

Fair Play
By Editha Rosario-Moore

Characters

Brianna Ethically ambiguous American woman, late-30s

Luke White American man, late-30s

Time

March 2024.

A shared office room of a non-profit organization.

In a tall building.

In downtown Chicago.

A dingy office room.

Two desks, two chairs, two bookshelves, one motivational poster exclaiming, COLLABORATION, depicting overlapping hands, hanging in the center of the upstage wall, between two windows.

BRIANNA drags a large box into the room and turns on the lights. She sniffs.

She pulls out a container of wipes right away and starts cleaning the desk stage right, furiously.

LUKE walks in, coffee in hand, lands at the other desk.

LUKE

Morning.

BRIANNA

Wiping and not looking up: Morning.

...

Looking up: Do you like this?

LUKE

The room?

BRIANNA gives a “thumbs up,” wiping.

LUKE sits, looks at his desk.

Is that chocolate?

Smelling, closely: Nope. Can I have a few?

BRIANNA

BRIANNA tosses the wipes to LUKE, keeps wiping.

By the way, I like to keep a clean office.

LUKE

Wiping: No kidding?

Just kidding.

Bowing: Noted.

BRIANNA

She’s done wiping—for now.

Don’t be like that.

I just wanna make sure we set boundaries, early on.

LUKE

We’ve been working together for a while, Bri.

BRIANNA

Not while sharing an office.

Is that home coffee?

LUKE

Noted.
No more wiping for LUKE.
But it's worth it. Right?
Gesturing: The windows?
Sipping: Starbucks.

BRIANNA

Ew.

LUKE

Are you boycotting?

BRIANNA

Always. There's nothing local down here anymore.
Proudly looking out the window: We gotta share a room, but we finally got a view.

LUKE

Those other offices were Black Boxes.

BRIANNA

Overlapping in unison: Black Boxes.
I mean, that other room they tried to shove me in?
Leila told me it's called the PENALTY BOX.

LUKE

Shit.
They laugh.
It's that small?

BRIANNA

Narrow.
Laughs: They gotta box me in, right?
So I naturally chose to share the window room.

LUKE

Gotta do it!
They were gonna give me the one across from Sean's office.

BRIANNA

No shit.
...
The really big one?

LUKE

Yeah.
But it's windowless.

BRIANNA

I thought—Leila told me they were gonna give you the one *across* from the penalty box.

LUKE

Nope. Sean said, I got you, man.

BRIANNA

So why didn't you take it.

LUKE

I want a window!

BRIANNA

I would've taken it.

LUKE

Looking out the window.
It's so cool looking down LaSalle Street.

BRIANNA

Do you think it's still—

LUKE

The Board of Trade!
That statue also reminds me of the poster for the film, "Metropolis," right?

BRIANNA

I like space.

LUKE

But we get along well.
Right?

BRIANNA

Looking out.

...

I think it's sad. All of the closed businesses on LaSalle.
I can't believe they never bounced back.

LUKE

Looking out: That's capitalism.

...

Back to business: And this side of the building is closer to the bathroom and elevators.

And the kitchen.

So you can store your milk!

BRIANNA

Invaded: What?

LUKE

Don't you... Pump milk?

BRIANNA

I stopped last year.

LUKE

Sorry.

...

But I do miss the old building.

BRIANNA

I like working from home more.

LUKE

Two days a week.

BRIANNA

I am annoyed that we only have *one* kitchen for like, 60 people.

LUKE

But cheaper rent, more bucks for the cause.

BRIANNA

Putting books on her shelf.

LUKE starts unpacking, too.

We still deserve a nice space. We're not martyrs.

...

I never did ask why you decided to be an accountant, here.

LUKE

I like it here.

And full disclosure, Sean is my old friend from college.

We were dorm mates all through college.

BRIANNA

No kidding.

LUKE

He needed someone. And there's less pressure in a non-profit. Plus my wife's a corporate lawyer. So we're good.

BRIANNA

And "the cause."
Any interest in that?

LUKE

Of course!
For now.
...
Why did you decide to work here?

BRIANNA

To do the work. Increase DEIJ.

LUKE

Are you worried?
About your position?

BRIANNA

Why?

LUKE

Because of the *Students for Fair Admissions* decision.
My sister's a lawyer. She said, it's gonna affect everything, especially people like you—
DEI professionals.
Company's'll start cuttin' positions. Especially ones that rely on donations.

BRIANNA

Unpacks again, faster.
Why do you want to worry me?
There's still so much work to do.
They'll just have to figure it out.
...
And we use DEIJ!

LUKE

Oh, wow.
What's the J?

BRIANNA

Justice.
Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and *Justice*.

LUKE

Right, that's right.

...

Starts unpacking again.

Why?

BRIANNA

Because none of it's possible without social justice.
Non-profits and schools need the 'J.'
So yeah. I'm worried.

LUKE

I'm sorry.

BRIANNA

Why?

LUKE

Just so you know.
We do have the money in the budget.
At least for the next fiscal year.
According to what I know.
And I will advocate for you. To Sean.

BRIANNA

You'd do that for li'l ol' me?

LUKE

For us, Bri.
...
For the org.
I'm just trying to help.

BRIANNA

Holding up a funeral palm card she found in the desk drawer: Who used to be in here?

LUKE

What is that?
Reading it: Did they D-I-E?

BRIANNA

Why are you spelling at me?

LUKE

I'm tryin' to, to lighten it up.
DIE, DEI?

...

Sorry.

And I'm creeped out a bit.

BRIANNA

Don't be.

She places it at the bottom of the frame of the COLLABORATION poster.

For now.

LUKE

Why?

BRIANNA

We can't just throw it away.

LUKE

No way.

He takes it down.

He does not know what to do with it.

BRIANNA

Why do you care so much?

LUKE

That's my poster.

BRIANNA

Holding in a laugh: What?

LUKE

I had them move it from my old office.

BRIANNA

Luke.

LUKE

It's important to me.

BRIANNA

It's corny!

LUKE

It was my dad's.

BRIANNA

I can tell.

LUKE

He d-i-e-d.

BRIANNA

...

I'm sorry.

LUKE takes down the poster, puts the frame on his desk

It's OK, man. Keep it there.

LUKE

He removes the poster and unfolds the bottom.

Holds it up: "All for One. Or Else."

BRIANNA

It's one of those unmotivating posters, or de—

LUKE

Yep. My dad, the jokester.

BRIANNA

Why'd you fold it in?

LUKE

Uh, frame size?

BRIANNA

I have one that size at home.

I'll bring it in.

LUKE

Thanks.

...

Bri. I care. I do.

Why else would I be here, for this long.

BRIANNA

It's good to know.

...

Why don't you come to one of my meetings?

LUKE

AA?

BRIANNA

No, ass. The DEIJ meetups I always send emails about.

LUKE

Oh. No.
I didn't think I should.

BRIANNA

Why?

LUKE

That's not what I do.

BRIANNA

But you're a part of this place.
For now.

LUKE

What could I possibly have to say?

BRIANNA

I don't know.
Maybe listen.

LUKE

He tacks the palm card on the wall. OK.
When's the next one?

BRIANNA

Next Wednesday.

LUKE

Is there anything I can say to Sean, about your job?

BRIANNA

Come to the meeting.

LUKE

OK! I'll figure out what to say to him.

BRIANNA

Just come to the meeting.

LUKE

Overlapping, in unison: Come to the meeting, yes.

...

You know, there is a new coffee shop two blocks north of the river.

BRIANNA

That's far.

LUKE

Starting to leave: I'm gonna go check it out.

BRIANNA

You already have coffee.

LUKE

Eh, I need more.
What do you want?

BRIANNA

Just a regular coffee.
With oat milk.

LUKE

You got it.

BRIANNA

Thank you.
But you still gotta come to the meeting.

LUKE

Of course.
BRIANNA looks out the window.

END