

Lionel swallows hard. Can he give voice to what happened? D'unte sees Lionel struggling.

D'UNTE

Honey, I've heard it all. If you manage to say something that actually shocks me, I'll just be impressed.

Lionel takes a deep breath and begins.

LIONEL

It all started when I fell hard for this secret alt-right monster--

D'UNTE

--For the hate sex, I get it.

LIONEL

Right. Sans like any sex. And then I met this sweet guy, and we liked all the same things. He was the first person I... we...

D'UNTE

Had the intercourse?

LIONEL

But then he dumps me because I'm--
(makes air quotes)
--"monogamous."

D'UNTE

The air quotes are confusing me. Are you not monogamous?

LIONEL

No, I am. I think... But when I went home for Spring Break...

D'unte laughs at the "party girl" before him.

D'UNTE

...You revenge-fucked your way through the locals on Grindr within a ten mile radius. Been there.

Lionel smiles. He seems to be feeling a little more at ease.

LIONEL

Yeah. Well, not quite. But I did go a little "wild" back home in "Hoe-ston."
(off D'unte's look)
You know, like Houston. But where I was a hoe. Hoe-ston...

D'unte gives Lionel a courtesy laugh.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

Anyway, now I'm just... I'm nervous, so I'm here.

D'UNTE

Shall we get started?

D'unte consults a list of questions and continues. Lionel becomes increasingly anxious with this interrogation.

D'UNTE (CONT'D)

Have you had sex with a woman since your last test?

LIONEL

Ha.

D'UNTE

With a man?

LIONEL

Yes.

D'UNTE

Okay. How many partners?

LIONEL

Two and a half.

D'UNTE

Was he short, or--

LIONEL

--Fellatio is half, right?

D'UNTE

No.

(then)

Did you have sex under the influence of methamphetamines, a.k.a. meth, a.k.a. Tina?

LIONEL

Who?

D'UNTE

Cocaine, a.k.a. yayo, a.k.a. yay, a.k.a. Bolivian marching powder?

LIONEL

No! Who's doing-- Do people answer
"yes" to these?

D'UNTE

Alcohol?

LIONEL

Oh. Yes. Lots and lots of that.

D'unte can't help but smile.

D'UNTE

Did you use a condom?

Lionel takes a long beat before answering.

LIONEL

Once, I did. The other guy...

Lionel looks legitimately worried. D'unte feels for him.

D'UNTE

Relax, honey. Every gay on campus
has sat in that chair and gone
through exactly what you're going
through right now.

Lionel nods. It's comforting, but only to a point. D'unte
resumes the questionnaire.

Lionel spots something on the wall. It's a PRINT-OUT that
boasts a diagram of... A PYRAMID.

D'UNTE (CONT'D)

If you get a positive result, would
you be a danger to yourself today?

LIONEL

I... I don't know.

D'UNTE

I kinda need an answer, and let me
tell you, one of them requires less
paperwork, so...

LIONEL

(terrified)
No. I'll be fine.

D'unte takes out the small testing kit and goes through the ritual of sanitizing the needle, pricking Lionel's finger, and adding the blood to a small container with chemicals. Lionel can't take his eyes off the poster.

LIONEL (CONT'D)

Hey, what is that?

Lionel nods toward the poster. D'unte looks back.

D'UNTE

Homework. Maslow's hierarchy of needs. It's how I study.

Lionel's mind flits behind his eyes at the image. Finally, D'unte pours the final bit of liquid into the container. They wait. Lionel could jump out of his skin.

D'UNTE (CONT'D)

Alright, here we--

Just then, there's another KNOCK on the door.

LIONEL

Occupied!

D'unte looks at the test.

D'UNTE

Negative.

LIONEL

Oh, thank you, Jesus.

D'UNTE

You are fucking precious and I'm obsessed with you, deal with it.

Now that Lionel can breathe easy, he actually is taken aback and touched by D'unte's kindness.

LIONEL

Yeah? Really?

D'UNTE

Yeah. You should come by the house. It's me and like all the black homosexuals on campus.

LIONEL

All three?

13

CONTINUED:

13

D'UNTE

You'd be surprised! The last house on Regatta. Come through.

THE BANGING returns. D'unte slides open the door.

14

EXT. QUAD/INT. MOBILE HEALTH TRUCK - CONTINUOUS (D1)

14

It's Al and his petition.

AL

Everybody good in here?

D'UNTE

No, Al. Lionel has full-blown AIDS.

Lionel gasps.

AL

Oh my God! No! Lionel!

D'UNTE

I'm kidding fool, but what if he was? Just 'cause you fine and seem like the type who'd give it a try--

AL

--Never gonna happen, D'unte--

D'UNTE

--Doesn't mean you can come banging on my closed and very professional door. Now what do you want, Obtainable Daniel Sunjata?

Al holds up his petition. D'unte ponders it.

D'UNTE (CONT'D)

Oh cool. What's it for?

AL

For real? Great. Yeah, so Winchester has refused to become a sanctuary school. At this moment, people are living in fear of being dragged out of their lives and deported... Plus people are being shitty as fuck and mad weird today.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

D'unte gestures for the petition.

LIONEL

Al, you're looking to the outside for a hero, but maybe you just need to discover that you are--

D'UNTE

(to Lionel)

--Okay, five minutes ago you were peeing yourself with terror, so maybe pump the brakes, Black Buddha.

LIONEL

That's fair.

D'UNTE

(to Al)

You only have a dozen signatures?

*

AL

And that's four days' work.

*

(then, realizing)

*

What am I even doing?

*

D'UNTE

Asking the right question.

Lionel's eyes dart back to the pyramid as Al slinks out.

The sun sets behind a dejected Al who sits on a bench. He talks to SOMEONE WE CAN'T SEE as he counts dollar bills.

AL

Troy's sold out to those *Pastiche* fucks. Coco's on a world domination tour. Reggie's all boo'd up. Even Sam's checked out. Everybody's given up!

Al hands the money to the person off-screen.

AL (CONT'D)

They'd all rather stick their heads in the sand than face the truth.

WE HEAR A FAMILIAR VOICE.

SILVIO (O.S.)

The truth, huh? So when are you going to tell your A-P friends that "Al" is short for "Alberto"?

And then WE SEE him. Al's dealer is SILVIO.

AL

Man, fuck off with that. I don't lie about who I am. If people want to assume one thing, let 'em. Besides, where I grew up, brown and black. Same thing.

SILVIO

Uh-huh...

(in fluent Spanish)

You ever heard the phrase, "Be the change you seek"?

AL

(in fluent Spanish)

Look who's talking. Mr. "Make Winchester Great Again."

SILVIO

Funny.

They continue in Spanish with subtitles.

AL

I see you. Gay and brown and arguing for the other side? Angling for that talking head money. You know you're making all this shit worse for the rest of us?

SILVIO

Then stop me. Look, "for us"? There's always a moment when you have to choose between being who you are and getting what you want. They built it that way. At least I made a choice. You're still looking for someone to choose for you.

Beat as Silvio counts the money and hands Al grams of weed.

SILVIO (CONT'D)

See you next week.

16

EXT. QUAD - LATER (D1)

16

Al sneaks a few puffs from a joint as he shuffles through campus. A Latinx student Facebook group open on his phone. Suddenly, a noise grabs his attention...

...The booming and energetic voice of PROFESSOR MOSES BROWN. Suave, dignified, gregarious, and black. He's drawn a crowd of students who sit around him on some steps.

MOSES

...And make no mistake, it is by design. There are people of power in this country who have consciously given your fellow Americans a permission structure to give into their basest, most ignorant beliefs...

Al is pulled to what seems like an impromptu gathering.

MOSES (CONT'D)

...This isn't to forgive those who are all too willing to embrace the racist rhetoric, but it is to say that we have to, have to, absolutely have to remember that this was by design. Step one is always to divide. Step two? I don't know about you all, but I'm not about to get complacent, because I don't want to live in a world where we get to step two.

Al looks down at his phone and the Latinx group he was considering. He closes the browser window and joins the group. As Moses talks, Al's eyes fill with awe and hope.

Just behind him, Sam watches, wondering if she should join. Something pulls her eye to the left. It's... X, standing in the crowd. As Sam ponders what she should do, someone crosses and X is gone. As Sam's eyes look to us...

CUT TO CREDITS.

END OF SHOW