

Prejudice in America

Dedicated to the little old lady who stole my drink at KFC.

By Jack Hall

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CHARACTERS

Jon- A reporter

Neil- A convenience store owner

Brian- A white guy

Tia- An Asian woman

Larry- An older black man

Mohammed- A Pakistani man

Gladys- An old white lady

The stage is set like a convenience store. There's a counter with a cash register, cigarettes, candy, a cooler of drinks, hot dogs, a magazine rack, newspapers, and other essentials. Neil is behind the counter. Jon enters down center, addressing the audience.

JON- Good evening. Tonight, prejudice. Does it still exist in America? We're here at the Slurp and Burp Convenience Store in the heartland of America to take a closer look. Our hidden cameras are trained on that man, owner Neil Suggins, so the world can know whether or not Americans are prejudiced.

Jon steps to the side. Brian enters.

BRIAN- Hi.

NEIL- Hi there.

BRIAN- Pack of Marlboro reds?

NEIL- *(grabs the cigarettes)* Here you go.

BRIAN- You need to see my ID?

NEIL- Nah! Just two fifty-eight.

Brian pays Neil.

NEIL- Out of three... forty-two is your change.

BRIAN- Thanks, pal.

NEIL- You too, have a good one.

Brian exits.

JON- Well, looks like Neil knows a few things about customer service. Now let's really shake some things up.

Tia enters.

TIA- Hello.

NEIL- Yeah, whadya want?

TIA- Umm, Milky Way?

NEIL- Milky Way? You no wanna egg roll?

TIA- Excuse me?

NEIL- Nothing. Seventy-five cents with tax... though I bet you already knew that.

TIA- Here's three quarters.

NEIL- Yep, you knew it.

TIA- Thanks.

NEIL- Thanks. Careful you no get chocolate on seat in Toyota!

Tia exits, shaking her head at the rudeness.

JON- Can you believe Neil? First, he's offering her some additional food items he thinks she might enjoy, then he compliments her intelligence, and then shows great concern for her vehicle. What a guy, huh?

Larry enters.

LARRY- Hey, man.

NEIL- Yo.

LARRY- Gimme some Marlboros, light.

NEIL- Gimme some ID, bro.

LARRY- What?

NEIL- You heard me, G. I need to see your ID.

LARRY- Wow, man, I ain't been carded in years.

Larry hands over his ID.

NEIL- You mean you "haven't been" carded?

LARRY- Yeah, man. That's a compliment.

NEIL- No, it's the law. Hey, this does NOT look like you!

LARRY- What?

NEIL- This guy has glasses and a mustache?

LARRY- I got Lasik and I shaved.

NEIL- You got a fake ID, didn't you?

LARRY- Man, I don't need this! I'm 48!

NEIL- And I'm Jack Nicholson. No smokes for you.

LARRY- Fine then. I'll take a Twix.

Larry hands money over, Neil makes change as they talk.

NEIL- Twix, hmm, interesting choice. Two candy bars in one. Kinda like you're buying one, and stealing the other, isn't it?

LARRY- Sure, whatever.

Larry exits; Neil watches him closely.

NEIL- Hands off the Ebony magazine!

LARRY- Whatever!

JON- Can you believe that guy? Passing a fake ID off on our friend Neil? He's way too smart to fall for that one!

Mohammed enters.

NEIL- Holy crap.

MOHAMMED- Begging your pardon. Do you sell lighters?

NEIL- Lighters? What do you need a lighter for, huh? You setting a bomb some place?

MOHAMMED- What??

NEIL- What are you blowing up this time? City Hall? The high school? The Wal-Mart??
Osama sent you here to strike terror in the heartland, didn't he?

MOHAMMED- I just need to light some candles for a romantic dinner so I can propose to my girlfriend!

NEIL- So you can get married and have little baby terrorists? Not on my watch!

MOHAMMED- I am not a terrorist!

NEIL- Yeah, tell it to Homeland Security when they get here!

MOHAMMED- Don't bother, I'm leaving!

NEIL- That's it, back to Iraq with you, camel jockey!

MOHAMMED- I'm from Pakistan!

NEIL- Once we carpet bomb all your people back to the stone age, it won't matter!!

Mohammed leaves.

JON- Wow... you know, some bleeding heart liberals out there would call that racial profiling. This reporter calls it patriotism. I think we've proved our point here, but... well, just to be sure, let's have one more look.

Gladys enters.

GLADYS- Hi there, sonny.

NEIL- Hello there, ma'am.

GLADYS- I just need a hot dog.

Neil gets a hot dog.

NEIL- That'll be one dollar.

GLADYS- Here you go.

NEIL- Thank you.

Gladys walks to the cooler.

GLADYS- I get a drink with that, right?

NEIL- Well, it's not included, but...

Gladys takes a drink anyway.

NEIL- Aw, take it.

GLADYS- Ooh, Twix bars. *(takes one)* Can't forget my newspaper.

NEIL- Uh, ma'am, those are... aw, take one.

GLADYS- Thank you.

Gladys grabs a paper. And then a People magazine.

GLADYS- Ooh, People. I wonder what that Jessica Simpson is up to.

Gladys exits. Jon walks to center. Neil sees him.

JON- Well, I think we've proved our point. I don't care what the history books say. In modern America, there is no such thing as prejudice.

NEIL- Hey! What the heck are you doing?

JON- Well hello, Neil.

NEIL- You know my name?

JON- That's right. We've been doing a news report on you.

NEIL- News report? What are you, one of those paparazzi?

JON- Paparazzi? No, we're--

NEIL- What are you doing in my store? What, Lindsay Lohan's not in town, so you come harrass me?

JON- Now wait just a minute.

NEIL- No you wait a minute! You monsters are gonna kill that poor girl causing as many wrecks as you do! You get out of my store right now!

JON- But--

NEIL- Now!!

Jon starts to leave.

NEIL- And leave that Paris Hilton alone too, ya filthy animal!