

SPIT

A Short Film

by

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(Inspired by a True Event)

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FADE IN:

CARD: 1966

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EXT. NORTH PHILADELPHIA STREET - DAY

Poor neighborhood. Predominantly Black.

Two Black boys, MICHAEL, 9, black-rimmed glasses, upbeat; and his older brother, DONALD, 12, older and more chill, walk along the sidewalk, heads down, searching the gutters. *

Donald carries a bag full of discarded soda bottles.

Michael spots a glass COCA COLA bottle in the gutter and grabs it. He is delighted.

MICHAEL

Another five cents. How much we got?

Donald counts the bottles.

DONALD

Eighty-five cents.

MICHAEL

Three more and we both get a hotdog and a soda.

They continue searching the gutters.

A bus pulls up next to them and stops at the light.

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

Two White TEENAGERS, 18 and 19, working class, look through the bus window.

The teen nearest the window spots Michael and Donald and nudges his buddy.

He points at them and laughs. He slides down the bus window.

WHITE TEENAGER

Hey, Niggers.

Michael and Donald look up just as the White teen hawks up a mouthful of phlegm and spits at them.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

The spit hits Michael dead in the face.

DONALD
Fuck you, you Cracker
motherfuckers.

The teens on the bus laugh and turn away. They've had their fun.

Michael wipes at the spit on his face.

Furiously, he hurls the glass Coke bottle at the bus.

DONALD (CONT'D)
Michael, no!

The Coke bottle shatters the bus window, spraying the two teenagers with glass.

The teens jump out of their seats, outraged at having the impunity of their actions challenged by people they consider beneath them. *
*

DONALD (CONT'D)
Run!

Donald drops his bag of bottles and he and Michael take off just as the bus door bursts open and the two teens come charging out.

TEEN *
You fucking Niggers. *

Michael and Donald sprint across an abandoned dirt lot with the White teens closing fast.

Michael turns his head to see if they are close. They are nearly on top of them. He panics.

Donald reaches out and shoves Michael forward.

DONALD
Run, Michael, run.

Michael sprints even harder.

Donald spins around, fists swinging, taking on both of the White teens. Unbeknownst, Michael keeps running, terrified.

Suddenly, PEOPLE are running past Michael towards the White teens, shouting. Michael stops and turns.

He sees the White teens beating Donald on the ground. One delivers a final kick to the head before they both take off as a group of Black LOCALS give chase.

Michael stares, breathing hard.

Donald lies barely conscious on the ground, unmoving.
Michael moves towards him, fearing the worst.

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VOICE IN THE CROWD
Lord, get that boy to the hospital.

Sweat runs down Michael's glasses, distorting his vision. All he can see is a black form crumpled in a sea of dust made white by the bright sun.

The whiteness grows and intensifies, pulsing, rushing to fill Michael's field of view, blotting out everything until the impenetrable whiteness hits him like a punch, knocking him -

INT. HOSPITAL DOCTOR'S LOUNGE - DAY

- awake in doctor's lounge adjacent to the hospital Emergency Room.

It takes a moment for Michael, now 37, same black-rimmed glasses, to register the CODE BLUE announcement coming through the ceiling speakers.

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*

The lounge TV shows scenes from a violent clash between White supremacists, neo-Nazis and civil rights and antifascist groups.

Michael and the other dozing, or TV watching, medical staff leap to their feet and rush out of the room.

INT. HOSPITAL EMERGENCY ROOM - DAY

Injured people are rushed in on gurneys. Michael enters.

A NURSE points to a bald, BLOODIED MAN, mid-20's, with a severe head wound.

NURSE
Compound skull fracture.

Michael rushes over to the man, a tattooed Skinhead. Michael begins evaluating the man's injury and then notices the man wears a T-shirt with the words, Nigger Go Home, on the front.

Michael looks at the shirt and pauses.

FLASHBACK

Flashes of images -

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EXT. DIRT LOT - DAY

The spit hitting Michael in the face.

Donald getting beat up by the two White teenagers.

END FLASHBACK

INT. EMERGENCY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The Skinhead is barely conscious but sees that Michael is Black. He tries to protest but is too weak and not sufficiently lucid. He falls into unconsciousness.

Michael immediately goes to work examining the injury.

MICHAEL

Prep for CT scan.

The nurses push the gurney through the door.

*

FLASHBACK

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY

*

Donald on gurney being rushed down hospital hallway. Michael running by his side until he is stopped by a NURSE.

*

*

NURSE

Did somebody call your parents?

*

*

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Donald lies on a hospital bed, part of his head and face heavily bandaged.

*

A thoracic full body spinal brace binds his body from his neck to his waist.

Tubes run from two intravenous drip bags on a stand into needles inserted into his arm.

He is unconscious but the sweat on his brow and tremors that rack his body indicate he is in great pain.

INT. CHEAP APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

*

Donald, in pain, walks with a paraplegic gait across the room.

*

*

Michael watches Donald struggle to walk. Guilt and sadness are evident on Michael's face.

*

*

EXT. DARK STREET CORNER - NIGHT

MICHAEL, now 17, wearing a Temple University sweatshirt and carrying a backpack full of books walks down a darkened street.

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*

A group of WHITE TEENAGERS cluster at a corner. Michael hesitates for a moment, fearful, before crossing over to them.

*

*

*

After a few moments of conversation, Michael hands one of the teens some money in exchange for a vial of Oxycontin pills.

*

*

INT. CHEAP APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

*

Michael watches as DONALD, now 20, greedily downs the Oxycontin pills.

*

END FLASHBACK

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michael enters the room.

The Skinhead is asleep in bed. His head heavily bandaged with a cerebral fluid drainage tube leading from his skull.

Michael, professional, dispassionate, inspects the drainage tube and checks the monitors assessing the Skinhead's vital signs.

*

As he turns to leave Michael sees the Skinhead's T-shirt and clothing folded on the bureau. Michael turns the shirt over and looks at the words, Nigger Go Home.

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FLASHBACK

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER - NIGHT

Donald, 20, surreptitiously injects himself with heroin.

END FLASHBACK

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Michael grabs the shirt and throws it into the trash can.

He pauses for a moment, then pulls the shirt out of the trash, refolds it and put it back on the bureau.

SKINHEAD (O.C.)

I can get you one in your size if
you want.

Michael turns around. The Skinhead is wide awake watching him.

MICHAEL

You think that shit's funny?

Michael hurls the shirt at the him.

The Skinhead chuckles, pleased and dismissive of Michael's anger.

SKINHEAD

My father was a doctor.
(beat)
Cardiologist.

MICHAEL

Fuck you, man.

The Skinhead stares at Michael and smirks.

SKINHEAD

I guess I better not go to sleep
tonight, huh. You might sneak in
here and pull the plug.

Michael shakes his head, bringing himself back under control.

MICHAEL

You're not worth it.

SKINHEAD

Come on, man, I know you hate me as
much as I hate you.

*
*

Michael walks to the side of the bed.

*

MICHAEL

I doubt it.

The Skinhead hears the depth of meaning in Michael's words.

*

SKINHEAD

Well, I would do it if I were you.

*

MICHAEL

Well you're not me.

*
*

SKINHEAD

Thank God.

*
*

FLASHBACK

EXT. STREET - DAY

*

Michael and Donald running from the teens.

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EXT. ALLEY - NIGHT

Donald lies dead of a drug overdose. A needle by his side.

END FLASHBACK

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INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Michael looks at the Skinhead, emotions churning.

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The Skinhead shrugs, indifferent.

*

Michael turns to leave.

*

The Skinhead closes his eyes.

SKINHEAD

Whatever, man.

By way of commentary.

*

SKINHEAD (CONT'D)

Fucking Niggers.

*
*

Michael spins around, hawks and spits in his face. *

The Skinhead is shocked, angry. So is Michael. *

Then the Skinhead sinks back into his pillow, laughing. He *
wipes some of the spit off of his face. *

Still smiling, he touches his bandaged skull. *

SKINHEAD (CONT'D)

Alright, Man, I guess we're even.

Michael takes the T-shirt and wipes the remaining spit from *
the Skinhead's face.

MICHAEL

Not by a long shot.

(beat)

My spit doesn't stain.

They stare at each other for a hard second.

THE END

CUT TO BLACK: