

SH7 AKBAR

EXT. DAY - 3226 NEKOMA LN

A house.

INT. DAY -KITCHEN

There is a clock on the wall and a calendar. We see through the kitchen window out into the front yard and beyond. The street is empty.

INT. DAY -KITCHEN

A middle aged man washes dishes listening to NPR and his face reveals his politics. Occasionally he turns to look at the Radio to respond. Often he chooses to ignore the noise.

JIM
bullshit...and so what, every
president does the same thing.

INT. DAY -KITCHEN

JIM is cleaning stove while singing along with Nina Simone on Pandora.

EXT. DAY - 3226 NEKOMA LN

Jim sits under the shade of a giant oak tree, flanked by a Beauty Berry Bush, in full bloom, reading the New Yorker Magazine.

JIM
Oh this is comedy...
(Laughing to himself)

EXT. DAY - BLOUNTSTOWN BUS STOP

JIM walks to the bus stop carrying a bag. He stops, takes a seat, pulls out the New Yorker Magazine & reads. BERNIE, pregnant woman, mid-30's walks up to the stop, sits next to Jim.

(CONTINUED)

BERNIE

(Looks at the front cover of
the magazine Jim is reading
and smiles to herself.)

Who would have thunk it?

(Chuckles to herself.)

JIM

(Notices her, checks to see if
she is speaking to him or on
the phone or just plain
crazy.)

Pardon?

BERNIE

Who would have thunk it?

JIM

(looks confused and decides to
patronize with an almost
smile.)

BERNIE

Trump - Giuliani?

JIM

(slowly nods in recognition.
Quickly reassessing his
assumptions pursuing a new
thesis.)

You from New York?

BERNIE

I lived there in the 90's.

JIM

Me too. Rudy was great for New York
City in the same way that Trump is
great for the USA.

BERNIE

We agree about that - they both are
Trojan horses sent by the army of
domestic corporate interests
hellbent on suppressing and
destroying the vestiges of anything
resembling humanity.

(CONTINUED)

JIM

(surprised, impressed, dazzled
and back on his heels.)

If only we had time to continue
this, which bus are you taking?

BERNIE

I'm taking the F bus, on my way to
campus.

JIM

Well great, because in that brief
time, my young friend, perhaps I
can persuade you of other possible
interpretations. Are you a student.

BERNIE

I guess you could say that, I'm
doing some post-doc research at FSU
and teaching a few courses. What
about you?

JIM

I'm on faculty at FSU too. Oh look,
here comes our bus.

CUT TO:

EXT. FSU - DAY

BERNIE exits the bus first, followed by JIM and they are
mid-conversation, with BERNIE relentlessly enjoying
bombarding JIM's arguments as he laughs, enjoying her
onslaught.

BERNIE

You are so wrong and time is too
short on any given day to expose
the fallacy of your assumptions. No
offense...

(CONTINUED)

(she stops and takes a breath
as they both regard her
pregnant condition.)

JIM

Some taken...but I'll live.

BERNIE

What? The big bad, New Yorker is
offended? The lover of war-mongers,
harborer of police-state
politicians, and presumptively, all
around conservative academic is
offended?

JIM

Why, yes, I am? Contrary to the
popular #metoo narrative, a
"straight" man is also able to be
hurt by words.

BERNIE

Pobri seto - Forgive me - hashtag
forgive me.

(She offers her hand for him
to shake. JIM hesitates and
then shakes her hand.)

I'm Dr. Bernie Van Hoesen, and I am
in the fledgling Africana Studies
department. I'm one of the
interdisciplinary scholars.

JIM

(He smiles admiringly.)

Dr. Bernie Van Hoesen, I'm glad I
bumped into you today. I'm Jim. I'm
in theatre.

BERNIE

Are you James Aldridge?

JIM

(hesitates, smiles from
flattery but far more curious)

Yeaah...do I owe you money...are
you about to serve with

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

(cont'd)

papers...who you
with...NSA...CIA...the Student Loan
people...I got enemies...

BERNIE

(fighting back laughter)

Don't make jokes, I have to go pee,
and nobody wants to see me pee,
right here, right now. You only
directed one of the most
significant pieces of Black theatre
in the south in the past 20 years,
and it's my job to know about
everything Black that ever happened
in the world. And you, Mr.
Aldridge, happened in a big way.

JIM

Forgive me, Dr. Van Hoesen, I like
to think that I am still happening,
and that I am just getting started.

BERNIE

Oh yeah? Let me be the judge of
that. You are the head of the
directing department in theatre,
right.

JIM

(he nods)

BERNIE

Lunch. Tomorrow. I'll meet you at
your office. Be ready at 1:15. I'll
drive. You'll listen. I'll judge
whether, as you say, you are still
happening. Have a nice day, Mr.
Aldridge.

And with that, BERNIE looks JIM over and almost grins, turns
and waddles away. JIM stares blankly at BERNIE walking away
trying to figure out what just happened; then smiles as he
decides that whatever just happened was amazing.

THE END