

Untitled Barris/Patel Project

"PILOT"
#101

Written by
Kenya Barris & Vijal Patel

Story by
Kenya Barris

Directed by
Anton Cropper

PRE-SHOOTING DRAFT - 01/20/17

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CAST LIST

LIBBY WRIGHT..... Felicity Huffman
MALCOLM BLACK..... Courtney B. Vance
NAYA BLACK..... Monique Green
CASSIUS BLACK..... Sayeed Shahidi
MJ BLACK..... Jahi Di'allo Winston
RANDAL MARTIN..... Gary Cole
BERNIE WILSON..... James Lesure
ZEV ADLER..... Caitlin McGee
BOB SAGET..... TBA
TBD HOST..... TBA
GAY WEDDING GUEST..... TBA
DALLAS BILLIONAIRE..... TBA

SET LIST

INTERIORS

*AMERICA'S MOST HILARIOUS COP SHOOTINGS SET

*TBD POLITICAL TALK SHOW
-SET
-BATHROOM

CHURCH

LIBBY'S & MALCOLM'S HOUSE
-GREAT ROOM
*-LIVING ROOM
-KITCHEN
-DINING ROOM
-MASTER BEDROOM
-NAYA'S ROOM
-MJ'S ROOM
-HALLWAY

BLACK & WRIGHT
-SET
-STUDIO
*-VIEWING ROOM

PUBLIC SCHOOL

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

OAKWOOD PRIVATE SCHOOL

EXTERIORS

LIBBY'S & MALCOLM'S HOUSE

~~*ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL~~

COLD OPEN

1 **OVER BLACK:** The smooth, confident-bordering-on-cocky voice 1
of MALCOLM BLACK speaks to us over MUSIC TBD.

MALCOLM (V.O.)
So here's the thing. I'm pretty
sure the world's about to end.

EXPLOSION OF APOCALYPTIC IMAGES: GLACIERS COLLAPSING...
ABANDONED DETROIT ROW HOUSES... SYRIA... ETC.

MALCOLM (V.O.)
It's the End of Days: Race riots.
Refugee crises. Terrorist bombings.
And don't even get me started on the
cop shootings.

BARRAGE OF COP SHOOTINGS FOOTAGE

MALCOLM (V.O.)
Shit's happening on camera. A lot!
It's not even breaking news anymore.
It's almost like it's a show.

2 **FANTASY POP:** BOB SAGET presents *America's Most Hilarious* 2
Cop Shootings.

BOB SAGET
Check out this submission from
Jasper, Texas!

On the SCREEN behind Bob, we see IPHONE FOOTAGE of a COP
SHOOTING TABLEAU. Several police cars, red and blue lights,
yellow tape, body bags. We **PRE-LAP** the smart, unfiltered voice
of LIBBY WRIGHT.

LIBBY (V.O.)
As a country, we're more divided
than ever. Blacks versus Whites.
Left versus Right. It seems like
it's everybody against everybody.

ANOTHER EXPLOSION OF FOOTAGE: TRUMP RALLY FIGHTS. BLACK
PROTESTORS ATTACKING POLICE IN CHARLOTTE. TRUMP RALLY
FIGHTS. FIREBOMBED RNC HEADQUARTERS. TRUMP RALLY FIGHTS.

LIBBY (V.O.)
Yep, we're fucked. Sorry, I mean,
screwed. God, 'fucked' sounds so
much better.

MALCOLM (V.O.)
My grandmother used to have this
saying...

INSERT: IMAGE of a beautiful, silver-haired, steely-eyed BLACK WOMAN speaking to camera. As her wise lips move, we hear Malcolm's voice say:

MALCOLM (V.O.)
'You can be right or you can be happy.' And I think that's what's going on in the world today.

INSERT: FOOTAGE of the UKRAINIAN PARLIAMENT BRAWL.

MALCOLM (V.O.)
Everyone is more concerned about being right and in turn, it's leaving a lot of people unhappy.

LIBBY (V.O.)
Trust me, we were no different.

3

INT. TBD POLITICAL TALK SHOW - SET - DAY (D1)

3

To TBD HOST'S RIGHT, we see LIBBY, to his LEFT, MALCOLM. They're going at it. Ferociously.

TBD HOST
But Libby, you talk about Black Lives Matter like they're a cover band for a real organization. Like it or not, they're a real movement.

LIBBY
Are they? You know twice as many White people are shot by police than Blacks?

MALCOLM
Technically, sure. But there's four times more of you than us. So police should probably start shooting more of you to catch up.

LIBBY
That's very funny. You're right. There are fewer of you. You're only like, what, fifteen percent of the population? But you commit over half the robberies, half the murders, and almost half the assaults. Now I might be wrong, but seems like you guys might have a little bit of a problem.

MALCOLM

Yeah, it's called poverty. Which is kind of hard to climb out of after four hundred years of slavery. Thank you for that.

LIBBY

'Thank you for that?' I didn't do it.

MALCOLM

Yeah, but you don't exactly strike me as the Abolitionist type.

TBD HOST

He's not wrong. You don't.

LIBBY

Whatever. Just because I'm White doesn't mean I don't know what it's like to be poor. I'm from rural West Virginia. Which I'm gonna guess is a little broker than, where does your bio say you're from again?

(checks research, taunting)
Oooo, the mean streets of Silver Springs, Maryland.

MALCOLM

Oh that's it, gloves are off!

They dive back into arguing, ferociously, as we SMASH CUT TO:

4 INT. TBD POLITICAL TALK SHOW - BATHROOM - DAY (D1) 4

Libby and Malcolm in the bathroom making out. Ferociously.

LIBBY (V.O.)

But it's crazy the power love holds over hate.

5 INT. CHURCH - DAY (D2) 5

CLOSE ON: WEDDING OFFICIANT standing at an altar.

MALCOLM (V.O.)

Here's the thing, whether we'd like to admit it or not, America and its political system are just an old married couple. Two sides, split down the middle, who barely ever agree, but always have to be right.

PULL BACK to REVEAL: Libby and Malcolm are the loving couple the Officiant's about to marry. Happiest day of their lives.

LIBBY (V.O.)

Which is why after a crazy whirlwind romance of three weeks plus bathroom sex, when we both realized we'd met the person we could both be wrong with but still somehow be happy with, we decided to cross the aisle by walking down the aisle.

REVEAL: Three hundred confused, shocked FACES looking on. On the groom's side... the DNC (gay couples, wheelchairs, Birkenstocks, hijabs). And on the bride's side... the RNC (blue suits, red ties, cowboy hats, full employment).

We **ANGLE ON** a GAY WEDDING GUEST and his HUSBAND on the DNC side and a BILLIONAIRE and his DEBUTANTE WIFE on the RNC side.

GAY WEDDING GUEST
I give it two days.

DALLAS BILLIONAIRE
Be divorced by the reception.

The Republican Couple looks over to see the gay Democratic Couple FLIPPING THEM OFF. The Republicans return the favor.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

6 **EXT. LIBBY & MALCOLM'S HOUSE - LOS ANGELES - DAY (D3)** 6

CHYRON: TWO DAYS MY ASS... THREE MONTHS LATER

The red clay-tiled roof of a classic Spanish style home nestled in the heart of Los Angeles' Larchmont Village.

7 **INT. LIBBY & MALCOLM'S HOUSE - GREAT ROOM - DAY (D3)** 7

Libby rifles through boxes, HOLDING A CLIPBOARD. Malcolm passes by Libby, kisses her on the cheek, plays a quick butt-bongo on her rump, and plops onto the couch. As he pulls out an OIL PORTRAIT of cowboy Reagan from a moving box...

MALCOLM

What? No way's this thing's going up in my house.

LIBBY

It's patriotic and folksy.

MALCOLM

It's garbage.

He dumps it back. From another box, Libby pulls out a SLUTTY-BORDERLINE-WHORISH set of lingerie (thong, garter, the works).

LIBBY

Maybe this'll change your mind.

MALCOLM

Whoa! Libby! The kids! Hell, I don't even know if I should be seeing you in that.

Libby slinks over to the couch and whispers in his ear...

LIBBY

I'll only be in it for a second.

As she kisses him, Malcolm loses himself in the moment. Just then MALCOLM JR. AKA "MJ" crosses in.

MJ

Hey, guys.

MALCOLM

(sotto, moment ruined)
As if on cue.

MJ

You don't have to stop. It's just normal human sexuality.

We hear a CLINK from glasses in a moving box. MJ tenses.

MJ (CONT'D)
Feel that?! That an earthquake?

MALCOLM
No, dude. Just a truck driving by.

MJ
(covering)
Oh... yeah. I figured that.
(then, nervous)
But you know those happen here;
earthquakes. Pretty interesting
choice we made moving across the
country to a place where tectonic
plates shift and violently rip the
Earth apart.

LIBBY
MJ, sweetie, remember, just because
it can go wrong, doesn't mean it
will.

MJ
You know what, you're right, Libby.
(then, to himself)
Also doesn't mean it won't.

MJ heads off. Malcolm, shaking his head, looks to Libby.

MALCOLM
Always something with that kid.

LIBBY
Come on, he's been through a lot.

MALCOLM
No. Uh uh. He's been like this
since I met him.

Just then, CASSIUS crosses in, holding an iPhone to his ear.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)
Cassius, what's up with the cable?
Gotta watch my Rams lose this weekend.

Cassius casually winks to his Dad then gestures to the phone.

CASSIUS
(into phone)
...Sorry about that Lucy. That was
my DirecTV guy on the other line. He
is not playing. Yeah, I told him I
was on with you.
(MORE)

CASSIUS (CONT'D)

He didn't seem to care. He's talking like a guy who's already got my business. And there's something about that that's very attractive. But let's all talk this out, I'll conference him in.

(clicking over)

Hey Lucy, you're on with Pete from Direct. Now I don't want to put words in her mouth, but it sounded like Lucy was about to offer me two years of free service. What's that Pete, do I like Hawaii? Of course. But you know where I love? Jamaica.

MALCOLM

My man.

8 INT. LIBBY & MALCOLM'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS (D3) 8

Libby enters to see NAYA putting a FRAMED WEDDING PHOTO of Malcolm and his deceased wife, JOY, above the mantel IN FRONT OF a framed photo of Malcolm and Libby's wedding.

LIBBY

Oh, hey Naya. That's a beautiful picture, but maybe we can put it on this pretty table... over here.

NAYA

Oh yeah, I'm sorry. I'm sure my Mom won't have any objections to that. You know, 'cause she's dead.

(off Libby's face dropping)

Didn't mean to take anything away from the shining, wonderful, beautiful life you still have. But you're right, I'll take down the picture of my mom who died of cancer for a picture of my dad and his new White living wife.

LIBBY

(beat)

You know what? Let's just keep it there for now.

NAYA

If you say so.

Libby, clearly rattled, turns to Malcolm, entering. The **CAMERA STAYS ON** Malcolm and Libby as they **WALK AND TALK...**

MALCOLM

I gotta sign these bad-ass kids up
for school this week.

LIBBY

No, we have to sign these bad-ass
kids up. Now where are we thinking?

MALCOLM

I don't know. Neighborhood school.

LIBBY

So wait, we're making the most
important decision of these kids'
lives based on what Google Maps
says? Did you even read the
education prospectus I put together
for potential schools?

MALCOLM

Yes, of course.

LIBBY

Interesting. Because I didn't do one.

MALCOLM

Hm, well played. I've now
established myself as a liar.

LIBBY

Look, the kids aren't going anywhere
until you hear some of my ideas. I
told you, if we're doing this, we're
doing it right. Together.

MALCOLM

You're right. You got my back--

LIBBY

And you got mine.

They FIST-BUMP/DOUBLE-SLAP/FIST-BUMP. This is their thing.
Naya catches a glimpse of this. Looks like she's gonna be
sick. Libby notices, then crosses Malcolm away.

LIBBY (CONT'D)

(whispering)

And in that spirit, I'm gonna need
you to have my back with Naya.
Pretty sure she hates me.

MALCOLM

Libby, Naya does not hate you.

NAYA (O.S.)

Yes I do!

Off Malcolm's "she may hate you" face. The **CAMERA SNAKES
BACK THROUGH THE HOUSE** to the kids, still unpacking...

NAYA (CONT'D)

Dad's such a sellout. Like a pure
grade-A Herman Cain, Cuba Gooding
Jr., OJ Simpson-level sellout.

MJ

I like Cuba. And Libby.

NAYA

The same way you liked our sweet
old neighbor Mr. Makovich who
turned out to be a Nazi?

MJ

He used to make me pickles.

NAYA

He was a Nazi doctor.

MJ

You guys should be nicer to me.
I'm sick.

NAYA

I'm not gonna do this.

CASSIUS

No please, we have to.
(then, to MJ)
What is it this time?

MJ

Childhood amnesia.

NAYA

(makes perfect sense)
Sure.

MJ

It's real. Happens all the time.
Our brain just starts wiping away
memories. It's a naturally
occurring phenomenon that can
strike anywhere between the ages of
eight and eleven.

CASSIUS

Dude, you turn twelve next week!

MJ

Exactly. I've only got a week to prepare. The late onset cases are catastrophic. Wipe you right out.

Cassius looks at him, semi-disgusted.

CASSIUS

I guess it's pretty safe to say that you and me are never gonna be, like, I dunno...
(searching)
Close.

9

INT. BLACK & WRIGHT - SET - DAY (D4)

9

Malcolm and Libby marvel at the LED SET of their new pundit show. They stare at the ten-foot title "**BLACK & WRIGHT**" adorned with face-to-face photos of them squaring off à la Mayweather v. Pacquiao. It's over the top.

MALCOLM

Subtle.

LIBBY

So we're supposed to *murder* each other on air and then carpool home holding hands?

MALCOLM

Lib, it's all for show. We got this. Remember, here is here and home is home.

LIBBY

You're right, babe. We got this.

RANDAL (O.S.)

There they are!

They turn to see their Executive Producer, RANDAL MARTIN.

RANDAL (CONT'D)

Saw you guys on TBD SHOW and I was like, 'Yes! These two would make great television.' And then you got married? Black to White. Republican to Democrat. Man to woman. Natural enemies! Well, not the man to woman part. But to be fair, we do do a lot of damage to you guys.

LIBBY

Hello, Randal.

RANDAL

Zev!

With a SNAP, Randal signals over Producer ZEVINA "ZEV" ADLER.

RANDAL (CONT'D)

You and Libby have a chance to go over any segment preps?

LIBBY

We did and they're great.

RANDAL

Of course they're great. My short-haired, masculine-named producer has the best résumé in the business, which I know because I hired her off of it before meeting her.

(then, to Bernie)

And I don't even need to ask how you and Malcolm are doing, Bernie.

Randal turns to the approaching other Producer, BERNIE WILSON.

MALCOLM

Are you saying that because he's Black?

BERNIE

That's exactly why he's saying it.

RANDAL

That's ridiculous.

(to Malcolm)

But he has told you about our basketball team, right?

BERNIE

It upsets me to say that I did.

RANDAL

My guys. Hitting it off like I knew you would.

Randal crosses off.

ZEV

He's a lot. But he's great at his job. And he believes in this show. Which is saying something because these types of shows always fail.

MALCOLM

Excuse me?

BERNIE

She's saying these shows don't usually work.

(then, to himself)

She's not wrong.

ZEV

But you know what? Most marriages fail and you two still got married.

LIBBY

Yes, we did.

ZEV

And if you guys can have hope even though fifty percent of first marriages and like seventy percent of second marriages fail miserably, then we can have hope in this show even though it's the type that almost always fails.

BERNIE

(beat, to himself)

I'm gonna go freshen up my résumé.

10

INT. BLACK & WRIGHT - SET - LATER (D4)

10

HIGH-ENERGY OPENING TITLES OF 'BLACK & WRIGHT'

REVEAL the titles are playing on a STAGE MONITOR. **PAN OVER** TO Malcolm and Libby at the DESK, about to go on air. Libby's clearly nervous, shuffling through her notes.

LIBBY

(starting to lose it)

Where're my quantitatives?

(losing it)

Where are my quants?!

(totally gone)

Where are my fucking--

(then, finding, relieved)

Phew, okay, here they are.

MALCOLM

Seems like you're in a good place.

Libby shoots him a death stare.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Lib, calm down. Just keep your water close. Breathe in through your nose, out through your mouth. You'll be great, kid.

LIBBY
Please stop talking to me.
(noticing)
Wait. Where are your notes?

MALCOLM
(gesturing to brain)
Up here.

LIBBY
You don't have notes?!

MALCOLM
Not my thing. I have more of a
jazz approach.

LIBBY
To politics?!

MALCOLM
Babe, look, you're a college professor,
you're used to the classroom. This TV
thing is more my world. Just follow my
lead. And remember...
(demonstrates deep nostril
inhale/mouth exhale)
Water.

Malcolm smiles smugly. Off Libby's worried look...

11

INT. BLACK & WRIGHT - SET - LATER (D4)

11

On the LED WALL, a LIGHT SQUARE hops around various issues:
LGBTQ RIGHTS, GUNS, NATIONAL ANTHEM, ABORTION, RUST BELT, ETC.
CLOSE ON Malcolm's HAND hitting a game show-style buzzer. The
light stops on a PICTURE of a bushel of ALFALFA SPROUTS.

MALCOLM
And the topic is Alfalfa!

LIBBY
Really? Alfalfa?

MALCOLM
Very important issue. Drought causer.
Sandwich ruiner. Honestly, alfalfa
might be a bigger problem than racism.

LIBBY
Are you being serious right now?

MALCOLM
And here we go.

Malcolm SIGHS AND ROLLS HIS EYES.

LIBBY

What's that? 'Cause I don't see major pieces of American agriculture as sandwich toppings, I get a sigh-roll?

MALCOLM

'Sigh-roll?'

LIBBY

Zev!

On the LED WALL, WE SEE CLIPS of: ANGELA RYE's sigh-roll at KAYLEIGH MCENANY on CNN. HILLARY sigh-rolling TRUMP at their first debate. ANDERSON COOPER at everybody. Legendary AL GORE "fuzzy math" sigh-roll during Bush/Gore 2000 debate.

LIBBY (CONT'D)

It's the dismissive off-handed liberal smug way of pissing on any idea that's not theirs.

MALCOLM

You guys had that ready to go?
Cute. Fine, you wanna end this early? Let's talk alfalfa...
(points to producer's booth)
Let 'em have it, Bern!

The LED WALL cycles GRAPHICS to illustrate his points.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Alfalfa. Takes an ocean to grow one sprig of it. If we stopped growing alfalfa, California drought over. That's a fact. But the only reason we don't is because Republicans are totally in the pocket of the Agricultural Lobby. Another fact.

Malcolm looks smug. The LED WALL shows a GIANT DIGITAL METER (BLUE on left, RED on right). The digital NEEDLE leans blue.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Ooo, looks like the viewers' text votes on the 'Lean-O-Meter' are leaning left.

LIBBY

Shocking. A television show with a left-leaning audience.

(then)

All right, jazz man. If you'll just give me a second to respond to your political bebop.

(re: her notes)

(MORE)

LIBBY (CONT'D)

According to my research, what
Republicans have actually been
doing is finally closing our
massive trade deficit by exporting
all our surplus alfalfa to China.

MALCOLM

So?

LIBBY

So stopping that will not only raise
global food prices, but also lead us
into a trade war with probably the only
country in the world you do not want to
get into a trade war with, because they
make everything, and oh yeah, they have
nukes!

MALCOLM

Who nukes over sprouts?! Who?!
Who does that?!

LIBBY

And what would you Liberals put on
your organic wraps? 'Cause you're
the only ones who order it!

(to camera/America)

Man eats Greek yogurt like it's
crack.

(off Malcolm, about to
interrupt)

That was not racial. Anyway, so
while yoga moms and Chinese cows
are losing their sprouts, a pissed-
off Beijing is building up their
military while you Liberals are
dismantling ours by cutting funding
by almost \$130 billion. Hope you
love our new national anthem!

(then, to producer's booth)

Zev!!!

We HEAR that racist CHINESE MUSICAL RIFF. On the LED WALL we
SEE a NUCLEAR EXPLOSION. Toasted, Malcolm takes a nostril
inhale/mouth exhale as Libby smugly slides him his glass.

LIBBY (CONT'D)

Don't forget the water.

The LEAN-O-METER appears on the LED WALL, its needle FULLY in
the RED. Off Libby's smug wink to Malcolm, we...

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

12 **INT. BLACK & WRIGHT - SET - MOMENTS LATER (D4)**

12

As Malcolm and Libby come off the set...

LIBBY
Cheer up. You did great, kid.

MALCOLM
Please stop talking to me.

Bernie, Zev, and Randal excitedly cross toward them.

ZEV
Guys, that was amazing! Mostly
just Libby, though.

BERNIE
(aside, to Malcolm)
Seriously, I'm embarrassed to be
Black right now. You may or may
not be off the basketball team.

MALCOLM
I didn't ask to be on it.

BERNIE
You're off.

RANDAL
My girl! Libby Wright! Talk about
'The Wright Stuff'! Now *that's* a
show title!

MALCOLM
What?!

BERNIE
What about 'The Wright Factor'?

ZEV
I got it. 'Wright & Wong'! I know
Ali Wong.

BERNIE
When you call Ali, ask her if she
can hoop.
(pointedly re: Malcolm)
I've recently lost my point guard.

13 **INT. LIBBY & MALCOLM'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY (D4)**

13

Naya enters, noticing a POST-IT NOTE on the fridge.

NAYA
(reading)
'You're allergic to shellfish.'
(then)
What the--

She notices there are POST-IT NOTES placed EVERYWHERE. At that moment, their OLD ENGLISH SHEEP DOG, MAX, runs in, wearing a T-shirt, with handwritten Sharpie all over it.

NAYA (CONT'D)
Max, come here.
(reading T-shirt)
'This dog's name is Max. You love him. Chocolate will kill him.'

Naya sees MJ putting another Post-It on the stove. It reads, **"This is hot."** Naya snatches the Post-It.

NAYA (CONT'D)
What is this?

MJ
These notes are my guide map for after I transition.

NAYA
The only note you need is one that says 'I'm an idiot.'

As Naya exits, MJ writes another reminder on his forearm.

MJ
(as he writes)
'Naya wronged you. Never forgive, never forget.'

14 INT. LIBBY & MALCOLM'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - THAT NIGHT (N4) 14

Malcolm and Libby sit at the dinner table with the kids.

MALCOLM
(awkward)
So... how was everybody's --

NAYA
Stop. Not playing this game with you.

MALCOLM
Excuse me?

CASSIUS
Got the DirecTV guy to come early.
We saw the whole thing. Ugly.

MJ

My memory's not what it used to be,
but that's a beat-down you never
forget.

LIBBY

I'm gonna go hop on the treadmill for
a quick second. Something about being
a winner that just fills you with
life.

(to Malcolm)

You stay here. You should not have
that feeling.

Libby crosses off. Naya turns to Malcolm, deadly serious.

NAYA

Dad, end it. End it now. You keep
doing that show, you're gonna ruin
your career. You stay married to
her, you're going to end up dead.
We can just go right now. Black
men leave their wives all the time.
No one will think less of you. In
fact, most of the time those are
Black women they're leaving. You
leave a White woman, you could be a
folk hero. Like John Henry. Think
about it.

Off Malcolm, spiraling. He's losing at work and home.

15 **INT. LIBBY & MALCOLM'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT (N4)** 15

Libby, still in Newlywed Phase, wears sexy silk PJs in bed.
Malcolm enters in boxers and socks, ice cream carton in hand.
He realizes she's watching their episode of *Black & Wright*.

MALCOLM

You're watching that *again*?

LIBBY

In high-def you can really see the
tears welling up in your eyes.

MALCOLM

Tears? Psht, please. I just
happen to be blessed with heavily
lubricated eyes.

LIBBY

If you want, I can help you prep
for the next show. You know, since
it's televised and people see you.

MALCOLM

Go ahead, have your fun. I'm gonna be fine. Trust me, us jazz men find the music. Think Charlie Parker ever helped Miles Davis?

LIBBY

Uh yeah. Actually a lot. Maybe made one of the greatest albums of all time together. Hold on, wait. Have you ever even heard jazz? Name three Miles Davis songs.

MALCOLM

(beat, busted)

I'm not gonna get into the nuances of Black music with you. I have more important things to do, like figure out where I'm gonna send my kids to school.

LIBBY

Wait. Are you trying to edge me out of this because you lost today?

MALCOLM

Just figured since you're so busy winning and being full of life --

LIBBY

Don't be like that. And trust me, I know a thing or two about getting kids into school. While my mom was figuring out new and inventive ways to make cocktails out of Southern Comfort and codeine, I managed to get four of my siblings into college, two of them into the army, and one an extremely reduced prison sentence.

MALCOLM

Fine, but you should know picking schools is kind of my thing.

LIBBY

You mean like how jazz is kind of your thing?

MALCOLM

Such a nasty woman.

PRE-LAP MUSIC: Miles Davis & Charlie Parker's "*A Night In Tunisia*." OVER BIRD'S AND MILES' SCORE, we SEE a **STYLIZED SEQUENCE** that illustrates Malcolm and Libby's different points of view on the highly politicized education debate.

16 INT. PUBLIC SCHOOL - DAY (FANTASY 1)

16

As the jazzy horns continue to blow, Malcolm proudly struts through the halls of the local public high school.

MALCOLM

See, this is what I'm talking about. Real people. Government funded. Nationwide curriculum.

LIBBY

We're not sending the kids to public school. This place is just juvie with tater tots.

CAMERA ANGLES ON a GUY and a GIRL in a corner having PRE-SEX MAKEOUTS. Then **WHIPS TO** another corner at what seems to be a FIGHT CLUB-ESQUE BRAWL.

LIBBY (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Abysmal teacher-student ratio...

INSERT: A TEACHER in front of a super OVERCROWDED classroom.

LIBBY (V.O.)

Plummeting graduation rates...

INSERT: A LONE GRADUATE in a cap and gown sits in a graduation auditorium amongst a sea of EMPTY CHAIRS.

LIBBY (V.O.)

Underpaid educators, unqualified administrators...

INSERT: TEACHER strikes, a PRINCIPAL asleep at his desk.

LIBBY

This your Liberal Big Government at work. No thanks.

(to Janitor)

Excuse me, where's the hallway out of here where we won't get raped?

The JANITOR starts to point one way but then changes his mind and points at another. **ANGLE ON:** Malcolm's skeptical face as they head off in that direction...

MALCOLM

So the big bad public school scares you but...

17 INT. ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS (F1)

17

STILL ON: Malcolm's SKEPTICAL FACE.

MALCOLM
These guys don't?

REVEAL some PRIESTS passing them in the hallway.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)
And don't even get me started on
the Wes Craven set dressing. Great
backdrop for learning.

The **CAMERA WHIPS AROUND TO** a GRAPHIC CRUCIFIXION...
IDOLATRY... AN OMINOUS STAINED-GLASS WINDOW SCENE. **BACK ON**
MALCOLM, noticing a group of UNIFORMED STUDENTS walking by.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)
And what's up with everyone being
dressed alike? What is this,
Munich 1938?

LIBBY
Sure, make fun of it. But growing
up having no money, at least going
to Calvary Christian, I didn't have
to worry about who had on the newest
Bugle Boy jeans.

MALCOLM
Bugle Boys? What?! They're not going
here. This is not the real world.

ANGLE ON: Libby's SKEPTICAL FACE as they head for the exit.

LIBBY
Oh...

18

INT. OAKMONT PRIVATE SCHOOL - CONTINUOUS (F1)

18

STILL ON: Libby's SKEPTICAL FACE.

LIBBY
And private school is?

MALCOLM
Yeah. Diversity, gluten-free
cafeteria, unisex bathrooms --

LIBBY
Please. This fake place looks like
it was cast.

'FROZEN MOMENT' FX: The CAMERA MOVES though a group of KIDS
representing every ethnicity, gender, and body type on Earth.
Literally a scene from a movie called *Diverse Private School*.

LIBBY (CONT'D)
The kids are not going here.

19 **INT. LIBBY & MALCOLM'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT (N4)** 19

Libby drops a stack of school brochures into Malcolm's lap.

LIBBY
Boom. I pre-vetted twenty other schools. We knock out five a day, we'll have 'em in school by Monday.

MALCOLM
Look, we could spin our wheels forever on this. I got it.

LIBBY
Oh 'cause you're the man? Explains why your ego can't stand being trounced by me.

MALCOLM
I handled my loss with dignity!

LIBBY
You took two baths. Look, you married me, Malcolm. This is who I am. I'm not gonna be some backseat wife.

MALCOLM
I'm not asking you to!

Malcolm notices a POST-IT NOTE on his pillow and reads it:

MALCOLM (CONT'D)
'Daddy sleeps here.' The hell is this?

LIBBY
If you paid more attention to MJ you'd know, but no, you 'got this!' I'll just sit here, quiet and stupid!

MALCOLM
I'm not loving your energy right now!

LIBBY
Fine! I'll be on the couch!

MALCOLM
And I'll be in the bath!

20 **INT. BLACK & WRIGHT - STUDIO - NEXT MORNING (D5)** 20

An exhausted Malcolm and Libby get their make-up done in side-by-side chairs, glaring at each other in the mirror. **PRE-LAP** music from the titles of *Black & Wright*, then SMASH CUT TO:

21 INT. BLACK & WRIGHT - SET - LATER (D5)

21

Malcolm and Libby are MID-SHOW. The topic is IMMIGRATION. On the LED, we see IMAGES of Mexicans, refugees, U.S. Border Patrol, INS workers, barbed-wire fences, a wall, etc.

LIBBY

Just because we're a 'nation of immigrants' we should let in every Tom, Dick, and Mohammed that shows up at our door?! No thanks! Go back and make your own country great again!

MALCOLM

Oh that's original. You gonna put that on a hat too?

LIBBY

Put this on a hat. Fact: Last year, we let in more immigrants from just the top two non-White countries than we did from all White countries combined. Fact: Illegal immigration costs U.S. taxpayers \$113 billion a year. Fact: Democratic obstruction to reasonable border security is what kills all reform. Fact: that tie makes your neck look fat.

MALCOLM

Sure. Body shame me to deflect off your unfair treatment of immigrants.

LIBBY

Unfair? You mean unfair like when a White woman 'immigrates' into a certain family, but the egotistical dad doesn't let her help out on anything that matters? That kind of unfair?!

MALCOLM

Are you seriously putting our business on blast for everyone?

22 INT. BLACK & WRIGHT - VIEWING ROOM - SAME TIME (D5)

22

ZEV

What is happening right now?

BERNIE

I don't know, but it's gold.

23 BACK ON THE DESK

23

MALCOLM

Whatever. Doesn't matter. I don't need to spout a billion facts to make my point. Your side always make immigration about fear. 'They'll steal your jobs! They'll kill your kids! They'll ruin this country!'

LIBBY

I'm glad you agree.

MALCOLM

Know what makes America great? It's not from kicking out, it's from *bringing* out. Bringing out the best in them, letting them bring out the best in us. Albert Einstein, immigrant. Joseph Pulitzer, immigrant. Drake Don't-know-his-last-name, immigrant. The way I see it, immigration isn't about denigration, it's about inspiration!
(to producer booth)
Bernie!

The LED WALL fills with DIVERSE FACES forming a U.S. MAP.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)

Can I get a Lean-O-Meter check?

The Lean-O-Meter appears, the NEEDLE BURIED IN THE BLUE.

24

INT. LIBBY & MALCOLM'S HOUSE - GREAT ROOM - NIGHT (N5)

24

The kids are at the table as Malcolm and Libby enter.

MALCOLM

If anyone needs me, I'll be on the treadmill! Cass, come load up a replay of today's show on my iPad. Feel free to gather 'round to watch.

NAYA

We'd love to come worship you, but we're filling out school enrollment forms.

MALCOLM

Enrollment forms? I haven't even picked your school yet.

LIBBY

We haven't picked your school -- oh forget it.

NAYA

Okay. You guys haven't picked our school yet. You guys are bad parents. But we did. 'Cause school's kinda important.

MALCOLM

What? You picked a school? Where?

NAYA

Larchwood Charter. Great school. Public. With individualized curriculums. Uniform tops.

LIBBY

Wow that actually sounds --

NAYA

Perfect? Yeah thanks, Libby. Your approval is really important to us.

MALCOLM

How could you make this decision without consulting us?

NAYA

Oh it's bothering you that we made major life decisions without checking with you? Like someone saying 'This random White lady is your new step-mom.'

CASSIUS

Or, 'Hey, we're moving to LA.'

MJ

Or, 'We're re-introducing gluten back into your diet.'
(off their looks)
Sorry, I needed something.

NAYA

But why should we be surprised? That's what you guys do. You don't talk to people. You talk 'at' them, 'about' them, 'around' them. You're just political clowns! Entertainers. All you care about is winning the Lean-O-Meter. Everyone else gets to turn you off. We have to live with you.

Naya storms out. MJ and Cassius follow. Now all alone:

MALCOLM/LIBBY

Fuuhck.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

25

INT. LIBBY & MALCOLM'S HOUSE - GREAT ROOM - NIGHT (N5)

25

On Malcolm and Libby, as they were...

MALCOLM

This is all my fault.

LIBBY

As much as I'd love to agree, we
both did this.

(then)

Look, we can't get so wrapped up in
our own stuff we drop the ball with
the kids. My mom did that with me
and it made me never want to have
kids of my own. We're not doing
that to them.

MALCOLM

I think we just got wrapped up in
the show. We're fierce competitors.

LIBBY

And you're a really bad winner.

MALCOLM

Hold up. Are you saying you want
me to pull my punches at work?

LIBBY

Hell no. Don't you ever let up.
I'm never letting up on you. To
the death.

MALCOLM

That's my girl.

(then)

But we gotta make sure we keep that
there. When we come home, we gotta
cross the aisle, meet in the
middle, and do what's best for our
family. On schools, on life, on
everything. Together.

Libby smiles as their tension lifts.

LIBBY

Agreed. You got my back.

MALCOLM

And you got mine.

They FIST-BUMP/DOUBLE-SLAP/FIST-BUMP and KISS sweetly.

26

INT. LIBBY & MALCOLM'S HOUSE - NAYA'S ROOM - NIGHT (N5)

26

Malcolm enters. Naya won't even look at him, wireless earbuds in. He approaches and takes one out.

MALCOLM

Look, you were right and I'm sorry about the school thing.

NAYA

Dad, it's not just the school thing. It's you. And her. And you with her. What is that? I don't get it. Nobody does!

MALCOLM

Honestly, I don't care what anybody thinks, but I care what you think. And I get it, it's not like I saw this coming. After your mom died I never thought I'd love another woman, much less a White Republican woman from West Virginia--

NAYA

With no booty.

MALCOLM

I mean, she has a little booty.

NAYA

Dad...

MALCOLM

Anyway, I know none of this adds up. But Libby is an amazing, bright, beautiful, sensitive--

NAYA

Opinionated, bossy--

MALCOLM

Look, you know how I see the world. My blood runs Blue. And when I sit across from folks who don't see it like me, I wanna grab their face and scream some sense into them. But Libby challenges me in ways I never thought I would be. And the fact she opens me up like that -- that's someone who makes you... better or grow or I dunno, it's special is my point.

NAYA
Yeah, but still... her?

MALCOLM
That morning, when your mom passed,
I was sitting next to her in the
hospital. Know what her last words
to me were?

NAYA
I remember. You told me she said
'I'll always be watching over you.'

MALCOLM
Hmm, that is what I told you, isn't
it? Actually, it was 'Malcolm,
please don't go get some weak bitch.'

NAYA
What?!

MALCOLM
Yeah, toward the end she was really
abusing that morphine button.
(then)
My point is can we try and give
Libby a chance? I think your mom
would like her.

This lands on Naya.

NAYA
Well, this head-over-heels love
story doesn't sound like it has a
pre-nup attached to it... right?

MALCOLM
That is correct.

NAYA
God, Dad!
(then)
Fine. I'll give her a chance.

Malcolm smiles, gives Naya a hug.

27

INT. LIBBY & MALCOLM'S HOUSE - MJ'S ROOM - SAME (N5)

27

Libby, CARRYING A BOX, enters to see MJ on his bed writing
Post-It notes. She notices his entire room is COVERED IN
THEM. Kind of feels like Kevin Spacey's apartment in *SE7EN*.

LIBBY
Hey, bud. Whatcha doing?

MJ

Nothing.

LIBBY

Um, okay. Well I heard you been worried about forgetting stuff.

As MJ places another Post-It on his already-covered lamp:

MJ

Childhood amnesia don't play.

Libby crosses and sits on the bed next to him.

LIBBY

You know, when I was growing up we didn't have a lot, so me and my mom used to make a lot of stuff together. We'd make scrapbooks and put all the things we loved inside 'em. Great way of remembering all the stuff you don't want to forget.

Libby pulls out a LARGE, BOUND, HAND-DECORATED BOOK.

LIBBY (CONT'D)

Thought maybe I'd make you one of your own.

MJ

Thanks, Libby. But I'm a little past arts and crafts.

LIBBY

Okay. Suit yourself.

As Libby starts putting it down, knowingly...

MJ

(quickly)

Maybe I'll just give it a quick flip through. Don't wanna be rude.

MJ opens the scrapbook.

MJ (CONT'D)

Hey. These are pictures of my mom.

LIBBY

Not to take away from your amazing self-diagnosis, but I'm guessing that's who you're really worried about forgetting. New town, new house, new life, I get it.

MJ

It's just... I was so young.
Sometimes it's hard to remember
her, even now.

LIBBY

Well you're never going to forget
her because she's always going to
be with you...

(gesturing to his heart)

Right here. But if you ever want
to look at her, just open this up.

(re: pictures)

She was so beautiful. You guys
look just alike.

MJ

It's our regal cheek bones.

REVEAL Malcolm smiling in the doorway alongside Naya. He
turns to her with a look that says "She's not so bad, right?"

NAYA

Dead mother scrapbook? Pretty
desperate move if you ask me.

Naya, crosses away, shaking her head. As Libby exits MJ's
room and joins Malcolm, they **WALK AND TALK...**

28

INT. LIBBY & MALCOLM'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS (N5)

28

MALCOLM

Really nice what you did with him.

LIBBY

Thanks. How'd it go with Naya?

MALCOLM

Pretty good. Told her we're
family, I love her, I value her --

LIBBY

You brought up 'weak bitch' didn't
you?

MALCOLM

I did.

LIBBY

Malcolm! You were supposed to have
saved that for your drunk rambling
toast at her wedding!

MALCOLM

No one's marrying her.

LIBBY

You may be right.

MALCOLM

By the way, we should probably check out Larchwood Charter ourselves. Make sure it's a real school and the kids aren't just selling drugs or drone chips or something.

LIBBY

Agreed.

MALCOLM (V.O.)

So like we were saying, the world's crazy. And we're all different.

LIBBY (V.O.)

But just because we're different doesn't mean we can't make it work.

Malcolm gently takes Libby's hand and kisses it, as we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

TAG

29 INT. MALCOLM & LIBBY'S HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT (N5) 29

Libby, in a sexy spaghetti-strapped nightgown, scrolls through her iPad, atop the covers. Malcolm, in his boxers and V-neck, crosses and gets in bed. He turns to her.

MALCOLM

Babe, I love this thing you've been doing every night. You know, the *Red Shoe Diaries* look. But we're married now. I know the sexy woman I got. You don't have to do this for me.

LIBBY

Look, I'm a forty-something-year-old woman with no booty--

MALCOLM

Babe, you got a little--

LIBBY

With no booty, in her first marriage to a man who culturally has a propensity to stray. I think I'm gonna keep this up for a while.

MALCOLM

(beat)

That's probably not a bad idea.

(then, realizing, re: him)

Hold on, do I need to maybe--

LIBBY

No. Black man in silk pajamas. I mean, I'm not gonna say it reads like a malt liquor commercial. But I'm not not gonna say it either.

Malcolm playfully kisses Libby.

LIBBY (CONT'D)

But... if we're taking requests, nothing wrong with a man getting a pedicure. I'm worried those talons are gonna hit an artery and I'm gonna bleed out in my sleep.

MALCOLM

(beat, a little hurt)

I'm gonna go put on socks.

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW