

COMING 2 AMERICA

Written by

Barry W. Blaustein & David Sheffield

Current Revisions by Kenya Barris

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INT. CORPORATE OFFICE BUILDING - WAITING ROOM - DAY

TIGHT ON A WIDE, TOOTHY SMILE. PULL BACK to REVEAL the smiling mouth of a WAX BURGER KING MASCOT in the Burger King corporate office waiting room where we PAN DOWN and LAND on the WIDE, TOOTHY SMILE OF...

LAVELLE JUNSON, mid 20s, seated, wearing a short-sleeved, collared shirt, a borrowed tie, and plastic-framed glasses like a total square. Beside him is his cousin, KAREEM "BIG 'REEM" JUNSON, 20s, straight outta Queens. Multiple, possibly (definitely) fake chains. A blowout fade with parts on the side. He looks a lot like Fatboy SSE from Instagram.

BIG 'REEM

Yo, why you wastin' your time in here right now? Nobody's gonna hire you over all these Mitt Romney lookin' woke ass shmiggas.

We WIDEN even more to REVEAL Lavelle is surrounded by super straight laced, post-grad, YOUNG BLACK MITT ROMNEY TYPES, all seemingly wearing the same Club Monaco pre-tailored suit, Aldo hard bottom shoes, and perfectly coiffed two inch afros while pretending they don't hear Big 'Reem, jabber on.

LAVELLE

(to 'Reem, clinched teeth)
Could you please shut the hell up, you're embarrassing me?

BIG 'REEM

Nah, you're embarrassing me, bro. Don't you see what's happening? It's 'Hire-a-Shmigga' day and you the dustiest shmigga up in here. Quit playing yourself with this job search - let's bounce! I got a stack of fugazi Summer Jam tix we could be getting off to NYU kids RIGHT NOW.

LAVELLE

'Reem, don't try to son me. You live with your mom and pay her rent biweekly. Not every two weeks. Twice a week. Your shit is very fragile. Very. Now calm down and let me focus.

Big 'Reem sits back in his chair, wounded.

BIG 'REEM

Whatever. And I don't appreciate my Mom's discussing our pay schedule with other people. It's duplicitous.

A YOUNG WHITE FEMALE ASSISTANT enters.

ASSISTANT

L. Junson?

BIG 'REEM

(under his breath)

Don't do White voice--

LAVELLE

(using "White voice")

Present.

'Reem rolls his eyes as LaVelle stands and is escorted to the back. 'Reem looks to a "Romney" seated beside him.

BIG 'REEM

What's taking you so long with that
US Weekly, Chad!?

INT. CORPORATE OFFICE BUILDING - OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

LaVelle, nervous, is seated in a ridiculously over accentuated corporate office suite. Burger King swag is every-fucking-where. Hats, Posters, Bobble Heads, Toys, collectible kids meal boxes, the shit is nuts. MR. DENSON, White, 40's, unapologetically racist (think Danny McBride) sits across from Lavelle.

LAVELLE

Thank you for seeing me, Mr.
Denson.

MR. DENSON

Of course. I love meeting all
kinds of people. And not just
because HR says I have to.

Mr. Denson peruses Lavelle's resume.

MR. DENSON (CONT'D)

So, tell me, Lah-ville... I mean,
Lay-ville... No, it's obviously Lah-
ville.

LAVELLE

It's LaVelle.

MR. DENSON

That's hilarious. Could you
imagine? Anyway, why do you think
you're a good candidate for the
management training program here?

LAVELLE

Well, I'm a people person, and it's
always been my goal to one day take
on a leadership role. Plus,
chicken fries are good as hell.
So, you know... boom.

LaVelle flashes that signature smirk, Mr. Denson doesn't think it's funny.

MR. DENSON

I see that you don't have a degree.

LaVelle shifts in his seat, nervously.

LAVELLE

Crazy story.

MR. DENSON

Always is.

Mr. Denson takes out an iPhone and slides it near LaVelle.

MR. DENSON (CONT'D)

If you don't mind, I'm going to record this for my podcast.

LAVELLE

Excuse me?

MR. DENSON

It's no big deal. I have this little alt-right comedy podcast I do called 'Hood Tales'. Check it out. It's fucking hilarious. Never mind the phone, just tell your story. And speak up.

LAVELLE

Um, okay... See, I was three credits short of a management degree when my Mom ran out of money, so I had to drop out and help her at home.

MR. DENSON

Sure, sure. And your mother? She was on drugs, right?

LAVELLE

I mean, she smoked a lot of weed.

MR. DENSON

That counts. Did she drink all of her beverages out of a paper bag?

LAVELLE

Just the ones you're supposed to.

MR. DENSON

But you were angry at your father, weren't you? You tried to use that anger to fuel your dreams of making it to the NBA. But your local gang stopped you from going to practice.

(MORE)

MR. DENSON (CONT'D)

You quickly found it was easier to sell a bag of dope than to run suicides for your old school Irish coach who cared about you but didn't know how to show it.

LAVELLE

Man, what are you talking about?

MR. DENSON

There's no shame in any of this, LaFrederick. Own it.

LAVELLE

Is this some sort of psych test to see if I'm going to whoop your ass? Am I getting this job or not?

MR. DENSON

Oh, hell no.

(holding up iPhone)

Do I need to play back your story for you? Totally not Burger King management material. But this is going to make one hell of a 'Hood Tales', so for that, I thank you.

As LaVelle, defeated, stands, we PRELAP the unmistakable sound of SIR PAUL MCCARTNEY and THE BEATLES OPIOID LACED ANTHEM, "GETTING BETTER" over his exit.

PAUL MCCARTNEY (V.O.)

(singing)

It's getting better all the time.

As Lavelle crosses out the interview we,

FADE OUT.

Then over a bright SUN LIT LENS FLARE we,

FADE BACK IN:

THE PARAMOUNT LOGO appears over the familiar landscape of the PARAMOUNT MOUNTAIN. The logo fades, but surprisingly the image of the mountain lingers.

As PAUL MCCARTNEY CONTINUES SINGING his ode to a happy life, we PUSH IN on the mountain, ascending the snow-covered peak, crossing up and over to a magical land of lush tropical jungle on the other side.

LIONS ROAR, MONKEYS play and ELEPHANTS TRUMPET. In the distance we see the ROYAL PALACE. We're back in ZAMUNDA. And it looks more incredible than ever.

The MUSIC CONTINUES over the OPENING MONTAGE:

PAUL MCCARTNEY (V.O.)
*I've got to admit it's getting
 better.*

INT. PALACE STAIRCASE - DAY

ROSE PETALS flutter on the marble stairs as FOUR PAIRS of GIRLS' FEET tiptoe up the steps to the door of the master bedroom, revealing Akeem's four daughters: Cute as a button 4-year-old SHANI, 9-year-old playful troublemaker TINASHE, bookish but spunky 14-year-old OMMA, and 20-year-old MEEKA, a beautiful young woman, mature beyond her age.

INT. ROYAL BEDROOM - SAME TIME

Akeem's faithful servant, OHA, quietly enters the room. He is accompanied by FOUR EQUALLY CEREMONIOUSLY DRESSED AND MASSIVE MEN carrying in a HUGE AND ORNATE CASE. Following them in is the CLEANER, carrying freshly pressed clothes, the WIPER - with a roll of toilet paper, the BATHER - clutching a tray of soaps, and standing out from the rest is the ROYAL BARBER, a GORGEOUS WOMAN holding a pair of GOLDEN CLIPPERS.

PAUL MCCARTNEY (V.O.)
It's getting better all the time.

PRINCE AKEEM sleeps peacefully in his lavish bed as *Sir Paul continues to melodiously score the morning*. With great care, Oha and his men each take a KEY from around their necks and place it into a KEY HOLE at each corner of the case. Silently, they each hold up FINGERS which count down:

3-2-1...

They each TURN THEIR KEY in unison. The huge case opens to reveal a TINY GOLD TRIANGLE. Still in sync with the song, Oha takes the triangle from the case and gently taps it.

PAUL MCCARTNEY (V.O.)
Have to admit it's getting better.

Akeem opens his eyes ... to another perfect day in a perfect life. Akeem smiles as he hears the warm voice of his beautiful wife, LISA. She's as lovely as the day they met.

LISA
 Good morning, Your Highness.

The four daughters burst into the room and jump on the bed.

DAUGHTERS
 G'morning, Daddy. Morning, Mommy.

AKEEM
 (good naturedly)
 That's it. Everybody off the bed.

The girls exit, laughing. As Lisa tries to get up, he pulls her back to him:

AKEEM (CONT'D)
Not you, Your Highness.

Off Lisa and Akeem falling back into bed, *

CUT TO: *

Akeem and his family cut a ribbon for an unknown opening of an unknown location. PULL OUT to REVEAL: *

EXT. MCDOWELL'S - DAY

Lisa's Dad, CLEO MCDOWELL, beams with pride as he opens the latest McDowell's hamburger restaurant in Zamunda. It looks exactly like the one in Queens but with an African motif.

ANGLE ON MCDOWELL'S SIGN: "NOW SERVING 2 CONTINENTS"

MAURICE (Louie Anderson) looks as out of place here in a dashiki as he did wearing plaid in Queens. He proudly adjusts his 'Assistant Manager' BADGE as he looks into the MIRROR in front of him ...

MAURICE
(to himself)
Now let's go sell some burgers to Africans. *

INT. ROYAL HALLWAY - DAY

Akeem and Lisa stride down a palace hallway. The walls are filled with pictures of Akeem with various world leaders - MANDELA, BISHOP TUTU, OBAMA - as well as FRAMED MAGAZINE COVERS FEATURING LISA - VOGUE ZAMUNDA, ELLE ZAMUNDA, HARPER'S BAZAAR ZAMUNDA, W MAGAZINE ZAMUNDA. The happy couple is joined by their daughters. It's a perfect tableau. *

PAUL MCCARTNEY (V.O.)
*It's getting so much better ...
all the time!*

Akeem nods to the real PAUL MCCARTNEY who has been performing the song live.

AKEEM
Thank you, Sir Paul.

PAUL MCCARTNEY
Thank you for the ten million dollars, Your Highness.

UNKNOWN (O.S.)
Ten million dollars?!

REVEAL: RINGO STARR is behind Paul McCartney playing drums.

RINGO

I just got air fare and he told me
I could pet an elephant.

INT. ROYAL GYM - DAY

Akeem and his oldest daughter Meeka are in the midst of an intense sparring match, wielding WOODEN BO STAFFS. Akeem doesn't hold back. Nor does Meeka need him to.

MEEKA

I have heard that Grandfather has begun sharing his daily briefings with you.

AKEEM

Yes. They contain many pressing foreign policy matters.
(beat, smiling)
Like the various eligible bachelors interested in your hand.

MEEKA

(ignoring)
Any news of the increasing threats from General Izzi?

AKEEM

Only news that his son is still single.

Meeka SWEEPS Akeem's legs out from under him, JUMPING ON TOP of him with her bo staff to his throat.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

But we can talk about something else.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Behold! Prince Akeem in his natural element... cowering at the mercy of the women in his life.

Akeem turns to see his old friend, SEMMI (Arsenio Hall), smiling to himself at his own joke. With a smirk, Akeem rises to his feet, tossing Semmi his bo staff.

AKEEM

Perhaps you'd like to demonstrate how a real man stands up for himself.

Semmi's smile quickly fades, turning to Meeka as she readies her weapon.

SEMMI

Eh, I totally would but your father sent me on an urgent mission. He'd like to speak with you right away.

AKEEM

Very well. I can see myself out.
(then)
Meeka, don't take it too easy on Uncle Semmi.

SEMMI

(beat)
Uh, his majesty was really quite adamant that I personally escort you to him.

AKEEM

Really? That doesn't sound like him at all--

SEMMI

Come, come! Mustn't keep him waiting.

AKEEM

Mmm hmm.

Off Akeem and Meeka sharing a knowing look as Semmi hurries out of the room,

INT. HALLWAY OF THE PALACE - DAY

Akeem and Semmi walk briskly down the hall.

AKEEM

So how is he?

SEMMI

Your father? He's already ordered my execution three times today.

AKEEM

Oh, good. He must be feeling better!

Akeem and Semmi turn a corner, FURROWING THEIR BROWS as they see OHA, huffing and puffing, RUNNING TOWARD THEM with urgency.

OHA

(gasping for air)
My prince-- Visitors-- I couldn't stop-- Too many--

SEMMI

Oh, you've got to be kidding me...

Entering the hallway we see a man wearing battle fatigues, a cut-off shirt and army boots. This is GENERAL IZZI. A perpetual grimace and a face full of those spots Morgan Freeman has. There's something menacing about him. Maybe it's the AK-47 hanging over his shoulder. *

Or his posse of RAVENOUS-LOOKING SOLDIERS flanking him, also strapped with AK-47s. Many in the entourage wear DISCARDED ALSO-RAN SPORTS T-SHIRTS - "ATLANTA FALCONS - SUPERBOWL CHAMPS," "LAKERS FOUR-PEAT," "I'M WITH HER," "CLEVELAND INDIANS WORLD SERIES CHAMPIONS," etc... *

The two groups meet in the middle of the hallway. One of Izzi's LIEUTENANTS does a royal announcement:

LIEUTENANT

Prince Akeem, I present to you General Izzi, Supreme Leader of Nexdoria. Commander of their undefeated troops, conqueror of countries and hearts. Benevolent father of many sons and daughters.

AKEEM

Welc--

LIEUTENANT

The Punisher of Infidels. The Wrestler of Lions. The Tamer of Elephants. The Human Beatbox. The inspiration for Mufasa.

AKEEM

Welcom--

LIEUTENANT

The most well endowed man in Africa. The Father of manned space flight. The Master of Disaster. The Sultan of Swing. The King of Pop. The Original Man who floats like a butterfly and stings like a bee. The hardest working man in show business, Old Blue Eyes--

AKEEM

(blurting in)

Welcome, General Izzi.

GENERAL IZZI

Prince Akeem.

General Izzi holds out his hand. Akeem SHAKES it. Izzi pulls a power move, like Trump, JERKING Akeem toward him.

GENERAL IZZI (CONT'D)

My condolences on this day.

AKEEM

A great many thanks for the well wishes, General. But as you know, my father still breathes.

GENERAL IZZI

Ah yes. But for how long?

AKEEM

Why have you come here, Izzi?

GENERAL IZZI

You know why. Thirty years ago you left my sister at the altar.

SEMMI

(heard this before)

Here we go--

GENERAL IZZI

Now look at her!

ANGLE ON: IMANI IZZI, the bride Akeem rejected in the first film. She looks more or less the same, still wearing her wedding gown, but now it's tattered and dirty. And she's still hopping up and down, BARKING like a dog. She continues to bark throughout the scene.

IMANI IZZI

Arf, arf, arf!

AKEEM

Imani. Always a pleasure.

GENERAL IZZI

If you had married her, not only would she not be barking, but our countries would be united, putting an end to decades of my people's suffering.

SEMMI

(re: Imani's barking)

I'm sorry, is there anyway you can make her stop?

AKEEM

Semmi--

SEMMI

It just doesn't end.

(then, to Izzi)

Perhaps a command you have? Some form of treat? Maybe spritz her nose or shake a can of dimes?

AKEEM

Excuse him. General Izzi, we have tried to help Nexdoria many times throughout the years and every time you have squandered the money. The one that sticks out most recently is a failed amusement park.

GENERAL IZZI

Izzi-Land could have worked!

AKEEM

Right. Who doesn't love a beheading zoo? The point is, we cannot blindly and irresponsibly provide aid. However, we support your great country--

GENERAL IZZI

My country is shit! We don't even have our own version of American Idol. Italy has an Idol, Paris has an Idol, Malawi has an Idol. I've heard even Afghanistan is getting an Idol!

SEMMI

Hmm. I bet their backstories will be quite inspired.

*

GENERAL IZZI

Silence! I am in the middle of a threatening prelude to action! The people of Nexdoria are poor! They are forced to turn to crime. I've had to chop off the hands of more criminals this fiscal quarter than the last two quarters combined.

*

*

AKEEM

Perhaps your kingdom's labor force would improve if your citizens had both hands.

General Izzi scoffs, turning to his soldiers, "This fucking guy..."

AKEEM (CONT'D)

General, truly, I would like nothing more than to help relieve Nexdoria's burden of poverty, but Zamunda can only afford so much.

GENERAL IZZI

I have not come here for money. I have come for blood.

(off Akeem's confused look)
Well, not like *murder* blood. At least not yet. Family blood!
Marriage blood!

(MORE)

GENERAL IZZI (CONT'D)
 (frustrated they're not
 getting it, blurting out)
 Has your daughter responded to the
 open proposal from my son?!

General Izzi motions to IDI, 20s, a greasy, gold front,
 perfect perm having ass dude who leans on his scepter like
 it's an '83 Cutlass Supreme.

AKEEM
 Yeah... I do not know if he and
 Meeka will ever happen.

General Izzi groans.

GENERAL IZZI
 You know, my daughter, Bopoto, is
 also available...

Izzi motions back to the soldiers clearing a path, revealing
 his daughter, BOPOTO, an equally gorgeous & terrifying woman
 in skimpy army fatigues by Fashionova, who for some reason is
 cleaning the tip of her AK-47 barrel by spitting and
 sensually wiping it off. Semmi's mouth drops to the floor.

AKEEM
 General, as you are very well
 aware, I do not have any sons.

GENERAL IZZI
 Yes, and yet, she is still
 available... *

Akeem shakes his head, incredulous. *

AKEEM
 While I appreciate you stopping in,
 I mustn't keep my father waiting
 any longer. If you'll excuse me-- *

GENERAL IZZI
 Look little prince, your daddy's
 about to join the great Sahara in
 the Sky! I advise you to
 reconsider my offer. Once your
 father is gone, my patience will be
 as well.

Akeem smiles and crosses off, but as he turns his back to
 Izzi, we clock a rattled look washing over his face. *

INT. KING JAFFE JOFFER'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

KING JAFFE JOFFER (James Earl Jones) lies in bed with medical
 equipment all around and NURSES hovering. He's clearly in
 his final days. With him is BABA (Dave Chappelle), a shaky
 old shaman, at least a hundred years old. The word "ancient"
 wasn't even invented when this fucker was born.

Lisa sits at his bedside. They talk and laugh. Though it's sad, they are in good spirits.

AKEEM

How are you today, Father?

KING JAFFE

Still dying, thank you.

LISA

He's the most cheerful dying man
I've ever seen.

KING JAFFE

King. I am the most cheerful dying
king you've ever seen.

SEMMI

Please don't leave us so soon, Your
Highness. Zamunda needs you.

KING JAFFE

Oh, shut up, Semmi. You don't have
to suck up to me anymore. I'll be
dead soon. Why couldn't it be you?

(then)

Akeem, there is much to discuss.
Lisa, my beauty, would you excuse
us for a moment? The matters I
need to speak of weigh too heavy on
a woman's ears.

Lisa looks over to Akeem, who just smiles back awkwardly.

LISA

(putting on happy face)
Of course.

Lisa kisses King Jaffe on the cheek. Akeem sits at his
father's side and they watch as she exits.

KING JAFFE

My son, rule number one... Never
trust a big butt and a smile.

AKEEM

Father, can we not--

KING JAFFE

Do you know who else has a
delightful rump...?

King Jaffe and Baba share a knowing look.

KING JAFFE (CONT'D)

Oha's wife, Kwasi! The ratio Gods
have smiled down triumphantly on
her delicious backside.

Oha does his best to conceal his frustration, this clearly is something that comes up a lot.

AKEEM

(cringing)

My apologies, Oha. Your wife is very elegantly rotund, but that is not how I would describe her. I would speak first of her lovely personality, or her many community contributions.

KING JAFFE

Or her ripe Tanzanian sweet potato.
(then, sighing wistfully)
Ah, if only I had more time.

BABA

To have you longer would indeed be a blessing your majesty.

AKEEM

It surely would. *Although...* Kwasi would *still* be Oha's wife.

KING JAFFE

Unless I had him killed.

Baba and King Jaffe share a hearty laugh. Akeem and Semmi exchange panicked looks with Oha.

SEMMI

Your majesty, perhaps we should move on? I feel as if the Prince is clear on the first rule.

AKEEM

Yes. Rock solid.

KING JAFFE

Fine.

(to Semmi, re: dying)

Why couldn't it be you?

(then, to Akeem)

Rule number two, my son: Always remember to put--

AKEEM

(by rote)

--Zamunda first. Do not worry.

You have taught me well.

(then)

What is really on your mind, father?

KING JAFFE

(suddenly serious)

Our legacy.

(MORE)

KING JAFFE (CONT'D)

And my long-held belief that our family's five-thousand year reign over this land will end with you.

AKEEM

Ah... yes. That.

KING JAFFE

You know the law of Zamunda. The throne must pass to--

AKEEM

A male heir. Also something we've been over a thousand times. I apologize once more for the disappointment and shame my offspring's genetic make-up has caused you.

KING JAFFE

Apology accepted... If you make this right.

AKEEM

Well, I think Meeka is very... somewhat... kind of close to eventually choosing a suitable partner--

King Jaffe lets out another hearty laugh.

KING JAFFE

As comforting as that is, your daughter's courtship is no longer a concern. For I have recently learned your shortcomings in masculinity may not be as severe as I have long thought.

Suddenly Baba shouts, cackling:

BABA

You gotsa son! I seen it!

AKEEM

(beat)
Excuse me?

Akeem turns to his father, confused.

KING JAFFE

It is true. Baba has seen it in a vision. You have a son.

Baba grins, displaying a few yellow teeth -- very few.

BABA

A Bastard son!

AKEEM

Impossible. I have never lain with another woman. Only Lisa.

KING JAFFE

Semmi!

Semmi, everyone turns to see, is now hanging halfway out of the window, obviously trying to escape. He stops in his tracks and turns around, busted.

SEMMI

(meekly)

Hmmm?

KING JAFFE

Tell Akeem the truth at once.

Semmi, caught, takes a nervous deep inhale.

SEMMI

Well, remember in Queens? How night after night you were looking for the perfect woman?

AKEEM

Yes...

SEMMI

Well... I was looking for the perfect vagina. Or any vagina.

PRELAP MUSIC: BOBBY BROWN'S "MY PREROGATIVE"

INT. A LATE NIGHT CLUB IN QUEENS - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

CHYRON: Queens, 1988

We're back to the night club scene from the original movie. Semmi and Akeem (*who thanks to CGI and a little help from Black genetics look exactly as they did in 1988*) are in their booth. Akeem who already looks a little tipsy has just sent away yet another POTENTIAL SUITOR. Semmi looks frustrated.

SEMMI (V.O.)

We had been looking everywhere and you just kept saying, 'No, she's too fat!', 'No, she's too skinny!', 'No, she's too covered in bruises!

Semmi having had enough, stands and crosses away.

SEMMI (V.O.)

So I took matters into my own hands.

Semmi approaches a group of GORGEOUS PARTY GIRLS, who quickly DISPERSE leaving him with TWO STRAGGLERS: One, a breathing, two x chromosome having, upright walking 'Detroit 6', and her very intense friend, a brassy, wasted, ratchet as shit, junior bank teller, we will later come to know as MARY.

MARY

A prince?!

SEMMI

Yes, a prince. But he cannot know that you know his true identity. We are Africans undercover in America.

MARY

Nigga, that's the weakest pick-up line I've ever heard!

Semmi starts to turn away in defeat.

MARY (CONT'D)

But I already called in sick tomorrow so I'll smash your homeboy. Let me just go throw-up real quick and we can bounce.

*
*

INT. SHABBY QUEENS APARTMENT - NIGHT (1988)

New Edition's beautiful, "*Can You Stand The Rain*" scores a scene that is anything but beautiful. The room is filled with smoke. Semmi is being fawned over by two of Mary's DTF friends. Akeem, unfortunately, is on the couch, being fawned over by only Mary. Semmi hits a joint and passes it to Akeem.

*
*

AKEEM

No, thank you.

SEMMI

Akeem, getting high is one of the most American things one can do right alongside discriminating against minorities and making frivolous purchases with borrowed money.

AKEEM

(privately to Semmi)

I am not here to be American, I am here to find a Queen. And she is definitely not in this room.

Semmi turns to find Mary scratching the back of her throat with her tongue, making a loud and indecent noise.

SEMMI

(also privately)

We will find your queen, I can assure you.

(MORE)

SEMMI (CONT'D)

But first, we must have a night to relax. Now if you'll excuse me, I'm going to... how can I put this delicately?

(leaning in, re: friends)

Bend each of these women over.

The girls giddily follow Semmi to the bedroom. Akeem looks at Mary, nervously. She's into him. Mary walks over to a BURNING SCENTED CANDLE, picks it up, puts it below her skirt line and WAFTS THE SCENT UP INTO HER PRIVATES.

MARY

(re: label)

Hope you like pumpkin pie, Playboy.

AKEEM

I do not. But, thank you.

MARY

I have a confession to make...

AKEEM

Oh, no need to confide in me.

MARY

I gave your homeboy some bullshit.

She pulls out a bigger, better joint.

MARY (CONT'D)

This may or may not be laced with that good shit.

*
*

She hands it to him.

AKEEM

No, thank you.

MARY

I said "may or may not".

*

She lights it and takes a drag. After a beat:

MARY (CONT'D)

See, it's fine.

She hands him the joint. He hesitates but with her nudging he takes a drag. Just as he's inhaling... really irreversibly filling his lungs with THC:

MARY (CONT'D)

(suddenly)

Wait. Actually it's *not* fine.

Her body goes limp. Oh, fuck. But before Akeem can react his does, too. Mary looks over at him.

MARY (CONT'D)

You thinking what I'm thinking?

Akeem wants to say "hell no" but literally can't move.

MARY (CONT'D)

Looks like your couch pulls out.

(she leans in)

But you don't have to.

Mary uses one arm to fling her other arm onto Akeem's body as JOHNNY GILL'S BOOMING VOICE CONTINUES TO SWELL. He watches her, stuck in his own body, eyes widening with dread as Mary pulls herself onto him like a paraplegic trying to hoist herself into a wheelchair. Akeem's having sex with this woman whether he wants to or not. ANGLE ON: Semmi, stopping short at the doorway at the sight of them "having sex." He frowns, sickened with himself.

END FLASHBACK

INT. KING JAFFE'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Akeem, in a rage, stares daggers at Semmi.

SEMMI

I'm so sorry, Akeem. If it makes you feel any better, I've had an itch for thirty years.

Akeem looks away from Semmi in shock.

AKEEM

I truly have a son?

KING JAFFE

Yes.

Baba hands Akeem an iPad Pro. On it, a photo. Akeem looks shocked.

AKEEM

This is my son?!

ANGLE ON: A picture of LIL UZI VERT looking turnt.

BABA

(laughing)

Ha! Got 'em! When he was most vulnerable!

King Jaffe CLAPS TWICE. A ROYAL SERVANT heads in, swipes the iPad screen twice. And exits.

KING JAFFE

This is your son, Akeem. We had the Royal Graphic Designer sketch what Baba saw in his vision.

Akeem regards the composite image of Lavelle. A million different emotions.

AKEEM

(sotto, re: sketch)

My son.

KING JAFFE

You must go back to Queens. Find your son. And get him to marry General Izzi's daughter.

AKEEM

(beat)

Excuse me?

KING JAFFE

Let's be honest, Akeem, you are my only child. Because of that, I may have coddled you too much. And as you know, Zamunda has no standing army to protect you. Once I am gone Izzi will no longer have anything to fear. You'll definitely be assassinated within a week.

BABA

Month tops.

Akeem fidgets nervously.

*

KING JAFFE

I shudder to think of what would become of Zamunda with a dead king and no heir.

BABA

Sad!

KING JAFFE

Our family has kept this country safe and prosperous for hundreds of generations by upholding the same laws and traditions. Until 30 years ago, when you broke one of those laws and put our entire legacy in jeopardy. This is your chance to right that wrong. Bring your son back to Zamunda to take the Princely Tests, prove himself as your heir, preserve our traditions, and save your ass. That is my dying wish.

*
*
*
*

Overwhelmed, Akeem looks into his dying father's eyes and nods.

AKEEM

I will not disappoint you, Father--

BABA

Follow the thunderbird! It will
bring you to the boy.

Akeem looks at Baba confused but before he can ask what the hell that meant his father motions him over, handing him the ROYAL CROWN.

KING JAFFE

One more thing, Akeem. My funeral
should be spectacular. And I don't
want to miss it. So, let's have it
now, before I die.

INT. ROYAL BALLROOM - DAY

The ballroom is bathed in theatrical lighting. All of Zamunda has gathered for the big event. This is less of a funeral and more of a glorious celebration. Akeem, much on his mind, stands with Lisa and his four daughters.

We hear the POUNDING RHYTHM of AFRICAN DRUMS. The lights dim as all eyes focus on the stage.

MUSCULAR PALLBEARERS enter, carrying a magnificent open coffin. With great ceremony they place it on a pedestal.

An AFRICAN CHORUS chants an ancient SONG.

And now the pedestal tilts, raising the coffin upright to reveal King Jaffe Joffer resting inside, smiling with satisfaction.

KING JAFFE

You may begin.

The ballroom is awash in a golden African Sunrise. In silhouette a WOMAN holds a newborn BABY aloft, a la 'Lion King'. The chorus reaches a stirring crescendo ...

MALE AFRICAN CHORUS

AHHHHHH AHHHH AHHHHH!

NARRATOR'S VOICE (MORGAN FREEMAN)

In 1931 a child was born. A child
who would one day become the greatest
king in the history of Zamunda.

IN THE COFFIN

King Jaffe is grinning, really enjoying this.

NARRATOR'S VOICE (CONT'D)

A brilliant man. A brave man. A
generous and kind man ...

King Jaffe gestures to say, "Go on, more ... "

NARRATOR'S VOICE (CONT'D)
And also very handsome.

The King still wants more...

NARRATOR'S VOICE (CONT'D)
The most handsome man the world has
ever seen...

He's still not satisfied.

NARRATOR'S VOICE (CONT'D)
I mean, classically handsome. Not
the kind of thing that goes in and
out of style like a Shemar Moore or
an Antonio Banderas. Just a face
for the ages.

He's almost satisfied.

NARRATOR'S VOICE (CONT'D)
I guess what I'm saying is, King
Jaffe is so handsome that when he
dies, so does the word 'handsome'.

King Jaffe NODS, finally pleased.

NARRATOR'S VOICE (CONT'D)
All Hail King Jaffe Joffer!

An ORCHESTRA breaks into a SNAPPY BROADWAY TUNE. A CHORUS of
DANCERS and SINGERS enters ...

CHORUS
JAFFE JOFFER!

They break into a CHOO CHOO train routine.

CHORUS (CONT'D)
*Jaffe Joffer, Jaffe Joffer, Choo-
choo-choo. Jaffe Joffer, Jaffe
Joffer, WOO WOOOO!*

They break into a big dance number.

CHORUS (CONT'D)
*Jaffe Joffer was his name.
Ruling Zamunda was his game.
So full of love and charity
He brought us great prosperity.*

*

LIN MANUEL MIRANDA enters. He does an impromptu RAP about
King Jaffe's greatness (a la "Hamilton").

The CHORUS forms for the BIG FINALE.

CHORUS (CONT'D)
Jaffe Joffer

PEOPLE hold up FLASH CARDS creating a hundred-foot PORTRAIT of the King.

CHORUS (CONT'D)
Jaffe Joffer ...

A HUGE FLOCK of WHITE DOVES is released. They fly around in patterns, forming to create giant initials: JJ

CHORUS (CONT'D)
Jaffe Joffer ... the greatest man

A CHORUS dressed in TOP HATS and TAILS brings it home ... along with a LINE OF TAP DANCING ZEBRAS.

CHORUS GUY
Step aside, Buddha!

CHORUS
Greatest Man.

CHORUS GIRL
Move over, Muhammad!

CHORUS
The Greatest man ...

CHORUS GUY
Not so fast, Jesus!

*

CHORUS
THE GREATEST MAN ... OF ALL!!

The SONG ENDS with an explosion of FIREWORKS, FLAGS, CONFETTI as a giant statue of King Jaffe rises from the floor.

A beat of silence ... and then King Jaffe speaks ...

KING JAFFE
(aside to Akeem)
Remember your promise, my son.
(then, back to everyone)
Okay, I'm going to die now. Thank
you for coming. Good-bye.

The King dies peacefully with a smile on his face. His words are echoing through Akeem's mind.

EXT. PALACE BELL TOWER - DAY

Servants pull on a rope, ringing a giant bell. Its melancholy clangor echoes over the palace grounds.

INT. RECEIVING ROOM OF PALACE - DAY

Akeem, dressed in Black, seems distracted as he receives condolences from a long line of finely-dressed DIPLOMATS, HEADS OF STATE, and PALACE STAFF. Oha and the team of servants we met earlier approach, silently bowing their heads in solemn deference. Suddenly, the beautiful Royal Barber, MIREMBE, steps forward.

MIREMBE

Your highness, we are so sorry for your loss. But just know there are many of us who are sure you'll make an even better king--

OHA

Mirembe...

MIREMBE

--a king who pays very close attention to the needs of his people.

AKEEM

(beat, lost in thought)
Hmm?

OHA

(jumping in)
Nothing, nothing! Come Mirembe!

With a flourish, Oha does another bow and quickly drags Mirembe off before she can say more. Semmi approaches.

SEMMI

How are you holding up, my friend?

Akeem takes a deep breath, attempting to compose himself.

AKEEM

I have just lost the greatest man in my life at the same time that I find out that somewhere out there is a son I have never met who is the rightful heir to the throne and quite possibly my only ticket out of getting assassinated. It is quite a lot to take in.

SEMMI

Is there any way I can help?

AKEEM

I would like you to prepare travel arrangements for us to go to America at once.

SEMMI

(beat)

Is there a different way I can help? Perhaps something I can do from here. A three-way call that could be made? Or even some tasks maybe using a laptop or a smartphone? Locally?

AKEEM

Need I remind you, Semmi, the only reason I am forced to go back to New York is because I was drugged by a strange woman that you forced upon me?

SEMMI

I see you've inherited the King's gift of an unforgivingly long memory.

AKEEM

If I were to have you executed, it would help me forgive you.

Semmi shouts to Oha.

*

SEMMI

Oha, prepare travel arrangements to America at once!

*

LISA (O.S.)

Travel Arrangements?

At that moment, Akeem turns to see Lisa walking toward them.

AKEEM

Yes, I am going to--

Semmi cuts Akeem a look.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

Uh, I will be going on a trip... not really a *trip* trip... more of a... retreat. A royal retreat! I need to clear my head after the passing of father.

LISA

Do you want me to come with you?

AKEEM

No!

Lisa is taken aback.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

I just think I could probably use some 'me' time. I want to make sure my head is in the right place. I want to be the best king I can be.

Lisa puts a comforting hand on Akeem's shoulder.

LISA

I understand. I know how hard this is for you. We all loved your father. But as, uh, great of a king as he was... not much has changed around here since our marriage. And I'm excited to see you bring about the progressive, modern changes we always used to talk about.

AKEEM

(conflicted)

Yes, who cares about thousand-year-old laws and traditions and ancestors' dying wishes.

LISA

Exactly... Have fun on your retreat. Just don't bring back anything.

AKEEM

Why would you say that, Lisa?!

Lisa shoots a confused glare to Akeem.

LISA

It's just a phrase American wives tell their husbands when they go on boy trips. You sure you're okay?

AKEEM

Yes, yes. Of course. Sorry. I just... miss you. Already. You're my rock. Never forget that.

With a laugh, she kisses Akeem on the cheek and crosses off. As Akeem takes a deep breath, he makes eye contact with his oldest daughter, Meeka, who's been standing nearby.

MEEKKA

(embracing Akeem)

Safe travels, father. All of Zamunda shall be anxiously awaiting the start of your reign. I look forward to standing right by your side, ready to help with whatever Zamunda needs.

*
*
*
*

Off Akeem's uncomfortable face,

*

BABA (O.S.)

King Akeem!

Baba rushes up, holding the Royal iPad.

BABA (CONT'D)

Do not forget the sketch of--

Akeem snatches the iPad, cutting Baba off and awkwardly hiding the screen from Meeka.

AKEEM

Thank you, Baba. I must be going.
(then, to Meeka)
I appreciate the kind words,
daughter. Hope you feel the same
way when I return.

MEEKA

Of course. Why would I not?

AKEEM

No reason. Just saying. Yes.
Okay. Looove you...

Off Akeem forcing a smile toward his unsuspecting daughter,

EXT. SKY OVER THE JUNGLE - DAY

SILENCE over a serene jungle setting. Nothing is stirring... Until Bruno Mars' piercing falsetto -- "*24K Magic*" begins to blast over the ROARING turbines of the ZAMUNDAN ROYAL G6 JET as it soars over the jungle heading towards America.

INT. ROYAL JET - HOURS LATER

As "*24K Magic*" continues to play, Akeem stares forlornly out the cockpit window of the plane, talking to an UNSEEN PILOT, BACK TURNED TO CAMERA, through the open cockpit door.

AKEEM

Normally being in the clouds clears
my head, but today--

As Bruno Mars brings it home Akeem, frustrated, opens the curtain to reveal a very cramped BRUNO MARS and his BAND with all their instruments along with Semmi packed into the passenger compartment of the G6.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

Semmi, this is one of my favorites,
but if you would not mind...

SEMMI

Of course, King.
(then to band)
Guys, I believe "Why Him?" is our
in-flight movie. Please enjoy.

Semmi shuts the curtain on a sad Bruno Mars, and joins Akeem in the cockpit.

AKEEM

I hate lying to my family. But I have no choice until I know for sure this boy is really my son.

Akeem studies the sketch from Baba's vision.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

If he is, can you imagine? An heir to the throne of Zamunda born in America, the land of opportunity. You'd think he'd be a very important man.

SEMMI

Anyone with Joffer blood running through his veins can't be anything short of amazing.

AKEEM

Yes, but what do you think he does?

SEMMI

He comes from a respected line of rulers so I'm sure he's found his way into a leadership role.

AKEEM

Maybe he is the CEO of some large and innovative company, like Toms. Our entire continent is full of their discarded, lightweight shoes.

SEMMI

That would be most impressive.

Akeem smiles.

AKEEM

Yes. That would make me most proud.

Off Akeem's WIDE SMILE...

INT. ROYAL LIMO/EXT. STREETS OF QUEENS - NIGHT

The limo travels the snow-covered streets of Queens as Ace Frehley's "New York Groove" plays. Akeem looks out at the old neighborhood which is in the middle of being gentrified. The old and the new blend in seamlessly. Hipsters exiting WHOLE FOODS with alkaline water brush up against the original residents pouring out of PAYDAY LOAN FRANCHISES.

EXT. 121 TAYLOR STREET - NIGHT

The limo pulls up in front of one of the last remaining establishments of a rapidly transforming block, the MY-T-FINE BARBERSHOP. From the outside nothing about this place has changed since the 80s. Akeem smiles, warmly nostalgic.

As he gets out of his limo, we pre-lap the unmistakable and familiar voice of:

CLARENCE (PRELAP)
Floyd Mayweather ain't shit.

INT. BARBERSHOP - NIGHT

Inside, it looks exactly the same as it did in 1988. All the characters from the original film are here: The barbers CLARENCE (Eddie Murphy), MORRIS (Arsenio Hall), and SWEETS (Clint Smith), along with the old Jewish customer, SAUL (also Eddie Murphy). Although thirty years older, they look the same, because back then they were already old as shit.

CUBA GOODING JR is, once again, getting his hair cut.

MORRIS
He beat the shit out of that little
Filipino boy. Pockeequando,
Packemando ... whatever the hell
his name was, he got his ass beat. *

SAUL
And he beat the shit out of the
Irish boy. McGreggor.

CLARENCE
He just did that for us Blacks.
Can't have no White boy beating his
ass in this political climate.
Would have caused a riot! I rioted
anyway though. Needed a new TV.

Akeem and Semmi enter.

SAUL
Hey, look who's here. It's Kunta
Kinte! And his friend, Ebola!

CLARENCE
Famine and Blood Diamond!

MORRIS
Nelson Mandela and Winnie!

CUBA
(trying to join in)
Those hungry babies with the flies
on their face!

SAUL/MORRIS/CLARENCE/SWEETS
Whoa!/ Too far./ Shut yo' ass up!/
Talkin' 'bout them babies like that!

CLARENCE
Get the hell out of here!

Cuba stands and hands Clarence cash as he exits.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)
(on a dime, smiling)
Thank you, come again.

Cuba exits. Clarence turns to Akeem.

CLARENCE (CONT'D)
Now what are you doing back here,
'Full Blown AIDS?'

The old men all laugh heartily.

MORRIS
It is true, they do got it.

AKEEM
Ha, yes. Often my people are very
sick. It is nice to see you. The
neighborhood seems to be thriving.

CLARENCE
That's that gentrification! When
it's just niggas, the neighborhood
is shit. White folks move in with
their coffee and dog parks, all of
a sudden my shitty brownstone is
worth ten million dollars.

SWEETS
Your brownstone ain't worth no ten
million dollars.

CLARENCE
Fuck you! My brownstone is too
worth ten million dollars! I'm
gonna sell it and get a Tesla.
'Bout to get paid, nigga.

SEMMI
Yes, America has certainly changed
since our last visit. Your Black
president finally united this great
country.

CLARENCE
Mm hmm. But it's all gone to shit,
now.

MORRIS
We all gonna die, just don't know how.

*

SWEETS

Probably be the Orientals.

CLARENCE

Right! The Ko-reans. The bad ones. Not the nice Ko-reans like we got next door. They're the South ones. They bring me kimchi.

SAUL

It's going to be the Nazi's!
(to Akeem and Semmi)
They're back and they dress like the Best Buy Geek Squad only they want to kill people. I miss the white hoods. The hoods made you feel safer. Without the hoods, anybody could be a Nazi!

CLARENCE

Fuck a Nazi. If I saw a Nazi I'd be like, "Fuck you, Nazi". Then I'd punch him in the nose and steal his wallet.

SAUL

I'm worried about those hurricanes. Harvey, Irma, Jose, Maria! They name 'em after Jews and Puerto Ricans, you ever notice that, Prince?

SEMMI

Akeem is now an African King.

SAUL

Beautiful! Is there a Mrs. King?

AKEEM

I do have a wife, yes.

CLARENCE

You got kids? I got me some. And grandkids. Got a granddaughter that used to be my grandson. Turned that penis into a vagina. You can do that now. Science.

MORRIS

Bet you we could fix all those floppy titties you got over there.

AKEEM

Well--

SAUL

Oh, you can't touch titties anymore either! Touching a titty gets you fired.

SWEETS

Unless you're the President!

CLARENCE

I remember when you could finger pop a woman in the back of the church pew. Just good clean fun.

SAUL

Well, those days are gone now. You'll never get to finger pop a woman again! It's bullshit, Kunta!

AKEEM

Well... I am sorry you can no longer indiscriminately touch a woman's body at your every whim.

CLARENCE

It's okay. I got it in when I was younger.

AKEEM

That is good to know. But I am actually here with a purpose. I have just discovered that I may have a bastard son, conceived during my previous visit.

The old men laugh.

SWEETS

The long arm of the family court always brings 'em back. How much child support she getting you for?

SEMMI

He pays no child support.

MORRIS

No child support for thirty years and you came back? Dummy.

AKEEM

My son has been missing a father long enough. Perhaps you can use this to help me find him.

Semmi then takes out the iPad to reveal the sketch.

CLARENCE

What kind of picture is that?!

AKEEM

The royal graphic designer made a sketch based on a dream that Baba, the ancient, royal visionary of Zamunda had.

CLARENCE

Shit. Graphic designer? That ain't nothing but a iphone picture with a Snapchat filter.

MORRIS

I've seen him! Your son's a he-hoe.
(off Akeem's confusion)
A Male prostitute. Sellin' his ass over in Bayside.

SAUL

Ah, you don't know bupkes! This is the kid that's always outside of Saint John's University.

CLARENCE

(re: picture)
Oh, yeah! That is him.

AKEEM

He is a college student! Wonderful!

CLARENCE

Nah, he scalps tickets. Should be there now for the Thunderbirds game.

Akeem narrows his eyes, thinking back on Baba's premonition.

AKEEM

'Follow the thunderbird'...
(then, on a mission)
You have been very helpful. Semmi, reward them for their service.

Akeem exits as Semmi pulls out a huge wad of cash.

SEMMI

Forgive my ignorance. In America, how many thousands of dollars is appropriate to tip these days?

The old men smile. Jackpot.

EXT. ST. JOHN'S UNIVERSITY - BASKETBALL ARENA - NIGHT

The St. John's THUNDERBIRD MASCOT welcomes FANS to the game as they pour into the arena. We spot LaVelle fishing through his backpack. Thumbing past his resume from the earlier Burger King interview, he sighs, pulling out a couple TICKETS from the bag instead. He takes a deep breath, shifting gears to make some money. We see a confidence and swagger in him that was nowhere to be found back at the interview.

LAVELLE

(to passing fans)
Got four, got four! Fire seats!

He steps in front of TWO STUDENTS PASSING BY.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)
 Middle Tennessee State tonight.
 They got a 7 foot 9 center you
 should see before his heart pops
 while he's taking a dump.

Lavelle spots TWO FRAT BROS rocking beer-stained pastel shirts.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)
 Yo, you guys need tickets?

The Frat Boys ignore his call and keep walking.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)
 (in a whisper)
Pills. Caps. Doses. I got doses.

The Frat Boys stop.

FRAT BRO #1
 What you got, bro?

LAVELLE
 I got a cousin who works at Duane
 Reade and another who's in a lot of
 pain from stage 3 rectal cancer.

Lavelle opens up his backpack, flashing handfuls of unlabeled pill bottles and baggies filled to the brim.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)
 I got Adderall to help you study,
 Ativan to help you sleep after,
 and Molly for when you pass your
 exams and need to party. Up, down,
 and in love. I'll get you where
 you want to go. What's good?

The students look at each other, excited.

FRAT BRO #1
 How much for a little of each?

LAVELLE
 Let's see...
 (quickly, in his head)
 Molly is twenty bucks but this is
 pure as hell, so I'll do twenty
 five. You'll both roll once but
 wish you could roll again, so let's
 do four pills for a hundred-- ninety
 five because I'm nice. The Addy is
 thirty milligrams at ten dollars a
 pop-- that gets you about thirty
 cents on the gram... you'll want ten
 of those a piece-- plus Ativan at
 two dollars a pill puts you at...
 three hundred and five dollars.

*

FRAT BRO #2
Three hundred and five?!

FRAT BRO #1
That feels kinda high...

LAVELLE

Look, I'm going to be honest with you. I need the money. I've had a hard life. My mom was on drugs, my father wasn't around... I tried to use my anger at him to fuel my dream of making it to the NBA but the local gang stopped me. It's easier to sell this dope than run suicides for my old school Irish coach, who I know cares about me, but doesn't know how to show it.

FRAT BRO #2

Shit, man. That's rough.

LAVELLE

Yeah. I'm just trying to use this money to claw my way out of the clutches of the Ghetto. But since you guys seem like good dudes, I'll call it three hundred even.

Just as the students are about to pay, LaVelle turns around to see TWO COPS, staring right at him.

COP #1

What's in the bag, Meek Mill?

LAVELLE

Certainly nothing incriminating, officer.

COP #2

Let's have a look.

LAVELLE

Oh-kay, sure... No prob--

LaVelle TAKES OFF RUNNING. The cops give chase.

INT. THE ROYAL LIMOUSINE/EXT. ST. JOHN'S - SAME

Akeem looks out and sees the Saint John's basketball arena, draped with a giant Thunderbird banner. Oha parks the limo and opens the trunk. Akeem gets out, removes his lion-skin trench coat and hands it to Oha in exchange for the New York Mets bomber jacket he wore in the first movie.

AKEEM

Wait here.

BACK ON LAVELLE: Outrunning the cops.

COP #1

Stop right there!

LaVelle continues, expertly maneuvering through the crowd. This isn't his first rodeo. Running, swinging and jumping off things that were never meant to be used that way.

COP #2

These guys are getting really good at running from us.

They take off behind him. LaVelle turns a corner, sprinting headlong into ... AKEEM. THE TWO MEN STARE FACE-TO-FACE FOR AN INSTANT. AKEEM HOLDS THE IPAD SKETCH NEXT TO LAVELLE. IT'S SPOT-ON, DOWN TO THE CHURRO CRUMB IN HIS GOATEE. A MASSIVE GAP-TOOTHED GRIN SPREADS ACROSS AKEEM'S FACE.

LaVelle pauses, confused, then cuts and runs, employing the same Parkour moves as before. Akeem chases after him, moving with the same amazing agility despite carrying an iPad: a real Zamundan superhero. Lagging behind, the cops watch as both LaVelle and Akeem disappear into the crowd. *

COP #2 (CONT'D)

(out of breath)

Seriously. Who have they been learning this shit from? *

ON LAVELLE *

Sprinting full steam ahead. He expertly slips through the crowd, leaving the cops and Akeem in the dust, ducking into a narrow alley up ahead... *

EXT. STREETS OF QUEENS/DARK ALLEY - CONTINUOUS *

LaVelle braces himself up against a brick wall, peeking back around the corner. Nobody in sight. Relieved, he hunches over to catch his breath, when, out of nowhere-- *

AKEEM (O.S.) *

Hello. *

LAVELLE *

(jumping) *

Jesus Christ! *

Akeem just stares at him, smiling. *

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

The hell are you doing, man? Do I know you?? *

AKEEM

Not yet but I am most excited to get to know each other. *

LaVelle notices the drawing of himself on Akeem's iPad.

LAVELLE

Is that a picture of me?! You some
sort of serial killer?

*
*

AKEEM

I am no serial killer.

LaVelle tries to skirt past Akeem but Akeem blocks his path.

*

AKEEM (CONT'D)

Can I ask your name?

*

LAVELLE

Okay. Right. Maybe if you learn
my name it'll humanize me and make
it harder to kill me. I am
LaVelle Junson. I have a mother
and friends who love and will miss
me. I am LaVelle Junson.

*
*
*
*

Akeem stares deeply into his new-found son's eyes.

AKEEM

LaVelle Junson.

LAVELLE

Please don't stare at me like that.

AKEEM

I am sorry. I cannot contain the
joy this meeting is bringing me.

LAVELLE

The fuck is happening?

*

AKEEM

You have your grandfather's strong
jaw.

Akeem caresses LaVelle's face.

LAVELLE

You know what? Not today, devil!

*

LaVelle slaps away Akeem's hand, quickly doing a DOUBLE JUKE
MOVE, finally getting past him, rushing back into the street
as...

*
*
*

Two COP CARS SCREECH up, cornering him.

*

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

Goddammit!

(then, trying to talk his
way out of it)

Thank God you're here. There's a
Jamaican serial killer back there
who wants to take my jaw as a
trophy.

*

The Officers are hearing none of it. They grab LaVelle and put him in cuffs just as Akeem comes out of the alley. *

AKEEM

What is the meaning of this? Why are you being arrested? *

LAVELLE

You're a Black serial killer, you should understand.
(pointed, to Cops)
My skin color makes me a criminal.

AKEEM

That doesn't make sense. A police officer wouldn't arrest a man just for being Black. This is America.

The Cops exchange perplexed looks while leading LaVelle into the squad car.

INT. CITY JAIL - NIGHT

CLOSE on a TV mounted on the ceiling of a holding cell. A COMMERCIAL is playing featuring Lisa's old boyfriend, DARRYL. He is now completely bald.

DARRYL

Hi, I'm Darryl Jenks. Not only am I the founder of Soul Gro, I'm also a customer.

SOULFUL JINGLE SINGERS

(singing)
Just let your Soul Gro ...

Hair starts growing out of Darryl's head. Fast. Like a Chia Pet. Within seconds he has a full head of hair.

SOULFUL JINGLE SINGERS (CONT'D)

Your hair so silky smooth.

SLO-MO: Darryl smiles, shakes his luxurious new hair.

SOULFUL JINGLE SINGERS (CONT'D)

Just let your Soul Gro

ANGLE TO REVEAL:

The PRISONERS in the holding cell. It's LaVelle... and a bunch of other BLACK GUYS. A GUARD comes up.

GUARD

Junson ... Someone paid your bail.

Off LaVelle, taken aback,

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

LaVelle comes out into the cold night air and immediately sees Akeem, arms crossed, looking like a disappointed father.

AKEEM

You said you were arrested for being Black but it was actually because you were selling large quantities of drugs.

(then, shaking his head)
Unacceptable. Surely a young, strong, handsome man such as yourself has more honorable earning opportunities.

LaVelle can't help but laugh.

LAVELLE

Look, maybe there's no racism in your quaint little serial killer's village just outside of Wakanda, but you sound absolutely insane talking like that in Queens.

*

AKEEM

(sadly)
My god. This country has completely broken your spirit.

LAVELLE

(beat)
Cool. Well, thanks for bailing me out, African Hannibal Lecter.

LaVelle takes off.

AKEEM

Akeem. My name is Akeem. And I think I may be your father.

LaVelle stops immediately.

LAVELLE

(beat)
What the fuck makes you think that?

AKEEM

Baba, the royal shaman of Zamunda, saw it in a vision.

LaVelle sighs. This dude is bat shit crazy.

LAVELLE

I get it now, you're one of those African scammers. I thought it was all over email but this is some next level shit.

(then)
(MORE)

LAVELLE (CONT'D)
Oh shit! You're going to take my spleen aren't you?!

*

AKEEM
I do not want your spleen. I just want to get to know my son.

LaVelle grows even more confused, studying Akeem.

LAVELLE
If you really think you're my Pops then what's my mother's name?

AKEEM
I do not know. It was many years ago. And only a brief encounter. That I do not recall.

LAVELLE
Look, I don't know what your deal is but I haven't needed a dad my whole life and I'm not looking for one now. So stay the fuck away from me, Bellevue.

As LaVelle starts to walk away, the Zamundan-flagged, ROYAL LIMO FLEET arrives. Oha steps out, nodding to both men with deference.

OHA
King Akeem.

LAVELLE
(beat)
King?

OHA
I see you have found the prince.

LAVELLE
Prince?

AKEEM
I hadn't gotten that far yet, but thank you, Oha.

LAVELLE
Did this Ruben Studdard looking-ass dude just call me a Prince?

AKEEM
Please allow me to explain.

Akeem gestures toward the limo. LaVelle considers.

EXT. BAD NEIGHBORHOOD IN QUEENS - NIGHT

The Royal Limo pulls up in front of a run-down tenement.

INT. RUN-DOWN APARTMENT - SAME TIME

A loud, raucous family dinner in a cramped apartment. At the head of the table is LaVelle's mother, MARY, mid-argument with Big 'Reem and a bunch of LaVelle's OTHER COUSINS. A shitty TV is muted behind them: *Girls* is on, where, as usual, HANNAH is naked.

MARY

(re: *Girls*)

This doughy hoe gets to be naked on TV and she's a feminist icon. My titty pops out while I'm bowling, and I can't get my shoes back. This country ain't shit. Only good thing happening is them changing the twenty dollar bill.

BIG 'REEM

What they changing it to?

MARY

Black Girl Magic. They're putting Harriet Tubman on that shit.

COUSIN #1

Wow. Look at God. How do you think they're going to do her hair?

COUSIN #2

She was about those bandanas...

BIG 'REEM

They ain't puttin' no Harriet Tubman on our money in no damn bandana.

MARY

I think they need to give her a nice, simple weave. Three packs, twenty two inches, Virgin Polynesian hair. Classy, something you could wear to a Cheesecake Factory.

COUSIN #2

And a Fashionova dress.

MARY

Hell yeah. You know Harriet had ass too, all that squatting and running in tunnels.

COUSIN #1

I bet the brothas used to call her "Sista Tubs."

(then, pretending)

Looking real nice today, Sista Tubs. How you doing?

MARY
(as "Sista Tubs")
I'm fine, baby. Can't complain.
Just laying low, you know.
Organizing...

The Cousins laugh as LaVelle enters.

MARY (CONT'D)
Hey baby! Where ya been?

Akeem and Semmi enter before he can respond.

MARY (CONT'D)
(noticing, overwhelmed)
Awww, my Gaaawd ... My African! I
told my homegirl you'd come back!
This shit is hard to quit, ain't
it?
(pointed, at LaVelle)
I wish I knew to expect you. I
would have tidied up a bit...

LAVELLE
So you *do* know him?

MARY
I know him very well. Like all the
way live, up in his crevices and--

AKEEM
Okay... we get the point...
(beat, then)
Hello...uh...

Akeem searches for her name.

LAVELLE
Mary. Remember that shit. It's
the name of an angel.

AKEEM
It is good to see you... again...

MARY
You want me to make you a sandwich?
Some salami on a nice ciabatta? Or
I got pretzel bread if you want it.
Compromises the flavor of the
salami but you may not notice. Not
everyone has a sandwich palate.

BIG 'REEM
Why you ain't never offer me no
ciabatta bread, auntie Mary?

SEMMI
King Akeem does not eat sandwiches.

MARY

Still running that same ol' game,
huh? Last time you were a prince,
but whatever.

SEMMI

It's no game. He is a king now.

LAVELLE

(confused, processing)
So wait. You and him really were a
thing? How long were you together?

MARY

It was at least forty-five minutes.
Yeah. Mostly cause neither of us
could move our bodies after the PCP
started hitting.

LAVELLE

Then he's really my father?

MARY

(beat, thinking about it)
Oh, shit! Now that I think about
it... Yeah, he probably is! He
probably fucking is.

LaVelle looks over to Akeem. Reality finally settling in.
He slowly begins to regard the shape of his father's face
compared to his own. His strong brows, his high cheek bones,
the gap in his tooth.

COUSIN #1/#2/#3

You lying./Wish I knew my Dad./I
fucks with pretzel bread too.

LaVelle scratches nervously at the base of his neck at what
he's experiencing. At that same moment, he notices Akeem
ALSO SCRATCHING NERVOUSLY at the base of his neck. It's
uncanny and undeniable.

MARY

Whoa, this is a trip!

AKEEM

Mary, I am here for my son.

MARY

Hold up, what?! After I did all
the work, now you wanna be on some
joint custody shit?

AKEEM

I want to take him back to Zamunda
so that he can take his rightful
place on the throne.

MARY

Oh, he's not going anywhere.

AKEEM

Please. This is the boy's birthright. I am offering him a chance at a better life.

LaVelle suddenly looks stung.

LAVELLE

Look man, I don't know what you think this is, but I don't need no African handouts--

BIG 'REEM

For real? 'Cause you just got out of jail, you owe me back for all those tickets, and you're not exactly killing that job hunt.

LAVELLE

(through gritted teeth)
I said I'm cool, man.

Just then, Semmi opens a briefcase to reveal it's full of cash and gold.

SEMMI

Oops. It just popped open. My mistake.

A wide-eyed Mary looks to a slack-jawed LaVelle. Then, on a dime:

LAVELLE

Having said that, you did abandon me for thirty years and if you're trying to pay it forward, who am I to say no to becoming a prince?

MARY

Amen! So what's the game plan? Y'all wanna take us where exactly? I want my cousins to know the details in case y'all try to sell me into sex trafficking like the sheik I met online.

Akeem and Semmi share a look.

AKEEM

We are only offering to bring LaVelle back to his homeland.
(spinning)
But maybe we can send for you once he is settled.

LAVELLE

Yeah, all that Zika must be fucking with your brains if you think you're taking me without my moms.

MARY

So, what're we talking? We get a hut with our own shaman or some shit?

Akeem and Semmi share another look. This is a lost cause.

AKEEM

How about a palace? With servants.
(to Semmi for support)
We can even install a pool in your room, if it will please you.

MARY

You know what? It would. It really, really would.

LAVELLE

I'll just go ahead and assume a pool comes standard for princes.

SEMMI

To be clear, you are not officially a prince yet. Not until after the Princely Tests--

Akeem nudges Semmi, cutting him off.

LAVELLE

Not until what?

AKEEM

Not until, uh... you find a princess!

This gets a rise out of the cousins.

LAVELLE

I mean... that shouldn't be much of a problem for me, know what I'm sayin'?

COUSIN #1/#2/#3

Ha! / Quit playing. / You ain't seen a pussy in years.

AKEEM

(sensing an opportunity)
Not to get ahead of ourselves, but there is a suitor in our neighboring country already expressing interest.

LAVELLE

Yeah? She on the 'gram?

AKEEM

The what?

SEMMI

Oh yes.

Semmi suddenly holds out an iPad already open to BOPOTO'S INSTAGRAM.

SEMMI (CONT'D)

Just don't accidentally 'like' any of her pictures!

LaVelle and the cousins crowd around the iPad ogling over her ridiculously sexual pics.

COUSIN #1/#2/BIG 'REEM

Oh, shit! / That's what's up. / She got that motherland booty.

Wide-eyed, LaVelle looks up from the iPad.

LAVELLE

Well... we should probably get going.

AKEEM

Excellent! This is most exciting, my son.

LAVELLE

Don't fucking call me that.

AKEEM

Duly noted.

LaVelle crosses toward the door, Mary follows, grabbing nothing but her purse.

COUSIN #1

Wait. Now?! You're just gonna leave all your stuff?

MARY

(clapping for emphasis)
Our-shit-sucks.

COUSIN #2

But your apartment--

MARY

(more clapping)
I-have-not-paid-rent-in-three-months-so-we-need-to-be-out.

(then, in her cousins' faces)

Bye bitches! We 'bout to get dripped!

As Cardi B and Migos', "DRIP" begins to BLAST, Mary slaps Akeem's ass and SASHAYS out of the apartment with pure unearned confidence.

*

Cardi continues to let the world know that she "Came through Drippin'..." as we PRELAP the MUFFLED ROAR of a GULFSTREAM G650 we MATCH CUT TO,

EXT. NIGHT SKIES - ESTABLISHING

The sleek and refined elegance of a GULFSTREAM G650 with a ZUMANDAN FLAG underneath it's tail numbers RIPS INTO THE FRAME and through the cloudless night of the 45000 feet airspace reserved for private transportation.

INT. ROYAL JET - NIGHT

Cardi and the Migos boys are suddenly replaced by the hauntingly unforgettable hook of "Started!..." as Drake's, "Started From The Bottom" makes a stentorian and clamorous announcement from the Royal jet's Transmission Audio sound system. Oha (who's definitely kind of into it) watches as Mary is living it the fuck up: POPPING BOTTLES, TWERKING, MILLY WOPPING, it's like she's hit 'Hood BINGO' and she wants everyone to know.

MARY
(to Akeem)
You should put up a pole in here!

Oha, looks to Semmi, they've talked about this and agree.

LAVELLE (O.S.)
I think this thing is jammed.

Pull back to see LaVelle smacking the side of a SUPREME MONEY GUN that suddenly starts shooting bills with Akeem's face, MAKING IT RAIN.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)
Got 'em!

ANGLE ON Akeem anxiously watching on.

AKEEM
(to Semmi)
I have to be honest, I was not expecting my heir to be as brash... and combative... and immature...

SEMMI
Yes, but... he is a man. So, there's that.

AKEEM
Mhm.
(then)
Semmi, when we arrive, inform General Izzi I have returned... with a son.

*
*
*

SEMMI

I will do as you wish.
 (then, calling back)
 Oha! When we arrive inform General
 Izzi Akeem has returned with a son!

*
*
*

AKEEM

(to Semmi)
 And take LaVelle and his mother on
 a tour of the palace grounds. I
 need time to inform Lisa of all
 this.

*
*
*
*
*
*

SEMMI

Of course.
 (then, calling out)
 Oha! First take LaVelle and his
 mother on a tour of the palace
 grounds!

*
*
*
*
*

AKEEM

You think Lisa will be
 understanding, right?

SEMMI

Of course. What is not to
 understand?

*

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. PALACE FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

TIGHT ON Lisa, BOILING.

LISA

Are you kidding me?! 'Royal
 retreat' my ass! You lied to me!

REVEAL she's going off on Akeem, beyond furious.

AKEEM

Lisa, please. Do not be mad.

LISA

You go looking for an illegitimate
 son without telling me, and you
 expect me not to be mad?! He's the
 brother to our girls and heir to
 the throne, Akeem! I should have
 known about this!

AKEEM

I did not want to concern you until
 I knew for sure there was something
 to be concerned about.

LISA

Well now you know for damn sure how
 fuckin' concerned I am.

AKEEM

I hate how masterfully you swear
when you are angry.

Akeem cowers as she unloads a series of expletives.

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - SAME TIME

Oha leads LaVelle and Mary on a tour of the palace.

MARY

Oh, my Gawd! This is some fancy
shit. Gotta do one for the 'gram.
(taking picture)
Ohhh, them hatin' ass bitches in
Queens gon' die when they see this.
I'm on some Cardi B shit!

PALACE GUARDS along the gate bow in deference as LaVelle
passes. Off LaVelle taking it all in, awe-struck,

INT. PALACE FOYER - SAME TIME

Back on Lisa and Akeem. She is calmer, pacing, trying to
figure this all out.

LISA

Fine. You have an illegitimate
child. We can deal with it. They
always work these things out when
it happens on "Empire".

AKEEM

(happy she's not yelling)
And on "Empire", the child is often
the result of an illicit affair.
Which I did not have. I never
betrayed you.

LISA

I guess we hadn't even met yet.
And it's not like you were the
first man I ever slept with.

AKEEM

(beat)
What's this now?

LISA

(ignoring)
So I guess you didn't really do
anything wrong.

AKEEM

It was an honest mistake that could
happen to anyone who's best friend
drugged him so he could procure
casual sex with strange women.

(MORE)

AKEEM (CONT'D)

(beat)
But about these other men...

LISA

I knew it! This reeks of Semmi.

AKEEM

You're right. Best not to talk about the other men... And I am not trying to shift blame here, but... yes, it was all Semmi.

LISA

Semmi!

They turn to see Semmi hanging halfway out the window, obviously trying to escape... again. He stops in his tracks and turns around, busted... again.

SEMMI

(meekly)
Hmmm?

AKEEM

Just go.

Semmi climbs out the window and runs away. Akeem turns to Lisa who now seems a little calmer.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

Are you really okay with this?

LISA

I will be. But from here on out be honest with me. No more surprises.

AKEEM

I promise - not one more surprise!

MC SHAN'S *"The Bridge"* begins as source music off screen.

Akeem and Lisa turn to see Oha leading Mary and LaVelle into the palace. MC SHAN playing on a Beats pill. Despite it, Oha maintains his royal composure.

OHA

Presenting King Akeem's bastard son from America, LaVelle Junson, and his unwed mother... Mary.

MARY

(to Lisa)
Hey, girl, hey!

AKEEM

(eesh, to Lisa)
Okay, one more surprise.

Lisa looks like she could castrate Akeem.

LAVELLE

Honor to meet you, Queen.

LaVelle puts out a hand to shake, then hesitates.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

Wait, do we shake or should I bow?

MARY

Fuck that noise! I'm a hugger.

Mary gives an uncomfortable Lisa a BIG BEAR HUG.

AKEEM

(reaching)

See, Lisa? She is a hugger! You are often a hugger. So much in common... you two... this is nice.

Lisa throws Akeem another deadly look.

MARY

So, you just have the one house? Oprah has like four but it's all good. You'll get there, boo.

MEEKA (O.S.)

What's going on in here?

Everyone turns to see Meeka, Akeem's oldest daughter, entering along with her younger sisters.

AKEEM

Um... children, I want you to meet your, uh, brother, LaVelle.

(to LaVelle)

This is Princess Shani ... Shani, this is your bastard brother.

Little Shani curtsies.

LAVELLE

Hey, cuteness.

AKEEM

Meet Princess Tinashe.

(to Tinashe)

This is your bastard brother.

Tinashe curtsies.

LAVELLE

Look at them guns. Don't mess with her.

AKEEM

Meet Princess Omma.

(to Omma)

Your bastard brother.

Bespectacled Omma curtsies.

LAVELLE

You must be the smart one. I can tell. You're wearing glasses.

OMMA

I have astigmatism. There's no reason to make fun of it.

LAVELLE

My bad.

AKEEM

And finally, my eldest daughter, Princess Meeka.

(to Meeka)

This is your bast--

LAVELLE

Bastard brother. They got it. I think you've done enough to remind everyone you're a deadbeat who never even bothered to learn the name of the woman you knocked up.

MARY

Ay that's me. I'm Mary. But think of me as your second momma.

LISA

Mmm, you don't have to though.

MARY

Mmm, but you should. Cause I kinda am.

Lisa glares at Akeem who shifts awkwardly.

AKEEM

How great is this? Just your typical Zamundan-American, aristocratic, blended family. We are just like a show on ABC.

Off Akeem and his very uncomfortable family next to LaVelle and Mary who stick out like sore, unrefined thumbs,

INT. ROYAL DINING ROOM - NIGHT

A tremendously long and elegant table made more pronounced by Akeem's children ALL SITTING ON THE OPPOSITE END. Akeem and the girls eat impeccably while Mary and LaVelle are hunched over their plates, stuffing food in their mouths like prisoners at Rikers Island.

LISA

So, LaVelle, what were you doing in Queens before you found out you were a prince?

LaVelle freezes, mid-gigantic scoop of caviar, looking up from his plate.

LAVELLE

Uh... I was kind of between a couple things. Been interviewing for a few management positions. Not sure if you've heard of Burger Ki--

MARY

Don't sell yourself short, baby. LaVelle's a hell of an entrepreneur. You should'a seen the operation he was running with his cousins.

LAVELLE

Ma, they don't need to hear all that.

MARY

The boy's basically the Steve Jobs of scalping tickets and slipping pills to college kids.

LISA

Oh... wow.

Lisa cuts Akeem a glare. We can tell LaVelle's embarrassed.

LISA (CONT'D)

And remind me again how you and Akeem found each other?

LAVELLE

(beat)

...he bumped into me... while I was... on a run.

*
*

LISA

On a run?

*
*

AKEEM

Well... In the spirit of being completely honest with my Queen, I should probably add that I bumped into him while he was running from the police right before I bailed him out of jail for selling drugs.

*
*

LAVELLE

Seriously?

MARY

Boy, what did I tell you about getting caught?!

TINASHE

(to Oha)

Can I sell drugs?

MARY

(screaming across table)

As long as you don't get caught baby.

(then, off Akeem and Lisa)

What? It's a teachable moment.

SHANI

(screaming to LaVelle)

So was this your first time going to jail?

LAVELLE

(screaming back)

No, unfortunately. Turns out life in America as a Black man abandoned by his father is about as hard as they make it seem on television.

LaVelle looks to Akeem, really rubbing it in.

MARY

But that's okay, baby. You gonna be the head of all this one day. This long ass table, this food, this dining room, this whole gott damn kingdom--

ANGLE ON the three young princesses whispering to each other:

SHANI

Wait, I'm confused.

OMMA

I always thought Meeka was gonna be Queen.

TINASHE

Psh! A woman isn't allowed to rule Zamunda. *Idiot.*

MEEKA

(standing)

Please, excuse me.

Meeka suddenly gets up from the table and leaves. Akeem smiles politely for the guests, but can sense his daughter is upset.

INT. ROYAL BEDROOM - NIGHT

Lisa is getting ready for bed. Akeem enters, dragging his feet.

LISA

You sure you're in the right room?

AKEEM

Lisa, please. I am getting it from everywhere -- Meeka is very upset.

LISA

Well her father just went on a secret trip to America and came home with a random drug-dealing criminal half-brother to inherit the throne of the country she loves.

(beat)

So I'd say that's fairly upsetting.

Akeem is speechless.

LISA (CONT'D)

I actually think she's handling it pretty well, considering.

AKEEM

Considering what?

LISA

You ever thought that maybe Meeka wanted to be your heir to the throne? And why shouldn't she be? She's practically trained for it her whole life.

AKEEM

You think this boy would be my first choice to be my heir? Of course not. But what can I do? He's my first born. My only son. You know the law.

Lisa shakes her head.

LISA

This isn't you talking. It's your father.

She turns off the light and rolls over.

LISA (CONT'D)

Goodnight Akeem.

LONG BEAT, then:

AKEEM

This may be poor timing on my part
but would you be in the mood to--

LISA

(not a chance)
Oh my God!

AKEEM

Yes, poor timing, just as I
thought. Good night!

KIDS (V.O.)

(prelap)
*We pledge allegiance, to General
Izzi, and all of the democracy he
does for Nexdoria.*

EXT. NEXDORIA - NEXT MORNING

A glorious sunrise over a total shit hole stuffed with junker cars in traffic, the air sticky with pollution. We spot a sign that reads, "Welcome to Nexdoria ... Strength Through Ignorance."

KIDS (V.O.)

*He is not a king. But better than
Obama ever was and ever will be.*

A PEELING BILLBOARD featuring the scowling face of General Izzi. It reads, "IZZI IZ PROGRESS."

KIDS (V.O.)

*His presence is calming, his
leadership is unparalleled. There
will never be another Izzi.*

Dilapidated high rises sway in an arid city center. Broken windows. Broken promises. A giant poster affixed to one of the abandoned buildings. Izzi's same scowling face as the text reads: "IZZI IZ THE FUTURE."

KIDS (V.O.)

*We follow our great leader through
thick and thin. One nation.
Indivisible. With liberty and
justice for all.*

ANOTHER BILLBOARD features Izzi menacingly holding up a meat cleaver. The text simply reads, "OR ELSE..."

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. NEXDORIA - ON THE PALACE BALCONY - DAY

Izzi making THE EXACT SAME FACE, sitting across from his daughter, Bopoto, listening intently as she pitches him an idea.

BOPOTO

What if I just pretend to pick something up and bend over in front of him while you shoot him in the back of the head?

GENERAL IZZI

Mmm...

(beat, considering)

I hate it. Too simple. We're not just talking about assassinating anyone... it's the King of Zamunda. There should be more pizazz.

IDI (O.S.)

Father, please say hello to my many loyal followers.

Izzi turns to his son, Idi, who we see is live on Facebook, excitedly handing his phone over to his father. Izzi IMMEDIATELY throws it over the balcony.

IDI (CONT'D)

But, father!

GENERAL IZZI

We do not share our every moment with the world like teenage American girls.

*

A group of MENACING NEXDORIAN SOLDIERS march in, saluting.

MENACING SOLDIER

Supreme Leader Izzi. We've been informed that King Akeem has returned from his royal retreat in America. With an adult bastard son.

*
*
*
*
*

GENERAL IZZI

A son? Really...

IDI

(suddenly insecure)

Is he handsome?

(then)

He hasn't been using Tinder locally, has he?

General Izzi ignores his son, turning to his daughter.

GENERAL IZZI

Bopoto. New plan. Put on the scoop neck dress by Ivanka Trump.

(MORE)

GENERAL IZZI (CONT'D)
It's time for you to be used like
the object I raised you to be.

INT. LAVELLE'S SUITE AT THE PALACE - DAY

Morning light bathes the room. As LaVelle wakes up, he's startled and pleasantly surprised to see FOUR BEAUTIFUL NAKED SERVANT GIRLS gathered around his bed.

SERVANTS
Good morning, Prince.

LAVELLE
Wow. Good morning, ladies.

SERVANT GIRL #1
Would you like us to bathe you?

LAVELLE
Bathe me?

Off LaVelle's eyes going wide,

INT. MARY'S SUITE AT THE PALACE - DAY

Mary is luxuriating in a sunken tub. A big MUSCULAR MANSERVANT rises from the water to say --

MANSERVANT
Your privates are clean, Ma'am.

He coughs like he's got a hair stuck in his throat.

MARY
One more time. Just to be sure.

Manservant sadly goes back underwater.

INT. LAVELLE'S SUITE AT THE PALACE - MORNING

LaVelle emerges from the bathroom in a towel with a satisfied strut. He stops as he sees MIREMBE, the gorgeous ROYAL BARBER we met earlier, carrying her GOLDEN CLIPPERS. *
*

MIREMBE
(bowing)
Good morning, your highness. I am Mirembe, the royal groomer. Please allow me the honor of trimming your most precious hairs. *

LAVELLE
(looking into his towel)
Uh...

MIREMBE

The ones atop your head, sir.

LAVELLE

Ah, right. Of course.

She motions to a nearby barber chair.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

Whoa, this is dope. You're saying I can get lined up anytime I want?

MIREMBE

(beat)

Are you trying to suggest you can just summon me whenever you desire?

LAVELLE

What? No. Not at all. I was just--

Mirembe laughs.

MIREMBE

It was a joke, your highness. Serving the royal family is a great honor in Zamunda. It would be my pleasure.

LAVELLE

Cool. For sure. Knew that.

LaVelle takes a seat in the chair.

MIREMBE

Sit back, relax, and as I style your hair, we shall loudly and over-aggressively banter about sports and politics while pretending to have far more knowledge about these topics than we actually do. You'll feel right at home.

Off LaVelle smiling up at Mirembe,

INT. PALACE HALLWAY - DAY

LaVelle and Mary emerge from their respective quarters. She struts toward her son as if walking on air.

LAVELLE

Damn Ma, I've never seen you look so relaxed.

MARY

And I've never seen you look so fresh. That's a nice cut!

LAVELLE
 (feeling himself)
 Right?

MARY
 Wait, the hell is that? *

Mary tugs on the back of LaVelle's head, revealing he has a LONG BRAID a la Akeem's haircut in the first movie.

LAVELLE
 Goddamn! I knew she was doing
 something weird back there! *

Mary starts cracking up as they pass Oha, standing guard outside the Throne Room.

OHA
 (to LaVelle)
 Your highness. The King has
 requested your presence.
 (pointed, to Mary)
 And your presence alone.

MARY
 Word, let's go see what his sexy
 royal ass is up to.

Off LaVelle rolling his eyes as Mary marches ahead,

INT. THRONE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Akeem sits atop the throne, holding court, flanked by Baba, Semmi, Lisa and his daughters. Standing before him, is the Prime Minister of Israel, BENJAMIN NETANYAHU, holding out an ornately wrapped GIFT BASKET of bagels, lox, challah, apples, honey, hummus, falafel, soaps from the dead sea, etc.

BENJAMIN NETANYAHU
 Again, I am so sorry I could not
 attend your father's funeral in
 person. Although, it's a bit more
 on you considering you threw it on
 the Sabbath. But we do not need to
 get into that now.

(then)
 Your father was a great ally and a
 strong King and I know you will be
 a worthy successor despite the many
 dinners we had where he'd go on and
 on about your lack of a backbone,
 male heir, and overall disrespect
 for tradition.

(then)
 But again, we do not need to get
 into all that now.

Awkward beat as Akeem forces a toothy smile.

AKEEM

Thank you very much, Prime
Minister.

The Prime Minister exits, passing by LaVelle and Mary as they
make their way inside.

MARY

(to Akeem)
There's my *baaaaby!*

Lisa shakes her head as Mary approaches with LaVelle.

MEEKA

(to Lisa)
Don't you have a dress like that?

LISA

(through gritted teeth)
I did.

MARY

Thanks, girl. It took me forever
to find it in your closet.

LISA

And who said you could go through
my closet?

MARY

(to Meeka)
Your mother always been this
uppity?

LISA

I am not uppity!

MARY

Uppityniggasayswhat?

LISA

What?

MARY

Exactly.

ANGLE ON TINASHE giggling.

TINASHE

Mommy looks funny when she's mad.

MARY

(to Akeem)
So what's up, boo? You beckoned?

AKEEM

I would like to make clear that I,
in no way, requested your presence.

MARY

Sure...

AKEEM

I didn't.

MARY

(winking)

Okay.

AKEEM

I have called *LaVelle* here to observe how a King holds court. *

Meeka glares at *LaVelle*. There's jealousy in her eyes.

LAVELLE

Ooo... yeah... I was actually thinking about hitting that pool today.

MARY

Heard that. Lisa, cool if I borrow a two-piece?

LAVELLE

Also, is there a mall around here? I'm feelin' these silk slippers and all but I'ma need to add some J's to the royal repertoire.

(then, looking around)

Where's that Supreme money gun at?

As the confused PALACE ONLOOKERS watch on, an embarrassed Akeem laughs uncomfortably.

AKEEM

My son--

LAVELLE

Don't.

AKEEM

LaVelle. I can not stress enough the importance of you staying right here. In this room. For... educational purposes. You never know what other world leaders might walk through that door at any minute with extremely time sensitive propositions... *

Just then, we hear a SOUND IN THE DISTANCE growing LOUDER and LOUDER - a cacophony of MARCHING BOOTS hitting the ground. The double doors burst open and General Izzi stomps in, flanked by a posse of MENACING NEXDORIAN SOLDIERS. While Izzi's interruption would normally rattle Akeem, we notice him suddenly perking up. *

GENERAL IZZI

King Akeem.

AKEEM

General Izzi! A most completely unexpected visit.

(then, feigning confusion)
What could have possibly brought you back to Zamunda?

BABA

(whispering to Akeem)
He definitely here to assassinate you.

Akeem does his best to ignore Baba.

GENERAL IZZI

I've come to offer congratulations on locating one of your lost sperms. I often wonder about my own stray bullets.

AKEEM

Thank you for the... kind words.

GENERAL IZZI

Yes, well, I have not just returned with words. But with a new offer for my daughter's hand...

General Izzi claps his hands and a WAVE OF NEXDORIAN TRIBAL WOMEN rush into the palace (a la the first film) - DANCING, DRUMMING, BACKFLIPPING, before clearing a path for BOPOTO, who struts toward LaVelle in the sexy Ivanka Trump dress.

LaVelle's jaw drops. Semmi's drops further.

MARY

Hot damn! Look at that body.
That's some P90x shit.

(then)
Still number two in the room though.

GENERAL IZZI

(to LaVelle)
I present my daughter, Bopoto.

LAVELLE

Bopoto...

Bopoto approaches LaVelle, now breast-to-face with the slack-jawed heir to Zamunda.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

Beautiful... name. What's it mean?

BOPOTO

She who squirts.

Semmi's jaw falls open again. LaVelle is practically drooling.

GENERAL IZZI

So what do you say? Shall we finally join our families in marriage under one flag by uniting your LaVelle with my Bopoto?

CHATTER from the crowd.

LAVELLE

Whoa... wow... not that I'm not interested... very, very interested... but, like... I just got here. Shouldn't I see what else is out there?

Izzi laughs. Bopoto takes LaVelle's hand, looking him right in the eye.

BOPOTO

Say yes, and no man shall have more happiness or more pleasure day after day after day from our wedding bed to your death bed.

She kisses him on the lips. As LaVelle stands, in a trance, Lisa shoots Akeem a look. *

AKEEM

Uh, as you know General Izzi, I have a strong opinion when it comes to arranged marriages. *

(then) *

But... if this is what LaVelle desires, then who am I to stand in the way?

LISA

Wait, what?

Akeem avoids eye contact with his wife, turning to LaVelle.

AKEEM

LaVelle? Is this what you want?

LaVelle turns back to his father, who awaits his answer on pins and needles. *

LAVELLE

Yeah... I'm 'bout it.

Akeem delightfully double-claps his hands, beyond excited. *

AKEEM

Then it is settled! *

GENERAL IZZI

Huzzah!

NEXDORIAN SOLDIERS

Huzzah!

Lisa and Meeka look to each other, shell-shocked.

BABA

Well done my King! I can see your father taking a water break from his orgy in heaven, smiling down upon you with pride.

Akeem swells.

MEEKA

Father, are you sure about this?

GENERAL IZZI

Silence, useless woman!

Meeka shoots her dad a look, who once again avoids eye contact as well as the question. *

GENERAL IZZI (CONT'D)

Let us proceed immediately. A semi-automatic shotgun wedding it will be!

AKEEM *

Excellent! *

BABA

("not so fast")

Uh, uh, uh. You know the law. Remember your father's last words... the boy must first pass the Princely Tests. *

Akeem turns to Baba, extremely annoyed. *

AKEEM

Yes... of course... I'd almost forgotten... The Princely Tests. *

BABA *

The wedding can not take place until he's proven himself your worthy heir! *

CHATTER from Zamundan Onlookers, whispering, nodding in agreement. General Izzi groans, turning to Akeem. *

GENERAL IZZI *

With your blood running through his veins I expect Prince LaVelle to complete said tests within a week.

(then, lowering voice) *

I would hate to go back to plotting your death. Well... 'hate' is a strong word.

AKEEM

(nervous)

No need for plotting. From what I've seen, the boy is a very, uh, smart, capable, mature, young man who should breeze through them in no time.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*

GENERAL IZZI

For your sake, I hope so.

*
*

General Izzi strangely snaps his fingers and his soldiers follow him out. Bopoto slowly lets go of LaVelle's hand, not breaking eye contact until she exits the room.

MARY

(to LaVelle, re: Bopoto)

Good choice baby, she got them strong child-bearing hips.

As the Nexdorians exit, Meeka immediately pulls Akeem aside.

MEEKA

Father, can we talk about this?

AKEEM

There's nothing to talk about.

MEEKA

What do you mean? I know General Izzi has been a thorn in your side but surely there is a diplomatic solu--

AKEEM

I said there's nothing to talk about!

Meeka is taken aback. It's rare for Akeem to raise his voice. Especially at her.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

I am the King and LaVelle is my heir. I appreciate you trying to help, but please Meeka, know your role.

Meeka storms out. Akeem sighs. LaVelle approaches.

*

LAVELLE

Yo, what's the deal? When were you gonna say something about these tests?

*
*
*

AKEEM

Did I not say something before? I thought I did. Semmi might've... I think...

*
*
*
*

(then, off LaVelle's face)

Do not worry.

*

(MORE)

AKEEM (CONT'D)

Every prince before you for
thousands of years has passed them.
It's a one hundred percent success
rate.

LAVELLE

(beat)
No pressure then, huh?

AKEEM

(forcing big smile)
Exactly. I for one am not
concerned... at all... in the
slightest...

LAVELLE

Mmm hmm. Let's just get this shit
going. I've got a lifetime of
riches and 'she who squirts'
waiting on me.

Off Akeem, staring back at LaVelle, more and more concerned
that this kid has his life and kingdom in his hands,

PRELAP: *DNA* by Kendrick Lamar

INT. AKEEM'S ROYAL STUDY - DAY

Akeem and Baba escort LaVelle, now dressed in a colorful
African robe, into the Royal Study. Meeka studies at a table
nearby, pretending she is not paying attention to them.

AKEEM

Okay then. Let us begin--

BABA

(with pomp and
circumstance)
The Princely Tests are one of
Zamunda's oldest and most sacred
traditions!

AKEEM

Yes. Thank you, Baba--

BABA

They separate the men from the
boys, the worthy from the
worthless, the Princes from the
peasants!

AKEEM

Right. We should be able to get
through these rather quickly--

BABA

Or as long as it may take to prove
to the Great Ancestors you are a
deserving--

LAVELLE *
Yo man, I got it. *

AKEEM *
Yes, Baba. He's got it. *

LAVELLE *
I can speak for myself. *

AKEEM *
Of course. You can. Cool. *

Awkward beat. Baba flashes a huge toothless grin. *

BABA *
Ah, nothing like the sweet sound of *
a father and son bonding during the *
Princely Tests. Another long *
honored Zamundan tradition. *

Akeem and LaVelle both cut Baba a look. *

AKEEM *
Let's start with something simple. *
First, you must learn to walk like *
a prince. *

Akeem walks with a princely gait. LaVelle follows but his
walk is stiff, almost robotic.

AKEEM (CONT'D) *
Loosen up. *

LaVelle tries to do the 'princely walk' but:

AKEEM (CONT'D)
What is that?

LAVELLE
The George Jefferson walk. He's
the classiest brother ever to walk.

Meeka shakes her head.

AKEEM
While it may be classy it is not
royal. But you will find it. You
know, when I was learning my
princely stride I walked more like
King Jonah Joffer.

Akeem and Baba crack up but LaVelle doesn't get it. *

AKEEM (CONT'D)
Could you imagine?! It was quite
comical.
(off LaVelle's blank look)
He, uh, walked funny.

LAVELLE
Sounds hilarious.

AKEEM
Yes... quite... Let's try again.

Off LaVelle giving it another shot,

INT. THE ROYAL LIBRARY - DAY

Akeem and Shani teach LaVelle the names of his forefathers. Shani, on her tricycle, rides up to portraits of Zamundan ancestors on the wall and points them out for LaVelle.

SHANI
Who's that?

LAVELLE
Jappa Joffer... Joffer Joffer and
uh... uh... Jiffy Lube Joffer?

AKEEM
What is Jiffy Lube?

LAVELLE
A car repair shop.

AKEEM
So then probably not that...

Akeem sighs, becoming discouraged.

INT. THE ROYAL DINING ROOM - DAY

Akeem and LaVelle are at the breakfast table. Akeem has finished and is reading a newspaper.

LaVelle reaches for the wrong fork. Tinashe SLAPS his hand. LaVelle reaches for the wrong spoon. Omma SLAPS him again.

CLOSE ON LaVelle as he SLURPS his coffee. Out of nowhere, Oha SLAPS his face.

Akeem hides behind his newspaper, hanging his head.

Meeka watches LaVelle's fail while using perfect table manners that he lacks. No one notices.

INT. THRONE ROOM - DAY

Akeem sits at his throne, LaVelle at his side, Meeka behind them both in the smallest, least ornate chair.

AKEEM

(to LaVelle)

When the time comes, you will be asked to handle state affairs. A healthy relationship with the people you rule over is essential for the heir to the throne.

LAVELLE

Seems easy enough.

A distressed MAN enters the room, and stands before the king.

DISTRESSED MAN

King Akeem. I come here today bearing the burden of great emotional stress. See, my wife just passed--

FRRRRRRRR. Suddenly a BARRAGE OF CASH comes shooting into the man's face. Pull back to see LaVelle shooting the SUPREME MONEY GUN directly at him.

LAVELLE

Boom. 50 g's. That should solve your problem.

DISTRESSED MAN

But this is not a matter of money--

LAVELLE

(proud of himself)

You're welcome.

Off Akeem and Meeka, shaking their heads,

AKEEM (PRE-LAP)

Behold. The most important test...

EXT. GRASSY PLAIN - DAY

Baba and Akeem point out a big MALE LION sleeping in the sun to LaVelle.

LAVELLE

Whoa! What the fuck?
(off the lion ROARING)
What the fuck?!

BABA

Get the whiskers of the lion. GO!

LAVELLE

The fuck are you talking about?

AKEEM

Only once you are able to steal the whiskers from a sleeping lion, will you be ready to become prince.

LAVELLE

You're fucking with me, right? Your soft ass never did this.

AKEEM

Oh, but I did. First try.

BABA

Eh...
(off Akeem's look)
Uh huh, yes. First try.

AKEEM

You will need these ...
(handing him a pair of
tiny golden scissors)
They belonged to my great-great-grandfather ... who is?

LAVELLE

(struggling)
Uh ... hum ... Young Jeezy
Joffer?

Off Akeem, growing more frustrated,

EXT. AFRICAN PLAIN - MOMENTS LATER

LaVelle, scissors in hand, creeps through the grass toward the SLEEPING LION. He crawls closer. So close that he can smell the lion's foul breath and hear the beast SNORING.

Terrified, LaVelle guides the scissors to the lion's whiskers. The lion wakes with a mighty ROAR right in LaVelle's face.

LAVELLE

Fuck this!

Off LaVelle sprinting away,

END MUSIC.

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - DAY

Akeem and Baba await LaVelle as he comes running out of the jungle.

AKEEM

I take it you did not get the whiskers?

LAVELLE

Man, fuck you and your whiskers!

Akeem sighs. As LaVelle marches off,

AKEEM

I understand that you harbor an animosity toward me for being absent in your childhood but if you could just actually apply yourself--

LaVelle wheels around, stung.

LAVELLE

'Apply myself?'

AKEEM

Yes, you know. Take something seriously to perhaps better your--

LaVelle charges at his father. Baba holds him back.

BABA

He attack the king! Treason!
Traitor! Attempted murderer!

LAVELLE

You don't know anything about me!
I've been 'applying myself' my whole life!

AKEEM

Pft. At what? Selling drugs?

LAVELLE

Man, you have no idea what it's like. You've had everything handed to you your entire life! You were born into this shit. Thanks to you I grew up with nothing!

AKEEM

You're right. And if I could go back and change things I would. But now I'm giving you the chance to have everything I did. You're just too full of resentment and anger to step up and take it.

LaVelle stares down Akeem. Is he gonna... punch him in the face? After a beat he instead pushes Baba off him and storms away. Off Akeem, shaking his head, disappointed, *

INT. AKEEM AND LISA'S ROYAL BEDROOM - THAT MOMENT *

Akeem shuffles in, exhausted from his training sessions with LaVelle. He stops in his tracks as he notices Lisa's closet door is torn off the hinges.

ANGLE ON Lisa, directing SERVANTS as they carry something large and rectangular into the room. It's covered.

AKEEM
What's going on?

LISA
Nothing.
(then, to herself)
I'll show that bitch 'uppity.'

The servants unveil a giant, heavy, metal security door.

AKEEM
Might that be a bit extreme?

LISA
Why do you say that?

One of the servants pulls out a keypad.

SERVANT #1
You may choose your twelve digit secret password with one uppercase letter and one special character for secure access to your fashion closet, Your Highness.

LISA
Thank you.

He holds up the keypad and she types in a number, pointedly covering her hand so not even Akeem can see.

AKEEM
You are right. Not extreme at all.

The servant takes the keypad. They install the door.

LISA
I hope this is all worth it for that boy.

Off a dejected Akeem, shuffling off, not so convinced it is,

INT. ROYAL GYM - MORNING

Meeka trains alone. She's not easy on herself. It's an array of acrobatic moves and pin point swings with the bo staff. LaVelle shuffles by, lost in thought. He does a double take, then stops to watch.

MEEKA
(without breaking stride)
What do you want?

LAVELLE

(beat)

Has he always been this demanding?

MEEKA

Who?

LAVELLE

Your father.

MEEKA

You mean, *our* father?

LAVELLE

I mean the guy who raised you from the day you were born and who I just met a week ago.

MEEKA

You mean the guy who will make you prince just because you are a man and who doesn't even think of me as an option despite the fact I've trained twenty five years for it?

LAVELLE

(beat)

Yeah... I feel like we're talking about the same guy.

(then, walking toward Meeka)

Look, I know--

WHAP! Meeka spins around to face LaVelle, cracking him in the face with the bo staff.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

What the--?!

*

Meeka hides a smile. That felt good.

MEEKA

I'm sorry. It was an accident.

It wasn't.

LAVELLE

(hanging his head)

I know your whole family hates me and my mom. But don't worry, it's looking like you won't have to deal with us much longer.

*

*

Meeka softens watching LaVelle's genuine disappointment in himself as he walks off.

INT. MCDOWELL'S - DUSK

The girls are in the McDowell's PlayPen. Tinashe is pegging her younger sisters with balls from the pit. Cleo and Lisa are sitting at a table. Lisa sips a coffee while watching a surveillance feed on her cellphone of Mary, hacking into her closet and rifling through her clothes.

LISA

Yeah, I think I'm out on this whole blended family thing. Me, Akeem and the girls work just fine.

CLEO

Not sure that's an option anymore, honey. You know, sometimes you gotta just embrace change. Like I did with my breakfast sandwich, the McDowffin. Do I wish I could've kept calling it the McMuffin? Sure. But due to the copyright infringement lawsuit I lost three times, it's just not possible.

LISA

That woman is loud, obnoxious, ghetto...

CLEO

What about the boy?

LISA

(ignoring, distracted)
She just takes and takes and takes.

CLEO

So you've told me. But I'm asking about her son. Is he a lot like Akeem?

LISA

(re: surveillance feed)
I don't think you're understanding. She steals. I'm talking literal breaking and entering.

CLEO

Baby, listen... if you were a broke, single mom, raising a son alone who knows what you'd be like.

LISA

Not like her.

CLEO

Back in Queens you wouldn't have given someone like Mary a second thought. Now that you're here, all of a sudden she's not good enough?

Lisa considers this.

LISA
Do you think I'm uppity?

CLEO
(changing the subject)
Hey, maybe I can do a McStuffin!
With one extra piece of bacon.

LISA
Dad...

CLEO
You've been a princess for thirty
years. Uppity is bound to happen.

LISA
Dad!

CLEO
When you're living large, it's easy
to forget where you came from.

Cleo pulls out a gold comb and mirror to touch up his hair.

LISA
Yeah, we both might have lost some
perspective over the years.

CLEO
You don't have to be best friends
with Mary, but cut her some slack.
You didn't fit in when you first
got here and now look at you.
You're refined and polished... and
uppity.

Lisa laughs and playfully swats him as his advice now lands.

INT. LAVELLE'S SUITE AT THE PALACE - NIGHT

A silent and defeated-looking LaVelle sits in the barber
chair mid-haircut with the royal groomer, Mirembe.

MIREMBE
Why so quiet? Is everything
alright?

LaVelle just nods.

MIREMBE (CONT'D)
You don't want to argue about who's
the top 5 rappers of all time? Or
what you'd do if you were GM of the
Knicks?

LAVELLE

Nah.

MIREMBE

(shrugging)

As you wish, your highness.

LAVELLE

Don't call me that.

MIREMBE

Would you prefer, my prince?

LAVELLE

Nope.

MIREMBE

Your Majesty?

LAVELLE

No.

MIREMBE

Sir--

LAVELLE

(snapping)

Hey! None of that. I'm not a highness, or a majesty, or a sir...

(then, deflating)

I'm nothing.

MIREMBE

Please. You are the son of the King of Zamunda. You come from a long line of Joffers--

LAVELLE

I come from a long line of broke-ass nobodies. Who the fuck was I, thinking I could ever have any of this?...

*
*
*
*

LaVelle gestures to the gold-plated everything in the room. He then tugs at his hair, grabbing the "princely braid."

*
*

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

You know what? Just cut this shit off, okay?

*
*
*

MIREMBE

Ah, you would like to remove the princely braid? This is fair. To be honest, not a great look on you.

LaVelle looks up, taken aback by her directness.

LAVELLE

I mean, is it a good look on anyone?

MIREMBE
(with a smirk)
No, I guess not. Just one of the
many backwards Zamundan traditions.

LaVelle furrows his brow. This girl really speaks her mind.

LAVELLE
Heard that. Don't even get me
started on lion whiskers.

MIREMBE
Yes, I hear you failed miserably at
this.

Mirembe laughs. LaVelle is a bit stung.

MIREMBE (CONT'D)
Don't worry. If it makes you feel
any better I hear it took King
Akeem twelve times to successfully
retrieve his whiskers.

LAVELLE
No shit? His lyin' ass. How's he
gonna try me for not getting it my
first time?

MIREMBE
Isn't it the worst when a parent is
disappointed in you for unfair
reasons?

LAVELLE
Yeah...
(then, covering)
Well, not that I would ever give a
shit what he thinks.

MIREMBE
(knowing)
Of course.
(then)
I did not give a single
hippopotamus shit when my parents
disowned me for choosing to become
a groomer.

LAVELLE
Goddamn. Why would they disown you
for that?

MIREMBE
I come from a long line of proud
bathers. So... you know.

LAVELLE
(beat)
Right.

MIREMBE

But sometimes you just have to 'do you.'

LAVELLE

Yeah well, I can't really just 'do me'.

MIREMBE

Why not?

LAVELLE

Because I'm from Queens. And anyone from Queens could never be the prince Akeem is expecting me to be.

*

MIREMBE

Then don't be the prince he's expecting you to be. Do you. Be the prince from Queens.

*

*

Off LaVelle taking this in as Mireembe trims off his Zamundan braid,

CUE MUSIC: "TBD" Royals by Lorde? -- If I Ruled the World by Nas?

INT. ROYAL STUDY - DAY

LaVelle struts back and forth, executing the perfect princely walk for Akeem.

LAVELLE

I call it my "White man Thinks he's Better than Niggas" walk.

AKEEM

Excellent.

In step, LaVelle shoots Akeem a smug look like "I know it's excellent." Mary and Lisa pass by the door and peek in at LaVelle.

MARY

Look at my baby. Walking like a White man thinking he's better than niggas.

LISA

In Zamunda, we don't really use the n-word.

MARY

Ya'll niggas should. It's delicious. Tastes so good in my mouth knowing I can say something a White nigga would get fucked up for saying.

Mary sashays off. Lisa shakes her head and follows.

LISA
Hey, I was thinking I could show
you the ropes around here.

MARY
Lonely in your ivory tower, huh?

LISA
My ivory tower is just fine.

MARY
Sounds like you need a friend.

LISA
I don't need a friend.

MARY
Sure you don't.

LISA
I don't.

MARY
I'll be your little friend.

LISA
I don't need a friend!

INT. ROYAL DINING ROOM - DAY

Akeem and LaVelle are at the breakfast table. Akeem has finished and is reading a newspaper. Meeka, Tinashe, Shani and Omma eat next to him. Across the table, LaVelle reaches for a fork -- the right one. On instinct, Oha goes to slap his hand but stops himself, realizing. LaVelle slaps the shit out of Oha. The girls laugh. Akeem hides behind his newspaper, cracking a small smile.

We pull out to reveal Mary and Lisa sitting at another part of the table going through a similar lesson. Lisa is growing frustrated.

LISA
No, you use the salad fork for the
salad.

MARY
(picking it up)
I'm going to use this little fork
for my salad.

LISA
That's the oyster fork.

MARY
What do I use it for?

LISA

Oysters!

MARY

But then what will I use for my
salad?

Off Lisa being ready to slap her,

INT. THRONE ROOM - DAY

Akeem and LaVelle hold court, sitting across from TWO
FARMERS, arguing.

FARMER EDDIE

This man has stolen from me my
goat. A good, strong milking goat!

FARMER ARSENIO

He lies! This goat has grazed my
fields for many, many moons. I
feed her. I care for her--

FARMER EDDIE

This man violates my goat for
pleasure!

LOUD Gasps around the room. Lavelle looks disturbed.

FARMER ARSENIO

This is a witch hunt! I have done
no such thing!

FARMER EDDIE

Their mating screams will haunt me
until my dying day! Like a hawk
penetrating a cat, or a hippo
inside a flamingo--

AKEEM

(with a booming voice)

THAT IS ENOUGH!

The room breaks into side conversations, outraged. Akeem
eyes his people, clearly unsure how to act. LaVelle looks
over at Akeem who is genuinely stumped.

LAVELLE

I got this.

LaVelle hops off his seat, and crosses to the farmers who
look confused.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

So my cousin 'Reem got caught
messing around on his girl once.

(MORE)

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

Problem was, his girl's brother was a shooter, and when he found out, that nigga was upset.

Farmer Eddie nods like "as he should've been."

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

So Reem's bugging out 'cause he thinks he's gonna get his top turned into his bottom walking out a bodega when he least expects it. So I told him to cop a ticket to Miami on credit, chill on the beach for a few weeks while things die down, and by the time he's back, ol' girl'll be up under some other dude and no one'll give a shit about 'Reem anymore.

FARMER ARSENIO

So what did he do?

LAVELLE

'Reem? Oh that nigga never listens to me. He stuck around and got shot twice in the thigh. You should see him in shorts.

The crowd starts to talk amongst themselves. Akeem nervously looks to LaVelle like, "get to the point."

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

Point is, sometimes you just gotta get out of dodge until shit dies down.

(to Farmer Arsenio)

And while I think fuckin' goats is wild corny and extra disgusting, you and your goat should probably dip out for a minute. Maybe go to India if you can. I think goats are sacred there.

(to Farmer Eddie)

And since it's gonna suck losing your income goat, maybe we can set you both up with a little goat money. Nothing crazy.

(Re: Farmer Arsenio)

Just enough to get "it wasn't me" over here off to India, and enough for you to buy a brand new, yet-to-be-sexually-assaulted-by-a-human male goat to replace your old toss who probably didn't have too much goatin' left in her anyway. How's that sound?

The farmers nod dumbly and appreciatively. All eyes are on LaVelle, who just diffused a situation in a way that's totally foreign to how things are dealt with in Zamunda.

AKEEM

You heard the prince. So it shall
be done!

APPLAUSE BREAKS OUT. ANGLE ON Akeem and Meeka, shooting
LaVelle small approving nods, starting to come around.

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - DAY

Akeem and LaVelle, flanked by Baba and Meeka, make their way
to the edge of the palace grounds.

AKEEM

I have to say, you have progressed
masterfully, LaVelle.

LAVELLE

Yeah, I mean, all I really had to
do was apply myself, right?

Akeem smiles off the jab.

AKEEM

Now the only question is, do you
still fear the lion?

LAVELLE

Yeah, I still fear the lion. It's
a fucking *lion*!

AKEEM

I find it helps to think of them as
giant house cats.

LAVELLE

Oh yeah, when'd you figure that
out? Around what, your tenth,
eleventh shot?

AKEEM

(beat)
No idea what you speak of.

LAVELLE

Mmmhmm...

AKEEM

What? I succeeded on my first try!
As did my father--

LAVELLE

Jaffe Joffer.

AKEEM

And his father--

LAVELLE

Jappa Joffer.

AKEEM

Very good.

LAVELLE

And not once, as all of these great kings tried to rip whiskers off a goddamn jungle monster's face, did they ever step back and say, you know what, this shit is kind of ridiculous and unnecessary?

AKEEM

The final lesson is not about the whiskers, LaVelle. It's about becoming a leader who never gives in to fear. No matter how absurd or daunting the enemy might seem.

(then)

The whiskers are simply tradition.

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LAVELLE

Right. Like the marriage tradition.

Akeem looks taken aback.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

When I was studying up on all those Kings I noticed they all had Queens a little different than Lisa. What happened there?

Akeem takes a beat, trying to find the words.

AKEEM

When I was your age, I had a rebellious streak. Much like you.

LAVELLE

And what, you weren't feeling the girl your Pops wanted you to marry?

AKEEM

Well... no... I mean, yes... but it wasn't just that. I was looking for more than just a wife. I wanted someone I connected with on a deeper level who understood where I was coming from, even if we didn't come from the same place.

As LaVelle takes this in, Akeem worries he's said too much.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

Having said that, I am sure this is something you will find with Bopoto.

LAVELLE

Yeah... she seems cool.

LAVELLE (V.O.)
And I had to trap his ass to get it
back.

EXT. BUSH COUNTRY - LATER

Akeem, Meeka and Baba watch. LaVelle is perched on a tree
branch, holding a trip rope, ready to spring the trap.

LAVELLE (V.O.)
So I stood on the roof of the
crackhouse and waited...

A huge MALE LION approaches the trap, smelling the bait.
Just as the beast starts to enter the trap, it stops, SNIFFS
the air, sensing the presence of ...

LaVelle up in the tree ...

LAVELLE (V.O.)
But he had just hit some premium
PCP so he had like super hero
intuition or something and knew I
was up there...

The lion SNARLS and climbs up the tree after LaVelle.

LaVelle is trapped on the tree branch and now the lion is on
the branch with him, creeping closer and closer. LaVelle
jumps ...

LAVELLE (V.O.)
This nigga climbed up the side of
the house with his bare hands, on
some Spider-man shit, cornering me.

And lands next to the trap. To save himself from the lion,
LaVelle crawls into the trap, SLAMMING the door behind him.

The lion leaps from the branch, landing with a CRASH on top
of the bamboo cage. LaVelle cringes, hoping the trap will
hold. The lion tries to chew through the bamboo bars of the
cage with huge vicious teeth.

LAVELLE (V.O.)
But little did he know, I came
prepared...

LaVelle goes in his bag and pulls out a small opened can. We
PULL OUT to REVEAL Akeem, Meeka and Baba watching nearby.

AKEEM
What is that?

LAVELLE
What any deadly house cat likes:
cat food.

LaVelle slathers the cat food all over the top of the cage. The lion starts to eat it. LaVelle nervously takes out the tiny gold scissors given to him by Akeem.

As the lion eats, LaVelle reaches out and SNIP... clips a few whiskers!

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

I got 'em!

Now if he could just get the lion to go away.

MEEKA

How did you escape Crackhead Bobby?

LAVELLE

Easy. I had a little bag of crack on me. I threw the bag and when he went for it, I escaped.

LaVelle goes back into his bag and removes ANOTHER PACKAGE OF CAT FOOD. He opens it and waves it under the lion's nose to get his attention. It works. He throws the cat food across the bush. The lion runs after it, leaving LaVelle triumphant.

AKEEM

Brilliant!

MEEKA

Finish the story. Did you get your mother's TV back?

LAVELLE

What? No. Bobby was a crackhead. They don't take TVs home, they turn 'em into crack.

Everyone exchanges looks like "of course."

INT. THE PALACE - NIGHT

LaVelle, Akeem, Meeka and Baba return to the palace, victorious.

LAVELLE

I got em! Whiskers of a lion!

Semmi, Oha, and various other palace servants applaud as Akeem proudly lifts LaVelle's arm holding the whiskers into the air. LaVelle looks up at his father's hand grasping his own. He doesn't pull away. *

AKEEM

He is almost ready to be a prince!

LAVELLE

Almost?

BABA

It is time for de umbajuntoo!

Everyone CHEERS.

LAVELLE

What's umbajuntoo? *

EXT. PALACE GROUNDS - DAY

A large CROWD has gathered for the ceremonial Umbajuntoo, or CIRCUMCISION of LaVelle. He wears a ceremonial robe, looking around confused as Baba ties his arms behind his back while a CHORUS chants an ancient African song.

LAVELLE

Okay, what's going on...

AKEEM

All prospective princes must undergo umbajuntoo. The ceremonial circumcision.

LAVELLE

What? No, no, no. Fuck that.

Baba holds up a necklace with shriveled foreskins hanging from it.

BABA

Deese are de foreskins of your forefathers. *

(pointing them out)

Joffer Joffer ... Jappa Joffer ...
Jaffe Joffer ... and King Akeem.

Baba points to Akeem's foreskin which is bigger than the others. LaVelle's panic subsides only for a moment as he looks to Akeem impressed. Akeem shrugs, embarrassed.

A TOUR GUIDE leads a group of AMERICAN TOURISTS through the CROWD. *

TOUR GUIDE

Stay together, please. Move up if you can't see. *

Among the tourists are the KLUMPS: PROFESSOR SHERMAN KLUMP, MAMA KLUMP, PAPA KLUMP, ERNIE KLUMP and GRANNY KLUMP. (All played by Eddie Murphy) *

SHERMAN KLUMP

This is very exciting. We're about to witness an ancient African ceremony. *

MAMA KLUMP

My goodness. What are they going to do to that poor man's penis?

PAPA KLUMP

They gonna chop it off. Just like you did my dick thirty years ago.

GRANNY KLUMP

You don't have no dick to spare, Cletus.

PAPA KLUMP

Maybe we can find a witch doctor to cure you of "ugly".

MAMA KLUMP

Mama ... Cletus ... please.

SHERMAN KLUMP

Let's try to stay focused. We came here to learn about our African heritage.

PAPA KLUMP

(looking around)

Yeah, where's the African titties?

MAMA KLUMP

Cletus!

ERNIE KLUMP

Papa's right. On Nat Geo they walk around with they floppy titties hangin' out.

SHERMAN KLUMP

I knew I should have taken this trip alone.

DRUMS pound a rhythm as Baba sharpens his knife on a leather strap. His hand is so shaky we fear for LaVelle's privates. LaVelle holds his breath and closes his eyes.

PAPA KLUMP

I can't look.

ERNIE KLUMP

Me neither.

Papa and Ernie bury their heads in each other's shoulders.

GRANNY KLUMP

That young man has a nice strong pecker.

LaVelle holds his breath and closes his eyes. BIG DRUM ROLL as the deed is done. Everyone CHEERS. A successful circumcision.

MAMA KLUMP
Hercules, Hercules, Hercules!

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Off LaVelle, passing out,

INT. LAVELLE'S SUITE AT THE PALACE - NIGHT

LaVelle sits on the edge of his bed, shaking his head, drinking straight from a bottle of Ciroc African Starfruit. The door opens and Mirembe enters with her barber equipment.

MIREMBE
Prince LaVelle, I'm here to groom
you before the coro-- oh!

From Mirembe's POV we reveal LaVelle is sitting on the edge of his bed in an open silk robe, no pants, large ice pack over his groin.

LAVELLE
Fucking Zamundan tradition, man.

Mirembe can't help but laugh.

MIREMBE
I'll come back later.

LAVELLE
Nah, come on.

LaVelle holds up the bottle.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)
Have a drink with me. Please.
I've had a hell of a day.
(then)
I'll put some pants on.

Off Mirembe considering,

INT. LAVELLE'S SUITE AT THE PALACE - LATER THAT NIGHT

TIGHT ON the now near-empty bottle. PULL BACK to find LaVelle and Mirembe, passing the bottle back and forth, taking swigs at the end of his bed.

LAVELLE
--And then this muh'fucka says
'nineteen!'

MIREMBE
Nooooo!

LAVELLE
Yeah!
(then)
But don't tell anyone I told you.
(MORE)

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

He said he'd execute me if I said anything, and after he umbajuntoo'd my shit, who knows what the man is capable of.

MIREMBE

Don't worry, I would never. You know what they say, 'snitches get stitches.'

LAVELLE

Oh yeah? They say that here?

MIREMBE

Well, it really goes 'the hummingbird who sings gets shot out of the sky.' But it pretty much translates to the same thing.

LaVelle laughs.

LAVELLE

Hey maybe Zamunda and home aren't *that* different.

MIREMBE

Eh, there are some pretty big differences.

(then)

Have you ever seen a Zamundan movie? Total Baboon dung! Nothing gets higher than a 20 percent on RottenPapayas.com. But American cinema? The best.

LAVELLE

I guess. What else do we have other than superhero shit, remakes, and sequels to old ass movies no one's asking for?

MIREMBE

This is true about the sequels. If something is good why ruin it?

LAVELLE

Exactly.

MIREMBE

But there are exceptions. Are you familiar with the 'Barbershop' series?

LAVELLE

Oh, hell yeah.

MIREMBE

I love those! Except for that one spin-off with Queen Latifah.

(MORE)

MIREMBE (CONT'D)
Everybody here takes great offense
to her giving herself a royal
moniker.

LAVELLE
What about Queen B'?

MIREMBE
Come on. You know she gets a pass
for that.

LAVELLE
(laughing)
Okay... so American entertainment.
That the biggest difference?

MIREMBE
Well, there are also certain
freedoms...

LAVELLE
Like what?

Mirembe stops in her tracks. She's said too much.

MIREMBE
I shouldn't--

LAVELLE
No, come on, you can tell me. I
won't say anything. Hummingbirds
get shot or whatever, right?

Mirembe takes a deep breath.

MIREMBE
This might sound stupid but it is
my dream to one day open my own
barbershop.

LAVELLE
Yo, that's dope!

MIREMBE
You making fun of me?

LAVELLE
No! I don't know anyone who works
the scissors like you. You should
do it.

Mirembe smiles, finishing off the bottle.

MIREMBE
Well... women are not allowed to
own businesses in Zamunda.

LAVELLE
What? That's some bullshit.

MIREMBE

Oh, it's more than some bullshit. Many Zamundans have whispered hope of change with Akeem becoming King but it does not exactly look like that is happening.

LAVELLE

I mean, now that I'm officially prince, you can bet there's gonna be some changes around here. *

MIREMBE

It is a nice idea, but you shouldn't speak too soon. Every other prince talks about doing things differently but eventually they all just do things the same way it's always been done.

LAVELLE

Yeah, well I'm not like every other prince, remember? I'm a prince from Queens.

LaVelle and Mirembe stare at each other for a long, charged beat. LaVelle leans in. Mirembe hesitates but doesn't stop him from KISSING HER. Suddenly, DING! Mirembe quickly pulls back. LaVelle looks down at his phone. It's a DM from Bopoto - a naked picture along with the message: 'U up?' LaVelle tries to swipe it off the screen but Mirembe has already seen it.

MIREMBE

I should not have done that. I have to go.

LAVELLE

No, no, no--

Mirembe starts packing up her things.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

Please--

MIREMBE

You need to get sleep. Tomorrow is a big day. You'll be one step closer to marrying your princess.

Before LaVelle can protest, Mirembe turns and heads out. Watching her leave, he lets out a sigh. After a beat, he looks back down at the naked picture on his phone, then winces, suddenly grabbing the ice pack and placing it back on his crotch, in more pain than ever.

INT. PALACE BALLROOM - NIGHT

All of the Royal Court has gathered for the coronation of the new prince. LaVelle takes a deep breath as he steps forward and Akeem places the princely crown on his head.

OHA
Presenting the Crown Prince of
Zamunda. Prince LaVelle!

The CROWD CHEERS. Akeem nudges LaVelle ...

AKEEM
Say something ...

LaVelle clears his throat. The AUDIENCE hushes, awaiting the first words from their future king.

LAVELLE
(very stiffly, nervous)
I promise I won't let you down.

Akeem nods to him like, 'come on, you got this.'

LAVELLE (CONT'D)
(with Queens swagger)
And that I'll always 'do me.' I'ma
be the best gott damn prince you've
ever seen.
(raising his glass)
Okay y'all, let's have fun tonight!

The CROWD applauds. An ORCHESTRA plays, kicking off the CORONATION BALL... People DANCE, DRINK CHAMPAGNE, etc. Akeem places his arm around LaVelle.

AKEEM
Prince LaVelle... I know it would
make you feel uneasy if I told you
that you're starting to make me
feel like a proud father, so I will
not.

LaVelle cracks a small smile.

AKEEM (CONT'D)
This is a big moment for Zamunda.
Our people can finally rest assured
knowing there is an heir to the
throne. Plus, your union with
Bopoto is going to secure peace and
prosperity in the region for
generations. Come... there is much
to celebrate!

LaVelle struggles to maintain his smile as we HEAR...

GENERAL IZZI (O.S.)
King Akeem.

General Izzi walks over wearing a formal dress uniform, with Bopoto on his arm, in a far-from-appropriate gown, crossing past a gawking Semmi as they approach LaVelle.

BOPOTO

My prince.

She bows. Cleavage galore.

LAVELLE

(stammering)

Hey. Good evening. What up?

AKEEM

Perhaps you two should get to know each other a little better.

GENERAL IZZI

Yes, yes. Have your way with her.

LAVELLE

Wait, what?

AKEEM

I meant they should dance.

General Izzi SHRUGS. LaVelle FURROWS HIS BROW as Bopoto takes his arm. As they CROSS to the dance floor, Akeem turns to Izzi.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

So... I take it I no longer have to worry about any sort of, you know...

GENERAL IZZI

Assassination?

AKEEM

Yes. So... We're all good?

GENERAL IZZI

No. Not until the wedding ceremony has been completed.

Akeem throws up his arms.

MARY (O.S.)

(rapping)

*Diamonds on my neck, diamond-
diamonds on my neck.*

Akeem and Izzi pause their conversation as they see Mary dripping in bling and decked out in an Oscar-worthy dress, crossing past them toward Lisa.

LISA

Uh... What are you wearing?

MARY
Makeover, bitch! Hair done, nails
done, everything did. Bam!

Mary hits a squatted jail pose. Lisa stifles a laugh.

MARY (CONT'D)
I got on two mil worth of Harry
Winston diamonds. What up?

LISA
You broke into my jewelry safe?

MARY
You know I did. Where's the bar?
I've been sober all day and it's
giving me a headache. We need to
take some shots.

LISA
What? No.

We follow Mary as she drags Lisa to the bar.

LISA (CONT'D)
I am a Queen. I'm not doing shots.

MARY
Bitch, you a queen from Queens.
Stop the bougie shit and hit this
Hennessy.

Mary puts up two fingers and the BARTENDER slides over two
shots.

MARY (CONT'D)
Let's see how you got down before
you turned into a conceited ass,
high-siddity --

Having heard enough, Lisa quickly slams down a shot, cutting
Mary a look.

LISA
You done?

MARY
Let's go!

ANGLE ON: LaVelle and Bopoto dancing.

LAVELLE
So... marriage, huh? Big step...

BOPOTO
I will make you a happy prince.

LAVELLE

And how would I make you a happy princess? What are your passions? Interests? What do you like--

BOPOTO

Whatever you like.

LAVELLE

(beat)

I know what I like. But what do you like?

BOPOTO

Whatever you like.

Off Lavelle's frustrated face,

BACK ON: Lisa and Mary standing in front of several empty shots laid out before them. They toss back another as Mary watches her son dance with Bopoto.

MARY

Look at my little man.

LISA

So, it was really just you and him all this time?

MARY

Yup. Living that single mom life.

LISA

How was that?

MARY

It was cool.

(then)

All good.

(then)

Hard.

LISA

Raising a Black boy, alone in Queens? It must've been hard. *Respect.*

Lisa cheers her with another shot and flags the bartender giving him the "keep 'em coming" signal.

MARY

So we cool now, huh?

LISA

What do you mean "now"?

MARY

You weren't feeling me at first. But it's all good. I know how I come off. We're different.

LISA

We aren't so different. We're both from Queens.

MARY

And we're both classy as hell.

Off Lisa and Mary downing more shots,

LISA

Be right back. I gotta piss like a motherfucker.

BACK ON: LaVelle and Bopoto.

LAVELLE

Do you have a favorite movie?

BOPOTO

Whatever is your favorite movie.

LAVELLE

Do you have any goals or dreams? Maybe you want to start a business?

BOPOTO

Whatever business you'd like to start.

LAVELLE

Listen, I don't want you to think it's okay for me to look down on you.

BOPOTO

But I am just a wife.

LAVELLE

(echoing father's words)
But I don't want just a wife.

LaVelle looks over Bopoto's shoulder, his eyes landing on... *Mirembe*, watching on from the bar. She's more dressed up than we've ever seen her. Incredibly stunning. Dazed, LaVelle smiles at her. She doesn't smile back, instead just turning to face the bar. We push in on LaVelle's face. A sense of clarity rushing over him.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

(under his breath)

I can't-- I can't do this.

He pulls back from Bopoto.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

Can you excuse me for a second?

BOPOTO

Okay. What shall I do?

LAVELLE

Uh, just wait here.

BOPOTO

Very well then. I will just wait here.

Bopoto plants her feet with no intention of moving a muscle as LaVelle crosses off toward the bar, approaching Mirembe:

LAVELLE

Mirembe, I need to talk to you.

Startled, Mirembe almost spills her drink, looking around nervously.

MIREMBE

There is nothing for us to talk about.

LAVELLE

Yes there is. I don't want to marry her. I want to marry you.

Mirembe's eyes go wide.

MIREMBE

Lavelle, I know the relationship between a barber and their client can be close, sometimes weirdly close--

LAVELLE

Wait... you can't be saying that's all this is. I'm not crazy for thinking there's so much more between us.

Mirembe has no words. He's not wrong.

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

Listen, I could go ahead and marry Bopoto, sit on the throne and live a comfortable life, bury any feelings I have for you, but real talk, you told me to 'do me' and the only time I've felt like myself since I've been here is with you.

Mirembe can't help but smile. LaVelle takes her hand...

LAVELLE (CONT'D)

Come back to Queens with me.

...Mirembe takes his. She's in. LaVelle's face lights up until--

MIREMBE

What are you going to tell your father?

LaVelle anxiously looks around the massive ballroom. Scanning through the hundreds of guests, the ornate decorations, the building anticipation and excitement. His eyes finally land on Akeem, still mid-conversation with General Izzi, planning for their new future. LaVelle shakes his head.

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LAVELLE
Let's just get out of here.

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MARY (O.S.)
Hold up...

ANGLE ON Mary eavesdropping on her son from down the bar.

MARY (CONT'D)
What is happening right now?!

INT. PALACE BALLROOM - LATER

An excited Akeem, along with General Izzi, approach Bopoto, still standing frozen on the same spot on the dance floor.

IZZI
Behold - the future Queen of Zamunda! I want to make a toast.

AKEEM
We have decided to proceed with the wedding first thing tomorrow. Where is LaVelle?

BOPOTO
I do not know. He asked me to wait here about an hour ago.

Akeem studies Bopoto, standing firm.

AKEEM
And wait you have.
(then)
Semmi!

Off Akeem, nervously waving over his loyal companion,

INT. PALACE BALLROOM - LATER

A wasted Lisa dances on the bar as Meeka desperately tries to reign her in.

LISA
Hey girl, you seeing all this fine dark chocolate here tonight?

MEEKA
Mother...

LISA
Just saying, lotta eligible...
people.

MEEKA
(unamused)
Please get down from there.

LISA
Uppityniggasayswhat?

MEEKA
What?

LISA
Ha! Gotya ass!

ANGLE ON an anxious Akeem standing awkwardly next to Bopoto and a frustrated Izzi. They watch as Oha rushes in, crossing over to Semmi, whispering in his ear. Semmi quickly rushes over to Akeem and General Izzi.

SEMMI
Your highness, I've looked
everywhere, but the Prince is
nowhere to be found.

Akeem's face drops.

IZZI
Nowhere to be found...

AKEEM
(covering)
I'm sure it's nothing. He's
probably on a walk. He loves
walks. Especially in the middle of
the night. It's his... thing.

IZZI
He better not be getting cold feet!

AKEEM
Nonsense! I wouldn't worry.
There's nothing to worry about.
I'm not worried.

IZZI
Enough! I don't know what's going
on here but it's making me want to
chop off some fucking hands.

Akeem gulps.

IZZI (CONT'D)
I will return expecting a wedding
tomorrow and for your sake, you
better hope your boy does too.

Izzi turns to leave, followed by his soldiers.

IZZI (CONT'D)
 (calling back)
 Come, Bopoto.

BOPOTO
 Father... my future husband told me
 to wait 'right here'.

IZZI
 Just come on!

BOPOTO
 Uh...

IZZI
 Ah, fuck it.

Izzi just walks off, leaving his daughter behind. As the door closes, Oha immediately pulls Akeem aside.

OHA
 Your highness, I thought it prudent
 to wait for the General to leave
 before giving you this.

Oha hands Akeem a letter.

OHA (CONT'D)
 It is from your son.

Off Akeem, anxiously ripping open the letter, his eyes going wide,

AKEEM (PRE-LAP)
 'My bad for leaving so suddenly but
 we both know Izzi's crazy ass
 would've raised hell if he found
 out...'

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INT. AKEEM AND LISA'S ROYAL BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Akeem paces back and forth reading the letter, steaming, as Lisa kicks off her heels and plops onto the bed.

AKEEM
 'I'm sure you're disappointed but
 being with her is more important to
 me than any amount of royalty or
 riches. And if anyone can
 understand that, I hope it's you.'
 (then, ROARING WITH ANGER)
 That unappreciative kumquat! After
 everything I did? Bringing him
 into my home, making him a prince,
 giving him a chance to actually do
 something with his life... this is
 how he repays me?!

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Lisa notices a Gatorade, bottle of Advil, a joint, and a lighter on her nightstand along with a note from Mary: "Hangovers ain't shit for a Queens girl. I'll miss your uppity ass."

LISA

Aww. She gone too? I'ma miss that crazy ass.

AKEEM

You know, he could've just told me about this groomer! Instead, he just runs away to America, breaking tradition to marry a girl he barely even knows! Who does that?!

Lisa cuts Akeem a look.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

That was different. When I left, my father was not in jeopardy of being assassinated by that feral mongoose Izzi - not that that has to do with anything - I definitely was not thinking about being brutally murdered when I suggested Bopoto. But just saying, what if I do get killed?! Can you imagine? Zamunda would be left without an heir to the throne!

Lisa shakes her head, filled with disappointment, sobering up.

LISA

I don't even know who you are anymore. Where's the man I fell in love with? The man who was going to bring this place into the twenty-first century. The man who'd laugh at people like Izzi, not cower in fear from them.

AKEEM

Lisa, what would you have me do? I made a promise to put Zamunda first!

Lisa sighs.

LISA

I know how much you love Zamunda. And I know how badly you want to live up to your father's expectations. But at some point you need to rule your own way. You need to do you.

As Akeem thinks on this for a long beat, there's a KNOCK at the door. It's Semmi.

SEMMI

Your highness.

LISA

Not now, Semmi!

SEMMI

I just thought you should know
LaVelle took the Royal Jet. The
good one. With the gold toilet.

LONG BEAT of Akeem considering this, then:

AKEEM

The nerve on that bastard!

Akeem shakes his head, crumpling the letter. *

AKEEM (CONT'D) *

Semmi, prepare the other royal jet. *

SEMMI *

(disgusted, confused) *

The one with the... porcelain
toilet? *

AKEEM *

Semmi! *

SEMMI *

Right away, your highness. *

Off Semmi, rushing out of the room, *

EXT. RUNWAY - ESTABLISHING *

The Royal Jet with the porcelain toilet takes off. Akeem, a
man on a mission. *

EXT. STREETS OF QUEENS - CONTINUOUS *

The Royal limo rolls up to a trash-lined curb. Akeem steps
out (a la his father in the first movie) and stares up at a
familiar run-down apartment. *

INT. RUN-DOWN APARTMENT - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS *

Akeem marches up to the front door of LaVelle and Mary's
apartment. He goes to knock but stops when he sees something
on the door. An EVICTION NOTICE. Beneath it in sharpie is a
note clearly written by Mary: "Good! We were out this bitch
anyways!" Off Akeem's face hardening as he storms out, *

CLARENCE (PRE-LAP)

Oh I seen the pee-pee tapes!

INT. MY-T-FINE BARBERSHOP - QUEENS, NY - LATER *

The OLD MEN from the BARBERSHOP - CLARENCE, MORRIS, SWEETS,
and SAUL - argue as usual. *

MORRIS

Man, no you ain't!

CLARENCE

Best believe I have.

SAUL

Are you talking about 'zat Robert
Kelly fella again?

CLARENCE

It was Donald, three leggy
Russians, and a whole lotta urine.

SWEETS *

Where'd you get it?

CLARENCE

Down on Canal Street. Little
Oriental boy sold it to me for five
dollars.

MORRIS

Lemme see it.

CLARENCE

I'll let you borrow it for six.

SAUL

("get outta here")
Mehhhhh.

Just then, the bell on the front door RINGS. All heads turn
to see Akeem enter. *

CLARENCE *

Ay! Mufasa! *

MORRIS *

Heard you found your boy! You here
for the wedding? *

AKEEM *

How did you hear of this? *

CLARENCE *

Him and his African piece of
sweetness came by yesterday.
Talking about getting her a job
here, make some money before
opening up her own shop. I told
them her fine ass could start today
but they're a little busy with them
nuptuals. *

AKEEM

The ceremony is today? Where?

CLARENCE

Eh... I think they mentioned it...
can't quite remember... memory's a
little hazy.

(then, turning to others
with a not-so-subtle wink)
What about you fellas?

MORRIS/SWEETS/SAUL

Yeah./Real hazy./Meshuga memory.

Akeem, getting the hint, digs into his pockets.

AKEEM

Unfortunately I have only come with
a bit of pocket change...

He pulls out a GIANT WAD OF HUNDRED DOLLAR BILLS.

CLARENCE

(blurting out, all in a
single breath)
Ebenezer Baptist Church, 1829
Stearns Drive, the one you met your
Queen at, trust me, can't miss it!

Off Akeem nodding as Clarence snatches the cash,

EXT. EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH - ESTABLISHING

It's the same church from the original movie, but it's now a
MEGACHURCH. The blinking NEON SIGN has been replaced with a
DALLAS COWBOYS STADIUM-ESQUE JUMBOTRON that has a TITHING
TICKER that proclaims: "Jesus Saves So You Don't Have To -
Donate Today!" The ticker flashes again now reading:
"TONIGHT: WEDDING OF LAVELLE JUNSON AND MIREMBE..."

INT. EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH - CONTINUOUS

The church pews have been replaced by STADIUM SEATING. There
are HUGE MONITORS all around the TEN THOUSAND SEAT VENUE.

The EBENEZER DANCERS ARE BEYOND INAPPROPRIATELY DRESSED.
VENDORS with HAND-HELD CREDIT CARD READERS are selling all
types of EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH SWAG from FOAM PRAYER HANDS,
to REVEREND BROWN HOLY WATER BOTTLES, AMEN LICENSE PLATES,
JESUS CANDLES WITH REVEREND BROWN ON THEM, FOAM CROWNS OF
THORNS, SIGNED PHOTOS OF REVEREND BROWN WITH HIS ARMS AROUND
JESUS AND MOSES, EBENEZER RALLY TOWELS, HAND FANS THAT WHEN
OPEN REVEAL A SELFIE OF REVEREND BROWN in THE BATHROOM IN A
MIRROR IN A SKINTIGHT UNDER ARMOR SHIRT, SILVER BELT BUCKLE
WIDE LEG JEANS (ALA EDDIE LONG), and SWEDISH FISH because
they're fantastic.

ANGLE ON the front row, where LaVelle's cousins are admiring Mary's new flashy diamonds she's still rocking from the coronation ball. *

'REEM

Goddamn, Auntie Mary. You're really shining out here.

MARY

What? You thought I'd dip out of that palace empty-handed? I got a condo on one ear and a lake house on the other. Me and my baby gonna be alright. *

Mary and 'Reem dap. CAMERA pushes to the ALTAR where LaVelle and Mireembe stand, holding hands, all smiles. *

REVEREND BROWN (ARSENIO HALL) wearing a head-mic (a la JANET JACKSON), as lascivious as ever, emerges from below stage, via a hydraulic lift. *

FROM THE CROWD an uproarious "Amen!" The CHOIR sings a rocking GOSPEL SONG at a RAPID TEMPO. Reverend Brown goes into a frenzied DANCE. Way too old to keep up with the pace, he signals the choir to cut the music before flashing a veneer-filled smile at the congregation. *

REVEREND BROWN *

(out of breath) *

Holy brothers and sisters, we are gathered here today for the meeting of these two beautiful souls... pressed together like a pair of sumptuous... beings... touching, ever so gently, bouncing through life, side by side... supported by the holy bra of matrimony! *

(then) *

But first! We're going to hear from a special, special man. You know him as an entertainer, an actor ... and author of the self-published relationship book "The Proper Care and Watering of a Fly Black Man." He's saved! He's blessed! He's Brother Randy Watson!! *

Suddenly a SHOWER OF WHITE LIGHTS SHINE FROM ABOVE. SMOKE fills the stage as another ELEVATED PLATFORM begins to RISE, revealing BROTHER RANDY WATSON (Eddie Murphy) wearing his trademark baby blue tuxedo. *

RANDY WATSON *

Praise the Lord. I'm so happy to be among you tonight. Give it up for my band, Sacred Chocolate! *

Off Randy breaking into a painfully bad version of "And I am
Telling You..." from Dream Girls, *

EXT. STREETS OF QUEENS - SAME *

Akeem briskly marches down the street. The BLINKING LIGHTS
of Ebenezer Baptist Church shining in the distance as we
hear: *

DEEP VOICE (O.S.) *

Hey! *

Akeem turns to see the TWO COPS (who earlier arrested
LaVelle) approaching. *

COP #1 *

That's a nice fur coat you got on
there. *

Akeem continues pushing ahead as the cops follow behind. *

COP #2 *

(to Cop #1, re: Akeem) *

You know, this guy matches the
description of that shoplift
suspect from a few months back. *

AKEEM *

Let me guess, was he Black? *

COP #2 *

Whoa, whoa, whoa! Why you gotta
take it there? *

AKEEM *

I am sorry I have no time for this. *

Akeem starts speed walking. *

COP #1 *

Hey, stop right there. *

Akeem suddenly takes off in a full-on sprint. *

COP #2 *

Get 'em! *

The Cops give chase. But once again Akeem transforms into a
Zamundan superhero, running, jumping, climbing, and
disappearing into the crowded New York streets. *

COP #1 *

(out of breath) *

Man, I'm telling you, these guys
are getting really good at running
from us! *

INT. PALACE BALLROOM - DAY

*

Back in Zamunda, Bopoto is still standing in the same spot we last left her, legs crossed, incredibly uncomfortable, squirming in place, desperate to go to the bathroom. The three young princesses, Tinashe, Omma, and Shani cross by. Tinashe swigs from a glass of water.

*

TINASHE
(taunting, to Bopoto)
Thirsty?

Bopoto aggressively shakes her head as Lisa, Meeka, and Semmi approach, pleading.

LISA
(to Bopoto)
Honey, this is ridiculous.

MEEKA
LaVelle would not want you to continue in this sort of pain.

BOPOTO
(in agony)
I'm... fine... really.

SEMMI
Can I at least bring you a bedpan?
I won't watch if you don't want me to.

Just then, BOOM! The double doors burst open and General Izzi storms in flanked by his NEXDORIAN GOONS.

GENERAL IZZI
So, I assume the prince has returned from his midnight stroll and is prepared to marry my...
(then, noticing)
... soon to be UTI-ridden daughter.

LONG BEAT.

SEMMI
Uh... quick hypothetical. Let's say he hasn't...

General Izzi stops in his tracks, BOILING.

GENERAL IZZI
Where is King Akeem?

ANOTHER LONG BEAT.

SEMMI
Uh... another hypothetical.. Let's say Akeem is now gone too.

General Izzi ROARS, slamming his foot down.

GENERAL IZZI
That's it!

General Izzi PULLS OUT HIS GUN. Off everyone bracing in fear,

RANDY WATSON (PRE-LAP)
(*singing*)
You're gonna love me, Jesus, oooh
ooh mm mm mm
You're gonna love me

INT. EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH - SAME

Sacred Chocolate finishes their performance to rousing applause.

REVEREND BROWN
Sacred Chocolate everyone! Making
even the most pious sisters drip
holy water since 1988!

ANGLE ON LaVelle turning to Mirembe, a bit uncomfortable:

LAVELLE
I know this probably isn't exactly
what you've always imagined your
wedding to be like.

MIREMBE
Well... I had always assumed there
would be a sexist officiant leading
a very strange ceremony so it's not
that far off.

LaVelle smiles. Mirembe smiles back.

REVEREND BROWN
And now on to the main event...

AKEEM (O.S.)
Wait!

All eyes turn to see Akeem, barging into the church.

MIREMBE
King Akeem?

LAVELLE
Whoa... Hey... What are you doing
here?

AKEEM
I am here to stop this wedding at
once!

Off LaVelle, taken aback, suddenly growing infuriated, *

INT. ZAMUNDAN PALACE - CONTINUOUS *

Izzi and his men now all have their guns trained on the terrified Zamundans. *

GENERAL IZZI *

I will not continue to be jerked
around like a howler monkey grazing
in a field of horny goat weeds!
Now tell me, where is Akeem? Where
is LaVelle?! *

Everyone stands frozen, unsure what to do, until Meeka calmly steps forward. *

MEEKA

You know, General, your short
temper is by far your greatest
weakness.

Everyone turns to Meeka, shocked. Izzi's eyes practically bulge out of his head.

GENERAL IZZI

Wha- what did you just say to me??

MEEKA

(stoically walking toward
Izzi)

I said calm down. Clearly you feel
slighted by my father and our
country, but let us find a way to
solve this diplomatically. Why
don't you drop the machismo act and
think with your brain for once?

GENERAL IZZI

How dare you lecture me on how to
think, *woman*. I know what I'm
doing!

MEEKA

Do you though? Do you know how
much debt Nexdoria is in to Zamunda
already and how you'll ever pay it
back? Do you have a plan for how
you would improve Nexdoria so you
are not back here begging for our
help in a matter of months? Do you
even know how to run a country?

GENERAL IZZI

(signaling to his guards)
That's enough.

A handful of Nexdorian guards charge at Meeka. She grabs one, hurling him into a chair, smashing it.

She then picks up one of the wooden legs that cracked off, using it like the bo staff we saw her practicing with earlier, deftly taking out the other four guards running at her. As General Izzi quickly aims his gun at Meeka, WHAP! She bashes him with the stick, knocking away his firearm. Everyone in the room watches on in awe.

MEEKA

(meaning business)

Now, for the last time, I suggest you calm down so we can perhaps find a diplomatic solution to your problems.

Meeka procures a ridiculously LARGE BINDER.

MEEKA (CONT'D)

I've actually put together a 50-point plan that would not only bring peace to the region but also drastically improve your country's socio-economic position on the international stage.

Off General Izzi, looking both infuriated yet intrigued,

GENERAL IZZI

(through clenched teeth)

I'm listening...

INT. EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH - SAME

*

Back at LaVelle's just-interrupted wedding, Akeem approaches the alter.

*

*

LAVELLE

Look, I'm sorry for ducking out on you but seriously, of all people, you're the one trying to stop this?

*

AKEEM

I'm sorry, LaVelle, but this wedding can't happen--

*

*

*

BIG REEM

Ooo shit. This about to get *interesting*.

*

*

*

LAVELLE

How can you be such a hypocritical asshole?!

*

*

*

AKEEM

Hey! That is no way to speak of your father!

*

*

*

LAVELLE

No, fuck that. You're not my
father. You're nothing like me.
We have nothing in common.

*
*
*

AKEEM

See, that is where you are wrong!

Akeem raises his voice, silencing LaVelle.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

Me and you have more in common than
you could possibly know. Maybe not
the me you saw in Zamunda. But the
real me. Who says what's on his
mind, who stands up for what he
believes in... who knows what it's
like to have unfair expectations
put on him by his father.

Akeem cautiously approaches LaVelle at the alter.

LAVELLE

The hell are you trying to say?
Where's this shit coming from?

*
*
*

AKEEM

LaVelle. One of the great joys of
marriage is having a partner who
can point out just how badly you've
screwed things up. And I am lucky
enough to have found that person.
The person who always makes me
better. The person who means more
to me than any amount of royalty or
riches ever could. And if you have
truly found that in Mirembe, then I
couldn't be happier for you.

*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*
*

LaVelle looks to Mirembe, confused.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

I am not trying to stop your
wedding. I am trying to stop you
from having it here.

REVEREND BROWN

Hey, come on, now--

AKEEM

You are the Prince of Zamunda. And
you deserve a royal wedding. To
any woman of your choosing.
(then)
Come home.

As LaVelle takes a long beat to consider, the guys from the
Barbershop arrive...

*
*

SAUL

Did he break it yet? The glass?
Did I miss it?

*

INT. PALACE BALLROOM - LATER

Meeka and General Izzi sit at a table, surrounded by empty cups of coffee and food wrappers from McDowell's. General Izzi is finishing the last page of Meeka's proposal. He closes the binder looking up at her, with a subtle nod, impressed.

GENERAL IZZI

So you're saying you wrote this?
With your brain?

Meeka nods.

GENERAL IZZI (CONT'D)

Fascinating.

(then)

I do have a couple notes... The whole 'women being able to vote' thing--

MEEKA

Non-negotiable.

GENERAL IZZI

I see. Then perhaps there's some wiggle room on the abolition of my justice system's frequent use of the hand-severance penalty?

MEEKA

Absolutely not.

GENERAL IZZI

You drive a tough bargain,
Princess.

MEEKA

So do we have a deal?

GENERAL IZZI

Well, naturally, you have no authority to implement any of this. So probably best I hold on to this binder and offer it to your father as my own man-made thoughts.

AKEEM (O.S.)

General Izzi!

The General turns around, sees Akeem approaching, and quickly snatches the binder from Meeka.

GENERAL IZZI

King Akeem! Excellent timing. I believe I may have a new solution to our longstanding prob--

General Izzi goes silent, his face dropping as LaVelle and Mirembe follow Akeem inside, holding hands.

GENERAL IZZI (CONT'D)

What is this?

AKEEM

May I present Prince LaVelle and his new bride to be, Mirembe The Groomer!

BOPOTO (O.S.)

Fuck me.

ANGLE ON BOPOTO, CLUTCHING HER BLADDER, ABOUT TO EXPLODE, running out to find the nearest bathroom.

GENERAL IZZI

This is an outrage! I was just about to accept your daughter's, I mean, *my* peace terms. But once again you've made a fool of me and my family. THIS MEANS WAR!

Akeem steps to General Izzi, chest puffed, unfazed. *

AKEEM

IF IT'S WAR YOU WANT THEN IT'S WAR YOU'LL GET. *

Off everyone, taken aback, *

AKEEM (CONT'D) *

For too long I have forgotten the biggest lesson a Zamundan King learns from those ridiculous Princely Tests: To never give into fear, no matter how absurd or daunting the enemy might seem. *

LaVelle smiles. General Izzi laughs. *

GENERAL IZZI

That's cute. But I know Zamunda has no standing army. You weak pathetic peace-seekers. I will destroy you, your family, and your country! *

AKEEM

(voice again booming) YOU WILL DO NO SUCH THING! *

(then)

(MORE) *

AKEEM (CONT'D)

We may not have an army, but we've got bountiful finances and friends in high places. Like Israeli friends with a world class Air Force and enough firepower to bomb you and the rest of Nexdoria to rubble.

General Izzi's face suddenly drops. Akeem flashes his signature gap-toothed grin.

AKEEM (CONT'D)

So I suggest you finish negotiating a deal with my new heir to the throne.

General Izzi begrudgingly turns to LaVelle.

GENERAL IZZI

Very well.

LAVELLE

Oh, no, not me. Her...

LaVelle nods to Meeka.

GENERAL IZZI

Her?

BABA

(popping up from nowhere)
What you mean her?!

CHATTER from ONLOOKERS. Wide-eyed, Meeka turns to her father.

MEEKA

Me?

Akeem nods. Angle on Lisa standing by her younger daughters, proudly watching on.

OMMA

So Meeka is gonna be queen!
(pointed, to Tinashe)
Idiot.

TINASHE

Wait, but I thought a woman couldn't rule Zamunda.

SHANI

Okay, now I'm very confused.

MEEKA

What about our laws? Traditions?

AKEEM

I am done worrying about the laws
and traditions of the kings of old.
It is time for me to 'do me.'

Angle on an approving look from LaVelle and Mirembe.
Overwhelmed, Meeka turns back to her brother.

MEEKKA

(to LaVelle)
Still, I can not. After all your
training... the lion whiskers...

LAVELLE

Come on now, those lion whiskers
don't prove shit. And a few weeks
of training is nothing compared to
a lifetime.

(then, nodding to Akeem)
We've been talking and it's pretty
obvious you're better prepared to
rule Zamunda than I ever could be.

MEEKKA

Even so. You have the makings of a
great leader!

AKEEM

And he will be someday.

LAVELLE

Of something a little more 'me'.
Something like the other family
business.

(then, with a smirk)
King of McDowell's has a nice ring
to it, don't you think?

BABA

Eh... I'd stick with just king.

GENERAL IZZI

Right?

Akeem cuts a look to Baba and Izzi.

BABA

But you do you.

MEEKKA

Hold on, father...

Meeka quickly pulls her father aside.

MEEKKA (CONT'D)

There's something else you need to
consider. And I need to make sure
you understand.

(then, deep breath)
You see, I am--

AKEEM

A woman? Meeka, truly, I get it.

MEEKA

Yes, that, but also, a woman who is... attracted to...

(another deep breath)

What I'm trying to say is, if I am queen, I will never be able to give you a child to carry on the Joffer name...

A BEAT as Akeem finally understands what Meeka is trying to tell him. She braces for her father's response, beyond nervous as he gently holds her shoulders, looking into her eyes.

AKEEM

I know. I've always known. And I do not care. I think two Queens beats a King any day.

Relieved and overcome with emotion, Meeka throws her arms around her father. Off the reunited family's excitement,

OHA (V.O.)

(singing)

She's your queen to be!

Over melodic harpsichords and Oha's velvety vocals we see QUICK CUTS of Akeem's new changes being implemented in Zamunda:

EXT. MCDOWELL'S - DAY

LaVelle, in McDowell's gear and a MANAGER name tag, cuts the ribbon in front of a brand new McDowell's. He locks eyes with his father, proudly watching on.

OHA (V.O.)

A vision of perfection...

EXT. BARBERSHOP - DAY

Mirembe welcomes a LONG LINE of customers into the first Zamundan female-owned Barbershop.

OHA (V.O.)

An object of affection...

INT. NEXDORIAN ROYAL PALACE - DAY

Meeka and Izzi sign a PEACE DEAL. ANGLE ON: Idi filming them on Facebook Live with a new phone. Meeka grabs it out of his hand and tosses it outside the palace gates. Izzi looks up at Meeka and they fist bump.

OHA (V.O.)
To quench your royal fire.

INT. ROYAL BALLROOM - A FEW WEEKS LATER

Everyone has gathered for a ROYAL WEDDING. Oha sings at the head of the room. LaVelle, at the alter, shoots him a look.

OHA
 (then, quickly)
*Yet also an independent woman with
 her own goals and desiressss...*

ANGLE TO REVEAL:

The bride, MIREMBE, walking down the aisle looking amazing.

OHA (CONT'D)
Your Queen to be.

ANGLE WIDER TO REVEAL:

Everyone is in attendance. All of Zamunda. Mary, Semmi, Lisa, Meeka, Shani, Tinashe, Omma, Big 'Reem, the cousins, Izzi, Idi, Bopoto, the barbershop guys, and finally Reverend Brown, who sits begrudgingly in the audience as we REVEAL King Akeem is officiating the ceremony.

KING AKEEM
 It is my honor to stand before you
 today not as your king. But as a
 proud father.

Akeem looks to his son, who gives him an approving nod.

AKEEM
 You heard me say father, right?

LAVELLE
 (smiling, rolling his
 eyes)
 Yeah, man. Keep going.

AKEEM
 Okay, cool, cool. Just checking.
 (then)
 Then by the power vested in me by
 the ancestors of old and the
 Zamundan People, I now pronounce
 you man and wife...

The prince kisses his bride. LIONS ROAR, MONKEYS play, ELEPHANTS TRUMPET, and as we PULL BACK over the Zamundan sunrise,

FADE OUT.

TAG:

INT. MARBLE HALLWAY - DAY

TIGHT ON a pair of FEET WALKING. The feet turn a corner and suddenly FLOWER PETALS start falling to the floor around them. The feet suddenly stop. PAN UP to see MEEKA, standing between two TRADITIONALLY DRESSED ZAMUNDAN WOMEN holding baskets of rose petals.

MEEKA

Please. We do not do that anymore.

The Women bow their heads, apologetically.

WOMAN #1

Yes, your highness.

WOMAN #2

Is there anything we can do for you this morning?

MEEKA

No thank you. I am going out to explore.

(then, proudly)

I want to see how a truly progressive country is run and take those lessons back home with me.

As Meeka heads toward the exit, the two women turn and look at each other, beyond incredulous.

EXT. BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Meeka exits a building and stops, looking out into the distance. PULL BACK to see she's just left the ZAMUNDAN EMBASSY in Washington DC. Off her taking a deep breath, staring out at the White House in the distance,

THE END