



SAMPLE OF SENSITIVITY READING FEEDBACK

In this example, the main character Sam is on vacation and runs into an old acquaintance. This example is an excerpt from a larger story. Sam is not written intentionally to be bigoted or racist.

We were walking down the crowded street, our first night in Vegas. We passed a club where a huge black guy was guarding the door. He had on a red polo shirt with the club logo on his chest. Standing at the door next to him was a 20 something year old woman in a tight sparkly dress and red lipstick. As I got closer, I realized he wasn't just a bouncer, I recognized him from campus.

"Hi Tyrone!" I walked up more confident that I would be able to get in, now that I recognized him.

"Hey Sam, what are you doing around here?" He gestured to the woman at his side, "this is Melanie."

She put a cigarette to her lips and barely nodded in my direction. Suddenly a woman with dark copper skin and tight ringlets came out of the club, "Melanie, your date is at the bar looking for you."

I looked at her and I could tell from the cut of her eyes and wild hair she didn't suffer any fools and would be quick to put anybody in their place.

Melanie rolled her eyes, "Fine. I'll go see what he wants in a minute." She continued, "you know how I feel about needy men. I have no patience for them."

"We know." The new girl and Tyrone said simultaneously.

She smashed her cigarette against the side of the building and tossed the butt on the ground and disappeared inside the darkened doorway.

The characters in this text are entirely fictional. Any resemblance to actual persons living or dead is entirely coincidental. Copyright © 2021 Writing Diversely LLC

Commented [1]: capitalize Black. This description is vague and can be seen as a stereotype if not balanced elsewhere in the text with a richer description of Tyrone

Commented [2]: It's unclear if Sam was nervous about approaching because there was a huge Black guy standing there or if nightclub lines intimidate them.

Commented [3]: Everyone except Melanie has a racial or physical description. Is the reader supposed to assume Melanie is white? Read about White Default <https://www.writingdiversely.com/post/dismantling-the-white-default>

Commented [4]: Sam is assuming only negative things about this character just by the way she looks. Also, "wild" is a very loaded term historically when describing how WoC look and act. Use an alternative description

Commented [5]: Overall, there are several examples in this one page that show bias or stereotypes against characters of color. Sam comes across as biased against PoC and as a reader I'm concerned that I'll have to be exposed to a racist character