

GAZE

"GAZING AT MY CAKE"

by

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INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

TOM (early 20s, black) is sitting at the table in the coffee shop. He is a hipster wearing thick rimmed glasses, his favorite yellow bomber jacket, and hair that says "I'm a diva."

MUSIC QUE: "My Life" by Mary J. Blige

He stares at the camera while sipping tea, with something on his mind.

TOM

Most people have no clue what it is like to live in the south. Most people have no idea how hard it is to be gay and black living in the south. Raised by two well-educated parents -

An image of a light-skinned middle-aged black woman, CINDY, smiling giddily next to her brown-skinned husband, DONALD, sternly vexed, appears on the screen.

TOM (CONT'D)

Living in one of the most suburban areas of Arkansas...

CUT TO:

EXT LITTLE ROCK - DAY

The city of Little Rock, Arkansas at the height of a busy afternoon in the fall.

TOM (V.O.)

The city of trees, that is stuck in-between a Little Rock and a city just north of it, Maumelle.

CUT TO:

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Tom is still sitting in the coffee shop, sipping his tea, next to a vinyl record player.

TOM

In high school, I walked the fine line of fitting in with the white kids, and barely fitting in with the black kids.

(MORE)

TOM (CONT'D)

As if I wasn't black enough
because I grew up living next to
the rich and white privileged.
When someone used to say I was
acting white, my response was
always:

CUT TO:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Younger Tom's locker opens and white kids are standing
around him.

WHITE KID

Yo, why is you acting so white?

YOUNGER TOM

So how is a black person supposed
to act?

WHITE KID

Huh? I don't know. Not like you.

The kids hanging around the lockers start joshing.
(laughing)

YOUNGER TOM

Like? Proper? You know you sound
really racist right now.

WHITE KID

(yelling)

Shut up! I'm not racist.

YOUNGER TOM

(sarcastically with a
little hand flare)

And I'm not black.

The kids nearby Tom's locker start laughing.
(laughing)

Tom slams his locker shut.

MUSIC QUE: "AIN'T NOBODY" BY CHAKA KHAN

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

TOM

One thing I'm not going to allow is some fucking person who doesn't pay my bills... or fucks with me dictate how I should act as a black person. Now you might be wondering who is this charming lad on the tellie? Well ladies and gents', I'm Tom, ugh... see even my name sounds like a middle-aged white man. My mother once told me she chose Tom because it sounds more white on job applications.

Tom rolls his eyes at the thought of that.

TOM (CONT'D)

Like what's wrong with Tyshaun, Demetrius, or even By-r-on?

CUT TO:

EXT. HUED GRAFFITI WALL IN THE GHETTO - DAY

Show several men, TYSHAUN, DEMETRIUS, and BY-R-RON - they are rough around the edges.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

INT. TOM'S LOFT - BEDROOM - MORNING

We see Tom in his bed. As the alarm blares, he rolls off the side of the bed attempting to turn off the alarm.

TOM (V.O.)

Every morning I wake up, just like this, #flawless...

Tom is anything but flawless looking at the moment.

INT. TOM'S LOFT - BATHROOM - MORNING

Tom in the shower, singing *Toni Braxton* with his toothbrush.

TOM (V.O.)

... and slay a song in the shower.

EXT. DOWNTOWN LITTLE ROCK - MORNING

Tom, is carrying a blue briefcase with a thick coat, wearing heavy boots that make tapping sounds, is running late to work.

TOM (V.O.)
Run late for work, and somehow
maintain a job...

MUSIC QUE: "Don't Take It Personal (Just One of Dem Days)"
by Monica

INT. AD AGENCY - TOM'S CUBICLE - DAY

Tom is at work, casually scrolling on his computer trying to look busy as his coworkers pass his desk. Then the camera pans to his computer and we see he's actually on Facebook not doing his work.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

At the bar with his friends, Tom is the life of the party.

TOM (V.O.)
... and a social life.

EXT. BAR - NIGHT

A beautiful mate, BLAKE, mid-twenties with scruff and slicked back black hair is drunkenly carrying Tom out the bar into the cab.

TOM (TO CAMERA)
(slurring)
See the struggle is #REAL
somedays...

EXT. MAIN STREET IN LITTLE ROCK - NIGHT

Tom pukes in the cab and wipes his face on Blake's shirt.

TOM (V.O.)
And some days worse than others.

BLAKE
Dude! You just threw up on my new
Ashton's. I'm taking you straight
home.

TOM
 (slurring)
 I'm sorry!

BLAKE
 Make a left, then keep straight
 sir.

TOM
 Look, I only move in one
 direction, gayly forward. We don't
 use that S-word around here.

Tom continues to puke in the cab all over Blake's lap.

TITLE CARD:

GAZE

END TEASER

INT. AD AGENCY - HALLWAY - DAY

Tom is casually walking around the office carrying his laptop, notebook, etc. staring at his coworkers, looking annoyed.

TOM (V.O.)
 Working at an advertising agency
 can be a little overwhelming
 sometimes.

The advertising agency is completely trash and looks like the Mad Men office. Tom is turning a corner in the office with people running in the background, people throwing papers everywhere, smoking cigarettes, stacks of folders, and skinny white girls and white men in business suits.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 In lieu of what Mad Men depicts as
 an alpha male driven industry
 surrounded by real desperate
 housewives tryna make the up and
 cut in couture, instead today's
 swirl of tricks is just a little
 less elegant.

Suddenly the Mad Men appearance dissipates and then we see white people in their early to mid twenties, wearing jeans, and looking hipster, and a vivid playful background with a ping pong table as Tom continues his walk. We see each person as Tom describes them.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Just surrounded by underpaid
 millennials, a sprinkle of gay,
 and people who should probably
 retire.

Tom passes by those people. He stops in the middle of the hallway. Staring at the camera in focus with people having a merry time behind him.

TOM (TO CAMERA)
 I'm not going to lie, working with
 other millennials can be a bit of
 a challenge. Like, I've never
 worked with people who are so
 entitled and self-centered.

As Tom approaches his desk he passes by MEGAN.

TOM (V.O.)
 Some of them have even installed
 mirrors in their cubicles...

Megan picks up the comb to tease her hair in the mirror at her cubicle.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Not to look behind them in the
 event of a robbery, but to
 constantly stare at and fix their
 hair. Like who's got time for
 that? Don't you got shit to do?

INT. AD AGENCY - TOM'S CUBICLE - DAY

Tom makes it to his desk. Right as he is settling in, LANE approaches. Lane is in his late 20s, white, scruffy beard, posh kind of guy.

LANE
 Man, you got that report that is
 due on Tuesday?

TOM
 Yeah, give me one sec. I'll email
 it to you.

LANE
 This campaign is going to be a big
 one. Can I see it, man?

Lane is hovering over Tom's computer while Tom is zipping the file and composing the email for Lane.

TOM (V.O.)
See... sometimes I choose to drown
out white men who always think
that their goals and missions are
greater than mine.

Lane is trying to show Tom how to do his job. Tom is talking directly to the camera in focus. Lane is continuing to scroll on Tom's computer.

TOM (TO CAMERA)
Take Lane for an example, he got
this job because his dad became a
partner last year. He's never
actually had to work a day in his
life. But somehow became my
supervisor. I've been here two
years without a promotion, yet I'm
teaching him how to do his job?

Lane is now able to hear Tom's dialogue. Tom thinks that he is still in a monologue with the camera.

TOM
(whispering)
His entitled ass.

LANE
Huh? Did you say something.

TOM
Oh. I said, this document won't
title. Untitled doc.

Lane continues to take over Tom's computer. While Tom goes back to a monologue with the camera in focus. Tom is looking a little confused.

TOM (TO CAMERA)
He didn't even have to work for it
to be my new boss. He's always
trying to be the life of the
party. Wanting the big fish to
fry, but his daddy never taught
him how to fish. So what can I do?
Call him my new master? Hell no!

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. AGENCY ELEVATOR - DAY

Tom is waiting to get on the elevator, the doors open with fog and strobe lights coming every direction. Tom is in

heaven and clearly by himself listening to his music while singing and dancing to Beyoncé's, "Formation".

MUSIC QUE: "Formation" by Beyoncé

TOM (V.O.)

One day I'll be leading a group of mini-mes at work or, touring the country with Beyoncé.

Creeping up behind Lane appears to be Drew. Drew knocks on Tom's cubicle, spinning Tom out of his fantasy world into reality.

DREW

Lane, Janet wants to see you in the break room.

LANE

All right man, I'll be there in a second.

DREW

(Yelling)

Hey Janet, Lane said he'll be there in a sec! Can you wait?

JANET a 40 year old Asian woman who is wearing an outfit off the rack from Zara. She then comes around the corner to address Lane in a forward manner.

JANET

(Yelling)

Lane, come to the break room now!

Lane walks away and joins Janet, they walk away to the break room. Janet closes the door behind them.

DREW

This is going to be good. She hasn't pulled anyone into the break room in a while.

We see Janet and Lane having a heated discussion in the break room through the glass wall.

TOM (V.O.)

Little does Lane know, that Janet only breaks bad news, like Omarosa you're FIRED kind of news...after she pulls them into the break room.

We see inside the break room, Lane is red in the face and starting to cry.

LANE

(Yelling)

Why? Janet! I just started two months ago, I have a dog, rent, and a girlfriend. My dad is a partner at this company. You can't fire me.

JANET

(Sighing)

Oh this is awkward. You failed your drug test. This is why I hate when partners hire their rich kids. Your dad wanted me to do this. Obviously he couldn't. But you're fired. That's it. Joe will walk you out.

We see Lane being dragged out of the break room by security. Tom and Drew go back to their conversation.

TOM

Well that's one more crackhead down. Who's going to take his accounts now?

DREW

You're looking at him!

TOM

No way! Congrats! This is like three years overdue! Wait, so does this mean you're my new supervisor?

DREW

Yes! But I promise our friendship will never change.

TOM

Did you screw your way into this position? (gasp) You think Jerry would be into that?

DREW

Now you know that is virtually impossible, besides, I'm not sure any of the partners, Jerry included, would be into having an ice cream sandwich with Roderick and I.

TOM

Wait, was that the guy from last night?

Drew hands Tom his phone with a dirty picture on it.

DREW

Yeah, take a look. They don't call him big Rod for nothing...

TOM

Yeah, yeah. I see. That's a very, very BIG rod alright.

DREW

I was wondering how all of it was going to fit at first. I've never been with a black man before.

MUSIC QUE: "Rolling Down My Face" by Amerie

INT. DREW'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

We see a flashback of Drew's night having wild crazy sex with his new date, the black guy.

DREW (V.O)

But after five minutes of foreplay, and five tequila shots later... my body was ready to take his five extra inches of God given dick.

INT. AD AGENCY - TOM'S CUBICLE - DAY

We are back in the office at Tom's desk with Drew still standing in his cubicle.

TOM

Well, he's hung like a horse.

DREW

(Whispers)

And fucks like one too.

TOM

I'm surprised you haven't had a little chocolate in your life.

DREW

I just haven't. I find black guys attractive. I just feel like they aren't always into me.

TOM

A piece of chocolate doesn't hurt here and there.

DREW

Says the man who usually only eats
white chocolate.

Tom hands back Drew's phone, and Drew continues to stare at
his phone while Tom rolls his eyes.

TOM (V.O.)

See when I'm not living
vicariously through one of Drew's
latest sex stories and sometimes
scandals... after work I like to
go dancing...

BEGIN MONTAGE:

INT. CLUB TREUBLE DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

This is club Treuble, Tom's go-to. It's all of the gays'
favorite place to dance - pop music, dancing, boys. Cute
go-go boys.

TOM (V.O.)

Maybe go do a little karaoke,
pretend I'm Beyoncé on the dance
floor.

We find Tom in his element dancing next to his best
friends.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

To my left is JEFF, aka "the
Michelle" of the group.

We see JEFFERY (27, white) dancing next to Tom. His shaggy
hair doesn't stop him from wearing his bold style loud and
clear.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Jeff or Jeffery if you're feeling
formal. He's kinda like a jack of
all trades. Sells cars, goes to
school, while trying to make his
way to Broadway. That's if, he
could survive seeing rats in
Brooklyn...

We see HENRY (28, asian male) with a sculpted body dancing
next to Tom and Jeff without a shirt on. Wearing barely
anything.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
And to my right is Henry aka "the Kelly." From Shanghai, he comes from a long lineage of doctors and housewives. But when his parents found out he was gay and had dropped out of high school, they shipped his ass to his Grandma's in Arkansas of all places. Now he's stuck doing his own dirty laundry, because it wasn't long after he arrived his Nana died.

MUSIC QUE: "Baby I Need Your Loving" by The Four Tops

INT. CLUB TREUBLE DANCE FLOOR - NIGHT

We see Tom holding a drink and Jeff and Henry dancing in the background.

TOM (TO CAMERA)
He then started stripping at Louie and working on sets exclusively with other male actors. (wink)

Cut to Tom dancing with Henry and Jeff while holding on to them in the middle.

TOM (V.O.)
This trio has been bar hopping for half a decade now.

Pan to Tom and Henry walking off the stage to the bar.

TOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Touring every gay and sometimes straight bar. And probably coming to a city near you.

MUSIC QUE: "Drunk in love" by Beyoncé

INT. CLUB TREUBLE BAR - NIGHT

Gay men are gyrating and grinding on each other everywhere with little to no clothes. Spotlighting the center of the dance floor are a group of men singing in the background of Tom and Henry. As Tom and Henry are waiting for their drink, the bar tender notably overlooks them.

HENRY
So... what happened to the boy?

TOM
What do you mean?

HENRY
Who was that guy riding your dick
last week? The one you brought
here to meet everyone.

TOM
Of all people, you're talking
about riding dicks?

HENRY
Well at least I get paid for it...
Besides it's only for the summer.
Come on now. Don't be a prude.

TOM
(Shaking head)
Mhm...Hm... that's what you said
last summer. (waves at bar tender)
Two ciders please!

HENRY
But it puts food on the table.
Good food. I'm talking about that
surf and turf shit from
WholePaycheck, OKURRR!

Cut to Tom's third eye: Shirtless bartender carrying a six
pack with a six pack in slow motion to hand them their
drinks. Tom and Henry are obviously staring mighty hard at
the bartender.

TOM
Yea, just ride that wave.

TOM & HENRY
Surfboard, Surfboard!

TOM
Cheers to that!

RANDOM WHITE GUY
Damn you a fine nigga, do you got
a nigga?

Focus is broken as Tom and Henry whip around to find a
random WHITE GUY (early 20s, baseball cap wearing frat boy)
gawking at Tom.

TOM & HENRY
What did you just say?

TOM
Oh hell nah!

RANDOM WHITE GUY
Damn you fine as hell.

TOM
Thanks, can I help you?

RANDOM WHITE GUY
Can I be your nigga?

HENRY
Dude what the fuck is wrong with
you?

TOM
Please get out of my face saying
that word.

Overwhelmed with emotions, Tom's background beings to spin
and go out of focus. While we listen to the random white
guy in the background saying...

RANDOM WHITE GUY
Damn you a fine nigga. (repeating)

Suddenly we are back in focus with Tom, Henry and the
random white guy. SPLASH! Immediately Tom throws his beer
in the random white guy's face.

TOM
What the fuck! I'm not cool with
you saying nigga to me.

HENRY
Who the fuck do you think you are,
dude? Don't approach my friend
like that!

RANDOM WHITE GUY
What? Why you mad? My grandfather
was black too.

TOM
(emphasizing)
Little white boy, you don't know
me.

RANDOM WHITE GUY
What the hell did I do?

HENRY

Bless your heart. Don't ever use
the n-word to pick someone up
again. You're not black, sweetie.

Tom and Henry walk away from the bar. Leaving the Random
White Guy drenched in their drinks.

TOM

Girl that was literally the worst
pick up line I've ever heard. Like
bye!

HENRY

Yeah, these white boyz out here
are getting more brave each and
every day since they put that
baby-handed Hitler in the white
house.

JEFF

Are you guys going to get out here
and dance? Wait, what's going on?

TOM

Just dealing with this racist
America we live in. Let's dance.

MUSIC QUE: "This is America" by Childish Gambino

We see everyone dancing in slow motion.

Contact Me for More! TTrevor94@gmail.com