

## **Walking next to Michael Brown**

But sometimes I wonder if my appearance would have mattered had I grown up in Ferguson - a town that is seventy percent Black, unlike my neighborhood, which was five. Maybe walking through Black neighborhoods makes you Blacker. I mean, it's not like I'm that White. My lips are full and my hair kinks in humid air. So maybe, if I were walking next to Michael Brown on Canfield Drive, I would've rocked that St. Louis Cardinals cap to the side with a little less irony. Maybe I would've helped him steal those cigars because I wasn't in rehearsals because Normandy High, where Michael Brown graduated, had no theatre department. Maybe I would've spent more time at the gym, put on some weight. I would've been more suspicious, more observant, more defensive, resulting in a more persuasive swagger so that from a distance Officer Wilson, through his tinted windshield, would've seen Michael Brown walking next to Another Tall Black Dude wearing a red cap obscuring his green eyes." "And maybe when Officer Wilson pulled up to the curb and grabbed Michael Brown by the throat, I would've run out of time."

"Because 'Officer, there must've been a miscommunication' takes about four seconds to say. Michael Brown was shot six times":

"Officer (bang!) there musta (bang!) been a (bang!) miscommuni (bang!) cation (bang! bang!)."