Finding “the one” chapter

Scene Three

**Rachael:** I was 17 when I left home and a lot built up to that moment. My dad came to this country when he was five. My parents got married because my dad was handed a photo of my mum and thought she was pretty, so she came over from India when she was 21 and had my brother a year later and five years later had me.

My brother was a typical Singh, a Sikh boy. He had the beard, the turban, fluent in Punjabi and all the aunties loved him. Whilst I was a coconut – brown on the outside, white on the inside who had all white/black friends. I stayed away from the Asians because I didn’t get along with them. Plus brown guys aren’t my type.

I always say I hate my community but I love my religion. Sikhism is my everything. If I didn’t have it I’d have keeled over with my depression. My family knew about my opinions of the Asian community and brown boys. And this caused the whole situation. I overheard my mum talking to my Nani in India asking if the photos had arrived for the boys to see. And from that I knew I was screwed.

I got in touch with the police and they helped me out a lot. One day they asked me to go to the magistrate’s office I think, and it was around the time the London riots had happened and reached Nottingham and people were getting booked. Anyway I went there and asked what was the matter and told me they needed my DNA. So I let them take my bloods, swab my mouth and fingerprints. They then took a mould of my mouth. The mould was banana flavour and asked them why it was necessary. They hesitated for a moment and explained they’d need to refer to it just in case I was caught and set alight like in other cases.

But eventually my boyfriend and I were able to move a bag of clothes, important items like GCSE’s and birth certificates. I did this once a week for a year before I could move in with him. When it came to the day of moving out it was planned to the “T”. I made sure my parents and brother were at work and I had everything packed early in the morning and a letter explaining everything. I also made sure to see everyone out and tell them I loved them and gave them one last hug and kiss. They didn’t say it back but I knew they did.

I miss my family. I’ve not had contact with them for three years on May 12th. I don’t blame them for what happened, I blame my community and I’d never want my children to know this or be a part of that community.