

SCENE TWO

The Beach.

Charlie is doing kick ups

CHARLIE

21, 22, 23, 24, 25

CHI

Charlie, can you help please?

CHARLIE

Shhh, this takes focus. Kick ups are -

CHI

I hope you get sand in your eye.

CHARLIE

Hostile.

CHI

Can you not do that later? I need help with the tape measure and Quad-

CHARLIE

30, 31, 32... Ask Kam or Ella.

CHI

(across the beach)

Kam! Come help man!

KAM

(across the beach)

Yooo, just make up the numbers. No one cares.

CHI

Argh, fine. I'll just do it myself.

ELLA

I can help!

CHI

...

ELLA

Did you see that? She just rolled her eyes at me.

She's just like that. KAM

It's so hot. ELLA

Ooh! I got a fan. KAM

Pink? ELLA

He turns on a portable fan that he's using to keep her cool.

It's Chi's. Is that better? This dumb thing doesn't go any faster. KAM

Yeah, I'm good. Your turn, here give it to me, you look hot. ELLA

She takes the fan from him and turns it to face him.

Yeah I am! That's calm still. So babe... KAM

Babe? ELLA

Ella. KAM

Yes... ELLA

I was thinking yeah, tonight me and you could have some alone time. Chi's not gonna snake if you want to sneak out. We can meet in the common room. KAM

Hmm... ELLA

Obviously we've been doing a ting for a- KAM

ELLA
(mock offense)

Doing a ting?

KAM

So what you saying?

...

The ball is kicked towards the Quadrat.

CHARLIE

Ooh crap! HEADS!

CHI

Oh my days Charlie! What is wrong with you?! You messed up the whole sample.

CHARLIE

Soz accident.

CHI

Now I have to start again.

CHARLIE

You were doing it wrong anyway.

CHI

You come and do it then!

KAM

(calmly)

Don't talk to her like that.

CHARLIE

(equally calm)

I'll talk to her however I want. I'll talk to whoever however I want.

Kam stands up.

KAM

Is it?

CHI

Leave it Kamara.

Charlie walks towards Chi.

CHARLIE

Yeah, leave it...

(he searches for an insult and lands on)

...Kameroon. Do what your sister says little man.

KAM

Kameroon? Little man?

ELLA

Kam just leave it.

CHARLIE

What now you got two females talking for you? Embarrassing.

KAM

(beginning to get angry)

I'm not your mate. Who are you talking to like that?

CHARLIE

You Kameron, you absolute Beta!

KAM

That's not my name.

CHARLIE

I don't care. Kamer-

Kam lunges at Charlie.

KAM

Imma rock your jaw.

CHARLIE

Yeah? Come on.

They start to scrap.

KAM

You prick!

CHI

Stop man.

KAM

Get out the way.

Chi attempts to step in and takes a punch to the arm.

CHI

Ow.

KAM

Look what you made me do, you wasteman!

CHARLIE

I'm not the one who hit her. I'd never hit a female, but I guess that's what happens when you're not raised right.

Kam lunges again.

KAM

Imma kill you.

ELLA

Kam don't!

KAM

Ella let me go.

CHARLIE

See ya Kameroon.

KAM

Look he's getting away man. Move Ella.

ELLA

Leave it. Look he's gone now.

KAM

Why did you get involved? You should've let me have him. Now he thinks he's-

ELLA

Look.

KAM

What.

ELLA

Chi.

KAM

Oh.

ELLA

Are you alright Chi?

CHI

I'm fine.

KAM CHI
I'm (sorry)- Let's just finish this so we can go to lunch.

KAM
Nah, dead that. I'm gonna go chat to him. He thinks he can just chat to man anyhow.

ELLA
Kam! Come back!
Chi do you want any -

CHI
(without looking up)
I don't want nothing from you. Go chase after your likkle boyfriend man.

ELLA
Fine.

CHI
Typical.

Chi finishes up her work.

SCENE FOUR

Beach

Charlie and Kam are on their hands and knees trying to assemble materials.

Ella and Chi stand on either side overlooking.

CHARLIE

That doesn't go there mate. You have to put the rope through the planks.

KAM

Mind your ting yeah and I'll mind mine...

CHARLIE

I'm just saying you're doing it wrong, idiot. The planks are too far apart. Let me do it.

KAM

(he's hurt but hides it well)

I'm not an idiot. I've got it yeah.

CHI

Hurry up so we can get out of here. Lunch was so dead, I'm starving **and** it's too hot **and** we've only been here a few hours **and** it's already hell.

CHARLIE

All you women do is complain.

CHI

Whatever.

ELLA

I've got the instructions, if that helps?

CHARLIE

Nah we don't need them man, it's just common sense init.

CHI

Clearly it's not that common.

ELLA

Exactly, we're not getting anywhere.

CHI

Kamara, if I drown when I get on this bridge yeah... I swear-

KAM

What did I say about my guvvy Chi?

CHARLIE

They're not gonna actually make us get on it.

ELLA

I don't think that's how you do it.

CHI

That doesn't make sense.

CHARLIE

If we wanted your opinion, we'd ask for it. It's a race, we need speed not...

ELLA

Oh my God, just let us help.

CHARLIE

... Just sit your pretty self down somewhere and focus on your nails or something.

Chi shifts, she smiles, a deliberate attempt to disarm him.

CHI

So you think I'm pretty?

Charlie is taken aback by this comment.

CHARLIE

No, nah, I mean- for a Black girl init.

He's regained his swagger, Charlie stands up as if he's gonna move to her. He licks his lips and ambles towards her.

CHARLIE

What, you interested in a little cream in your coffee?

Chi smiles and rolls her eyes.

CHI

Ew. Back up weirdo.

Kam stands up between them.

KAM

Come near my sister yeah and watch what happens. This time I won't hold back.
Deadass. Back up.

*Charlie backs away and heads back to
building of the bridge.*

CHARLIE

Whatever man, I'm gonna finish this myself.

ELLA

Look the parts are numbered, just connect the bits in order.

The boys completely air her.

ELLA

Guys, it's not...

KAM

Babe, just let us handle it init... like we got
this.

CHARLIE

Listen to your man yeah. Men are better at this stuff, it's a biological fact.

*Charlie and Kam continue in their
assembly struggle.*

KAM

Pass that bit of rope there.

CHARLIE

What for?

KAM

To hold them together.

CHARLIE

We don't need to do that yet.

KAM

I'm not dumb you know.

CHARLIE

Could've fooled me.

As they bicker, Chi and Ella make eye contact. They snigger to themselves, in absolute awe of the performance of hypermasculinity. They're tangled in the rope.

Not them getting tangled. CHI

Dummies. ELLA

Right. CHI

You- ELLA

Chi catches herself, kisses her teeth at Ella.

We're not boys. CHI

It's like that? ELLA

It is. CHI

Chi folds her arms defiantly.

ELLA
Look, you don't have to be my bestie but we shouldn't have to suffer in this heat because they don't want our help. Wanna get out of here?

CHI
...

ELLA
You could work on your application before dinner...

CHI
...

ELLA

I saw they had a little sensory room near the canteen.

CHI

...

ELLA

I'll show you... I won't even stay. I'm gonna have a nap.

CHI

Fine. We're leaving.

ELLA

Yeah.

CHARLIE

Okay bye.
Move that man.

KAM

You move it.

SCENE FIVE

SENSORY ROOM

Chi is in the Sensory room working on her iPad, the screen won't work properly and it's growing her frustration. Kam enters.

KAM

Yo quick one, can I get the charger?

CHI

Hi, hello to you too and no, I need it. This thing won't stay charged and the screen don't work when the battery is low.

KAM

I'll be quick, I swear.

CHI

Kam please don't...

KAM

I'm... just... going to... yoink. I pinky promise, I'll bring back in 10. Just gotta post something quick. Here take this.

CHI

I don't like kit kat.

KAM

Eat it, it's good for you. Bye.

CHI

See ya.

*Kam exits.
Eventually Charlie enters on the phone.*

CHARLIE

Alright dad. Love you mate.

CHI

What you stalking me now?

CHARLIE

You wish. I've got my own stuff to do.

Chi shakes her head and returns to her typing.

Charlie sits a couple of spaces down and bring out his laptop.

CHARLIE

It's wild to see you without your shadow. Where's Kameroon?

CHI

Is that meant to be funny?

CHARLIE

Yeah, it's hilarious and genius. Shadow because you're always together and because he's you know- [darkskin]

CHI

I meant 'Kameroon,' sounds corny.

CHARLIE

It's a pun so yeah, clever and funny. Like me.

CHI

Please shut up.

CHARLIE

Why are you so hostile? Here I am just making polite conversation...

CHI

Oh my God, leave me alone or I will bang you in your face. Now the stupid thing is dead.

She taps at the screen repeatedly becoming more frustrated.

CHARLIE

And aggressive...

She grabs a pen or book and dashes it at him.

CHARLIE

You missed.

CHI

I am sick of your crap, I'm sick of Kam's crap, I'm sick of it all. Just do one or I swear to God, I'm gonna deck you.

*Chi breaks down in tears.
Charlie looks around, he's not sure what to do.*

CHARLIE

(unsure of himself)

What's wrong... You hungry... my mum cries for no reason when she's hungry too... or is it PMS... Dinner was pretty dire but I could get you a snack...

*Chi gathers herself.
There's an awkward silence. He pulls out a charger.*

CHI

Oh My God! You know you chat bares.

CHARLIE

I have a lot to say.

CHI

Yeah and 80 percent of it is rubbish.

CHARLIE

Wow.

He slides over a seat and hands it over to her.

CHARLIE

Do you want to borrow my charger?

CHI

Thanks.

CHARLIE

I never seen you cry before.

CHI
Just leave me alone.

CHARLIE
What were you working on?

CHI
Personal statement for Wood Hill Academy.

CHARLIE
Really? Same!

Chi stops.

CHI
Ew.

CHARLIE
What?

CHI
Just rethinking whether I want to go now.

CHARLIE
Harsh.

CHI
I'm literally going to get away from you.

CHARLIE
What did I do?

CHI
You don't see why I'd want to get away from you?

CHARLIE
I'm nice.

CHI
Well, I guess not just you. Everyone. But especially you.

CHARLIE
Don't you need to like all 7s to get into Wood Hill?

I'm predicted 8s and 9s.

CHI

Oh mad.

CHARLIE

We're in the same set!

CHI

Yeah but I just thought...

CHARLIE

What...

CHI

My dad said that a lot of... well... your type... being in like top set is because of diversity quotas and that...

CHARLIE

I don't think that's how it works in state school mate.

CHI

But that's how it works out in the real world. Most people just want handouts, but people like me don't get hand outs. So I have to work extra hard.

CHARLIE

Chi laughs loud. A sort of involuntary laughter that shakes Charlie a little.

I don't need this.

CHI

What you leaving?

CHARLIE

Hmm...

CHI

He isn't the hypermasculine alpha male she was used to.

Wanna kiss me or something?

CHARLIE

Chi kisses her teeth.

CHI

Get up.

CHARLIE

Why...

CHI

Just do it.

CHARLIE

Fine....

CHI

You'd actually be alright if you weren't so ...

CHARLIE

Charming...

CHI

Okay lets look at it this way. But before that, do you actually believe things like oppression exist? If you don't, this is a lost cause and there's no hope for you.

CHARLIE

I mean it would be illogical to say they don't exist, but deffo not to the extent they did in the past.

CHI

How would you know?

CHARLIE

What?

CHI

How would you know? It's never directed your way. So why would you ever experience it? You ain't got female friends, you deffo don't have Black friends. I've never been to the arctic, never seen a real life polar bear, does that mean they don't exist. I've never gone into space and seen the planet from birds eye view, does that mean the earth is flat? Just because you don't see it, don't mean it ain't happening.

He pauses... then...

CHARLIE

Yeah but... it's not as bad though... also there's different levels to like privilege...

CHI

Exactly. Come stand next to me.

CHARLIE

Yeah you deffo want me.

CHI

Oh my God, shut up.

CHARLIE

It's a joke. Relax, I'm coming.

Chi drags him to the side of the room and makes him stand next to her.

CHI

Right, so we're standing at the height of privilege, no oppression here. We did this in PSHE but you and Kam were at football. A perfect world where it doesn't affect us. I want you to take a step that way, for every time you've been oppressed.

CHARLIE

What?

CHI

So for example... I'm Black... so racism. I take a step.

She takes a step.

CHI

I'm a woman... so sexism... I take another step

She takes a step.

CHI

I'm working class...

CHARLIE

Another step.

She takes a step.

CHI

Your turn.

CHARLIE

I'm working class... I take a step. And... Okay I see.

*He pauses there. He looks at the gap
between them. Chi looks at the gap too.*

CHI

That gap there is how much harder that I have to work than you.

CHARLIE

I just think-

CHI

Oh my God! What more could you possibly have to say? I just don't see how someone can be so smart but just like ignore reality.

Charlie take a moment to think about this.

CHARLIE

Okay, maybe you're right...

Suddenly, Chi grabs her chest.

CHI

(melodramatic)

ARGHH!

CHARLIE

Crap are you okay?

CHI

Yeah, just a man, Charlie Leadings, proud meninist and men's right activist, just said I'm right.

CHARLIE

Ahh so you got banter?

CHI

Maybe. Not just a pretty face.

CHARLIE

I guess not.
You are really pretty though.

CHI

We would never work.

Why not?
CHARLIE

Because you don't like me!
CHI

Yeah I do... I really do.
CHARLIE
(earnestly)

CHI
No you like the idea of me. You like that I'm pretty 'for a Black girl' which is racist by the way, you like that I'm funny and smart but you don't like women, or even understand them. So how can you like **me**?

I-
CHARLIE

He trails off.

You're hella smart you know.
CHARLIE

CHI
I know. I have to be, because I have to be ready, all the time... to argue with the likes of you.

Fair enough...
It's not easy for me either.
CHARLIE
(chuckling)

She turns to him.

CHI
I know, in fact I know more than you can ever imagine. The world is crap, for everybody, including you, including me, so why do you take it out on me?

It's not personal.
CHARLIE

CHI

I know but also I didn't set society up this way. All that strength, masculinity, alpha male stuff, you could use that to make the world a better place or you could use it to antagonise me, my brother, and all the other people that are dealing with the same crappy world that you are. You like physics yeah? Everything in the universe is made up of energy right? And energy can't be created or destroyed, but can be converted into other types. All the negative energy the world gives you, you could convert it into positive energy and that energy would come back to you. For example, you've stopped being ignorant and mean for 5 mins and in that time no one has threatened to beat you up.

*Charlie stops to think.
He nods to himself, an understanding.
Eventually...*

CHARLIE

Yeah....

Will you help me, I'm a little dyslexic. Oooh! I'm dyslexic, that's a step.

Chi laughs.

CHI

Sure.

*They work together and the set moves
around them.*