

-- but the house is a FULL-SCALE RIOT. Hating the act, drunks SMASH glasses and chairs, SWARM the stage imitating "coon" dancing, and cruelly HECKLE the dark-skinned Maggie.

"BLACKFOOTS"

5/23/22

DRUNK HECKLERS

Come on, jigaboos, shuffle them feet!  
Bug those eyes! Scratch them dirtbugs!  
(taunting Maggie)  
Look at that powderburn! Crawl back to  
your tar pit, you blackface spook!

Maggie cries violently, but White directs everyone to soldier on.

CUT TO:

**BACKSTAGE - AFTER THE SHOW**

As White and Ella are off arguing with the Owner, a quintet of smug black singers, THE BLACKFOOTS, strut up to the choir snickering.

START →

BLACKFOOT 1

Ah, the *No-Name Hebrew-Persian Negroes*.

BLACKFOOT 2

*Feedback* - y'all had those hicks up a gum tree trying to figure you out.

IKE

The Blackfoots! You're headlining!

BLACKFOOT 3

Of course we are. *Feedback* - if you want to, you'd better get serious about who you are, what you represent.

LOUDIN

What's *your* act?

BLACKFOOT 4

The Blackfoots are about legacy, history, authenticity.

BLACKFOOT 5

(pumps a *Black Power* fist)  
We sing black music about the black experience! We tell *our* stories --

BLACKFOOT 1

-- but keep it mainstream!

BLACKFOOT 2

Some are ashamed of our heritage; we shout it from the rooftops! We stay true to the roots and keep it real --

BLACKFOOT 3

-- but mainstream. We find that sweet spot!

TOM

And Whites pay to see it?

BLACKFOOT 4

Is you serious?! Look at us --  
(shows off their bling)  
-- velvet lapels, muskrat pumps, pearl-handled picks. That's white money!  
That's the power of *crossover*!

CHOIR

Wow!

BLACKFOOT 5

Wow, right! Stay for the show, feast on the crumbs.

END

FLASH FORWARD TO:

**AUDITORIUM - JUST BEFORE THE BLACKFOOTS' SHOW**

As White, Ella and the choir excitedly await the Blackfoots' show, the lights dim. The curtain rises.

The Blackfoots bound onstage singing a spiritual --

BLACKFOOTS

NORA, NORA LET ME COME IN,  
DE DO'S ALL FAST'NED AN' DE WINDERS PINNED  
DARKIE DANCE DE JUBA FOR IT, HA HA HA!  
SHUFFLE SCRATCH SLAP-'N-SKIP, HA HA HA!

-- in blackface, dancing like buffoons. Sporting bulging eyes, buck teeth and slave chains as jewelry, they're full-on minstrels.

BLACKFOOTS

FOR A SPADE TO CROON  
GIVE A TUNE TO THAT COON!  
KEEP YO' HAN' ON DAT PLOW, HO'D ON!

The audience ROARS. The choir retches.

**INT. FLEABAG MOTEL - GRIMY DINING ROOM - NEXT MORNING**

The choir sits at a putrid table, scratching bug bites and picking at foul food. All are shattered but the unfazed White, who eats heartily, and Ella, who fastidiously perfects the score.

As Bennie flips through the paper, he gasps.