

~~What we have now are moderate Republicans posing as Democrats and right-wing extremists. They...~~

START



~~Nora stops talking.~~ Tina has been texting on her phone.

TINA

Girl, give me one second.

There is an awkward silence on Nora's end, but not on Tina's. Tina starts laughing.

TINA

Oh, shit! Your homegirl is in the news again.

NORA

What?

TINA

Listen to this: This is what Claire Danes said to Lena Dunham in an interview she was doing with her.

NORA

Oh, please don't...

TINA

"Your depiction of women is unnervingly relatable. It's so funny how you've worked in things like the way that we're always asking everyone if they're mad at us, and the fact that women cuddle with each other and we pee with each other. I also like the way you address the possible, if not inevitable, comparisons to *Sex and the City*."

NORA

Are you being serious right now?

TINA

This is what Sarah Jessica Parker said, "It's a very different show, but the similarities is in the intimacy of the conversations among women."

NORA

Oh, Jesus!

TINA

(laughing)

“I also think Dunham came along understanding her voice and with support of a producing partner [Judd Apatow] experienced enough to say she is capable of this, she needs to be in charge of the story as it’s her voice.”

NORA

That woman needs to stop. And I mean stop everything.

TINA

Why do you take her so seriously?

NORA

Because she represents everything that is deplorable about our generation. Everything she does is ideological bullshit!

TINA

Ideology? Girl, what ideology?

NORA

Look at her show! She has nothing relevant to say and she’s revered for it! I mean, are there consequences to her idiotic misadventures or does her mindless self-indulgence still function even though she’s mocking herself? That’s what I’m saying! Even if she is making fun of herself, her decisions still work out in the end. Even if you hate all of those characters and what they do, it still works out for them. That’s endorsement. That is ideology at its core.

TINA

I see what you’re saying. Marx thought that was the most simplistic definition of ideology: “They do not know it, but they are doing it.” But we’re in another state of social and ideological consciousness. Now people do it, know it’s bad for them, and do it anyway.

NORA

Oh, sure. I’m giving her the benefit of the doubt that she’s just dumb. I’m sure she’s unaware of the impact and danger her idiocy is having on cultural dialogue.

TINA

I don’t think she’s as dumb as you think. I don’t think she is saying, this is how I am and this is how people should behave. It’s mockery!

NORA

Fine. Let's just say it is for argument's sake. A lot of people in this country are too dumb to get that kind of dramatic irony. And her decision to write about these kind of characters is an ideological one. You know that! She's saying that these type of people deserve to have their voices amplified over others, which would be fine if it weren't already the dominant narrative. If she didn't feel that way, she wouldn't write them. That's reactionary! And her acting ability is the nail in the coffin.

TINA

Shit...

NORA

No, her acting is so bad it's fucking gratuitous. I am literally offended by how bad of an actress she is. I take it personally. I've seen better acting coming out of Kristen Stewart's ass.

TINA

You are not comparing Lena Dunham to Twilight!

NORA

No! It's worse! Because Twilight doesn't pretend to be some form of high level art. *Girls* has that pretense. And, yes, her acting is THAT bad! There are so many remarkably talented actors in New York City. Literally thousands of them! Many of them spend the greater part of their lives devoted to the craft of acting. They train by taking acting classes, voice classes, singing classes, dance classes, movement classes, they read books on acting, on philosophy, on theory, they study the history of their craft, they study the history of art, and most of them work shit jobs all so they can possibly have that opportunity to go to one important audition, which may or may not benefit them in some kind of way. They struggle for years to try to get on a television show so they can possibly live off the thing they decided to dedicate their lives to. That's a hard life. And when someone like Lena Dunham comes along and starts to hire half-ass amateur actors like herself or other talentless dumbasses who possess absolutely no acting capabilities and then deny that nepotism had anything to do with it, it is more than insulting to those actors who have talent. It's offensive.

TINA

Well, all those girls are somebody's daughter, right?

NORA

Mhmm. Dunham is the daughter of famous, wealthy artists. Allison Williams is Brian Williams' daughter and she had the audacity to say nepotism had nothing to do with her being cast on the show, even though Brian Williams is friends with Judd Apatow. That was literally her first audition.

TINA

And Zosia Mamet is David Mamet's daughter. And, shit, apparently Dunham didn't even know who David Mamet was when she auditioned.

NORA

She didn't know who David Mamet was? Are you...perfect! That's just fuckin' perfect. But I'll bet Apatow did.

TINA

Mhmm.

NORA

And they all have the audacity to say that nepotism was not a factor in their success! Get the fuck out of here!

TINA

Nepotism exists in every industry. Girl, why you getting all worked up? You've never acted a day in your life.

NORA

I can imagine their plight. Call it aggressive empathy.

They both laugh.

NORA (CONT'D)

I'm telling you that's how good it is to be white.

TINA

What do you mean?

NORA

Girl, name me one black equivalent to Lena Dunham. Name me one black woman who acts badly, writes like she's in high school, directs like Ed Wood, and produces? Name me one!

TINA

Shit, I was about to say Tyler Perry.

NORA

Shit...

TINA

Oh, no, no, no. I'm with you on that one. Fuck THAT dumb motherfucker! Seriously! I'm fuckin' sick of all that stereotypical, mammy, minstrel show bullshit! All that god damn subservient, backwards Christian dogma! I told you he was gonna be a problem in college, didn't I?

NORA

Mhmm.

TINA

I'm tellin' you, we should have killed his ass years ago!

NORA

Yeah, but he didn't have rich, wealthy parents to help him out. I'll give him that.

TINA

No! Fuck that excuse! How many Madea movies are there now? How many times has he deliberately exploited racist, minstrel like imagery? Remember African-American history with Professor Wilson? Which minstrel show performers were paid the most money?

NORA

The ones who wore dresses.

TINA

Shit! Tyler Perry perpetuates all that stupid shit in a modern context! Fuck him! See, now that's the motherfucker I want to kill. Lena Dunham is the flavor of the week. She won't matter in a couple of years.

NORA

Let's hope. But, seriously, is that how far being white can take you? Can you really be just kind of dumb and untalented, yet still be more successful than so many other people? Is it that fucking deep?

TINA

It's like what Malcolm once said, "White people are so obsessed with their own importance that they're willing to pay liberally, even dearly, for the impression of being catered to and entertained."

NORA

Shit, amen to that.

TINA

Now that's what bothered me about the show.

NORA

What?

TINA

It takes place in New York and there were no black people. It's basically about four rich white girls who haven't seemed to run into any people of color in New York City. Seriously? What is this? *Friends*?

NORA

It's not much different from her movie *Tiny Furniture*. Did you see it?

TINA

Girl, I couldn't get through that.

NORA

Well, then, let me tell you about this dumbass movie. The film is about a young white girl coming home from college and she feels depressed about it. That's it! That's the movie! What the...who the fuck likes this shit?

TINA

She speaks for a lot of people

NORA

She don't speak for me. Or probably any black people.

TINA

She doesn't claim to speak for black people!

NORA

The bitch said she was the voice of a generation! If she meant the white part, she should have said so!

TINA

Point taken.

They laugh.

TINA (CONT'D)

Did any black people make it on the second season?

NORA

Well, in order to be a good petty bourgeois liberal she had to take note of the criticism. Oh, yeah. Especially after Lesley Arfin, a writer Lena Dunham hired for the show, in response to the critics, said on Twitter, "What really bothered me about *Precious* was there was no representation of ME!"

TINA

Wait a minute. She said, what? That motherfucker said WHAT?

NORA

That's what the fuck she tweeted!

TINA

Right. Because a poor fat black girl who is sexually abused by her father and lives in poverty is the same as four rich dumbass white girls who can't get over themselves.

NORA

Well, she tweeted an apology. She said, "Without thinking, I put gender politics above race and class. That was careless. The last thing I want is girls vs. girls." Even though nothing she said in the original tweet had anything to do with gender politics. But then like a punk she deleted her original response to the criticism and then deleted the apology. These are the kind of writers working on that show.

TINA

Sounds about right.

NORA

But for the second season Lena Dunham got herself a black boyfriend.

TINA

Huh.

NORA

A black Republican.

TINA

No, she didn't.

NORA

Girl, you think I'm lying?

TINA

What the fuck? You could potentially walk around New York all day and never see a white Republican.

NORA

Right? It's so forced it's insulting. He's barely on screen throughout a couple of episodes. He's on for just enough time to absolutely worship her, fuck her, say some shit about staying together, and then she breaks up with him because she says their political views are too different, even though they never really discuss them. All she used this black character for was to fuck him, have him praise her, condescends to him, and, in return, she offers him a mercy fuck. Let's be honest: a black dildo would have sufficed.

TINA

Jesus...

NORA (CONT'D)

But she got one black guy on the show who wasn't an extra!

Nora begins to applaud.

NORA (CONT'D)

Race problem solved! This woman would honestly rather watch herself take a piss on screen than give people of color something meaningful or intelligent to say.

TINA

Girl, that shit is gross.

NORA

I don't understand her obsession with making her audience watch her take a piss! Who the fuck needs to see that? What the fuck does that have to do with anything?

TINA

Yeah. Now that I think about it every time I saw the show she was always getting naked.

NORA

Almost every fucking episode!

TINA

It was like she was trying to make a bold statement because she's a few pounds overweight.

NORA

It might be a bold statement if 56% of her audience members weren't men. According to Vulture, the show's largest single audience or 22% of the audience is white men over fifty. Hm. I wonder why.

TINA

This is what Professor Hinkson talked about. Being naked on screen is not a feminist declaration. It hasn't been for a long time. If the only thing she can offer us is her body as oppose to complex thought or intellectual inquiry, then she's not doing the movement any favors.

NORA

Having every actress on your show get naked and perform soft-core porn acts doesn't help female empowerment. It's not feminism. Find. Another. Word.

TINA

She really thinks her show is helping international feminism?

NORA

Listen to her on NPR. She's a dumb motherfucker! And do you want to know the peak of her irresponsibility? It's when she had an abortion party on her show.

TINA

A what?

NORA

An abortion party.

TINA

What does that even mean?

NORA

One of her friends thinks she might be pregnant and decides to have an abortion. Fine. But then Lena Dunham and her other dumbass white friends show up at the clinic and start making light of the whole situation. And I don't mean light in a "we're trying to comfort our friend through something that could be potentially really traumatic for her" kind of way. No. I mean light in the sense that they're trying to turn abortion into a joke. Does she know that doctors have been murdered over this issue?

TINA

That's what I'm talking about! How do you not see this as a critique?!?! I'm not saying it's good, but the oblivious narcissism is so fucking ridiculous that it could reach a level of social commentary.

NORA

Because depiction isn't criticism. Just because you acknowledge you're a self-indulgent, self-obsessed, narcissistic, piece of spoiled shit doesn't make you not a self-indulgent, self-obsessed, narcissistic piece of spoiled shit.

TINA

True.

NORA

If the show were criticism there would actually be some critique in it. Instead she just acknowledges her stupid shit and we're supposed to interpret it as growth. No. Fuck her! It's like when white people acknowledge white privilege. I'll be more impressed when you push back against it. God I hate that dumb motherfucker!

Nora. TINA

What? NORA

You actin' mad black right now. TINA

There is a short pause. They both laugh.

I curse like a motherfucker after a few glasses. NORA

Thank you for picking up the wine. I thought about picking up a bottle today. I felt bad. TINA

What? About yesterday? NORA

That's not how I wanted things to go down. Believe me, I tried talking to Lynn. She's not budging. TINA

I understand. NORA

Really? TINA

I understand she's been waiting to do this for a long time. NORA

That's not fair. TINA

It's not? NORA

Rent is a legit concern. TINA

NORA

Girl, don't even give me that line. You know this ain't about rent. Lynn has always had something personal against me. You damn near had to beg her to let me move in.

TINA

That was a long time ago. Lynn loves you!

NORA

Girl, she loves you. Me? She can deal without.

TINA

Look, Nora, I'll talk to her, but I don't think she'll change her mind.

NORA

Right.

TINA

At least your name isn't on the lease. You don't have to deal with landlords and paper work and going to...

NORA

Yeah. Being homeless is so much better.

TINA

Well, you're not going to be homeless. Have you talked to your Dad yet?

NORA

I haven't told him.

TINA

Nora. You have to tell him.

NORA

I will. I just wanted to tell him in person. I didn't want to do it over the phone or through an e-mail. He's coming by tomorrow.

TINA

Oh!

NORA

It'll be easier to convince him if he's here.

TINA

You think he would say no?

NORA

No. I don't know.

TINA

Nora, there's no shame in asking for his help.

NORA

I don't want to have to ask for his help. I don't want to have to rely on him or anybody for anything. It's bad enough that I have to rely on the state in order to eat. Shit. Imagine that. I have two degrees and I'm on fuckin' food stamps. I barely got by every month when I had a job. Plus, I got all my loans from school. God, I don't know what the hell I'm gonna do about that.

TINA

Girl, you and me both.

NORA

I'm over \$100,000 in debt and I don't have a job or a place to live. What am I supposed to do?

Lynn enters from the front door. She looks exhausted.

TINA

Oh! Hey! You're home early.

LYNN

~~We wrapped early. They're picking up again next week.~~

~~Lynn walks over to Tina and they kiss.~~

TINA

~~Do you want some wine or something to eat?~~

LYNN

~~No, thanks. I'm super tired. I just wanna take a shower and go to bed.~~

TINA

~~Okay. We were just talking about Lena Dunham.~~

LYNN

~~Oh, God. Again?~~

TINA

~~Nora's obsessed.~~

END

