

Scene 3

Mihai sits at the table. Charlie walks in and gives him an envelope of money.

Charlie: That's for March and April.

Mihai: *(counts the money)* It's too much.

Charlie: Dad really liked how you got rid of the weeds in the patio.

Mihai: Did he?

Charlie: Yes Michael.

Mihai: I'm happy then.

Charlie: Plus you don't rip out huge patches of grass like the last guy we had.

Mihai: You want some tea?

Charlie: No, I'm all right. I can't stay long, I have to do my admission essays for uni.

Mihai: What are you going to write about?

Charlie: Inspirational figures.

Mihai: Who?

Charlie: Figures who inspire me. Or rather figures my father thinks should inspire me. I was thinking Thomas Edison or Winston Churchill. Someone black too, for diversity.

Mihai: Obama?

Charlie: Too obvious, everyone will write about him, need to think of someone else to stand out. I'm writing about a 'technology' person as well.

Mihai: How about Mark Zuckerberg /

Charlie: I'm already doing Steve Jobs, he's better.

Mihai: Why?

Charlie: Isn't it obvious?

Mihai: Yes, obvious *(pause)* How? How is it obvious?

Charlie: Cancer, Michael, cancer and death! Zuckerberg hasn't had cancer and he's not even dead.

Mihai: Right, of course, cancer.

Charlie: Steve Jobs is dead and he had cancer. You can use him for more. He covers perseverance, commitment, fighting against insurmountable odds. Admissions committees love that. Steve Jobs. Cancer. Death. Excellent choice.

Mihai: Damn Zuckerberg and his non-cancerous, healthy, young body /

Charlie: If Zuckerberg had AIDS or no legs, or some disease that's more impressive than cancer /

Mihai: Let's just hope he does some day /

Charlie: Or if he was *black....black* AND a woman AND grew up on a kitchen sink estate, then we'd be in business.

Mihai: I see.

Charlie: The thing with these essays – you just have to create a story that grabs attention, it's tricky when you're dealing with real people though, gotta stick to the facts.

Charlie picks up the book Mihai is taking notes from.

Charlie: What's this? (*reading*) Life in the United Kingdom! Official Practice questions and answers! A journey to citizenship! In the United Kingdom, national identity and citizenship do not always mean the same thing. (*stands on the couch like Lenin*) Yadda Yadda Yadda! The United Kingdom is *more socially mobile* and *less class conscious* than it has ever been in the past! Although there is still great inequality between the very rich and poor, people are generally *wealthier* in real terms /

Mihai: Go ahead ask me anything /

Charlie: "It is against the law to be drunk in a public place in the UK. True or false?"

Mihai: True! TRUE!

Charlie: The whole country should be locked up. I'd never pass the journey to citizenship test.

Mihai: You don't need to.

Mihai tries to take the book. They fight for it playfully. Charlie's hand lingers on Mihai a little too long. Mihai doesn't notice this.

Mihai: New question, “when you apply for a job which person would not be suitable to ask for a reference?”

Charlie: My psychiatrist. Then I’d never get a job.

Mihai: Would you ask a relative, like your father?

Charlie: Hell no!

Mihai: Correct, family members not allowed to give /

Charlie: Why would I ask my father to give me a job reference? He hates me.

Mihai: I’m sure he doesn’t, I’m sure he loves you very much, did you tell him you’d be staying longer today?

Charlie: He doesn’t know I’m here. He’s a busy man, my dad.