

NICKI ESQ - EPISODE 4

"THE SECOND TIME AROUND"

Created by

Derrick Thompson

Teleplay by

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Nicki enters dressed for work. Derrick is still asleep on the sofa. His face is covered.

NICKI

Rise and shine Uncle D!

From under the sheets Derrick coughs. Nicki removes the sheet from Derrick's face and is startled. Derrick coughs again.

NICKI (CONT'D)

Good lord you look like death warmed over.

DERRICK

You're too kind.

Derrick coughs and Nicki withdraws.

NICKI

Oh you can't bring all those germs into the office.

(beat)

Jasmine! Time for school, let's go.

Jasmine enters wearing pajamas on the top and her school uniform on the bottom. She sneezes and sneeze again.

NICKI (CONT'D)

Baby are you ok? Come here.

Nicki put her head on Jasmine's forehead.

NICKI (CONT'D)

You feel warm.

DERRICK

Take my temperature.

NICKI

Uhhh I see you're sick already.

JASMINE

Uncle D you look terrible.

NICKI

Jasmine go get back in bed. All of sudden its General Hospital in here. Uncle D I gotta get to the office. Make sure Jasmin is ok. There's plenty of soup and juice in the kitchen.

DERRICK

But how will you manage without me?

Derrick coughs.

NICKI

Oh let me hurry up and get outta here.
This is germ central station.

2

INT. NICKI'S OFFICE - MORNING

2

Nicki is engrossed with legal information on her computer. Gladys arrives on her scooter unexpectedly.

GLADYS

Help has arrived.

NICKI

Why are you here?

GLADYS

Your assistant is out right?

NICKI

Yeah.

GLADYS

There's a ton of work to be done, right?

NICKI

Yeah.

GLADYS

You clearly missed your last hair appointment, right?

Nicki gives her a blank stare.

GLADYS (CONT'D)

Mr. Layton said you need help with the Curly Que case.

NICKI

I definitely do. Oh you can start by printing out the case file and separate all the interrogations. Let me show...

GLADYS

(interrupts)

I've worked at that desk before remember?

NICKI

Unfortunately I do. I'm meeting The Curly Q attorneys after lunch. So I need those documents "ASAP".

GLADYS

Don't start that ASAP stuff with me.

NICKI

Well its just that when you move time literally stands still.

Gladys starts her scooter.

GLADYS

Well let's see if HR can find you...

NICKI

(interrupts)

No no Gladys, I really need your help.

GLADYS

Do me a favor, get in front of this scooter. I wanna see something.

Nicki obliges and Gladys starts the scooter almost hitting Nicki.

3

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

3

Tanya in a neon yellow head scarf and carrying a cappuccino searches for a place to sit. As she takes her seat, she notices a script on the next table.

TANYA

Ooooh you got an audition?

Kyle a young attractive white male ignores the question.

TANYA (CONT'D)

I said you got an audition today.

(pause)

I see the script.

KYLE

Oh no the audition was last month. I got the part. We're shooting tomorrow.

TANYA

(defeated)

Oh.

(beat)

(MORE)

TANYA (CONT'D)

Don't ya just hate this actor life. It's so feast or famine.

KYLE

Well it's been all feast for me.

Kyle returns to his script.

TANYA

Oh

(beat)

Me too actually. When it rains it pours. I booked 3 national spots last month so no complaints here. No sir.

KYLE

I'm sorry what?

Dara a young pretty female approaches Kyle.

DARA

Sorry I'm late. I've had the morning from hell. There was a big leak in the apartment above me. My car stalled 3 blocks from my place and I had to call my brother. And then I...

Kyle interrupts

KYLE

What about the audition? Did you get it?

TANYA

Awww it's ok there'll be other parts.

DARA

(to Tanya)

Excuse me.

DARA (CONT'D)

(to Kyle)

Of course I got the part.

KYLE

Yessss!! Let's get outta here.

They get up from the table.

DARA

(whispers)

Who was that?

KYLE
 (whispers)
 Some crazy lady.

DARA
 (whispers)
 What's with the head scarf?!?!

4

INT. LIVING ROOM - MORNING

4

Derrick is seated on the sofa, Jasmine enters. Derrick sneezes.

DERRICK
 You sure you sick? I know you'd do anything to get outta school.

JASMINE
 You sure you sick, because I know working for my mama ain't no walk in the park.

Derrick coughs. Jasmine clicks on the TV and a "Bert and Ernie Sesame Street" scene appears.

JASMINE (CONT'D)
 Oooh Sesame Street.

DERRICK
 These 2 been living with each other for 100 years. They should just come out already.

JASMINE
 Come out where?

DERRICK
 I mean I think they might be more than just "friends".

Jasmine's eyes grow wide.

JASMINE
 Wait you mean Bert and Ernie are...

DERRICK
 Gay.

JASMINE
 I need a drink. Give me some apple juice please.

DERRICK
 Yes ma'am. You ok? Are you surprised?

JASMINE

Well I'm only 7 but if they been living
in that little bedroom since you were
young, I guess they might be gay.

5 INT. RECEPTION AREA

5

Tanya is seated along side several other female
actresses.

The casting director appears at the door.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Tanya Lockhart.

TANYA

Ooh that's me.

Tanya adjusts the colorful scarf on her head. She walks
through the door.

5B INT. CASTING OFFICE

5B

CASTING DIRECTOR

That's a beautiful head scarf Ms.
Lockhart.

TANYA

Thank you. It's from...

CASTING DIRECTOR

(interrupts)

Too bad this isn't a scarf commercial.
David can you film her walking. Ms.
Lockhart would you walk towards the wall.
(pause)

Now walk back please.

David, a young assistant is filming her.

CASTING DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

Got that? Ms. Lockhart read the
highlighted lines please.

He hands her a sheet. Tanya clears her throat.

TANYA

Do you use your legs as much as I do? Did
you know the average person take 2,184,00
steps in a year?

CASTING DIRECTOR

Thank you Ms. Earhart.

TANYA

Lockhart.

CASTING DIRECTOR

Ms. Lockhart how long have you been acting?

TANYA

About 5 years, I started back in...

CASTING DIRECTOR

(interrupts)

Interesting, David get the next actress.

TANYA

...college.

6

INT. GLADYS'S DESK AREA - AFTERNOON

6

Gladys is having lunch at her desk while reading the Dallas Morning News.

Nicki enters carrying a folder.

NICKI

Yummy, is that a salad?

GLADYS

No, it's a leafy green pork chop.

Nicki starts to head for her office then stops.

GLADYS (CONT'D)

(annoyed)

I'm having lunch Ms. Howell.

NICKI

I can see that.

(beat)

And by the looks of it I'd say last time you ate was sometime early last month.

GLADYS

Ms. Howell, how can I help you?

NICKI

Well I think you may have missed one of the plaintiffs interrogation documents and I need it for my meeting.

GLADYS
I gave you all 19 plaintiff statements.

NICKI
20.

Gladys turns to the computer.

GLADYS
Ms. Howell I personally looked over each
and every one of the "19" plaintiffs
statements and I can assure you that I...

She suddenly freezes.

NICKI
You were saying something.

GLADYS
Marie Sanford, editor-in-chief of ROOT
magazine. Hmmmmph how did I miss this one?

NICKI
Maybe it was simply your lack of food.

Gladys takes a big bite of her salad.

7 INT. LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

7

Derrick and Jasmine are resting comfortably on the sofa.

JASMINE
Uncle D when did you first know you were
gay?

DERRICK
I think I always knew but I didn't tell
anyone for a long time.

JASMINE
Why?

DERRICK
Because I was afraid people would judge
me and make fun of me. The world is a lot
different now than it was when I was
growing up.

Jasmine uses the remote to flip the TV and stumbles upon
RuPaul's Drag Race (Ru is out of drag).

The doorbell rings.

JASMINE

What's this?

DERRICK

Looks like RuPauls Drag race.

Derrick goes to the door.

TANYA

I've come to check on the sick and shut in.

DERRICK

Nice head wrap, you're a fortune teller now?

TANYA

Well you know I'm not about to let a little Curly Q get in the way of my audition game.

DERRICK

Wait, you wore that to an audition?

JASMINE

Did you get the part?

Jasmine looks at Derrick and they both laugh at the ridiculousness of the question.

TANYA

Anyway....Ooh RuPaul's Drag Race!!! My favorite show!!!

DERRICK

We're getting a little education in all things gay.

TANYA

Well this show is a great teaching tool.

JASMINE

So RuPaul is gay?

DERRICK

Yes.

JASMINE

And the boys dressing up like girls are gay?

DERRICK

Yes.

JASMINE

I'm so confused.

TANYA

Girl tell me about it . But Jas, everyman who dresses as a woman is not necessarily gay.

DERRICK

Martin Lawrence did it , Jamie Foxx did it, even flip Wilson did back in the day.

JASMINE

Who?

DERRICK

Never-mind.

JASMINE

Uncle D, do you like to wear dresses?

TANYA

Yes uncle D, do ya?

Tanya chuckles.

DERRICK

No ma'am, dresses aren't for me. But I do have a couple friends who love a great gown every now and then.

JASMINE

It's gonna take me a little time to figure this whole gay thing out.

DERRICK

Sweetie you got plenty of time.

8 EXT. CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

8

Jessica walks by the glass enclosed conference room, she suddenly notices Fabian and quickly stops to inspect. Fabian, looking at his cell, feels her eyes. He looks up and notices Jessica, who scurries away.

Once out of sight, Jessica takes two steps backwards to sneak a parting glance of Fabian. She quickly exits.

9 INT. MR. LAYTON'S OFFICE - 2 MINUTES LATER

9

Mr. Layton is seated behind his desk. Nicki sits in front.

MR LAYTON

So Ms. Howell we're thinking a settlement claim in the 8 to 10 mil range?

NICKI

I was thinking 10.

MR LAYTON

And I was thinking I like the way you are thinking.

NICKI

I just hate the fact that I'm going up against a former law classmate slash lover.

Jessica enters.

JESSICA

Knock knock. Darling is that the Curly Q attorney in the conference room?

NICKI

Fabian Boyd.

JESSICA

He's quite dashing.

NICKI

Yes I've experienced his "dashing ness".

MR LAYTON

Apparently Ms. Howell and Mr. Boyd have a history.

JESSICA

Oh this could be epic. It reminds me of Adam's Rib.

NICKI

Adam's what?

JESSICA

It's a simply delightful movie from 1949. You see two lawyers Spencer Tracey and Katherine Hepburn are madly in love with one another, when they end up on opposite sides of a courtroom case. Katherine Hepburn has to defend...

MR LAYTON

(interrupts)

Ms. Bouchard!!! Exactly how long will this movie classic memory last?

JESSICA

Well forgive me. But darling there's nothing wrong with trying to get a little something extra in this settlement for yourself. You know what I mean.

NICKI

Can you believe he just disappeared into thin air. Not even a "goodbye". Oh he's gonna pay.

MR LAYTON

So we're at 19 plaintiffs?

NICKI

Actually 20. We added one more last night.

MR LAYTON

Yes!!! Even numbers are lucky.

NICKI

Right.

Nicki rolls her eyes. She stands.

NICKI (CONT'D)

Well off to battle I go.

Jessica approaches Nicki.

JESSICA

Katherine remember your Spencer Tracey awaits.

NICKI

Who?

MR LAYTON

Ms. Bouchard !!!

JESSICA

Sorry.

Nicki exits.

MR LAYTON

You know that really is a great movie.

Nicki is walking towards the conference room, papers in tow.

NICKI
Focus Nicki!!

We hear a voice over of Nicki's thoughts.

NICKI (V.O.)
Gurl is it me or has he gotten finer with
age. Like a nice bottle of merlot
emmmmmmm.

NICKI
(to herself)
I said focus.

Her thoughts pop up again.

NICKI (V.O.)
Girl trust me I'm focused alright. I'm
focused right on those lips.

NICKI
(to herself)
Ok you are of no help today.

And again.

NICKI (V.O.)
Listen it's been awhile, know what I mean

11 INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

11

In the see-through glass enclosed conference room, Nicki
straightens her papers as Fabian looks on from the other
side of the table.

NICKI
I can't believe you did what you did.

FABIAN
Excuse me?

NICKI
I mean, shall we get started?

FABIAN
I bill by the hour so take your time.
(beat)
You forgot a page.

Fabian points to a single sheet Nicki has unknowingly
missed. Nicki grabs the sheet.

NICKI
(annoyed)
So counsel Boyd.

NICKI'S FLASHBACK:

11A INT. LAW SCHOOL LIBRARY - 5 YEARS AGO 11A

Nicki is seated at a table studying diligently. Fabian is seated at a table near by. He stares at Nicki, then nervously makes his way over.

FABIAN
Hey you're in professor Johnson's
business associations class.

Nicki pretends not to hear him.

FABIAN (CONT'D)
Professor Johnson right?

NICKI
Oh yes. Associations and cooperations.
He's tough huh?

FABIAN
Boy is he. You studying for the big exam?

NICKI
Pretending to study.

She chuckles.

FABIAN
I'm Fabian by the way.

Fabian extends his hand.

NICKI
Nicki.

FABIAN
I recognize the back of your head.

Nicki caresses the back of her head.

NICKI
Does it look ok? Somedays it's better
than others.

FABIAN
Trust me it's fine...but the front is
much better.

NICKI

Thank you.
 (beat)
 I think.

FABIAN

What are you doing after you're done studying?

NICKI

Ummm, hopefully whatever you're doing.

END OF FLASHBACK

11B

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS

11B

Mr. Layton, nervous about Nicki's meeting, slowly begins to walk by outside. Fabian gives a polite nod. Mr. Layton disappears.

NICKI

So are we prepared to come up with an overall monetary range for this class action settlement?

FABIAN

Why don't I leave that to you.

Nicki keeps her eyes focused on the papers.

NICKI

Counsel you should first know that we have two additional plaintiffs that will be joining the class action. One being a high powered magazine editor with a rather large social media platform.

Nicki finally looks Fabian directly in the eyes.

NICKI (CONT'D)

I have a new affidavit.

FABIAN

Hmmmm can I see said affidavit?

NICKI

Here you go.

She pushes the piece of paper slowly across the table. Fabian picks it up.

FABIAN

Whew I didn't see this coming.

Mr. Layton appears outside the glass Again. Fabian notices him. Fabian leans across the table to whisper.

FABIAN (CONT'D)

Why does this old white man keep creeping by?

Nicki quickly turns around to see Mr. Layton exit.

NICKI

Mr. Layton?...anyway, so I'm thinking considering all the pain and suffering Curly Q has caused...10 million seems fair.

Fabian begins to cough uncontrollably.

FABIANS FLASHBACK:

11C

EXT. OUTSIDE SPORTS BAR - EVENING - 5 YEARS AGO

11C

Nicki, dressed in a button up Dallas Cowboys jersey, and Fabian exit the bar and begin to walk. Fabian seems a tad somber.

NICKI

Come on Fabian. The Cowboys lost but it's not the end of the world, jeez.

Fabian hangs his head.

NICKI (CONT'D)

We can still celebrate tonight like they did win.

Fabian gives a forced smile.

NICKI (CONT'D)

Fabian what's wrong with you.

FABIAN

I'm sorry Nicki, I really am.

NICKI

It's ok there'll be other games.

FABIAN

No it's not that. We've had such an amazing time these last couple of months.

NICKI

We have right and UH OH.

FABIAN
I really am sorry.

NICKI
Wait hold up. Is this a break up? What,
there's somebody else?

FABIAN
No Nicki's it's...

NICKI
(interrupts)
You know what save it!

Fabian reaches for her and she takes a step back and unbuttons her Cowboys jersey revealing a New York Giants t0-shirt. She throws the jersey to Fabian.

NICKI (CONT'D)
Take that. I mean I never liked the
Cowboys anyway.

FABIAN
Nicki.

END OF FLASHBACK

11D

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS

11D

Nicki suddenly rises and pours a glass of water from the pitcher.

NICKI
Here, are you ok?
(beat)
Maybe 10 million is too low huh?

FABIAN
Obviously I'll have to run that number by
Curly Q.

NICKI
Of course.

FABIAN
Whereas I'm not 100% sure if that amount
will fly, there is one thing I'm totally
sure of.

NICKI
Really? And what's that?

FABIAN

I'd be honored if you'd have a drink with me this eve.

NICKI

You're right
(pause)
You would be honored.

12

INT. DERRICK'S DESK AREA - 5 MIN LATER

12

Gladys has just gotten on her scooter as Nicki returns from the conference room with all smiles.

NICKI

I'm back.

GLADYS

Let the suffering begin.

NICKI

Thanks for all your help today.

GLADYS

Yeah.

Mr. Layton and Jessica enter.

MR. LAYTON

Well Ms. Howell, will we be able to keep the lights on?

NICKI

Well I can't let you know until...

MR LAYTON

Until what?!

NICKI

Until after our drinks later.

Jessica gleefully claps.

JESSICA

That's my girl. Deals always turn out better with adult beverages.

GLADYS

I certainly hope Derrick is better by tomorrow. You know how small my patience window is for all things Nicki Howell. Pardon me.

Gladys starts her scooter and exits.

JESSICA

Oooh remember that sexy massage scene in Adam's Rib?

MR. LAYTON

Ms. Bouchard!!!

NICKI

Yes "Ms Bouchard", again with that movie.

JESSICA

But it's relevant. You see Katherine got the best of Spencer in both the courtroom AND the bedroom.

MR LAYTON

Now that you mention it that was one hell of a scene.

NICKI

You wouldn't happen to have any movie references from this decade, would ya?

13 INT. BAR - EVENING

13

Nicki and Fabian are having drinks at the bar.

FABIAN

I wasn't sure if you would say yes to having a drink with me.

NICKI

Let's just say I felt like doing some charity work. And besides I know how to separate business and pleasure.

FABIAN

(laughs)

You do?

(Pause)

I knew you'd become a skilled attorney.

NICKI

Me too!

FABIAN

Good ole Thurgood Marshall School of Law really prepared us.

(beat)

Listen I'm really sorry about the way we ended back then.

(MORE)

FABIAN (CONT'D)

What I didn't tell you was that, well my mom had passed away and it turned my whole world upside down.

NICKI

I'm sorry.

(beat)

You did a Kanye.

FABIAN

Excuse me.

NICKI

Oh me and my girlfriends call it a Kanye. It's when a sudden death causes you to react irrationally.

Fabian chuckles.

FABIAN

Then yes I was Kanyed. BUT I got help. You deserved better than the old Fabian.

NICKI

So this is the new Fabian?

FABIAN

The all new and improved Fabian Boyd S Q4.

NICKI

S Q4?

FABIAN

That's the brand new Maserati model.

NICKI

Ahhhhh!

FABIAN

You should take me for a test drive.

Their eyes lock.

FABIAN (CONT'D)

What do ya say?

Nicki ponders the moment.

NICKI

I just might do that.

Fabian smiles.

NICKI (CONT'D)
But Fabian S Q5.

FABIAN
Four.

NICKI
Whatever, just know that no matter how
good the test drive is.
(beat)
You're still gonna lose this case.

14 INT. TANYA'S KITCHEN - EVENING

14

Tanya is pouring a glass of wine and talking on the cell
phone.

TANYA
My hair is actually starting to grow back
Mama...But I like this headscarf...I had
an audition today and the casting
director looooooved it as well....ooooh
hold on I got a call.

Tanya clicks over to answer the second call.

TANYA (CONT'D)
Hello...This is Tanya...yessir...are you
serious? I'll be there....yes I can leave
the scarf at home...thank you....

Tanya clicks back over to her call with her mama.

TANYA (CONT'D)
Mama you still there? You aren't gonna
believe this....the audition today, I got
the part! Don't worry mama, they asked me
to leave the scarf at home.

15 INT. NICKI'S LIVING ROOM

15

Jasmine in her pajamas is laying on the sofa and Derrick
brings her a glass of juice. She flips the remote again
and lands on CNN with Don Lemon anchoring.

JASMINE
Who's that?

Derrick coughs.

DERRICK

That's Don Lemon, he's a news anchor for CNN.

(pause)

He's also gay.

JASMINE

What?! How you know uncle D?

DERRICK

Because he told everybody. He's "out".

JASMINE

Out?

DERRICK

Out of the closet?

DERRICK (CONT'D)

It means he's not trying to hide the fact that he's gay. When you try and hide from your mother, where's the first place you go?

Jasmine ponders the question.

JASMINE

The closet....ooooohhh

DERRICK

See.

JASMINE

But I'm not gay!

DERRICK

I know you're not, calm down.

JASMINE

But he doesn't look gay.

DERRICK

Ok how do I explain this...

(pause)

You can't necessarily tell if someone is gay by the way they look or act.

JASMINE

What about RuPaul.

DERRICK

Ok true but not every gay man looks or dresses or acts like RuPaul.

JASMINE

You don't act like him. Neither did Uncle Bart.

DERRICK

Oh well you've never seen your Uncle Bart after a few drinks but that's a whole nother story. Isn't it time for bed?

Nicki enters.

NICKI

The doctor will see you both now.

Jasmine gets up from the sofa and runs to Nicki.

NICKI (CONT'D)

How you feeling baby?

JASMINE

I'm feeling ok. Mama did you know Don Lemon was gay?

Nicki stares at Derrick.

DERRICK

I promise I had nothing to do with it.

JASMINE

Next time we play hide and seek, don't look for me in the closet.

NICKI

Go get in the bed young lady.

Jasmine exits.

DERRICK

Long day at work I see. Did everybody miss me?

NICKI

Gladys was your stand in. So of course I missed you. I actually agreed to have a drink with Fabian.

Derrick rises from the sofa.

DERRICK

Wait Fabian Fabian? Fabian Boyd? Fabian who broke your heart? Fabian who you're up against on the Curly Que case?

NICKI

I see you're feeling better.

She heads to her bedroom and begins to sing the Shalamar song.

NICKI (CONT'D)

(singing)

Not like the first time.

Not like the first time.

Talking bout the second time...