**2013\_esch\_UgAs\_23**

*This is Luam XXXX interviewing Adil Dean on the twenty-ninth of April 2013. Can I just get you to start off by telling me your full name and your date of birth?*

Right, my full name is Adil Dean and my, er, date of birth is the twenty second of April 1966.

*Ok, where were you born?*

I was born in Uganda.

*Where abouts?*

In Kampala.

*Um, can you tell me a little about your family?*

Ermmmm, yes I, er, er, let’s see, I was er, erm, my gran-, er, er, what shall I say. I was born there, my parents were divorced, divorced when I was six months old so…um, my, I, er, lived with my father’s side [***mm-hm****]* of the family.

*Yeah.*

And, er, really all I remember in- basically is er, just a little bit about Uganda, not too much, [***yeah***] and where we used to live and all that. Ah, but we came here…where I was- came to England when I was six…[***mm-hm***] er, as a refugee with my grandmother.

*And, what did your parents do?*

Uh my dad, I think he worked in the er, erm fire extinguisher game. [***Really***] He was selling fire extinguishers to companies.

*He had his own-he had his own business?*

His own business there, yes, yes. Yeah.

*And your mother?*

Not too sure, she left when I was six months old.

*Ok.*

Yeah.

*And was it- your dad Indian? Was that- your dad Asian?*

Er, yes, yes, yeah. Asian, uhhh, my grandmother…um, she was half African and…uh, Turkish, and er, um, Indian. Yeah.

*And what can you remember about Kampala?*

Umm….

*Did you go- did you go to school there?*

I remember going to school there, yeah I went to school there. Erm…

*I’ve seen a picture of you, erm, at your nan’s house, in your uniform.*

Oh yeah.

*I think, in your little cap.*

Oh that was here [**was that here?**], that was in Woking, yeah.

*Ok.*

Yeah, yeah. That was-

There was one of you, you in all white.

It was in gr- All white! Oh that was a say- yeah, that was my grandmother, dressed me up. [***Laughing***] That was here yeah. That was when we probably just came here.

*Ok.*

Yeah…um.

Do you remember anything about your school in Uganda?

School, no really, no. It was very, very er, vivid memories erm, er…not really, no. Erm… I know where we lived, y’know I can visua- think, see it in my, er…

*What does it look like?*

[Sighs] Oh God, it was a house at the bottom of the hill and the steps going all the way up to the top of the road, it was quite a lot of steps…Uhhh. Yeah, I don’t remember too, too much.

*But you lived with your nan?*

I lived with my grandmother, yes.

*And, did you- did you have her…other people living with her too? Was it just two of you?*

Erm, my er- at that time I think it was my uncle Jimmy. I think my Dad was living there too. I think that was it really. [**Phone rings**] Oh sor-sorr…[***it’s alright***]. [**Clicking sound, then phone half rings** **-Talks to someone on the phone for 13 seconds**]. [**Phone beeps**] Sorry,[***that’s okay***] I’m gonna have to take a XXXX out to a lady [***yeah that’s fine, no problem***].

*And do you remember um…it’s back on now* [**yeah**]. *Do you remember leaving Uganda?*

No really, no, I don’t remember leaving there, I kinda remember coming to England that’s it.

*Okay.*

Yeah.

*What do you remember about coming to England?*

Ahhh, coming to England, and uh, being held in a, um, detention centre for six months. In I think it was Conbrooke by the airport, that’s where they had the detention centre.

*Was this near Heathrow Airport?*

Yes, near Heathrow Airport, yeah [***okay***]. This was back in I think ’72, yeah. When I think that maybe, [**hissing sound**] probably all other uh, Asian refugees was aswell.

*Yeah. What was the detention centre like?*

Uhhhmm, I don’t know, we just didn’t er– I think my gran and me just had the one room we shared that…and uh, just uh, just remembering all the, all the different people, just uh- I remember going to the canteen [***mmm***] that’s really all I remember, really, yeah.

*Was it like a communal-being served communally, like a…like a soup kitchen but-*

Yeah, kind of, yeah, you get your tray and go get your food and all that.

*Yeah.*

And, yeah.

*And how long did you stay there?*

I think it was six months, six months there…six months there, erm, then erm, at the time my, my aunt was living here, she was married, my er, grandmother’s daughter [***mm-hmm***] ah, near er, she lived in er, Hounslow. Um, so I think what happened there is- then after that they then er, put us…in Cranford [***mm-hm***]…my gran and me, to be close to my aunt. Erm, but they put us in a caravan which was in the back in the garden, back of someone’s house.

*Okay.*

But it didn’t have uh, I can’t remember but again it wasn’t a very pleasant time.

*So who’s, who’s house or whose, who was living on that site?*

Erm my gran, me and my grandma were living in the caravan, erm…er…obviously it was probably rent from the council, y’know [***yeah***], given to the council, whatever but, er, yeah, that was very unpleasant, it was just a horrible place really. The uh, heating y’know, it was one of those g- portable heaters you had [***yeah***], it was cold, damp, it was terrible cos y’know, coming from a hot country like that and then coming here…

*Yeah.*

Yeah so it wasn’t very good. Uhmmm lived there- I d- can’t remember how long we lived there- we lived there for a while, then we got um, and obviously we were trying to get some housing, better housing, then they took, then they sent us to…from there…they sent us to Woking.

*Okay.*

We spent some time in Woking there, maybe a year or two… Erm, and in Woking it was erm, a place called Constitutional House, it was with other refugees- I remember a Tibetan guy at that time [***mm-hm***], there were people from Tibet coming. So I remember Tibetan guy- I remember Polish family there, they were there. It was good though because er, I then got sent to a school, private school. That’s where you- what you saw my gran’s pictures, a great green hat [***mmm***] and all that…Um so that was maybe a year…then obviously what my grandma’s trying to do is say to them, y’know, can we try and be closer to her daughter [**hissing sound**], because we didn’t have anyone else here.

*Mmm.*

Ummm, so we stayed there for a little bit and then I think the next step, then they sent us to Battersea…

*Okay.*

Uhh, they sent us to Battersea and uh, um I remember going to Latchmia School in Battersea, and that might have been for a year or two…I still can’t remember the d- time and dates…

*But you were around eight, nine…*

Eight, nine [***yeah***], yeah eight! Seven, eight, seven, eight. Or cert- somewhere around that area. So that was maybe for a year and we’re still trying to get closer to my aunt. Ah, from Battersea…where did they send us? We lived in…Cranford, in the, in the caravan…then they se- uh, and then Woking…then Battersea, then from Battersea they sent us to Norwood Green.

*Okay.*

Ummm which was a nice two bedroom, uh flat in Norwood Green- so er, I finally had my own…room, *[****yeah****]* basically.

Ummm, so lived there for probably a year…um, then my dad eventually came because he was trying to get out of Uganda, he erm, was erm…he was trying to get out of Uganda and uh, every time he tried to get out they used to, y’know they er, erm, they took him off and they er, tortured him, he got tortured quite a bit. Erm…

*He didn’t- he didn’t-he- what happened, did he not try to leave with you and your nan at the same time-*

No, he er, basically what the er, my uncle and my er, er, dad said at the time, things are getting bad, we’ll get you two out and we’ll follow on, we’ll come later on.

*So did you leave before the announcement?*

Err, just slightly before [***okay***] yeah, yeah, cos they knew what was happening [***yeah***], so they said they would be safe, just for me and my gran to get out, um, so my dad tried to get out and then finally eventually he did get out. Umm so…when he came, then I went and lived with him in er, in er, errr rented accommodation in Cranford. [***Mm-hm***] I remember that. My grandmother stayed in Greenfor- uh, in Norwood Green.

*Okay.*

Then eventually I think uh, um, what happened there is, I was nine or ten…t-eleven. Um…eleven by the time I moved, we moved out of Cranford with my dad…and we lived in Hounslow by Lampton School.

*Okay.*

So I went to Lampton School. My grandmother went from gr- from Norwood Green, they put her into the accommodation that she’s in now, which she’s been in there for twenty-five, thiry years maybe. Twenty-five years at least.

*Wow.*

Yes I think it’s something like that- I think it’s twenty-five odd years. Because I know that because she just had a- she just bought a TV last year because she kept that same TV for twenty-five years.

*Wow* [***Laughs***].

XXXX personally I wanted to buy her something XXXX- but she’s, no!

*She’s refused.*

Refused. ‘This is the TV I've had, I’ll use it…till it goes, if only when.’

*Yeah.*

Sooo, then I uh, went to Lampton School…erm uh, from er, eleven to seventeen, um, uh, then I went to uh, college, Hounslow Borough College [***mm-hmm***] for a couple of years. Ah, then I went to- then I started working-

*What was your first job?*

Er, first job was er, er erm, freight forwarding, I worked for a freight forwarding company, importing and exporting um, just the documentation, import export documentation clerk. That was around when I was eighteen and a half a and then by the time I was twenty…a green card which we had applied for [***mm-hm***] came through so, my dad had also remarried as well, so, my stepmum, my dad and they had a kid as well, [***mm-hm***], his name is Amir, and er, we moved to America.

*Okay.*

And that was in 1986. Erm, my gran was obviously still at the same er, um, home that she’s in now, [***mm-hm***] and just moved to America.

*Oh, going back to what you were talking about when you was in school, [***yeah***] in Hounslow, was it, your school in Hounslow-*

Oh, Lampton School?

*Lampton, yeah.*

Yeah, high school.

*Erm, can you remind me of your first day at school?*

[**Pause**] Errr, not really, no [**laughs**].

*Was it your secondary school?*

Yeah, secondary school, yeah, yeah. Yeah, y’know it was er, it was okay, it was a good school.

*Was it a mixed ethnicity XXXX a white school?*

It was a mixed school, yeah a mixed school. There was er, Asians cos Hounslow had a lot of Asians at that time cos a lot of Asians came into Hounslow. Uhh yeah, it was a mixed school.

*Do you remember coming across any Ugandan Asian communities, when you were-?*

Errr, no, not really, no, no. No. It was kind of- it was kind of er, a little bit of the odd one out because I came from Uganda- a lot of the other peoples were, were either from India or Pakistan. So not many people were um, from Africa, just save y’know…

*Yeah. And did you have like a mixed, social circle of friends, did you experience any issues?*

Erm, well at that time when I was growing up in er, in er, where was that? I went to school, high school in ’77…and er…finished in ’83, erm, I mean there was a- yeah, in that period there was a lot of um, National Front erm [***mmm***], and British movement, it was a lot of racial- skinhead, I-I grew up in a skinhead area so it was [yeah] very, very tough time to grow up in, in this country, if you’re an Asian.

*Yeah.*

Ummm there was a lot of er, hatred.

*Can you remember what any of your neighbours were like, th-the- your local community?*

Um, well we lived in flats, very isolated in a sense y’know, we really didn’t er, er s- at that time when I was actually going to school, I was living with my dad, [***mm-hm***] when I was about eleven and he was working shifts at the airport.

*But what was he doing at the airport?*

Er, I think he was in catering, in the catering, y’know where they catering for the airlines [***yeah***], he was doing something like that. But also, uh, y’know I was on my own quite a bit [***mm-hm***], at home.

*Yeah.*

So um…[**someone enters and says ‘Alright, boss.’]**Alright, thanks…Um so yeah, so I was on my own quite a lot so we didn’t really associate- the only time I went out was um, we all went out to see my gran a lot [***mm-hm***], and my aunts, and my uncles would visit, that’s it really. Yeah.

*Yeah and what was it like- what did you do in your spare time?*

Oh basically, er, spare time was er, there was a park next to me at that time, at that time there was no video games so, [***laughs***]and on the TV channels, there was only three at the time.

*Yeah.*

Wasn’t any of those cable. My youth was spent out in the park playing football and cricket.

*Really?*

That’s it, every single day. Football and cricket, football summer holidays, football, cricket, football cricket. And then er, um…I think in 1979, when I was about thirteen or fourteen, I then uhm, my Dad sent me to America on my summer holidays, I would go to Minnesota and visit my aunt.

*Yeah.*

On my summer holidays spent- most of my summer holiday cos he worked here all the time. So yeah that’s how I got to experience America at that time, in the early days, um, that’s why we-we went there cos we applied for our green card.

*Yeah.*

Basically we applied for our green card in 1918 (I think he means 1980 here), and we got it ’86.

*You applied in 1918?*

80 [***80***]. Yeah, 1980. Took nearly five and a half years to get. And at that time you can apply for it if you had a blood relative [***mm-hm***], which was my aunt, my dad’s sister, who was living there and she was a citizen.

*Yeah. Was there any particular reason why you wanted to go to America?*

Uh,better life [***yeah***]. A better life, yeah. I was a much, much better life, my parents knew it was and erm, cos we visited there and we knew…yeah.

*So when you were growing up, um in London, you were saying- the community where you grew up was kind of very isolated and, there was a lot of skinheads?*

Yeah.

*Did you have any like run-ins with them or did-*

Luckily enough I didn’t, but errrr…y’know kept myself to myself [***yeah***], but it was very er, y’know it was very- you had to be very careful where you walked and stuff like that. Erm, erm, y’know at night or errr, yeah. You just had to be careful really.

*Was there- were they physically very violent in that area XXXX-*

Physically they were very intimidating, they were in groups all the time [***mm-hm***], there were never individuals…erm…yeah, yeah, y’know basically I’d come and go to school, come home, really go to the park and that’s it really, didn’t have much of a- didn’t do anything much than that [***yeah***], more than that. [14:53.3]

*Erm, what was it like when you moved to America? Cos at that point you were…about…twenty?*

Twenty. I moved to America when I was twenty.

*Yeah.*

Er, basic my, we met in, we went to Minnesota where my aunt was based and er, my parents basically said they want to move to Florida and I said I didn’t want to move because I thought it was er, I thought it was for old people.

*Florida?* [***Laughs***]

Yeah, yeah. I thought it was just for old people, I didn’t know much about it at that time. So they said we’re moving and I decided to stay with my aunt.

*Okay.*

So that’s when we-when I kinda left home.

*Mm-hm.*

Yeah, so stayed we stayed in Minnesota and then er, the thing is I’d been in Minnesota for the last five years, but only in the summer.

*Okay.*

So all I knew about Minnesota was beautiful hot weather all the time. [**High-pitched squeak in the background**]. Now living there, erm we moved there in September and come October, November, December, it was absolutely freezing, with temperatures minus seventeen degrees. Erm, that’s when I said basically I didn’t want to live there. So we had some relatives erm, just some relatives in er, California.

*Mm-hm.*

So I er, went down to California and lived with a family that er, we were somewhat n- rel-relatives with. And er,…[**makes tutting sound**] I lived there for about a year…Erm, there wasn’t much prospect of jobs and all that there- I mean, not for me at that time, I was trying to find myself.

*Yeah.*

So I lived there for a year and then I came back to Minnesota cos that was kind of the headquarters cos my aunt- my two aunts were there.

*Yeah.*

And another aunt from- the one that was living here, remember when I said that [***yeah***] she had also moved to Minnesota as well.

*Okay, so at that point it was just Mrs- y-your grandmother just XXXX-*

Then yeah at that point it was just my grandmother living here- then oh although my other aunt- uncle was here, Nisardeen (?).

*Yeah.*

Er, the pilot.

*Yeah.*

Erm…[**makes tutting sound**] so yeah, so I then from Cali- from California lived there for a year then came back to Minnesota…and then I got a job in freight forwarding, what I used to do here.

*Mm-hm.*

And, uh, the beauty of like America is I started driving, doing the lowest job, which was driving the, the truck with all the documents from the office to the airport and doing that run for about six, seven months-

*Mm-hm.*

And er, I worked my way up and then in two years I became the export manager, looking after five people…Erm so that’sss, what I, y’know, er, that’s what the beauty about America was- if you worked hard you worked- you worked your way up quickly and er, yo-you then become quite successful doing that.

*Yeah.*

The opportunities are there- much, much easier. Erm, so after I did that, then I got er, offered a job in California freight forwarding again [***mm-hm***] so I decided to take another chance and go down there. Erm, the job wasn’t that great, the money was good but the job wasn’t satisfying so I kind of erm, then I stayed in California for another year.

*Mm-hm.*

Then I came back to Minnesota…[**makes tutting sound**] came back to Minnesota, didn’t know what to- what I was doing, what I wanted to do in life, I was- this was in 1990.

*Okay.*

Er, so I moved in ’86, by 1990 I was moving around doing things and then I, erm, was in Minnisota. Then I decided to come back to England. [**Pauses**]. I came back to England, got a job at erm, PIA in erm Heathrow airport.

*Okay.*

[**Makes tutting sound**] And erm, renting accommodation, er in Hounslow, near my grandmother. Erm, and then I erm, from there…what did I do? I…played for a football team here-

*Did you?*

It was just a local team. Erm, and I broke my leg…within the fi- in December. I moved here in like, October, got a job for two months then I broke my leg. It was quite a very bad- it was a bad, bad break. Erm, so I had a cast on there and I had to lay on a y’know, stay on that for six months.

*Mmm.*

I had nobody else here…er, couldn’t afford anything, didn’t have money, so I had to li- stay at my grandmother- my grandmother had to look after me.

*Okay.*

Er, for six months on her couch. And at that time they s- th-the warden said y’know, you can’t have your living there anymore. And I had no other- so then I had to move and erm, they put me in erm…they put me in a place called The Thorn Cliff in Hounslow or Heston erm, and that was where all the refugees were…er, living [***mmm***], it was a place where er, it was a- you just had a small little room and all different nationalities were there and, it was erm, I don’t know how you would describe it- what do you-how would you describe somewhere like that?

*Like a halls kind of thing? Residence?*

Yee…

*Do y- were y- did you share kitchens or…?*

No it was a catering er, it was a, you get- [***okay***], you go where the train, you get catered, [***yeah***] yeah. It was that- it was horrible. It was absolutely horrible…but I had no choice, I had no money, my leg was healing at that time- starting to heal six months later.

*Mmm.*

Erm, then I just basically erm, erm, got a bike- bicycle, started biking to get my leg er, rehabbed, and I got a job at a golf course in Twickenham, erm just as a- at the pro shop, just erm, y’know gettin- selling golf items and getting tickets for people to play golf. And I did that for about three-four months, saved enough money for my erm, plane fare.

*Mm-hm.*

I think I saved about three hundred and fifty pounds…and er, then I- in September of that er, ’91 it was, 1991 so can be 1990, er, September of 1990 or October of 1990, so spent basically a year here, my leg got healed and I went back to America. Went back to Minnesota, with I think three hundred and fifty pounds in my pocket.

*That was it?*

That was it. And I was with my two au- my aunt up in there and I- and she had a massive basement and I said I’d like to have the basement…erm, this, I suppose, strikes me more than anything else is that she said that I need some rent and I said I’ve only got three hundred and fifty pounds…she said I don’t care so, I f- fine I gave her half of my money-

*Mm-hm.*

And the other half, I sent out CVs to about fifty companies to get a job straight away. Within two weeks I got a job…I applied for anything and everything and I applied for- I got a job as a- well, the ac- the position was for an accounts clerk, and obviously I didn’t have a clue about that. But I went in there and this Chinese company erm, were importing furniture and importing scooters.

*Mmm.*

The guy looked my previous background in freight forwarding and he said well maybe I could use you for something else. So he started erm, he said I’m bringing these things in called scooters- this was in the early infancy of scooters, in 1991.

*Mm-hm.*

And erm, he said I’d like you to look at this and erm, maybe start making calls around the country and see if you can erm, er, sell these products around the country.

*Mmm.*

Soo I did that for a- 1991, ninety…one ni-, a year and a half. Then there was a major…erm show in Atlanta that all the suppliers of mobility equipment go there, and all the trade people go there to buy erm, for their shops and all that. And I was actually exhibiting the shop rider scooters, erm from Taiwan at that time, the manufacture it was Taiwen. And when I got th- and so erm just for the first time my boss said we’re going down to Atlanta and we’re gonna exhibit these scooters with the manufacture in Taiwen, [**noise of child shouting in background**] so I did that and while I was down there, erm, a, another corporation who, from Canada were gonna buy the shop mobility distribution for the whole of the United States and run it themselves. So as I had been in it for a year and a half, they said we’d like you to work for us…but the catch is that you would have to move from Minnesota and move to Orlando, Florida. And I said yes. So I…I then from er, y’know having absolutely nothing then moved- and not knowing anything- I moved fifteen hundred miles south to Florida, to Orlando. They basically gave me all the tools, they set me up with a two bedroom apartment and office in that place, they set me up with a van, all the tools, computers, everything. Erm, paid me a very good salary…and said go sell these products around the country. So basically I would just- I’d just pick up the phone and just call all over the country and the way at that time- that was before the internet and all that-

*Mmm.*

To do my mark- my research to who do I sell to, I’d go down to the lub- public library and on microfilm I would make copies of all the- basically all the yellow pages, erm ads around the country- you have that in one facility.

*Yeah.*

So, erm, my XXXX in Texas for example, any town in Texas I would look at the section in the yellow pages about mobility, copy that, go home, phone them and say hey, I’d like to come and visit you [**pauses**]. So basically yeah, then I got set up basically working for this company, shop mobility…erm, in Orlando in ninety- I moved to Orlando in ninety-th- December of 1992.

*Mm-hm.*

And erm, from December ’92 I got paid a very good salary and the salary increased every single year because my performance was very good. Erm, then in 1996, in December ninety…six, I bought my, I bought a house.

*Mm-hm.*

Erm, which I was able to do because I travelled around the country, all expenses paid, hotels- everything. So the salary I was b- able to save, all of it yeah. So I was able to afford a house- I bought my first house in ’96. Erm…and then erm in ’97 or ninety-se- ’98, 1998, these, this Canadian company had been bought out by another company.

*Mm-hm.*

Erm, who were an American company who wanted to do the distribution but they wanted to be, they wanted to be in erm, they wanted me to move to West Palm Beach. Cos that’s where they were located, which in Florida.

*Okay.*

I erm, then said er no to that because I basically liked where I was living. Although the money was extremely good, it was more than I was getting paid. But I, basically didn’t like the area, y’know in, in, in, I was very happy, extremely happy in where I was.

*Yeah.*

So de-decided not to go for the money and decided to stay in a comfortable situation. Erm, then I commuted to West Palm Beach erm, every, every week- they would pay for my hotel and fare- air fare. Erm, and after three months they said well we want you to make a decision- whether you want to stay here or, or go back. Oh, oh, either stay with us or leave.

*Yeah.*

And I decided to leave. Erm, prior to that I’d made a manu- er, er, a deal erm [tuts], a retailer who was in Lakeland in Florida, who wanted to go into business with me and we were gonna set up a business. Together in Orlando because I was leaving my job. When I left my job, I’m on my- driving on my way back home I called the guy and then he decided not to do it.

*Okay.*

So it left me, basically, without a job now and er, nothing, nothing at all. So I basically then decided to open my own business - I borrowed some money off my dad to open the business and er, had a really good business there in Orlando for er, nearly five years.

*Is this erm, selling scooters?*

Yeah, selling mobility equipment.

*Mm-hm.*

Did pretty well there, erm y’know being able to survive with my- it was- it was very good. It was very good doing that. Erm…then er, I suppose then I got married, er, came here on my holidays around erm, er, through a friend of the family, introduced to a girl from here- we actually didn’t really- we met a little bit but we talked on the phone more than anything else-

*Yeah.*

And then she- and then she came over to the States- things weren’t actually very good at the time because actually the business was starting to decline…Er, I think I lost a little bit of focus on that. And erm, and what else? And we weren’t getting along- she then got pregnant there, had a baby and then after, we decided to move back. [**Pauses**]. Er, y’know, and then I moved back here to Ameri- to London in er, December of 2003.

*Okay.*

So er, I’ve been here ever since.

*So ten years this year.*

Ten years, yeah, so then, I mean, we came back here then we separated and we finally got divorced [***mm-hm***], erm so my child is now nine and er, here I am. I’m working at shop mobility at the moment [***mm-hm***] which er, is a, is funded by the council and run by Esil (?), which is a charity. Don’t know how long this is going to go for.

*Mmm.*

But I have erm, due to the fact that not knowing that we’re gonna have a job or not, next month or not, I’ve decided to open my own business [***okay***], again in mobility - er, retailing, selling wheelchairs and scooters and have an e-commerce website- so I’ve got that to cover me if anything was to go wrong I’d just go back into that.

*So will you be launching that soon or are you doing it at the moment now?*

I’ve actually launched it now, yeah [***okay***]. It’s, it’s launched now, [***clapping noise***] last week I launched my e- er, e-commerce website. Erm…and basically what I have is an e-commerce website that er, allows people to buy er, equipment that gets delivered to their homes, such as er, small aids to daily living stuff.

*Okay.*

Erm, but I won’t sell mobility equipment nationwide because I can’t service it.

*Yeah.*

I’m selling that kind of stuff in a twenty mile radius of Ealing Broadway, erm, station.

*Okay.*

That way I can service people. And the company is called Viking Mobility Aids.

*Okay, make sure you give me your card!* [**Yeah**] *I was gonna ask you, when you said that, the er, strikes you when you moved into your aunt’s basement* [**mmm**] *was she asked for rent.*

Yes.

*Why- why were you shocked? [****Pauses****] Because- [****laughs****]*

Because it was my family- it’s family, yeah. I was in shock because it was family…but it was a great thing t- for me because it kind of sho- y’know it helped me understand…erm, y’know that-that- it made me do things basically-it made me y’know, rather than er, not doing things she really made me think and er, get a job straight away and um, get b- y’know.

*Do you think she did it on purpose?*

Yeah I think so, yeah, definitely.

*Cos I’ve noticed something about the Ugandan Asian communities, that they’re very entrepreneurial and [***yeah***] um, very supportive of one another as well [***yeah***]. So do you think that, that, that aspect of being self-employed and working really hard, was that something that you perhaps got from your family or- is that something you’ve always been- in- is that something that that’s kind of like [***yeah***] comes natural to you?*

Erm…

*Or…*

I don’t know, I don’t know about that, I don’t think, I’m not sure, because I’ve not, I don’t know, I don’t know if- cos I was living with [***yeah***] my grandmother at the time so erm… I don’t know I think it’s just the fact that er, surviving y’know, learning to survive especially when you’re so- on your own, I kinda felt like I’ve been on my own all my life really, in a sense [***yeah***]. And it’s if you wanna do good you’ve just got to go out and do it, you’ve gotta get y’know- erm, there are plenty of opportunities out there I think for people, it’s just knowing how to get them.

*Yeah.*

Erm…

*Have you ever been uh, back to Uganda?*

Yes, I- while I was living in America I, I decided to take my grandmother, erm, in 1998. I came over to London, picked her up and er, took her to Uganda. And my uncle was alive at the time, his name was Jameel Dean.

*Was he the one that was the er, the driver [***yeah***], the racing driver?*

[**Talking to another person**] Hi Younis, how you doing? [**Talks to him for seven seconds**]

*Erm, your uncle was there, in Uganda at the time?*

Yeah.

*What was it like going back to Uganda for the first time? Or since you, since you left?*

Yeah, well I left when I was six, didn’t really know much about it erm…it was, it was, it was good, it was er, a d- a different experience, I didn’t think that they would have what I thought they’d have. I mean there was a Hugo Boss shop there, y’know things like that- was I was very shocked that they had that kind of stuff.

*Yeah, did you imagine it to be a little bit, y’know a bit more deprived or-*

Yes, yes, a lo- I mean it-it-it is but things like y’know, you can get- buy a Hugo Boss shirt, suits there, yeah so it was different, my uncle had a really nice place there erm, and everybody was very good, y’know. He was a different er, kind of Asian I think erm, where Asians there erm, y’know, er, had servants and all that and they kind of kept a distance where he did but he- they’re more like family and friends. Nobady was like- they all loved working for him, with him and all that kind of stuff, and he was er, d-did you see all that stuff on the wall about him?

*About Jimmy?*

Yeah.

*Yeah.*

Yeah, I mean he was incredible cos when I got in the van with him, in his XXXX car, and he went down the high street- everyone knew him. Ev- he would honk- everybody knew him- he’d give people rides. He was just that kind of man, he was just inc- he was an incredible man.

*When you say he was like a different kind of Asian- what would the-the -the kind of stereotype or th-*

The stereotype I mean, I think it’s just, it’s just when the- when the Asian have their-their servants they don’t, they, they don’t treat them very well maybe or they, y’know, it’s not- I think he just treated them- everybody as family, y’know.

*Yeah.*

Everybody as family, he just did things, er, gave people rides and stuff like that, it was very- it was, it was good, very eye opening.

*Would you go back to Uganda? Like ho- are you still attached to Uganda do you reckon?*

Er no, no, now he’s not there…

*Mmm.*

That was the only reason for going. Ah, there is no attachment to Uganda at all, I don’t think there’s anything I wo- no. nothing at all.

*Yeah. So, when you think of home, wh- where do you envision-*

Erm, to tell you truthfully I think, I, I believe my home is America.

*Yeah.*

Definitely America. America- I think being y’know, I’ve been back here ten years, I’m just erm…I don’t like it at all. I don’t, I don’t, I don’t like the weath- one the weather here is terrible. Erm, y’know…the people are very different, you can’t meet people in this country because nobody talks to each other. You don’t know your neighbours…erm the British are just so cold, y’know, y’know if I went to Ameri- when I was in America- when I say went to a place, a restaurant, a bar with friends, er, not only with friends, you also get to meet other people there but everybody is so friendly, you get chatting, you talk to people, you meet a lot of friends, er, just very good. Erm, this country is so- it makes you so isolated, a very isolated country. Erm, apart from the weather, y’know, jus-it’s not a place I really want to- the houses- buying a house in this country is virtually impossible for people. Erm, it’s not a place I’d like to- I’d like to move to the States but I can’t because of my er, my child.

*Right.*

Er, I suppose when he gets a little older I will but I would definitely be moving to Florida within the next ten years.

*Definite part of your life?*

Definite- oh well, y’know I do like England, I- y’know I- my plan would be to- to live in Florida for the winter months and to live in…here in the summer months, if I could.

*Yeah [****laughs****].*

Yeah, if I could but, no as far as retiring and anything, it would definitely be in Florida.

*Okay.*

Yeah, without a doubt. I’m not er, I’m not very fond of this country at all, I mean I like- not fond of the country, I mean- maybe because it’s not in a posi- cos it’s different to where I’ve been in America, y’know I’ve had a big. luxury-luxurious house, had th-th-th-the space and everything there and then coming here and y’know I’ve got a flat here which was really good but I feel isolate- y’know, I feel so claustrophobic in it, yeah.

*Especially where you’ve…lived in America-*

Yes, yes, I just feel yeah, size-wise, everything. Erm…it’s a depressing place, especially in the winter [***laughs***], very, very depressing. And my ten years here have gone very quick…extremely quick, I mean it’s just a fast w- I suppose for me I was used to a slow pace of life as well.

*Yeah.*

Florida was a slower pace of life than it is here in England. Y’know you get your fast pace of life in, in a place like New York and the north-east [***mmm***] they’re very fast paced, you can go there but- and I did go there but I found them to be the same as England- I would never live in- anywhere where it’s so congested like that [***yeah***]…not anymore, no. It’s not a big thing- London is not a big thing for me at all.

*And your son- do you- does your son know about your erm, your upbringing when you first came here? Does he know about you- you were born in Uganda and you came-*

Yeah, he know that but he doesn’t know th-the hardship or anything of how things were.

*Yeah.*

How I grew up and everything, y’know, he’s- I try and make his life a lot different. He was born in America but only for three months [***mmm***]. But he’s been back there a couple of times, he loves it there too as well.

*Yeah.*

Erm, but er, I suppose I can’t do anything because his mother is here and…we’ll just have to wait and see.

*Yeah.*

Yeah.

*But is- America is home for you-*

Yes, yes, I feel that America is home- I was there eighteen years…erm, I’ve been…first six years of my life, yeah, was in Uganda, then the next fourteen years of my life was in the UK, then the next eighteen years of my life was in America.

*Mm-hm.*

And the last ten years of my life has been here.

*Yeah.*

So that’s how it’s worked out.

*Okay. Thank you Adil.*

Okay, thanks.

**Interview details**

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