

Take Two

GABOUREY SIDIBE
STEALS THE
SHOW AGAIN IN
A STIRRING NEW
CABLE DRAMA

Last fall we were learning to pronounce the name of the actress in a hard-to-swallow indie film, *Precious*. Now Gabourey Sidibe, 27, is a mainstream star. The Oscar nominee chats about her role as a spirited student on the new Showtime series *The Big C*. Listen in.

ESSENCE: Your character, Andrea, seems a bit like you—sassy and secure.

GABOUREY SIDIBE: Andrea's sassy, but she's kind of mean too. That's her defense mechanism.

ESSENCE: Speaking of mean, Andrea's teacher (Laura Linney) tells her she has two choices in life—either be “fat and jolly or a skinny bitch.” As a full-figured woman, were you offended by that line?

G.S.: I have a very sick sense of humor, so I thought it was hilarious! Besides, I know jolly fat girls and bitchy fat girls, so perhaps it's not an either/or situation.

ESSENCE: You've become a symbol of self-love and empowerment. Was that your intention?

G.S.: It was a happy coincidence, actually. People thought I should hate myself because I don't look “the norm,” but what is the norm? I absolutely believe you can be anything you want to be and you should love yourself, no matter how you look or what anybody thinks regarding your body.

—Regina R. Robertson