CHARACTERS

TIMOTHY  Caucasian, eight-years-old. Mathew’s brother.
MATTHEW  Twenty-three-years-old, he’s a racist.
KYLIE    Caucasian, early twenties.
ELIZABETH Late forties. Kyle’s racist mother.
RYAN     Late forties, Kyle’s father.
CLARENCE African-American, early thirties. County sheriff.
MANAGER  Caucasian, early thirties.
MICHELLE Late forties, Maria’s racist mother.
BRAD     Caucasian, early twenties. Tattooed thug.
WILL     African-American, late twenties. Racist thug.
SETTING

The story opens in Timothy’s bedroom.

TIME

The time is set in the present.
### SCENES

#### ACT I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scene 1</th>
<th>Timothy’s bedroom</th>
<th>Afternoon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scene 2</td>
<td>Ryan and Elizabeth living room</td>
<td>Afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 3</td>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>Afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 4</td>
<td>Maria’s bedroom</td>
<td>Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 5</td>
<td>Jail cell</td>
<td>Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 6</td>
<td>Store</td>
<td>Night</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 7</td>
<td>Timothy’s bedroom</td>
<td>Afternoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scene 8</td>
<td>Kyle’s bedroom</td>
<td>Night</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ACT I

Scene 1

Posters of various rap artists are on the wall, along with fitted baseball hats hanging on hooks. The floor is covered with dirty clothes, and collectible sports cards are scattered on the nightstand. TIMOTHY is sitting on the bed wearing a baseball jersey, jeans and a fitted hat watching rap videos, imitating what he sees.

MATHEW walks in wearing busboy attire.

MATHEW

What are you doing?

Timothy keeps his eyes on the screen.

TIMOTHY

Nothing. Watching rap videos.

MATHEW

Rap videos? What do you know about rap?

TIMOTHY

I like listening to it.

MATHEW

Do you know what the message means?

TIMOTHY

The message?

Mathew walks over to the television turning it off.

MATHEW

The message. Do you know what it is?

Timothy sighs shaking his head, shrugging up his shoulders.

TIMOTHY

To have fun.

Ethnicity by Bernard Mersier
MATHEW

Who has fun wearing their clothes like that? When they speak, you can barely understand what they're saying. Do you want me to tell you what the message is?

TIMOTHY

Tell me.

MATHEW

Go out and hit people upside the head starting fights and talking to hood rats, all the while you're robbing and killing. It's obvious the message is you don't have to work for a living. Just kill whoever you have a problem with, get women pregnant and don't take care of the child, calling her a baby mama.

TIMOTHY

...You're saying?

MATHEW

I'm saying black people are bad, and you shouldn't like them.

TIMOTHY

Who should I like?

MATHEW

Do you hear or see white people getting into trouble or have the issues black people have?

Timothy sits silent.

MATHEW (CONT’D)

Try listening to music other than this rap nonsense. Be like your older brother. Get a steady job, speak correctly and take care of your responsibilities. Don't end up on welfare like those black people.

TIMOTHY

Okay.

MATHEW

That's my little man. I'm about to go to work. You remember what I said.

TIMOTHY

Okay.
Mathew walks out the room.
Timothy waits a few seconds before turning the television back on imitating what he sees.

END OF THE SCENE

ACT I

Scene 2

KYLE and ELIZABETH both wearing something casual are having a heated argument in the living room.
RYAN is sitting in a chair wearing something casual annoyed by the topic of their argument.

ELIZABETH
What do you see in that girl?!

KYLE
It doesn't matter what I see in her, as long as I'm happy.

ELIZABETH
Look at her! What about her makes you happy?

KYLE
Every time I kiss her my love grows stronger.

ELIZABETH
How can you stomach the idea of kissing her?

KYLE
Because she's the woman I love.

ELIZABETH
Love has nothing to do with it! I know what your issue is. You know those black girls are quick to give it up, so you're taking advantage.

KYLE
How can you say that?
ELIZABETH
Because I know it's the truth. I hope you're using condoms. I'm not about to have a chocolate vanilla swirl as a grandchild.

KYLE
You won't have to worry about seeing our baby, whenever we decide to have one.

ELIZABETH
You're absolutely right! That's your stupidity in your lap. I wash my hands of it.

KYLE
Wash your own stupidity from your hands.

ELIZABETH
I can't believe I call you my son.

Elizabeth walks off stage.
Kyle turns to Ryan.

KYLE
What do you think, dad?

RYAN
When I was younger before I met your mother…I dated a few black women.

KYLE
You did?

RYAN
Yep. Ashley and I were together for some years before I met your mother.

KYLE
What happened?

RYAN
She had to go her separate way, and I had to stay in the city. By the time I could get back in touch with her, she moved on.

(Sighs)
Although we still loved each other, there was nothing that could be done.
KYLE
I'm sorry.

RYAN
I tell you one thing. To this day, I wish I could have her back.

KYLE
You still love her?

RYAN
Of course I do. Once you truly fall in love with someone, even if the person leaves, you never lose the feeling.

KYLE
So, you're saying?

RYAN
I'm saying don't let anyone ruin your true love. Never let your true love leave, if you can keep it.

KYLE
What's mom problem?

RYAN
(Sighs)
Let me make a long story short. A black man raped your mother's sister. Because of that, she feels all black people are foul.

KYLE
She shouldn't take it out on me.

RYAN
I just told you, son. Don't let anyone ruin your happiness.

KYLE
Thanks.

RYAN
Anytime you need me. Get going, and show Maria a good time.
KYLE
You know I will. I'll be back later.

Kyle walks off stage.
Ryan stands up shaking his head.

RYAN
(Sighs)
If only I could go back.

END OF THE SCENE

ACT I
Scene 3
Silence cloaks the room, while people peacefully sit eating their meals. Mathew is walking around the room clearing tables.

CLARENCE walks in wearing something casual making his way to a table taking a seat.

Mathew walks pass Clarence doing a double take, turning around walking back to him.

MATHEW
Excuse me?

Clarence looks at him.

CLARENCE
How may I help you?

MATHEW
Are you sure you're in the right place?

CLARENCE
What do you mean?

MATHEW
I'm sorry, let me rephrase. You do know, you're not the right, how shall I say...the right type to dine in this establishment?

Clarence looks around the room confused.

Ethnicity by Bernard Mersier
CLARENCE
What's the right type?

MATHEW
Let's stop with the games.

CLARENCE
I never knew it was a game. I truthfully need to know, what's the right type?

Mathew laughs.

MATHEW
I can't believe you're about to have this conversation with me, Bro.

Clarence laughs.

CLARENCE
Bro? Are you a racist?

MATHEW
I'm far from racist, Bro.

CLARENCE
Can you please stop calling me, Bro?

MATHEW
Why would I do that? Isn't that what you and your people from the ghetto call each other?

CLARENCE
The ghetto? You have no idea who I am, do you?

MATHEW
You're the average black man from the ghetto, who stumbled into the wrong place.

CLARENCE
Your ignorance is starting to annoy me, so do me a favor. Send someone to take my order.
MATHEW
We don't sell fries, hamburgers and wing dings here. Why don't you pick something from the menu...if you can read the menu?

Clarence smiles cracking his knuckles, sliding his chair back standing up.

CLARENCE
Let me tell you something.

Mathew jumps back in a defensive stance.

MATHEW
Get back! I have the right to defend myself! I'm sorry it had to come to this because you have an issue with our rules! There's nothing I can do about that or my skin color!

Everyone looks at them confused.

Clarence continues smiling, reaching in his pocket.

CLARENCE
All I have to say is you’re...

Mathew grabs a glass from off the table, hitting Clarence upside the head.

MATHEW
He's got a weapon!

The MANAGER runs on stage.

Clarence holds his head laughing.

MANAGER
What's going on?

MATHEW
He was about to attack me, sir. I had to defend myself.

MANAGER
What are you talking about? Do you know who this man is?

Mathew is confused, wondering why the Manager is more concerned with Clarence instead of what he said.

Ethnicity by Bernard Mersier
MATHEW
He's a man who was about to attack me, sir.

CLARENCE
I was trying to tell you.

Clarence drops his wallet on the table showing his badge.

MATHEW
You're---

MANAGER
This is our county sheriff.

MATHEW
That means---

CLARENCE
Don't even think about running, because you're under arrest.

Clarence pulls his handcuffs out, stepping over to Mathew placing him under arrest.

MANAGER
I'm really sorry about this.

CLARENCE
Not a problem. I'll just take my friend here down to the station, and see if he can follow our rules.

MATHEW
(Scared)
I can't go to jail.

CLARENCE
Be lucky you're not getting charged with assaulting an officer.

Clarence walks Mathew off stage.

END OF THE SCENE
ACT I

Scene 4

MARIA is sitting at her vanity staring in the mirror doing her hair. She’s wearing something casual, but seductive.

MICHELLE walks in wearing something casual.

MICHELLE
You're beautiful.

MARIA
Thank you. Kyle is taking me out for dinner and a movie.

MICHELLE
Kyle? Is that the white boy?

MARIA
Yes.

MICHELLE
Is he rich?

MARIA
No.

MICHELLE
He's not rich? What do you see in him?

MARIA
What makes you ask?

MICHELLE
He looks alright, but I wouldn't look twice. I know you wouldn't know how he is in bed, because you wouldn't sleep with him.

MARIA
Why?
MICHELLE
White boys compared to black men, size does matter. I figure why have a snack when you can have the full meal?

Maria breaks out laughing.

MARIA
With that said, let me get going. I'm already running late.

She stands up walking to the door.

MICHELLE
Maria, wait.

She stops turning around.

MICHELLE
Are you sure you'll be okay?

MARIA
We've been out plenty of times, and nothing's happened.

MICHELLE
I'm just making sure. You're my only child, and my only reason to live.

MARIA
If something was going to happen, it would happen if I was with a black or white man. I love you, and I'll see you later.

Maria walks off stage.

MICHELLE
…If you were dating a black man, I would feel more secure about what you said.

END OF THE SCENE

Act I

Scene 5

Mathew has his hands on the bars looking at Clarence smiling at him.

BRAD is standing against the wall staring at Mathew.

Ethnicity by Bernard Mersier
CLARENCE
That smart mouth of yours stopped running.

MATHEW
Soon as I'm released, I'm suing.

CLARENCE
Okay.

Clarence walks off stage.
Mathew sighs walking over to the wall.
Brad walks over to him.

BRAD
What you in for?

MATHEW
The charge is assault with a weapon, but he said he won’t file the report if I stay here for the night.

BRAD
Is that right? You assaulted the guy who brought you in?

MATHEW
Yup.

BRAD
Why did you assault him?

MATHEW
I was explaining he was in the wrong establishment, but he wouldn't listen.

BRAD
He was in the wrong establishment? What made him wrong?

MATHEW
Name me a black person with sophistication. If you can, I was wrong for attempting to explain he was in the wrong establishment.

Ethnicity by Bernard Mersier
BRAD
You have a thing against black people?

MATHEW
Of course I do. Look at the way they dress, talk and act. How can you begin to think they're civilized people?

Brad laughs, patting Mathew on the shoulder as if he’s proud of what he said.

MATHEW
I'm glad you understand. We need more...

Brad grabs him by the collar, pressing him up against the wall.

BRAD
No, I don’t understand. I happen to like black people.

MATHEW
You what?

BRAD
You heard what I said. Not only do I like black people. My baby mama is black.

MATHEW
Baby mama? How---

BRAD
She’s a beautiful black woman with her head on her shoulders, and has the heart to love a person like me. That’s how I can be with her.

MATHEW
You said baby mama? I don't understand.

BRAD
And you’ll never understand, white boy who thinks he's better than everybody. But I'll give you something you can understand.

MATHEW
What?
CLARENCE
(Off stage)
Lights out in three minutes!

BRAD
When these lights go off, you'll learn to respect not just black people, but people in general.

MATHEW
There's no need---

BRAD
There's a need for this. You need to learn people are no different from the next.

MATHEW
But...you're white.

BRAD
I'm me as an individual. The color of a person doesn't make them.

The lights go out, and all you can hear is punches and Mathew screaming.

END OF THE SCENE

ACT I
Scene 6
Kyle and Maria are holding hands in the store.

M aria
Told you the movie would be good.

Kyle
About time you picked a movie worth sitting through.

She gives him a kiss on the cheek.

M aria
Don't act like that. Just say your baby has good taste.

Kyle
What special benefits come with it?
MARIA
You'll be lucky if you get anything.

KYLE
I’m already lucky. I have the most beautiful woman in the world by my side.

They engage in a passionate kiss.

KYLE
Let me grab a few things from the back.

MARIA
I'll pick a drink since my baby did something I wanted to do.

KYLE
Make sure it's something to get you more in the mood.

MARIA
Go get what you're about to get.

Kyle walks off stage.
Maria stands at the counter looking over the drinks.
WILL staggers on stage wearing a wife beater and jeans, dropping his cigarette to the floor stepping on it.
He walks over to Maria stopping behind her staring.

WILL
What's going on beautiful?

She turns her head looking at him sneering.

MARIA
Nothing's going on.

WILL
It's gotta be something going on. Scrumptious women like you don’t stand around alone without something going on.

MARIA
(Sighs)
If there was something going on, it would have nothing to do with you.

Ethnicity by Bernard Mersier
WILL
Playing hard to get? I like that, baby.

MARIA
Why are you calling me baby? People actually have names.

WILL
I'm calling you baby, because that's all I'll be saying while I'm putting this pipe on you, girl.

He tries to wrap his arms around her waist, and she turns around shoving him.

MARIA
What's wrong with you?! You don't know me, putting your hands on me!

WILL
I'm trying to…

Kyle comes back holding some chips and pops, pausing when he sees Will bothering his woman.

KYLE
Who is this?

MARIA
I have no idea.

WILL
Who is this?

MARIA
My man!

Kyle places his items down, moving Maria to the side getting in Will's face.

KYLE
What's the problem?

WILL
Calm your nerves, white boy.
KYLE
Call me what you want. But you’re not about to bother my woman.

WILL
This is your woman? You don’t realize you’re getting used? This fine sister doesn’t love you.

MARIA
Excuse me?!

KYLE
Baby, I got this. This fine sister has been my woman for the past five years.

WILL
White boy, you so dumb. Sisters only talk to your kind for money.

KYLE
Well---

MARIA
Hold up! Why should I talk to a no good, no job black man like you?! Men like you made me try a white man in the first place! Thinking you’re this and that, when you’re only worth one night, if you do that right!

WILL
Sister, I understand. You don’t wanna blow what you got going on. Believe you me, I understand completely.

MARIA
Boy, if you don’t get---

KYLE
Don’t worry about it. Let’s just go.

Kyle and Maria start walking off.

WILL
(Mocking)
Don’t worry about it. Let’s just go.

Kyle turns around walking to Will shoving him to the floor.
KYLE
Leave well enough alone! You're not getting my girl! You're not doing anything with your life! You don't want what you're looking for!

Kyle and Maria walk out the store.
Will is on the floor dazed for a few seconds, before standing up pulling a knife out making his way out the store behind them.

KYLE
I can't believe people these days.

MARIA
Don't even think about it. Let's just go get a room and relax.

KYLE
You're right. I shouldn't let---

WILL
I guess you're tough now, white boy?!

Kyle and Maria stop walking, but don't turn around.

KYLE
Don't you have a corner to sit on and drink a forty ounce?!

WILL
That's real funny.

Will runs at Kyle with the knife forward.
Maria turns around jumping in front of Kyle getting pierced, releasing a loud scream.
Will slowly pulls the knife out.
Kyle catches her falling back holding her bleeding stomach, falling to the floor with Maria in his arms.
Will stands lost holding the bloody knife.

KYLE
Baby, it'll be okay. It'll be okay baby, just lay here in my arms. Help! Somebody help us!

Will runs off stage dropping the knife.

Ethnicity by Bernard Mersier
MARIAN
I'm okay. I just...I just need---

KYLE
(Sobbing)
I'm right here. I won't leave you.

MARIAN
I know you won't leave me. You love me.

KYLE
I'll always love you. There's no one for me, but you.

MARIAN
Kiss me.

He gives her a kiss.
When he pulls back, her soul has moved on.

KYLE
No!

END OF THE SCENE

Act I
Scene 7

Timothy is sitting on the bed watching rap videos, wearing a wife beater and shorts.
Mathew walks in the room bruised up with a limp, wearing something casual.
Timothy turns the television off.

TIMOTHEY
What happened to you?

MATTHEW
Don't worry about it. What were you in here doing?

TIMOTHEY
Nothing.

Ethnicity by Bernard Mersier
Mathew takes a seat next to him on the bed.

MATHEW
Watching those rap videos again?

TIMOTHY
Don't get mad.

MATHEW
I'm not about to get mad.

TIMOTHY
Why not?

MATHEW
I'm actually glad you're watching them.

TIMOTHY
You told me not to listen to rap music.

MATHEW
I know what I told you. But yesterday after my experience, I realized something.

TIMOTHY
What's that?

MATHEW
There's no difference in race. You never judge a book by the cover because it makes you stupid.

TIMOTHY
So...black people are cool?

MATHEW
Everybody is cool, as long as they don't think they're better than anyone else.

TIMOTHY
How cool is that?

Mathew laughs.
MATHEW

Turn the television on.

The two sit listening to music, both imitating what they see.  

END OF THE SCENE

Act I

Scene 8

Kyle is sitting at his desk wearing the blood stained clothes staring at pictures of him and Maria.

Elizabeth comes in.

He turns his head looking at her sighing disgusted.

KYLE  
(Sobbing)

I'm sure you're happy.

ELIZABETH

Why would you say that?

KYLE

The girl you hate so much is gone. You can go back to calling me your son.

She walks over to him trying to touch him, and he moves away.

KYLE (CONT’D)

Don't touch me.

ELIZABETH

I understand how you feel.

KYLE

You have no idea how I feel. You didn't like her, and basically disowned me as a son because I was in love. All because of what happened to auntie.

ELIZABETH

How do---
KYLE
Dad told me.

ELIZABETH
It's more than that. My issue comes from---

KYLE
You have no legitimate reason why you don’t like black people. You know what? People like you would make me hate white people, because of the ignorance that comes from your mouth. Unlike you, I'm not closed-minded blaming an entire race because of one person's actions.

ELIZABETH
Kyle...

Turning his back to her, he picks up a picture staring at it.

KYLE
Leave. There’s nothing else for us to discuss until you realize the way you think is ignorant.

It dawns on her the hate she has for no reason destroyed the relationship with her son. Lowering her head, she walks out the room.

Kyle continues looking at the photos.

Placing the picture down, he pulls out a pocket knife opening it, placing it on his heart.

KYLE (CONT'D)
There's no need to live without you. Love no longer remains in my heart, because you're gone. The only person who made me happy was you. I love you, Maria. I'll be with you soon.

He shoves the knife in his heart releasing a soft moan, falling on the desk dead.

END OF THE SCENE
THE END

Ethnicity by Bernard Mersier