

Custom

By

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INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Two customers officers sit in a small interview room. MARK NEOBOLD (35) overweight, mustachioed, balding.

He is sat forward in his chair.

AMANDA DOOLAN (28) short, medium build, brunette dyed-blond - girl-next door pretty.

She is slumped back in her chair.

Across the table from them is sat ADEDELE MBOKU (18) a slim African male.

Mark is holding a banana in his hand, offering it to Adedele

MARK
Bwanana! Bwanana!
(Shakes the banana)
Bwanana!
(Laughs)
You know - bwanana? You like
bwanana? Bwanana!

Amanda looks uncomfortable; shifts in her seat

AMANDA
Mark..?

Still laughing, he looks over to Amanda.

MARK
He likes a bwanana. He knows what a
bwanana is doesn't he? How can he
not know what a bwanana is?

Amanda leans forward.

AMANDA
Can you tell us your intentions in
this country?
(pause)
Why have you come across here?

MARK
Like some freebies, would you? Sick
of crapping in your own front room?
Want one of our nice council houses
is it?

ADEDELE
I'm here to study. Go to college.

 MARK
Sod off! Studying! Studying our
benefit system, more like!

Mark leans further forward.

 MARK (CONT'D)
 (quietly)
Studying some of our fanny, eh?

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Amanda is sat outside an office.

She looks nervous; gets up and walks toward the office door.

She changes her mind. Turns around and walks away.

Before she reaches the end of the corridor, she stops again.

Thinks hard.

She turns, goes back to the office, and knocks on the door.

A voice calls her in.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

A standard office.

Behind the desk is PHIL ELDMOND (46), slim, managerial-type male.

Amanda is sat on the chair opposite Phil.

 PHIL
Amanda. So, how are you today?

Phil looks up and down again; has a document out in front of him, only half concentrating on Amanda.

 AMANDA
I'm... okay.

 PHIL
So what can I do for you?

AMANDA

Well, it's just that... I've got
some concerns, about staff...

PHIL

Yeah, I'm listening, what's
bothering you?

AMANDA

I need to make a complaint. Against
a member of staff.

Phil looks up from his document.

PHIL

Go on.

AMANDA

It's Mark. He's a complete racist.

Phil puts his pen down.

PHIL

What makes you think that?

AMANDA

I know that we all have our own
personal opinion on these things...

PHIL

That's a very serious allegation
you're making.

AMANDA

...people from other cultures...
but we're supposed to be the
professionals...

PHIL

Can you back it up?

AMANDA

...and not let our personal feeling
get involved.

Phil shrugs and nods at the same time

PHIL

Mmmm...

AMANDA

His behavior.

PHIL
Look, Amanda.

AMANDA
Phil, it's getting out of control.

PHIL
Out of control?

AMANDA
He's abusing people.

PHIL
Have you thought this through?

AMANDA
I'm sat there and I feel ashamed of what's going on.

PHIL
Okay.

AMANDA
I'm ashamed of what I'm seeing, and hearing, of what he's getting up to.

PHIL
Okay, okay. I'll look into it.
Leave it with me.

Amanda thinks for a second.

AMANDA
Look into it?

PHIL
Yeah. I'll deal with it.

AMANDA
Well, yeah, but it needs more than just looking into. This guy needs reigning in, it's a disciplinary action.

Phil puts his pen down; agitation creeping in.

PHIL
Look, I'll deal with it. I'll decide what kind of action it is, and what needs to be done. That's my decision. I'll carry out an appropriate investigation, and...

AMANDA

But he's blatant! You're happy that he's a racist? You're not bothered.

PHIL

Amanda! This organisation takes any and all allegations of any inappropriate behavior very seriously.

Phil picks up his pen.

PHIL

I'll carry out any appropriate remedial actions that are required.

Amanda gets up to leave, Phil taps his pen on the desk top and looks toward the ceiling.

INT.

Mark and Ralf are in an interview room with BUKU OWELE (14).

Ralf is sat munching a bag of crisps; big grin on his face.

Mark is stood over the Buku. Buku is prone, bent-legged, on the floor. He aims a pretend fire-arm.

MARK

So when they said to you fire! Get down and fire, this is the position you'd be in then?

Ralf knocks his head back and laughs out loud.

MARK (CONT'D)

And that's what you'd do eh? If they said 'Umbongo!' You fire. Boom boom, big gun.

Buku looks nervous. He nods his head.

BUKU

Yes.

MARK

Get up then, you snotty little git.

Buku jumps up.

MARK

Down again charwalla!

Buku hits the floor.

MARK (CONT'D)

Boom boom. You like guns?

Mark uses his arms to imitate a gun.

MARK

You like gunfire. Gunfire good?
Gunfire nicey, nicey?

Ralf laughs out loud again

INT. CANTEEN - DAY

Phil is in the canteen, checking sandwiches. He is joined by Mark.

MARK

Afternoon, Phil-boy.

Phil turns his head round to see Mark.

PHIL

What have you been up to then,
shag-wit?

MARK

The usual. keeping our borders
clean and tidy. Free of foreign
muck.

PHIL

Doesn't sound like it to me.

MARK

What's that supposed to mean?

PHIL

Your figures are up, mongoloid.
You've been letting more of them
through than even.

MARK

My figure are fine. You've got a
better chance of skinning a live
grizzly than getting through me,
mate.

PHIL

Well that's not what the figure show.

Phil give Mark a dead-pan look.

PHIL

You're up on last month.

Phil takes a tray, and picks some food.

PHIL (CONT'D)

More little darkies and Ukrainian duck pluggers got through than before.

Mark whips a concerned glance toward Phil.

PHIL (CONT'D)

You're opening up the borders mate.

MARK

I think you're off the point.

PHIL

(pause)

If you turn up for work one day and I'm in nick for hugging my child too nicely... and you've got some grass-skirted wogachops sitting in my desk giving you lots...

MARK

It isn't going to happen.

PHIL

...and this country turns browner than bisto gravy; I can safely tell anyone white left here...

MARK

Not on my watch, mate.

PHIL

...that it's precisely your fault for letting in every curly haired nonce that fancies an extended holiday.

MARK

Look. These border are safe with me.

INT. MEETING ROOM - DAY

Staff meeting. People are milling around the room chatting; some find seats and sit.

Mark takes up his position with relish - stood in front of the group.

MARK

Right everyone. We're going to have a 'no-darkies' day today.

Ralf laughs.

MARK (CONT'D)

It don't matter how good their case is, we keep the lot of them out.

Amanda looks toward the ceiling, exasperated.

MARK (CONT'D)

I want a top effort from everyone.

Ralf claps, still laughing.

RALF

You're on mate!

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Mark walks down the corridor.

Ralf is outside the interview room. He's unsure if he is to go in or not. He carries a clipboard; sees Mark walking towards him.

RALF

Hi Mark. We've got another one in here. Do you want to have a look at the specs? I've got the sheet here.

Mark looks into the interview room, ignoring Ralf.

MARK

Yeah, I've got this one covered.

Mark looks at the sheet that Ralf is holding.

MARK (CONT'D)

Sam's booked in to do it with me.

RALF

Alright.

MARK

See you later then.

Ralf heads down the corridor.

Mark turn to walk up the corridor - turns his head to look at Ralf disappearing round a corner, and heads back to the interview room.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

FEMI MAKALELE (20) an attractive African female is sat behind a desk.

MARK

Afternoon, Love. And how are you?

Mark takes a seat opposite.

MARK (CONT'D)

How are you?

Femi shrugs her head to one side; she is putting on a face of being relaxed and unfazed by Mark, but there is an air of apprehension.

FEMI

I'm Okay.

Mark looks to his side as if checking for anyone watching.

MARK

Yeah, I bet you are.

Mark looks intently at Femi, and leans toward her.

MARK (CONT'D)

There's only one way that you are getting into this country, darling, and that's by sucking my man.

Femi frowns.

MARK (CONT'D)

Happy with a little bit of that?

Femi looks incredulous.

Her face slowly begins to contort into one of mild disgust as Mark's intentions dawn on her.

MARK (CONT'D)

So if you want in to our green and pleasant land, you better get your laughing gear firmly attached to to my rod. Understandy?

FEMI

Suck you? I'd die first. Who do you think you are?

MARK

Who do I think I am? Guardian of the borders, darling. Protector of the emerald isle, keeper of pleasant things away from the dirt-bags of life, like yourself.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

The following day.

Mark is walking along the corridors.

Further up, Ralf looking very nervous.

Beyond him, TWO MEN (30s), both smartly dressed.

MARK

Morning Ralf. How's it?

RALF

Phil wants to see you.

MARK

What for?

Mark starts to look nervous.

RALF

He's in his office.

Ralf nods his head in the direct.

Mark moves towards Phil's office. Knocks quickly and lets himself in.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Phil is stood next to his desk. He looks nervous and uncomfortable. He holds a pen in his hand.

MARK
What's going on?

PHIL
Mark. How are you doing?

MARK
I'm a little bit bemused, Phil, to be honest. You fancy shining some light for me?

PHIL
To be straight-forward with you...
(pause)
I'm going to have to suspend you from duties forthwith... on full pay.

Phil TAPS his pen on the desk.

MARK
What?

PHIL
...until further notice.

MARK
What the are you on?

PHIL
It's come to my attention that...

MARK
Are you serious?

Mark puts his hands on his hips and listening intently. Visibly steadying his nerves.

PHIL
...you have been exercising a racist regime...

Mark snorts in half laughter.

PHIL (CONT'D)
...an unacceptable regime, during which...

Mark folds his arms, defensive, but cocky.

PHIL
...you, you, did not, treat our
customers with the appropriate...
dignity or respect that...

MARK
(Half laughing)
Uh? Spit it out, then.

PHIL
This organisation demands the
highest of standards,

MARK
You do know how much of the brown
stuff you are in don't you?

PHIL
...and only those high standards
are acceptable.

MARK
Do you seriously think that I'm
just going to go quietly?

PHIL
Mark...

MARK
Down with a whimper, out on my
arse, to do what?

PHIL
There's...

MARK
You think you can just get rid of
me? So I can pop-off down the job
search

PHIL
...nothing...

MARK
Drive a truck around? A bit of
fork-lifting for a crap wage? A
street corner, selling my arse for
a fiver a go?

Phil's head is bowed, but his eyes are looking straight at
Mark.

PHIL
...on record.

MARK
On record?

PHIL
You don't think I sat there and
wrote everything down do you?
(paraphrases)
"Supervision with Mark, told him to
keep the charlies out, no darkies
today thanks very much".

MARK
What are you saying?

PHIL
You're the pawn, not me.

MARK
Pawn?

PHIL
You were the one sitting in the
staff meeting giving it the gob.

MARK
Where are we going with this?

PHIL
That's why I'm here, manager, and
you're there, uniform, and about to
take the racket.

A grin spreads across Mark's face.

MARK
Oh, I think I'm beginning to
understand.

PHIL
Understand, I've got more to lose
than you mate, I'm paid more. I
never intended to go down, and I
knew that from the beginning; I
knew I couldn't afford to go down,
and I planned accordingly.

Mark raises his eyebrows.

MARK

Planned accordingly. Oh very clever.

PHIL

That's what you're here for, the fall guy. Go get your job. Fork-lifting isn't that bad. Heard it pays quite well.

MARK

Little grease-ball.

PHIL

Try drop me in it if you wish, and no doubt things will be uncomfortable for me, but, end of the day, it's just bitter pills, desperately looking for a scape-goat...

MARK

You are...

PHIL

Mark. Please. There's stuff on your file, just in case.

MARK

Like?

PHIL

You're entitled to see your file, and in the future you'll do so. After this certainly.

Mark takes a small, unsure step forward.

MARK

What are you you saying..?

PHIL

Just that you should check your file that's all. There's been issues with this type of thing before, a couple of times; you didn't react very well then either...

MARK

I didn't sign a thing...

PHIL

Well aware of that. There's notes
in your file to that effect.

Mark stares at Phil.

MARK

Covered all post then have you?

PHIL

You might say that.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM

Mark is sat at a table in a windowless room. The two smartly
dressed men are sat opposite him, DETECTIVE ANDREW HALIBER
and DETECTIVE VINCE HOY.

Low light, sparse, harsh.

HALIBER

Afternoon. My name is Detective
HALIBER, and along-side me is my
colleague, Detective HOY.

HOY

Pleased to meet you.

HALIBER

You've got some fairly serious
charges against you, Mark.

HOY

Don't mind if we call you Mark, do
you?

HALIBER

We've had a number of... issues
forwarded to us. Allegations. Some
of which are tantamount to, well...

HOY

Are you a racist Mark? Do you hate
black people? Immigrants? people
from other countries?

Mark remains still.

HALIBER

We have to take these allegations
very seriously, Mark. Some come
from other customs officers.

(pause)

That must surprise you, Mark?

Mark offers no response.

HOY

How long have you been up to this?
There's been a number of complaints.

HALIBER

From women as well.

HOY

Sexual complaints. Pervert are you?

HALIBER

Want to hear what some of them
said?

HOY

We've got the transcripts here if
you'd like me to read them out for
you?

HALIBER

Mark, you're supposed to be a
professional. You know what this
can do to your career, don't you?
This could be very damaging.

HOY

Kids as well.

HALIBER

Child soldiers.

HOY

Do you like scaring kids?

HALIBER

You were supposed to be looking
after them, they must have been
scared stiff. Have you seen the
allegations here?

HOY

These are pretty nasty - getting
them to pretend to shoot guns. Do
you now what those kids went
through?

HALIBER

Mark. You need to talk to us.

Mark retains his counsel.

HALIBER (CONT'D)

Tell us, what happened? Where did it go wrong?

Mark girds himself. Fills his chest.

MARK

Never went wrong.

For the first time, Mark looks his opponents in the eye.

MARK

It was never wrong.

He stares them both down.

MARK

I did the right thing. Always did the right thing. Did what I believed in. Keep the little twats out.

Detectives both look with a start, surprised by the response.

MARK (CONT'D)

I know what's going down here. I'm trussed up like a Christmas turkey. Wrapped up nice.

Mark bows his head and then shakes his head.

MARK (CONT'D)

That tosser, Phil.

He looks at the detectives in turn.

MARK

You want to take a closer look at him. That's all I'm saying.

(pause)

He's got his backside covered very nicely. He's used to getting away with it. That's pretty clear to me now. I can see that well enough.

Mark tightens his lips. Then sits up straight.

MARK (CONT'D)
Me? I'm over in this place.

Haliber and Hoy exchange a brief glance.

MARK (CONT'D)
My little kingdom's gone. End of.

Mark gives the detectives a dead stare.

MARK (CONT'D)
Screw them. I don't want 'em in
this country and neither do a lot
of other people. I'm doing what a
lot of people believe in, what a
lot of people think should be
happening...

HALIBER
Mark, you're not a conviction
politician, you're a customs
officer.

Mark clenches his eyes tightly.

MARK
And a bloody fine one at that.

Mark Shoots a harsh gaze at the detectives.

HOY
I think that's a matter of opinion.

MARK
Did my duty unfailingly.

The detectives look at each other.

FADE OUT:

THE END