

CUSTOM

By

Simon Colligan

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

Two customs officers are in a small interview room. MARK (30s, overweight) is sat forward in his chair, AMANDA (mid 20s, blonde, medium build) is somewhat slumped backwards. Across the table from them, there is a slim, young African male - IMMIGRANT #1.

MARK is holding a banana in his hand, as if he were offering it to IMMIGRANT #1

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

AMANDA looks uncomfortable, and shifts in her seat

AMANDA  
MARK..?

MARK looks over to AMANDA, still laughing

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

MARK  
Like some f\*\*king freebies, would you? Sick of sh\*tting in your own front room, so you want one of our nice council houses is it?

IMMIGRANT #1  
I'm here to do some studying..., I'm here to go to college.

MARK  
F\*\*k off! Studying! Studying our benefit  
system, that's what!

MARK tones down the vocal volume and leans forward

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

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

AMANDA is sitting outside of an office - PHIL'S office. She is looking nervous, unsure what she is to do. She gets up and walks toward an office door, but changes her mind, turns around and walks away. Before she reaches the end of the corridor, she stops again. She is still very uncertain, and thinks hard. She turns, and goes back to the office. She knocks on the door, and a voice calls her in. PHIL (early 40s slightly short, medium slim, brown hair).

INT. INSIDE PHIL'S OFFICE

AMANDA sits down in the chair opposite PHIL, he is across the desk from her.

PHIL  
So, how are you today?

PHIL has a document out in front of him, and is doing some writing, he looks down and up and is only half concentrating on AMANDA

AMANDA  
Yeah, I'm ok, not too bad.

PHIL  
So what can I do for you?

AMANDA  
Well, it's just that... well I've got some concerns, you know about staff...

PHIL

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

AMANDA

Well, I just feel, and I know it's not always the done thing, but I feel that I just have to make a complaint. Against another member of staff.

This gets PHIL'S attention, and he looks up from his document for a longer period of time

PHIL

Yeah, go on then, I'm happy to hear you out.

AMANDA

It's just MARK. He's a complete racist. I know that we all have our own personal opinion on these things, you people from other cultures and that, and immigration, but we're supposed to be professionals, you know, not let our personal feeling get involved.

MARK shrugs and nods at the same time.

MARK

Mmmm...

AMANDA

(CONT'D)

AMANDA (CONT'D)

And his behaviour, is just getting completely, it's well out, way out of order. He's, he's actually abusing people, you know, and I feel, ashamed, I'm sat there and I feel ashamed of what's going on, of what I'm seeing, and hearing, of what he's getting up to.

PHIL

Ok, ok. I'll look into it. Leave it with me.

AMANDA thinks for a second, is a little surprised by the response that she has received.

AMANDA

Look into it?

PHIL

Yeah, yeah. I'll deal with it. I'll be looking into it.

AMANDA

Well, yeah, but it needs more than just looking into. This guy needs reigning in, this has got to be a disciplinary action hasn't it.

PHIL

(Getting a little agitated)

Look, I've said that I will look into it. I'll decide what kind of action it is, and what kind of action needs to be taken. That's my decision. I'll carry out an appropriate investigation, and...

AMANDA

But he's blatant! You're happy that

(CONT'D)

AMANDA (CONT'D)

he's a racist? You don't seem bothered.

PHIL

AMANDA! This organisation takes any and all allegations of any inappropriate behaviour very seriously, and will carry out any appropriate remedial actions that are required.

AMANDA understands that the conversation is over. Her lips tighten, and she gets up to leave, nodding (bowing) her head slightly as if to recognise PHIL'S authority. She leaves the office. PHIL taps his pen on the desk top and looks toward the ceiling.

INT.

MARK and RALF are in an interview room with CHILD IMMIGRANT. There is a desk in the room, and all three are in front of the desk, which appears to have been pushed toward the back wall. RALF is sitting in a child to the left of the door. CHILD IMMIGRANT is on the floor, one of his legs bent, and resting on his elbows. RALF is sitting with his legs crossed, but with one of his legs in the 'open crossed' position; he is eating a bags of sweets, and has a big grin on his face. MARK is stood up near to the CHILD IMMIGRANT, so that the CHILD IMMIGRANT is between the two of them.

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 'Umbong!' You f\*cky f\*cky, fire. Boom boom, big gun.

CHILD IMMIGRANT looks nervous and afraid, nods his head

CHILD IMMIGRANT

Yes

MARK

Get up then, you snotty little git. Down again charwalla!

MARK uses his arms to imitate a gun

MARK (CON'T)

Boom boom. You like guns? You like gunfire. Gunfire good? Gunfire nicey, nicey?

RALF laughs out loud again

INT.

PHIL is in the canteen, looking at 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, f\*ck-wit?

MARK  
The usual, keeping our borders clean and tidy, and free of foreign muck.

PHIL  
Doesn't sound like it to me.

MARK  
Uh? What's that supposed to mean, you twat?

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

MARK  
What, my figures are fine, there's no problems with my figures, you got a better chance of skinning a live grizzly than you have of getting through me, mate.

PHIL  
Well that's not what the figure show. You're up on last month. More little darkies and Ukrainian duck f\*ckers got through than did before, you opening up the borders mate. So 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 let them all in

mate, and this country turns browner than bisto gravy, I can safely tell anyone white left here, that it's precisely your fault for letting in every curly haired nonce that fancies an extended holiday?

MARK

Don't you worry, mate. These borders are quite safe with me.

INT.

Staff meeting, the staff are milling around the room, and begin to sit down.

MARK

Right everyone. We're going to have a 'no-darkies' day today, so it don't matter how good their case is, we keep the lot of them out.

RALF laughs.

AMANDA looks toward the ceiling, as if exasperated.

MARK (CONT'D)

So I want a top effort from everyone.

RALF claps his hands, still laughing.

RALF

You're on mate!

INT.

MARK is walking down the corridor, and RALF is outside of the interview room, he looks unsure if he is to go in or not, and has a clipboard, that he is carrying - he looks down to the clipboard, and then sees MARK walking towards him.

RALF

Hi MARK, we 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, and does look not at RALF at any time.

MARK

Yeah, mate I've got this one covered, we're going to be doing this one in about fifteen minutes, should last about half an hour or so...

MARK looks at the sheet that RALF is holding.

MARK (CONT'D)

SAM'S booked in to do it with me.

RALF

Alright mate, see you anon.

RALF turns and leaves heading down the corridor. MARK turns to walk up the corridor, but turns his head to look at RALF disappearing round the corner, and heads back to the interview room. He walks in, and there is IMMIGRANT #2 sat behind the desk, facing MARK as he walks in. She is a young African female, about 20 years old.

MARK

Afternoon, Love. And how are you?

IMMIGRANT #2 shrugs her head to one side; she is putting on a face of being relaxed and unfazed by MARK, but is inquisitive as to his intentions, and there is a slight air of apprehension.

IMMIGRANT #2

Ok.

MARK looks to his side and down.

MARK

Yeah, I bet you are.

MARK looks at IMMIGRANT #2, still in a standing position,

but leans over the desk, but not in a particularly threatening manner, it is so he can keep his voice low.

MARK (CONT'D)

There's only one way that you are getting into this country, darling, and that's by sucking my c\*ck. Are you happy with a little bit of that?

IMMIGRANT #2 looks incredulous, unsure that she has just heard him correctly. Her face begins to contort into one of mild disgust.

MARK (CONT'D)

So if you want in to our green and pleasant land, you better get your laughing gear firmly attached to my rod, or you f\*ck of right back from where you came, understandy?

IMMIGRANT #2

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

MARK

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

INT.

The next day, MARK is walking into the office, down the corridors. Further up the corridor is RALF. He is looking very nervous. Slightly beyond him, there are two men, who are both smartly dressed. They are the detectives, but MARK does not realise this yet, nor does the viewer.

RALF

PHIL wants to see you mate.

MARK

What the f\*ck for?

MARK is starting to look nervous. He realises that something

is wrong, but does not know yet what it is. He goes towards PHIL'S office, knocks quickly and lets himself in. PHIL is standing in the office next to his desk. He too looks nervous and uncomfortable. Something is clearly wrong

MARK (CONT'D)  
What's going on mate?

PHIL  
MARK. How are you doing?

MARK does not reply, and the question is not asked with the intent that he replies

PHIL (CONT'D)  
Look, I'm going to have to suspend you from duties forthwith on full pay.

MARK  
What?

PHIL  
...until further notice.

MARK  
What the f\*ck are you on mate?

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

MARK  
What the f\*ck is this? Are you being serious?

MARK puts his hands on his hips and turns his head slightly to the left or the right, as if trying to listen intently. His head is shaking a little and he appears to be steadying his nerves.

PHIL  
You have been exercising a racist regime...

MARK snorts in half laughter.

PHIL  
(corrects himself)  
...an unacceptable regime, during which...

PHIL appears to lose his train of thought, and has to re-gather.

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

MARK  
(Half laughing)  
Uh!?

PHIL  
This organisation demands the highest of  
standards, and only those high standards  
are acceptable.

MARK  
You know how much sh\*t you are in don't  
you? D'you seriously think that I'm just  
going to go quietly, down with a  
whimper, out on my arse, to do what?  
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 his head is pointing down, forty five degrees, but his  
eyes are looking straight up, his tone is quiet.

PHIL  
MARK, there's nothing on record. You  
don't think I sat there and wrote  
everything down do you?  
(paraphrases)  
Supervision with MARK, told him to keep

(CONT'D)

PHIL (CON'T)  
the charlies out, no darkies today

thanks very much.

(ends paraphrasing)

You're the pawn mate, not me. You're the one sitting in the staff meeting giving it the gob. That's why I'm here, manager, and you're there, uniform, and about to take the racket. 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. That's what you're here for, the fall guy. Go get your job - fork-lifting aint that bad, and pays quite well. 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 scapegoat...

MARK

You are...

PHIL

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

MARK

Uh?

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 forwards, tilting his head further to the left or right.

MARK

What are 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, knows that he is being shafted, but  
unable to figure a way out or a response on his feet.

INT.

MARK is sat at a table in a windowless room. The two  
detectives are sat opposite him; low light, sparse, harsh.

HALIBER  
Afternoon. My name is Detective HALIBER,  
and along-side me is my colleague,  
Detective HOY. You've got some fairly  
serious charges against you, MARK. Don't  
mind if we call you MARK, do you? 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?

HALIBER  
We have to take these allegations very

(CONT'D)

HALIBER (CONT'D)  
seriously, MARK. Some of them come from  
other customs officers. That must  
surprise you, MARK?

HOY  
How long have you been up to this?  
There's been a number of complaints.  
From women as well. Sexual complaints.  
Pervert are you? Want to hear what some  
of them said. 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. Child soldiers. Do like scaring kids? You were supposed to be looking after them, they must have been scared stiff. Have you seen the allegations here? 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 has barely had a chance to get a word in edgeways.

HALIBER (CONT'D)

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

MARK

Never went wrong. It was never wrong.

(CONT'D)

MARK (CONT'D)

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 response.

MARK (CONT'D)

I know what's going down here. I'm set up like a f\*cking Christmas turkey. Wrapped up nice. I aint working here again.

MARK bows his head and then shakes his head.

MARK (CONT'D)

That tosser, PHIL. You want to take a closer look at him. That's all I'm saying, 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 and he considers that he should have seen this coming and PHIL'S betrayal. Then sits up straight.

MARK (CONT'D)

Me? I'm over in this place, in this organisation. My little kingdom's gone, and I'm out. End of. F\*ck 'em. I don't want 'em in this country and neither does 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 turns his head, to the left, and up to the ceiling, and closes his eyes tightly.

MARK

And a bloody fine one at that.

MARK shoots a harsh gaze at the detectives.

MARK (CONT'D)

Did my duty unflinchingly.

The detectives look at each other, they know that this is going to be an easy prosecution, but are still unsettled by his attitude.

FADE OUT:

THE END

