

#PTWFS3_AMockumentary_KK
(Post Traumatic White Folk Syndrome)
A Mockumentary

Written by

Karan Kendrick

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ACT ONE

OVER A BLACK SCREEN WE HEAR:

A PULSE. RHYTHMIC. REMINISCENT OF THE "60 MINUTES" CLOCK IN IT'S INTENTION; BUT MORE OF A VIBRATING PRESENCE THAT INDICATES TIME, CHANGE AND FORWARD MOVEMENT. AS THE SOUND FADES TO A LOW BUT PRESENT RHYTHM IN THE BACKGROUND WE FADE IN TO:

INSET:

INT. THE WAREHOUSE NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

A determined MARIO ROBINSON, 19 passionately and sincerely addresses the crowd that has gathered.

MARIO

We so focused on the drama of it
all--nobody dealing with the trauma
of it all.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAILY GRACE REHABILITATION PARK - DAY

SAI KHEMLANI, 28. Half dazed, watches his 4-year-old son RAVI play. His wife PRIYA sits dutifully at his side.

SAI

And you...you just can't believe
it. Who are these people that do
this with no consequence? I have
the only consequence? Me. My
family. My community.

CUT TO:

INT. BOARDROOM - DAY

Terra Davis-Green, 38 sits in her usual seat at the head of the table opposite BNN Interviewer EVAN MAE.

EVAN MAE

And you feel that this syndrome is
pervasive in corporate culture?

TERRA

This bullshit is pervasive in American culture. Corporate, non-profit, educational, blue collar...life. And that's what I'm gonna lose or I'm gonna get if something doesn't change and change quickly.

INT. BNN TELEVISION STUDIOS - DAY

Respected Host of "Pulse Of America" News Magazine, EVAN MAE, 40, sits on a stool amid a black backdrop with blue uplighting. A split screen with the emotional face of each interviewee is poised behind her on a graphic.

EVAN MAE

We often hear of the devastating effects of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD with regard to soldiers who come home from the war. Persistent mental and emotional stress as a result of injury or severe psychological shock is a condition that plagues some soldiers who experience combat-directly or indirectly- and their families for years.

But tonight, we will explore a growing phenomenon even more far reaching than PTSD. Often misdiagnosed as irrational behaviour, the angry black woman syndrome; or categorized as a general "crazy," among black people, "Post Traumatic White Folks Syndrome" is the silent enemy that lives within the confines of what many see as the war within our own nation.

CUE TITLE: Post Traumatic White Folks Syndrome

CUT TO:

EXT. DAILY GRACE REHABILITATION PARK - DAY

EVAN MAE (V.O.)
 We begin at Daily Grace
 Rehabilitation Center - A
 specialized treatment facility in
 northern Virginia, dedicated to the
 care and healing of those with
 PTWFS.

INT. DAILY GRACE REHABILITATION CENTER - DAY

Several stations are set up in various rooms where men,
 women, and children are led through rehabilitative counseling
 that includes pill management, eye movement desensitization
 and reprocessing, yoga/cognitive processing therapy, and
 stress inoculation training. EVAN MAE is being escorted by
 REHAB COUNSELOR, 32, a facilitator at the CENTER.

EVAN MAE
 So everyone here is receiving
 therapy--

REHAB COUNSELOR
 --various forms of therapy to
 offset the trauma of their
 ..."encounter."

EVAN MAE
 So the children--

REHAB COUNSELOR
 Everyone here has had an
 "encounter" with White Folk.
 And...well...here they are.

CUT TO:

INT. DAILY GRACE REHABILITATION HOUSING QUARTERS - DAY

Four year old RAVI is having the time of his life playing in
 his made-up world.

RAVI
 Aaaaaaaaah!!!! I'm gonna get you!

Ravi runs revealing father SAI watching the evening news and
 PRIYA watching SAI. PRIYA grabs RAVI in one hand and the
 remote in the other and tries to change the channel, but SAI
 stops her.

NEWS COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
 Officer Kenneth J. Bolow was tried
 and cleared today of any wrong-
 doing in the shooting death of 23-
 year-old Ron Guitierrez.

RAVI uses this moment to escape his mother's grasp and
 continue to play.

NEWS COMMENTATOR (V.O. CONT'D)
 Guitierrez, who was at home washing
 his car in his driveway at the
 time, was shot 12 times in the back
 by Officer Bolow for failure to use
 warm water when rinsing his tires.

PRIYA notices SAI beginning to react to the news.

NEWS COMMENTATOR (V.O.)
 As he returns to duty, Officer
 Bolow has this to say:

OFFICER BOLOW (V.O.)
 I'm ready to get back to
 work...continue to serve our
 community with the law and order
 that it deserves. I'm sorry for my
 family having to go through this;
 my wife had to reschedule her hair
 appointment just to support me at
 trial--

BOLOW'S WIFE (V.O.)
 And I'd do it all again baby.

OFFICER BOLOW (V.O. CONT'D)
 but I'm glad...glad to be back.

PRIYA
 Come. We have to get some air.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAILY GRACE REHABILITATION PARK - DAY

PRIYA walks with SAI, comforting him. RAVI runs ahead in his
 own world of play.

RAVI
 You can't get me!

EVAN MAE

How does that make you feel? To watch the news reports about what happened to Ron Gutierrez?

SAI

Everytime I see it replaying on the TV...I think...It could happen to me. It could happen to my family. It could happen. That is scary. That is terrifying.

PRIYA

Sai is a good man and--

SAI

He was a good man and now he is gone and for what? He--

SAI suddenly notices something out of the corner of his eye. RAVI's hands are in the shape of a gun as he continues in his world of play.

RAVI

I'm gonna get you! Pow pow! Pow!

SAI

No. Ravi No!

SAI leaps to tackle a confused RAVI and shield him for his life. Counselors emerge to diffuse the situation.

PRIYA

Excuse me.

Priya consoles a traumatized RAVI. As counselors drag SAI back to rehabilitation.

EVAN MAE

While this family seeks institutional rehabilitation, college sophomore Mario Robinson has a different approach. We journey south to Atlanta to meet the 19 year old honor student and leader of what he calls the Martin/X movement.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

A crowd of over three hundred 20-somethings are being turned away by a BOUNCER from an already packed club.

BOUNCER
 I'm sorry folks, that's it for tonight. Thank you for coming out. Go ahead and complete your registration paperwork. We'll see you Saturday. Be safe out there.

The crowd reacts and begins to slowly disperse. Some immediately, some to get their paperwork.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WAREHOUSE NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

A mix of spoken word and call and response is led by a passionate and sincere MARIO BROWN.

MARIO (V.O.)
 We so focused on the drama of it all, nobody dealing with the trauma of it all. Black, brown bodies being slain in the streets, no consequence because the officer just claims self defense...If that is all we see, logic says that's what can be and our psyche then retreats into defeat and we just-we just can't afford that. Not any more. We just can't afford that. Any. More.

As the crowd reacts, we

CUT TO:

INT. THE WAREHOUSE NIGHT CLUB INTERVIEW SETUP - NIGHT

The last few members of the crowd file out through the backstage door.

EVAN MAE
 What is the Martin/X movement?

MARIO

Malcom X said "By Any Means Necessary." We are taking it a step further by living, "By every means necessary."

EVAN MAE

Which means?

MARIO

Which means we are not divided by this mythical ideology of one militant approach vs one peaceful approach. We are saying all hands on deck. If you pray, pray; if you fight, fight; if you sing, sing; if you got money, write a check; if you can cook, fix a plate--it takes everybody. And we serve to raise the awareness and the capital to equip people for the fight.

EVAN MAE

What does that look like?

MARIO

Everything from voter registration to gun registration, literacy classes, fresh food assistance, strategic community building, increased minority participation in politics and police forces, financial literacy, religious accountability, listen - We are all in this together. Shoulder to shoulder, we have to eradicate this thing.

EVAN MAE

This PTWFS?

MARIO

I have an issue with the term Post Traumatic White Folk Syndrome.

EVAN MAE

What is your issue?

MARIO

That it never ends.

EVAN MAE

Explain.

MARIO

Post denotes something that has happened in the past. One traumatic experience. You see someone suffer demise or get hurt and you fight to never see that again or feel that way again. This is not that. This is current. This is ongoing. Which is why we cannot focus on dealing with it. We must determine to eradicate it. Coping with a syndrome allows it to continue. I can't cope.

Enter, MARIAN, white male, 19. He is coming to join the interview. He looks familiar but we don't quite know why. He takes his place next to MARIO.

EVAN MAE

You were speaking earlier of shoulder to shoulder...

As MARIAN is getting his mic put on.

EVAN MAE (V.O.)

Mario has a partner in the fight that many people would not suspect.

EVAN MAE

Hi Marian. Glad you could join us.

MARIAN

Thank you, I'm glad to be here.

EVAN MAE

You are--

MARIAN

Marian Robinson...Mario's twin brother.

MARIO

Every means necessary.

EVAN MAE

So how does this work?

MARIAN

We are twins. Same mom and dad. People see me as white and him as black. So we roll with that.

EVAN MAE

You roll with it.

MARIO

We both have spheres of influence
individually and collectively.

MARIAN

And we both have the same goal of
healing our people-

MARIO

Human people-

MARIAN

Right humankind of what dehumanizes
us because of the macro and micro
aggressions we inflict upon each
other regarding race in America.

MARIO

He can go places I can't go. Say
what I can't say to people who
won't listen to me just because of
what I look like.

MARIAN

So that's what I do. And he can do
the same in places I don't have
access to...

MARIO

So I do that.

EVAN MAE

Why--

MARIO AND MARIAN

That's my brother.

CUT TO:

INT. GUN WAREHOUSE - DAY

Mario and his team have 5 service areas: "Voter
Registration," "Gun Registration," "Gun Purchase," "Financial
Literacy," "Sno Cones."

EVAN MAE (V.O.)

On Thursday nights, crowds gather
for what the brothers call a safe
space to be heard, to feel and to
seek understanding.

(MORE)

EVAN MAE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
But on Saturday mornings, Mario and
his team meet back at "The
Warehouse" to continue what they
refer to as "the work of the
movement."

Crowds are lined up in each area for service.

EVAN MAE
And what does this do?

MARIO
It engages people so that we are
not just having conversations about
progress, it increases gun
ownership in the black community by
4% every 3 months. It changes the
conversation.

EVAN MAE
About gun ownership?

MARIO
About everything.

SFX:

HEARTBEAT. PULSE OF AMERICA

CUT TO:

INT. BNN TELEVISION STUDIOS - DAY

EVAN MAE
Our final look tonight takes us to
corporate america, where the trauma
is not as obvious, but cuts just as
deep.

EXT. GLOBAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS HEADQUARTERS - DAY

A view of the picture perfect campus reveals EVAN MAE
entering the main building.

EVAN MAE (V.O.)

It is here at the world's most respected advanced technology conglomerate, Global Science and Technology, where we meet Scientist, Scholar, and CEO Terra Davis-Green

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OF GLOBAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY - DAY

EVAN MAE (V.O. CONT'D)

Terra Davis Green is a rockstar in the science community, and an accomplished innovator in the corporate world.

CONTINUOUS INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Terra Davis-Green shows banks the pictures on the wall of all of the old white males who have previously held her position. The portraits are professionally painted and framed. Trailing EVAN and TERRA is TERRA's secretary JENNA, 64. The women come to TERRA's picture at the end of the hallway just before they enter the boardroom. It is a stick figure drawn by JENNA's 8-year-old granddaughter. The following POV is from a second camera.

JENNA

Oh my goodness! You must be from BNN!

EVAN motions to cut the interview but the camera is still rolling.

JENNA (CONT'D)

Did you see this drawing from my darling grandgirl? Isn't this adorable?! #GirlPower

(to EVAN-sizing her up and down)

And aren't you a doll? Just like "Brownie" here? #BossBabe

(The women exchange a look.)

My lil' pet name.

(Clueless. Then)

She just loves when I call her that.

TERRA DAVIS GREEN
 (Exhausted. But
 Professional. She rises
 above the moment.)
 We're going to go inside for the
 interview.

SECRETARY
 (Beet Red.)
 Oh my goodness. Did I say
 something inappropriate-
 (through tears)
 I did not mean to-I need a little
 break.

Other women from the hallway gather to console JENNA and take her away to a more comfortable setting. The women look back at TERRA with scornful glances.

TERRA Crosses to Boardroom.

OFF OF EVAN MAE'S BLANK STARE WE CUT TO:

INT. BOARDROOM INTERVIEW SETUP - DAY

EVAN MAE
 You hold degrees from three of the
 top institutions in the country-

TERRA DAVIS GREEN
 Correct.

EVAN MAE
 Yale. Harvard. Stanford.

TERRA DAVIS GREEN
 Correct.

EVAN MAE
 Many would consider
 that...powerful.

TERRA DAVIS GREEN
 In this world it is a necessary key
 to gain entry, access to the power.

EVAN MAE
 And you have undoubtedly thrived as
 a minority in these settings.

TERRA DAVIS GREEN
 Yes. There have been challenges
 for sure.

(MORE)

TERRA DAVIS GREEN (CONT'D)

But I was able to overcome them.
Learn from them. Move forward.

EVAN is still obviously taken aback from the exchange she just witnessed with JENNA.

EVAN MAE

Can we cut?

Off the record...So how do you go from successfully navigating those waters to...and I don't mean to be inappropriate here; but please help me understand the exchange we just witnessed. Your secretary just handled you like you were her secretary.

TERRA knows where this is going. But just listens.

EVAN MAE (CONT'D)

...And the exchange would have still been inappropriate even if the roles were reversed. How do you explain that? How you reacted?

TERRA DAVIS GREEN

I pick my battles.

There is silence between the women. EVAN is not sure how to proceed. TERRA is steady. Unshaken. Clear. EVAN resumes like the professional that she is.

EVAN MAE

Help me understand what that means.

TERRA DAVIS GREEN

It means that my secretary's father, the picture on the wall before mine, is still very much in charge. He is the chairman of the board and the primary underwriter for most of our research here.

EVAN MAE

He writes the checks.

TERRA DAVIS GREEN

In a nutshell.

EVAN MAE

Or brings the checks.

TERRA DAVIS GREEN

Correct.

EVAN MAE

How do you succeed here? How do you move forward.

TERRA DAVIS GREEN

(Laughs) you don't. It's not about succeeding. It's about surviving.

EVAN MAE

So it's death by a thousand paper cuts.

TERRA DAVIS GREEN

(Laughs)

It's torture by a thousand paper cuts. You have to understand, I am valuable to this organization; but I am a commodity. If they kill you, they can't mine your talent. Your skill. The patents and discoveries, the strides that I've made here belong to them. So they won't take it too far. Just far enough remind me that I will never be on their level.

EVAN MAE

So the drawing-

TERRA DAVIS GREEN

Is a reminder.

EVAN MAE

Of what?

TERRA DAVIS GREEN

Of the fact that I am competing with an 8-year-old. And that she'll probably have a properly framed photo on that wall before I will.

The camera hangs on TERRA, then moves to EVAN. The show must go on.

CUT TO:

EXT. TERRA DAVIS GREEN HOME - NIGHT

Sprawling mansion of epic proportions. Perfectly manicured lawn. Aston Martin DBX pulls into the driveway.

EVAN MAE (V.O.)

Green works 15-18 hour days. And on the nights that she makes it home, instead of her apartment in the city, she is usually there just long enough to sleep and prepare for the next day.

INT. TERRA DAVIS GREEN HOME - NIGHT

TERRA DAVIS GREEN

(Laughing) Who needs sleep?

EVAN MAE

How does this affect you.

TERRA DAVIS GREEN

(A moment. Thoughtful)
...I'm numb.

EVAN MAE

What does that mean?

TERRA DAVIS GREEN

If anything affects me, then everything affects me. So I put my feelings so far away, I don't have to be affected. I don't even know where they are anymore. And it sucks. But...

EVAN MAE

Does it work?

TERRA DAVIS GREEN

On some level. I have no family. Real friends. Kids. Or future personal life that I can forsee; but I also have no real fear of acting on the recurring dream of strangling my secretary so...

EVAN MAE

It's a trade-off?

TERRA DAVIS GREEN

It's a trade-off.

EVAN MAE
This beautiful home?

TERRA DAVIS GREEN
Trade-off.

EVAN MAE
Ashton Martin DBX?

TERRA DAVIS GREEN
An incredible trade-off.

EVAN MAE
Summer home on the water in
Nantucket?

TERRA DAVIS GREEN
A relaxing trade-off.
(Laughs)

EVAN MAE
Is it worth it?

TERRA DAVIS GREEN
(Pause. Shakes head no.
Smiles to cover the deep
pain of emotion that
begins to rise).

SFX:

HEARTBEAT. PULSE OF AMERICA

CUT TO:

INT. BNN TELEVISION STUDIOS - DAY

EVAN MAE
This has been Pulse of America.
I'm Evan Mae.

THE END