"BLACK-ISH"

"Keepin' It Real!"

(PILOT EPISODE)

Written by

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Writer's Second Draft (NETWORK REVISIONS)

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WGA REGISTERED

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COLD OPEN

FADE IN:

**BLACK**

Public Enemy's, "Fight the Power" BLASTS.

**INT. DRE'S BEDROOM - DAY (DAY 1)**

**ANGLE ON:** an IPHONE 5S, laying on its back. The case reads, "IF FOUND… YOU'RE WELCOME." A HAND stops the ALARM. CAMERA PANS and RESTS on the wide faced smile of ANDRE "DRE" JOHNSON, 35, Black (not African-American, he hates that shit), still laying in bed.

DRE (V.O.)
Okay, so, I'm just your standard, regular ol', massively well endowed, Black dude.

CAMERA PANS to Dre's sleeping wife, RAINBOW, 35, mouth agape, drooling, hair disheveled, one eye partially opened.

DRE (V.O.)
This drooling, jaundice complexioned, mixed race woman is my wife, Rainbow. And despite what she looks like right now, she's a doctor.

**INT. DRE'S BATHROOM - A LITTLE LATER (DAY 1)**

Dre's now out of bed and brushing his teeth.

DRE (V.O.)
We're lucky. We've got great jobs...

**INSERT:** WHITE BACK DROP

**SFX:** DING! - DRE, casually dressed, and RAINBOW, in a physician's white coat, POP INTO THE WHITE BACKDROP, arm in arm, all smiles.

DRE (V.O.)
A great house...

**SFX:** DING! - An impressive TWO STORY COLONIAL HOME POPS into the frame filling the previously WHITE BACKGROUND.

DRE (V.O.)
And four great kids...

**SFX:** DING! DING! DING! DING! - Dre's kids (ZOEY, 14, ANDRE JR., 13, JACK, 6, DIANE, 6) POP IN and complete the now BEAUTIFUL FAMILY PORTRAIT that is THE JOHNSON'S.

**INT. DRE'S CLOSET - A LITTLE LATER (DAY 1)**

Dre stands in front of a ridiculously large collection of HIGH-END SNEAKERS, deciding on a shoe for the day.

DRE (V.O.)
I guess for a kid from the hood, I'm living the American Dream. Only problem is; Whatever 'American' it was who had the 'Dream', probably wasn't Black. And if he was, he should have mentioned the part about how when Brotha's start getting a little money, stuff starts getting a little weird.

**EXT. DRE'S HOUSE - FANTASY SEQUENCE**

A ROOFLESS SIGHTSEEING TOUR VAN rides past Dre's house as he and the kids play outside. A TOUR GUIDE on a PA SYSTEM speaks to the TOURISTS in the van.

DRE (V.O.)
Like in my neighborhood, we're sort of an oddity...

TOUR GUIDE
And if you look to the left you'll see the mythical and majestic Black family out of their natural habitat, yet still thriving. Go ahead and wave, they'll wave right back. They are just... just amazing.

"THE MYTHICAL AND MAJESTIC BLACK FAMILY - WHITE NEIGHBORHOOD - (CIRCA 2014)" is SCRIBBLED in underneath Dre and the kids.

BACK TO REALITY:

**INT. DRE'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

Dre, drinking coffee, notices the newspaper's headline: "MILEY CYRUS - TWERKIN' 9 TO 5!!" He groans, disgusted.

DRE (V.O.)
Don't get me wrong, I love my life. I guess I just worry about what I gave up to get it. I feel like in an effort to 'make it'... aka, assimilate... me and a lot of other Black folks have lost a little bit of ourselves... And everybody else has found it. Just look around:

**INSERT:** The most BOOTYLICIOUS PICTURE of KIM KARDASHIAN legally possible to show on network television.

DRE (V.O.)
Kim Kardashian's the symbol for big butts...

**INSERT:** CLIPS of JT & ROBIN THICKE at the Soul Train Awards.

DRE (V.O.)
Justin Timberlake and Robin Thicke are R&B gods…

**INSERT:** CLIPS of ASIAN DANCE TEAMS doing dance moves that don't seem physically plausible.

DRE (V.O.)
And Asian guys are just un-holdable on the dance floor!

**INT. DRE'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS (DAY 1)**

Dre, dressed, puts a PASTRY on a plate and sits at the table.

DRE (V.O.)
Come on! Big butts, R&B and dancing?! We may not have wanted to admit it, but those were the Black man's 'Go-To's! My family thinks I'm crazy but I tell 'em all the time, we're going out of style. We're living in the last days of Disco of it being cool to be Black.

**EXT. MALL - PARKING LOT - FLASHBACK**

Dre's cruising the parking lot looking for a space. As he finds one it's SWOOPED IN on by a WHITE SOCCER MOM in a MINI VAN.

DRE (V.O.)
And look, I'm not saying I miss the days of being the 'Big Scary Black Guy'...

Dre SHOOTS the Soccer Mom his MEANEST 'BIG SCARY BLACK GUY' MUG he can muster. Unfazed, and without missing a beat, the Soccer Mom SHOOTS HIM BACK THE BIRD. On DRE'S GRIMACE we, MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. DRE'S KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS**

DRE'S GRIMACE, remembering the moment, biting into his pastry.

DRE (V.O.)
But it did kinda have its advantages.

On this, WE:

CUT TO OPENING:

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

**INT. DRE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING (DAY 1)**

Dre's reading the paper and eating his pastry as we left him. His father, POPS, 60, enters and sits without saying a word.

DRE (V.O.)
Even though we were close, my Pops had a weird way of showing he loved me...

DRE
Hey Pops.

POPS
Jesus Christ! Can I at least get a cup of coffee in me before you start in?!

DRE (V.O.)
And by *weird*,' I meant he didn't do it at all...

Pops takes the pastry off Dre's plate and starts to read his newspaper. ZOEY, 14, enters. As usual, her head's buried in her iPhone. She sits down, takes the pastry from Pops' plate and continues texting without saying a word to anyone.

DRE
(pointedly)
Good morning, Zoey.

ZOEY
(still texting)
Hey Daddy.
(then, looking up)
Did you brush your teeth this morning?

DRE
Yeah, why?

ZOEY
(duh)
'Cause it smells like you didn't brush your teeth this morning.

POPS
Did feel like a pretty straight forward question, son.

ZOEY
Right? Like, why else would someone ask someone that?

Pops and Zoey BUMP FIST.

DRE
(beat, then smiling)
Nice try. Both of you. Not falling for that one again.

As Zoey shrugs and goes back to texting and Pops goes back to his paper, Dre inconspicuously SELF-TESTS his breath. ANDRE JR., 12, enters and POURS HIMSELF A GLASS OF ORANGE JUICE.

ANDRE JR.
Mornin', Pops! What's up, Dad!

Dre and Andre Jr. exchange their usual ROUTINE of a HAND-SLAP, FIST-BUMP, and KISS ON THE CHEEK. Pops looks on, disgusted.

POPS
For Christsakes! Why don't you two just go get a room?
(then, sotto)
Can't believe I fought in 'Nam and Marched' on Washington for <u>this</u>.

DRE
You shot yourself in the foot to avoid the draft and you were in D.C. for an Isley Brothers concert.

Rainbow, dressed in scrubs, enters with the TWINS, JACK and DIANE, 6, in tow. She kisses Dre on the forehead.

RAINBOW
Good morning, Mr. Vice President!

DRE
Hear that, Pops? Stevenson's announcing my VP promotion today.

POPS
Psh! If you had gone and worked for that Black firm like I told you, you'd have been Mr. <u>President</u>, five years ago.

RAINBOW
Yeah, but for like half the money.

POPS
So? It's a Black company so you gotta adjust for the Negro inflation tax. That's like making three, four times as much.

JACK
(sotto, to Diane)
God, I love that crazy old man.

DIANE
(sotto, to Jack)
Talk to me again when he starts wandering away and pooping his pants.

Dre stands and addresses his wife and father.

DRE
You know what? This job is about more than just money for me. As a VP at one of the top ad agencies in the world, I'm gonna be breaking down barriers and earning my respect.

RAINBOW
Yes, absolutely honey, you're right. Respect and barriers. Equally important to money. But just so I'm clear... there <u>is</u> a salary increase, correct?

Dre ignores Rainbow and turns to his Dad.

DRE
Come on Pops, admit it. You didn't think I'd make it.

POPS
Admit it?! I tell you that everyday! Why do you think I stay out there in the guest house? I need to be close for when the other shoe drops.

Andre Jr. interrupts.

ANDRE JR.
Dad, you think I can ride with you? I need to get to school a little early.

DRE
You're in luck, since I don't have to drop Pops off at his weekly...
(doing air quotes)
'massage' appointment. I got time.

POPS
(re: Dre's air quotes)
I don't know what all that's for. Mama-San runs a legitimate business.

DRE
Yeah, that moves every three months and got shut down by Vice last week.

POPS
(beat, sotto)
She'll be back. You'll see.
(wistfully, to himself)
She'll be back.

Dre shakes his head at Pops as he and Andre Jr. head out.

**INT. DRE'S TESLA TRUCK / EXT. VALLEY PREP- MORNING (DAY 1)**

Dre and Andre Jr. are riding in the car.

DRE
Why did you need to get to school early, Junior?

ANDRE JR.
Tryout's are today. Wanted to get a little extra work in so I'd be ready.

Dre beams over to Andre Jr., and nods proudly.

DRE
Okay, okay! I heard that! Work on your handle. Make sure you lock up that point guard spot.

ANDRE JR.
No point guards in Field Hockey, Dad.

DRE
(not getting it)
Right, right. True. Definitely got a point there.
(then)
Not really sure what that at all has to do with what we're talking about though.

ANDRE JR.
That's what I'm trying out for.

DRE
For *Field Hockey*?! Isn't that a woman's sport?

ANDRE JR.
Nope. 'Lotta people think that though.

DRE
A lot of people <u>do</u> <u>not</u> think about Field Hockey, Son!
(then, hurt)
What happened?! We've been hooping together all summer! I thought you were gonna go out for the team.
(MORE)

DRE (CONT'D)
Give those Valley Prep boys some of the 'Johnson family Jumper'?

ANDRE JR.
The 'Johnson Family What?' Dad, I don't think I remember you hitting one jumpshot. We had to change 'HORSE' to 'EQUESTRIAN' and you still never gave me an 'E'.

DRE
(beat, complete denial)
I'm not talking about the accuracy, I'm talking about the form! The form is what the family is known for.

ANDRE JR.
Right. Anyway, I thought about playing hoop, but all my friends are Fee-Hocking it this year so I figured, you know, when in Rome.

DRE
You're not in Rome! You're in L.A. No one in L.A. plays field hockey!

ANDRE JR.
Not true. It's a real sport, Dad.

DRE
(mocking)
Oh, yeah? It's a real sport? Maybe I'll catch a game tonight. What channel's it on again?

ANDRE JR.
(searching his phone)
Okaaay... ESPN Deportes, is showing a game at three thirty five in the morning... next month. Good one too. Grudge match between the Crystal Geyser Vixens and the Dasani Tigers.

Dre throws his hands up, exasperated, as he pulls into the DROP-OFF LINE at VALLEY PREP and Andre Jr. prepares to go into the SEA OF WHITENESS that is his school.

DRE
Okay, fine. Not gonna let you ruin my day. You wanna play 'Field Hockey' over the greatest sport in the world? Go for it. Least you're playing sports, right?

ANDRE JR.
Thanks Dad.

Andre Jr. grabs his bag and begins to EXIT THE CAR. As he does, a neighborhood friend, ZACH, 13, (White, laid back, perpetually matter-of-fact) walks by.

ZACH'
What's up, Mr. J. Sup, Andy!

Zach walks into the building as Dre glares back to his son through the ROLLED DOWN CAR WINDOW.

DRE
(re: Zach)
Andy?!

ANDRE JR.
Nice, right? I think it says; 'I'm edgy... but approachable.'

DRE
I think it says; 'I'm an idiot... who plays Field Hockey.'
(then)
Andy's not even a derivative of Andre!

ANDRE JR.
Derivative or not, that's my new handle and I think the ship's sailed on it. Nicknames have a lot of stickiness.
(then`)
And to be honest Dad, Andre's <u>your</u> name. It's who <u>you</u> are. I've never really felt like it fit me.

DRE
You're twelve! You don't know what fits you! When we went to buy shoes, the salesman said you've been wearing sneakers that were 3 sizes too small!

ANDRE JR.
I thought I was tying them too tight. Still doesn't mean I'm a Dre though.
(then, getting ready to go)
Oh and don't forget, we have to talk about what we're going to do for my birthday party next week.

DRE
Maybe I can find you a 'throwback' Field Hockey Jersey to wear to it.

ANDRE JR.
Pssh... Yeah, good luck with that. It's mostly a European sport so getting--

Dre ROLLS UP THE WINDOW and and shakes his head, disgusted, as he drives off from Andre Jr. and WE GO TO:

**EXT. ESTABLSIHING RELEVANT ADVERTISING - DAY (DAY 1)**

The pristine mirrored finish of the RELEVANT ADVERTISING offices.

**INT. RELEVANT ADVERTISING - LOBBY - DAY (DAY 1)**

Jean Knight's "*Mr. Big Stuff*" SCORES as Dre makes his way through the lobby and is greeted by ALL, but none more fondly than the other BLACK EMPLOYEES (SECURITY GUARDS, JANITORS, MAIL ROOM GUYS, etc.)

DRE (V.O.)
There were so few of us at Relevant that being Black made you feel like you were part of a little family. So when one of us made it, it was kind of like we all did. And right now, I was <u>that</u> one. I'm not saying I was the Jackie Robinson of Relevant Advertising or anything. But, I mean, if other people were saying it, they wouldn't be wrong.

Dre exchanges a flurry of different but equally impactful 'HEAD NODS', 'FIST PUMPS', and 'WHAT UP'S' with his "FAMILY."

**INT. RELEVANT ADVERTISING - DRE'S OFFICE - DAY (DAY 1)**

Dre enters and is greeted by his assistant, KRIS LEVINE, 23.

KRIS
Drizzy Dre, what up?! Or should I say Mr. Vee-Peezy?!

Dre and Kris do complicated, but well practiced, HANDSHAKE.

DRE (V.O.)
This is my assistant, Kris. Notice how I do the shake with him? For the 'good ones' you don't mind sprinkling a li'l something here and there.

DRE
Yo, Kris, let ask you a question? Did you want to play the same sport your Dad did in High School?

KRIS
You kidding me? Of course! My Dad was an friggin' Field Hockey God!

Dre ROLLS HIS EYES as a White co-worker, JOSH, 40, pops in.

JOSH
Yo, Dr. Dre!

DRE
Or just Andre... Just Andre's fine, too.

DRE (V.O.)
This is Josh. Not one of the good ones.

JOSH
Right. Sorry. Andre...
(then)
Hey bro-- I mean, Andre. We're working on this Folgers copy and wanted to know how you think a Black guy would say, 'Good morning'?

DRE
Um... I'm thinking, probably just like that. But let's pitch on it later.

JOSH
Cool bro'! I mean, Dre-- Andre!

Josh starts to head out, but then turns around.

JOSH (CONT'D)
Oh yeah. Stevenson called a meeting. Sounds like something big might be up.

Dre looks to Kris, knowingly, then to Josh.

DRE
Really? 'Big?' That's what people are saying? I've been hearing 'historic' and 'game changing' tossed around, but who knows. Probably just office gossip.

Josh furrows, confused, as Dre smiles, smugly, and we, GO TO:

**INT. RELEVANT ADVERTISING - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY (DAY 1)**

The meeting is in full swing. The boss, MR. STEVENSON, (60, White, nouveau-liberal, voted for Barack... the second time) addresses the EMPLOYEES, seated around the conference table.

DRE (V.O.)
When it came to the advertising game, Relevant was in a league of its own. I was damn lucky to be there. But like many companies, Relevant had a long-standing history of an US vs. THEM mentality.

The room is split by a CLEAR LINE OF SEGREGATION. On ONE SIDE of the table, the MINORITIES.

Underneath them a CHYRON reads: “US.” On the OTHER SIDE, the WHITE EMPLOYEES, who underneath a CHYRON reads: “THEM.”

DRE (V.O.)
That's why this promotion was such a big deal. For once, one of 'US' was gonna get a chance to be one of 'THEM.'

**ANGLE ON:** Dre's smiling face as he IMAGINES THIS MOMENT.

**INSERT:** With a quick “DING,” we see Dre and Josh SWAP SEATS. Dre, now seated on the 'THEM' side, has his LEGS KICKED UP on the table EATING SNACKS. Off DRE’S SMILING FACE, we,

MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. RELEVANT ADVERTISING - CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

DRE’S SMILING FACE, still daydreaming as Mr. Stevenson stands.

MR. STEVENSON
Alright guys, I’m sure all of you have heard that I have an announcement.

DRE
Shh! Quiet everyone! Mr. Stevenson has an announcement! No idea what it could be. Probably pretty huge though.

MR. STEVENSON
Myself along with the board have decided to up a new VP in the company.

DRE
What?! Oh my God, that’s crazy! But wise. Very wise. Kudos to you, sir.

Dre STANDS and starts a SOLO SLOW-CLAP. Off Mr. Stevenson’s GLARE, he sits.

MR. STEVENSON
Relevant’s one of the fastest growing advertising companies in the world. But the world's demos are changing and we want to be the leader of that change...

As Mr. Stevenson continues to talk, Dre eagerly, yet subtly, begins to GATHER HIS THINGS, STAND, and WALK from the “US” side of the table to the “THEM” side of the table. Dre is now on the “THEM” side of the table, attempting to squeeze into an EMPTY CHAIR next to Josh.

DRE
(sotto)
If I could just *squeeze* in there--

MR. STEVENSON
And that's why, without any further ado, I'd like everyone to give a warm congrats, to the VP of our new Urban Division, Andre Johnson!

Off this announcement Dre is STOPPED IN HIS TRACKS.

DRE
I'm sorry. Did you say, 'Urban?'

On Dre's shocked and confused face, we GO TO,

**INT. DRE'S HOUSE - DINING ROOM - THAT EVENING - NIGHT (NIGHT 1)**

The entire Johnson family, including Pops, eats a buffet style dinner. Rainbow stands, RAISING HER GLASS.

RAINBOW
To my husband, the VP!

As everyone TOASTS, Dre sits, noticeably UNENTHUSIASTIC.

POPS
Yes, congrats to my son. Finally made it to Head Puppet of the White man.
(raising his glass)
To you.

RAINBOW
Nice, Pops. You're supposed to be here helping celebrate.

POPS
Actually, you told me I was coming over to eat fried chicken.
(re: chicken)
I don't know what the hell this is.

RAINBOW
It's fried chicken. 'Baked' fried chicken.

Pops looks at his chicken, then to Dre, furious.

POPS
(to Dre, re: chicken)
You dirty mother--!

RAINBOW
Pops!

DRE
No, he's right. I feel like a sell out.
(then)
(MORE)

DRE (CONT'D)
I said I wanted to be Relevant's first Black VP. But really, I wanted to be their first VP who *happened* to be Black.

RAINBOW
What difference does it make?! Obama's the first Black President. Is he any less the President?

DRE
No, because he's the first Black President of the *United States*. Not the first Black President of extra clean Air Jordan's or wave caps.

JACK
Obama's the first Black President?

POPS
(to Dre, re: Jack)
Really doing a bang up job over here.

Dre turns to Rainbow, irritated.

RAINBOW
Hold on, let's explore this. Jack, you really didn't know Barack Obama was our first Black President?

JACK
Um, not really. I mean, he's the <u>only</u> president I've <u>ever</u> known.

RAINBOW
Okay! There! He's the <u>only</u> one! That explains his lack of Presidential trivia.

DRE
Presidential trivia? I didn't ask what Obama's first goldfish was named!
(then)
What's the point of putting up with what I put up with at work just to be able to afford to send our kids to private school, if they don't even know Barack's the first Black president?

DIANE
Tootie!
(off their looks)
Obama's first goldfish's name was Tootie.

RAINBOW
Very good, sweetie. Now why don't you and Jack go get ready for bed?

Diane gets up, followed by Jack. Jack whispers to his sister.

JACK
How did you know Obama's fish's name?

DIANE
I didn't. Nice, right?

As the twins leave, Andre Jr. crosses over to his parents.

ANDRE JR.
Great as this has been, I got FH try-outs tomorrow and I want to be fresh. Plus, I got moved to the front leg of Danny Segalbaum's Hora chair for his Bar Mitzah this weekend and he's got quite the tuchis, so I'm gonna need my strength.

As Andre Jr. exits, Dre turns to Rainbow.

DRE
You wanna 'explore' that, too?

RAINBOW
Danny Segalbaum has Type II Diabetes so that could explain his tuchis size.

DRE
Of course you think this is funny. You're not the one at fault.

RAINBOW
What? What are you talking about?

DRE
My kids look at me going to my job and being a sell out everyday, how can I expect anything more from them?

Dre shakes his head and crosses out. Rainbow turns to Pops.

RAINBOW
Jeez! For once, all I wanted to do was have a nice dinner with my family and celebrate a good thing like normal people. Guess we don't all get what we want.

POPS
Damn right, if we did, I'd be eating *fried* fried chicken right now.

Pops exits. Off Rainbow's incredulous face, we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

**INT. DRE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY (DAY 2)**

Rainbow enters from work to find Dre on the couch looking at old family pictures on his Apple TV.

RAINBOW
What are you doing home?

DRE
Took the day off. Wanted to remember my life the way it used to be.

RAINBOW
Oh, okay. Makes sense. Usually what people do the day after they're promoted.

DRE
Don't start 'Bow, please.

RAINBOW
Oh my God! Would you please stop this pity party? So they added 'Urban' on your job title. Boo hoo.
(off Dre's look)
What? You think I don't go through all kind of stuff like this being a female doctor. Come on, it's still an amazing job. Keep it real.

Off Bow, Dre sits up and shoots her a DEATH STARE.

DRE
'Keep it real?' 'Keep it real?!' I'm 'Mr. Keep It Real!' You're the one that doesn't 'keep it real.' In fact, you keep it so unreal, you shouldn't even be allowed to question my realness.

RAINBOW
Annd, here we go.

DRE
And if we're really keeping it all the way real, you're mixed! Or biracial. Or omnicolored. Or whatever they're calling it today. Point is, you're not even really Black, so...

RAINBOW
Well if I'm not really Black then somebody needs to tell my hair and my complete lack of fiscal responsibility!

DRE
You don't get it! Not only am I a joke at work, but I've let my family get lost in all this craziness. I'm raising a son that doesn't want to play the game that's not only given Black Men more TV time than COPS but that his father dominated at--

RAINBOW
I thought you didn't make the team?

DRE
That was political! I won three intramural championships!
(then)
Point is my boy's playing Yuppy Stick Ball and just got moved to the front of some fat kid's Bar Mitzah thingee!

RAINBOW
Hora.
(then, off his look)
Sorry. I'm just not understanding what any of this has to do with you?

DRE
Don't you see? We're both trapped in the White Matrix. Mine is Relevant. His is Valley Prep. It's time to take the blue pill, babe.

RAINBOW
That's the one that keeps you in The Matrix.

DRE
Okay, the green pill.

RAINBOW
There was no green pill.

DRE
I get it! You've seen the movie! All I'm saying is I want us to take whichever color that stops making us outsiders trying to fit in.

RAINBOW
Outsider?! What are you talking about? Relevant made you into a VP! And I'm sorry Dre, but not everything's about you being Black.

Off Rainbow, Dre looks at her, INCREDULOUS, as WE GO TO:

**INT. BASKETBALL GYM - DAY - FLASHBACK**

TWO CAPTAINS are selecting teams from a GROUP OF 6'5", ATHLETIC WHITE GUYS gathered in front of them, and Dre. Team Captain #1 scans his athletic White options but then narrows his gaze on Dre, who SNACKS ON CHIPS, then TAKES A PUFF ON HIS ASTHMA INHALER.

CAPTAIN #1
I got homeboy. With the Fritos.

Dre cuts an INCREDULOUS LOOK to Rainbow, sitting in the bleachers.

**EXT. STREET - DAY - FLASHBACK**

Dre sits in his car. Rainbow's in the passenger seat. They have been pulled over by a POLICE CAR whose lights are on behind them. A COP approaches Dre's window.

COP
The reason I pulled you over is because you didn't have your headlights on.

DRE
But it's daytime!

Off this, Dre turns and shoots Rainbow another INCREDULOUS LOOK.

**INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY - FLASHBACK**

Dre is lying on a patient table in linens. Rainbow sits on the chair next to him as the DOCTOR speaks to him.

DOCTOR
It's unlikely, but there's a chance it could be sickle cell.

DRE
You're getting this from a sprained ankle?

Dre gives Rainbow his familiar LOOK OF INCREDULITY as we,

MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. DRE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

DRE INCREDULOUSLY STARING at Rainbow.

RAINBOW
Ok, those might not have been the best examples.

Rainbow and Dre's argument is interrupted as Jack and Diane enter from school with Pops. They cross and greet their parents.

JACK
Mommy! Liza Jackson asked if Diane and I can have a play date with her.

DIANE
She's weird, so feel free to say no.

RAINBOW
Liza Jackson? Which one is she again?

DIANE
You know... wears the Nemo shoes? Every. Single. Day.

JACK
And the polka dot backpack.

DIANE
Kinda smells like a turkey burger.

JACK
No, like chili!

DRE
(realizing)
Hold up! Wait a second. Are you guys talking about the *only* other little Black girl in your class?

Jack and Diane contemplate, then NOD their heads, "Yes."

DRE (CONT'D)
Why didn't you just say that?

DIANE
I dunno? Guess when I hear 'Liza Jackson' I just think Nemo and turkey burgers.

As Jack and Diane cross off, Dre turns to Rainbow, incensed.

RAINBOW
What?! They don't see color. Don't you think that's beautiful?

DRE
No, I think we need to get them tested!

POPS
(re: Jack and Diane)
But when I say it, I'm wrong?

Rainbow cuts Pops a GLARE. He throws his hands up and crosses to the bathroom as Andre Jr. in full Field Hockey uniform enters home from try-outs with Zach.

ANDRE JR.
I made the team!

DRE
(incredulous)
Of course you did.

Andre Jr. sits at the kitchen table as Zach nonchalantly crosses to the refrigerator, OPENS it, and begins RUMMAGING.

DRE (CONT'D)
Uh, Zach, did you need something?

ZACH
Yeah, I've been craving grape soda all day and my parents never buy any.

DRE
And why in the hell would you assume--

ZACH
Got it!
(holding up a grape soda)
Thanks Mr. J. Mrs. J. Later Andy!

Dre grabs his head in pain off Zach calling Dre "Andy". As Zach exits and Pops crosses back in, Dre GLARES to Andre Jr. Before he can say anything, Zoey, on her cell phone, crosses in.

ZOEY
(into phone)
Hold on, Margo.
(then)
Mom. Dad. Margo's going to a 'Jason Mraz' acoustic jam on Saturday. Can I go? Please? Phillip Phillips is gonna beat box as his opener.

Dre shoots Zoey a blank look but before he can respond Andre Jr., taking "air shots" with his Field Hockey stick, interrupts.

ANDRE JR.
Oh, and Dad, me and some of the 'Field Mob' decided what I should do for my birthday party... I want to have a Bar Mitzah!
(off Dre's look)
Before you say anything. I know we're not Jewish, but Zach knows a Rabbi who's great at pushing through conversions.

DRE
So you'd be willing to forsake your own religion just for a party?

ANDRE JR.
Short answer? Yes. All the attention. The actual cash instead of crappy Barnes and Nobles gift cards. And the entertainment? Oy!
(then)
David Blaine performed at Isaac Barnow's! He gave Isaac's mom, Isaac's dad's 'secret' cell phone number that nobody, including his mom, had. It was epic! When you left that party, you might not have believed in marriage anymore, but there was no questioning whether or not magic was real.

DRE
Well, Isaac may be lucky enough to get magician's to destroy his parents' lives, but you get other stuff.

ANDRE JR.
Like what?

POPS
(jumping in, offended)
Like making it home alive everyday!
(then)
White folks won't tell you this, but it's a known fact that 68% of Black men will die before the age of 14 from a knife wound to the throat on their way home.

Dre looks at his father, a bit exasperated.

DRE
Pops, I know you're trying to help, but you can't just pull random, terrifying stats that 'White folks don't want you to know' out your ass like you did with us. Kids have Google now.

POPS
And who in the hell do you think created Google?

ANDRE JR.
Larry Page and Sergey Brin.
(holding up his phone)
Just Googled it... On the iPhone I got from Isaac Barnow's Bar Mitzvah.

POPS
(beat, to Dre, re: Andre Jr.)
You need to whoop him. Two times.

Dre turns to Rainbow, desperate.

DRE
Are you hearing any of this?

RAINBOW
Junior, you're not converting.

ANDRE JR.
Why not, Ma? And now that I think about it, if I do, it won't matter what my nickname is because when I convert I'll get a Hebrew name.
(then)
I'm thinking I'm gonna go with either 'Schlomo' or 'Shmuel'. They're both pretty solid, so I don't think I can go wrong.

DRE
(beat, then exploding)
That's it!
(then, calling out)
Family meeting! Kitchen! NOW!

POPS
Uh oh! I smell a 'group hug' or a 'mass time out' coming on.

DRE
Not this time.

Off Dre, having had enough, we GO TO,

**INT. HOME THEATRE - A LITTLE LATER (DAY 2)**

The FAMILY minus Pops, is seated in a modest (as far as Home Theatre's go) Home Theatre Room. Dre, pacing back in forth in front of the MUTED SCREEN which is playing Spike Lee's, 'Malcolm X', turns to his family, all business.

DRE
Listen up! Now I know I've been complaining a lot about my job, but this family's my number one priority and I can't expect things at work to change if my home's in shambles.

ZOEY
(into phone)
Oh! So they're beat boxing together?

DRE
Zoey, hang up the phone!

ZOEY
(into phone)
I'll text you Margo.

Zoey hangs up the phone but IMMEDIATELY BEGINS TEXTING.

DRE
From now on, we're not playing by anybody else's rules but our own. And thanks to your mother, I now know what our new rule is; We're keeping it real!

JACK
Mommy, I'm scared.

DRE
You don't have to be scared, big guy. But what you guys do have to start doing, is describing people using racial identifications.

DIANE
Okay, now I'm with Jack.

DRE
(ala a Newscaster)
'The assailant was an Hispanic male between the ages of ten and sixty.'
(then, to Twins)
See? Now I know who I'm looking for.

Dre turns to Andre Jr.

DRE (CONT'D)
And Junior... If I hear anybody calling you Schlomo or Shmuel or especially Andy, I'm gonna back over you and whoever's calling you it, in my car.

ANDRE JR.
Dad--

DRE
I'm not finished! I may have to come watch you play possibly the world's dumbest sport, but I don't have to keep writing you eighteen dollar checks and hearing you rave about other kids' Bar Mitzvah's.
(then)
Next Saturday, for your 13th birthday, you become a man too. A Black man. I'm throwing you an African Rites of Passage Ceremony.

ANDRE JR.
(beat)
That does not sound as fun.

Dre turns to Zoey who's SNAPPING A SELFIE and lowers his head, resigned.

DRE
And Zoey... It's too late for you, baby. Just let me know how much the tickets are and don't get pregnant.

ZOEY
Cool! Hey can I ask your opinion about these two Instagram filters?

DRE
(beat)
Later.

Zoey, oblivious, shoots her Dad a "thumbs up" and goes back to texting.

RAINBOW
Dre, this is ridic--

DRE
--'Bow. You were right.

RAINBOW
Excuse me?

DRE
You were right! I'm going to go into Relevant tomorrow, give my concept presentation, and keep it real as fuck with them.

RAINBOW
Don't think that's exactly what I said.
(then)
Babe, listen, I know this job thing has you a bit out of sorts, but Urban Division or not, this position is a huge deal and you should be proud.

DRE
I am. I'm totally over it. Totally.

RAINBOW
Oh. Well... good. Because I know how you can get and I wanted to make sure you weren't going to go into work and do something stupid.

DRE
If RELEVANT wants an 'Urban VP', than that's what they're going to get.

RAINBOW
Right. So... you're not over it and you definitely are going to do something stupid. Got it.

Dre, with a manic glare, begins nodding his head knowingly.

DRE (V.O.)
I knew my new "Keeping it Real" regime of nonstop, pure, uncut realness wasn't gonna be easy, but I was dedicated and ready to do whatever it took to get me and my family back on track.

As family sits slack jawed at Dre's announcement we CUT TO,

**INSERT:** Over the aggressive, hardcore, bass line of Dead Prez's, "Hip-Hop," we see ICONIC, REVOLUTIONARY IMAGES from moments of social upheaval throughout Black history (i.e. the classic photo of a boy being bit by a dog in Birmingham, video footage of Civil Rights marchers being hosed, video footage of Muhammad Ali angrily speaking to an audience of Black Muslims, and for some reason there's even a clip of SHAQ DUNKING ON CHRIS DUDLEY). As the music SLOWLY FADES, we HOLD on one last image, the INDELIBLE SHOT of MALCOLM X LOOKING OUT OF HIS WINDOW HOLDING AN M-1 CARBINE RIFLE. This image, along with the screen, then suddenly FADES TO BLACK. After a beat, a CHYRON over the black reads: "SAMSUNG - GALAXY BRIGHT" Off this, WE,

**INT. RELEVANT ADVERTISING - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY (DAY 3)**

PULL OUT to see we've been watching a FLAT SCREEN MONITOR. As the LIGHTS COME ON the camera PANS to see that Dre has just presented this pitch to Mr. Stevenson and the other BOSSES. Dre stands looking on DEFIANTLY as a mix of LEGITIMATE FEAR and ANGER is plastered across the faces of his BOSSES. Off this WE,

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

**EXT. DRE'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - DAY (DAY 4)**

The backyard's been transformed into what appears to be a mock AFRICAN VILLAGE as the classic Ugandan ceremonial hymn, "Ngayaya" plays on an iPod as Dre, in ridiculous looking AFRICAN GARB, goes over traditional African "Rites of Passage" practices with a clearly unhappy, Andre Jr., who's holding a WOODEN STAFF.

DRE (V.O.)
Operation Keepin' It Real was in full effect. And although it was off to a rocky start, I still had high hopes.

Pops, watching on, is in a BLACK PANTHER UNIFORM (black turtle neck, black beret, black leather jacket and black jeans).

POPS
What is this mess you're doing?

DRE
It's not 'mess.' It's our culture.

POPS
(re: Andre's African garb)
That ain't 'our' culture!
(re: his Black Panther fit)
This is our culture. We're Black. Not African. Hell, Africans don't even like us. What you need to do is to turn on some James Brown or better yet, have this boy learn past the third verse of, 'We Shall Overcome'. Damn song has seven verses. People forget that.

ANDRE JR.
Dad, not that this song that you've had on loop for seven hours isn't great, and I'm sure James Brown's nice too, but since I'm the one having to go through this meshugaas, can I make a request? How 'bout some Macklemore?

POPS
(to Dre, re: Macklemore)
See what happens when you start baking fried chicken?!

DRE
This isn't my fault! It's his mother's. And your cholesterol's five hundred! You should've been eating that chicken raw!

Pops and Dre's BICKERING is interrupted by Rainbow, home from work, comes outside to the scenario of Dre, dressed in his African garb, arguing with Pops dressed as a Black Panther, while Ugandan music blares and Andre Jr. holds a large stick.

RAINBOW
(beat, to Dre, re: scene)
So, should I start or do you want to?

DRE
Not in the mood right now, Bow.

RAINBOW
Well, that's just too bad because this, this has to be talked about.

POPS
Come on, Junior. Let me introduce you to the Godfather of Soul.

Pops grabs Andre Jr. and crosses indoors. Dre turns to Rainbow.

DRE
Know this doesn't look great, but I could really use a little support right now.

RAINBOW
You know what? I was actually trying to be supportive when I called you at work today to apologize. But my apology got a little derailed when the receptionist rerouted my call to Corporate Security who questioned me for thirty minutes on my family's political affiliations and my husband's mental state.

DRE
(beat, badly covering)
Hmph, weird. Didn't get your message.

RAINBOW
What happened at work, Dre?

DRE
Um, well, Mr. Stevenson failed to fully grasp the irony of my pitch. So we mutually decided to take the weekend and think about whether or not Relevant is still the right fit for me.

RAINBOW
'Still the right fit?!' He's thinking about firing you!

DRE
Guess if you need to over simplify it--

RAINBOW
You're about to blow this, Dre! You and your nonsense is about to send our kids to public school! I am the co-chair of a very prestigious, deliciously catered PTA! Do you know what the PTA meetings are like at a public school?! No. You don't. No one does. Because nobody goes!

DRE
So what do you suggest I do? Bow down and give up what I believe in just so I can hold onto a job that allows me to keep my family in this crazy world we're really not even a part of?

RAINBOW
This isn't about us and the kids. This is about <u>you</u>. And there's no winning with you. You're mad that Relevant gave you the job because you're Black, but if they'd given it to a White guy, then YOU'D BE MAD SOMEONE BLACK DIDN'T GET IT!

Rainbow takes a deep breath and composes herself.

RAINBOW (CONT'D)
You know what? Do what you want with your job. I don't care. Seriously. I'm gonna support you no matter what. I always do, so what's the point of even arguing with you?

DRE
Thank you. I really appre--

RAINBOW
--I'm not done.
(then)
I'll support you, but this 'keeping it real' BS you're on, stops now. I'm not going to have you running around, torturing my family. Whatever issues your working through... get over them!

Rainbow turns and heads inside, leaving Dre to his thoughts.

**EXT. DRE'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - A LITTLE LATER (DAY 4)**

Dre, clearly bothered by everything, is shooting hoops by himself when Pops and Andre Jr. come outside to join him.

POPS
I just hid another grape soda in the refrigerator next to something called 'Almond Milk.' If someone takes this one, we're gonna have problems.

Andre Jr., sensing his father's mood, speaks to him sincerely.

ANDRE JR.
Dad, listen, I get it. You feel like I'm turning into a White boy. But I'm not. I'm just being me. I'm just not quite sure who that is yet. Since I skipped second grade, I'm like the youngest and shortest kid in my class.

DRE
Son, I know how difficult it must be to feel like the different one at school, but it's important for you to hold on to your culture and realize how special it is.

ANDRE JR.
And not that I don't appreciate what you're trying to do, but honestly Dad, all I'm trying to hold onto right now is my first boob.
(then)
You think I don't know Field Hockey isn't exactly the sexiest sport around? Trust me, I know! But I also knew that because of that I had a great chance of making the team. I'm a <u>ninth grader</u>, playing <u>Varsity</u>. That means something!

DRE
So... this was all part of your plan?

ANDRE JR.
Yes! Me and the Field Mob--

DRE
--Please stop calling yourselves that.

ANDRE JR.
Fine. Me and my boys figured that if we could just get our foot in the door with the other jocks, we could get in there and really make some noise.

DRE
So you actually do want to play basketball?

ANDRE JR.
(smiling)
Yeah, Dad. But I suck at it.

DRE
And Michael Jordan. You do know who he is?

ANDRE JR.
Yes! Mock turtlenecks, Mom Jeans, Big suits...

DRE
Right. We went over this. You do know him. And the Bar Mitzvah? You don't actually want to have one?

ANDRE JR.
Oh no. I totally want one of those. They're awesome!
(then)
But if the Rites of Passage thing really means that much to you, I'll do it.

Andre Jr. gives his Dad a SHAKE AND A POUND as he crosses back in. Dre, shocked, turns to Pops who's overheard the whole thing. Pops equally shocked, SHRUGS, IMPRESSED.

POPS
(re: Andre Jr.)
Hmph. Who knew? He wants to hold a boob? Woulda swore he was gay.

Dre, reeling a bit, takes a seat in the chair next to Pops.

DRE
How the hell did you manage to keep it real with us when we were growing up?

POPS
I didn't. I kept it honest. 'Keeping it real' is just something some rapper said in a song and your generation has been running around for the last twenty years swearing they were doing it.

DRE
I really did screw this up, didn't I?

POPS
Screwing things up is what being a father's all about. That's how we learn to fix stuff. Just remember son, whatever you do make sure that it's right for who you are.
(MORE)

POPS (CONT'D)
And more importantly, who your kids are. They're all different. We try and have our kids be little carbon copies of us. But that's not possible. Every time I walk past that herb garden of yours over there, I'm reminded of that.
(then, sincere)
You're a good Dad, and I'm proud of you son. Always.

Pops gives his son a sincere 'POUND,' SHAKE, and HUG. As the two men sit for a beat, they're interrupted by Jack and Diane who walk through the living room, TALKING.

JACK
Did you see what Mexican Phillip did to Armenian Johnny?

DIANE
No, I saw what he did to Johnny the Jew.

JACK
Oh, yeah! That's who I meant.

DIANE
Oh, well then, yeah, I saw it. I was with fat, White Mary when it happened.

As the Twins continue their conversation into the next room, Pops looks to Dre.

POPS
Still proud of you. But not you're greatest moment.

DRE
That's fair.

As Dre looks to his Twins and hears his father's words, he realizes that maybe he's made some mistakes. On this we,

**INT. LIMO - DAY (DAY 5)**

The entire Johnson family, including Pops, is riding in a stretched limo. Dre and Andre Jr. are again dressed in traditional African garb. Surprisingly, this time, so is Pops. Andre Jr. looks as if he's about to have a stroke.

ANDRE JR.
Come on Dad, seriously, do we really have to go through with this?

DRE
'Fraid so, son.

Pops lights a leaf of sage and begins waving it around Andre Jr.

POPS
Be still, boy. This is sage. Get the bad spirits off you.

ANDRE JR.
Come on Pops, you too? But we're not African, remember?

POPS
Hey, when in Rome.

ANDRE JR.
But this is L.A.!
(then)
Okay, fine. But if I step out of the car like this, I'm cooked at school.

Dre pulls a box from under the seats and hands it to Andre Jr.

ANDRE JR. (CONT'D)
Then maybe you should put this on.

Andre Jr. OPENS THE BOX and finds a RED ADIDAS TRACKSUIT, a pair of SHELL TOE ADIDAS, and a BLACK KANGOL HAT. He looks at his father, confused. Off this we,

**EXT. LIMO/BRO MITZVAH VENUE - DAY - CONTINUOUS**

A YOUNG, HIP LATINO KID DJ begins to BLAST Drake's, "Started From The Bottom" as Andre Jr. steps out, and sees a sign that says, "Welcome to Andre's Hip Hop Bro Mitzvah" and all his FRIENDS dressed in the same, but different colored, ADIDAS SWEAT SUITS as he is.

Andre Jr.'s face lights up with excitement as he looks on at a CREW OF DANCERS, made primarily of ethnically ambiguous ASIAN KIDS, who put their modern twist on break-dancing. Dre's buddy, Zach, who's MC'ing the event, stands in front of the DJ booth with a mic in hand rapping along to the chorus of, "Started from the bottom, now we here," while ironically dressed in a six hundred dollar Maison Martin Margiela hoodie. A stealth VIDEOGROPHER quietly captures it all.

ANDRE JR.
(to Dre)
What is this?

DRE
Bar mitzvah, African Rites of Passage, figured a 'Bro Mitzvah' was the best of both of those. Sorry about the old school hip-hop theme, I just couldn't do the Macklemore thing.

ANDRE JR.
What? I love it! Can I go change?

Dre nods as he and his son share a warm hug and Andre Jr. crosses to go change. Rainbow turns to Dre, with a smirk.

RAINBOW
Not bad.
(then, to Pops)
And you were in on it too? Nice. Might actually *fry* fry you some chicken for this.

DRE
And babe, I'm sorry for this week. Just don't know if I'm ever going to get used to how different everything is now. But I'm glad you're here with me while I try.

The moment is interrupted as Zach, again hypes the crowd.

ZACH
(into mic)
Yo, yo, yo, big Bro Mitzvah shout out to my boy Andy!

POPS
If that kid had called me 'boy' back in my day, I'd have had one of those Asian dancers kick him in the head.

RAINBOW
Well it's not your day anymore, it's theirs. And like it or not, this is them 'keeping it real.'

Off Rainbow's comment, Dre narrows his eyes as an idea sparks

DRE
(re: party)
You know, you might be on to something.

As the DJ scratches a seamless transition into JAY-Z'S "Hard Knock Life" and Dre stares on at this COLORFUL TABLEAU of homogeneity that is his children's lives we, MATCH CUT TO:

**INSERT:** A very similar, but more glossy, professionally produced version of that same COLORFUL TABLEAU we just saw, paired seamlessly on beat to Jay Z's, "Hard Knock Life." After a beat, the scene fades and a SAMSUNG LOGO comes over the images with a CHYRON that reads: "SAMSUNG BRIGHT: 'CAUSE KEEPIN' IT REAL IS COLORFUL." Off this we,

PULL OUT / REVEAL:

**INT. RELEVANT ADVERTISING - MEDIA ROOM - DAY (DAY 6)**

As we PULL OUT from the IMAGE we once again see being viewed on a FLATSCREEN MONITOR, and Dre is back at RELEVANT, playing a new version of the Samsung ad for the RELEVANT Advertising execs, including Mr. Stevenson, who STAND AND APPLAUD, obviously pleased by what they've just seen. As Dre walks around the room accepting congratulations and handshakes, he speaks to us:

DRE (V.O.)
So taking a cue from my very wise son, I decided to get my foot in the door and really make some noise. And just like that I became the sell-out, Head Puppet VP of Relevant Advertsing's Urban Division.

**INT. RELEVANT ADVERTISING - DRE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS**

Dre, proudly, sits at his desk as MAINTENANCE puts his NAME and TITLE, "VP - URBAN DIVISION" on his new OFFICE DOOR.

DRE (V.O.)
Funny thing is, I still didn't feel much like a sell out.

As Dre sits at his desk, he takes and places THE SAME PICTURE WE SAW FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE SHOW on his desk. We ANGLE and HOLD on this picture as we MATCH CUT TO:

**EXT. DRE'S HOUSE - ESTABLISHING - DAY**

THE SAME PICTURE WE SAW FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE SHOW. After a FLASH, the picture COMES ALIVE and Pops walks next to Dre and PUTS HIS ARM AROUND HIM.

DRE (V.O.)
I felt like a father who was willing to lose a battle here and there for his family.

The Johnson family BREAKS FROM THEIR POSE and goes about their business, Dre watches as Rainbow HOPS INTO HER WHITE RANGE ROVER, Zoey TAKES A SELFIE with her phone, Jack and Diane TEND TO THEIR PERSONALIZED BONSAI TREES, as Andre Jr. PICK UP HIS FIELD HOCKEY STICK.

DRE (V.O.)
And that felt pretty good.

Dre SHAKES his head at his family but then smiles, satisfied.

FADE TO **BLACK-ISH:**

END OF SHOW