

PASTORIZED

"The Book of Omari"

Written by

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Final Network Draft
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COLD OPEN

INT. CHURCH - SANCTUARY - DAY

(OMARI, HOPE, MICAH, JOSH, REIGN, LISA, KENNETH, ANGELA)

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THIS ISN'T YOUR GRANDFATHER'S CHURCH. WE SEE VARIOUS SHOTS: A RAISED STAGE IN THE FRONT WHERE A "PRAISE TEAM" OF TEN MUSICIANS AND SINGERS PERFORMS UPBEAT MUSIC; LARGE PROJECTION SCREENS FLANKING THE STAGE ON EITHER SIDE TO ENSURE THAT EVERYONE IN THE LARGE AUDITORIUM HAS A GOOD VIEW; "MEDIA MINISTRY" MEMBERS WITH HEADSETS WORKING CONTROL BOARDS AND VIDEO MONITORS, ETC.

CLOSE ON: **OMARI THOMAS**, STANDING ON STAGE, DRESSED VERY HIP IN RIPPED SKINNY JEANS, A TAILORED UNTUCKED BUTTON UP SHIRT AND WHITE HI-TOPS. THIS ISN'T YOUR GRANDFATHER'S PASTOR EITHER. HE RELAYS A PERSONAL STORY TO THE CONGREGATION.

OMARI

So, we were having family dinner and my kids say, "If a big earthquake hit LA, Hope's the type who would give a stranger her last bit of food." Of course, my wife smiles at that. Then they say, "Daddy would save his for the family."

WE HEAR SOMEONE OFFSCREEN CLEAR HER THROAT.

HOPE (O.S.)

That's not how I remember it.

PULL BACK: **HOPE CLARK-THOMAS** (30, STRONG, GORGEOUS, CO-PASTOR) SITS NEXT TO **KENNETH** (20S, WHITE, OMARI'S ASSISTANT) AND **ANGELA** (20S, WHITE, HOPE'S ASSISTANT), ALL TAKING NOTES. THERE IS NO CONGREGATION -- THIS IS A TECH REHEARSAL FOR THE SERMON. HOPE IS VERY HONEST AND DIRECT.

HOPE (CONT'D)

(LAUGHS) They actually said, "Daddy would keep his."

OMARI

You know what they meant.

HOPE

Sweetie, I think they said what they meant. You're trying to make it sound like a good thing. But that's okay.

OMARI

(CALLING OUT) Kids, how do you remember it?

ANGLE ON: THE SECOND ROW OF SEATS. **LISA** (18, FREE SPIRIT, OMARI'S BIOLOGICAL DAUGHTER), **MICAH** (13, VERY BIG FOR HIS AGE, HOPE'S SON), **JOSH** (13, CONFIDENT, OMARI'S SON) AND **REIGN** (9, TROUBLE, HOPE'S DAUGHTER) ALL HAVE THEIR NOSES PINNED TO THEIR PHONES, NOT PAYING ATTENTION AND NOT FAZED AT ALL BY THEIR PARENTS BEING THE LEAD PASTORS. HOPE SNAPS HER FINGERS.

HOPE

Hey, focus up!

OMARI

Yeah, we said no devices during church.

MICAH

It's just rehearsal. It's not even real church.

HOPE

(RE: PHONE) Is that real candy you're crushing? No. So give Omari your attention too.

OMARI

Come on, your mom and I never miss a football game, dance recital, robotics tournament or school play. Is it too much to ask for you to support our stuff too?

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JOSH

Can we yell from the seats if we
disagree with a call, like you guys?

MICAH

Or forget to bring snacks every time.

REIGN

Or make you stop to take a picture in
the doorway, in the car, when we get
there, right before you go on and in
the middle of your routine?

HOPE

(SENTIMENTAL) Look at all of you,
teaming up against us. That's so cute.

HOPE PULLS OUT HER PHONE AND TAKES A PICTURE.

OMARI

You guys are actually a big part of
this sermon. It makes it relatable.

MICAH

Okay, then I remember the story how my
mom said. (TO HOPE) Because it was
right after you told Reign you'd choke
her out if she rolled her eyes again.

THE KIDS LAUGH AT THE RECOLLECTION.

LISA

(PUTS ARM AROUND REIGN) Me and my mom
went at it just like you and Hope do.
I know how it feels. I got your back.

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HOPE

(TO LISA) I'm the only one keeping
your dad from charging you rent.

LISA

(PUSHES REIGN OFF) You'll live.

JOSH

(TO OMARI) Sorry, Dad. I remember it
how Hope said too. Because it was the
same night we found out about you
guys' matching belly rings.

HOPE AND OMARI EXCHANGE LOOKS. KENNETH AND ANGELA SNICKER.

KENNETH

Please put that in the sermon.

ANGELA

With visuals.

OMARI

(TO KIDS) Go back to your phones.

HOPE

It's not even real church.

AS OMARI AND HOPE CONTINUE WITH REHEARSAL, WE:

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

SCENE A

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

(HOPE, OMARI, NIKKINA, HENRY)

OMARI AND HOPE ARE DRESSED FOR A NIGHT OUT.

HOPE

It's so cool that the publishers
reached out to you.

OMARI

I know, right? I can't believe how
fast our ministry is growing. The
Facebook videos, the IG live
streams... now a book deal.

HOPE

(TOASTING) To a "new chapter."

A BEAT.

OMARI

(RE: PUN) You proud of yourself?

HOPE

You know I am.

OMARI

(CLINKS; THEN) I can't wait for you to
read the first draft. I'm calling it
"Wholeness: A Spiritual Plan for
Successful Relationships." It's gonna
be all about honesty and transparency.

HOPE

(NOTICES O.S.) Hey, isn't that your ex-wife at that table over there?

OMARI

Quick -- hide!

HE SLIDES DOWN IN HIS CHAIR.

HOPE

I said "your ex-wife," not "a spider on the ceiling in our bedroom."

OMARI

Her randomly "bumping" into us is getting suspicious. Like that time at the movies?

HOPE

It was Black Panther. You wouldn't bump into more black people if Obama's inauguration was the halftime show at NBA All-Star weekend.

OMARI

The pediatrician's office?

HOPE

Josh's fever was 103. Of course the school's gonna call her -- she's his mom. It's called an "In Case of Emergency" contact list, not "In Case Omari isn't trippin'."

OMARI

I'm sorry, but it's my job to protect
(MAKES CIRCLE AROUND THEM) this, my
"now," (POINTS TO EX) from that, my
"then."

HOPE

(KISSES HIM) And you are a great
protector. But this is a restaurant,
not Pride Rock, Mufasa.

OMARI

Fine. Just don't wave.

HOPE

I won't.

OMARI WAVES.

HOPE (CONT'D)

Why'd you wave?!

OMARI

Because even though you said you
wouldn't, I knew you were still going
to and it would make me look bad.

HOPE

(ADMITS) I was. And it would've.

OMARI

Now she's coming over. Good job.

HOPE

Remember, "The greatest of these is--"

OMARI

(PETULANT) "Love."

NIKKINA (30S, AFRICAN AMERICAN) APPROACHES.

NIKKINA

Hey, guys.

THEY AD-LIB HELLO'S.

NIKKINA (CONT'D)

What are the odds of me bumping into
you here?

OMARI

Come on, Nikkina, tell the truth. I
forgot to take the "Family Sharing"
off my iPhone and that's how you track
me, isn't it?

NIKKINA

Omari, please, ain't nobody got time
to be tracking you... or the five
times a week you've been going to
Sprinkles Cupcakes. (SOTTO; TO HOPE)
You needed to know.

OMARI

Well, it's nice to see you. If you
don't mind, we were kinda in the
middle of a celebratory dinner.

NIKKINA

Don't let me interrupt. I'm just here
to meet my boyfriend. Actually, I
guess I better get used to saying
"fiancee."

SHE EXCITEDLY SHOWS THEM THE ENGAGEMENT RING. IT'S NICE.

OMARI

(BRIGHTENS) Engaged? That's fantastic!

NIKKINA

His name's Henry, we met at work.

(LOOKS O.S.) There he is now.

ANGLE ON: **HENRY** (30S, CONGENIAL) ENTERING THE RESTAURANT.

OMARI

Bring him over so we can meet him.

NIKKINA

I thought you were in the middle of celebrating something.

OMARI

(WAVES IT OFF) It's nothing.

NIKKINA

Okay, gimme a sec.

SHE CROSSES OFF.

HOPE

You flip-flop any more and I'm gonna put you in my purse and take you to my next pedicure.

OMARI

Don't you see? Her getting married means she's gonna be too busy to pop into our lives all the time. It'll be easier to protect "this." Plus, it means no more alimony. This day keeps getting better.

(MORE)

OMARI (CONT'D)

First the book deal, now this. You just got off the hook for sex tonight.

HOPE

You didn't. (THEN; GENUINE CONCERN)
Don't you think she's moving kinda fast? We've never even met this dude.

OMARI

(WAVES IT OFF) People said we moved too fast when we started dating too.

HOPE

Yes -- Nikkina said that.

OMARI

Regardless, I stay out of her personal decisions.

NIKKINA APPROACHES WITH HENRY. OMARI SHAKES HIS HAND.

OMARI (CONT'D)

When's the big date? Do you guys need help with the planning? Want me to do the ceremony? I'm free next month.

HOPE

(STEPPING IN) Hi, I'm Hope. This is Omari, Nikkina's Jewish mother.

NIKKINA AND HENRY LAUGH.

OMARI

I'm just very happy for you guys.

HENRY

Thank you. Nice to meet you.

OMARI

What did Josh say about the engagement?

NIKKINA

Henry hasn't met Josh yet.

OMARI

Oh. (THEN PUSHES PAST) Well, he's a teenager. He didn't even care that I was marrying Hope until after her Instagram account was verified.

NIKKINA

We'll let you get back to your dinner.

HENRY

See you around?

OMARI

Yep. Just check her phone. It'll show you where I am.

HENRY

What?

NIKKINA

(COVERS) Nothing. He's joking.

SHE SHOOTS OMARI A LOOK AS THEY CROSS OFF AND WE:

CUT TO:

ACT ONESCENE B

INT. THOMAS HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING
(HOPE, OMARI, JOSH, LISA, REIGN, MICAH)

HOPE, DRESSED FOR THE DAY, PREPARES AN ASSEMBLY LINE OF BREAKFAST ITEMS (FRUIT, YOGURT, ETC.) ON THE KITCHEN ISLAND. THERE ARE FOUR SMALL TUPPERWARE CONTAINERS, EACH A DIFFERENT COLOR, AND SHE PUTS FOOD INSIDE AND JUICE BOXES BESIDE EACH ONE. OMARI COMES DOWN THE STAIRS.

HOPE

Morning, Babe.

OMARI

Got something for you.

HE PULLS OUT A LARGE STACK OF PAPERS WITH TWO HANDS.

OMARI (CONT'D)

You never got around to reading my
first draft, so here's the second.

HE DROPS THE STACK ON THE ISLAND WITH A LOUD **THUD**.

HOPE

Please tell me you're paid per page.

OMARI

(SHRUGS) I have a lot to say about
relationships.

HOPE

Is there a chapter about pushing your
ex-wife to get married for your own
selfish reasons?

OMARI

How was I being selfish? I simply want to give her new man the chance to know the joy of providing her the lifestyle she convinced the judge she was accustomed to.

HOPE

I think for everybody's sake, it's best if you stay out of it. Your judgement is a little clouded when it comes to your ex. Like asking a vampire to be objective about daylight savings time.

OMARI

(KNOWS SHE'S RIGHT) Fine. I won't push.

HOPE

(KISSES HIM) Thank you.

OMARI

But if and when they say "I do," you're gonna have to hold me back or I may kiss him before she does. (THEN; RE: FOOD) Oooh. Strawberries.

HOPE

Un-uh, those are for the kids.

OMARI

I know. But it's the one dad-perk I
exercise -- total eminent domain in
the kitchen.

HE SURVEYS THE ASSEMBLY LINE ON THE ISLAND FOR THE BEST
CHOICES AND PLUCKS FOOD (A GRAPE, STRAWBERRY, CHEESE, ETC.)
FROM EACH CONTAINER.

OMARI (CONT'D)

(AS HE PLUCKS FOOD) Mine... mine...
mine... (DROPS PIECE ON FLOOR THEN
PUTS IT BACK) Theirs...

HOPE PLAYFULLY SWATS HIS ARM. JOSH ENTERS, HOLDING A FOOTBALL
AND SPONGING HIS HAIR.

JOSH

I'm ready.

HOPE

(WITHOUT EVEN LOOKING) Teeth.

JOSH

(CLEARLY FORGOT) Right.

HE HEADS BACK UPSTAIRS. LISA ENTERS FROM THE DOWNSTAIRS
BEDROOM, DRESSED BUT BARELY AWAKE.

OMARI

Lisa, hurry up so you can take the
boys and Reign to school.

HOPE

Reign has gymnastics today. Make sure
she takes her bag with her. Last time
you forgot and they put her in a
leotard from Lost & Found.

(MORE)

HOPE (CONT'D)

I lost my mind like a black person in
a Tyler Perry movie who just saw a
bee.

LISA

(TO OMARI) Dad, being the nanny isn't
what I meant when I asked if I could
take a "Gap Year" after graduation.

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OMARI

That makes two of us. I thought "Gap
Year" meant getting a job at the Gap.

JOSH COMES BACK DOWNSTAIRS.

JOSH

I'm ready.

OMARI

(WITHOUT EVEN LOOKING) Pick your dirty
underwear up off the floor.

JOSH

(CLEARLY FORGOT) Right.

HE HEADS BACK UPSTAIRS. REIGN ENTERS WEARING A SCHOOL UNIFORM
AND NOT HAPPY ABOUT IT.

REIGN

(BOSSY, TO LISA) Come on, let's go.

LISA

Why are you wearing a school uniform?

REIGN

(WITH ATTITUDE) Ask my mom.

HOPE

Because I'm tired of fighting with her every morning over what she's going to wear. What nine-yr-old has a lookbook?

REIGN

This isn't fair. Our school doesn't even have uniforms.

HOPE

I told your teacher it's a punishment just for today.

REIGN

(RE: HOPE'S OUTFIT) What are you being punished for?

HOPE IS ABOUT TO REACT BUT OMARI STEPS IN.

OMARI

Hey, hey, don't speak to my wife that way.

REIGN

You mean my mom?

OMARI

She's my wife first. Don't forget that. Now I think if you go to the bathroom and check, you'll see that the outfit isn't that bad.

REIGN HEEDS THE WARNING AND CROSSES TO THE DOWNSTAIRS BATHROOM. OMARI AND HOPE SURREPTITIOUSLY FIST-BUMP. JOSH COMES BACK DOWNSTAIRS.

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JOSH

I'm ready. I did everything I'm supposed to do in the morning.

REIGN (O.S.)

Ew, gross! Josh, you didn't flush toilet!

JOSH

(CLEARLY FORGOT) Right. (THEN) But in my defense, that was from last night, not this morning.

OMARI SHAKES HIS HEAD. MICAH ENTERS.

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MICAH

Can somebody take me to the sporting goods store on the way to school?

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JOSH

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(TO MICAH) Since when do you need something from a sporting goods store?

MICAH

The football coach saw me and asked if I wanted to play. I told him yes.

JOSH

What? On my team?

MICAH

Yeah. I thought it'd be fun.

HOPE

But, Sweetie, robotics was supposed to be your sport.

OMARI

(TO JOSH) Stop laughing.

JOSH

I didn't - you owe me an apology.

OMARI PUNCHES JOSH IN THE ARM.

OMARI

There.

JOSH

(HOLDS ARM) Apology accepted.

HOPE

What about all this CTE stuff I keep
hearing about?

OMARI

He's so big they sent him to the
teachers' lounge on the first day. You
need to be worried about the other
boys. (THEN; CALMING) Tell you what,
let him try it for a week. Josh will
make sure it goes okay. Won't you,
Josh?

JOSH

It's bad enough you guys make us share
a room, now I have to watch out for
him at school too?

OMARI

You're siblings now. Gotta start
acting like it.

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JOSH

Can't I look out for Reign instead?

OMARI

Why?

JOSH

People are already afraid of her.

HOPE

Fine. A week. Come on, I'll take you
to the store.

SHE HEADS FOR THE DOOR. MICAH FOLLOWS.

HOPE (CONT'D)

But I'm buying you all the football
pads, braces and wraps we can find.
Some might be for body parts you don't
even have yet.

OFF THEIR LOOKS, WE:

CUT TO:

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ACT ONESCENE C

INT. THOMAS LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT DAY
(OMARI, HOPE, NIKKINA, HENRY)

HOPE READS (MICHELLE OBAMA'S BOOK) AS OMARI, IN STYLISH JEANS AND A FITTED T-SHIRT AND A FEDORA, ENTERS. HE HOLDS UP TWO BLAZERS.

OMARI

Hope, which jacket should I go with for the book cover photo? Tan with contrast stitching and pocket-square to match the hat, or plaid with the same undertones?

HOPE

Since when do you care so much about fashion?

OMARI

I don't know, I guess with the all the new attention we're about to get, I want to step up my game.

HOPE

(COMFORTING) Sweetie, people are attracted to what comes out of you. Hope, encouragement, truth. Don't worry about the other stuff.

OMARI

It's hard not to. Especially if I'm gonna be in a lot more photos and making a lot more appearances with someone who's always put together and in fresh gear.

HOPE

(FLATTERED) I'm not always put together.

OMARI

I was talking about Reign. (OFF HER LOOK) But she gets it from you.

HOPE

Nice recovery. (THEN; RE: BLAZERS) Go with the plaid.

OMARI

Great. I'll wear the other one to the men's conference this weekend.

SFX: DOORBELL. OMARI CROSSES TO THE FRONT DOOR.

OMARI (CONT'D)

(EXCITED) I still can't believe they asked me to host it. It's an honor. All those men coming together, trying to live better lives.

HOPE

Yeah, the baptismal pool's gonna smell like Axe Body Wash for weeks.

OMARI OPENS THE DOOR TO REVEAL NIKKINA AND HENRY.

NIKKINA

Hey. I came by to get Josh's overnight bag before I pick him up from school.

OMARI

Let me go get it. (TO HENRY) What's up, my man? Didn't expect to see you.

HE GIVES HENRY A HUG. IT'S A LITTLE TOO LONG.

NIKKINA

It's his first time meeting Josh, so he's making dinner for us.

OMARI

He cooks? (SING-SONG) Keep-er.

HOPE SHOOTS HIM A LOOK, SO HE PULLS IT BACK SOME.

OMARI (CONT'D)

You know what, let me go get that bag for you.

HOPE

Yeah, good idea.

HE CROSSES OFF. HOPE WALKS OVER TO NIKKINA AND HENRY.

NIKKINA

You got on him about pushing for me to get married, didn't you?

HOPE

Girl. You know how "extra" he is. Our first Christmas tree was a sequoia.

NIKKINA

(LAUGHS) Girl, he did a "homegoing service" for Lisa's pet goldfish.

(MORE)

NIKKINA (CONT'D)

It had to be a closed-toilet funeral
because it died in an aquarium
accident.

HOPE

(TO HENRY) So, what are you making
them for dinner?

HENRY

I was gonna grill my special bone-in
ribeye. (SARCASTIC) But "Bama" here
thinks everything tastes better with
barbecue sauce.

NIKKINA

(ROLLS EYES; SUCKS TEETH) Please,
folks from Texas always thinking they
know everything about steaks.

HENRY

Maybe this time I'll use your "cook it
until it smokes" recipe.

NIKKINA

(DISMISSIVE) Whatever. You love my
cooking. (TO HOPE) I used to be his
assistant, so I know how to do
everything just how he likes it.

HENRY

That's why you're my boo.

NIKKINA

You know that's right. Come here.

THEY KISS. HOPE BLURTS OUT:

HOPE

You shouldn't be getting married!

OMARI RETURNS, JUST IN TIME TO HEAR THIS. THEY'RE SHOCKED.

OMARI

(TO HOPE) Best if "we" stay out of it,

huh?

HE SHAKES HIS HEAD. OFF HOPE'S BUSTED LOOK, WE:

CUT TO:

ACT ONESCENE D

INT. OMARI AND HOPE'S BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT
(OMARI, HOPE)

OMARI AND HOPE GET READY FOR BED. OMARI IS UPSET.

OMARI

So you can interfere but I can't?

HOPE

You were ignoring all the signs. You just cared about not having to pay alimony anymore.

OMARI

First of all, it wasn't just the alimony. I cared about not paying two house notes too.

HOPE

That's why you couldn't see what I saw. The rolling of the eyes, the resentment masquerading as sarcasm, the condescending "jokes," the uneven power dynamics because she worked for him -- all of it points to future contempt, which is the number one predictor of divorce. That comes from years of counseling other couples, and from two hours of me and my ex trying to build a CD rack from Ikea.

OMARI

So you convinced them to break up?

HOPE

No, I simply said I think they have a lot to work out before they commit to something as big as marriage.

OMARI

(MAKING A POINT) If you're so concerned, why not tell them to read my book? It's all about relationships. Or why not tell Henry to come to the men's conference I'm hosting? It's gonna focus on relationships too.

HOPE

(UNSURE NOISE)

OMARI

What?

HOPE

Nothing.

OMARI

Oh, I see what's going on here.

HOPE

(UNCOMFORTABLE) I don't know what you're talking about.

HE POINTS TO THE COPY OF HIS MANUSCRIPT ON HER NIGHTSTAND.

OMARI

I notice you still haven't read my book.

HOPE

I will.

OMARI

You didn't read the previous draft
either.

HOPE

I haven't had any free time.

OMARI

You had time to read Michelle Obama's
book.

HOPE

Hey! I told you when I married you to
make room for Michelle in this
relationship.

OMARI

I don't think you wanted to read mine.

HOPE

What are you talking about?

OMARI

I've just been sensing something.
Something you're not telling me.

HOPE

There's nothing to tell.

OMARI

Something's bothering you.

HOPE

Nope, I'm good.

OMARI

You sure there's nothing you're...
jealous of?

HOPE

Jealous?

OMARI

At dinner, you kept pointing out how they approached me to do a book.

HOPE

My dad wrote over a dozen books. I'm used to it.

OMARI

This is different. Your dad's a famous pastor. You and I are equals, so it must bother you that they approached me.

HOPE

That's ridiculous.

OMARI

Well if you're not jealous, why wouldn't you read my book? Why didn't you want me to give advice to Nikkina?

HOPE

(BLURTS OUT) Because I know more about relationships than you!

HOPE IMMEDIATELY REGRETS SAYING IT, BUT IT'S TOO LATE.

HOPE (CONT'D)

Omari, I--

OMARI

Don't worry about reading it now.

HE PICKS UP THE MANUSCRIPT AND MOVES IT TO HIS SIDE.

OMARI (CONT'D)

(CALLS OUT) Alexa, play a playlist for
hurt feelings.

A BEAT LATER, THE SPEAKER ON THE TV STAND STARTS TO PLAY SAD
MUSIC. HOPE SHAKES HER HEAD. AS OMARI SADLY CLIMBS INTO BED,
MILKING IT, WE:

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWOSCENE E

INT. THOMAS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - THE NEXT DAY
(OMARI, MICAH, HOPE, JOSH)

OMARI CROSSES THROUGH THE LIVING ROOM. MICAH WATCHES A FOOTBALL VIDEO ON YOUTUBE AND TAKES NOTES.

OMARI

You're really getting into this
football, aren't you?

MICAH

(FOCUSING ON THE VIDEO) Mmm hmm.
Watching practice tape.

OMARI

You know, I didn't understand much
until Josh started playing.

HOPE CROSSES THROUGH, IN WORKOUT GEAR, PREPARING FOR A RUN.

OMARI (CONT'D)

But let me know if you have any
questions, (FOR HOPE'S BENEFIT) since
this is something I'm qualified to
give advice about.

HOPE PRETENDS SHE CAN'T HEAR AND POINTS TO HER EARBUDS.

HOPE

Noise-cancelling. Includes whining.

HE REACTS. SHE SMILES AND EXITS. WHEN SHE OPENS THE DOOR,
JOSH ENTERS, TOSSING HIS FOOTBALL UP WITH ONE HAND WHILE
SCROLLING THROUGH HIS PHONE WITH THE OTHER.

MICAH

(EXCITED) Hey, Josh. Wanna watch
practice tape with me?

JOSH

(WITHOUT LOOKING UP) I'm good.

HE CROSSES OFF. MICAH IS DISAPPOINTED. OMARI NOTICES.

OMARI

(REALIZES) You're doing all this to
impress Josh, aren't you?

MICAH

I don't know. I guess. Maybe. (OPENS
UP) He's always crapping on everything
I do.

OMARI SITS NEXT TO HIM AND PUTS HIS ARM ON HIS SHOULDER.

OMARI

Ha, he does that to me too. Just don't
be too hard on yourself. It took me
months to learn football. But
eventually, you'll know things like a
"pick-six" is--

OMARI (CONT'D)

MICAH

An interception and
touchdown.

An interception and
touchdown.

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OMARI (CONT'D)

Oh, you knew that. (THEN) Or things
like an "RPO" is a--

OMARI (CONT'D)

MICAH

Run Pass Option.

Run Pass Option.

OMARI (CONT'D)

Right, you knew that too. (TRIES TO
STUMP HIM) Or things like you counter
a Cover-2 defense with--

OMARI (CONT'D)

MICAH

A deep pass up the middle.

A deep pass up the middle.

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OMARI (CONT'D)

God doesn't like show-offs, Micah!

HE CROSSES OFF IN A HUFF AS WE:

CUT TO:

ACT TWOSCENE F

INT. CHURCH HALLWAY/OFFICE - LATER THAT DAY
(KENNETH, OMARI, ANGELA)

OMARI AND KENNETH WALK-AND-TALK DOWN THE HALL, GOING OVER OMARI'S SCHEDULE ON KENNETH'S IPAD.

KENNETH

Joe Logan from KWL A is moderating tomorrow and wants to kick things off with a Q and A about healthy relationships. Do you want me to approve the questions beforehand?

OMARI

Naw, whatever he wants to ask is fine.

KENNETH

I would advise against that. He's one of those "Gotcha" interviewers.

OMARI

What do you mean?

KENNETH

You know, they act all nice but then surprise you with a very uncomfortable question you didn't expect. "Gotcha."

OMARI

Let me think about that too. I'm a little preoccupied right now.

KENNETH

Pastor O, you know I'm not just your assistant.

(MORE)

KENNETH (CONT'D)

I wanna be your right hand man. Your armor bearer. Your wooden staff. I got your back. (THEN) So, what's on your mind?

OMARI

Can you believe Hope thinks she knows more about relationships than me?

KENNETH IS VERY UNCOMFORTABLE ANSWERING THAT SO HE STAYS SILENT.

OMARI (CONT'D)

Well?

KENNETH

I'm waiting on you to say, "Gotcha."

OMARI

You agree with her? Some right-hand-man.

KENNETH

Pastor O, you and Pastor Hope just have different strengths. If somebody needs advice on the biggest, dopest most romantic wedding, or the most fun date night -- you're the guy.

OMARI

(PROUD) "Netflix and Zeal" is our most popular couples' bible study.

KENNETH

But if somebody needs advice after
that because their partner is driving
them crazy or they think they picked
the wrong person, then it's time to
call Hope from the bullpen.

OMARI

First of all - ouch. Second, make a
note that one day I wanna do a wedding
at Dodger Stadium where me and the
groomsmen enter from the bullpen.

KENNETH PUTS THAT IN THE IPAD NOTES AS THEY ENTER THE CHURCH
OFFICE. ANGELA IS IN THE RECEPTION AREA WHERE SHE AND KENNETH
HAVE THEIR DESKS.

OMARI (CONT'D)

Ange, if you were having trouble in a
romantic relationship, who would you
go to for advice -- me or Hope?

ANGELA

Depends. Who's gonna tell me to stop
having random hookups with guys?

OMARI

We both will.

ANGELA

Then I'd go to you.

OMARI

Finally.

ANGELA

Hope's so much better than you at
giving advice, she might actually get
me to stop -- and boy do I not want to
do that.

SHE CROSSES OUT AND ON THEIR LOOKS, WE:

CUT TO:

ACT TWOSCENE G

INT. THOMAS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER THAT DAY
(LISA, REIGN, HOPE, JOSH, MICAH)

REIGN, DRESSED IN A CUTE OUTFIT AND SHADES, STRIKES VARIOUS POSES WHILE LISA TAKES PICTURES OF HER WITH HER PHONE.

LISA

I get so many more "likes" when I post
pics of you on my 'gram. (TYPES INTO
PHONE) "Hashtag she woke up like
this." "Hashtag gap year chronicles."

REIGN

Make sure you do "hashtag no filter."
I don't wanna promote unrealistic
female body expectations.

LISA

How do you even know what that is?

REIGN

From my last princess party, when I
asked mommy about the noises Ariel was
making in the bathroom trying to get
that clamshell top to close.

HOPE ENTERS, HOLDING THE DOOR OPEN FOR JOSH WHO IS IN HIS
FOOTBALL UNIFORM BUT WALKING ON CRUTCHES WITH HIS ANKLE
WRAPPED. MICAH FOLLOWS.

LISA

Oh my goodness, what happened?

HOPE

He's going to be okay. The doctor said
it's just a sprain.

JOSH

Because Micah didn't block for me.

MICAH

I was in the right spot. I even programmed my microrobots to run the plays to make sure I knew them.

JOSH

Are you saying it was my fault?

MICAH

No, I mean... I'm just saying... maybe you should've taken me up on my offer to study the practice tape.

JOSH

(DEFENSIVE) Hey, I'm the one who's been playing for years, not you. Stick to robotics!

HE HOBBLER OFF ON HIS CRUTCHES, ANGRILY BUT SLOWLY.

JOSH (CONT'D)

(UPSET) "Storming off" would be a lot more effective without these crutches!

HOPE

We know, Sweetie. We know.

AS HE CONTINUES OFF, HOPE GIVES MICAH A SUPPORTIVE PAT ON THE SHOULDER, WE:

CUT TO:

ACT TWOSCENE H

INT. CHURCH "GREEN ROOM" - THE NEXT DAY
(HOPE, OMARI, KENNETH)

CLOSE ON: A CARDBOARD POSTER ON AN EASEL. IN BIG LETTERS IT READS "MAN 2 MAN MEN'S CONFERENCE. HOSTED BY -- OMARI THOMAS" ABOVE A SMILING PICTURE OF OMARI. PULL BACK TO REVEAL: OMARI STANDS AT THE CRAFT SERVICES TABLE NEXT TO THE POSTER. HOPE ARRIVES.

HOPE

I just peeked in the sanctuary. It's
packed out there. You ready?

OMARI

Yep.

OMARI IS A LITTLE STAND-OFFISH AS HE MAKES A PLATE. HOPE DOES THE SAME.

HOPE

(BREAKING THE TENSION) So, I finally
sat down and read your manuscript.

OMARI

(CURIOUS) And?

HOPE

It's good.

OMARI

Thank you.

THE TENSION EASES, UNTIL...

HOPE

In fact, reading it inspired me.

OMARI

(PERKS UP) It did?

HOPE

Yeah, I think I should finally tackle writing a book of my own.

OMARI

(DEFENSIVE) Oh. So you think since I did it, then it must be easy. Especially for someone who is better at relationships than me.

HOPE

That's not what I meant.

OMARI

That's what it sounded like.

HOPE

Come on. I'm just trying to do the same as you -- step up my game some.

OMARI

Yeah, well don't worry. I won't take as long to read your book as you took to read mine.

HOPE

Ugh. Stop being so dramatic.

OMARI'S FACE GETS FLUSH, AS HE BREAKS OUT IN A SWEAT, GASPS AND TAKES A STEP BACK.

HOPE (CONT'D)

Okay, now that's a lot, even for you.

OMARI

(HOLDS HIS THROAT) I feel weird.

KENNETH ENTERS.

KENNETH

Six minutes, Pastor O, you're on.

OMARI

Was there shellfish in this food?

HOPE TAKES OMARI'S PLATE AND TASTES THE FOOD.

HOPE

The eggs have lobster in them! (TO
KENNETH) He's allergic.

KENNETH

Pastor O, that's really something your
right hand man should know.

OMARI

Not the time, Kenneth!

KENNETH

My bad. Are you gonna be okay?

OMARI

Yeah. My EpiPen's in my office. No
need to panic.

HOPE

Your face and lips are swelling.

OMARI

(PANICKING) My face?! Why, God? Why?

HOPE

(TO KENNETH; KNOWING) There's no way
he's gonna want to go out there
looking like that. Not for his first
time hosting a conference.

KENNETH

But it's too late to cancel.

HOPE

And too late to find a replacement.

KENNETH

(TO HOPE) Not if you do it.

HOPE

Me? It's a men's conference.

KENNETH

Women speak at them all the time. Plus you've been in all the rehearsals and everybody loves your advice.

HOPE

I guess if there's no other choice.

KENNETH

Great! I'll let them know.

HE EXITS.

HOPE

(EXCITED) Wow. I wanted to "step up my game" but I didn't know it'd be today.

(TO OMARI) Are you okay with this?

SHE LOOKS AT HIM FOR A BEAT.

HOPE (CONT'D)

I can't tell if you're pouting or if it's the shellfish.

OFF HIS DISAPPOINTED LOOK, WE:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

SCENE I

INT. THOMAS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME
(MICAH)

JOSH SITS ON THE SOFA WITH HIS FOOT ELEVATED, SULKING. MICAH
CROSSES THROUGH, HOLDING HIS ROBOTICS KIT.

MICAH

I'll catch you after my robotics
tournament, Josh.

JOSH JUST IGNORES HIM AND OPENS HIS LAPTOP. MICAH, DEJECTED,
LEAVES.

CUT TO:

ACT THREE

SCENE J

INT. CHURCH - SANCTUARY/GREEN ROOM - MOMENTS LATER
(JOE, HOPE)

HOPE NERVOUSLY SITS ON STAGE BEING INTERVIEWED BY **JOE LOGAN (LATINO, 40S)** IN FRONT OF A YOUNG, HIP, DIVERSE CONGREGATION OF MEN.

JOE

First off, Let's thank Pastor Hope for
filling in for her husband.

THE AUDIENCE APPLAUDS.

HOPE

Thank you. (TO LIVESTREAM CAMERA) Feel
better soon, Babe!

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH "GREEN ROOM" - SAME TIME
(OMARI)

OMARI AND KENNETH WATCH THE LIVESTREAM ON THE MONITOR.
OMARI'S IN FULL-ON ALLERGIC REACTION WITH A SWOLLEN UPPER LIP
AND CHEEKS AND PUFFY EYES.

OMARI

This sucks.

INT. CHURCH - SANCTURARY - SAME TIME
(JOE, HOPE)

AS THEY WERE...

JOE

I was prepared for a Q and A with
Pastor O, but since you're here, let
me start with something that I know
has been on a lot of people's minds.

HOPE

Go for it.

JOE

Since this is a men's conference, I thought I'd ask you about your father. Growing up, your father was one of the nation's most respected pastors, with one of the largest churches in the country.

HOPE

(PROUD) That's right, Bishop William Clark.

JOE

So when you came home pregnant at the young age of fifteen, how did that affect your relationship with him?

HOPE IS STUNNED BY THE QUESTION, LIKE A DEER IN HEADLIGHTS.

CUT TO:

INT. CHURCH "GREEN ROOM" - SAME TIME
(KENNETH)

OMARI AND KENNETH LOOK AT THE MONITOR IN SHOCK.

KENNETH

"Gotcha."

OMARI LOOKS AT HIS WIFE WITH CONCERN.

INT. CHURCH - SANCTURARY - CONTINUOUS
(HOPE, OMARI, JOE)

HOPE IS VISIBLY UNCOMFORTABLE.

HOPE

Well, Joe... It was... (SHE STARTS TO TEAR UP) We...

(MORE)

HOPE (CONT'D)

(TRYING TO KEEP IT TOGETHER) This is why I don't usually talk about it in public...

THERE IS AN UNCOMFORTABLE BEAT, FINALLY BROKEN BY:

OMARI (O.S.)

I got you.

HE STEPS IN AND SITS DOWN RIGHT BESIDE HER. WE HEAR **GASPS** FROM THE CONGREGATION AS THEY REACT TO HIS FACE. HE IGNORES IT AND PUTS HIS HAND ON HER SHOULDER.

OMARI (CONT'D)

You don't have to answer that.

HOPE

(WIPE EYES; ENCOURAGED) No, I'm good.

(TO JOE; CONTINUING) I felt so much shame because I'd let him down. I called myself all the names in the book, "You're a ho," "Nobody wants you," all these things. I lived that for years until I hated who I became. Then I had to make a decision... to live on faith that I am who God says I am -- that I am "fearfully and wonderfully made" -- in spite of what my past looks like.

HOPE TAKES THE MIC, STANDS AND CONFIDENTLY ADDRESSES THE CONGREGATION.

HOPE (CONT'D)

And what I'm most proud of is that I'm no longer ashamed of who I am.

(MORE)

HOPE (CONT'D)

I look in the mirror now and love the girl that I see -- the ugly truths and the beautiful things. (TO JOE) So a better question than "How did that affect my relationship with my father" is how did it affect my relationship with me. (LIGHT BULB) And the answer comes from something I recently read in Omari's book on "Wholeness."

SHE LOOKS TO OMARI. HE SMILES.

HOPE (CONT'D)

How'd you describe it, Honey? "It's not until we are 'whole' that we can have our best relationship with anyone -- fathers, husbands, wives, children, friends -- anyone."

OMARI

I kinda remember saying something like that. (THEN) Chapter 3, page 108, paragraph 4.

HOPE

You helped me see that. And the moment I did, things turned around. Because while I may pride myself on being good at helping other people with their relationships, nobody's better than you when it comes to helping me with my relationships.

OMARI

Thank you, Sweetie.

HOPE

(TO CONGREGATION) And if any of you find yourselves feeling the way I did, the moment you realize that same truth about "wholeness," I promise things will turn around in your relationships as well.

WITH THAT, SHE TAKES HER SEAT AND HANDS THE MIC BACK. THE AUDIENCE APPLAUDS AND HOOTS. OMARI HUGS HER.

JOE

(TO OMARI) Thanks for joining us.

OMARI

(RE: FACE) I wasn't going to, but Hope's bravery reminded me that our ministry is about being vulnerable and transparent. (TO HOPE) Thank you. Sometimes as men, it's hard for us to share the spotlight.

INT. THOMAS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME
(OMARI, LISA, JOSH)

JOSH IS WATCHING THE LIVE STREAM ON HIS LAPTOP.

OMARI (ON LAPTOP)

Especially when it's something we consider to be our lane.

JOSH TAKES THIS IN. LISA ENTERS AND HE SHUTS THE LAPTOP.

LISA

Were you watching Dad's livestream?

JOSH

(COVERS) No, that'd be lame.

SHE CROSSES OUT. HE WAITS FOR HER TO LEAVE, THEN OPENS THE LAPTOP AGAIN TO FINISH WATCHING.

INT. CHURCH - SANCTURARY - CONTINUOUS
(OMARI, KENNETH, HOPE)

AS THEY WERE.

OMARI

You see, all those hard-learned
lessons Hope just shared make her very
insightful, which is the reason...

(CONFESSING) She's better at
relationships than me.

HOPE REACTS. SUDDENLY KENNETH APPEARS AT THE CORNER OF THE STAGE.

KENNETH

The allergic reaction went to his
brain! Call a doctor!

OMARI WAVES HIM OFF.

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

(AS HE EXITS) I'm your right hand man!

HE TURNS BACK TO HOPE.

OMARI

And that's why I'm telling the
publisher that you and I are writing
this book together.

"AWWWWWWS" FROM THE CONGREGATION.

OMARI (CONT'D)

And the first chapter will be "How to
Handle when Your Spouse is Better at
Something."

HOPE

(SOTTO; TEASING) "Better at Many
Things."

OMARI

(SHAKES HIS HEAD) This should be fun.

HOPE

(SOTTO; SERIOUS) And I'm gonna need an
advance.

ON OMARI'S LOOK, WE:

CUT TO:

ACT THREESCENE K

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL GYM - LATER
(VOICE, JOSH)

MICAH IS WITH HIS ROBOTICS TEAM AT A TOURNAMENT. ON THE FLOOR OF THE GYM ARE A HANDFUL OF "PITS" WHERE DIFFERENT TEAMS GUIDE THEIR ROBOTS THROUGH OBSTACLE COURSES TO COMPLETE RANDOM TASKS. THERE ARE BARELY ANY SPECTATORS THERE.

ANGLE ON: MICAH'S TEAM'S TABLE. THEIR ROBOT GOES OFF TRACK AND MICAH FRANTICALLY TRIES TO FIX IT. SUDDENLY HE HEARS:

VOICE (O.S.)

Go Micah! You got this! You're a
beast!

MICAH LOOKS UP AND SEES JOSH THERE, ON HIS CRUTCHES, CHEERING FOR HIS STEP-BROTHER. HE PUMPS HIS FIST UP AND DOWN.

JOSH

Go! Go! Go! Go!

JOSH THEN TRIES TO GET THE OTHER SPECTATORS TO "KINDA" JOIN IN. IT'S SILLY, BUT IT MAKES MICAH SMILE. SUDDENLY, MICAH GETS AN IDEA AND TURNS BACK TO THE ROBOT. HE MAKES A COUPLE OF ADJUSTMENTS AND THE ROBOT COMPLETES THE COURSE RIGHT AT THE BUZZER! HIS OTHER NERDY ROBOTICS TEAMMATES ALL JUMP UP AND DOWN, CHEERING FOR MICAH AS IF HE JUST SCORED THE GAME-WINNING TOUCHDOWN. JOSH SMILES, AS HE SEES HIS BROTHER TREATED LIKE A ROBOTICS JOCK. ON MICAH'S SMILE, WE:

CUT TO:

ACT THREESCENE 1

INT. THOMAS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER
(OMARI, NIKKINA, HOPE, JOSH, MICAH)

OMARI AND HOPE ARE WALKING NIKKINA OUT THE DOOR.

OMARI

Now you're sure you're okay with Hope
giving you and Henry couple's
counseling? It's not gonna be too
weird?

NIKKINA

Not at all. You two have this stuff
figured out. If me and Henry can learn
from that, it's all gucci.

HOPE

Wow. That's very flattering.

NIKKINA

I can admit y'all are a better couple
than me and Omari were. It is what it
is. Just like it's no big deal that
I'm better at parenting than you two
are.

OMARI AND HOPE ARE TAKEN ABACK.

HOPE

(CHUCKLES) Okay, not that we're in a
competition...

OMARI

(CHUCKLES) But I think we're holding
it down on the parenting front, too.

JUST THEN, JOSH ENTERS ON CRUTCHES, FOLLOWED BY MICAH -- ALSO *
ON CRUTCHES.

JOSH

Dude. Who gets injured at a robotics
tournament?

MICAH

(SHEEPISH) I guess I was too heavy for
the team to carry me on their
shoulders.

JOSH SHAKES HIS HEAD. *

OMARI *

What happened?! *

JOSH *

I followed the advice you gave in your
speech about mom. *

THE TWO OF THEM HOBBLE THROUGH THE LIVING ROOM AND EXIT. *
OMARI AND HOPE EXCHANGE EMBARRASSED LOOKS. *

NIKKINA *

So, this couple's counseling is free,
right? *

OMARI *

Yep. *

HOPE *

Sounds good. *

SHE EXITS, AND WE: *

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

INT. CHURCH - SANCTURARY - THE NEXT SUNDAY
(OMARI, ANGELA, HOPE)

OMARI DELIVERS THE ACTUAL SERMON FROM THE COLD OPEN.

ANGLE ON: THE KIDS. UNLIKE BEFORE, THEY PAY ATTENTION THIS TIME. THEY SIT NEXT TO HOPE AS A FAMILY. IT'S A NICE TABLEAU.

OMARI

...But what they'd actually said was,
"Daddy would keep his food to
himself." And they were right. I can
be selfish. But I'm getting better at
admitting my faults. Even if it means
letting my wife offer couple's
counseling to my ex and her new fiance
because... well because she saw their
needs when I couldn't.

ANGLE ON: HOPE SMILING IN THE FRONT ROW NEXT TO ANGELA.

ANGELA

Aw, that's so sweet.

HOPE

We're all about honesty and
transparency.

ANGELA

(NOTICES O.S.) Isn't that your ex-
husband sitting over there?

HOPE

Quick -- hide!

SHE SLIDES DOWN IN THE SEAT. AS ANGELA SHAKES HER HEAD, WE:

END OF SHOW