

RESPECT IN THE WORKPLACE

RACIAL HARASSMENT SEGMENT

DON: You gonna turn this place into a reserve, Jaye, if you keep this up.

JAYE: My grandmother made it. Do you like it?

DON: Yeah right, its just what we need. Is something going to come crawling out of that? And where did you get these filthy feathers from? The reserve, where else?!

JAYE: I'm not biting Don.

DON: I drove past a reserve one time. Me and my kids were playing a game. We were looking at all those dirty little shacks and we were playing count the dirty Indians - we'd go there's a clean Indian there's a dirty Indian. Do you know how many dirty Indians we counted?

JAYE: Shut up - just shut up.

KEN: Now what is going on?

DON: Ken, she moved the desk.

JAYE: What?

DON: She moved that desk and you can't do that without getting an approval. Right Ken?! Well Ken?

KEN: Yeah, right. Right.

DON: Well, I am getting sick of this. We have regulations for a reason. She gets to violate them anytime she wants because she gets to cry Indian.

KEN: Look, lets not make a big deal out of this all right. Jaye just put the desk back where it was.

DON: Ken, she gets a demerit for this. It is a violation of the safety regulations.

JAYE: Look Ken, I didn't mean to break any rules.

DON: Yeah, well you didn't get it approved. Did you? Ken?

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KEN: He's right.

JAYE: Ken, I moved the desk by the window. What are you afraid Don over here is going to trip over it and fall out.

DON: What did you say half-breed?

JAYE: I said you've blown some fuses and you're wandering around in a dark room, White-ee!

KEN: Jaye, you're the one who is always blowing a fuse, huh! I have had nothing but trouble ever since you got here. You whine, you complain, not a day goes by that -

JAYE: Damn, it's a desk. Come on you guys. Get a life!

DON: It means a demerit.

JAYE: Do you know where you can all shove your demerit points.

KEN: Okay. That's enough. I do not have to take this crap from you. You're suspended for three days. Now outta of here and move the desk back where it was before you leave!

NAOMI: Hi Tina. Tina, the character you just played experienced racial harassment. What would that character have liked to see happen?

TINA: I think the character would have liked to have seen the issue of racial harassment dealt with in that scene.

NAOMI: Supervisor Ken, how do you think he responded?

TINA: As this character? I don't think that she felt that there was an answer to this issue in her supervisor. I think that she would have had to have gone somewhere else. A level of management that is higher.

NAOMI: What the law says is first of all that supervisors should be responsible and watch out what goes on in the workplace and make sure the workplace is safe and healthy for everyone. But if they don't or the company has no policy, then you can go the provincial

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or federal Human Rights Commission. In this scene the racism was blatant. It was really in your face. Is that the way it is? Your a native person is that what really goes on?

TINA: You know, sadly enough it is not that uncommon and there is also the more insidious racism - very calculated I think and sometimes maybe it is not calculated, maybe sometimes it is not conscious. It's stereotypes that are deeply engrained into people, they don't even think that they're racist. They don't believe their words or actions are racism and that occurs a lot. What I am trying to do is just call it as it is - really - and say that I think this was racism. And people will say no, no, whoever or in whatever, situation.

NAOMI: Do they try to make you feel your crazy and you haven't heard what you really heard.

TINA: Well, they try and convince you that that isn't racism and that there is another issue that's going here and the person doesn't really know how to deal with it properly. That's what I find is common and it happens in the workplace. It happens when you are dealing with government agencies, whatever and so I just say now, think what you want. I am the one who lives with it, I know what it feels like and I know what it is. I know what it is to be treated poorly, have poor service or whatever, and I know what racism is. And so now, I am becoming much more vocal about it.

NAOMI: That's good.

TINA: But you get to the point where it becomes too painful and very demoralizing.

NAOMI: Tina, in this scene your character yelled back and called the fellow who was complaining about you white-ee.

TINA: Right.

NAOMI: Watching it we can understand why. The frustration and the anger that you feel just comes out. But all of a sudden your character was the one that got the demerit.

TINA: Right.

NAOMI: How did that feel?

TINA: I think, what I felt the character would have felt, was that she was just being cornered. She really was being put in a position where she had no way out. I mean it