

BLACK TIES

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Inspired by my life

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FADE IN:

INT. BATHROOM - EVENING

CLOSE UP of the neck and shoulders of a man tying a double Windsor knot in a BLACK TIE and WHITE DRESS SHIRT. As the knot is completed camera pans up on RASHAD's (black male, mid 20's) face as if he is looking in the mirror.

He looks anxious, takes a deep breath, lets it out.

CUT TO:

INT. RESTAURANT - PRIVATE DINING AREA - EVENING

CLOSE UP RASHAD'S FACE

Rashad's expression is bright and charming.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO EXPOSE

He is standing in the middle of a private dining room, surrounded roughly a DOZEN WHITE People mingle around him laughing and talking. All the men are wearing BLACK TIES, SHIRTS and SLACKS, women are dressed in SUNDRESSES or the like.

A WAITER walks up with a PLATTER of CHICKEN WINGS and offers some to RASHAD. He politely declines. The waiter walks away.

PAM, white female, 50's, BRIGHT FLORAL APPAREL OUTFIT, approaches Rashad with a wide smile. She carries a GLASS of ALCOHOL in hand. She swaggers as if already drunk.

PAM

So you're Chad's best man, good for him!

Pam taps Rashad on the shoulder and walks away.

Rashad follows Pam with his eyes looking bewildered.

CHAD (O.S.)

Yo, what up dawg!

CHAD (white male, mid 20's, dressed in BUTTON SHIRT, BLACK TIE, and SLACKS) and BECKY (white female, mid 20's, dressed in a SUNDRESS) approach. Chad is all elated, Becky is bouncing.

RASHAD
Heey! Congratulations you two!

Rashad and Chad give each other dap and a hug.

Becky slides in to give Rashad a big hug and pulls back still holding his arms.

BECKY
I'm so glad you could do this for us.

Becky notices someone and motions towards them.

BECKY (CONT'D)
Oh! Tiffany! C'mere girl!

TIFFANY (black female, pretty, mid 20's, in a SUNDRESS) approaches, Becky moves to give her a hug and present her to Rashad.

BECKY (CONT'D)
Rashad, this is Tiffany. Maid of honor as you know, and my soul sistah!

TIFFANY
(embarrassed)
Please don't do that.

Tiffany and Rashad shake hands and give an awkward greeting.

BECKY
So... we thought you two should get to know each other better.

Becky and chad look at them expectantly.

Rashad and Tiffany look at Becky and Chad, look at each other, then look around the room awkwardly.

BECKY (CONT'D)
Well, I bet you guys have so much in common.

Becky notices someone else entering.

BECKY (CONT'D)
Marissa! (to Rashad and Tiffany) So happy you're here. Gotta do the rounds!

Becky and Tiffany give each other a kiss on the cheek. Rashad and Chad dap each other.

CHAD
We'll catch up soon.

Becky and Chad move off, Chad winks at Rashad, Becky suggestively nods her head at Tiffany.

Rashad and Tiffany stand there awkwardly in silence.

RASHAD
So like congrats for them right?

TIFFANY
Totally, couldn't be happier for them.

Silence.

RASHAD
Nice place.

TIFFANY
Yeah, Becky's parents set this up.

RASHAD
Cool... want to find some seats?

TIFFANY
Sure

AT THEIR TABLE

Rashad and Tiffany approach a table towards the back of the room and a seat.

Rashad takes a drink of WATER from his GLASS. Tiffany adjusts her dress.

TIFFANY
So are you and Chad partners? Like law partners, not the other thing, because clearly.

Tiffany motions to the surroundings.

RASHAD
We did our undergrad together.

TIFFANY
Oh. My dad was a lawyer, don't really like lawyers.

RASHAD
(quietly)
Suck it Freud.

Rashad takes a drink of WATER.

TIFFANY
Hmm?

Rashad shakes his head. They both sit in awkward silence. Tiffany takes a sip of WATER from her GLASS.

RASHAD
So how do you know Becky?

TIFFANY
We served together.

RASHAD
Oh, so you're a vet? Nice. My brother was in the service.

TIFFANY
Did you serve?

RASHAD
Oh god no.

Another moment of awkward silence between them.

RASHAD (CONT'D)
It's really great about these two.

TIFFANY
Super great.

They both look around the room in different directions.

LATER

Rashad and Tiffany are standing against a wall together as people walk by and give brief polite nods, but no one tries to engage with them. They are both holding half full CHAMPAIGN GLASSES. They look and feel isolated.

RASHAD
So like, what are you into?

TIFFANY
Privacy.

Rashad takes a sip looking off.

Tiffany leans into the wall, looks at Rashad and wants to extend an olive branch.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)
You into Insecure?

RASHAD
No, I see a therapist.

TIFFANY
Issa Rae? HBO?

RASHAD
Oh, don't really know it.

They both look around the room in silence.

RASHAD (CONT'D)
Want to grab food?

TIFFANY
Sure.

They move off.

INT. RESTAURANT - PRIVATE DINING AREA, BUFFET TABLE - EVENING

Rashad and Tiffany standing in line working towards the buffet.

RASHAD
Who's your favorite artist?

TIFFANY
Kendrick Lamar, you?

RASHAD
DMB.

TIFFANY
Wooow, very retro.

BACK AT TABLE

Tiffany and Rashad are sitting next to each other at the table with their PLATES of FOOD, GLASSES of WATER and are half heartedly picking at it. Both looking like they'd rather be anywhere but here.

TIFFANY
You like Comics?

RASHAD
Of course.

They both perk up.

TIFFANY
Favorite Comic?

RASHAD
W. Kamau Bell.

TIFFANY
Who? I meant comic books, like DC,
Marvel?

RASHAD
Oh. Not really.

They both start picking at their food in awkward silence.

Pam, staggers over to the table with a huge grin, carrying a PLATE of FOOD and GLASS of ALCOHOL.

PAM
You two going to show us how it's
done on the dance floor tomorrow?

Pam does a little shimmy.

PAM (CONT'D)
You know they have Hennessy.

PAM winks and walks off.

PAM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Open bar!

Tiffany slumps and looks at the ceiling.

TIFFANY
THANKS PAM!

Rashad looks confused and leans toward Tiffany.

RASHAD
What was that all about?

Tiffany turns to Rashad.

TIFFANY
That's Becky's mom.

RASHAD

Not gonna lie, I'm feeling a little
uncomfortable.

TIFFANY leans towards Rashad in her chair.

TIFFANY

Bruh.

RASHAD

I'm surprised she didn't just drop
a bottle of Crown Royal on the
table with a side of watermelon.

TIFFANY

It be like that sometimes.

RASHAD

Like when they be touching your
hair?

Tiffany emphatically nods in agreement.

TIFFANY

Why you putting hands on my head?

RASHAD

Or when they want YOUR take on
something racist.

Tiffany shakes her head in agreement.

RASHAD (CONT'D)

But Rashad, my other black friend
says...

TIFFANY

(clapping on each word)
You. Ain't. Got. Black. Friends.
Cameron!

Rashad points towards TIFFANY in agreement.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

(In a deep masculine
voice)

I mean, how is that really racist
though? Isn't it just the truth?

Rashad throws his head back.

RASHAD

Like, why you even asking me then?

Tiffany sits up excitedly.

TIFFANY

Ooh, ooh. My favorite is the "But
you're not 'BLACK' black."

Rashad sits up erect staring intently at Tiffany.

RASHAD

I'm a first year partner at a
prestigious law firm. Y'all
wouldn't've hired me if I was
"BLACK" black.

TIFFANY

Chuuuuurch!

They both dap. And lean back for a beat.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

Benign racism...

RASHAD

Huh?

Tiffany sits up and leans towards Rashad, who leans in
listening.

TIFFANY

Benign racism. It's uncomfortable,
and ugly, but it ain't life
threatening.

RASHAD

Ok.

TIFFANY

But malignant racism... will
straight up kill you. Problem is,
benign can turn malignant real
quick.

RASHAD

Never thought of it like that...

Rashad sits starring at nothing, thinking. Tiffany takes a
sip.

RASHAD (CONT'D)

What's frustrating though, like,
with the benign, do you say
something, or just let it ride?

TIFFANY

Cuz you know you were disrespected,
but you also don't want to be THAT
person.

Rashad leans way back in his chair. Tiffany throws her arms to the side in a victory stance.

RASHAD

Right?! And no matter how
diplomatic you tryna be someone's
getting in their feelings.

TIFFANY

Like yours don't count..

RASHAD

Thank you!

They give each other five.

Becky and Chad approach the table, they are both beaming with excitement.

BECKY

Oh me gee, look at you two hitting
it off. I knew you guys would have
so much in common!

Rashad and Tiffany give each other a side eye then start laughing.

RASHAD

Imma get me some of this Henney,
you in?

TIFFANY

Oh fo sho.

They both get up and move off from the table.

TIFFANY (CONT'D)

But you really need to check out
Insecure.

A WAITER carrying a PLATTER of CHICKEN WINGS passes by, and they grab one off the platter and takes a bite.

FADE OUT.