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Master of None

“Thanksgiving”

(#208 ‘As-Aired’)

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CAST LIST

DEV
DENISE

CATHERINE
JOYCE
KID DEV
KID DENISE
PRE-TEEN DEV
PRE-TEEN DENISE
ERNESTINE
TEEN DENISE
TEEN DEV
MICHELLE
NIKKI

SET LIST

INTERIORS

WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT
KITCHEN/DINING ROOM
KITCHEN
PRE-TEEN DENISE'S ROOM
DINING ROOM
TEEN DENISE'S ROOM
COLLEGE DENISE'S ROOM
MODERN DENISE'S ROOM
LIVING ROOM

DINER

EXTERIORS

N/A

3 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - DAY - 3
1991

Denise's mom and grandma, CATHERINE and ERNESTINE, are with Catherine's friend, JOYCE. They're prepping for Thanksgiving dinner while watching the *Price is Right*.

JOYCE
Where Denise at?

CATHERINE
She's upstairs with her little boyfriend.

JOYCE
Oh, wait, Denise got a little boyfriend?!

CATHERINE
Mm-hmm.

Two kids, around age 8, run in. It's KID DEV and KID DENISE. Denise is dressed femininely and conservatively.

ERNESTINE
Y'all better stop running through this house.

KID DENISE
Yes, Grandma.

CATHERINE
Denise, what were y'all doing up there?

KID DENISE
Watching *Fresh Prince*.

CATHERINE
You weren't eating candy, were you?

KID DENISE
No.

CATHERINE
Dev, do y'all even celebrate Thanksgiving in your house? Is that a thing y'all do in the Indian community?

KID DEV
We have lunch together. Then my dad watches *The Godfather* and falls asleep.

CATHERINE
(laughs)
Well, you are welcome to come have Thanksgiving with us anytime you want.

(CONTINUED)

KID DENISE
What's "the Indian community"?

CATHERINE
Dev is Indian.

KID DENISE
Wait... I thought Dev was black.

KID DEV
I'm brown!

KID DENISE
Black people are brown too!

CATHERINE
Oh lord. Okay, look, both of you are minorities.

KID DENISE
What's a minority?

CATHERINE
It's a group of people that have to work twice as hard in life to get half as far. And Denise, you a black woman, so you gonna have to work three times as hard.

JOYCE
I know that's right.

CATHERINE
Mm-hmm. You're both gonna be disenfranchised. Ma.

ERNESTINE
I'm coming.

KID DENISE
Like a McDonald's?

JOYCE
What?

KID DENISE
McDonald's is a franchise. When people open up their own McDonald's, they just pay the big McDonald's man a license fee so they can run it. That's what a franchise is.

CATHERINE

Denise, how the hell do you know what a franchise is, but you don't know that Dev ain't black?

KID DEV

I'm confused. I'm a McDonald's?

Catherine is exasperated.

CATHERINE

You're a McDonald's and Denise is a Burger King. Now, both of y'all sit on down so we can get ready to eat.

Denise and Dev sit at the table.

JOYCE

And I'm a big old White Castle, so...

Everyone laughs.

JOYCE (CONT'D)

Ooh, this looks good.

CATHERINE

We gonna say grace first.

JOYCE

Oh.

OPENING CREDITS.

4 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY - 1995

4

Catherine, Ernestine, and Joyce do their Thanksgiving prep, circa 1995.

JOYCE

Ooh, tell your mama to stop smoking in the kitchen.

ERNESTINE

Child, I'm old. I can smoke wherever I want.

JOYCE

Dropping ashes all in the potatoes...

ERNESTINE

It adds flavor.

JOYCE

I don't want no Newport potatoes.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

4

ERNESTINE

I was trying to help.

5 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - PRE-TEEN DENISE'S ROOM - DAY -5
1995

TIGHT SHOT: A music video on a small TV in Denise's room:
"Brown Sugar" by D'Angelo.

Pull out to REVEAL: PRE-TEEN DEV and PRE-TEEN DENISE are now older, around 12. Dev is wearing a suit. They are dancing and having fun. There are posters on the wall of Jasmine Guy, Jennifer Aniston, Hilary from Fresh Prince, Whitney Houston.

PRE-TEEN DEV

(singing)

"Skin is caramel/ With the cocoa eyes/
Even got a big sister by the name of
Chocolate Thai."

Catherine opens the door.

PRE-TEEN DEV (CONT'D)

(singing)

"Brown sugar baaaabe, I get high off your
love, don't know how to behave."

CATHERINE

What are y'all doing in here? Dev, now,
what you know bout brown sugar. You're 12
years old. You still got some of your
baby teeth. Now y'all ain't got no
business listening to these songs. Look
at Denise over there, staring at
D'Angelo.

Cut to the TV. Denise is actually staring at the woman in the video. Catherine hangs a pink, fluffy dress on Denise's closet door.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Denise, put on your dress so you can look
nice for dinner.

Denise looks at the dress, skeptical.

6 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - PRE-TEEN DENISE'S ROOM - DAY -6
LATER - 1995

Denise has the dress on, she looks at herself in the mirror.
She makes a disgusted face.

PRE-TEEN DENISE

Man, this is some bullshit.

7 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - 7
AFTERNOON - 1995

Dev and the family are downstairs. Denise comes down dressed "Denise style" but in kids mode - blue jean overalls, Cross Colors shirt, and some LA Gear sneakers. She walks downstairs in slow motion as "Flava in Ya Ear (remix)" by Craig Mack.

CATHERINE

Denise, that does not look like the clothes I picked out for you! What happened to that nice dress?

PRE-TEEN DENISE

It didn't fit right!

CATHERINE

You better make it fit.

PRE-TEEN DENISE

Why can't I just wear this? It's just us. Arsenio ain't coming?

PRE-TEEN DEV

Arsenio is coming?!

PRE-TEEN DENISE

No!

JOYCE

Catherine, let that child wear what she wanna wear. And you watch your tone.

PRE-TEEN DENISE

Thanks, Aunt Joyce.

JOYCE

All right, Ernestine, hurry up and say this prayer.

ERNESTINE

Thank you, Jesus, for bringing all our family together in one room for another Watkins family Thanksgiving. I want to bless all the hands that made the food. I want to bless the family that's here today. I also want to bless the extended family that's here, little Dev. I also want to bless--

JOYCE

We got it. God is able. Jesus wept. Can we please talk about O.J.?

(CONTINUED)

ERNESTINE

I don't know what we gonna talk about. He didn't do it.

PRE-TEEN DENISE

What about all that blood? How you know, Grandma?

ERNESTINE

'Cause I just know!

CATHERINE

Ooh, if Nicole was black, we wouldn't even be talking about this.

ERNESTINE

I know that's right.

JOYCE

Honey, they are always trying take down our black icons.

ERNESTINE

Mm-hmm.

JOYCE

Look at Michael!

CATHERINE

Oh!

JOYCE

I still don't believe he touched them kids.

CATHERINE

Child, anytime these folks see a black man coming up in the world, making himself enough money to get himself a white woman, they try to frame him.

PRE-TEEN DENISE

What about Clarence Thomas?

ERNESTINE

Fuck his ass.

Catherine and Ernestine prep for Thanksgiving. Time has advanced a few years, circa 1999.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

ERNESTINE

You didn't put no parsnips in that
dressing, did you?

CATHERINE

No, Mama. No parsnips.

ERNESTINE

That's my least favorite vegetable. I
hate them suckers.

9 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - TEEN DENISE'S ROOM - DAY - 9
1999

TEEN DENISE and TEEN DEV, around age 16, playing cards.
Denise is wearing baggy clothes, Tommy Hilfiger, FUBU. A 90s
version of current Denise attire.

TEEN DENISE

Man, I told you this is stupid. You can't
play spades with two people.

TEEN DEV

I'm trying to make it work. You wanted to
play spades. Let's see if Aunt Joyce
wants to play.

TEEN DENISE

She got a gambling problem. She can't be
around playing cards no more.

Teen Denise puts her cards down.

TEEN DENISE (CONT'D)

Hey, could I talk to you about something?

TEEN DEV

Yeah, sure. What's up?

TEEN DENISE

You know Erica?

TEEN DEV

White Erica or black Erica?

TEEN DENISE

Nah, mixed Erica.

TEEN DEV

Oh, yeah, I know mixed Erica. She's cute.

TEEN DENISE

Nah, mixed Erica's fine as hell.

(CONTINUED)

TEEN DEV

Okay...

TEEN DENISE

That's what I'm trying to say. Like... I like her. I have a crush on her.

TEEN DEV

Wait, are you trying to tell me that you're... you know?

TEEN DENISE

Lebanese.

TEEN DEV

What? You're from Lebanon?

TEEN DENISE

No. I just-- I don't know how to-- I'm not comfortable with the word, uh...
(quietly)
Lesbian.

TEEN DEV

All right. So we'll say you're Lebanese. I mean, I always thought there was a good chance. You're the only girl who wore Jordans to the Spring Fling. And you got those Jasmine Guy posters up for years. I always felt like it wasn't about her acting.

TEEN DENISE

And I have been dressing like Da Brat since preschool.

TEEN DEV

You gonna tell your mom?

TEEN DENISE

Being gay isn't exactly something black people love to talk about.

TEEN DEV

Why?

TEEN DENISE

Some black people think being gay's a choice. And when they find out that their kid is gay, they try to figure out what they did wrong.

(CONTINUED)

TEEN DEV

Gay Martin's white. His parents did the same thing.

TEEN DENISE

Yeah, but it's more intense for black folks. All right, so everything's a contest for us, and your kids are like trophies. Me being gay is like tarnishing her trophy.

TEEN DEV

I don't think being Lebanese tarnishes the trophy. There's plenty of straight trophies. I think it's cool you're a Lebanese trophy.

TEEN DENISE

Thanks, dude.

TEEN DEV

Damn, this has been an intense talk.
(beat)

You want to smoke some weed? I got some shit that's DANK.

Teen Dev pulls out a ziplock bag with the tiniest amount of the saddest-looking weed you have ever seen.

10 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - TEEN DENISE'S ROOM - DAY - 10
1999

MUSIC: Musical Youth - Pass the Dutchie.

STYLIZED MONTAGE: Teen Dev and Teen Denise are smoking weed and blowing the smoke through a paper towel roll with a dryer sheet in it, into the fan.

11 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - TEEN DENISE'S ROOM - DAY - 11
LATER - 1999

Teen Dev is spacing out in front of a psychedelic poster.

TEEN DEV

Are you sure I'm supposed to see a dolphin? I don't see a dolphin.

Teen Denise is lying on her bed, lost in a poster of Jennifer Anniston pasted to her ceiling.

TEEN DENISE

I don't know, man. I'm in another world right now.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

11

CATHERINE (O.S.)
Denise? Dev?

TEEN DEV
Oh shit! I thought she was going to the store.

TEEN DENISE
Me too! Be cool!

TEEN DEV
I'm cool! You be cool!

12

TEEN DENISE
Shut up!

12

Teen Denise and Teen Dev unpause a video game and act like they have been playing.

CATHERINE
What y'all up to?

Catherine enters.

TEEN DEV
Hi Ms. Watk -- AHHHHHHH!!!

REVEAL: Catherine has a white cream mask on. Her face is covered in white goop.

TEEN DENISE
What the hell, ma?!

CATHERINE
It's just a hydrating mask. You know I got a dry T-zone! What you freaking out for?

TEEN DENISE
We freaking out 'cause you're coming in here looking like Dead Presidents!

Teen Dev is scared.

TEEN DENISE (CONT'D)
You're supposed to be at the store. Why are you here?

CATHERINE
Yeah, I was going. Shoot, Joyce say she can handle it.
(beat)
Dev, how are your parents? They good?

(CONTINUED)

TEEN DEV

Yeah.

CATHERINE

I heard y'all were going to Hawaii for Christmas. You excited?

TEEN DEV

(beat)

Yeah.

CATHERINE

Well, this has been a stimulating conversation.

TEEN DEV

Yeah.

TEEN DENISE

Okay, bye, Mom.

CATHERINE

Uh-uh.

TEEN DENISE

Bye, okay?

CATHERINE

Girl, don't be telling me where I can go in my own house. Don't you be telling me where I can go in my own house.

(beat)

Are you all right? 'Cause I swear, y'all look a little spaced out.

TEEN DENISE

We're just tired!

CATHERINE

Uh-huh. All right, I'm leaving. I'll see y'all later for dinner.

(leaving the room)

You really need to clean all this up. I'ma give this to the Goodwill, somebody who appreciate it.

Catherine exits.

TEEN DEV

D-did I seem too high? Was that-- was I cool?

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (3) 11

14 TEEN DENISE
We cool. I'ma just kick it with Jen real quick. 14

Denise lies back down on her bed to stare at the poster.

15 INT. DINER - DAY - 2006 15

Time has advanced a few years, Thanksgiving morning circa 2006. Denise (now played by Lena) is home from college. She's wearing a hoodie and sweatpants.

REVEAL: Denise is with Catherine.

CATHERINE
How are you this tall and you don't play basketball?

DENISE
I know, it sucks.

CATHERINE
A basketball scholarship would've come in real handy right now. But, I'm just glad you in college and you ain't pregnant and on drugs.

DENISE
You don't got to worry about me getting pregnant.

CATHERINE
Why? You got that UID thing?

Denise is grossed out by the thought.

DENISE
Okay, first of all, it's not a UID. Okay? It's not a thing. It's the IUD.

CATHERINE
Mm.

DENISE
But you ain't got to worry about me and pregnancy.

CATHERINE
(beat)
You got saved. You done come to the Lord.

DENISE
No. I don't know why you keep asking me that.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

Catherine shrugs.

DENISE (CONT'D)

I'm not... gonna get pregnant because...
I don't like having sex with men.

Catherine takes this in. It's not a shock but it's still a moment.

CATHERINE

Have you tried it?

DENISE

No.

CATHERINE

Then how do you know you don't like it?

DENISE

It's just something I know.

CATHERINE

(beat)

Well, what you trying to say?

Denise seems annoyed.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

What's is the problem?

DENISE

I'm just annoyed that I even have to have
this conversation with you.

CATHERINE

What conversation? I'm sitting here being
normal. You acting like a crazy person.

DENISE

Ma?

CATHERINE

Hmm?

DENISE

I'm gay.

Catherine looks around the restaurant wondering if anyone heard her daughter.

CATHERINE

You what?

(CONTINUED)

DENISE

I'm gay.

Denise can tell her mom's uncomfortable and a little embarrassed.

DENISE (CONT'D)

I've always been gay.

Catherine is still at a loss for words.

DENISE (CONT'D)

But I'm still the same person. I'm still your daughter. Nothing's changed.

Denise sees there are tears in her mother's eyes. This, of course, breaks her heart.

DENISE (CONT'D)

What's wrong? Ma, why are you crying?

CATHERINE

Mm-mm. Mm-mm.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

I just-- I don't want life to be hard for you.

(beat)

It is hard enough being a black woman in this world. Now you want add something else to that?

DENISE

It's not like this was my choice. It's just who I am.

CATHERINE

Well, who else you done told?

DENISE

Just Dev.

CATHERINE

Yeah, of course.

(then)

You know you can't tell your grandmother.

DENISE

Why?

CATHERINE

'Cause she won't be able to handle this. And you know forgetful she is.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED: (3)

15

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

You're gonna have to come out to her every other week.

DENISE

True. She do be forgetting stuff.

Catherine sighs.

16 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - COLLEGE DENISE'S ROOM - DAY -16
2006

Denise and Dev are back in her room hanging out.

DEV

So how'd it go?

DENISE

Well, it wasn't my all time favorite conversation with my mom, but it was all right. She cried, though.

DEV

Oh man.

DENISE

I figured she would. She's a crier.

DEV

Did she tell you she loves you and supports you no matter what and all that stuff?

DENISE

No, man. This ain't an episode of *Growing Pains*. She ain't say none of that. But at lease she didn't disown me, 'cause that be happening. So... I guess it was a success.

17 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS - 2002 17

Catherine and Joyce are downstairs in the kitchen preparing dinner.

JOYCE

So, she's a butch queen?

CATHERINE

(whispering)

No. I think that's something else in the gay world.

(CONTINUED)

JOYCE

Well, that's a world I don't know nothing about, child.

CATHERINE

I just wish I knew where I went wrong.

JOYCE

What do you mean where you went wrong? Denise ain't never been arrested, she's in college, she keep a job, and she respects her elders. Honey, she want to lay around with some women, baby that is her business.

CATHERINE

Maybe I just should've spent more time with her.

JOYCE

You spent plenty of time with that girl.

CATHERINE

Is this 'cause I couldn't keep a man?

JOYCE

(laughs)

You not being able yo keep a man a whole 'nother conversation.

CATHERINE

Please.

JOYCE

But being gay ain't got nothing to do with that.

CATHERINE

Oh, I know. I just never thought I would have a gay daughter.

JOYCE

Well, get used to it. 'Cause one of these days she gone bring home one of her little girlfriends.

Catherine cringes at the thought.

CATHERINE

Oh, Lord. Oh Lord!

(beat)

Well, I just hope she don't bring home no white girl, 'cause I don't want to see no Jennifer Anistons up in here.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

17

JOYCE

Oh, honey, Becky is coming. And Megan.
And Katie.

(laughs)

All right, let's-- I'm gonna finish the
peas.

18 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY - 2015

18

Catherine, Ernestine, and Joyce's Thanksgiving prep. This
takes place during Season 1, in 2015.

JOYCE

Girl, it was about to get serious, but I
can't date nobody with a collection of
pinkie rings.

CATHERINE

Why not? Ain't nothing wrong with a
little jewelry. You were toe rings.

ERNESTINE

I dated a pimp once.

19 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - MODERN DENISE'S ROOM - DAY - 19
2015

Denise and Dev back in the room. Dev is on an Elliptical.
Denise is pacing, nervously.

DEV

Dev, Dev, get them steps. Dev, Dev, Get
them steps. Man, I can't believe your mom
turned your room into a gym. Pretty
harsh.

DENISE

You know my mom likes to stay fit.

DEV

What time's Michelle getting here?

DENISE

She should be here soon.

DEV

You nervous?

DENISE

Hell, yeah. It's the first time my
family's gonna see me with a woman. My
grandma don't really know I'm gay yet, so
she still thinks she's my "friend."

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

DEV

All right. Don't stress. I'm here. It's gonna be fine.

DENISE

Have you talked to your parents about Rachel yet?

DEV

No.

DENISE

They don't know y'all live together?

DEV

No.

DENISE

I feel like all three of them are gonna get mad at you about that.

DEV

Why would they be mad?

DENISE

Stupid.

Just then they hear the DOORBELL RING. They head downstairs.

DENISE (CONT'D)

Shit, here she is. Come on.

DEV

Michelle in the cut.

Dev gets off the Elliptical.

DEV (CONT'D)

Ooh, my legs are sore. Jesus.

20 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY - 2015

20

A knock at the door. Denise comes down the stairs. Dev follows.

DENISE

I got it! I got it!

(to Dev)

Hey, yo, give me a second.

DEV

Sure, sure.

(CONTINUED)

Denise opens the door to greet MICHELLE who walks in holding a bottle of wine. She's an attractive black woman who walks with confidence.

DENISE

Hey, boo.

MICHELLE

Hey.

DENISE

You're looking cute.

MICHELLE

Mm. Thank you.

Denise greets her with an innocent kiss on the cheek.

Catherine watches Denise and Michelle from the dining room, pretending to set the table.

DENISE (O.S.)

Thanks for the wine.

MICHELLE (O.S.)

You know I have class.

DENISE (O.S.)

Uh-huh. Aunt Joyce gonna love you.

Catherine works her way over to the door to meet Michelle.

DENISE (CONT'D)

Ma, this is Michelle.

CATHERINE

Hi.

DENISE

Michelle, this is my mom, Catherine.

MICHELLE

It's so great to--

CATHERINE

Nice to meet you.

Michelle goes for a hug - but Catherine sticks out her hand for a handshake. It turns into an awkward half hug, half handshake.

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

DENISE

Okay.

CATHERINE

Welcome...

DENISE

Okay.

CATHERINE

To our home.

DENISE

That was awkward.

Joyce, and Ernestine are standing in a line waiting to meet Michelle.

DENISE (CONT'D)

Uh, this is my Aunt Joyce.

MICHELLE

Oh, it's so great to finally meet--

Michelle then goes to shake her hand - but for some reason Joyce uncomfortably grabs Michelle's hand. Michelle plays it off and turns her one sided handshake into an awkward wave.

JOYCE

How you doing?

DENISE

What the hell? Really, Joyce?

(beat)

Okay, anyway, this is my grandma Ernestine.

ERNESTINE

Hello, there.

MICHELLE

Ooh.

Ernestine walks over to Michelle, using her cane, and gives Michelle a warm hug. This is the only greeting that doesn't feel weird. Michelle hugs her back and smiles.

DENISE

This is my friend Michelle.

ERNESTINE

Welcome, darling.

MICHELLE

Thank you.

DENISE

Okay, Grandma.

Dev walks in.

DENISE (CONT'D)

That's Dev.

DEV

Hey. Friend of Denise's. No relation to the Watkins.

MICHELLE

Yeah, I figured.

DEV

Yeah, the whole me-being-Indian thing probably tipped you off. Fun Denise fact: when we were kids, Denise thought I was black.

DENISE

Okay. Don't make me break out the Halloween pictures, all right? Remember when you went as Indian Peter Pan?

DEV

Damn, why you got to hate on the Pan? Remember when we were black and Indian Mario and Luigi? That was cute.

DENISE

Shut up.

Joyce notices Michelle's wine bottle and grabs it.

JOYCE

Oh, that look like the expensive shit.

CATHERINE

All right, come on.

JOYCE

All right, Michelle. I see what you're doing. Hey, yeah!

DEV

Good to meet you, Michelle.

Dev and Joyce leave for another room leaving Denise, Catherine, and Michelle to stand around awkwardly.

(CONTINUED)

20

DENISE
Okay. Thanks, Ma.

CATHERINE
Oh.

DENISE
Get out of here.

Catherine leaves. Denise is at a loss for words as she removes Michelle's coat.

MICHELLE
They're nice.

DENISE
Mm-hmm.

MICHELLE
They-- they are. They're great.

21 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - DAY - 21
2015

The family and Dev sit around the table eating Thanksgiving dinner. No one is talking. It's super awkward. You can hear the silverware scraping against the china.

DEV
Um, Denise, maybe we can take Michelle to that Chinese restaurant in Flushing I was telling you about.

DENISE
Yeah, that sounds cool.

CATHERINE
Dev, why you plotting your next meal and you ain't finished the one in front of you?

DEV
Never too early to plan ahead, especially when it comes to matters of the tum.

Dev clicks his tongue.

DENISE
Well, speaking of Chinese food, Michelle was living in China earlier this year.

No one reacts.

(CONTINUED)

DENISE (CONT'D)

What to tell them about that, babe?

MICHELLE

Yeah, um... I was living in Shanghai for about two months for work. Mostly I just took pictures with people who thought I was Beyoncé. This one restaurant even put my photo up on the wall. I just didn't have the heart to tell them the truth.

DEV

I've always wanted to go to China. Looks cool.

MICHELLE

Yeah, it is.

A pause.

DENISE

Ma? Aunt Joyce? Grandma? Y'all have any thoughts on that?

Joyce and Catherine are still uncomfortable.

ERNESTINE

Well, you know my hearing is bad. Where did she go?

DENISE

China.

ERNESTINE

Hmm?

DEV

(screaming)

China! She went to China, Grandma!

ERNESTINE

Mm.

DEV

(screaming)

She lived in Shanghai for two months for work! And a lot of people thought she was Beyoncé! And this one restaurant even put her photo on the wall, but she didn't have the heart to tell them!

ERNESTINE

Oh. I always liked China.

(CONTINUED)

MICHELLE

Mm.

ERNESTINE

You must be really smart.

MICHELLE

Oh.

ERNESTINE

You're smart, and you're cute. You don't usually get both of those in the same package. Usually you only get one or the other.

MICHELLE

Oh, thank you very much. I could say the same thing about Denise.

Denise smiles at Michelle. She instinctively goes in for a kiss, but she clocks Catherine's uneasiness and stops herself. Joyce pours Catherine a glass of wine.

CATHERINE

Thanks.

JOYCE

Mm.

Joyce takes a pull straight from the bottle. Catherine downs her glass and glares at Denise. The room is tense.

DEV

(screaming)

Grandma Ernestine, your yams turned out really nice this year! You add a little nutmeg?

ERNESTINE

Hmm?

DEV

(screaming)

I said your yams turned out really nice this year! Did you add a little nutmeg?

Joyce snaps and slams the table.

JOYCE

She added nutmeg! Don't you ask another fucking question. Nutmeg, cinnamon, whatever the hell! You know what go in the damn yams!

22 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT - 2015 22

Denise and Catherine are in the kitchen cleaning up.

CATHERINE

I don't have any appreciation for what was going on at my table.

DENISE

What are you talking about?

CATHERINE

If you wanna bring your friend over here, that's fine, but don't be making eyes and rubbing backs and getting all fresh.

DENISE

I wasn't doing that.

CATHERINE

Oh, yes, you were. I saw you. I know that look. Oh, you used to make that look for Rachel from Friends. I always thought you were looking at Joey.

DENISE

Joey? Ma, are you serious? That character was an idiot.

CATHERINE

Look, you can be lesbian if you want to - but when you come up in here, you gonna respect my house.

23 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY - 2016 23

Thanksgiving 2016 prep with Catherine, Ernestine, and Joyce.

24 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - MODERN DENISE'S ROOM - DAY - 2016 24

Dev riffles through old VHS tapes in Denise's room.

DEV

Problem Child Two. Oh, shit. What else we got? Denise and Dev's tap dancer song of nineteen ninety-one? Should we fire this up? You remember the routine?

Dev starts tapping.

DEV (CONT'D)

'Cause I don't.

(CONTINUED)

DENISE

Man, sit your ass down.

DEV

When's your boo arriving here?

DENISE

She should be here in a few minutes.

DEV

Wow. Thanksgiving invite. Must be serious.

DENISE

Yeah, man. I really like her.

DEV

Nice. What's her Instagram name? I want to look her up.

DENISE

Dude, you're literally gonna meet her in a few minutes.

DEV

I know. But I want to look it up beforehand, get a vibe.

DENISE

(sighs)
I forgot.

DEV

You forgot, look it up.

DENISE

(sighs)
NipplesAndToes23.

DEV

Whoa. What's that?

DENISE

NipplesAndToes23.

DEV

Denise! You can't be dating some girl with the Instagram name "NipplesAndToes23."

DENISE

I know, man. I'm trying to get her to change it.

DEV
(scoffs)
I'm just surprised there are 22 other
NipplesAndToes.

Dev goes to her Instagram page.

DEV (CONT'D)
Let's see what we got here. Oh, wow.
These are some provocative photos.

DENISE
Okay, don't be looking at my girl, man.

DEV
Ooh. Really into fitness.

ANGLE ON: Dev's phone. We see really racy photos of Nikki in skimpy gym clothes and drinking thick white protein shakes.

DENISE
She is kinda naked there.

DEV
Well, maybe I shouldn't just paint it
with one brush. She's clearly very
political. I just voted.

Another photo of her with skimpy underwear and panties on with the caption that reads "I just voted."

Denise leans in to see the photo.

DENISE
Man. That wasn't for no damn election.
That was for *So You Think You Can Dance*?

DEV
Does she have some sort of intense fabric
allergy 'cause she is scantily clad in a
lot of these photos, Denise.

The doorbell rings.

DEV (CONT'D)
Oh, shit! NipplesandToes in the building,
let's go!

DENISE
All right. I'll be there in a second.

DEV
Okay.

24 CONTINUED: (3)

24

Dev heads out.

25 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - KITCHEN/DINING ROOM - NIGHT -25
2016

Everyone is eating Thanksgiving dinner, including NIKKI.

DENISE

See that's the thing about Sandra Bland,
you know. It's like she reminded me so
much of myself. Like, she was woke, she
was confident, she didn't take no shit.
(sighs)
But the scary thing is, that's what got
her killed.

CATHERINE

If Sandra was white, we wouldn't even be
having this conversation.

JOYCE

Mm. Yeah, you got that right.

ERNESTINE

Mm-hmm.

CATHERINE

Yep.

ERNESTINE

That's why I keep telling y'all, if the
police pull you over, just nod your head.
A-And shut the fuck up.

Nikki is on her phone.

DENISE

Yo, Dev, what about that Indian grandpa?

DEV

Oh, yeah. It's big on the Indian people e-
mail chains I'm on. So, apparently there
was this Indian grandpa in Alabama and he
was walking around his neighborhood and
some lady called the cops and said, "Oh,
there's a black guy walking around." And
so the cops are like, "We'll look into
it." And they go over there and they try
to talk to him and he doesn't speak
English. So, he's confused. He hasn't
done anything wrong, he tries to walk
away. Cop just grabs him, slams him on
the ground face first, he's paralyzed
now.

(CONTINUED)

CATHERINE

Oh!

JOYCE

Oh, my God. Uh, I think I know the answer to this question. But did anything happen to the cops?

DEV

Nope. They said it was a justified use of force.

CATHERINE

Oh. That's horrible. Horrible.

A quiet beat.

NIKKI

So, I was watching the news the other day and apparently there's this bulldog that set a world record for skateboarding through thirty people's legs. DD, you seen that clip. He was going through the legs like...

Nikki mimics Otto the Skateboarding dog.

The table is stunned by Nikki's idiocy.

DENISE

You know, that wasn't news. That was on Worldstar HipHop.

NIKKI

That's the news. DD, let's take a selfie.

DENISE

All right. Let's do it quick, though.

They pose.

NIKKI

Ready? Oh, this has to go on the gram.

DEV

Hey, Nikki, what is your username on there?

NIKKI

NipplesAndToes23.

Joyce holds back a spit-take.

DEV

Oh. What was it again?

NIKKI

NipplesAndToes23.

DEV

Okay. Well, I'm gonna add you real quick.
Wait-- So, NipplesAndToes43.

NIKKI

No, NipplesAndToes23.

DEV

(typing it in)
Nipples and toes twenty-three.

NIKKI

Yeah.

DEV

Wait, is it nipples and the letter "N"
toes or is it nipples ampersand toes...

NIKKI

No, it's nipples and the word, "and," a-n-
d, toes twenty-three.

DEV

So, nipples, a-n-d toes.

NIKKI

Yes.

DEV

So, nipples...

NIKKI/DEV

...And toes...

NIKKI

Twenty-three.

DEV

So...

NIKKI/DEV

NipplesAndToes23.

Joyce slams the table.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: (3) 25

26 JOYCE
Yeah. Got the nipples. Got the toes. I think it's very clear what her username is. 26

27 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - 2016 27

Everyone is watching *Do The Right Thing*. Nikki is laid out on a couch.

NIKKI
Hey Dev.

DEV
What?

NIKKI
Do you mind scooting to the floor so I can stretch?

DEV
(annoyed)
Sure.

NIKKI
Thank you.

She sprawls out.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
DD?

DENISE
Yeah?

NIKKI
Can you pass me the blanket?

Denise grabs her a blanket.

DENISE
You good?

NIKKI
Ooh. I'm so comfy. So cozy.

DEV
Hey, I'm glad you're all cozy and comfy but you mind not talking so much during the movie?

DENISE
Yeah, babe. This is, like, a really intense part.

NIKKI

*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

ANGLE ON: TV, Radio Raheem is lying dead on the ground. Officer Long tells him to "Get the fuck up, boy, or you're dead!"

NIKKI (CONT'D)

Wait. One more thing. DD, can you make me your special chocolate milk?

DENISE

Yeah...

DEV

I'll get your milk. I'm getting up anyway.

NIKKI

DD, tell him your recipe.

DEV

Denise, what's the recipe?

DENISE

I just do what's on the back of the bottle, dude.

DEV

(smacks lips)

Don't seem too special.

28 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT - 2016

28

Catherine and Joyce are having a drink as Dev joins them at the kitchen table.

CATHERINE

Dev, who the hell is this girl?

DEV

I don't know. I just met her tonight. But I feel like I've already seen her naked, even though she's fully-clothed.

JOYCE

She's a THOT, right?

CATHERINE

What's a THOT?

JOYCE

(pointing at Nikki)

A T-H-O-T. That. Hoe. Over. There.

DEV

Oh, it's an acronym.

(CONTINUED)

CATHERINE

You know what, I'm not in love with this whole lesbian thing. But I at least want my child to date a girl who got some sense. What happened to Michelle?

DEV

Michelle wanted them to move in together. Denise wasn't ready, they got into a big fight and they broke up.

CATHERINE

Oh.

JOYCE

That sounds familiar.

CATHERINE

Well, shit. I don't believe in shacking either. Mm, mm, mm. Does anybody know why the hell she keep calling Denise "DD?"

DEV

Where is the second "D" coming from? And for the record, I'm about to make this grown woman some chocolate milk.

(to Joyce)

Fill me up.

29 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY - 2017 29

Catherine pulls the turkey out of the oven. Time has advanced one year. It is 2017.

30 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY - 2017 30

Dev and Denise talk.

DENISE

(handing Dev a glass)

Here you go.

DEV

Thanks.

DENISE

Mm-hmm.

DEV

Got to say. I'm glad Michelle's coming through this year. We don't have to deal with Nikki. Although, the nickname DD was starting to grow on me.

(CONTINUED)

DENISE

Okay. Dude, don't ever call me that.

DEV

So, how's everything with Michelle?
Things good since you guys got back
together?

DENISE

Yeah, man. It's been really good. We got
a couple's therapist now. Learning how to
communicate better. Learning about love
languages.

DEV

Ooh. Love languages.

DENISE

Yeah, dude. It's a thing. Oh, and we're
really on a high right now too 'cause I
killed it for her birthday.

DEV

What'd you do?

DENISE

Well, a friend of mine is a chef, right?
So he came over and cooked a little nice
intimate meal for me and five of her
closest friends. Yeah, we lit candles.
All that. Super fly.

DEV

Mm. I see you.

DENISE

You know how I do. But before the night
was over, I had New Edition come through
and sing her favorite song, "Can You
Stand The Rain?"

DEV

What? How'd you get New Edition?

DENISE

Oh, I didn't get the real New Edition.
Got the New Edition cover band, New
Addition. A-d-d-i-t-i-o-n.

DEV

Love the name.

DENISE
Yeah. The Filipino Johnny Gill was no
joke. Yeah.

The doorbell rings.

31 DENISE (CONT'D)
Oh, I should go. 31

32 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY - 2017 32

MUSIC: New Edition - Can You Stand the Rain?

MONTAGE: Denise opens the door for Michelle. They hug. The
family and Dev are happy to see Michelle.

A32 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - KITCHEN - DAY - 2017 A32

Catherine is prepping Thanksgiving alone. Michelle walks in.

MICHELLE
So Dev and Denise never help out with the
cooking?

CATHERINE
Unless you count Dev's macaroni taste
test, then no.

MICHELLE
Well, I'd love to help.

Catherine pauses for a beat.

CATHERINE
Oh... Well, uh, grab that platter and
plate some of the cornbread for me.

There is an awkward beat of silence

CATHERINE (CONT'D)
I like that outfit you got Denise.

MICHELLE
Yeah, um, it's nice to mix it up so she's
not always wearing sweatpants and a hat
that says "Ratch."

CATHERINE
Yeah, well... I remember when she was in
the eighth grade, she wore a John Starks
Knicks jersey to school the whole year.
Then she spilled gravy all over it and
she still wore it for another month.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

A32 CONTINUED:

A32

CATHERINE (CONT'D)

I had to sneak up in her room and take it
to give it to the Goodwill.

MICHELLE

Ooh. Well, that's good to know. I might
just have to spill some gravy on that
"Ratch" hat.

They laugh.

CATHERINE

I know that's right.

They laugh. Denise enters.

DENISE

What y'all in here laughing about?

CATHERINE

Don't you worry about it.

MICHELLE

I'm just gonna take this out.

Michelle exits.

CATHERINE

Thank you.

(to Denise)

I think this is gonna to be a lovely
Thanksgiving, Denise.

DENISE

Yeah, I think so.

CATHERINE

And, uh, I like Michelle.

DENISE

I like her, too.

Catherine holds Denise's hand.

CATHERINE

I'm happy for you.

Denise smiles. Dev walks over.

DEV

Guys, I just got a text from Nikki. Um,
she's kicking it with that bulldog that
skateboards through people's legs,
they're close by, wondering if they can
roll through.

(CONTINUED)

CATHERINE

DD, you wanna get the chocolate milk ready?

DENISE

Okay. So, I'm just not gonna live that down, huh?

DEV

Hey, I was nice to her. I made her chocolate milk.

DENISE

Yeah, but you ain't do the right recipe though. You messed up the ratio. You put too much of the powder in there.

They walk out together to join the rest of the family.

33 INT. WATKINS FAMILY APARTMENT - DINING ROOM - DAY - 2017

33

Everyone is seated for Thanksgiving dinner.

MICHELLE

So Dev, do you come over for every Thanksgiving?

CATHERINE

Oh yeah. He's here every year. Since he was a little boy, the two of them playing upstairs with toys...

JOYCE

Oh. Then when they was teenagers, smoking weed and playing 'intendo.

DENISE

What are you talking about?

JOYCE

Oh, please. I found one of your sad little blunts in the trash. It was depressing. I smoked it though.

Everyone laughs.

DEV

Wait, so guys knew?

CATHERINE

Coming down to dinner all bug-eyed and smelling like lemon air freshener, thinking y'all was slick? Please.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

They laugh.

ERNESTINE

What are y'all laughing about?

JOYCE

(to Dev)

Go ahead.

DEV

(yelling)

So, Grandma! When we were teenagers we used to go upstairs and smoke weed and we didn't think they knew, but they did!

ERNESTINE

Oh yeah, I remember that. The whole house smelled like reefer.

They continue to laugh.

CATHERINE

Can we say grace?

34 Cut to black.

34

END OF SHOW

*