

BLACK TIES

Written by

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Inspired by my life

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  
Woow, 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 starrng 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.