

#PTWFS\_Mockumentary\_KK  
(Post Traumatic White Folk Syndrome)  
A Mockumentary

Written by

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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. ATLANTA UNIVERSITY CONSORTIUM DORM ROOM - DAY

A determined MARIO ROBINSON, 19 focuses intently on his computer screen.

MARIO

You think it will never happen to you. But then it does.

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. It's like, how did this happen? 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

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN, 38 sits in her usual seat at the head of the table.

CORRESPONDENT

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

MARYUM

This bullshit is pervasive in American culture.

(MORE)

MARYUM (CONT'D)

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. TITLE: PTWFS (Post Traumatic White Folk  
Syndrome) 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. Individuals who experience  
combat-directly and indirectly are  
often diagnosed with the condition  
of persistent mental and emotional  
stress as a result of injury or  
severe psychological shock.

But tonight, we will explore a  
growing phenomenon even more  
prevalent than PTSD. Often  
misdiagnosed or dismissed as a  
general "crazy," it lives within  
the confines of what many see as  
the war within our own nation.

A condition known as Post Traumatic  
White Folks Syndrome or PTWFS. And  
as our correspondent Tamara Banks  
shows us, it is more prevalent and  
often more-devastating than it's  
psychological counterpart.

EXT. GLOBAL SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS HEADQUARTERS - DAY

A view of the picture perfect campus reveals CORRESPONDENT  
TAMARA BANKS. As she enters the building, VOICEOVER:

TAMARA BANKS (V.O.)

We begin our journey at the Headquarters of the world's most respected advanced technology conglomerate, Global Science and Technology where we meet Scientist, Scholar, and CEO, Maryum Davis-Brown.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY OF GST - DAY

TAMARA BANKS V.O. (CONT'D)

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

CONTINUOUS INT. HALLWAY. DAVIS-BROWN 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. THE WOMEN COME TO HER PICTURE AT THE END OF THE HALLWAY JUST BEFORE THEY ENTER THE BOARDROOM. IT IS A STICK FIGURE DRAWN BY HER SECRETARY'S 8-YEAR-OLD GRANDDAUGHTER.

SECRETARY

Oh my goodness! You must be from BNN!

(referencing the drawing as she straightens it up and admires it)

Isn't this adorable?! #GirlPower (to Tamara-sizing her up and down)

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

(*The women exchange a look.*)

My lil' pet name.

(Clueless. Then)

She just loves when I call her that.

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

(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 SECRETARY and  
take her away to a more comfortable setting.

MARYUM Crosses to Boardroom.

OFF OF TAMARA BANKS' BLANK STARE WE CUT TO:

INT. BOARDROOM - DAY

TAMARA BANKS

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

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

Correct

TAMARA BANKS

Yale. Harvard. Stanford.

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

Correct.

TAMARA BANKS

Many would consider  
that...powerful.

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

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

TAMARA BANKS

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

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

Yes. There have been challenges  
for sure. But I was able to  
overcome them. Learn from them.  
Move forward.

TAMARA BANKS

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.

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

(Non-verbal recognition of where this is going)

TAMARA BANKS

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

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

I pick my battles.

TAMARA BANKS

Help me understand what that means.

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

It means her 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.

TAMARA BANKS

He writes the checks.

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

In a nutshell.

TAMARA BANKS

Or *brings* the checks.

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

Correct.

TAMARA BANKS

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

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

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

TAMARA BANKS

So it's death by a thousand paper cuts.

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

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.

TAMARA BANKS

So the drawing-

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

Is a reminder.

TAMARA BANKS

Of what?

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN

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.

As the camera hangs on MARYUM, we hear TAMARA's voiceover:

TAMARA BANKS (V.O.)

Brown 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.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARYUM DAVIS BROWN HOME - NIGHT

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

INT. MARYUM DAVIS BROWN HOME - NIGHT

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN  
(Laughing) Who needs  
sleep?

TAMARA BANKS  
How does this affect you.

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN  
(A moment. Thoughtful)  
...I'm numb.

TAMARA BANKS  
What does that mean?

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN  
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...

TAMARA BANKS  
Does it work?

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

TAMARA BANKS  
It's a trade-off?

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN  
It's a trade-off.

TAMARA BANKS  
This beautiful home?

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN  
Trade-off.

TAMARA BANKS  
Ashton Martin DBX?

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN  
A beautiful trade-off.



TAMARA BANKS  
 Summer home on the water in  
 Nantucket?

MARYUM DAVIS BROWN  
 A relaxing trade-off.  
 (Laughs)

TAMARA BANKS  
 Is it worth it?

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

CUT TO:

EXT. DAILY GRACE REHABILITATION CENTER - DAY

TAMARA BANKS (V.O.)  
 Here at the Daily Grace  
 Rehabilitation Center, that trade-  
 off is all too common. But it is  
 not the only kind.

INT. DAILY GRACE REHABILITATION CENTER - DAY

Several stations are set up in various rooms around the center where men, women, boys and girls are led through rehabilitative counseling that includes pill management, Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing, Yoga/Cognitive Processing Therapy and Stress Inoculation Training.

TAMARA BANKS (V.O.)  
 (Cont'd) So everyone here  
 is receiving therapy-

REHAB COUNSELOR (V.O.)  
 --various forms of therapy to  
 offset the trauma of their  
 encounter.

TAMARA BANKS  
 So the children...

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

We end up in a room with SAI, MARLO and 3 other participants.

CUT TO:

INT. DAILY GRACE REHABILITATION CENTER THERAPY ROOM - DAY

SAI

It didn't happen to me personally;  
but just watching it on TV...I  
don't know...it *could* happen to me.  
And that is scary. Disheartening.

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

(Ad lib agreement)

Right. That's it. Scary.

CUT TO:

EXT. DAILY GRACE REHABILITATION PARK - DAY

SAI AND HIS WIFE PRIYA SIT IN PARK AND WATCH THEIR SON RAVI  
PLAY. RAVI IS LAUGHING HAVING A GREAT TIME IN HIS MADE-UP  
WORLD.

TAMARA BANKS (V.O.)

Sai and Priya cling to these  
moments as an escape from the  
trauma they faced in their own  
community.

CUT TO:

B-ROLL OF NEWS COVERAGE OF THE 2017 SHOOTING OF AN UNARMED  
LATINO MALE IN LOCAL COMMUNITY. AS THE VOICEOVER CONTINUES  
WE SEE A HEARTBROKEN LATINO FAMILY. THE MOTHER CONSOLES HER  
TWO CHILDREN. WHITE MALE COP'S TRIAL AND AQUITTAL, AND THE  
SAME COP BEING SWORN IN TO RETURN TO DUTY.

TAMARA BANKS (V.O.) CONT'D

In 2017, local officer Thomas J.  
Bolow was tried and cleared of any  
wrong-doing in the shooting death  
of Sai's friend and neighbor, Ron  
Gutierrez.

SAI

He was a good man. And now he is  
gone.

(MORE)

SAI (CONT'D)

His family...The officer is back on the streets patrolling the neighborhood. Who is next? Is it me? Who will be next for this?

TAMARA BANKS

And that scares you?

SAI

Yes. Very much.

TAMARA BANKS

So how do you deal with it?

AS SAI STARES OFF INTO SPACE.

PRIYA

We have adverse experiences with white people all of the time. But we figure it will get better. They will learn us and it will be ok.

TAMARA BANKS

Does it? Get better?

PRIYA

It does not.

(referencing Sai)

He is a very successful man. Was very successful. But it is too much. The constant failure of the justice system to...provide justice.

INT. HOME OF SAI AND PRIYA KHEMLANI

Sai sits and plays video games and stares off into space as their son Ravi runs around playing in the background.

PRIYA (V.O.)

(Cont'd) It is like he is broken. He cannot work. He says "what is it for?" We come here--to the center-hoping for help to make sense of it. Calm him.

EXT. DAILY GRACE REHABILITATION PARK - DAY

OFF-CAMERA WE HEAR A CHILD'S VOICE "POW POWWWW" CUT TO:

RAVI  
 (Hands formed as a gun)  
 I'm gonna get you! Pow  
 powwww!

SAI  
 (Leaps to tackle Ravi and  
 shield him for his life)  
 No Ravi No!

Counselors emerge to diffuse the situation.

PRIYA  
 Excuse me.

PRIYA consoles a confused Ravi as counselors drag SAI back to rehabilitation.

WITH THE SCENE CONTINUING IN THE BACKGROUND, TAMARA BANKS TO CAMERA

TAMARA BANKS  
 While this family seeks  
 rehabilitation for PTWFS which has  
 provided helpful coping mechanisms  
 for some; others seek a more  
 proactive method in dealing with  
 the condition.

INT. DORM ROOM - DAY

TAMARA BANKS  
 Meet Mario Robinson, 19, an honor  
 student at The Atlanta University  
 Consortium, or AUC. He and his  
 classmates have a different  
 approach.

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

TAMARA BANKS  
 What is your issue?

MARIO  
 That it never ends.

TAMARA BANKS

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.

TAMARA BANKS

Which is why you are buying guns?

MARIO

That's part of it. Yes.

TAMARA BANKS

It sounds counter-productive. Fighting guns with guns encourages more violence, doesn't it?

MARIO

We are not arming ourselves to kill. We are not animals. We are arming ourselves for leverage.

TAMARA BANKS

(looks for understanding)

MARIO

March? Ok. Pray? Absolutely. But faith without works is dead. This is our contribution to the work.

CUT TO:

INT. MARIO'S DORM ROOM - DAY

Mario sits at his computer where we now see he is ordering guns.

TAMARA BANKS (V.O.)

Stockpiling weapons is the work?

MARIO  
That is the work.

CUT TO:

INT. GUN WAREHOUSE - DAY

Mario and his team have three lines: "Voter Registration"  
"Gun Registration" and "Gun Purchase."

TAMARA BANKS (V.O.)  
Each Saturday morning, Mario and  
him team meet at "The Warehouse" a  
local college hangout and register  
black men and women to vote and to  
purchase guns.

TAMARA BANKS  
And what does this do?

MARIO  
It increases gun ownership in the  
black community by 12% every 3  
months. It changes the  
conversation.

TAMARA BANKS  
About gun ownership?

MARIO  
About everything.

INT. BNN TELEVISION STUDIOS - DAY

Evan Mae and Tamara Banks are seated in the studio.

EVAN MAE  
That is fascinating.

TAMARA BANKS  
Eye-opening indeed.

EVAN MAE  
What did you learn?

TAMARA BANKS  
That shit is fucked up.

EVAN MAE to Camera.

EVAN MAE

Thank you Tamara. And thank you  
for joining us. That's it for this  
edition of "Pulse of America."  
Join us next week as we continue to  
explore the effects, causes and  
treatment for PTWFS in our nation.  
I'm Evan Mae.

THE END