
A Distinctive Friendship

Two very different people, one common passion.

Jamal comes from a very different world than Forrester. The starting of the movie shows what life was like for Jamal growing up in the Bronx with his brother and single parent mother. For Forrester, he is secluded in his apartment for a number of years, who escaped from life after publishing his book and losing his family. Jamal breaks into Forrester's home with a dare from his friends. Jamal rushed out of the apartment leaving his backpack which contained his journals. When his backpack and journals is returned from Forrester's, once he opens his journals he sees that they have been edited. Jamal finds the courage once again to return to Forrester's apartment and knock on his door to ask for help with his writing. After Jamal completes his essay on why he should stay out of Forrester's home, a beginning glimpse of a friendship starts to take hold. Through their shared interest in writing, they started to get to know each other as they worked on Jamal's writing.

As the friendship grows, so does the trust and respect for each other. True friendship is based on respect, trust, loyalty and the ability to accept someone for who they are, no matter where their origins came from. Loyalty is about helping your friends achieve their goals, keeping their confidences and helping to conquer their fears. Forrester taught Jamal "You write the first draft with your heart, you write the second draft with your head."

The movie shows the loyalty that developed between two friends in many ways. Jamal honoured Forrester's request not to tell anyone about him, as he didn't want the attention from the outside world. Forrester informs Jamal about Professor Crawford when he tells him "bitterly disappointed teachers can be either very effective or very dangerous." Forrester helps Jamal achieve his dream of writing and in the end stands up for Jamal when he is accused of plagiarism. They were able to confide in each other about things that were very private and personal. Jamal was able to convince Forrester to achieve his dream of going to Scotland. Jamal feels many forms of discrimination throughout the movie. While in school he does not perform to the best of his abilities because of the peer pressure he would face. He is not sure how to take Forrester after he makes, what Jamal feels is, a remark about him being black.

As Jamal starts at Mavor School it is evident he is a minority at this exclusive school. Jamal's professor was extremely discriminatory towards him in many ways. He looked at Jamal and thought he was just another 'basketball player from the Bronx' who received a scholarship. Later he accused Jamal of plagiarism as he didn't believe a kid from his 'background' could write as well as he did.

This movie teaches us you can't always judge people by how they look, what they do or whether they are rich or poor. It shows what true friendship and loyalty means. As Forrest quotes "losing family obliges us to find our family - not always the family that is our blood but the family that can become our blood and should we have the wisdom to open our door' and you never know if you will receive that gift of friendship.