

## B-B-B-BAD TO THE BONE

Hello, network execs? Please fund this TV show. ✨ By Candace Moore



Skyler Cooper, who plays Bone



Melange Lavonne, who plays Jaden

**T**HE PILOT OF Amber Sharp's sassy serial dramedy, *Don't Go*, which focuses on lesbians of color in Los Angeles, has been wowing audiences and winning awards on the LGBT film festival circuit over the last year. The diverse cast, includes butch stage actor Skyler Cooper, who heats things up with her très foxy female masculinity; lesbian film veteran Guin Turner (*Go Fish*); *Chutney Popcorn*'s director and star, Nisha Ganatra, who plays a rebellious Indian American; and new talents Yaniv Moyal, Janora McDuffie and musician Mélange Lavonne. *Don't Go* combines the best elements of a *Melrose Place*-type prime time soap and a contemporary lesbian series like *The L Word*. Let's hope it gets scooped up by a queer-friendly cabler, just as it deserves.

### SKYLER COOPER

#### Tell us about your character in *Don't Go*.

Bone's a drifter. She's Jaden's best friend and very protective, for reasons revealed later. The most I can say without giving much away is that they're tight. Bone doesn't come from the same side of the tracks that Jaden came from. Jaden is privileged and it's interesting that they become friends.

#### How would you describe Bone's gender?

I think [Bone] knows about the concept of genderqueer. She can be many things. It will depend on what the writers do with the character. But she's butch, good old-fashioned butch.

#### What are the prospects for *Don't Go* getting on TV?

It takes up to a year for most pilots to get picked up. A lot needs

to be negotiated. It would be a travesty to not see a show like this on television. I applaud the creator for this concept. We had *Queer as Folk*, which called to the white, gay male community, *The L Word*, which represents the white, female L.A. community, and then we have *Noah's Arc*, which is mostly for the African American, gay male community. I'm glad that it's the women of color who are like, "Let's unify it all." I'm hoping that that's the next step for the queer community.

#### What was it like to work with your costars?

We were such a tight-knit family. Guin Turner—I'll tell you, when I heard that she was cast as the resident intersex character and read the script, I thought, Oh no, I don't want to have to hate on her! I remember watching *Go Fish* and thinking, She's so cute. You know how the kid who likes the girl in the cafeteria always teases her? I think there might be some of that going on for Bone. I played with it a bit—how would I act out if I had feelings for my buddy's girlfriend and there was some jealousy.

#### You're going to be on a series on JengoTV.com called *First Take*. Could you tell us about that?

Shortly after we did *Butch Mystique*, Deborah Wilson wanted to follow me around as an out African American actor looking to break into Hollywood. Lo and behold, I got my first pilot, *Don't Go*, within three months. There are things out there for me. Butch is sexy. It's when you come out as butch or genderqueer—however you feel most comfortable in your skin—when the world really accepts you. When you try to put on something you think you should be—that's when you're uncomfortable. I