

MAD WORLD

By Matthew Nsubuga

This screenplay is copyrighted the.juice@hotmail.co.uk
to its author. All rights
reserved.

This screenplay may not be
used or reproduced without the
express
written permission of the
author.

FADE IN:

INT. CHARLES' APARTMENT - DAY

A filthy apartment with a garbage-ridden floor, half-eaten food left on top of the T.V., and a box of Coco-Puffs laid on it's side underneath the coffee table.

Filled with many miscellaneous objects and ads and beer cans, one thing that stands out on the table is a photo of a man and a boy standing side by side, smiling.

CHARLES (V.O)

Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away. We hope to look back on our lives with pride and achievement. We want to feel we have accomplished something memorable; something our children will be so proud of they'd look at us and say *I'm proud of you.*

Slowly CHARLES is revealed to us. Laid on a couch. Feet up, he wears nothing but a t-shirt and boxers.

CHARLES (V.O)

Sadly this isn't reality. We live in a mad world.

He is black, old and rugged. Grey hairs fill his face - as do wrinkles.

A can of bear drips from his side.

The whole living room is revealed. Very TIGHT and CRAMPED. Pretty basic - BROWN carpet and BLUE wallpaper.

It is dark, curtains are closed.

From the midst of darkness a ROCKWEILER appears.

It moves towards Charles and LICKS his face.

It covers Charles' face in dog spit, looks quite REVOLTING.

CHARLES (V.O)

Succulent spit to start my day. A cold wind blows across my face. The day has started.

Charles' eyes dart open.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

Ah for God sake Casey, get off me.

Looks at the time: 11:20am

INT. BATHROOM

Charles TAKES both his hands and drops them in the oncoming tap water and drenches his face in it.

He stops and STARES at the mirror for a moment.

CHARLES (V.O)

Imagination is the one weapon in the war against reality. The nights go smoother than the day. The dreams stay close to my heart - where times are still prosperous.

He gets a towel and dries his face.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY 12PM

Casey chases him into the living room.

CHARLES

Why you so excited?

CHARLES (V.O)

Talking to a dog. I know what you think, but it helps.

He goes on his knees and pats the dog.

From the corner of his eye, he notices a photo on top of layers of rubbish on a table.

He leaves the dog and approaches it. He PICKS it up and takes a long look at it.

It is a picture of him and a boy.

The SMILE which was once before has totally disappeared.

He sits - picks up his phone.

He stares at it for a moment. Eyes turn watery - he wipes them. He takes another look at the photo and GLARES for a moment.

He can not DELIBERATE with himself any longer. He picks up the phone and dials a number.

(CONTINUED)

No answer - straight to answer mail. He SIGHS in disappointment.

ANSWER PHONE

Please leave your message after the tone.

BEEP.

CHARLES

Well its me, Dad. I was just wondering. We haven't seen each other for a long time since you got married and I haven't even seen the baby. Maybe you ... and your family, if your not busy or anything can come round for dinner or something. A small thing, nothing big just me, you, Jessica and the child.

Charles chuckles out a small laugh.

CHARLES

I don't even know the name of the baby. Anyway I think I've nattered on for long enough. Give me call.

He puts the phone down.

CHARLES (V.O)

Reason for living. One son. A respectable son. Doesn't feel the same for me. Relationship is lost. No room for repair. At least not at the moment.

He SNAPS out of his small gaze. SPRINGS up from the couch and slaps on a tracksuit and black shoes.

CHARLES

Come on Casey. Lets go for a walk.

EXT. PARK -- DAY 12:30PM

Charles stands in the centre of some open grass. He watches Casey run around. Hardly anyone is about.

CHARLES (V.O)

Is man an Ape or an Angel. The latter seems unlikely. I'm not religious. God must be disappointed

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES (V.O) (cont'd)
though. Life didn't go to
plan. The supreme irony of life is
that hardly anyone gets out of it
alive.

Creeping from behind him a lady suddenly comes to his
attention.

She's tall and blond. A soft white face, her names SARAH.

SARAH
Hi, is that your dog over there?

Charles turns and sees Casey jumping on top of a pedestrian.

CHARLES
HEY CASEY COME OVER HERE NOW!

Casey gets of the terrified man and runs towards Charles.

Sarah giggles.

SARAH
My names Sarah nice to meet you...

CHARLES
Charles.

They shake hands.

SARAH
That's a nice dog you got there.

CHARLES
Thank you. It was a gift from my
brother.

Charles bends down and puts Casey on his lead.

SARAH
Really? I wish I had a brother who
gave me a dog.

They both giggle like school children.

CHARLES
I know you, you live opposite the
Patterson's. I've seen you around.

SARAH
Yeah, that's me.

CHARLES (V.O)
The Patterson's.

EXT. URBAN STREET -- NIGHT -- FLASHBACK

Charles walks home with Casey.

Brimming from the other side of the road are sounds of loud music, arguments and screams.

CHARLES (V.O)
The place is like a club. Different cars pull up there every night.

INT. CHARLES BEDROOM -- FLASHBACK

Charles leans against his window. He stares across the street, as police park up and two women are separated.

CHARLES (V.O)
Sometimes I look outside my bedroom window and watch them at night. Fights always happen, police always show up. Provides much needed entertainment.

EXT. PARK -- DAY 13:00PM

Sarah pats Casey on the head.

CHARLES
How do you take that noise everyday?

SARAH
I survive.

CHARLES
You should complain to the council or something. It shouldn't be allowed.

SARAH
Whats the point? They never listen.

There's a short silence.

SARAH
I think I should be going now.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES

OK. It was nice meeting you Sarah.

SARAH

You to. You need to keep a better watch on your dog, you know.

CHARLES

Yeah, I will.

He smiles. She walks off towards the park gates.

CHARLES (V.O)

Feels nice. Risk is worth taking.

CHARLES

HEY, WAIT.

She stops and turns around.

CHARLES

Are you doing anything else later?
I mean, I was thinking maybe if you want to, you can come round for some dinner or something.

SARAH

Oh I'm sorry I'm married.

CHARLES (V.O)

Not all risks pay off.

CHARLES

Oh I thought because...

He points to her finger.

CHARLES

You didn't have a ring you were...

SARAH

Oh sorry. I forgot it at home. I'm sorry if I gave you the wrong idea.

CHARLES

It's fine. I'll see you again another time.

SARAH

Alright bye.

Charles' face looks pitiful as his dog begs him for attention.

INT. CHARLES LIVING ROOM -- DAY 15:00PM

Charles sits on his couch watching T.V. - Steve Wilkos.

On the screen the topic shows -

" DEADBEAT DADS "

Charles picks up his can of BEER and taking a little sip.

CHARLES (V.O)
 Interesting topic. Many years of
 life wasted on this instrument. My
 mum use to always say:

INT. FAMILY HOME -- FLASHBACK

Image of Charles' mothers face waving her finger. She's very black with short hair and bulging eyes.

CHARLES MOTHER
 YOU THINK TOO MUCH. STOP THINKING
 AND START DOING.

INT. CHARLES LIVING ROOM

Suddenly HUGE BANGS are being thumped at the front door.

Charles jumps up, startled.

He reaches the front door - looks through the hole.

CHARLES
 Who is that?

JASON
 It's me open up.

CHARLES
 Jason?

A smile covers Charles' face.

He unlocks the door and opens up. JASON pushes his way through into the house and into the living room.

Jason is tall, smart looking with long side burns.

Charles chases behind him.

(CONTINUED)

JASON
Look at this place.

CHARLES
Jason. It's been a long time.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- DAY

Jason turns and looks Charles right in the eye.

JASON
Listen. I'm going to be real clear here. So listen. I don't want you calling my house. I don't want you hassling my family. I don't want you in my life.

Jason's face has tensed up with anger.

CHARLES
Son. Let's just talk. Have a seat - I'll get you a drink.
(pleading)
Please.

Jason looks around. It's a mess - stuff lying everywhere. He laughs.

JASON
You're a funny guy.

CHARLES
I don't find this funny.

JASON
Oh really. Didn't seem that way when you almost drank yourself to death. The days you beat me with a belt. You couldn't stop laughing.

A tear drips down Charles face.

CHARLES
Listen son. Just listen.

JASON
Nah. You're a joke.

Jason tries to walk out of the living room but is stopped by his father.

(CONTINUED)

JASON

If you don't get out of my way, I will make you.

CHARLES

I just want you to understand that I agree with you. I am a drunk. A shameful father. But we need each other. I want to change - and I need your help. I want my life to have meaning.

JASON

You think the world owes you a living; the world owes you nothing. A cheater never changes its spots.

Charles lets him past. He PLUMMETS to his knees as Jason slams the door on his way out.

CHARLES (V.O)

Life's a bitch. It really is. Like a slap in the face.

INT. APARTMENT FRONT DOOR -- EVENING

Charles opens the front door, he wears his LARGE overcoat and holds a brown dusty stick.

Casey runs TOWARDS Charles as he begins to leave.

CHARLES

You stay here and don't touch anything. I'll see you in a bit.

He shuts the front door.

EXT. MAIN ROAD -- EVENING

Its THUNDERING down with rain.

Charles trots through the main road - head down.

CHARLES (V.O)

If a man hasn't discovered something that he will live for, he isn't fit to live. My mind is clear now.

INT. PUB -- EVENING 18:30PM

As Charles steps into the pub you see the rows upon rows of men sipping on their evening beer.

He heads to the bar. At the bar two men sit both overweight.

Charles joins them. He sits down and gestures to one of the waitress.

CHARLES

Love, can you get me a shot. Make
it a double and keep them coming.

The waitress passes him a cup. Then pours a shot into it.
She repeats this with another cup.

CHARLES

Thank you.

Charles puts them away without a breath.

CHARLES

Keep them coming.

One of the overweight white men turns around.

He's got short hair, small mustache with a Scottish accent,
his name is MATT.

MATT

Hey you live just by me.

Charles twist his head around drowsily.

CHARLES

Sorry?

MATT

I live across the road from you.

CHARLES

Really? Never seen you before.

MATT

I moved in there five years ago
with my wife Sarah.

Charles eyes pops up.

CHARLES

Sarah?

(CONTINUED)

MATT

Yeah. Do you know her?

CHARLES

No. Just rings a bell. Well nice to meet you ...

MATT

Matt.

CHARLES

Oh yeah... Matt. Nice to meet you Matt.

Matt smiles.

MATT

Nice to meet you to. Mind if I ask you where you work?

CHARLES

I don't work anymore, but I used to be a useful carpenter.

MATT

Carpenter?

CHARLES

Yeah, but that life is gone now.

MATT

So what is the special occasion?

CHARLES

What?

MATT

You took two shots you must be celebrating something.

CHARLES

Oh no no no. No celebration just a new focus.

MATT

New focus?

CHARLES

A new focus in life. Like a new direction.

(CONTINUED)

MATT

What is this direction?

CHARLES

Have you ever felt that there is something in life which is waiting for you and all you need to do is find it?

MATT

No.

CHARLES

I'm not sure what it is yet. This marks the start of the search. My purpose lies somewhere out there.

MATT

Well cheers to you, me and your new search.

Matt lifts up his beer, so does Charles and they touch it together.

CHARLES

I think I will be heading off ...

MATT

Matt.

CHARLES

Oh yes, Matt.

Charles struggles of his chair and stumbles out.

EXT. MAIN ROAD -- 20:00PM

Charles stumbles down the high street in darkness. He clutches his can of beer with real intensity while in short gaps - he drenches it down his throat.

As he makes his way home he sees a shop. He wiggles his can, nothing is inside. He scampers across the road like a MANIAC towards the shop.

INT. SHOP -- 20:20PM

He makes his way in. Not many people are inside. Only from what he sees is too hooded youths, a white lady and young white male.

(CONTINUED)

He turns to the shopkeeper who is keeping a watchful eye on the two youths.

CHARLES

Hey. Where your drinks?.

SHOPKEEPER

By the tins, down in that corner.

CHARLES (V.O)

New focus, but still old habits.
What can I say? The taste beats
everything else.

Charles glances at the two youths who stand by the chocolates near the entrance of the shop.

CHARLES

Bit young to be up so late, don't
you think?

YOUTH #1

Carry on walking old man.

CHARLES

Get yourselves home. Your parents
must worried.

YOUTH #2

(talking to his friend)

Is this man still talking to us?

They both laugh at Charles.

CHARLES (V.O)

I don't know why this old hag is
talking to them. They look lost
like how Jason used to.

Suddenly there's loud car skid from outside. The youths turn their attention to the shop entrance.

A man pokes his head into the shop and lifts up his arm.

CHARLES (V.O)

I'm surprised at how quickly I can
move. Maybe my search is already
over. Maybe redemption has found
me.

The man holds a handgun.

He SHOOTS.

(CONTINUED)

Charles DIVES.

Charles takes both bullets aimed at the youths. The youths FLINCH. The man has GONE.

Charles' is laid out. Still and calm. The youths surround him; PETRIFIED. Unable to MOVE.

CHARLES (V.O)

When I was a boy my dream was to be a carpenter. To make things. Then I met her. I was complete. But like that - she was gone. Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away. I can be happy now. My life has meaning. I didn't die with no purpose. I saved lives, I gave a people another chance in life. Man can be an Angel.

Charles pulls out the picture of him and his son standing side by side. He stares at it.

CHARLES (V.O)

Maybe my son will be proud of me now. Maybe he will no longer need to look down on me but to think high of me.

Charles lets go of the picture. He stares at the ceiling as he takes his final breaths.

CHARLES (V.O)

I can be with her now.

A picture of Mary. Soft brown eyes, caramel brown skin, black smooth hair and curved soft lips.

Charles finally lets go. His neck relaxes. Eyes still open.

CHARLES (V.O)

We can be together. Away from this mad world.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END