

HALF CREDIT

written by
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based on a true story

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FADE IN:

EXT. CAMPSITE ENTRANCE - DAY

Three yellow school buses pull off a dirt road into a rustic campsite. The doors open and a slow stream of solemn adolescents emerge carrying backpacks and sleeping bags. Jackets, hats, and haircuts puts us in the 1980's.

INT. SCHOOL BUS - DAY

NOAH is standing in the aisle waiting to get off the bus. He's only five feet tall and looks inadequate next to his classmates. These are New England prep school kids. Everyone is white. The students pull duffel bags from the luggage rack. Noah only carries a BACKPACK.

RICH
(taunting)
Is that all you packed for the whole week?

NOAH
Don't worry. I'll be ok.

RICH
Who said I'm worried?

EXT. CAMPSITE - DAY

Teachers and students break off into smaller groups. MR. HUGHES, a balding black teacher in his forties, holds a piece of wrinkled paper. Six names are hand written in rain-smeared ink. "Noah K, Kelvin B, Rich G, Mike S, Peter C, Todd B" He searches for the students while other teachers do the same. He finds Noah and Rich. Next comes KELVIN, a dark-skinned black kid, same height as Noah, wearing city clothes. A fish out of water.

Noah and Kelvin wait together while Mr. Hughes collects everyone. They are both wearing SNEAKERS.

NOAH
(to Kelvin)
Let me guess. You also forgot your boots?

KELVIN
I don't own any boots.

NOAH
I do. Didn't bring 'em though. Maybe I should have let my mom pack my things for me like she wanted.

KELVIN

Probably.
(looks around)
Hey I'm Kelvin.

NOAH

(shakes Kelvin's hand)
Noah.

KELVIN

So. You know any of these kids?

NOAH

Yeah. I went to middle school with
half of them. But half these kids
are new. Like you.

KELVIN

Got it. And so we're all going to...

(hokey voice)

"get out of our comfort zone and get
to know one another"

NOAH

And get eaten by mosquitos.

KELVIN

And eat shitty food.

NOAH.

I guess it's not so bad. I mean
we'll be bored as shit at our desks
the rest of the year. At least up
here we have a little freedom.

MISS BAPTISTE, an attractive white teacher in her forties,
dressed perfectly for the outdoors, passes Kelvin and Noah
holding a list of girl's names. She pulls CHRISTINA and
MAGDA aside with a bit more force than necessary.
Christina, annoyed, waves her hand to prevent further
shoves. Magda stumbles a bit but finds her footing.

CHRISTINA

(to Magda)
What's going on with her?

MAGDA

I have no idea.

CHRISTINA

I bet that's Baptiste. My brother
took French with her. Told me to
keep my distance.

MAGDA

Shit. I think I have French with her second period.

CHRISTINA.

Yep. Me too. Gonna a be a fun week.

As Miss Baptiste makes her way down the list, Mr. Hughes watches how she is handling the students. He shakes his head in disapproval, catches Kelvin's eye, and smiles.

MR. HUGHES

Ok, gentleman. Grab your gear. Let's head up the hill and set up camp.

EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT

Kelvin, Noah, and Rich are around a campfire. Another boy, PETER, handsome and athletic, smokes a cigarette and listens to his walkman. Christina and Magda, out of breath, appear from the darkness.

MAGDA

Jesus, it took forever to find you guys.

RICH

(getting up)

Welcome to our campsite ladies. Glad you could make it.

CHRISTINA

(to the group)

Thanks. Hey. I'm Christina, and I guess you know Magda already from last year?

PETER

Hey, I'm Peter

RICH

Rich