

We Barely Even Speak Anymore

by Reid Carter

Over black, the rustling and chirping of a city park.

JAMAL
Listen, I'm telling you--

KRIS
Wait--stop, you're being
ridiculous.

JAMAL
I'm serious!
(theatrically)
This is my philosophy, my guiding
principle, my north star--

Fade in.

EXT. BUFFALO PARK - DAY

CLOSE ON: KRISTOPHER, 22, skinny white boy wearing his workout gear--long running shorts and a baggy worn-out tee. His eyes are locked in place, staring up at someone off-screen while he absentmindedly ties his shoes.

KRIS
How did you even come up
with this?

JAMAL
(off-screen)
What you mean, how? I'm a genius,
don't doubt.

KRIS
Jamal--

CLOSE ON: JAMAL KINGSTON, 22, black and built like a Greek statue, oblivious to his friend's stare. He lifts his leg up to a

JAMAL
All right, so. I was talking to
Laura one time--

KRIS
Of course.

JAMAL
Hey hey, it ain't like that, don't
make this about her. Just
because--you gonna let me
philosophize or what?
(MORE)

JAMAL (CONT'D)

(A beat.)

Anyways. So we were chatting, me
and she-who-must-not-be-named--

We go wide and finally see the two together. Jamal stretches
and Kris tries to hide that he can't take his eyes off his
friend.

KRIS

(know-it-all)

Fear of the name only increases
fear of the thing itself.

Jamal brushes past it.

JAMAL

And she said that she, when she
was growing up she wanted to be an
astronaut.

KRIS

Really? We're talking about the
same Laura?

JAMAL

Right? Totally blindsighted me.

KRIS

Blindsided. I would've pegged her
as a...

JAMAL

(excited)

Yes?

KRIS

What?

JAMAL

Go on. I wanna hear you say it.

To Kris the line is seductive, in a way Jamal clearly did not
intend it to be. Kris blushes.

KRIS

I just would've thought she would
be more of a..."give me attention"
kind of kid. Like she would want
to be a rock star, not a--

Kris flinches as Jamal leaps into the air.

JAMAL

YES. Yesyesyesyesyesyes bro you are a fucking man out of my own head.

KRIS

What? That's it?

JAMAL

When we were growing up, there are only two tracks. Kids who want to grow up to be astronauts, and kids who want to grow up to be rock stars.

Kris stares, dumbfounded but unable to keep the smirk from his face.

JAMAL

What?

KRIS

Right. So, how far are we running today?

JAMAL

Kris--

KRIS

Do you remember running? I assumed you did, but maybe the sweatbands and short shorts are just your new aesthetic--

JAMAL

Kris--

He mocks going back to stretching. Jamal grabs his shoulder to get his attention. Kris bristles at the unexpected contact and shuts right up.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Oh, come on--you're just bitter because you don't have your own organizing philosophy for life and the universe and...philosophy.

With great effort, Kris rolls his eyes and resumes stretching.

JAMAL

Don't sulk.

KRIS

I'm not sulking

He turns slightly away and pouts his lips. It's cute, and earns a grin from Jamal.

JAMAL

Come on--which one did you want to be?

KRIS

Neither.

JAMAL

You're full of shit, come on, which was it?

KRIS

I'm not playing this game. What if it was both?

JAMAL

The point is you have to choose. No one loves two things exactly equal.

KRIS

Equally.

JAMAL

Sure. Little child you for sure had a preference, don't front.

KRIS

How do you know?

JAMAL

Come on, bro, I know you better than anyone. Also, because philosophy. It's, like, science.

KRIS

I don't think it is.

JAMAL

I should know, I wanted to be an astronaut.

KRIS

You did not.

JAMAL

Did to. And you wanted to be...

Kris hesitates.

KRIS
...a rockstar.

JAMAL
KNEW IT.

KRIS
You did?

JAMAL
Well, no, I would've guessed
astronaut, but I knew it was one
of the two. The principle is
science, I'm telling you.

KRIS
It was for like a second in middle
school, I grew out of it right
away--

JAMAL
Don't be embarrassed, it's a human
constant. Besides, you would've
made a killer rockstar, bro. A
rocker intellectual? You would've
been drowning in man butts.

KRIS
(laughing)
Stop it, you perv.

JAMAL
You know it's
true. Hot rocker
who's really into
chemistry or
whatever--

KRIS
Psychology--you
know my major,
Jamal--

JAMAL
That Tinder profile writes itself.
Now are we giving up running or
have you gotten attached to the
five pounds you gained over
Christmas break?

Jamal starts to run. Kris, not prepared for the abrupt change,
stumbles as he stands to join him.

KRIS
Oh wait up you absolute jackass--

CUT TO:

Kris, sitting alone at the same bench.

Fall, reddish leaves on the trees and scattered in the grass, a paler autumn sky.

Kris shows less skin, wears a sweatshirt and looser shorts. No one to show off for.

Opening titles begin as he puts in his headphones. He gets up, checks his shoelaces, and runs off. We stay with the bench as credits continue.

CUT TO: