

Other Side of The Chasm

by

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Cast of Characters

CHAD:

Teens

LIA:

Teens

Place

Football bleachers

Time

3PM

2.

Setting: The play takes place outside behind the high school on the bleachers of the football field.

At Rise: The play opens up with Lia noticing Chad sitting on the bleachers by himself, before walking over to talk to him.

LIA: Chad...where've you been hiding?

CHAD: Just chilling. What's up?

LIA: I been looking all over for you.

CHAD: You found me.

LIA: You alright?

CHAD: I'm good. What do you want?

LIA: Just...I was just, nothing I'll leave you alone then.

CHAD: Lia, wait. I've been dealing with a lot of shit at home and I, I've just been wanting to be alone is all. It's not you, it's everyone.

LIA: What kind of shit?

CHAD: Everything. Don't even wanna get into it. It's my whole family...they're all nuts.

LIA: So is mine.

CHAD: Not like mine, though.

LIA: Different kind of crazy.

CHAD: I've met your family and they're all alright, I mean normal at the least. My family is like that wacky toy you find in a crackerjack box.

LIA: You shouldn't say that.

CHAD: Not worth siding with them.

LIA: I'm not, I always got your back.

CHAD: Look i'm sorry if I'm snippy.

LIA: Want me to leave you alone?

CHAD: Sit with me, if you want.

LIA: ...What happened?

CHAD: What doesn't happen Lia? There's just too many cooks in the kitchen. Everyone is strangling for their right to be heard and 'cause I'm always the quiet one, I get hit with all the abuse. Lashin' out their frustrations at me and I'm just getting sick of it all...this cloud of dirt always hangin' in the air whenever I walk inside my house.

CHAD (cont'd): Always a fight. Always some shit to deal with. Sometimes I'll make bets with myself before I enter the madhouse ...see how far I think I'll get before I get halted and questioned with some pent up rage from my mom or some form of mockery from my brute of a brother, or another demand from my senseless Grandfather or whoever! Without fail, I always lose...they're all messed up, when I think of it, it's kinda sad how they all coulda been something more, if they didn't spend so much of their reservoirs on fighting one another.

LIA: Why is everyone so angry all the time?

CHAD: Who knows? It's always about anything, small stupid things. You know, the dog pissed on the rug, mom having a bad day, my father givin' orders...it's like the smallest thing becomes the largest focus. Can't stand it anymore. Gonna be eighteen next month. Can't wait. Moving out.

LIA: How?

CHAD: They just hired me over at the music shop. Gonna get me my own apartment and get the fuck out.

LIA: Aren't you going to college?

CHAD: Nah. College ain't for me.

LIA: Thought you said you were going?

CHAD: To do what? I'm not part of that world. I was never part of a fraternity, playing sports or even being in with the click. I just don't function that way.

LIA: You have friends.

CHAD: (laughs) Friend. That means you. Hey, why you even friends with me anyway?

LIA: I don't know how to answer that.

CHAD: Don't have to. I was just wondering. Like, why would you wanna be friends with me? You're the rare breed. You shouldn't even be hanging with me, I'm not even on your level.

LIA: That's stupid for you to say.

CHAD: It's true Lia. I live on the other side of town, away from all of you rich spoiled bastards. Not you, I'm just sayin'.

LIA: Is that what you think of me?

CHAD: No, but it's the world you come from. I only go to the same school because I'm in the same stupid district.

CHAD (cont'd): You see where I live, houses are falling apart, we don't even own them, we rent part of 'em...it's night and day compared to all of you. You know that party Russel had last week?

LIA: What about it?

CHAD: The one I wasn't invited to...I walked over to his house cause I was curious, I wanted to see it with my own two eyes, what it was like to be in with the crowd. I snuck in to the side of the house, past the bushes. And through the fence I saw all of you having the best time...music, barbecue, diving in the pool, drinkin', laughin'...it was like watching another world and yet I knew all of your faces. I saw your face and even though we're friends it was like I was seeing you for the first time. You didn't seem like you at all. You seemed, I don't know, in your natural element, where you belong...you were accepted and I realized on my walk back home that I wasn't and that sooner or later you and I, this friendship we supposedly have, is gonna thin out and end. You know why? Cause there's no sound I can ever make that's loud enough for any of you to take notice of...what I do, who I am, doesn't matter...never will because that's just the way things go when your on the other side of the chasm.

LIA: That's about the worst thing anyone's ever told me.

CHAD: Just the cards i've been dealt. Between my family life and what I saw last week, we might as well get to the end of it.

LIA: End of what?

CHAD: End of our stupid friendship! Aren't you listening?

LIA: I'm not going to listen to you! Not to that! That's a rotten way to think. I know you well enough to know that you're just feeling sorry for yourself. This isn't about you, it's about how you're allowing everyone else to make you feel. I thought you were smarter than that. I like you because you never give a damn about what others think and that's admirable. Since when you giving in?

CHAD: Stop it.

LIA: Since when? Who cares if you weren't invited to Russel's stupid party. Who cares if you don't live in some million dollar house? That doesn't define who you are as a person.

CHAD: It defines who I am in THEIR eyes, don't it?

LIA: Change the narrative.

CHAD: Look at me Lia, how am I going to change the narrative? Everyone's so far ahead of me and we aren't even out of high school.

CHAD (cont'd): I'm placed in that box of the forgotten. I know I'm gonna change things but it's gonna take me longer than anyone, i'll be dead before I get half way there!

LIA: That's wrong. You can make changes to your life now, be whoever you want to be, it's not gonna take a lifetime. We've had talks about this, our ambitions, our resilience, it ain't easy for any damn person! I might have some family wealth but how do you think that makes me feel? You think I wanna live off my family's money? And not do a damn thing with my own life?

CHAD: No I don't. I get it. But I can't even afford college like the rest of you! I can't further my education and get some high paying job or work for my dad's company or whatever leg up you all seem to get over me. I'm working at the shop, getting my own place so I can be done with all of you.

LIA: And what then?

CHAD: What do you mean?

LIA: What are you going to do after you've moved out and are working at the music shop?

CHAD: I haven't thought that far ahead yet.

LIA: You're settling.

CHAD: I'm escaping.

LIA: Forgetting about what you really want. Fine, be average.

CHAD: I'm not average! And it's so fuckin' easy for you to say.

LIA: How exactly would you act if the tables were turned? You didn't let me give up this year on my exams, hounding down my neck 'bout them all.

CHAD: You were giving up...

LIA: Exactly. But I didn't, did I? I knew I had to face myself and make a decision, there and then. And if I didn't make that decision, things woulda turned out differently for me.

CHAD: Yeah.

LIA: Somewhere deep down you know you are capable of way more than you're allowing yourself to be...

CHAD: I feel trapped.

LIA: I'll help you.

CHAD: How you gonna help me?

LIA: I know you want to go to college. And it's time you face the elephant in the room. Why can't we fill out applications together, look at some grants, loans...

CHAD: That stuff don't apply to someone like me, I told you already.

LIA: Where did you get accepted?

CHAD: What?

LIA: Don't lie to me.

CHAD: I got in.

LIA: Where?

CHAD: I'm not saying.

LIA: But you got in.

CHAD: A few. Can't afford it though.

LIA: You know why you got in, right?

CHAD: Why?

LIA: Cause you're brilliant.

CHAD: No, I'm not.

LIA: Any scholarships?

CHAD: Maybe...I'll show you the paperwork.

LIA: Really?

CHAD: Yeah.

LIA hugs CHAD.

LIA: So, what is the problem?

CHAD: ...I'm afraid...

LIA: Of what?

CHAD: I'm afraid to be as good as I want to be.

LIA: That's because you are as good as you imagine yourself being.

CHAD: What if I'm not able to...what if I'm not accepted?

LIA: You already are...you owe it to yourself.

CHAD: I don't want to fuck this up, Lia. What if I---

LIA: You won't. I promise. I am here full time.

CHAD: But you're leaving for Uni.

LIA: Maybe we'll end up going to the same place. If you ever tell me which schools want you.

CHAD: (smiles) I'll show you the letters.

LIA: Show me now.

CHAD: Yeah?

LIA: Yeah, let's do this.

END OF PLAY