

**By Lisa Langford**

**MARLENE SIDE**

Edited to be read as a monologue from page 63-64

MARLENE

Do you think I'm racist?

... She said I know her better than anybody and I don't know her at all.

...It's not like I'm incurious.

When Needie and I were in college, there were these Black people with giant afros and towering head wraps who would lie on the ground in front of the bursar's office every time the cafeteria workers wanted a raise. And, one day, while they were protesting some great injustice—the safe kind that only occurs on college campuses, because we *all* know that once those Kente-covered dissidents graduated and were affirmatively acted upon with ridiculously good jobs, they stopped protesting injustice and started perpetuating it— and Needra stood there staring at them, *transfixed*, with this *yearning*, like she wanted to join them more than anything in the world. She saw me see her watch them. She's my best friend; I'm like, "Let's go! Let's lie down on the sidewalk! Let's chain ourselves to something!" She looked at me like I was the dumbest, whitest person she'd ever seen.