

NICKI ESQ - EPISODE 5

"BULLY"

Created by

Derrick Thompson

Teleplay by

Jared Wofford

Name (of company, if applicable)
Address
Phone Number

Tanya arrives to the set of her first big commercial with a stomach full of butterflies. This time she's opted for a wig. Simon the director, a white 40 something male is conferring with an assistant. They suddenly notice Tanya.

SIMON

You must be Tanya...

TANYA

The one and only...so excited, it's my first national commercial.

SIMON

Ah a commercial virgin. I'm Simon. We'll try and make the first time memorable. We'll be ready to get to work in a few. Oh I'm so glad you wore a short skirt.

TANYA

Well short skirts are my specialty.

SIMON

I'm sure.

TANYA

What about hair and make up?

SIMON

Hair and....oh Yes.

(beat)

Daniel put some make up on her.

Tanya looks a little puzzled. She takes a seat on the sofa.

An assistant suddenly appears with a compact, catching Tanya off guard.

ASSISTANT

Look up sweetie.

TANYA

Oh ok.

He harshly and quickly blots her face twice.

ASSISTANT

Perfect.

Tanya looks confused.

TANYA
So much for the "glam squad".

2

INT. NICKI'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

2

Derrick is in the kitchen and notices Jasmine's moping head down at the kitchen counter.

DERRICK
Little girl, is this the part where I'm supposed to ask you what's wrong?

JASMINE
I thought you were going to ask that 5 minutes ago. My neck is starting to hurt holding this position.

DERRICK
Ok, what's the matter?

JASMINE
Drew Snyder.

DERRICK
Who's Drew Snyder?

JASMINE
He's the new boy in class who's always picking on me.

DERRICK
Oh we have a bully do we?

JASMINE
A bully? What's that?

DERRICK
Well a bully is somebody who likes to pick on others to make himself seem more important.

JASMINE
Then yes.
(beat)
I don't wanna go to school anymore.

DERRICK
So you are gonna let some snotty nose, raggedy little boy ruin your life?

Jasmine climbs down off the stool.

JASMINE
Yes. School's overrated anyway.

She runs to her room.

DERRICK
You know what?!

3

INT. JASMINE'S BEDROOM - 1 MIN LATER

3

Jasmine has hidden under the bed. Derrick enters.

DERRICK
Young lady!

JASMINE
(from under the bed)
Not here.

DERRICK
You can't run away from messy boys. Trust me I've tried for years.

Jasmine comes out from under the bed.

JASMINE
I don't want Drew picking on me Uncle D.

DERRICK
Clearly he likes you.

JASMINE
What?

DERRICK
Boys do that when they don't know what else to do. See this is probably Drew's way of getting your attention.

JASMINE
Why not just say, "Hey Jasmine".

DERRICK
HA!! That would be way too simple. Boys, men, they don't think in rational terms.

JASMINE
Why?

DERRICK
School starts in 45 minutes. That question requires 3 days of explaining.

Fabian and Nicki are seated across from one another at a candlelit table.

FABIAN

Nicki, we wasted so much time.

NICKI

We? You mean YOU wasted time. I've been raising a child and put myself through law school.

FABIAN

Ok.

(beat)

"I" wasted time.

Nicki sips her glass of wine.

NICKI

Clearly I've changed, I normally don't believe in second chances...when it comes to men that is.

FABIAN

Second time around.

Fabian takes her hand from across the table.

NICKI

I'm finally starting to enjoy my life Fabian. All the pieces are falling into place. I got a job I love, a beautiful daughter and...

Fabian interrupts.

FABIAN

A man who wants to shower you with nothing but love.

NICKI

That does seem to be the missing piece.

FABIAN

I got an idea, let's go back to my place so we can put the pieces together.

NICKI

I gotta get back home Fabian.

FABIAN

Come on just a little while.

NICKI

Did you get to run the settlement numbers by Curly Q?

FABIAN

Now now Nicki, you promised no discussing business this evening. It's all about pleasure.

NICKI

Right right no business. After all that number may go higher after tonight.

FABIAN

I'm sure these lips can prevent that.

5 INT. NICKI'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

5

Derrick is scrolling through his phone when he receives a text from Bart.

TEXT MESSAGE APPEARS ON SCREEN: "You know I miss you."

DERRICKS TEXT MESSAGE REPLY ON SCREEN: A simple smile emoji.

BARTS TEXT MESSAGE REPLY ON SCREEN: "That's all I get? Can you talk?"

DERRICKS TEXT MESSAGE REPLY: "Not now."

Derrick's phone rings. It's Nicki.

SPLIT SCREEN OF DERRICK AND NICKI.

DERRICK

Yes.

NICKI

That's how you answer the phone?

DERRICK

Who's this?

NICKI

Uncle D! Stop it. How's everything going?

DERRICK

Shouldn't you be here to see how everything is going?

NICKI

I'm going to be home a little late.

DERRICK

How late?

NICKI

I should be there by sunrise.

DERRICK

Oh it's like that? It's been so long since I enjoyed the "walk of shame". Guess I'll tell Jasmine, "Mommy worked all night long."

6

INT. NICKI'S LIVING ROOM - MORNING - DAY 2

6

Derrick puts some oatmeal in the microwave.

DERRICK

Jasmine! Time for school.

(beat)

Jasmine Thompson!

Jasmine appears dressed for school with a paper bag over her head.

DERRICK (CONT'D)

So just so I'm clear, you don't want to be bullied?

JASMINE

Drew can't see me this way.

DERRICK

Well he can't see you but trust me he can see you.

JASMINE

Where's Mommy?

DERRICK

Mommy went to work very early.

JASMINE

Can you ask her if I can stay home today?

Derrick pretends to pick up his cell phone.

DERRICK

Hey Nicki can Jasmine stay home from school? Ok".

JASMINE

What'd she say?

DERRICK

No. Now you want this oatmeal?

JASMINE

I need a moment.

DERRICK

If you have any problems at school today you let Uncle D know, bullies are my speciality.

JASMINE

They had bullies back when you were in school?

DERRICK

Uh, I'm trying to help YOU little girl.

7

EXT. OUTSIDE BOUTIQUE - MORNING

7

Nicki in sunglasses tip toes to the entrance of the store. She notices a "closed" sign but sees somebody inside the store. She knocks. A young female worker unlocks the door.

WORKER

I'm sorry we don't open for another hour.

Nicki puts her hand on the door.

NICKI

Can't you make an exception please please please. You see I wore this outfit to work yesterday and I simply cannot go into the office with it on again.

WORKER

And you couldn't just run by your house?

NICKI

(chuckles)

Way way outta the way.

WORKER

What?! You mean you had an unexpected overnight stay?

NICKI

Isn't it obvious?

WORKER

Come on in but make it quick. I don't wanna get in trouble.

7A INT. DRESSING ROOM - 10 MINS LATER

7A

Nicki is looking at herself in the mirror in a new jacket.

NICKI

You still gotta look stylish girl. I can't let Fabian's ass have me looking a mess at work.

She rips off the jacket and tries on another one that fits her like a glove.

NICKI (CONT'D)

Now that's what I'm talking about.

7B INT. STORE COUNTER - 10 MINS LATER

7B

WORKER

Love it, your little secret is safe with me. Let me just scan the tag in the back.

Nicki turns around.

WORKER (CONT'D)

Your total is \$326.

Nicki is now in a real rush. She hands her credit card.

NICKI

Fabian!!!

WORKER

So that's his name huh?

Nicki signs the receipt and quickly heads for the exit.

WORKER (CONT'D)

You sure you don't wanna look around for another dress to keep at his place.

NICKI

Oh he's good. Not sure if he's "2 dresses" good though.

8 INT. DERRICK'S WORK AREA - MORNING

8

Derrick is on his computer and listening to music with his wireless headphones. Nicki enters in a hurry.

NICKI

Morning.

Nicki continues into her office. Derrick removes his headphones and quickly follows Nicki.

8A

INT. NICKI'S OFFICE

8A

Nicki now in her office has stopped in front of her desk to open an envelope. Her back is to Derrick.

DERRICK

I'm starting my day with the new Brandy album. She's still got it.

Nicki doesn't turn around.

NICKI

That's nice.

DERRICK

Beautiful jacket. Is that new?

NICKI

Nope.

DERRICK

That price tag says \$150.

Nicki suddenly turns around.

NICKI

What?! Ugh I had to rush out this morning and buy it. I couldn't wear yesterday's dress in today.

DERRICK

I mean you could have. It would have been The Office Hot Topic.

NICKI

How's my baby?

DERRICK

She'll be alright, trust me.
Soooooooooo...

NICKI

So what?

DERRICK

How was last night?

NICKI

Well as you can see I temporarily forgot I was a mother and was at a clothing boutique an hour before they open. So clearly it was a night to remember.

DERRICK

Well as long as one of us is getting some lovin' I guess it's ok.

Nicki's office intercom rings and Derrick answers.

DERRICK (CONT'D)

Good morning Mr. Layton

(beat)

Yes she is

(beat)

Ok.

Derrick hangs up.

DERRICK (CONT'D)

Your presence is requested.

NICKI

I knew it, off I go.

DERRICK

Hold on, they don't need to know how much this outfit cost.

He yanks the price tag off.

DERRICK (CONT'D)

You overpaid.

9

INT. MR. LAYTON'S OFFICE - MORNING

9

Mr. Layton and Jessica are seated at a table in Mr. Layton's office. Nicki enters.

NICKI

Good morning everybody.

JESSICA

Good morning Ms...

(she takes a sniff)

Wait, do I smell new clothes?

MR. LAYTON

Ms. Bouchard what on earth are you talking about now?

JESSICA

No I mean I smell brand new clothes, like clothes freshly purchased at a chic boutique. I have a knack for this you know. When you stay out all night and need to make an emergency morning retail run.

NICKI

How'd you like me to fix your nose so you can't smell?

JESSICA

Darling I'm the president of the early Shop of Shame club...Welcome

Jessica extends her open arms.

MR. LAYTON

How are things Ms. Howell?

NICKI

I'm doing great Mr. Layton.

MR. LAYTON

By "things" I mean your cases.

NICKI

Oh, of course. Well the Allied case is moving along. The merger is in progress and I assure you they are more than satisfied with their legal team. And by "team" I mean Me.

MR. LAYTON

And the Curly Q settlement?

NICKI

Not finalized yet. But trust me when it's over I'm going to change my card from Nicki Esq to Nicki Howell Superstar.

JESSICA

I must say you put this snazzy little outfit together quite well.

NICKI

Why thank you.

JESSICA

I assume you simply didn't have enough time for new shoes.

Nicki and Tanya are walking. Nicki sips on an iced coffee, Tanya is wearing another beautifully colored scarf.

NICKI

I just can't believe it.

TANYA

Believe what?

NICKI

Girl, that you actually booked a commercial.

TANYA

Well thanks for the vote of confidence Sista.

NICKI

I have another film project for you. See I've gotten a couple of the other plaintiffs to make video statements about Curly Q's effect on their lives.

TANYA

(excited)

Oh yes yes perfect. I can see it now, the camera closes in on my sun soaked face and a tear rolls down as I recall that dreadful incident.

NICKI

Ok Viola Davis. It's a simple video not a Netflix series.

TANYA

So are you still sleeping with the enemy.

NICKI

Well I didn't officially sleep with him until last night.

TANYA

And?

NICKI

It was perfect. I mean perfect!

TANYA

Oh lord, there goes my case.

NICKI

What do you mean there goes your case?
I'm a professional I'll have you know and
you're my best friend. Our great sex has
absolutely nothing to do with this case.
Now bad sex would have definitely had
something to do with it.

TANYA

Got it. So you got screwed good in the
bedroom BUT he's gonna get screwed in
that courtroom.

NICKI

Exactly!

11 INT. NICKI'S LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

11

Jasmine and Derrick have just entered the room.

JASMINE

Whew what a day. Can I have a glass of
water with a twist of lemon please.

DERRICK

I should just put a tip jar on this
counter. What happened at school today?

JASMINE

Drew kept trying to touch my hair!

DERRICK

What?!

JASMINE

You can't touch this.

DERRICK

Ok, Mc Hammer.

JASMINE

Tomorrow is "special friends" day at
school Uncle D. You wanna be my special
guest?

DERRICK

Well I don't know.

JASMINE

Oh please.

Nicki enters.

NICKI

What are you begging for now Jas?

JASMINE

Hey mommy...Uncle D is going to be my guest for "special friends" day tomorrow at school. Right Uncle D?

DERRICK

Well I was going to the...

JASMINE

(interrupts)

Right Uncle D.

DERRICK

Well I guess I'm going to be your guest.

JASMINE

Yes!! I missed you Mommy, how was "work"?

NICKI

There's no need for the air quotes young lady.

JASMINE

Uncle D says it's for emphasis.

NICKI

How was class today?

JASMINE

I think I have a bully at school but imma be ok.

NICKI

Does the bully have a name?

JASMINE

Drew Snyder.

NICKI

Wait, Marty Synder's big head son? That drew Todd?

JASMINE

I have no idea what his daddy's name is but he's definitely got a big head!

NICKI

Marty used to pick on me in school years ago.

JASMINE

So bullying runs in their family?

DERRICK

Apparently it runs in their family, good looks run in ours.

12

INT. CURLY Q OFFICE CONFERENCE ROOM - AFTERNOON

12

The Curly Q offices are decorated with many beautiful images of stylish women of color. Nicki is in awe of each photograph. She sets her briefcase down on the table.

NICKI

Remind me to have my hair freshly coifed next time we meet here.

FABIAN

Nothing can distract from that face. Done, undone, it doesn't matter. Hell you could be bald.

Nicki gives him a laugh.

NICKI

Well the bald part is exactly why I'm here.

FABIAN

Good one

He reaches over and gently puts his hand on hers.

FABIAN (CONT'D)

So the board has asked me to counter.

Nicki removes her hand from under his.

NICKI

Well tell the board we'll see you in court.

FABIAN

Come on Nicki, aren't you gonna even negotiate?

NICKI

No, but what I am going to do is get all my clients' traumatic, gut wrenching stories on video. So the world can see exactly how "effective" Curly Q is. Doesn't it contain some kind of automotive fluid?

FABIAN

Ok ok. It doesn't contain any car fluid

(beat)

Does it? I'll speak to the board again on one condition.

NICKI

What is it with you and these conditions?

What is it this time?

FABIAN

I wanna see you again. I've been thinking about you non stop...so what do you say?

Nicki heads towards the door but then turns arounds.

NICKI

Sustained!

13

INT. OFFICE ROOM - AFTERNOON

13

Gladys is fiddling with a high tech video camera. It's not clear if she knows exactly what she's doing. Tanya enters.

TANYA

Hi, I'm Tanya.

GLADYS

Oh I know exactly who you are sweetie. You're Ms. Howell's friend right? The IT guy had a little emergency. Seems his boyfriend kidnapped the dog and is holding him hostage. I don't understand these young folks today. Anyway you can have a seat right here. Ms. Howell wants me to get a quick statement from you on how Curly Q has effected your life. This shouldn't be hard cuz you look ravaged.

TANYA

Well I'm ready for my closeup.

GLADYS

Ok so tell me exactly what your experience with Curly Q was.

TANYA

(overly dramatic)

Well my life has been a nightmare. I just don't know how I will survive. My hair, my confidence, my happiness, all gone. Thanks Curly Q.

Gladys is startled.

GLADYS

Girl you know this is for a courtroom.
It's NOT a TV commercial.

TANYA

Too much?

GLADYS

Way too much. Let's try it again. Hold
up. I think this thing is recording. Ok
go.

TANYA

My life will never be the same. I really
regret the day I ever purchased Curly Q.

GLADYS

Bless your heart.

Tanya then catches a glimpse of herself in the camera
lens and the gravity of the moment hits her.

GLADYS (CONT'D)

One more.

Tanya is suddenly emotional.

TANYA

I remember always playing with my hair
and Curly Q seemed like a terrific
product to try.

(beat)

Hair is super important to women
everywhere. It's how we often express
ourselves. It represents who we are. I
feel like Curly Q took away my power.

Gladys is in complete awe. Tanya's phone rings.

TANYA (CONT'D)

Oh I'm so sorry. This will only be a
second...hello...this is Tanya...oh
hey...are you serious?...oh my
god...thank you thank you...I'm so sorry.

(beat)

That was my agent. My first ever TV
commercial is gonna air tonight.

Gladys laughs.

TANYA (CONT'D)

What's funny?

GLADYS
I can't believe you have an agent.

14 INT. CLASSROOM MORNING

14

Jasmine and Derrick walk in holding hands.

Mr. Moore, Jasmine's first grade teacher, a 30 year old attractive black male is greeting students at the entrance.

MR. MOORE
Good morning Jasmine.

JASMINE
Good morning Mr. Moore.

MR. MOORE
And who is your "special" friend?

JASMINE
My Uncle Derrick.

MR. MOORE
Well welcome Uncle Derrick.

DERRICK
Well good morning. I see first grade teachers have really evolved.

Mr. Moore chuckles.

MR. MOORE
Looks like Uncles have come a long way too.

Derrick does a double take.

MR. MOORE (CONT'D)
Ok everyone please grab a seat. Thanks to you all for taking time to attend our special friends day here at St. Anthony's. Drew you wanna welcome our guests and introduce your guest.

JASMINE
(to Derrick)
That's him.

DREW, a white, 7 year old boy stands up.

DREW

Good morning everyone. My name is Drew Snyder and that's my dad Marty Snyder.

Shot of Clayton dressed exactly like his son, plaid shirt, khakis and glasses.

DERRICK

(to Jasmine)

Good lord they dressed alike.

JASMINE

We should have done that.

Derrick does another double take.

DREW

Thanks to each one of you for joining us this morning. We have juice and donuts and if you look around the walls are decorated with the students art work in honor of our theme...St. Anthony's family - love and respect throughout the school year.

Derrick raises his hand.

MR. MOORE

Question?

DERRICK

I'm Derrick Howell, good morning everyone. And this is my niece Jasmine. Drew I'm sure you know Jasmine, your beautiful classmate. I see the words Love and Respect displayed all over this classroom. Is that something you practice? Because I remember many many years ago, school was hard enough. So the last thing anybody needs is somebody picking on them and NOT respecting them when they enter this classroom. Right Drew?

Shot of the reaction of several of the first graders. Their eyes are wide and their mouths open.

JASMINE

Yeah right Drew?

Jasmine and Derrick are just outside the door.

JASMINE

Thank you for coming Uncle D. I feel so much better now.

Mr. Moore approaches.

MR. MOORE

Jasmine if you ever have any problems in THIS class you can always tell me.

DERRICK

See.

MR. MOORE

Boys can be trouble sometimes.

DERRICK

Sometimes?

MR. MOORE

Something tells me you were trouble Uncle Derrick.

DERRICK

I'm sure I would have been a better student if I'd had a teacher like you.

Jasmine starts pushing Derrick to leave.

JASMINE

Ok "special friend" time to go.

16 INT. ELEVATOR BANK - AFTERNOON 16

Shot of Nicki running to catch the elevator door before it closes.

16A INT. INSIDE ELEVATOR 16A

Nicki runs smack into Mr. Layton

NICKI

Oh, hey Mr. Layton.

MR. LAYTON

How'd the meeting go?

NICKI

Why I'm doing just fine Mr. Layton. Thanks for asking.

MR. LAYTON

Did they counter our settlement offer?

NICKI

They offered but I told them I'd see them in court.

MR. LAYTON

You what?!!!

Nicki's phone rings.

NICKI

Hey....what?!!....what?!!....it's airing tonight?....well congrats Issa Rae...tonight, see ya then.

NICKI (CONT'D)

Sorry, that was Tanya, her first big commercial airs tonight.

MR. LAYTON

Does Tanya have an agent?

NICKI

Yes why?

MR. LAYTON

Because if you botch this settlement Ms. Howell you might be joining Tanya auditioning for commercials!

17 INT. NICKI'S LIVING ROOM - EVENING

17

Jasmine and Derrick are on the sofa. Nicki is at the kitchen counter.

NICKI

Uncle D how was your adventure in "special friend" land.

DERRICK

I wish I was back in first grade so Mr. Moore could teach me.

NICKI

What?

DERRICK

I mean friends day was fine, right Jasmine?

JASMINE

Let's just say I think Drew has seen the light.

NICKI

Uncle D, you didn't cause any trouble did you?

JASMINE

No ma'am, Uncle D made the trouble disappear.

NICKI

Oh, so sounds like somebody was out saving the world.

DERRICK

Now you know I've always been a superhero.

JASMINE

Like Batman?

DERRICK

Batman, Superman, Aquaman. It doesn't matter. I could be any one. I've just got to find me some tights.

NICKI

I'm surprised you don't have some tights already.

DERRICK

Nicki I didn't say I didn't have any. I just said I needs to find them.

Tanya rushes in without knocking.

TANYA

Hey hey hey. Quick quick turn it to channel 5. I was told my spot is airing in a second. I'm about to be a star.

Derrick turns the remote to channel 5.

NICKI

Remind me to change the locks.

DERRICK

So you decided to throw your video premiere party here?

JASMINE

You should go live on IG. Start expanding your brand.

TANYA

Shhhh just turn up the volume.

Derrick adjusts the sound.

CUT TO: TV COMMERCIAL

ANNOUNCER

Do you use your legs as much as I do?

A visual of Tanya from the waist down walking near various Dallas landmarks.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

The average person takes more than 2 million steps a year.

Shot of Tanya from the waist down again.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

You don't want your legs to look like THIS.

Shot of Tanya's legs looking bartered and aged.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Mango-melon medicated Leg Mud
(beat)
So your legs never have to look like this...

Individual shots of Nicki, Derrick and Jasmine each in stunned silence. Nicki turns to see Tanya's reaction and suddenly notices the front door wide open.

JASMINE

Poor baby.

Nicki's cell phone rings. She answers it.

NICKI

Hello...hey Mr. Layton
(surprised)
...It's ok...what?...but Mr. Layton I...I see...Goodbye Mr. Layton.

DERRICK

Well he must have been watching Tanya's commercial too.

NICKI

Curly Q rejected the settlement offer and
Mr. Layton is taking me off the case.

THE END