



## Point After Touchdown

By Chris L. Brown

# Addicted to Boos

Ya know, Eddie Murphy once told Barbara Walters about how he would drive around in his car at night and just cry. He would pull up to a stop light sobbing, and somebody would pull up next to him and recognize him, and as he would try to wave to them a strand of mucus (translation: snot) would stretch from his hand, they'd be grossed out, and he'd jam on the gas when the green beckoned him. Ahh, the dramatically ironic life of a comedian. I know what my bro was talkin' about.

But it's time to get down to business. How many of you were at the Que Essence's *Showtime at the Apollo* production last Wednesday (raise your hands)? Now, how many of you were not there?

Today is Monday, March 4. In two weeks and three days, I have been a part of four comedy shows. In three of them, I felt chill; I enjoyed myself and the audience also seemed to have fun. But then, (dun-DUNNNNN!!) came the fourth show. I remember asking the young lady who got me to be a part of the *Apollo*: "Apollo? Man, that's a tough crowd, isn't it?"

"No," she assured me, "You are *established* talent. They don't boo *established* talent." Being the trusting brother I am, I agreed to do it at that point. What the freak, as my ex-homeboy Tom Cruise (he ain't down no more, not after *Days of Thunder*) used to say. But as it would turn out, she could

beginnings of a crowd lining up outside the door. I was pleased, because the crowd was predominantly African-American. I went backstage and started to psych myself up.

Dangit, I knew that trouble was about to arise when this fashion show thing went on before me. Although some of the designs were reminiscent of the strapped-together clothing a New York subway dweller wears, I was still surprised to hear such an unwelcome greeting from the crowd. Their clapping was about half as generous as that crowd at Black Awareness Day in *Coming to America* (remember?). I mostly heard lustful barks (I wonder who?), and 1,000 'Miss Thing' snaps and raps to the tune "Oooh, girl I can't believe she wearin' that!" The homeboy who designed it all, in the end, just came out, raised both his hands in self-proclaimed victory, and didn't even wait for the crowd's reaction. He was gone.

I'm backstage talking to someone about how long I should be when I hear my name being called. The woman I was speaking with

said, "That's you!" I was rearin' to go, hopefully to entertain my African-American peers with some intelligent humor. Right before I jogged out, somebody encouraged me: "Do good. We need them to laugh right about now." I guess I didn't consider that the said laughter could come *at* my expense, instead of because of my expenditure.

I arrived at the mike, and as my mom and sister stopped clapping, there was an instant of silence. Then, I heard it — a few boo addicts were flexing their nuclear voiceboxes. I hadn't even said a mudflippin' word, and those mugs were about goin' off already! I popped the first joke quickly, trying to drown the unbelievers. It went well, the audience laughed. Whew! I thought I was OK and I was — until I started to talk. You see, *intelligent* humor requires that one *substantiate* what one is talking about first, then go into the jokes. One cannot just go up there, grab one's scotch, say "Freak, Foul, Freak Yo Mama, Foul, Filth, Freak," and then "Thank You and Good Night." The audience is ideally going to listen. But, no, not these brothas and sistas. It wasn't long before a chorus of boos (not unlike the Hallelujah chorus, but mo' funky) attacked me. I kept running that "Established Talent" line through my head as I stood there. The woman probably is still off in a corner somewhere in stitches of laughter, talkin' about "What a sucka! What a sucka!"

Then, like the cavalry, I heard some applause trying to encourage me to keep going. This daring faction grew until it about equaled the boos. (And, let me take the time to thank those people who risked their lives for my flailing dap.) So I stood there and laughed while a live "Less Filling (boos)/Tastes Great (cheers)" battle erupted. (In real life, it's better than the commercials.) I tried to talk, but the noise was too loud.

Finally, one of the louder boo addicts shouted something out like, "Get outta here! You boring!" So, I retaliated: "Man, why are you bothering me when I'm trying to work? I don't come up to McDonald's and bother you when you're trying to work!" The crowd liked that, and aimed their laughter o' ridicule at The Mouth. Then, the unexpected happened. I'm standing there watching the guy leap up, grab his coat, jog to the stage, and hop on. My smarter instincts said, "Run! RUN!" but I

stood my ground. He covered the mike up, almost as if he thought someone had called him up there.

"What's up?"

I looked at him. "Say something."

"Nah, what's up?"

How ironic — at that point, I was smelling booze on this boo addict's breath. I fought to keep my consciousness. "Say something to cut me down," I whispered in his ear. The crowd was silent in anticipation. He turned to the mike. "He said for me to cut him down, (dramatic pause) so he can f— me up in the end." He turned to me and lightly hit me on the head. "I don't play that." And, oh, they booed. They booed *him* off the stage. They booed 'till the cows came home. They booed that poor mug's head under his sweater. They booed him all the way to Kansas. So, I took that cue and said "SSSSee ya."

Now, it was a learning experience and all that, but I do have a little beef to get out. To those boo addicts: Who Are You To Boo?!! I say my one boy was at least brave enough to come up and face the challenge and receive his fair payment for openin' his cavernous mouth. But what about the rest a' ya? Sittin' back there in the dark, with a thousand-and-one others around you doing the same thing. I say BOOOO back to ya! To all you non-listenin', McDonald's workin', non-hair combin', non-doorprize winnin', fake Kool Moe Dee lookin', Time Out biscuit eatin', non-tryin' to better yourself doin', non-class attendin', non-UNC attendin', *Soul Gloin'*, non-booty shakin', non-comedy appreciatin', supah street- language talkin', non-teeth brushin', Afro-wearin', Schlitz drinkin' muggs, Boo! BOOO! BOOOOOOOO!!! So git on, ya gizzards! Go boo yo mama!

Bill Cosby once said that if a crowd doesn't like your act, it's your own fault. Well, Bill never did the UNC *Apollo*. It may have partly been my fault, but it was mostly the fault of a substance called al-co-hol, as well as a state of mind called ignorance. If I sound bitter, I'm not.

I know that the crowd came on the premises that they could be rowdy and voice their displeasure and it was all in some twisted version of good fun. In fact, everybody's invited to my next performance . . . naaaaaah. Don't call me, I'll call you (or boo ya, if I get the chance).

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## & Entertainment

Hold on (Hey, Erika & Gai — you've got 3,043 people reading the *Ink* at this moment. Not bad, huh?) . . . Okay. Well, for those of you that were not there, let me tell you of my . . . adventure on stage.

have sold me the Brooklyn Bridge and the returns would have been better.

So, I trotted my humble self up to Great Hall a little while before the show and saw the familiar

## Bilal

By Lem Butler

