Match

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**WORD UP SISTA**

*Theresa Todd*

They say don’t take offense
To the ignorance you exude.

I’m not to be offended as you
Dumb down your speech,

Your words slurred and
Your vocabulary dulled

You spout off “black girl” phrases.
“Word Up Sista” and “I’m down wit that”

Flow freely in your naïve attempts to relate
To the black face sitting across from you.

I’m not to be offended as I watch you
Conform and convert into the woman you think I am

You snap your fingers and swing your neck,
“Oh girl no he dinnint” you say.

I’m not to be offended as you insult my intelligence
And illustrate your picture of black women.

As I stare at the white face sitting across from me
I can’t help but be offended.

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**MATCH**

*Tabitha Jensen*

Cast of Characters

JULIE, early twenties.

SAM, late twenties/early thirties.

SCENE I

ATRISE:

(A coffee shop. Sam is seated at a bench outside, waiting. Julie approaches, looking expectantly around. Sam eyes Julie; she glances at him, keeps looking around, glances back.)

SAM. Julie?

JULIE. Sam?

SAM. Hi!

JULIE. Hi! (They shake hands and laugh nervously) I hope you weren’t waiting around too long…

SAM. Nope, just got here.

JULIE. Am I late? I left really early, because I know how iffy the subway is on a Friday afternoon. It’s like there’s some weird anomaly of people that only work Fridays, because the cars on the road, the people on the bus, the jerks in the street—they multiply by a million on Fridays. I guess they must just be vapor the other six days of the week.

SAM. It’s just noon.

JULIE. Great. I’m glad you spotted me, because I can never remember a face. (Beat) Well, wanna go inside?

SAM. Sure.

(Sam and Julie enter the coffee shop and approach the counter.)

JULIE. Hi. I’ll have a tall Frappuccino, please.

SAM. Grande double-shot mocha, please.

(Julie opens up her purse tentatively, waiting for Sam to pull out his wallet. They awkwardly jumble around with the money for a moment, until Sam defiantly puts down his credit card.)
JULIE. Thanks.
SAM. You don’t look like your picture.
JULIE. What??! (taken aback)
SAM. You didn’t have glasses. In your picture.
JULIE. Oh. They’re new. Is that bad?
SAM. No, glasses are cool. I like glasses.
SAM. (After a prolonged silence) Sure is cold for October.
JULIE. I know! I’ve had my fan going since I got back to campus, since it muffles out most of the stupid stereo and drunken screaming noise, but I’m freezing all the time.
SAM. You don’t have heaters?
JULIE. Oh yeah, we do. But I never use it. It makes the room too hot.
SAM. Oh.
JULIE. I hope it can bump up a couple degrees before Halloween. I don’t want to have to wear some bulky coat over my costume.
SAM. What’s your costume?
JULIE. A French maid.
SAM. Ah.
JULIE. (Ligh t) So I’ll end up dying of frostbite, but at least I’ll die looking good! (Sam is deathly silent) What are you going as?
SAM. Me? Uhh, I don’t do Halloween. It’s not really my thing.
JULIE. Really? It’s my favorite holiday, next to Christmas. It’s just weird to me, like shopping on eBay for another person. (Waits for a response, and gets none) And I’ve got some freaky winks before. Like there was this guy who was fifty two who emailed me. FIFTY TWO. Hello! I said I like older guys, not old guys. He had a grandkid. If we got married, I’d be a stepgrandma at twenty. (Pauses, no response) But then I heard from you, and it was like, wow. There are cool, nice people out there you can meet. (Pauses, no response) How long have you been doing it?
SAM. About a year.
JULIE. Really?!
SAM. Yup.
JULIE. I just signed up when I got back from summer vacation. I am so sick of frat boys and TAs. I never actually dated anyone from school; that’s something I think you should never do. Besides, dating at Yorkshire is more like an engagement. If you’re not married within a few months of graduation, you’re an anomaly. So as far as Match goes, you’re my first date!
SAM. Cool.
JULIE. I was kind of nervous. I mean, not to sound paranoid, but whenever I heard about it before I was like, uh-oh, ax murderers. (Anticipates a response, gets none) But I guess it was more reassuring when you said “meet me at the coffee shop on 25th” rather than “Meet me at the abandoned barn at midnight- come alone.” (Again, no response) I’m glad I did it, though. You seem really... (slight pause) cool.
SAM. I’ve met about a dozen people. Usually it’s just one date.
JULIE. Oh... so you haven’t met anyone special?
SAM. Nope.
JULIE. You’ve never just met someone and thought right off the bat, wow. This could be something fantastic.
SAM. No.
JULIE. I’m not talking about love at first sight... I just mean you felt a little spark, saw something unique inside them somewhere.

SAM. Nope.

JULIE. *(In a much less chipper tone of voice)* So basically, everyone you’ve met online you’ve just met and forgotten.

SAM. Pretty much.

JULIE. *(Clearly irritated)* Well Sam, I’m afraid I have to run. Thanks for the coffee.

SAM. Are you sure? You just got here.

JULIE. Oh I’m positive.

*(Stands up, gets close to the exit, but then suddenly changes her mind and walks back)*

JULIE. You know, normally I would never do this, but I really have nothing to lose, since I very much doubt you’re ever going to call me again, and even if you did I’d have to be high on something to accept. So I’d just like to know what the hell your problem is.

SAM. What?!

JULIE. I’ve been carrying this shitty conversation on my back since we stepped in here. And believe me, it is not a light load to bear. You started off on the WEATHER, for god’s sake. Am I that boring?!

SAM. ...No...

JULIE. And I’ve tried asking you questions, I’ve tried telling stories, I’ve even tried jokes. I know they’re bad ones, but you could at least be a gentleman and laugh!

SAM. I’m... sorry...

JULIE. I don’t get it! You spend two weeks emailing me about Quentin Tarentino, and your research trip to Ethiopia in grad school, and the New Kids on the Block concert you were forced to take your little sister to and all those prepubescent girls thought you were Joey Macintyre and ripped out a chunk of your hair. And I’m totally pumped to meet you, and I went out and bought these god-damn Nordstrom shoes that I really can’t afford and that have given me the worst blisters I’ve ever had because they go with this outfit I picked out special—and I get here, and you can barely say two words to me the whole time! *(Silence)*

So what is your problem? Or my problem? Or the problem with this whole thing?!?

SAM. Sorry, but... you just make me feel... old.

JULIE. What?

SAM. You’re living in a dorm—

JULIE. On-campus apartment!

SAM. Whatever. You’re still taking classes, doors are opening left and right, and you’re not cemented in some damn dead-end career. It’s perfectly socially acceptable for you to go prancing around when it’s forty degrees out dressed like an escapee from the Playboy mansion, and I feel dirty for even thinking about it.

JULIE. You’re only 33. The *Friends* cast is older than that.

SAM. And you’re twenty.

JULIE. Hey! I turn twenty one in two weeks! So if you had this big hangup on my age, why did you email me in the first place?

SAM. I dunno, it sounded good on paper. Or the screen, I guess. I mean, what guy doesn’t want to date a hot twenty-something?

JULIE. You.

SAM. I just didn’t count on meeting you and feeling like a dirty old man.

JULIE. Dirty old men, horny schoolboys- it’s all the same thing.

SAM. I just don’t think it’s going to work out.

JULIE. Well obviously. *(Begins to leave again)*

SAM. Julie?

JULIE. Huh?

SAM. You are funny.

JULIE. Screw you.

*(Julie exits)*

END