

OUR NATION

Shooting Script
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Written by

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1 PLATE 1

Norfolk, Virginia - 1915

2 INT. DOUGLAS KITCHEN - DAY 2

DOUGLAS is an African American boy approximately 10 years old. He is nicely dressed, clothes any middle class child of the time may have worn. Ruffled shirt, jacket, slacks, good shoes. He is cleaned up and ready to go out. With him in the kitchen is MARGARET, his mother, an attractive woman in her thirties. She is dressed well, but not for going out.

DOUGLAS

It's only a nickel.

MARGARET

It's not about the nickel. I'll give you the nickel to go to the Lincoln like we usually do.

DOUGLAS

I wanna see The Birth of a Nation!
The Lincoln isn't showing it.
Momma, please.

MARGARET

No.

They stare each other down. Margaret looks nervous. After a moment she turns away from Douglas and picks up some carrots and starts chopping them on the counter, turning her back to the boy. Douglas stands firm staring at her back in the middle of the kitchen.

DOUGLAS

It's in the papers.

MARGARET

I know.

DOUGLAS

There are signs up all through the streets.

MARGARET

I saw.

Douglas searches for an angle to convince his mother of his need to see this film.

DOUGLAS

I already finished my homework.

MARGARET

Good boy.

DOUGLAS

I never been to the Lee.

MARGARET

I'm well aware of that son. I never been either.

DOUGLAS

Let's go together then.

Margaret stops chopping the carrots. She turns and draws up close to Douglas.

MARGARET

Son, someday you'll take me to the Lee. I'll dress up nice in my Sunday clothes, looking all fine just like you do now.

(beat)

But not today. Because the Lee, well son, that theatre is for white folks. That movie too from what I hear. They won't let a colored boy in, no matter you're dressed up and got your nickel.

DOUGLAS

So you'll give me the nickel then?

Margaret stands up and laughs. She goes over to her pocketbook and pulls out a nickel.

She hands it to him.

MARGARET

This I can give you. But I can't make the people running the Lee let you in. Seems like you got to go see that for yourself though. When they turn you away, don't get too upset. Just forget about Birth of a Nation.

DOUGLAS

I gotta get in. It's the greatest movie ever made; I got to see it!

Margaret adjusts Douglas's collar.

MARGARET

Go on then.