

CHAMPAGNE

by Thambi Duncan

Thambi Duncan
240-535-3046
thembiduncan@gmail.com
12 pp.

CHARACTERS

NICOLE: Black female

STEF: Black female

SETTING: Washington, DC. 2012

STEF

So...you here alone?

NICOLE

I don't see nobody else up in here.

STEF

Look, I'm not a dentist, and I don't pull teeth, ok?

(Stef gets up to leave.)

NICOLE

You leavin' your bottle.

STEF

Keep it. I don't even like champagne. I just bought this stupid bottle so I could get into this stupid VIP section and sit on this stupid couch next to-

NICOLE

You about to call me stupid?

(They have a brief stare-down, then they laugh.)

Aight...come on, sit down.

(Stef hesitates.)

We good, we good.

(Stef sits down. Nicole pours some of her own champagne in Stef's cup.)

Why you buy that cheap shit anyway? Drink this.

(Stef hesitates.)

Oh, you trippin' bout drinkin' behind me? I'ma be kissin' you later on, so...

(Stef gives her a look.)

Aight. You don't want a drink from a \$150 bottle of Dom - that's on you.

(Nicole's phone buzzes.)

STEF

You gonna get that?

NICOLE

My shit stay on blast. (Thumbing phone.) Ignorrree...

STEF

Okaaaaay...

(She notices someone in the club.)

Wow...there are some beautiful black women in Chocolate City!

NICOLE

Yup. And I fucked *almost* all of 'em. See, every lesbian clique in D.C. got one or two strong dimes in it, and I don't like to cross-pollinate, so I just hit one dime per clique.

STEF

Is that supposed to make you attractive?

NICOLE

I ain't gotta be attractive. I got money. You gon' feel me regardless.

STEF

Oh, my God.

(Stef takes a drink.)

NICOLE

Look, you know how shit work in this world. Money talks, bullshit walks. To the victor go the spoils. And I'm always the victor, so you know what that makes you...so just come on and-

STEF

...and I'm done.

(She gets up to leave. Nicole gets up to stop her.)

NICOLE

Nah, nah...hol' up, Ma! You know I'm just talkin' shit!

(Nicole sits her down.)

I know it's easy to flash some cake and pull the baddest chick in the room, but the personality and the romance - that's what make 'em stay around. 'Cause it's always gonna be a m'fucka with more money than me.

STEF

Glad you get that.

NICOLE

Yeah, I get it, in theory. In practice - eh...

STEF

That's why you're alone.

NICOLE

That's why you alone! I know where I belong. You the one that needed a change of atmosphere, needed to come back to the sistas. Up there with all them whiteys tryin' to touch your hair and shit, tokenin' you out so they can keep they diversity funding. (In a pretentious accent.) Oh, yes--(Her normal voice.) What's your name again?

STEF

Stefanie.

NICOLE

(Back to pretentious accent.) Oh yes, Stefanie...why don't you share with us the Neeeeegro perspective on--(Her normal voice.) What was you studying?

STEF

(Laughing, in spite of herself.) Chemistry. (She drinks.)

NICOLE

(Back to pretentious accent.) ...on the molecular properties of radium and its use in the treatment of various types of cancer?

STEF

Who knew that underneath all that hyper-masculine posturing, there lies a modicum of intelligence and insight. What made you so smart?

NICOLE

Smart. If I was smart, I would not be sittin' in this club on a Wednesday, drinkin' myself stupid. If I was smart, I'd be at a fuckin' art museum or bungee-jumpin' in Scandinavia or some shit. Now if I was *real* smart, I'd just be at home,

NICOLE (cont'd)
curled up on the couch with my lil' boo, drinkin' some
black tea, nah mean?

STEF
I love curling up on the couch. I love the simple things. I
don't need somebody to shout their love from the rooftops,
or throw a million-dollar rock on my finger...I just want a
sweet word here and there...a squeeze...a touch...hmmm...
(She drinks.)

NICOLE
Hmmp. (She drinks.)

STEF
Do you have a - 'boo'?

NICOLE
I don't see nobody else up in here.

STEF
Okay, I get it.

NICOLE
No, you don't. You ain't even hearin' me, for real.

STEF
Maybe cursing like a sailor and treating women like meat-

NICOLE
I keeps it one hundred. What you see is what you always
gon' get. No variations on the main theme.

STEF
I guess that explains why you can't keep a woman.

NICOLE
Who said I can't keep a woman? I just don't have one right
now.

STEF
Stop hiding behind your money and maybe-

NICOLE
You ain't got a woman either, evidently. You hidin' behind
your education? All them degrees and you can't even figure
out how to-

STEF

How to what? Treat a woman like a human being? Love her? Respect her? Listen to what she has to say? Return her calls? Not cheat on her? Hmmph. Apparently, that's too boring.

NICOLE

Oh, shit.

STEF

'Oh, shit' nothing. I'm over it.

NICOLE

You sure?

STEF

What do you know? All you care about is finding a 'dime.'

NICOLE

Maybe it's time for me lower my standards.

STEF

Then that puts me out of the running.

NICOLE

You sayin' you a dime?

STEF

You sayin' I'm *not*?

NICOLE

You was a 9.8, but that swag move right there just put you over the top.

(She holds out her phone. After some hesitation, Stef takes it and punches in her number.)

Now you up in there with the tens, boo.

STEF

Oooh, am I *your* boo now? Or just some generic boo-of-the-moment?

NICOLE

That's up to you.

STEF

I guess I've never been one for the easy catch.

NICOLE

But once you catch me, you might wanna throw my crazy ass back in the water.

(They laugh. They're pretty tipsy at this point.)

STEF

You know what? I think I like—

NICOLE

You like me.

STEF

I think I want to—

NICOLE

You wanna kiss me. I told you we was gon' be kissin'!

STEF

You did say that.

NICOLE

Didn't I, though?

(They kiss. It's nice. Really nice. Then...)

STEF

Waitwaitwaitwait.

NICOLE

You know this room got curtains, right?

(She gets up to close the curtains. Stef stops her.)

STEF

That's not the issue.

(She pulls out a sheet of paper and holds it up triumphantly.)

NICOLE

I ain't got my glasses, and it's dark as shit in here. What that say?