

## *let em eat brownies*

*n i wasn't tryin to be funny*

Avery Young

Sixth period bell *dings* or whats-in-ever the onomatopoeia. i slice silence barkin at two students who wanna "big redden" in the hallway ... *all that lips smackin ... yall need to be in class instead of swappin hootchie-nitis !* rm. 318's seriousness discombobulated. Belpedio's face pink grapefruit n her students laugh n toss.

i'm shamed face-ed. had no idea i was that loud when i said it ... or *that* funny. but they aint laughin at what i said. they laughin at my laugh. a lotta folk do / a lotta folk dont. one of my dearest friends calls my laugh *obnoxious* ... one of my biggest haters call it *ear piercin* ... i call it *Mines*. but they laughin. i'm laughin cause they laughin. but we cant spend the whole period inside this glee so i bring order by composin myself n askin *whats so funny*

young sage cullud girl i call *Paprika go You- Mr. Young. You silly.* i thank her n calm the class down with some deep breathin. orderrestored. that is until i look over to my left n spot a table decorated with two boxes. inside these boxes be cheesecake brownies ... peanut butter brownies .. raspberry fudge cake brownies ... s'more- james brown brownies ... a buncha brownies ... brownin up the joint. i go *who birthday?*

baffled at the laughter that follows such a question (irritated a bit) i say *i'm as serious as the sick n shut it ... who birthday?* erybody in the class room doin that *o my-stomach-hurt*-laughin. i swear fo god *Ms. Paprika* bout to throw up / she laughin so hard. erybody bonkers all cept this one brother sittin last seat fifth row. of course i just think him doin the *Billy Dee*.on me cause him aint been laughin the whole time. not that him not engaged ... aint inside a *Billy Dee*'s steelo to laugh. they keep it cucumber.

Belpedio hushes the room ... collects some homework she assigned the week befo n gets to passin out the brownies ... i thank her n we start the class. folk eatin brownies as i'm talkin bout poetry. as i am explainin the assignment due the next day, i peep *Billy Dee* brownie-less. so i ask *Billy Dee ...you too cool fo a brownie?*

order leaves court. class laughin fo two reasons; one ... *Billy Dee* must never be questioned bout anything n I dare do it; two...i'm addressin him all the while i'm chumpin on a cheesecake brownie (n it sho was a stone-cold-groove kinda yummy too!/ had me doin a *lucky-day* dance) ...

i go *fo real ... you allergic to brownies?*

class laughs.

him go *No*.

i go *am i botherin you with my fascination as to why you not partakin upon a brownie.*

class laughs harder.

him crack a smile then go *No*

i apologize to the class fo spendin this valuable time focussin on Billy Dee's defiance, but i had to ax ... *has a brownie ever done somethin to hurt yo heart?*

class hysterical.

him go *Naw, Dude I just don't wanna brownie.*

i go *cool ...*

n it really aint bout the brownie. i'm jarred. people who are not doin what erybody else is doin have always manipulated my attention. its like in the movie *Julius Ceasar* - the scene in which Julius bout to meet him maker ... erybody in the senate ... .. talking n carryin on ... then the frame of Cassius givin *the look* then all the conspirators gather round Caesar ... the under-score strikes somethin dangerous ... quick frame to the senate .. then Caesar ... then Casius ... then a hand goes underneath a robe ... some woman screams ... *jab/jab/jab ...Et tu Brute* ... folk chicken-run erywhere ... but the diabolical conspirators retreat like they did nothin mo than belch up henno.

not that i think *Billy Dee* gonna shank a brother, but i always find the need to address such defiance in order to keep my head on right.

but i digress bein bout the bidness of teachin the class poetry n then the bell does that onomatopoeia thing. i say goodbye ... students clear the classroom. as i am gatherin my bearings n get ready to leave. Belpedio pulls me to the side n goes ... *you are hilarious. that young man that didn't 'partake upon a brownie' is a wonderful and pretty bright student. I think he has some new girlfriend and has been missing a couple of assignments. I called his mother and she sent these brownies as a thank you and to teach him a lesson.*

my inside voice say *big mama wudda just got in my azz* but you never know when you have company so i say *wow! i had no idea.*

Belpedio says *I know and that's what makes the situation so funny. Don't worry. He knows you weren't teasing him or that you had any idea that his actions was the reason why there were brownies ... but when you asked him had a brownie ever did something to 'hurt his heart,' I could have died.*

i go *i'm glad you didn't ... that wudda funk'd up the brownie party.*

we laugh n *hasta miana* each other. as i am walkin down the hallway to the next room, i get to thinkin ... its an mystifyin thing... the way our mamas can fold us wherever we be (even when they dnot not in the room). i also know fo sho that *Billy Dee* is a good n respectful son. him endured my interrogation like *Meshach, Shadarach* n *Abedego*. didn't flinch inside the fire. withstood it real *slick-like* ... as a *Billy Dee* spose to.

i'm thinkin, what wonderful motherin. i guess watchin oprah does pay off cause this neo-parentin amazes me. *Billy Dee* didnt even look at them brownies. n him knew they were there n him knew him was the reason why. him sat patiently as i ran mouth bout him not

eatin or likin or bein heartbroken over a brownie. *wow ... Billy Dee* a really-good brother. cause had he ate one ... i wudda called him mama myself n told her ... *just throw up bofe yo hands n give Billie Dee on over to the lord. you done birth a sociopath!*

24 hours later ...

i'm inside rm. 318 ... befo the *you-late-bell*. when all the students get situated, i ax fo the homework. *Ms. Paprika* hands me a poem n swears her didnt know what to write n hopes i *like* it. I respond *I aint here to 'like'... I'm here to respond*. class laughs then *Billy Dee* hands me a page of poetry. i go *dang Billy Dee ... you did it! I was hopin fo pizza!*

room on hush.

*Billy Dee* code broke. him laughs. goes *got you faded next time*.

i laugh out loud.

room joins in.

i never have to eat any type of brownie ever.