

"TALKIN' DIRTY AFTER DARK"

Written by
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NEW NAME CHANGES

WORKER = RUDY RAE

DUKIE JEFFERSON = DUKIE SIMMONS

KIT KAT CLUB = DUKIE'S

"TALKIN' DIRTY AFTER DARK"

FADE IN:

1 EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT: DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES - EARLY EVENING 1

THE CAMERA PANS a prospering LOS ANGELES DOWNTOWN SKYLINE. A lower third SUPER reads DOWNTOWN LOS ANGELES. CAMERA PULLS BACK AND PANS all the way left to reveal a poor, palm tree lined, funky, urban environment . . . WATTS.

SYMPHONIC MUSIC DISSOLVES into SLAMMING URBAN RAP TRACKS that underscore and are intercut with images of WATTS.

The CAMERA DOLLIES slowly past THE RAPPERS, past the POLICE who have just pulled over a 350-pound BROTHER on a mini-moped, past a MILITANT BROTHER with a "Up W/Hope, Down W/Dope" sign, past a "Just In From Beverly Hills" SIDEWALK FURNITURE SALE, and past a studied OLD MAN and a YOUNG MAN playing checkers. The old man cleans out the young loser who reluctantly takes off and hands over his expensive shoes to the old winner. *

The SLOW DOLLY continues past a quartet of hyper-energetic, acrobatic, DOUBLE DUTCHERS who jump in time to the TRACK, and past a beautiful young BLACK MOTHER and THREE DAUGHTERS seated on a stoop. The mother talks on a portable phone and cornrows her older daughter's hair, who in turn cornrows her younger sister's hair, who in turn cornrows, etc. The mother hits a tender spot with the comb, her daughter lets out a scream. This sets off a ripple. Each cornrower hits a tender spot and each cornrowee yells . . . "OW! OW! OW! in sequence. *

The CAMERA continues its DOLLY past a TWO STORY APARTMENT BUILDING. THE CAMERA BACKS UP. As it ZOOMS into a SECOND STORY WINDOW, a lower third SUPER reads: WATTS.

2 INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS - EARLY EVENING 2 *

THE CAMERA FRAMES THE WINDOWS AND TRACKS ALONG THE WALL OF AN IMPECCABLY NEAT AND ORGANIZED ROOM, it makes note of "House Party," "Do The Right Thing," M.C. Hammer, Janet Jackson, Eddie Murphy, Arsenio Hall, and Detroit Piston posters. There's a wall for the JET bikini centerfolds and a wall of comedy memorabilia. *

The PHONE rings twice. No answer. Terry's answering machine takes over.

TERRY (V.O.)

This is Terry. Leave your name and the time that you called. Tonight you can catch me on the midnight show at Dukie's Comedy Club, doing my thing. That's at 141st Street and South Central. God Bless.

VOICE

Terry, this is Miss Washington from the Phone Company. It is now 4:30 in the afternoon. Your phone bill is overdue. If you don't get your ass down here by Monday morning, I'm cutting it off. I'm tired of your shit.

*

The CAMERA CONTINUES PAST the lumpy bed and ENDS on a frame of the answering machine.

*
*

SFX: MISS WASHINGTON SLAMMING THE PHONE DOWN.

On the slam, TERRY bolts from under the covers and his feet hit the floor. He's twenty-four, thin, Black and still waking up.

*
*

TERRY

Well, fuck you. Fuck AT&T and fuck AT&T's momma, Ma Bell. That ting 'a ling, four one one, drop a dime 'ho.

He stands and crosses to the bathroom. He's got an early morning hard on. He grabs at his crotch.

*

TERRY (Cont.)

Here, bitch, ting a ling on this!

Terry grabs his crotch a little too hard, causing him to bend over, grimacing in pain.

TERRY (Cont.)

Now, you trying to fuck with my manhood.

Terry hobbles to the bathroom.

3 EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT: RUBY LIN AND DUKIE'S BUNGALOW - 3 MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

A LOWER MIDDLE CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD IN WATTS ADJACENT. A neat, one story wood frame structure. An Astro Turf lawn. Bars on the windows and door. A DOBERMAN patrols the fenced yard. A metallic green CADILLAC is parked in the driveway.

The furnishings are a step above Sear's. The decor and accessories are 60's motel at best. Paintings adorn the wall of the crowded room: velvet paintings of Arsenio Hall, Bill Cosby, and George Bush.

DUKIE SIMMONS; thirty-five, handsome, and in great physical condition, finishes grooming in the mirror.

DUKIE

C'mon, woman. I wanna get to the club early tonight.

RUBY LIN (O.S.)

Dukie, If I go to your club and I'm not looking good, who's gonna be the first one to complain?

Dukie looks at his watch.

DUKIE

(firmly)

Ruby Lin, you got five minutes.

Dukie appears in the doorway. RUBY LIN, his wife, primps in her mirror. She's thirty-two, a little overweight, but attractive. *

RUBY LIN

Go on. You don't have to wait for me.

She reaches for a blonde wig from her wig rack and positions it on her head. She studies it in the mirror. Then, she cups her breasts and gives them a lift to show more cleavage.

RUBY LIN (CONT'D)

I ain't going no place 'til I'm looking damn good.

Dukie re-enters the bedroom, and puts on the last of his oversized Sammy Davis jewels. *

DUKIE

Why can't you just co-operate sometimes?

Ruby Lin, wearing a black wig, moves to the bathroom door. *

RUBY LIN

(sassy)

Why can't you find more time for me?

DUKIE

Because I gotta business and the business is taking real good care of you. That's why.

RUBY LIN

(sexy)

Baby, I want it like it used to be when we first got together. Making love in the bathtub. Suckin' my toes and eatin' Haagen Daz Butter Almond all nite.

(demanding)

Dukie, I wants the wiener when I wants it.

Dukie reacts and looks at his watch. *

DUKIE

(sweetly)

Not now, Ruby Lin. Baby, we gotta go.

Defeated. Ruby Lin exits to the bathroom. *

RUBY LIN (O.S.)

(fucking with him)

What you say? Can't hear you.

DUKIE

Woman, you know you heard me! We're leaving here in one minute.

RUBY LIN (O.S.)

(giving in)

Alright! Alright! Hold your pee. I'm almost ready.

7 INT. DUKIE'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS 7

THE CAMERA FRAMES Ruby Lin in the mirror poised with a straight razor. She's shaving the shaving cream and last traces of hair off her upper lip. The PHONE RINGS in the bedroom.

8 INT. TERRY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 8

Terry is nervously pacing back and forth with the phone in his hand.

TERRY

Look here, Mister Simmons, I ran into a little financial problem...I know, you're always helping me out. But...

(gets down)

...You want me to beg? O.K., I'm begging.

Terry gets down on his knees.

TERRY (Cont.)

I'm down on my knees kissing your ass. Alright...your entire ass.

Terry sucks kisses into the phone.

Ruby Lin enters as Dukie hangs up the phone, perturbed.

RUBY LIN

Dukie, who was that?

DUKIE

(annoyed)

Terry.

RUBY LIN

Terry? What'd he want?

DUKIE

What does Terry always want? Money! He needs sixty-seven dollars to pay his phone bill.

RUBY LIN

I keep telling you. Terry is gonna be big. You oughta invest.

DUKIE

Ruby Lin, Terry is just another comedian to me. What do you see in that boy?

As they move to exit, Ruby Lin, a step ahead, still argues.

RUBY LIN

(sexy)

Personally? I just love his work.

Dukie, a step behind, stops, gives her a suspicious look, and continues his exit.

*
*

10 ESTABLISHING SHOT: URBAN APARTMENT BLDG - MOMENTS LATER 10

11 INT. ARETHA AND BIGG'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 11

BIGG, thirty, is 300 POUNDS OF MUSCLE AND STRENGTH. He's on his back bench pressing 500-pounders. ARETHA BELL, thirty-five, prepares to leave.

ARETHA (O.S.)

Bigg, would you mind staying home tonight?

Gravely concerned, Bigg stops his workout and sits straight up.

BIGG

Why you want me to stay home? You trying to hide something from me or what?

ARETHA

No, baby. You know I wouldn't do that. It ain't that at all. It's just that you cause a commotion every time you come to the club.

BIGG

I don't like no one laughing at my woman.

ARETHA

Bigg, I'm a comedienne!

BIGG

Aretha, you're my Love Goddess. If anybody looks at you or laughs at you wrong, I'll kill them.

Bigg leans over, grabs a chair, and demonstrates his point by immediately BREAKING UP A CHAIR. THE CAMERA WHIPS TO REVEAL a room littered with BROKEN-UP FURNITURE.

*
*

ARETHA

Bigg, you've got to learn to control your emotions.

BIGG

(stands)

I like being a jealous, will-kill-another-nigger kind of nigger. It gives me motivation.

Bigg breaks a chair leg with his teeth.

*

ARETHA

Tell you what. You stay home and do 500 more bench presses. Then fix yourself two gallons of warm milk and some Chip Ahoy's, get in the bed and wait for me.

BIGG

I'll watch my Gumby and Homey the Clown videos 'til you get here. O.K., baby? *

ARETHA

O.K., baby.

Aretha moves to Bigg, steps on a stool and kisses him on the forehead. He's DELIRIOUS with love. She feels his arm muscles. *

ARETHA (Cont.)

Build momma some more twin peaks on those rocky mountains, baby.

Bigg lies back down on the bench and starts BUSTING IT with the weights. Aretha steps off the stool and exits the apartment and closes the door. *

12 INT. ARETHA & BIGG'S HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - MOMENTS 12
LATER

As she walks down the hallway, Bigg's grunts and groans pierce the walls. Every time the barbells hit the floor, THE BUILDING SHAKES . . . and Aretha has to regain her balance.

13 ESTABLISHING SHOT: A GREYHOUND PASSENGER PLATFORM 13

It's the BUS FOR LOS ANGELES. A wide variety of people with tickets in hand are in line to board. Percy is in it. *

14 INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS 14

PERCY WILSON, thirty-five and a little weighty, is already on board. He's looking for a seat. He spots one and starts to work his way to the back. Percy has to first work his way past a blue collar MOTHER and her five KIDS.

PERCY

Excuse me. Excuse me, please.

Trying to squeeze by, he accidentally nicks one of the little boys in the head with his suitcase.

BOY #1

O...uch! You hit me in the head with your suitcase!

MOTHER

Did you hit my baby boy?

PERCY

Miss, I think it was an accident.

The kids circle Percy.

BOY #2

(six years old)

Momma, I think we can take him.

PERCY

Lady, I'm sorry. It was an accident, really.

MOTHER

Why you pickin' on my kids?

The kids AD LIB as they menace and taunt Percy. *

PERCY

Ma'am. I'm not picking on your kids. Frankly, your kids got me scared for my life.

MOTHER

Move your black ass on down the aisle then.

Percy gladly continues to move down the aisle as the man and kids AD LIB after him. An OLD WOMAN is bent over in the aisle organizing herself for the trip. As Percy tries to SQUEEZE by the suitcase gooses her. The woman YELLS. *

OLD WOMAN

You damn pre-vert! Get your hands offa me!

Percy immediately drops his suitcase and holds his hands high. *

PERCY

I didn't touch a thing.

He slides by, as the Old Woman AD LIBS after him. He reaches back for his suitcase and finally reaches his seat. Relieved, Percy slips into it. He rests his suitcase on his lap. He closes his eyes to take a moment to gather himself. Percy is awakened by an abrupt rumbling motion. Slipping into the seat next to him is a 350-POUND MAN. It's gonna be a TIGHT ride to Los Angeles. *

14 CONTINUED:

14

The Big Man has the last and only available seat on the crowded bus. Percy decides to make good of the situation.

PERCY

(being friendly)

How you doing?

The man lets out a large burp followed by a larger fart.

MAN

I could be better. Mexican food.

Percy tries discreetly to open the window. It's sealed. Gagging, he buries his nose and his mouth in the armpit of his jacket.

15 EXT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

15

Terry exits his building and walks to his car, a 1979 Datsun. It looks war-ravaged and is decorated with another parking ticket. Terry plucks it off the windshield.

15A INT. TERRY'S CAR

15A *

TERRY

Damn! Another one.

He gets in his car and opens the glove compartment. Another hundred tickets spill out. He stuffs them back in and crams it shut. Terry turns on the ignition. Nothing. After four attempts, still nothing.

15B EXT. TERRY'S CAR

15B *

He gets out and opens the hood. Terry unwraps a piece of chewing gum, pops the stick in his mouth and wraps the foil around a spark plug. The car belches.

15C INT. TERRY'S CAR

15C *

Terry gets back in, pumps the gas and fires up the ignition. The motor coughs and turns over.

Terry backs out of his curbside parking spot and backs down the street. His car only travels in reverse. For months, he's been driving around Los Angeles...backwards.

DISSOLVE TO:

16 EXT. TACKY CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

16

Terry backs into the PARKING LOT for HOY'S WOK, a Chinese restaurant. He parks, exits his car and enters.

CUT TO:

Terry enters. He looks and spots JACKIE, his best friend. Terry slides into the booth opposite him.

TERRY

Jackie. What's up?

JACKIE

I'm good. How you doing?

TERRY

Real good. I hear they got you MC-ing at the club again tonight. How'd you do that?

JACKIE

Dukie and Ruby Lin know I be bustin' it. I hear you got a spot on the show tonight. How'd you do that?

TERRY

You don't get rich by just working hard. You got to be political and make the right career moves.

JACKIE

There you go with that short cut and political shit again.

TERRY

(impatient)

Jackie, sometimes you can be a real ignorant. Seriously.

JACKIE

(emphatic)

Hard work spells bank!

TERRY

And, bankers only work from 9 to 3 and never on weekends.

JACKIE

That's fucked up.

TERRY

Hey, we just see shit differently.

A 45-year-old CHINESE WAITRESS interrupts.

WAITRESS

Homies? You got your orders yet?

Her hair is in dreadlocks. She's wearing Reebok pumps, Flavor Flav sunglasses, and a Mandela t-shirt. She sounds just like Etta James. She slides a plate of Wonder bread and margarine across the table. Then, the water and silverware. Terry holds up his glass of water to the light.

TERRY

This water got a piece of rice in it.

WAITRESS

Funny man, what you expect? This is a Chinese restaurant. Rice is every damn where.

JACKIE

(checking silverware)

Could you bring me a clean fork?

WAITRESS

No problem.

She takes the fork, breathes on it, polishes it on the hem of her Mandela t-shirt and puts it back on the table in front of Jackie. Jackie looks at it in amazement. *

WAITRESS (Cont.)

Now! You wanna hear the specials or you want me to keep polishing the fucking silverware?

TERRY

We'll order.

WAITRESS

We got meatloaf foo yong, sweet and sour spam, and baloney fried rice.

JACKIE

I like that meatloaf foo . . .

WAITRESS

. . . I ain't finished yet. We got very, very short ribs, fried chicken skins, and frozen fish sticks smothered in some kind of red shit.

TERRY

Make that two meatloaf foo yongs. And something to drink . . . in a can.

The waitress exits. Terry and Jackie continue.

JACKIE

By the way, what you doing after the gig tonight? I'm trying to hook it up with this killer sister. We can do a double thing?

TERRY

I can't. I might still be politicking...

(boasting)

...and, getting a little pussy in the process.

JACKIE

Terry, you really need to find a good woman and settle down.

TERRY

Settle down? I'm still young.

JACKIE

That career pussy is gonna make your dick old real fast.

TERRY

No, It won't. I'll do just like those old people they found in Russia. Keep dipping my dick in some yoghurt.

Terry jumps up and pretends to demonstrate with a cup.

18 EXT. DUKIE'S COMEDY CLUB - NIGHT

THE CLUB is a STAND ALONE, neon decorated former Elks Lodge. People are parking and hustling to line up to get into the midnight, after hours show. CUT TO MUSIC. On one end of the spectrum, the Club's patrons look like Vogue and GQ covers. PRETTY WOMEN and HANDSOME MEN. On the other end, fake furs, press-on nails, wigs and Geri curls. From office workers to construction workers. From secretaries to cafeteria workers. From middle level corporate execs to Crips. Dukie's is a blue collar night club. The line is lengthening as patrons jostle and wait for the doors to open.

WOMAN #1

This show better be worth my ten dollars.

FAT WOMAN

Honey, last week I laughed so much that I musta lost five pounds.

WOMAN #1

So, Dorothy, exactly where did you lose this weight?

FAT WOMAN

In my booty, girl. Last week, I could hardly fit into this dress.

WOMAN #1

You still can't.

THE CAMERA FRAMES the Fat Woman's ENORMOUS BACKSIDE, barely covered by a jersey mini-dress. The dress is hiking up, being stretched to death, and BEGGING FOR MERCY. She pulls it down, but it rides up again, and again.

CUT TO:

A CAB pulls up a little down the street. It stops. A laid back, cooling it, not wanting to be "too" noticed ARETHA GETS OUT with a suitbag and makeup case. The patrons know her instantly, even though. They rush the cab. They AD LIB loud cheers: *

CROWD

Aretha!/There she is!/The diva!/The queen of comedy!/Funny lady!/That bitch sho is funny!

Cameras FLASH. She's a favorite. The COMEDY DIVA. Not to deny her fans, she waves and throws kisses to acknowledge them. *

ARETHA

I love all y'all. I'm gonna burn it up tonite.

The crowd responds enthusiastically.

FAN #1

Aretha, what time you going on?

ARETHA

One o'clock. Two o'clock. It don't matter. Just give me the microphone, the spotlight and some loud sick people.

CROWD

We're loud!/Yeah, we real sick!/I'm an outpatient.

ARETHA

I got some new stuff about people who try to hide they fat.

FAT WOMAN

(mumbling)

I know that bitch ain't talking about me.

The crowd AD LIBS their anticipation. Cameras continue to FLASH.

*
*
*

CUT TO:

20 EXT. DUKIE'S - NIGHT

20

Terry and Jackie drive by...BACKWARDS. He CIRCLES, hoping someone will notice him. He waves and drives slowly, but no one notices him. He's too much of an upstart.

JACKIE

Why don't you get the rattles in this thing fixed?

Terry turns on the radio, full blast, muffling the rattles.

TERRY

(shouting)

There, it's fixed!

JACKIE

(yelling)

Terry, this car is just like you. Stuck in reverse.

Terry is oblivious to the criticism.

TERRY

(yelling)

I think someone saw me. Let me go around one more time.

He circles again, to no notice. Aretha, still the object of attention, enters the club. Fans are at her heels.

*

The workers are CLEANING UP from the earlier show. Dukie is supervising. Aretha enters. Dukie spots her. He almost trips over a table and then a chair trying to get to her. He takes her hand and kisses it.

ARETHA

Oh, my goodness. Don't hurt yourself, big boy.

*

DUKIE

You're Dukie's queen, baby.

He hands her a bouquet of flowers.

ARETHA

(attitudinally)

You can spoil me! All you want.

DUKIE

I love to do it, darling. Just tell me what you need, how you need, and, when you need.

*
*

ARETHA

You know I will.

Aretha takes a whiff of her flowers.

ARETHA (CONT'D)

Flowers always get to me.

DUKIE

This is nothing. I'll get you a rose garden with a stage and a microphone in it. How's that?

*
*
*

ARETHA

(flirtatious)

I can't wait. Don't make it too long.

*

As Aretha floats out, Dukie looks after her with a twinkle in his eye. He reaches into his pocket, takes out a roll of bills, kisses it, blowing the kiss in her direction. From across the room, and partially concealed, Ruby Lin has seen it all. She doesn't like it and proceeds to chew her ice, turn and exit. Dukie turns back to the workers.

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*

DUKIE (CONT'D)

C'mon, step on it. The midnight show starts in fifteen minutes.

Dukie calls to Jackie, the MC for the night. Jackie crosses.

DUKIE (CONT'D)

Jackie, what's the line-up tonight?

JACKIE

The regulars and a couple of new people.

DUKIE

New people? Don't be puttin' no new people in the way of my crowd pleasers. We got to make money.

JACKIE

They're strong. Don't worry, I'll put 'em on early.

DUKIE

What time does Miss Aretha go on?

Jackie hands the list to Dukie. Dukie studies it.

JACKIE

I've got her on at about 1:30.

DUKIE

Use your head, boy! She's my moneymaker. If she goes on too early people leave and I can't sell drinks. Put her on at around 2:30, where I always put her. Where you gonna put Terry?

JACKIE

Where do you want me to put him?

DUKIE

Work him for every dime he owes me, and then some. Give that skinny, little, unfunny mother-fucker thirty minutes while the people are coming in.

JACKIE

Can I say something in defense of Terry?

DUKIE

No. Not a damn thing. I'll be in the office if you need me.

Dukie exits. Jackie re-works his list.

22 INT. DUKIE'S BACK ENTRANCE HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER 22

Terry enters the dimly lit hallway and walks toward CAMERA. Out of nowhere, a hand reaches out and snatches him. It scares the piss out of him.

23 INT. DUKIE'S LINEN CLOSET - CONTINUOUS 23

Terry trembles. It's pitch dark. He's been snatched into the closet.

VOICE
(insistent and desperate)
Kiss me!

TERRY
Are you crazy?

VOICE
No, I'm crazy for you!

The snatcher's hand now grabs the light chain and pulls. The light reveals Ruby Lin.

TERRY
What if we get caught?

RUBY LIN
I keep telling you, Dukie don't care.

TERRY
(reasoning)
Ruby Lin, this could blow everything.

RUBY LIN
Now, we definitely don't wanna do that. You can't afford me yet.

TERRY
(taking the out)
Right. That's what I'm saying.

RUBY LIN
Then, you better give me a little something to cool me out and hold me over 'cause Momma is hot tonight.

Ruby Lin GRABS Terry. One hand behind the neck. And one around his waist. It's a DEEP KISS. Terry starts to GASP FOR AIR.

TERRY
Ruby Lin, baby. Lighten up!

RUBY LIN

You got the money for your phone, didn't you?

TERRY

Yeah!

RUBY LIN

And, you got a spot in this week's line up, didn't you?

Opportunistic, Terry comes around. Now, he caresses Ruby Lin's ear.

TERRY

Well, you know, the one big difference between me and your husband is, I do care. When did you talk to him?

*
*
*

RUBY LIN

Last night. I tied him down, we had sex, and I told him all your jokes.

TERRY

Did he laugh?

RUBY LIN

It's hard to tell. I was sitting on his face.

Terry gives her a light kiss.

TERRY

We've got to stop meeting like this. I'll go first.

23A EXT. HALLWAY

23A *

Terry exits. He looks to his left. Dukie, busy giving instructions to his workers, approaches. Terry struggles with the closet door to keep Ruby Lin from exiting.

TERRY (Cont.)

(loudly)

Oh, hi there, Mister Simmons.

DUKIE

What the fuck you doing in my closet?

TERRY

Fu...Fu...Fuck. In the closet. I was just going over my routine.

(practically yelling)

Mister Simmons!

23A CONTINUED:

23A

DUKIE

Move out the way!

Dukie moves to open the door to inspect. Terry tries to fend him off.

DUKIE (Cont.)

Nigger, move.

Dukie pushes Terry aside and opens the door, turns on the light.

*
*

23B INT. CLOSET

23B

*

He inspects. No one is there. Closes door.

*

23C INT. HALL

23C

*

Terry is greatly relieved.

*

DUKIE (Cont.)

Stay out my closet. You got that?

Terry gladly exits. AD LIBS.

*

CUT TO:

24 INT. DUKIE'S LINEN CLOSET - NIGHT

24

The CAMERA PANS the closet and stops at the mops. One mop head moves. Then another. Ruby Lin's head, wearing a mop, suddenly appears. Holding her nose, she then emerges.

25 INT. DUKIE'S HALLWAY - ADJACENT TO MEN'S ROOM - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

25

Jackie is reviewing the line-up with ANTONIO. They walk toward the pay phone. ROACH is two steps behind.

ANTONIO

Do I have time to run out and come back?
I wanna get a bite to eat.

JACKIE

As long as you're back by one.

ANTONIO

No problem.

Antonio turns to exit and crosses.

JACKIE

By one, Antonio. Be on time.

ANTONIO

I'll be here. All my girls are in bed by now.

JACKIE

(calling after Antonio)

That's 'cause they're all in high school.

ROACH

What about my spot?

JACKIE

You're on just before Antonio.

ROACH

For how long?

JACKIE

You got ten minutes.

ROACH

Ten minutes? It takes ten minutes for me to get warmed up. For the little bit of money this joint is paying me, they need to let me work all night if I want to.

JACKIE

Relax, okay?

ROACH

If the owner wants to save money, why doesn't he march the people in, sit 'em down, and play old Richard Pryor records.

JACKIE

Roach, you don't have to do the gig.

ROACH

Then you're gonna' run around saying that Roach is selling out to the white Establishment. That Roach wants a bunch of money, big cars, and a moustache like Eddie Murphy's. That Roach wants white women. Well, why not?

JACKIE

Can we put this conversation on freeze for a second? I've gotta make an important phone call.

ROACH

Am I too Afro-centric for you, brother? Am I hitting a sore spot. Am I telling too much of the truth? Who you calling?

Jackie turns to the phone and deposits two dimes. Roach AD LIBS in the background. Jackie punches up a number. It rings.

JACKIE

Hello! Kimmie. This is Jackie.

KIMMIE (O.S.)

(just waking up)

Oh, hi.

JACKIE

You sound sleepy. You still coming?

KIMMIE (O.S.)

Um. Hum. Since I'm gonna be out late, I was taking a nap. I wanna get up and go to church in the morning.

JACKIE

You've got the directions, right?

KIMMIE (O.S.)

Um. Hum. How could I forget? You mailed them twice, left it on my service three times, and drew a map on the hood of my car.

JACKIE

Your name's at the door. They'll be holding a seat for you.

KIMMIE (O.S.)

I'll see you in a few.

They hang up. Jackie is happy. Roach continues on.

ROACH

You know what the real problem is. The black club owners are killing the freedom of expression by cutting brothers like me short. They know I might get up there and tell the customers they're watering down the drinks and frying frozen chicken wings in last week's grease.

JACKIE

Roach, I'll get you twelve minutes instead of ten, OK?

ROACH

Beautiful, my brother. Power to the people. A-Salaam-a-Laikam. Free South Africa. Comedy is King. Can you loan me ten dollars until later on?

Jackie waves off a begging Roach and exits as Roach continues to AD LIB.

*

26 INT. DUKIE'S BACKSTAGE AREA - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

26

Jackie enters. Terry paces nervously. He's stuffing one stick of gum after another into his mouth. He's the first comic in tonight's line-up.

*
*

JACKIE

(rubbing it in)

Terry, relax. All you do is go out there and smile and never open your mouth. I'll tell them you're a politician.

TERRY

(sweating)

Jackie, I don't need to hear no shit from you right now, okay! I'm nervous.

JACKIE

I don't know why you're nervous. You got it wired, remember?

TERRY

Jackie, I'm scared, okay? Now stop sweatin' me.

JACKIE

(making his point)

Terry, you got talent. Use it!

TERRY

Yeah! Yeah! Yo! Sure! Um, hum!
Okay.

As he packs more gum in.

27 INT. DUKIE'S CABARET ROOM - CONTINUOUS

27

Ruby Lin works her way to the front table and takes her seat. The waitress sets her up royally. Two BAD GIRLS sit at the bar. WE pick up on their conversation.

BAD GIRL #1

I think the MC is real cute.

BAD GIRL #2

No one said he wasn't cute. I said I don't think he knows that you even exist.

BAD GIRL #1

And, I suppose he's calling you every day.

BAD GIRL #2

Girl, I only met him last week.

BAD GIRL #1

All I need is one night to get him.

BAD GIRL #2

Are you challenging me?

BAD GIRL #1

No. But, if Jackie wanted some old leather luggage with teeth, he had a whole week.

BAD GIRL #2

By the end of the night, we'll see who has Jackie's nose wide open.

BAD GIRL #1

For what? Fresh air?

The Club's THEME SONG kicks over the PA system. From backstage, we hear the ANNOUNCER as Jackie readies to go on:

TONE LOC

Ladies and gentlemen, brothers and sisters.

(MORE)

TONE LOC (CONT'D)

Husbands, wives and adulterers.
 It's showtime once again at Dukie's
 Comedy Club. So let's enjoy a
 little food, a little company, sip
 a little drink and have a lot of
 laughs because laughs make us all a
 whole lot happier. And remember,
 it's a policy of Dukie's -- no
 cameras, tape recorders, shower
 caps or guns. So, with no further
 adieu, put your hands together and
 welcome Dukie's own comedy MC and
 star, Mister J.A.C.K.I.E.
 B.R.O.N.S.O.N!

The audience applauds and cheers wildly. The MUSIC peaks.
 Jackie EXITS the wings and moves toward center stage.

BAD GIRL #1

I'm gonna' get him.

BAD GIRL #2

No, I'm gonna get him.

BAD GIRL #1

My pussy just whistled and winked at
 him.

BAD GIRL #2

I just sent him a telepathic message.
 (imitating a megaphone)
 'This is the Pussy Police. Throw down
 your pants and come out with your dick
 up.'

Jackie has no idea he's being staked out by the two. His
 interest is in Kimmie. As MC, Jackie cuts the music and
 opens the night.

JACKIE

How's everybody doing tonight?

The CROWD RESPONDS ENTHUSIASTICALLY.

CROWD

Yeah!/Showtime!/Let's get busy!/Where's
 Aretha?!/You better be funny!/Who is
 this ugly motherfucker?!

The two Bad Girls are on it. They yell the loudest.

27 CONTINUED: (2)

27

BAD GIRL #1
You the man! Work it!

BAD GIRL #2
I'm here for you, baby! You mine!

BAD GIRL #1
Jackie, I got what you need!

The crowd loves the sexual innuendo. Jackie plays to them, using them to launch into his routine.

During the set, KIMMIE arrives. Jackie waves. She waves back. She's fine, conservatively dressed, and wears eyeglasses. The HOST seats her. *

From the BAR, the two B-Girls flirt with Jackie. They alternately blow kisses, pout, lick their lips, wiggle their tongue, and wave. As Jackie performs, he can't help but to notice. *

28 INT. GREYHOUND BUS TERMINAL - HOLLYWOOD - MOMENTS 28
LATER - NIGHT

The BUS PULLS INTO THE TERMINAL. Passengers begin to gather their belongings. The DRIVER announces the stop on the microphone.

DRIVER
Hollywood. Hollywood, California.

PERCY's oversized seat mate has fallen asleep on his shoulder. Percy nudges him.

PERCY
Hey, Mister Fluffy, we're here.

The seat mate stirs. He drools on Percy's sleeve. He wipes his face, then wipes the drool off of Percy's sleeve.

SEAT MATE
Sorry, buddy.

PERCY
That's okay. No problem. It's yours.

The seat mate looks around. Percy hands him his own jacket.

PERCY (Cont.)
This is L.A. You getting off here?

28 CONTINUED:

28

SEAT MATE

Yeah, this is me.

The seat mate gets up and moves out. Percy, with the suitcase still in his lap, slides to the aisle, makes sure everyone, particularly the kids, are off before he makes a move. He wiggles out of his seat and stands. His leg won't move. It's asleep. Percy drags it off the bus. *

29 EXT. GREYHOUND TERMINAL - NIGHT

29

Percy gets off the bus cautiously. He spots the kids, turns around, walks in the opposite direction. Quickly. *

Percy surveys the environs. It's seedy. He spots a phone and heads to it. He digs for a number and finds it. He digs for a coin and finds it, too. He drops it and dials. The PHONE RINGS. He waits for an answer. Finally.

30 OMITTED

30 *

31 INT. DUKIE'S - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

31

A WAITRESS approaches and answers the pay phone. *

WAITRESS

Hello!

PERCY (O.S.)

Hello!

WAITRESS

Can you speak up, I can't hear you.

32 EXT. GREYHOUND TERMINAL - NIGHT

32 *

Percy strains to hear. The bus is NOISY. *

PERCY

(yelling)

Can you hold on for just a second?!

He lets the phone dangle as he attempts to squeeze his suitcase into the booth and close the door. It won't fit. He grabs the phone.

PERCY (Cont.)

Can you hold on for just one more second.

He lets the phone dangle again. Percy takes off his belt, loops it around the suitcase handle, wraps the loose end around his free hand, lodges the phone between his head and neck and shuts the door with his free hand.

PERCY (Cont.)

Can you give me directions to the Club?
I'm at the Greyhound Terminal in
Hollywood. I'm supposed to audition
tonight.

With his free hand, Percy finds a piece of paper and a pencil. He then juggles to write the directions down. It's a struggle.

PERCY (Cont.)

Right...Right...Right...O.K., thanks. I
think I got 'em. See you soon.

Percy hangs up and STARES at the directions.

PERCY (Cont.)

Is that a right or a left? ... I think
she said left. Yeah, left.

Percy then moves to exit the booth. He can't get out. He STRUGGLES and still can't get out. In desperation, he knocks on the door. People STARE at him. No one assists. Who finally shows up? The KIDS from the bus. They taunt him and jump up and down on his suitcase...before they finally open the door.

KIDS

Come on out./We know you./Come on, punk.

PERCY

No, that's alright. I ain't coming out.

Percy looks for the taxi stand. Spots it. He approaches the first cab in line. The DRIVER is white. Percy leans into the window.

*
*

PERCY

You know how to get to Watts?

The cab takes off BURNING RUBBER. This cab obviously doesn't want to go there.

PERCY

(feels top of head)

Damn. Are my horns showing or something?

The next cab pulls up. The DRIVER leans toward Percy.

*

CABBIE
(thick West Indian
accent)

C'mon. Where you wanna go?

Percy is afraid to say it. He whispers.

PERCY

Watts...

CABBIE

Sure, jump in. What's the address?

PERCY

118904 South Central.

CABBIE

Sit back and get comfortable, man. It's
a long ride.

34 INT. CAB - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

34

Percy gets in, dragging his suitcase behind him. The Rasta driver rolls up the windows and puts the air conditioning on FULL FORCE. The interior of the cab turns into a frigid Arctic wind tunnel. The wind presses Percy against the seat. His clothes are flapping. The paper with his directions is flapping. The driver then puts on a Reggae tape. FULL BLAST. The BASS rattles the glass. Next, the cabbie lights up an incense stick that could double for a stick of dynamite. Percy chokes on the volume of smoke. They rocket off to Watts.

35 INT. DUKIE'S HALLWAY - ADJACENT TO MEN'S ROOM -
MOMENTS LATER

35

The pay phone RINGS. RUDY RAE answers it.

RUDY RAE

Hello! Dukie's.

36 INT. BIGG'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

36

Bigg has just stepped out of the shower.

BIGG

Is my woman there?

37 EFX: SPLIT SCREEN - BIGG'S BATHROOM/DUKIE'S BACKSTAGE
A/B

37

RUDY RAE

Your woman? Who's your woman?

BIGG

You know who she is. Put her on the phone.

RUDY RAE

Look, brother, I need some more information.

BIGG

You the one who been calling my woman and hanging up when I answer. I recognize your breathing.

RUDY RAE

Is this some kind of crank call?

On that, Rudy Rae SLAMS the phone down. Bigg is pissed. He bangs his head on the wall. Nothing happens. Bigg taps on the wall, looking for the right spot. He finds it and bangs his head on the wall again. The wall SHATTERS.

38 INT. DUKIE'S CABARET ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

38

At the end of Jackie's set, the audience responds wildly.

JACKIE

Thank you. Thank you. We got a live audience tonight. So let's keep moving right along. At this time, I'd like to bring to the stage another up-and-coming comic. He's a real good friend of mine and he's only been working at Dukie's for a little over a month. Let's put our hands together and welcome to the stage, Terry Lawrence!

The audience applauds. A RAP TRACK blasts. Jackie exits.

JACKIE (Cont.)

(to Terry)

Go on, brother. Kill 'em.

They shake hands. Terry moves to center stage. Ruby Lin is right down front. She applauds loudest and longest. The track and the applause stop. *

TERRY

(to the audience)

Hey, what's up?

The audience doesn't respond.

38 CONTINUED:

38

TERRY

Nobody talking? What's up?

The audience is inattentive and cold. Terry launches into his set. He's not connecting. They throw food and ashtrays.

38A INT. DUKIE'S OFFICE

38A *

Dukie hears the boos, draws open his curtains and observes. *

DUKIE

I knew that little skinny mother wasn't shit. *

He looks a while longer and draws the curtains shut. *

38B INT. CABARET ROOM

38B *

Gradually, he turns them around and wins them over. It turns into a good, strong, rousing set. Ruby Lin is H...appy! Terry exits the stage to applause and to the music. He's ecstatic. Jackie gives him a celebratory embrace and moves to center stage. He revs up the applause. *

JACKIE

Terry Lawrence, y'all. Terry Lawrence. Give it up. Terry Lawrence.

The applause continues.

39 INT. BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

39

Terry exits the stage, crosses to with Roach and KWAME as they AD LIB: *

TERRY

How'd I do?

KWAME

That was a good set. You're getting a lot stronger.

TERRY

Thanks! You really think so?

ROACH

Yeah, you were good. But, you coulda' been better. The sound system sounded a little off or something. It was feeding back.

KWAME

Brother, can't you just give it up to the brother and get offa' that white man's anthropological technologically restricting analysis of the indigenous Afro American comedy experience?

ROACH

Yeah, sure. The sound system is fucked up. Is that black enough for yo' ass?

KWAME

Be glad you're working. The white clubs ain't gonna give you a break.

TERRY

That's true. I tried for a year.

ROACH

Hold up. If you can pull in the people, the white club owners don't care.

KWAME

And most of the purified negroes who work the white clubs are getting their skin bleached, their hair relaxed, and their lips tucked.

The guys AD LIB as Ruby Lin approaches the three. She's bubbly. *

RUBY LIN

How's everybody doing?

The trio AD LIB hellos.

ROACH

Good crowd tonight?

KWAME

Roach, weren't you telling me something about the sound system?

ROACH

No, not at all, my brother. The sound's fabulous, out here on the front line, as we struggle to bring comedy to the people...

Lowering his head, Roach gives the black power salute.

ROACH (Cont.)
...Long live Arsenio Hall!

RUBY LIN
I need to talk to you for just a minute.
Excuse us.

Kwame and Roach give each other a 'What's going on' look.
Ruby Lin and Terry walk out of ear reach.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)
Terry, you were fabulous tonight.

TERRY
Ruby Lin...I mean Mrs. Simmons. I'm
glad you liked it.
(concerned)
But, that call with Dukie was a little
too close.

RUBY LIN
(emphatic)
I keep telling you, Dukie doesn't care
about me. *

TERRY
(impatient)
I keep telling you, I do! Did you ask him
about getting me more spots yet?

RUBY LIN
(using leverage)
Will I be seeing a little more of you?

TERRY
As much as you want.

RUBY LIN
Then, I'll take care of the spots.
Right now. *

Ruby Lin winks at Terry.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)
(sexily)
Don't go too far.

Terry winks back. Ruby Lin winks back. Terry winks back.

TERRY
Thanks, Mrs. Simmons . . . I mean, Ruby Lin
. . . baby. Thanks a whole lot.

Waitress grumbles as she exits.

*

KIMMIE

(with warmth)

Jackie, you can be so sick sometimes.
How come you kept calling after I stood
you up twice?

JACKIE

Maybe I like pain. Maybe I am sick?
(leans in for a kiss)

Now, cure me.

Kimmie leans over to kiss him. They kiss lightly. A WOMAN
PATRON in the next booth gets hot and horny watching. She
starts to fan herself...vigorously.

JACKIE (Cont.)

What about you?

KIMMIE

Well, I'm here and it is one o'clock in
the morning. Explain that.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

(sexy)

Jack ... ieeee.

*

Jackie turns to the source of the sound. Staring him in the
face, an inch from his nose, is a heaving and delicious
cocoa brown cleavage. As the voice bends over, the owner's
nipples are barely concealed by her dress. Jackie's mouth
uncontrollably drops open, and his eyes lock hypnotically
into the cleavage.

JACKIE

(trance like)

You looking for me ... Jackie?

Bad Girl #1 pushes herself closer to Jackie.

BAD GIRL #1

(sultry)

Yes, I am. I just wanted to tell you
how much I love your work and everything
about you.

JACKIE

(helplessly)

Everything?

Kimmie is obviously uncomfortable. Jackie snaps out of it.
He makes eye contact.

JACKIE (Cont.)

Let me introduce you to my date. This is Kimmie. What'd you say your name was?

BAD GIRL #1

Bridgette. They call me Jet for short.

JACKIE

Jet?

BAD GIRL #1

If I see a man I like, I jet to the bottom line real fast. Pleased to meet you. Kimmie. What a cute name...for a bird. You must be new in town? Are you from Mississippi or some rural area?

Kimmie sorta half waves and half smiles.

KIMMIE

Maybe I should leave the two of you alone to talk.

JACKIE

I don't know this woman.

BAD GIRL #1

I'm an aspiring comedienne and I want you to teach me the ropes. Privately. I'll do anything to get into the business.

JACKIE

Look, I'm here with my date. And, I've got a show to do. If you want work, talk to the owner.

BAD GIRL #1

If that's the way you want it. But, I'm very persistent. And, I'm a big, big comedy freak.

Bad Girl #1 sticks her finger in Jackie's drink, grabs the cherry, bends over again, and drops the cherry down her dress.

BAD GIRL #1 (Cont.)

If you want your cherry, come and get it.

She throws Jackie an inviting look as she glides her bugging butt back to the bar. It's outstanding. The woman patron voyeur at the next booth heats up even more. Kimmie is miffed. Jackie is confused and agitated.

*
*

KIMMIE

Does this kind of thing happen all the time?

JACKIE

No, never. Not at all. I hate cherries.

KIMMIE

I'll bet.

JACKIE

(sincerely concerned)

Seriously. This never happens.

Then, Bad Girl #2 waves a cherry at Jackie from the bar.

41 INT. DUKIE'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

41

Rudy Rae, the cook, is PHILOSOPHIZING and BUSTLING to get out the short orders. Aretha sits on a stool at a table in the corner tearing up some ribs. Ruby Lin walks in to inspect. At first, she doesn't see Aretha.

RUBY LIN

Step it up on those orders. You know how our people can be about their food.

RUDY RAE

Then you come on in here and stand over this greasy stove. I'm not in the mood for no bossy shit at one o'clock in the morning.

RUBY LIN

Rudy Rae, if you weren't my mother's second cousin, you'd be out of here. You oughta be glad you got a job that keeps your ass off the street and out of jail.

RUDY RAE

Believe me, sticking up liquor stores and 7-11's is easier than this bullshit. This damn grease done fucked up every shoe I own.

RUBY LIN

You only got two. The two on your feet.

The cook continues to AD LIB his disgruntlement. Ruby Lin continues her inspection. She spots Aretha . . . enjoying her food, sucking on a rib bone.

ARETHA

Um Umm. The food sure is better since Rudy Rae got here.

RUDY RAE

Um. Hum. Sure is. The cook oughta get a raise.

RUBY LIN

(to Aretha)

I take pride in my kitchen. And, the rule is stray cats can't eat in here.

*

ARETHA

Stray cat? Stray cat? You better ask Dukie who I am.

*

RUBY LIN

Aretha, I've had enough. I am sick and tired of Dukie always making exceptions for you -- sick and tired, you hear.

*

*

*

ARETHA

Wa...Wa...Wa...Wait a minute! Exceptions? Dukie don't have to make no exception for me. He knows that. He knows I'm here for him and him only.

*

*

*

RUBY LIN

(paranoid)

What you mean?

*

ARETHA

Just what I said, I'm here and I'm staying here 'cause of what I do for Dukie and what Dukie does for me, and, I do it real good. You get my point.

*

*

*

*

RUBY LIN

(coming back)

Aretha, let's establish something for once and for all, there's only one woman in Dukie's life who means a damn thing. One woman, you hear that.

*

*

*

*

*

ARETHA

Try two.

Ruby Lin's eyebrow goes up.

RUBY LIN

Oh, really?!

*

*

ARETHA

That's correct. The woman who makes the money. And, the heifer who spends it.

RUBY LIN

Aretha, get out of my kitchen, now!

RUDY RAE

(signifying)

Oh, shit. Get out the kitchen.

ARETHA

Ruby Lin, waddle your ass on out to the front of this building and look up on the marquee. If my name is still up there, and yours ain't, I'll eat any damn where I want. I'll eat on the stage if I want to.

Aretha sucks on a rib bone.

ARETHA (Cont.)

Now, I'm tired of you messing with me while I'm polishing this bone.

RUBY LIN

We'll see who has the last word on this shit.

Ruby Lin is PISSED. She exits...dramatically. Aretha is unconcerned. She continues with her food. Rudy Rae, laughing under his breath, rushes to Aretha and piles her plate.

RUDY RAE

Girl, polish some more of these bones. *

He continues to philosophize.

42 INT. HALLWAY

42 *

Terry approaches Dukie's office and enters. *

42A INT. DUKIE'S - DUKIE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

42A

Dukie sits behind his desk CLEANING HIS GUN. Terry enters. He sees the gun and hastily turns around and exits. *

DUKIE

(demanding)

Terry, come here. Where you going?

Terry re-enters, throws his hands above his head in the SURRENDER position. *

TERRY

I didn't do nothing. I swear, Mister Simmons. I was looking for Mrs. Simmons.

DUKIE

(suspicious)

You're up to something. You got that guilty look.

TERRY

(fakes happy look)

I look guilty? I'm happy. Real happy. Ha..ha..ha. Mister Happy. That's me.

Dukie points the gun at Terry.

DUKIE

You sure I don't have no reason to shoot your skinny black ass?

TERRY

(conning)

Straight up, Mister Jeff. I didn't do nothing. What's with the gun anyway?

DUKIE

It's my judge and jury. Someone might try to rob me. Someone might try to break in my house. I might have to kill some nigger for trying to take my woman against her will.

The GUN HAMMER CLICKS. Terry drops to the floor... paralyzed. Dukie lowers the gun and stands over Terry, shaking him.

TERRY

I ain't dead?

DUKIE

I'm just cleaning the motherfucker.

TERRY

Mister Jeff, if I ever hear or see someone messin' with your woman, I promise, I'll kill him for you.

DUKIE

Terry, you're alright. I like you. *

Ruby Lin BARGES through the door. She sees the gun. She sees Terry stretched out on the floor. She's back out the door.

RUBY LIN

Oh Lord! What's the number for 911?!

DUKIE

(after Ruby Lin)

Baby, Baby. It's okay.

Terry jumps up and is anxious to leave.

TERRY

It's alright, Ruby Lin, I mean ... Mrs. Simmons. We're finished talkin'.

(coaching Ruby Lin)

Everything is alright.

*

RUBY LIN

You didn't try to kill him?

DUKIE

No. Terry is real cool with me.

Ruby Lin is relieved.

RUBY LIN

(to Terry)

Did you got some more spots?

*

TERRY

(to Dukie)

You think I can get some more spots to perform?

*

DUKIE

(slightly suspect)

Ruby Lin mentioned that to me. Sure ... yeah, sure, you can have some more spots. You did good tonite, and, to tell you the truth, I haven't seen my wife this excited about anything in a long time.

*
*
*
*
*

TERRY

Really? Wow!

*

DUKIE

(suspicious)

Um, hum, real excited.

*

He fondles his gun.

*

DUKIE (Cont.)

Shit had me wonderin' for a minute.

TERRY

Not here, not me. I'm strictly a professional.

Terry moves to make his exit. Ruby Lin stops him.

TERRY (Cont.)

Gotta go. Thanks for the spots.

RUBY LIN

Terry, see me before you go home. I want to give you some notes on your routine.

Dukie takes serious note.

TERRY

Sure. I'm gonna hang around and watch some of the other comics. I'll be downstairs.

As Terry exits Dukie looks after him with a raised eyebrow.

42B INT. HALLWAY

42B

Terry is happily relieved to be alive.

42C INT. OFFICE

42C

As soon as the door closes, Dukie gets into it.

DUKIE

Now what's up? What's the deal with this young boy?

RUBY LIN

Dukie, get real for a minute.

DUKIE

I'll be real. I'll be real interested in what the hell is going on.

RUBY LIN

I'll tell you what's going on. I've finally had enough of that silly slut with her name on the front of our building disrespecting me. That's what.

Dukie is caught off guard. The wind knocked out of his sails.

DUKIE

Baby, what are you talking about? *

RUBY LIN

Aretha! 'Cuss her ass out and let her know who the hell I am around here. *

DUKIE

(pleading to reason)

Baby, it isn't that easy. She's our cash draw.

RUBY LIN

Dukie, you should never let any ol' woman get that much power over your mind unless...

Ruby Lin braces herself to ask the big question.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)

...Dukie...are you...boinkin' Aretha?

DUKIE

(adamant)

Hell no! It's strictly business.

(caving in)

Look, if it'll make you feel better, I'll talk to her. Alright?

RUBY LIN

I'm glad you see it my way.

Dukie shakes his head and exits with another problem on his plate.

As Dukie shuts the door, Ruby Lin reaches behind and gives her panties a little tug. They're riding up. The elastic pops. *

RUBY LIN (Cont.)

That 'ho is just too basic. *

43 EXT. FREEWAY - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

43

DRIVE SHOT. The taxicab is weaving in and out of freeway traffic well beyond the speed limit. From lane to lane, speeding up and slowing down, all in an attempt to be at the head of the pack.

44 INT. CAB - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

44

Percy is holding on for dear life. Suddenly, his stomach turns upside down. His face contorts. It's vomit time and he can't find the window button. His guts want to spill.

44 CONTINUED:

44

He reaches across to the front seat and sneaks the driver's giant Rasta hat. Just in time. His head disappears behind the driver's seat as he loads the hat with vomit. Percy comes back up with a slimy smile, like nothing ever happened, and slips the hat back onto the front seat.

45 INT. DUKIE'S CABARET ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

45

Kimmie and Jackie sit in silence with plenty of space between them. They stare at the comic on stage and exchange not a word or glance. Terry slips into the booth next to Jackie. Jackie has to move over and make room. To avoid contact with Jackie, Kimmie moves, too, almost falling on the floor. Terry and Jackie leap and catch her, just in time.

*

KIMMIE

Oops! Thank you.

TERRY

No problem. By the way, I'm Terry.

KIMMIE

Oh, hi. I'm Kimmie.

TERRY

(excitedly)

Kimmie? The special lady? I've heard a lot about you from Jackie. This calls for a celebration. Waitress, bring my friends a round of Diet Pepsis.

KIMMIE

(a little reassured)

You did? About me?

(to Jackie)

You told him I was special?

JACKIE

(slightly depressed)

Yeah! I did. I told him.

Kimmie blushes.

*

TERRY

In fact, if I can hook up a lady for later on, we can celebrate my career move. I got more spots.

JACKIE

(somber)

I keep telling you, don't play down your talent. It has a lot to do with it.

TERRY

I keep telling you, politics and talent go hand in hand. Meanwhile, I got to find me a lady.

Terry slides out of the booth.

TERRY (Cont.)

You two should act like you know each other.

He leaves. The couple look at each other and slowly move closer.

JACKIE

You are special.

46 INT. DUKIE'S BACKSTAGE - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

46

There's a KNOCK AT THE DOOR. Kwame opens it. It's the two Bad Girls standing in the doorway. *

KWAME

You must be looking for me?

Roach pushes Kwame aside.

ROACH

They're lookin' for a man, Kwame.

BAD GIRL #1

We're looking for Jackie.

KWAME

(bullshitting)

Jackie isn't here. But he said if anybody comes looking for him, they should come on in and get to know me.

ROACH

(conning)

I'm sure he'll be right back. C'mon in. Get comfortable.

KWAME

Is there anything I can help you with?

BAD GIRL #2

No, not really. The two of us have a bet going to see who can boink him first.

ROACH

Boink! Boink! I drive a Corvette. *

KWAME

Well, if that's the case, I think there's something you oughta know. Jackie is into hot pinks, pastels, and miniature poodles. *

BAD GIRL #1

Well, if he is, he'll wanna be a man after I finish with him. *

ROACH

(pretending gay)

I got a hot pink poodle with pastel toe nails. *

KWAME

Sisters, wait for Jackie. See, Roach is trying to con y'all. Me, I'm more honest and out front about it. I'm gonna be a man. I'm just gonna get down and beg. Please ... Pretty please. *

They enter and sit. Kwame closes the door. Roach swishes across the room and sits right between them. Kwame begs. *

47 INT. DUKIE'S CABARET ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

47

Jackie is on stage. ANTONIO waits in the wings.

JACKIE

We've got a special guest this evening. Someone who you've seen in "Harlem Nights," on the Arsenio show, and on "Live at the Apollo." Let's put our hands together and welcome a comic all the way from New York City, Antonio Rock!

The audience knows and loves Antonio. As his walk on MUSIC booms, the audience applauds wildly. As Jackie exits and Antonio moves to center stage, the two exchange fives. Antonio, now at center stage, grabs the mike, looks at it, throws it on the floor, and leaves. The audience begs him back. Knowing he's got them, Antonio comes back and launches into a killer set.

Aretha is SIGNING AUTOGRAPHS outside the Ladies room. Dukie approaches. He tries to get her attention.

FEMALE FAN #1

Girl, you sure know funny.

FEMALE FAN #2

We got to laffin' so hard on the job
that girlfriend bent over and hit the
erase button on the computer.

THE CAMERA FRAMES Female Fan #1. She has extremely large breasts. Aretha notices.

ARETHA

Baby, you got enough cup to erase
Webster's entire dictionary and a set of
encyclopedias.

DUKIE

(urgent)

Aretha, I gotta speak to you for a
minute.

ARETHA

Sure can. Excuse me for a minute.
It's Mister Ready Teller.

Aretha crosses to Dukie and they walk toward a quiet corner.

DUKIE

Aretha, I hate to bring this up...

ARETHA

...Uh oh. I've never seen this look
before. Something is bugging you. What
is it?

DUKIE

It's... It's Ruby Lin. She...

ARETHA

(adamant)

Dukie, I can understand if you gotta be
married to her, but keep that ingrown
toenail of yours away from me.

DUKIE

(pleading for reason)

How can I keep her away? She's my wife!
Ruby owns half of everything I own,
including the club.

ARETHA

Correction! Old Thunderbuns doesn't own half of me. I've finally decided. I'm here for you and only for you. That's how I want it.

*
*
*
*

DUKIE

(taken by surprise)

For me? And only me? What you mean?

*

ARETHA

Just what I said. When we first met two years ago, it was like magic. I knew then it was gonna be me and you. For a long, long time.

*
*
*
*

DUKIE

You did? For a long time? A long time how?

*
*

ARETHA

Look, I know it's been hard.

*

DUKIE

It still is.

*

ARETHA

But, it's been awful sweet. And, you've been real good to me under the circumstances.

*
*
*

DUKIE

I've been as good as I could.

*

ARETHA

That's right! Dukie! Baby! You're not tied to me like you're tied to her! Kinda tied.

*
*
*

DUKIE

(pondering)

Whoa, wait a minute. You're messing up my head.

*
*

ARETHA

(probing)

Well, we're like unmarried partners almost. You can have more than one partner of one partner's thing is better than another partner's thing in a certain area.

*
*
*
*
*
*

DUKIE
 (misreading Aretha's
 intentions; smitten)
 Yeah! I can deal with that.

ARETHA
 And you've always known what I
 like. A man. A real strong man.

DUKIE
 (falling)
 Hello! It sounds like me.

ARETHA
 Darling, you've got to do what's
 best for you and me and our bank
 account. We're gonna grow rich
 and old... together.

DUKIE
 (dreamily)
 Yes, we are.

ARETHA
 Ruby Lin'll survive.

DUKIE
 Sure she will.

ARETHA
 (hypnotically)
 Put her out of your mind and just
 think about us and our success. Be
 the man that you know you are. You
 got that? Dukie, you're the man.

Dukie's heart swells. He has completely misread the
 situation. Lusty music fills the room.

DUKIE
 I'm the man, baby. You just do
 your funny thing. I'll take care
 of the rest.

Dukie strides off in gunfighter fashion.

ARETHA
 Go get 'em, cowboy! I mean cow-man.
 Cow-man?

49 EXT. DUKIE'S PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

49

Kimie and Jackie stroll arm in arm.

JACKIE

Sometimes it gets a little too loud in there.

KIMMIE

I don't mind the noise. It's those two women.

JACKIE

Forget them. I don't know them, don't like them, and hope I never see them again.

50 INT. KIMMIE'S CAR - NIGHT

50

They get to Kimmie's car. She unlocks the door. He opens the door for her. Kimmie gets in.

KIMMIE

Don't you have to be back inside for the show?

Jackie looks at his watch.

JACKIE

Not for another ten minutes. We can sit in the car and listen to some music, look at the stars. Or...

He moves to kiss her. She holds him off.

KIMMIE

...or what?

JACKIE

...or...maybe just let me inhale some more of that killer perfume.

Jackie takes a deep inhale. He closes her door and tips around to the driver's side and gets in. He pops a cassette into the player. The music is romantic.

KIMMIE

You are so silly.

JACKIE

Call it silly. Call it anything. But, it's you.

KIMMIE

And I bet I'm the only girl you call.

JACKIE

Not true. I call Janet Jackson five times a day. She never comes to the phone, but I still call her.

KIMMIE

Who else?

JACKIE

Oprah Winfrey, Marsha Warfield, Roseanne...

KIMMIE

Oprah and Roseanne?

JACKIE

I'm a heavy weight romantic. *

KIMMIE

I don't like to play around with feelings like that.

JACKIE

Feelings? I hope they're for me.

KIMMIE

Maybe.

Jackie puts his arm around Kimmie. She doesn't resist. They look deeply into each other's eyes. Their lips meet. They kiss deeply. A head slowly appears from behind them. They are too deep in their kiss to even take notice. The head belongs to a female body that was hiding on the floor behind the back seat. It's Bad Girl #2. She studies the situation. Then, she speaks.

BAD GIRL #2

Shit, woman. Let me get some.

She scares the wits out of Kimmie and Jackie. Kimmie screams.

JACKIE

What the fuck?

BAD GIRL #2

If I got to share the shit with her, let's get busy.

Jackie gets out of the car. He reaches back and pulls the Bad Girl out.

JACKIE

Get out of my car!

BAD GIRL #2

Ugh! I like it rough.

She lunges to kiss him. Jackie dodges her as she brushes by. He jumps in the car and locks it. She presses her lips against the window. Lipstick kisses soon adorn the glass. She AD LIBS passionate exclamations. Jackie tries to comfort Kimmie.

CUT TO:

51 INT. DUKIE'S BACKSTAGE - MOMENTS LATER

51

Jackie, flustered, rushes in. Roach waits impatiently.

ROACH

Where you been? The next comic is almost finished.

JACKIE

Roach, you'll never believe this shit.

ROACH

I'm cynical, I'll believe anything.

JACKIE

I invited this sister down to the club. Right? Someone I like a whole lot.

ROACH

That was your first mistake. Liking her. Anytime you like someone, they end up being gay, married or having some kind of terminal illness.

JACKIE

You are real encouraging.

ROACH

I'm just trying to help.

JACKIE

Tonight for some strange reason, women just find me irresistible.

ROACH

If those two freaks who came to the dressing room are any example, forget your date.

JACKIE

Someone special doesn't come along that often.

ROACH

You're right! Those two freaks look real special.

JACKIE

I gotta admit. They do look kinda good.

ROACH

Kinda good? Maybe your dick needs an eye exam.

The audience is BOOING in the Cabaret Room. BUSBY, the comic on stage, has bombed.

JACKIE

Let me get this comic off and get you on. We can talk later.

Busby exits the stage in anguish as Jackie exits in the wings. He gives Busby a pat on the back and moves center stage to cool out the raucous crowd.

JACKIE (O.S.)

Ladies and gentlemen, tonight we have a very special guest in the house. Could you put the spot on Eddie Murphy!

The crowd gets silent and looks around.

JACKIE (O.S.)

That's Eddie over there. The Eddie Murphy who works in the gas station on 105th Street.

Catching onto his gag, the audience laughs. Busby is back stage. He latches onto Roach.

BUSBY

Damn, I was terrible! Did you catch my set?

ROACH

The last five minutes.

BUSBY

What'd you think?

ROACH

I think you've got two options. Either get out of the business or kill yourself.

52 INT. DUKIE'S CABARET ROOM STAGE - NIGHT

52

Jackie is on stage.

JACKIE

And now, I'd like to bring on our next comic. All the way from the Windy City of Chicago. Let's hear it for Roach Kennedy.

APPLAUSE. As the walk on MUSIC plays, Roach moves to center stage. Jackie and Roach slap hands. Jackie returns to the wings.

53 INT. DUKIE'S BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

53

JACKIE

(to himself)

What am I gonna do?

At that moment, a BLACK ANGEL appears on Jackie's shoulder.

ANGEL

Son, let your heart lead the way.

A BLACK DEVIL appears on Jackie's other shoulder.

DEVIL

Your penis has a mind of its own. It has no conscience and it needs daily exercise.

54 INT. DUKIE'S CABARET ROOM STAGE - NIGHT

54

Roach launches into his set. His arrogance comes across. The crowd's hisses indicate their displeasure. Their negativity escalates. Roach -- who loves being in the hole -- finally digs his way out and wins the room over.

55 INT. DUKIE'S STOREROOM - MOMENTS LATER

55

Ruby Lin has Terry backing up. She's three steps behind him waving a club.

RUBY LIN

What you mean you don't need me no more? I've been cheating on my husband and now you want to talk some amnesia shit.

TERRY
(still backing up)
Ruby Lin, don't make me get
physical with you.

RUBY LIN
That's exactly what I want. You
are gonna live up to your end of
the bargain, Mister Love Machine.

TERRY
Love?! Who said anything about
love? This was business!

She finally backs Terry into a corner.

RUBY LIN
You want me to tell my Dukie that
you've been using his wife...for
business purposes?

TERRY
Why you gonna do some shit like
that?

RUBY LIN
He shot James 'cause he said I was
seeing him three times a week.

TERRY
Who was James?

RUBY LIN
My late hairdresser.

TERRY
(terrified)
Ruby Lin, I don't think we need to
bring Dukie into this.

RUBY LIN
Then, I'm glad we had this talk.

TERRY
Do you use other men like this?

RUBY LIN
(affectionately)
Uh, uh. You're the first . . .

Ruby Lin stuffs her hand down into Terry's pants.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)

. . . and only man outside of holy matrimony that ever woo-woo-woo'ed me. And, you gonna get up off something tonight.

The door flies open. It's Rudy Rae, the cook. He enters.

RUDY RAE

I need a bottle of catsup.

Ruby Lin hastily yanks her hand out of Terry's pants. Terry bends over, grimacing in pain.

RUDY RAE (Cont.)

I didn't break in on nothing, did I?

RUBY LIN

Nope. Terry was doing some heavy lifting for me. I think he musta' got a hernia. Terry, you OK?

Terry is bent over in pain, moaning. Rudy Rae philosophizes. *

56 EXT. 7-ELEVEN PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER 56

A loud, speakers-blasting, low-riding Nissan pick up pulls into the lot. It parks. Bigg gets out and enters the 7-11.

57 INT. 7-ELEVEN - CONTINUOUS 57

Bigg enters. The Korean owner sits behind the counter. Bigg approaches him.

BIGG

You got my cookies?

KOREAN

Plenty cookies over there. You go look. Pay me. I no want trouble.

Bigg glares at the Korean as he moves to the cookie section. He searches. No Chip Ahoys. Frustrated, he moves back to the counter.

BIGG

Why are you out of my cookies, man.

KOREAN

We got plenty cookies.

BIGG
No, Chips. No Chip Ahoys?

KOREAN
No, shit? No use that language in here.

BIGG
I said Chips.

KOREAN
You say shit. No shit.

BIGG
(frustrated)
You got a phone?

KOREAN
Over there. But, no use shit.

BIGG
I can't use the phone?

KOREAN
You can use phone, but no use shit!

Bigg walks to the phone and dials. It rings.

RUDY RAE (O.S.)
Dukie's.

BIGG
Let me speak to Aretha.

58 EFX: SPLIT SCREEN - 7-ELEVEN/DUKIE'S BACKSTAGE 58
A/B

RUDY RAE
She can't come to the phone right now.
She's busy.

BIGG
Busy? With who?

RUDY RAE
With about three hundred people and it
looks like they're having a good time.

BIGG
(jealousy setting in)
Are you one of them?

RUDY RAE
Yeah! She's a lot of fun.

ARETHA (Cont.)

Thank you and good night.

Aretha exits the stage as Jackie enters.

JACKIE

Aretha, good set. But, you were a little hard on Mrs. Simmons.

ARETHA

Can't Fluffy take a joke?

Jackie moves to center stage.

JACKIE

Let's give it up for Aretha!

The audience is ecstatic.

60 INT. DUKIE'S - LADIES ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

60

Kimmie takes a critical stare at herself in the mirror. First, she musses with her hair. She pins it up. Then she unbuttons her knit blouse and slips it off her shoulders.

Kimmie takes off her skirt. She tears a couple of inches off the bottom and rolls up the waist. She puts it back on. Now, it's a tight and short mini skirt.

61 EXT. A DARK STREET IN WATTS - MOMENTS LATER

61

DRIVING SHOT. A speeding vehicle approaches CAMERA. It is Percy's cab. It peels into an all night gas station and SCREECHES to a standstill.

62 INT. CAB - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

62

Reggae music is BLASTING. Percy is shaking with fear.

DRIVER

I'll go inside and ask for directions.

PERCY

(pleading)

No, please let me go.

DRIVER

No, you sit back and relax.

PERCY

Please, I'm begging you. Let me be the one.

WHITE MAN

Call you a cab?

PERCY

Yes! Yes!

WHITE MAN

Don't no fucking cabs run out here this hour of the night. What's wrong with the one you is in?

PERCY

(whispering)

He's trying to kill me. Can you drive me somewhere?

WHITE MAN

(under his breath to woman)

Annie Mae, this motherfucker is on that PCP shit.

PERCY

Please. I'll pay you double.

WHITE MAN

No! We ain't leaving the station to drive yo' ass nowhere.

Percy has a 'What Am I Gonna Do' look on his face. He looks back at the cab.

PERCY

How do I get to Dukie's. It's at 118904 South Central.

WHITE MAN

Easy. 'Bout two miles from here. I wouldn't walk it if I was you.

(pointing)

You just go up there a bit. Turn right for a little ways. After a while you run right into a shopping center, then a church. Take a left and your third right. If you don't see nothing after a few miles, you done passed the motherfucker.

PERCY

Thanks. You give great directions. Ever think about joining the Navy and navigating nuclear submarines?

He pitifully walks back to the cab. Opens the door. Makes the sign of the cross and gets in. Before he can even close the door, the cab rockets out of the gas station.

64 INT. DUKIE'S - LADIES ROOM - NIGHT

64

Kimmie is still in the mirror. She takes off her glasses and applies some makeup. Kimmie has transformed into an ESSENCE cover girl. She moves to exit. Oops, wrong door. She's in a stall. Kimmie can't see too well without her glasses. She finds her way out and exits the Ladies room.

65 INT. DUKIE'S - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

65

Kimmie walks down the hallway toward the Cabaret Room. She catches an admiring guy's eye.

GUY #1

Princess. I know a photographer who can get you that Jet centerfold . . . or The Players.

KIMMIE

No, thank you. I teach school.

66 INT. DUKIE'S CABARET ROOM - NIGHT

66

As Kimmie enters the Cabaret Room, she gets more admiring stares. She moves to her seat and slips into it. The man at the table next to her can't resist.

GUY #2

(a continental air)

Seldom do I meet such a devastating beauty from the states. Are you Ethiopian?

KIMMIE

No, I'm from Washington, D.C. And where are you from?

GUY #2

I live in Paris.

KIMMIE

So what are you doing here?

GUY #2

Paris is overrun with tourists at this time of the year, so, I'm summering in Watts.

KIMMIE

That's nice, to be able to afford Paris
and Watts.

The WAITRESS arrives with an order. Kimmie is surprised.
She didn't order anything.

KIMMIE

What's this? I didn't order anything.

WAITRESS

Compliments of that gentleman over there.

The Waitress points. The admirer waves enthusiastically.

WAITRESS (CONT'D)

It's a Budweiser and a bucket of hot
wings.

Kimmie waves back politely.

KIMMIE

Th...a...nks.

Jackie slides into the booth. He notices Kimmie's change in
appearance.

JACKIE

(unpleasantly surprised)

What'd you do to yourself?

KIMMIE

(hoping to impress him)

I didn't do much, really.

JACKIE

Yes you did!

KIMMIE

You want something to eat?

Kimmie offers Jackie a wing.

JACKIE

I thought you didn't eat greasy food.

KIMMIE

That man over there sent it to me.

Kimmie looks and points. The guy waves more
enthusiastically. Kimmie waves back. Jackie is jealous.

JACKIE

I don't like this.

KIMMIE

How do you think those two hussies make me feel?

JACKIE

Kimie, I don't even know them.

KIMMIE

So! I don't know wing-man.

JACKIE

This is our first date. I wanted it to be special and it's turning...

The sound of violins fill the air. A Barry White voice comes from an overweight Barry White look-alike. It's lush voice speaks to the musical accompaniment.

THE VOICE

...BABY, YOU ARE MY ONE, MY LOVE, MY EVERYTHING. THE ONE I WANT, THE ONE I NEED. YOU MAKE MY FAT CELLS SING...

This makes Jackie more jealous. Kimie is flabbergasted, as the voice continues its 'uuu...hhhh, baby's...'

67 INT. DUKIE'S - DUKIE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

67

Ruby Lin tries to light a cigarette. She is so livid that she can't light the match. One. Two. Three. Four matches. No light. She throws the cigarette and the matchbook on the floor and paces. Dukie has a worried look on his face.

RUBY LIN

Dukie, I've had it, I want that HoHo 'ho fired...

*
*

DUKIE

No, I can't.

*

RUBY LIN

What do you mean, no, you can't?

*

DUKIE

Just what I said. I have my reasons. Aretha stays.

*
*

RUBY LIN

What's good for your business might not be good for your marriage.

DUKIE

I considered that.

RUBY LIN

Well, Mister Night Club, just what did your minute, business minded, lack of concern, no-give-a-damn-about-his-poor-little-old-wife, brain ring up in the marriage column? *

DUKIE

That she's good for your marriage, too. *

RUBY LIN

Some extraneous, joke-telling wench is good for our marriage. Give me a break.

DUKIE

Aretha helps to fill that room out there. And because of her, you get to live high off the hog, my dear. You get to buy all your clothes at the Mall, you've got a freezer full of chicken and Eskimo Pies, and you drive a brand new 1988 Nova.

RUBY LIN

You knew I was a princess when you married me.

DUKIE

True. But, Aretha is holding up one leg of the throne. If she leaves, you got a three-legged chair.

RUBY LIN

I don't need no chair. I'll stand. 'Cause she's going.

DUKIE

Ruby Lin, I'm the man and Aretha ain't going a damn place. So just get that silly idea out of your silly little head.

RUBY LIN

She ain't going?

Dukie doesn't respond.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)
I knew something was going on between
the two of you. Now you're gonna take
her over me?

*
*

DUKIE
Who said something was going on? I
just said she ain't going! Nowhere!

RUBY LIN
Alright, Mister Entrepreneur. The next
time you want me, call my divorce
lawyer, 'cause I ain't gonna be your
other woman.

*

Ruby Lin gets no reaction. She tries again.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)
I'm through. I'm washing my hands of
you and her.

Ruby Lin still gets no reaction.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)
And, no more head while you're watching
your Bu Vogue videos.

*

DUKIE
She stays!

RUBY LIN
You and your new woman can forget you
ever knew me!

*

Ruby Lin storms out dramatically, slamming the door. Dukie
is stunned. Suddenly, the door flies open again. Ruby Lin
sticks her head back in.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)
You no good, dirty, low life,
nappy-headed, Alf looking dog.

*
*

She slams the door again.

Ruby Lin storms down the hallway. Everybody gets out of her
way. She spots and walks up on Kwame, who is with Bad Girl
#1. Ruby Lin's anxious.

RUBY LIN
Where's Terry?

KWAME

I haven't seen him. Maybe he's in the dressing room.

Ruby Lin storms off toward the dressing room. Kwame continues rapping to the Bad Girl.

KWAME

What could you possibly see in Jackie? He's too intellectual.

BAD GIRL #1

I don't want him for his brain. I'm interested in a deeper relationship.

69 INT. DUKIE'S - DRESSING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

69

Finished for the night, Roach is packing up his things. Terry is pressing Bad Girl #2. Roach is annoyed.

TERRY

If you're free for a little rendezvousing, we can go to my place, sip on some chilled malt liquor, light a candle, and listen to some Eddie Murphy albums.

BAD GIRL #2

(sarcastic)

How romantic.

TERRY

(missing it)

Eddie's my man.

There's a frantic KNOCKING at the door.

ROACH

Who is it?

RUBY LIN (O.S.)

Ruby Lin. Is Terry there?

TERRY

(whispering)

Tell her I'm not here.

ROACH

Hey, it's the boss's wife. I can't do that.

Roach crosses and opens the door. Ruby Lin enters.

RUBY LIN
(intensely)

Roach, I need to talk to Terry... alone.

Roach grabs Bad Girl #2 and pulls her along.

ROACH

Sure, we were just leaving.

Roach and Bad Girl #2 exit. Ruby Lin shuts the door.

TERRY

Ruby Lin, I don't think...

Ruby Lin silences Terry with a kiss.

RUBY LIN

Terry, baby. I'm leaving Dukie.

Terry chokes.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)

For you.

Terry's choking turns into a shortness of breath. He begins to hyperventilate. Ruby Lin is hugging on him and trying to cool him out as Jackie flies through the door.

JACKIE

Kwame, you're up nex...

Ruby Lin, guilt written all over her face, turns to face him.

RUBY LIN

(playing it off)

Oh! Hi, Jackie.

Over her shoulder, Terry mouths, 'HELP'. Jackie gets the message. Instead of helping, he's gonna have some fun.

JACKIE

You know, Mrs. Simmons, I was just telling Terry. If anybody could teach him about the politics of this business, it would have to be you.

RUBY LIN

Oh, I'm helping him.

JACKIE

Well, you're doing a great job.

(to Terry)

Terry, you devil you.

Terry mouths, "Please help." Jackie chuckles inside, closes the door, and exits. Ruby Lin turns back to face Terry. He starts to hyperventilate again.

70 INT. DUKIE'S CABARET ROOM STAGE - NIGHT

70

Kwame's on stage in his black sunglasses and black leather jacket. He just stares at the crowd. They're waiting for his opener. Finally, he speaks.

KWAME

I'm tired of white people always thinking I wanna rob 'em. Just cause I'm wearing a ski mask and carrying a sawed off shot gun.

The crowd roars. Kwame's off to a flying start.

71 INT. DUKIE'S FREEZER - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

71

It's dimly lit and cold. Ruby Lin has Terry backed up against a wall, kissing on him. He looks panicked.

TERRY

What about my career?

RUBY LIN

We can start all over. After the divorce, I'll have enough money to buy you your own club.

Ruby Lin kisses him again.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)

Your kisses are cold.

TERRY

(shivering)

Shit, we're in a damn refrigerator!

RUBY LIN

Let me heat 'em up.

Ruby Lin sinks out of frame. The CAMERA continues to frame Terry as he watches her descent. We hear a zipper unzip. Terry's look of panic turns to a mix of panic and ecstasy.

TERRY
(pleading)
Ruby Lin, you know I'm weak. You know I'm weak... a little more to the left.

RUBY LIN
Yeah, but I can't get the zipper down. It's stuck.

*
*
*

Jackie is on stage.

JACKIE
How many people out there still believe in love?

The audience AD LIBS both positive and negative opinions: "It's cheaper to keep her." "First, I look at the purse." "A good man is hard to find, honey." "You are right about that, girl." The audience laughs at the responses.

JACKIE (Cont.)
I need you all to help me. See that lady right over there?

He points to Kimmie and the follow spot highlights her. Kimmie tries to wave off the spot. She's embarrassed.

JACKIE (Cont.)
She's my date for the evening. I've been trying to get to this woman for the longest time. I think I love her.

The audience AD LIBS: "Oh, isn't that sweet." "Nigger, you're bullshitting." "You just trying to get some." "Brother, she don't want you, she wants me." "Give it up, go on, tell the woman." "Honey, you better get him while you can."

JACKIE (Cont.)
(sincerely)
Kimmie, I just felt like I had to say it in front of everybody.

Jackie looks straight at Kimmie. The crowd gets more into it.

PERSON #1
What you gonna do, girl?

PERSON #2

You better go on.

Kimmie is in the spotlight. All of the attention is a little too much for her. She splits. Jackie panics.

JACKIE

Kimmie! Wait...

Jackie jumps off the stage, walks across several table tops, hits the floor and goes after her.

73 INT. DUKIE'S - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

73

A shaken Percy has just arrived. He walks down the hallway with his suitcase. He looks disoriented.

PERCY

Anybody know where I can find the owner?

RUDY RAE

I think he's upstairs in his office.

PERCY

Where's that?

Percy looks for the stairs. Kimmie runs by Percy. He asks her.

PERCY (Cont.)

I'm new here. Maybe you can help me...

Kimmie misinterprets the intent of Percy's remark. She thinks it's another man hitting on her. She responds emotionally.

KIMMIE

Just leave me alone. Leave me alone.

Percy is stunned. Another episode in this night's bad dream. He stares after her.

PERCY

What'd I say? I'm just...

Just then, Percy feels an energy rush by. He turns to look. It's Jackie running after Kimmie.

JACKIE

(to Percy)

Why you gonna upset her?

PERCY

I'm just a comic looking for work. You won't believe what happened to me. I was just...

Jackie is out of earshot. Percy re-groups himself and steps off in search of the stairs. The Bad Girls run to him.

BAD GIRLS

Where's Jackie?/You seen Jackie?

PERCY

Who's Jackie.

BAD GIRL #1

You know! Jackie!

PERCY

(shakes head 'no')

Naw. I haven't seen him.

The girls take off. The PAY PHONE RINGS. Percy picks it up and answers.

PERCY (Cont.)

Hello! Dukies?

BIGG (O.S.)

Who am I talking to?

PERCY

Percy.

BIGG (O.S.)

Percy, this is Bigg.

PERCY

Bigg? Why they call you Bigg?

BIGG (O.S.)

It's personal, I don't wanna talk about it.

PERCY

Oh. You one of those secretive brothers. With a name like Bigg, you are either seven feet tall, a midget or got a microscopic wee wee.

BIGG (O.S.)

Percy, I didn't get my cookies and I'm pissed off. Where's my woman?

PERCY

(joking)

Your woman is right here with me getting my cookies.

Percy laughs at his own joke. Bigg hangs up. He stares at the receiver before hanging it up.

PERCY (Cont.)

(to self)

I can feel it. Tonight, I'm gonna die.

74 OMIT

74

75 EXT. DUKIE'S - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

75

Jackie follows Kimmie outside. She's emotional. Jackie is a step behind. He offers his tenderness.

JACKIE

Kimmie, I wasn't trying to embarrass you.

KIMMIE

(emotional)

Look at me! I just wanna get away from here.

(suddenly remembering)

Oh, shit! I forgot my pocketbook. My car keys are in it.

She stops, takes off her shoes, and heads back to the club as the Bad Girls exit.

BAD GIRL #1

There he is. Jackie, come to Momma.

JACKIE

(yelling; pointing)

Look, stay away from me.

KIMMIE

If you like a public spectacle, there it is. I'm sure they'd screw you on stage if it would get them noticed.

JACKIE

I don't care about them.

Kimmie, then Jackie, brush right by the Bad Girls and re-enter the club.

BAD GIRL #2
(attitudinally)

Why you chasing that woman when you got two fantasies chasing you? Huh? Huh? Why?

The Bad Girls are miffed. Roach and Kwame appear.

KWAME

Hi! I know an all nite spot where we can go bowling.

ROACH

I got a spot where we can just go all nite.

BAD GIRL #1

I want Jackie.

BAD GIRL #2

Me, too.

They run back into the club. Kwame and Roach follow.

76 INT. DUKIE'S BACKSTAGE - CONTINUOUS

76

Dukie approaches. He queries his workers.

DUKIE

Anybody seen Terry? I need an MC.

HISPANIC WORKER #1

No comprende.

HISPANIC WORKER #2

Terry? I think sometimes he go in the freezer to rehearse his jokes.

PERCY

(to Dukie)

Excuse me, are you the owner?

Dukie keeps stepping. Percy is two steps behind.

DUKIE

Yeah! I'm busy right now.

PERCY

Anything I can help you with? I'll do the dishes, wash your car... I'll repave the entire parking lot.

DUKIE

I just lost my MC. I'm looking for one of my other comics to fill in.

PERCY

I'm a comic. I can do it.

DUKIE

What's your name? You ever MC before?

PERCY

(lying)

Yeah! Sure! I know what to do. My name's Percy.

DUKIE

Wait here. I may need you.

PERCY

I'll be waiting right here. I'm not gonna move from this spot. I'll stand right here in this same spot for a week if you want me to.

Percy freezes in the spot at attention, ready to serve. Dukie walks to the freezer. The door is locked. He finds his key, unlocks the door and steps inside.

77 INT. DUKIE'S FREEZER - CONTINUOUS

77

It's dark. Dukie fumbles for the light switch. He finds it and flicks it on. Standing directly across from Dukie, on the other side of a chest high barrier of boxes, is Terry. He is leaning back against the wall, his eyes shut, and moaning with ecstasy. Dukie startles him.

DUKIE

Terry!

Terry's eyes open and widen. He's aghast.

TERRY

Y...esss..., Mister Simmons.

DUKIE

What the fuck are you doing in my freezer?

TERRY
(stuttering)
N...N...N...Nothing, sir.

Ruby Lin's head suddenly appears from behind the boxes.

RUBY LIN
He's in here with me.

If Dukie's look could kill, Ruby Lin would be dead. He studies the situation intently.

DUKIE
Oh! Is that right? In the freezer with my wife. And what was my wife doing on her knees? Polishing your damn toenails?

TERRY
(almost in tears)
No, sir. Look, I can explain. Mrs. Simmons was trying to fix my zipper. I'm a victim of circumcission...I mean circumstance. *

RUBY LIN
You don't want me. *

TERRY
(quick to respond)
I don't either.. Really, really, I don't. *

Dukie pulls out his pistol and points it at a spot right between Terry's eyes.

DUKIE
Yes you do. You want her.

TERRY
No, I don't. Really, Mister Simmons. Really. My dick, it's all shriveled up. *

Terry demonstrates with his fingers. *

TERRY (Cont.)
This big, teenie...

RUBY LIN
(calling the bluff)
Dukie, if you're gonna shoot him, just go ahead and get it over with.

TERRY

(copping a plea)

No don't, please! Don't shoot me. I can explain everything. This was all a career move, Mister Simmons. Ruby Lin, I mean Mrs. Simmons told me she could help me to get work at the Club.

RUBY LIN

(aghast)

This little boney motherfucker was hitting on me!

DUKIE

(to Ruby Lin)

And I'm supposed to believe you just fought boney off until you couldn't fight him off no more.

*
*
*

TERRY

No, sir. It was strictly professional.

RUBY LIN

What about you and Aretha?

*

DUKIE

What about me and Aretha?

*

RUBY LIN

The two of you been carryin' on.

*

DUKIE

Not in the frozen food section.

*

RUBY LIN

At least somebody is paying some attention to me.

*

*

DUKIE

And Terry is gonna pay a whole lot of attention to you.

*

*

TERRY

What do you mean?

DUKIE

Just what I said. You wanna keep working at Dukir's? You wanna live?

TERRY

Yes, sir. Please.

DUKIE
 You're gonna boink Ruby Lin or die. Or,
 I can tell the judge that I killed the
 two of you in a fit of passion.

RUBY LIN
 Terry, Dukie is serious. You better get
 it up.

Terry looks at his dick. Dukie looks at his watch.

DUKIE
 I'll be back in exactly five minutes.
 You better be busy.

He moves to exit. He stops at the doorway.

DUKIE (Cont.)
 You want the lights on or off?

TERRY
 (panicked)
 Off! Please.

Dukie flicks the lights off and closes the door.

78 INT. DUKIE'S - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

78

Dukie locks the deadbolt on the freezer door, puts the key
 in his pocket, reflects deeply.

DUKIE
 (to self)
 Well, what do you know. The situation
 played right into my hands.

Percy waves.

PERCY
 I'm over here. Me. Mister Sno-Cone.
 Right where you told me to freeze.

Dukie walks to him.

DUKIE
 C'mon. You're about to get real busy.

They hurriedly walk down the hallway and into the backstage
 area.

PERCY
 What you want me to do?

MC. DUKIE

PERCY
MC? Okay, here goes.

Percy gathers himself, exits the wings.

79 INT. DUKIE'S CABARET ROOM - NIGHT

79

Percy immediately tries to rev it up.

PERCY
Hey, y'all. I was on the corner a
minute ago and someone came up to me and
said, 'You ever MC before? I said,
"No," but I BS all the time.'

The audience responds with "That's corny" AD LIBS.
Someone throws a chair at the stage. Gunshots ring out.
Percy isn't getting over.

PERSON #1
Where's Jackie.

PERSON #2
Get that big redbone off the stage.

Percy's got heart. He's gonna hang. He throws the chair
back and tries to take command.

80 INT. DUKIE'S - DUKIE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

80

Dukie enters with Aretha on his arm. He closes the door and
locks it. He turns to Aretha and attempts to kiss her.
Stunned, she pulls back.

ARETHA
Whoa! Wait a minute. What you doing?

DUKIE
No, it's cool. I got Ruby Lin locked in
a closet with Terry.

ARETHA
With Terry? Little Terry?

DUKIE
With Terry. He was just the excuse I
needed.

ARETHA
Excuse for what?

DUKIE

To cement my thing with you.

ARETHA

What thing?

DUKIE

The love partnership you were talking about. Me and you. Making money and making love.

Dukie moves in for a kiss on the neck. Aretha pushes him away.

ARETHA

Dukie, I think you misunderstood. If Bigg ever found out, he...

Dukie kisses her on the neck.

DUKIE

...I'll get him a football contract in Canada.

Dukie gets more aggressive. Aretha holds him off.

DUKIE (Cont.)

Why you holding back? I thought this was what you wanted.

ARETHA

Yeah, the money and the fame part.

Dukie puts his arms around her. She backs off.

DUKIE

What about the love part? And, all the man stuff?

*
*

ARETHA

(uncompromising)

Dukie, you are the man. The man who employs me and launched my career. That man! You got a wife and I got a three hundred pound baby boy on steroids.

*
*
*

DUKIE

But, now I want you. The Diva, baby.

*

Dukie dives for Aretha's lips. He's not taking no. There's an insistent KNOCKING on the door. It startles them. Dukie responds.

DUKIE

Who is it!?

VOICE (O.S.)

Percy! Can I speak to you for a second.
It'll just take a second. It's about
the MC'ing.

DUKIE

Let me get rid of this guy. He's
filling in for Jackie.

Dukie and Aretha separate and gather themselves.

ARETHA

I really should go. This isn't right.

Dukie opens the door. Percy rushes inside. He's bubbling
with enthusiasm. He sees the two.

PERCY

(enthused)

They love me down there. You think I
can get some spots here at the Club?

DUKIE

(to Percy)

Good! Let's talk later.

ARETHA

(buying time)

Why don't the two of you talk.

DUKIE

(trying to get rid
of Percy)

Percy, I said comeback later and we'll
talk. I'm busy right now.

As Percy turns to leave, Bigg explodes into the room. He's
ready to kill.

BIGG

I'm gonna kill you 'cause now I know who
really been messing with my woman.

Bigg storms at Dukie and right past him. He grabs Percy,
lifting him four feet off the floor. Percy struggles. Dukie
is relieved. Aretha panics.

ARETHA

Bigg, let him go.

PERCY

Who's your woman, man?

BIGG

Talking that shit about my woman on the phone.

DUKIE

(adamant)

Don't get no blood on my rug!

ARETHA

Bigg, I have never ever seen this man before.

As Bigg hoists Percy higher, his feet dangle.

PERCY

God, please let that be the truth.

BIGG

You're lying.

PERCY

If I'm lying, who is that person behind you kissing on your woman?

Bigg drops Percy and turns to look. Percy crashes to the floor and then hauls ass out the door. Dukie gets as far away from Aretha as he can. Bigg realizes he's been duped. He's out the door, after Percy. Aretha and Dukie head out after Bigg.

DUKIE

Don't fuck up my club.

ARETHA

Bigg, he didn't do nothing.

81 INT. DUKIE'S FREEZER - MOMENTS LATER

81

Terry is panicky. Ruby Lin and Terry are working on trying to get him an erection.

TERRY

Try some more of that peanut oil.

Ruby Lin is hard at work.

RUBY LIN

How's that feel? Is it working?

Terry is shivering and holding back the tears.

TERRY

No. it ain't working! I'm fucked up.
I'm fucked up for life. Look at it.
It's dead.

Ruby Lin is still on the case.

RUBY LIN

If it don't come to life soon, all three
of us will be dead. You, me, and your
dick.

82 INT. DUKIE'S CABARET ROOM STAGE - CONTINUOUS

82

A COMIC is on stage performing.

COMIC

What do you get when you --

The comic does a double take. Percy cuts across the stage,
with Bigg a step behind.

BIGG

...cross Bigg? You cross Bigg?

Aretha is on Bigg's heals.

ARETHA

If you cross Bigg, someone's gonna die.

Dukie is steps behind Aretha. He grabs the mic.

DUKIE

(to audience)

Sorry folks, just a minor altercation.

Percy is running across the tables. Bigg, after him, storms
through tables. Turning them over and knocking them aside.
Aretha pleads.

ARETHA

Chill, big fella. Chill!

*

DUKIE

(pleads)

Control that humongous nigger.

83 INT. DUKIE'S FREEZER - CONTINUOUS

83

Ruby Lin is banging on the door.

TERRY
 (panicky)
 Ruby Lin, where you going?

RUBY LIN
 I'm gonna find Dukie and lay his ass out. Locking me in a closet with a young boy who can't get it up, while he's off somewhere fucking Aretha.

TERRY
 Aretha?

RUBY LIN
 Yes, Miss Aretha! That comedy tramp!

Rudy Rae, the cook, flings the freezer door open. She yells and storms past.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)
 Dukie, I'm looking for your black ass. Where is it?

RUDY RAE
 (to Terry)
 See if you can talk her into a raise for the cook.

Terry takes off after her.

TERRY
 Ruby Lin, be cool. He's dangerous right now.

RUBY LIN
 I'm going up in his face...cheatin' on me all this time.

RUDY RAE
 You don't get no shit like this on cable.

Rudy Rae takes off after them.

84 INT. DUKIE'S CABARET ROOM

84

It's total chaos. A string of mini-altercations and arguments. Spilled drinks. Torn clothes. Wigs ajar. Pushing, shoving. Overturned furniture. And in the middle of it all, Bigg is strangling Percy.

ARETHA
 Bigg, don't kill him.

BIGG
I wanna take him right to the edge.

DUKIE
You makin' it bad for business.

BIGG
He shouldna' messed with my woman.

PERCY
(barely audible)
I'm innocent. I'm innocent. Ask her.

BIGG
She would never do nothing behind my
back unless someone tempted her.

Aretha gives Dukie a look.

DUKIE
If someone messed with my woman, I'd do
the same thing.

Bigg squeezes harder.

PERCY
Brother! Please let me go. I wasn't
messin' with yo' woman.

RUBY LIN (O.S.)
That's right!

Ruby Lin stands atop a chair.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)
It wasn't him.

Ruby Lin points to Dukie.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)
It was that slimy, no good husband of
mine.

Everyone is aghast. Bigg drops Percy. He looks around.
Quick as a fly catcher, he grabs Dukie.

DUKIE
Now, Bigg, I can explain. Aretha works
for me. We're just friends.

Bigg smacks him. Again and again. Ruby Lin laughs at the
top of her lungs. Dukie is taking an ass whipping.

BIGG

I never liked you no how. You always reminded me of my kindergarten teacher.

Kimie and Jackie are crawling under the tables looking for her purse. She doesn't have her glasses. She's bumping into stuff.

KIMMIE

I can't see a thing without my glasses.

JACKIE

Look, I'm sorry about all this.

KIMMIE

Me, too. Is this what you call a good time?

JACKIE

It must be a full moon.

Terry runs in and straight to Jackie.

TERRY

(aghast)

Why didn't you help me?

JACKIE

Your politics got you in the shit. Let your politics get you out.

TERRY

Thanks a lot. Thanks a whole lot.

KIMMIE

Jackie! Help me find my purse!

JACKIE

(to Terry)

Cupid is on the line and I gotta take the call.

Jackie resumes looking and leaves Terry hanging.

JACKIE (Cont.)

(to Kimie, sweetly)

I'm looking, baby.

Terry spots Bigg whipping on Dukie. He crosses.

TERRY

Mister Simmons, I'm real sorry. I hope this won't effect our relationship.

DUKIE
 (struggling with
 the words)
 You're the cause of this shit!

The whipping is getting serious. Ruby Lin realizes it.

RUBY LIN
 Bigg, that's enough!

BIGG
 No, it ain't.

RUBY LIN
 I said that's enough.

Bigg won't stop. Ruby Lin tries to pull him back. No go. She takes a swing at Bigg. Now Aretha jumps in. Ruby Lin gives Aretha a Tyson punch. Aretha's out cold. RUDY RAE, the cook, slaps Bigg with an iron frying pan. Bigg grins.

RUDY RAE
 (to Ruby Lin)
 Can I get a raise?

RUBY LIN
 And a dishwasher.

RUDY RAE
 And, how about a --

Terry grabs the pan out of Rudy Rae's hand and slaps Bigg. This time Bigg falls.

85 EXT. DUKIE'S - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

85

Jackie walks beside Kimmie toward her car. He pleads reason.

JACKIE
 Kimmie, why are you putting yourself
 through all of these changes?

KIMMIE
 I don't know. This night has got me
 all confused. *

He catches her and stops her.

JACKIE
 Don't change! I like you. Just you.
 Not some fly girl.

She gathers herself.

KIMMIE
(cynically)
Yeah, right!

JACKIE
That's what I want. You don't need miniskirts and make up. I just want Kimmie. The Kimmie who's beautiful inside and out. That one.

KIMMIE
Jackie, I just wanna go home and get up and go to church in the morning. That's all.

JACKIE
Can I come?

KIMMIE
To church?

JACKIE
That, too.

KIMMIE
Don't you have to work some more?

JACKIE
That can wait. This is about right now.

Kimmie gives it a long thought.

JACKIE (Cont.)
Please! I'll sleep on the couch.

She looks into his eyes deeply. And then gives him a light kiss. The light kiss deepens . . . and deepens. Kimmie pulls back. She hands Jackie her keys.

KIMMIE
You drive!

JACKIE
I can't. I've never driven a car in my life.
(enthusiastic)
I can cook breakfast.

Kimmie grabs his hand. The new lovers practically float to her car. They get in. As they drive off, the Bad Girls run out the club and shout after the car.

BAD GIRL #1

Jackie, you don't want her.

BAD GIRL #2

Baby, don't go.

Kimmie does a U-turn and floors it, headed straight for the Bad Girls. They turn around and haul ass. They jump just in time, miniskirts up to their waste, into a ditch.

Kwame and Roach gladly rush to the scene.

KWAME

Oh my God, what do we have here?

ROACH

Two fine bitches in the ditches.

86 EXT. RUBY LIN AND DUKIE'S HOUSE - PRE-DAWN - NEXT DAY 86

Terry's car backs down the street and pulls up in front and stops. He gets out, walks around the front of it and lets Ruby Lin out.

TERRY

Look, I'm sorry. I messed up.

RUBY LIN

That's OK, Terry. It was sweet while it lasted.

TERRY

Now, why you have to go and say something like that.

RUBY LIN

Oh, I'm sorry. I didn't mean 'it.' I meant us.

TERRY

My career's gone. My...shit...
(looking at his crotch)
it's...it's...

Ruby Lin puts her finger to his lips to silence him.

RUBY LIN

Try not to think about it.

Dukie spots the two from the bedroom window. He moves quickly.

RUBY LIN (Cont.)

You're still young. You've got your whole life in...

Dukie lets the front door fly open. In the same instant, he lets his doberman loose.

DUKIE

Go get 'em, tiger. Bite 'em in the ass.

Ruby Lin and Terry just make it back into the car. They roll up the windows. The dog SNARLS at them. The car won't start, Terry tries it again. Ruby Lin CHANTS in tongues.

RUBY LIN

Go Bu. Tay Tay. La Foo Ma. Go Bu.
Tay Tay. La Foo Ma.

The car starts and Terry hurriedly backs down the street. The car spews green exhaust. The dog chases the car.

87 EXT. CHURCH/INT. KIMMIE'S CAR - TWO HOURS LATER - DAY 87

Kimmie pulls into a parking lot and parks. She is dressed up like it's Easter Sunday. Kimmie gets out of the car, closes her door and opens the back door. She leans in.

KIMMIE

C'mon, baby. Wake up. We're here.

Jackie is asleep on the back seat. She gives him a tender kiss. He stirs.

KIMMIE (Cont.)

Jackie, we're here.

Jackie gets up and out of the car and closes the door. They hug and share a light kiss. The lovers then walk hand in hand toward the church. Jackie has on a poor comic's Sunday-go-to-meeting clothes.

88 EXT. A SUBURBAN TENNIS COMPLEX - MOMENTS LATER - DAY 88

The CAMERA winds its way through the complex until it finds Court #9. It's the Bad Girls and their mixed doubles companions, Roach and Kwame. The femmes are dressed in the latest revealing tennis outfits. The guys are dressed in some embarrassingly mis-matched, makeshift tennis clothes.

Worse, they can't play a lick of tennis. A lob hits Kwame in the forehead. Roach hits a home run over the fence.

89 INT. BIGG AND ARETHA'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER 89

Bigg and Percy are in front of the TV watching NFL. Bigg holds an ice pack on his head. Aretha is in the adjoining kitchen baking.

BIGG

How'd you sleep?

PERCY

(a little nervous)

Brother, thanks for letting me sleep on your couch. And, I'm glad we got straight on your woman.

BIGG

(inches forward out
of his seat)

What you mean straight?

PERCY

(defensive)

I didn't mean nothing by it. Really.

BIGG

Cool. You know I'm sensitive.

The phone rings. Aretha moves to answer it.

ARETHA

I'll get it.

BIGG

I let my woman answer the phone.

PERCY

That's real good, Bigg.

Aretha picks it up.

ARETHA

Hello!

VOICE (O.S.)

Can you talk?

Aretha puts on an air for Bigg to veil the true intentions of the call.

ARETHA

Oh, yes. How are you?

90 EFX: SPLIT SCREEN - BIGG'S KITCHEN/DUKIE'S BEDROOM 90
A/B A/B

DUKIE

Baby, I wish I could be there with you
right now.

ARETHA

Oh, Big Bigg? He's just fine. He's
watching football.

DUKIE

Your body was like hot lava, baby.

Aretha heats up a little.

ARETHA

Oh my goodness!

DUKIE

Now that Ruby Lin is gone, we can have
our thing more out in the open. We can
be in Jamaica making love on the beach.
Nude.

Aretha gets sweaty.

ARETHA

I've got real good news. I'm expecting! *

DUKIE

(suddenly serious)

Expecting?

ARETHA

Bigg's gonna be a Daddy and I'm gonna be
a Mommy!

DUKIE

You're gonna be a mother? When did
this all happen? *

ARETHA

We found out this morning. I used one
of those pregnancy kits. *

DUKIE

What about us? The business? *

ARETHA

(dropping the bomb)

The only place I'm gonna be working is
right here at home. Look, I gotta go
before you make Bigg's cookies burn up.

*
*

Aretha hangs up. Miss Domestic smiles and bats her eyes at
Bigg. She then moves to the oven to check the cookies.

91 INT. DUKIE'S BEDROOM 91

Dukie sits on the edge of his bed. Stunned. He gets up and
paces.

DUKIE

(to self)

How could she do this to my business?

92 EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT - TERRY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - 92
MOMENTS LATER

93 INT. TERRY'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 93

Terry sits straight up in his bed into FRAME. Screaming,
he's having a nightmare. Perspiration covers his forehead.

TERRY

Where is it? Where's my dick?

Ruby Lin, awakened by his screams, pops up next to him from
under the covers. She wakes him.

RUBY LIN

What is it, baby? What is it?

Terry realizing Ruby Lin is there, jumps out of the bed to
get some distance from her.

TERRY

You, that's who did it, you.

Jubilant, Ruby Lin points to his crotch.

RUBY LIN

Look, baby.

Unbeknownst to him, he's got a hard-on. His briefs stick
out a mile. Suddenly, he's ecstatic. He can't believe it.
He profiles in the mirror.

TERRY

It's a miracle! The steel is back. The
steel is back.

Ruby Lin is ecstatic. Terry is more ecstatic. He talks to his crotch.

TERRY (Cont.)

Welcome home, big fella!

RUBY LIN

I'm so happy for us.

TERRY

Us? We may have to re-think this "us" shit. "Us" is the problem. "Us"...

The PHONE RINGS. Terry answers.

TERRY (Cont.)

Yo! Terry speaking.

He hands the phone to Ruby Lin.

TERRY (Cont.)

It's Dukie. He's crying.

Ruby Lin and Dukie AD LIB as Dukie begs (O.S.) for her to come back home.

FADE OUT:

CREDITS: Dukie and Ruby Lin's AD LIB argument will continue under credits.

THE END