

CHANGE  
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BLACK SCREEN

TITLE PAGE

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RESIDENTS OF CALIFORNIA VOTED TO ELECT THE NEW  
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

THEY ALSO VOTED FOR OR AGAINST PROPOSITION 8 WHICH, IF  
PASSED, WOULD ELIMINATE SAME-SEX COUPLES' RIGHT TO  
MARRY.

BLACK SCREEN

JAMIE (VO)

If I could... I would be voting  
for Barack Obama. And not just  
cause I'm black.

Students chuckle.

EXT. STREET, DUSK

A SKATEBOARD rushes past, grounding the gravel of the  
uneven streets of LA. As the board moves further away  
we see the legs and body of a black teenage boy,  
JAMIE.

JAMIE (VO)

I think he'll lead us in the  
right direction. Bringing the  
troops home from Iraq and  
getting us out of the economic  
crisis.

Jamie is tall for his age and has an air of knowing  
about him. His JEANS are baggy and hang low on his  
waist and his GRAPHIC TEE reads "TIME FOR CHANGE".

We move in on his face and he skates faster and faster  
along the sidewalk; his eyes focused on the up-coming  
ledge. He gives another push, it glides over the edge  
and he lands confidently on the street.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM, DAY

Jamie stands at the front of the class. His confident stance is betrayed only by the beads of sweat collecting on his forehead. He grips a piece of PAPER in his hand but doesn't look at it.

We start at the back of the class and move in on him as he speaks, catching the backs of students as we pass them. Some are watching intently, some are scribbling, some are gazing out the window.

JAMIE

Obama said that it needs to start with change. He said "It starts with changing our hearts, changing our minds, broadening our spirit...It's not easy to stand in somebody else's shoes. To see past our own difference." If he wins it will be a change for the better for America.

Some of the kids let out whoops of approval. Jamie smiles slyly and looks to the side of the room - to his teacher to signal he's finished. JEN (30s), white, tall, smiles and nods and Jamie slinks to the back of the room and takes his seat. We close in on the half-crumpled piece of paper he was holding as he shoves it onto the desk. It's a picture of Obama and the words from his speech.

JEN

Thank you Jamie. Excellent work.  
Ivan you're up.

IVAN, a white, good-looking, baby-faced boy walks to the front of the class. He wears a black heavy metal T-Shirt and nothing about him would give it away: He's gay and not ashamed of it.

As he lifts up his paper to read AARON, a small black kid with a lot to prove interrupts.

AARON

(shouts)  
Yes, on Prop Eight!

The kids at the back giggle and TOM, Aaron's sidekick, high-fives him.

JEN

Aaron, please sit outside for  
the rest of the class.

AARON

No problem.

He gets up and swaggers across the classroom towards the door, pursing his lips at Ivan on the way. Ivan stares ahead at Jamie who keeps his head down and stares at his crumpled speech.

The sound of a skateboard and kids laughing come in before we cut to

EXT. STREET, DUSK

Aaron, Tom and a white kid hang by a gas station and Jamie rolls up to them, flips up his board and greets them with a hand shake. AARON smokes a cigarette and offers one to Jamie.

JAMIE

(declining the  
cigarette)

Nah, my Grandmas coming round.  
We're gonna watch it.

AARON

Come to Tom's. His moms workin.

JAMIE

Don't bug me man. It's  
important.

WHITE KID

(with sarcasm)

Great speech today Barack!

Jamie steals the cigarette from Aaron's hand and takes a drag.

JAMIE  
(to White Kid)  
Fuck you.

TOM  
(to White Kid)  
While you're fucking Palin.

The white kid grabs Tom round the waist and tackles him to the ground. They play fight.

AARON  
Did you see Ivan in class today?

Tom and the white kid stop fighting. Tom mimics Ivan and makes his lip quiver. The white kid laughs.

AARON (CONT)  
We're gunna spray his house.

JAMIE  
Why?

WHITE KID  
Cause its funny. He's a fucking queer boy.

JAMIE  
Don't man.

The boys shoot a stare to Jamie. Aaron takes a long drag on the cigarette. Pause.

JAMIE (CONT)  
Do it tomorrow...after they've passed Prop Eight.

Aaron smiles.

TOM  
Yeah, that'll be sick.

AARON  
Jamie does it again. The boy genius!

Aaron gives him a hand shake. Jamie goes to flick the cigarette butt away, looks at the gas pumps in the gas

station and carefully puts it out on the ground. He picks up his board.

JAMIE  
Catch you later.

TOM  
Tomorrow at Ivan's!!

EXT. STREET, DUSK

Jamie skates along the street, passing people rushing home.

He stops at a crossing and presses the button to cross. He hears cars beeping as they go past and looks to see a group of women and children, mostly African American, holding signs that read "YES ON PROP 8" and "PROTECT MARRIAGE" on the other side of the street.

The majority of people seem to be beeping, nodding and smiling at the group. But he notices a twenty-something HIPSTER guy on the other side who's shaking his head and rolling his eyes.

Jamie looks at him: His funky hair cut, tight t-shirt and skinny jeans. As the light signals for them to walk the hipster makes a point of looking back to the demonstrators and shaking his head in disapproval.

Jamie has picked up his board and crosses towards the guy. His eyes are stuck on him. The hipster looks down to the ground still shaking his head then looks up and catches Jamie's stare. Their eyes are locked for a few seconds before Jamie drops his board and glides past the hipster.

He rides the board for a few moments then looks back before.

WOMAN  
(shouts)  
Hey!

He looks forward again and swerves just in time to avoid crashing into a woman as we jump cut to

EXT. HOUSE, EVENING

Ivan sits on a low wall outside Jamie's house. He's holding a sign that says "Equal Rights For All" by his feet. Jamie see's him, jumps off the board and quickly walks up to him whilst checking over his shoulder.

JAMIE

What you doin' here?  
(indicating the sign)  
And turn that around.

Ivan stands up and turns the sign around so people can't read it.

IVAN

I thought you might wanna come  
with me.

JAMIE

Nah, man I can't do that.

IVAN

Why?

Jamie shifts uncomfortably. He moves closer to Ivan and speaks softly but firmly.

JAMIE

Look, its California. Prop Eight  
won't pass. Don't worry about  
it.

INT. BEDROOM, EVENING.

CANDICE (15), Jamie's younger sister, also tall and skinny, watches from the bedroom window. The boys stand pretty close and talk in near whispers.

MOM (OS)

Is Jamie back?

CANDICE

(shouts to her Mom)

No.

EXT. HOUSE, EVENING

The boys stand for a moment - really close. It looks like Ivan might say something but Jamie cuts in

JAMIE

I'll see you tomorrow. Don't stress.

Ivan smiles. Jamie smiles back and then picks up his board and unlocks the front door.

INT. HOUSE, DUSK

Jamie walks into the house and gently closes the door behind him. He balances his skateboard up against the wall and notices a pair of old fashioned brown shoes by the skirting board.

CANDICE (OS)

He's home mom!

Jamie rolls his eyes and quickly runs up the stairs and dives into his room.

INT. JAMIE'S BEDROOM, DUSK

MOM(OS)

Come say hello to your Grandma!

JAMIE

(shouting)

Yeah, I will.

The room is tidy with the exception of a pile of T SHIRTS on the floor. He picks them up, straightens them out and folds them on the bed. He goes over to the mirror and looks at himself, adjusts some wayward pieces of hair.

He stands and listens for a moment. The sounds of the house seep through the floor; children running and screaming, a mother's voice, the muffled murmur of the television. He looks at the door knob - no lock - but judges that the sounds are distant enough.

He falls onto the bed, reaches underneath the mattress and pulls out a MAGAZINE. It's already open on a page, but he flicks through another couple of pages to find something he likes. It's GAY PORN. Jamie lies back on the bed and holds the magazine over his head. He reaches down to unbutton his flies. He's about to reach inside his boxers when

MOM (OS)

Jamie!

He quickly flips over onto his front to hide his open pants and stuffs the MAGAZINE back under the mattress.

JAMIE

What?

He lies still listening for the sound of footsteps or her response... nothing. He exhales, buttons up his jeans and sits up on the bed. He looks at the wall - it's patterned with pictures of Barak Obama.

He gets up and darts out the room.

INT. DINING ROOM /LOUNGE, NIGHT

The table in the center of the room is laden with FOOD for a buffet and GRANDMA, a stern African American lady, sits at the edge of it picking at the CHICKEN WINGS. She's agitated and continually looks to the TV that has the news of the election on in the corner of the room.

JAMIE

Hi Grandma.

Jamie walks over to her and kisses her on the cheek. She mumbles a kind of greeting and looks back to the TV.

MOM(OS)

Check out his T shirt.

Grandma squints and reads his "Time for Change" tee.

GRANDMA

It better be.

His Mom, JOANNE, a beautiful black woman with a dazzling smile, brings in some more food from the kitchen. Jamie sits at the table and starts to pick at it.

JONANNE

How did it go today? You win anyone round?

Joanne slaps his hand away from the food. He frowns at his mom with a 'not fair' face and glances to his Grandma who is chewing on some meat. Joanne gives him a warning look.

JAMIE

They're all Obama anyway.

TYE, 4, bursts into the room laughing. He's being chased by Candice.

JAMIE

(to Candice)

Did you go in my room again?

CANDICE

I needed a shirt.

Candice catches Tye and starts to tickle him.

JAMIE

Well, don't. Just ask me.

CANDICE

Looks good doesn't it?

He looks at her T SHIRT - it has "Obama" written on it and the "o" is replaced with a peace sign. It does look good. Jamie shrugs.

Tye runs past Candice and pulls on her T SHIRT. She lets out a yelp and runs after him.

GRANDMA

(calls out)

I'm gunna need some quiet in this place very soon.

Jamie and Grandma sit in uncomfortable silence for a moment. She watches the television.

GRANDMA

So, you gave a speech today?

JAMIE

Yeah. It wasn't much.

GRANDMA

(dismissive)

Not that they can vote anyway.

Pause. Jamie stares at her. Her fingers grab for food on the table behind her and scoop it into her mouth, dropping some bits on her lap.

JAMIE

We have Pennsylvania now anyway  
so he's basically he's won.

GRANDMA

When I was your age I could not  
sit next to a white woman on a  
bus or in the theatre or in a  
restaurant...

JAMIE

(bored)

Yes, I know.

GRANDMA

(sharply)

What do you know?

(signaling to the TV)

Turn it up.

Jamie bites his tongue. He picks up the remote control, turns up the volume on the television and walks out of the room and up the stairs.

INT. JAMIE'S BEDROOM, NIGHT

He walks into his room and Candice is sitting at his desk painting her nails. He lets out a noise of dissatisfaction and slumps on the bed.

CANDICE

Why aren't you watching?

Jamie thinks for a moment, looks like he might say something but sighs and turns his head away from her. They sit quietly for a moment. We hear the sound of the front door opening and their father getting home.

Candice holds out her hand with the nails she's painted for Jamie to see. He gives her a "they're okay" shrug.

CANDICE

Sarah spoke to Steven today and apparently he likes me.

She waits hoping she might get a response. Jamie stares at the walls.

CANDICE

I think he might ask me out. I don't even like him that much but at least I might finally have a boyfriend...

Jamie looks at her sternly then looks back to the pictures of Obama. He speaks quietly almost to himself.

JAMIE

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character...I have a dream today."

Candice sits and looks at him.

JOANNE (OS)

Kids! Come watch!

They both look at one another, jump up and run down the stairs.

INT. DINING ROOM/LOUNGE, NIGHT

Jamie and Candice run into the room where Joanne, Grandma and now their father, THOMAS, are watching the TV screen with the ABC news.

NEWSCASTER (VO)

Barack Obama will be the 44<sup>th</sup>  
president of the United States...

(sounds of cheering)

That's the reaction out in Times  
Square.

Grandma lifts herself up and shuffles out of the room.

Joanne sits on Thomas' knee and they hold a long kiss and embrace. Jamie watches them and Candice makes a noise like she's throwing up.

THOMAS

(whispers)

I love you.

Joanne smiles, wipes her eyes and turns to the kids.

JOANNE

(to Jamie)

Come here.

He goes to her and she hugs him tight, her eyes moist. Candice goes up behind her brother and joins the group hug.

JOANNE

I wish your Grandpa was here.

Then Tye starts jumping up to them for attention.

JOANNE

(to Tye)

Yes, we love you too.

Joanne picks Tye up and she sits down with him on her knee. Thomas is entranced watching the TV.

Candice starts jumping and dancing around excitedly; singing the "I've got a crush on Obama" song. Jamie,

who is now finally relaxed, smiles and starts dancing along with her. They do their own version of ballroom dancing, he spins her around.

THOMAS

I didn't think it could happen.

CANDICE

(still dancing)

The old are so cynical. Jamie knew he'd win.

THOMAS

You kids have no idea.

JAMIE

God, you sound like Grandma.

JOANNE

(quickly)

Jamie.

Thomas gives a stern look to Jamie and Jamie stops dancing.

JAMIE

Sorry.

Jamie sits down next to his Dad. They both stare at the TV.

Joanne gets up and goes into the kitchen.

JOANNE

(to Candice)

Come help me.

Candice follows her mom out, giving a sly smile to Jamie on the way. He ignores her.

JAMIE

(to his Dad)

When's he coming out? Have they said?

Pause.

THOMAS

You have more freedoms than I could have dreamed of at your age. Change is hard. You shouldn't be so cocksure.

Jamie stares at the TV. Candice dances back into the room.

CANDICE

Let's get the party started!

THOMAS

You're not having friends over!

CANDICE

The food Dad, can we eat the food?

Jamie gets up and makes a bee line for the food. Joanne comes in carrying a bottle of sparkling wine.

JOANNE

Yes. Eat. Where's your Grandma?

JAMIE

(shrugging)

Dunno.

Joanne gives him a look and he turns and with a roll of the eyes he leaves the room to find her.

INT. HALLWAY, NIGHT

Jamie walks down the hallway and peers into the empty bathroom. Then he walks further down and quickly looks into the dark bedroom. He starts to walk back, but pauses when he hears something and looks back in again.

JAMIE

Grandma?

She is sitting in the dark on the edge of the bed. Her head is in her hands.

Jamie slowly walks into the room.

INT. BEDROOM, NIGHT

JAMIE

Are you okay?

He walks up to her. Not sure what to do. He crouches down in front of her. After a moment she reaches out her hand to him. He gives her his and she holds it. She's been crying.

GRANDMA

(whispers)

Free at last.

He smiles and for the first time she smiles back.

JAMIE (VO)

"If there is anyone out there who still doubts that America is a place where all things are possible..."

INT. DINING ROOM/LOUNGE, MORNING

Joanne, Jamie, Candice and Tye sit at the table eating breakfast.

JAMIE

"...who still wonders if the dream of our founders is alive in our time;

CANDICE

...tonight is your...

JAMIE

...who still questions the power of our democracy,  
(pause for effect)  
Tonight is your answer."

JOANNE

That was quick.

CANDICE

It was on YouTube.

Jamie's phone receives a text message. He ignores it.

JAMIE

We should have a day off. To celebrate. They should do that.

JOANNE

Do you want some toast?

CANDICE

Yes.

Thomas walks in with a cup of coffee and sits down to butter some toast.

THOMAS

More good news. Proposition Eight has passed.

Jamie and Candice look up from their food. They digest the information for a moment.

JAMIE

Are you sure you mean "passed"? That means they can't marry?

THOMAS

Yes, I know what it means, thank you, Jamie. And no they can't.

Jamie looks down at his cereal, moves it around the bowl with his spoon.

Joanne and Thomas continue eating their breakfast.

JOANNE

Good.

THOMAS

It's stupid.

Jamie looks up at his Dad, hopeful.

THOMAS (CONT)

They shouldn't have been able to marry in the first place.

Candice is sitting with her head hung low and has begun to cry. Everyone stops eating and looks at her.

Joanne and Thomas look at one another and then throw a questioning look to Jamie.

JOANNE  
(to Jamie)  
What's the matter?

Pause.

Jamie kicks Candice under the table, but she sobs harder.

Pause.

JAMIE  
I don't know. She's stupid.

He pushes his chair out, grabs his phone from the table and makes for the door.

JAMIE  
I'll see you later.

EXT. STREET MORNING

He slams the front door, skateboard in hand, and simply stands on the doorstep staring up the street. He looks at the message on his phone. It's from Aaron and reads "ITS DONE!!"

The skateboard HITS the ground HARD. Jamie launches onto it and down the street. He skates fast down alleys and streets, his attention focused on the road.

As he skates we hear the newscast of the night before with crowds cheering in the background.

NEWSCASTER  
...And in thinking about this moment. The great document of the United States,

The board as it hits a CRACK in the sidewalk and Jamie nearly falls. The board rolls across the street. He stares at it momentarily, but abandons it and continues on foot - RUNNING as fast as he can.

NEWSCASTER (CONT)

...the declaration of Independence says we hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men were created equal. That was two-hundred and thirty-two years ago. This country has not been so good at living up to that ideal. Tonight we take a giant step.

Jamie turns a corner to Ivan's street and STOPS.

Half way down the street Ivan is sitting on the edge of the sidewalk with his head in his hands.

Jamie looks at Ivan's house. Sprayed over the front are the words "FUCKING QUEERS".

Jamie, still breathing hard from the run, looks at Ivan.

Slowly he walks up to him.

He crouches down behind him and then wraps his arms around him. Ivan, stares forward, stone-faced. He reaches for Jamie's hand and holds it.

The camera pulls back as we watch the black boy and the white boy hold each other in silence.

And we CUT TO

BLACK