

CHAMELEONS AMONGST US

by Taabish Nomani 10D

Kamelio, a young 16-year-old boy who has just been transferred from Spain due to his mother's recent marriage with an Australian real estate agent, has been invited to hang around with some of his new class mates at a recently built shopping mall; Stanford. Upon arriving in Melbourne, Kamelio notices the great difference, from city life to food. Uncomfortable at first due to his poor English, Kamelio is encouraged by his parents to mix with Australian kids so he can accustom to their traditions. After a small struggle of picking an outfit, Kamelio finally heads out to meet his new mates. What Kamelio doesn't know, is that his friends haven't invited him for hanging out, but to embarrass him in front of the class at Lord's Pizza.

Kamelio: Mother, how longer?

Mother: Si, Si, I know you excited, patience hijo.

Father: Oh c'mon Isabella, he is only a boy. Let him enjoy his freedom. He's just excited to meet with his new amigos aren't your boy?

Kamelio: Si, Si padre.

Father: Kamelio! Remember, your friends speak English not Spanish. Your English isn't the greatest son, but you must try and stick to it. You will get used to it after a while.

Kamelio: Si, d-a-a-d.

Father: (Frustrated)Not Si, we say yes.

Kamelio: Sorry, yes, I say yes.

Mother: We here Kamelio, is Stanford yes?

Kamelio: Si mama.

(Gets out of the car and walks towards a small group of boys)

Father: I don't know what I'm going to do with that boy.

Patrick: Ay boys, its good old Kam coming over, the new Spanish kid remember? Play it low boys.

Kamelio: Hola friend amigos!

(All the kids laugh)

Kamelio: (Nervous) I do funny?

Bert: No, no. We were just laughing at that old lady over there. She just tripped over the curb. Anyway, how's your life bro?

Kamelio: Who? Me?

Bert: Yeah, I'm asking you Kam-man.

Kamelio: What Kam-man? I good.

Patrick: (Eyes Bert suspiciously) Just ignore him Kamelio. He makes up weird nicknames for people. Believe me, he comes up with really, really weird names. So how was your trip here?

Kamelio: Si, I come plane. My d-aa-a-d take me here.

Bert: We know that dude. How was Spain like? Does everybody eat tacos and burritos there?

Dev: Bert you're an absolute retard. Tacos are made in Mexico. Kamelio, disregard this guy. He is a complete dweeb and only cares about 2 things; fame. If you look at his belly, I'm sure you can decipher what his second love is.

Bert: Speaking about food-

Dev: (Nonchalantly) We were never speaking about food.

Bert: Ok whatever Dev, I was going to say how about we go for a bite at Lord's Pizza.

Patrick: Are you sure you're just going there for a 'bite'?

(Everyone laugh)

Kamelio: Patrick, you say lot amigos come.

Patrick: They are here. They're waiting for us inside.

Patrick: Affirmative. Let's go have a 'bite.'

Bert: Shut up!

Kamelio and his friends enter Lord's Pizza to find chaos looming everywhere. People are taking cover behind fallen tables to avoid the pizzas and soft drinks flying around the room. However, in a quieter section towards the back they see a group of young adults enjoying a meal. They decide to do the same and head over.

Patrick: Hey boys. What'cha been doing?

(The group of kids reply unanimously, saying 'nothing much.')

Bert: Dudes, check it. This is Kamelio, the kid from Spain, remember?

Andrew: Say what now?

Bert: (Whispers) You know, the weirdo you told us to bring?

Andrew: Ahh ok, so this is the one. Well Kamelio, welcome to the club. The names Andrew, but they call me Maestro. Have a seat.

Kamelio: Th-ank you.

Larry: Hey Maestro, why'd you let him take big B's chair, he's gonna be mad.

Andrew: Tsk, tsk, tsk. Have you not learnt anything Larry? I am the boss here. I can kick and recruit anyone I like. You got that?

Larry: Yeh.

Andrew: Anyways, boys meet my crew. Larry, and Big B, who's in the toilet by the way.

Larry: What's sup?

Kamelio: I good much.

Larry: (laughs) Your voice...check it. What's with the refugee talk bruh? You can drop the act.

Andrew: Ye man drop it?

Kamelio: I no drop?

Patrick: Chill guys, he just came from Spain. He's not perfect yet.

Andrew: Are you defending him?

Patrick: Not at all.

Bert: So Andr- I mean Maestro, what did you invite us for, and why did you tell us to bring Kam-

(Larry kicks Bert on the leg from under the table.)

Larry: It's because he's new and we want him to hang out with us, get to know us, aren't I right Maestro?

Andrew: You heard the man.

(Big B enters the room.)

Big B: Piss off pipsqueak, this is my chair.

Andrew: Shut up you big baby! I told him to sit there. Now go find another seat.

Big B: (Through gritted teeth) Yes Maestro sir.

Andrew: Don't worry about him, he just looks intimidating, but he's such a big baby.

Kamelio: Ok

Andrew: Kamelio why don't you tell us about yourself?

Kamelio: I am Kamelio. I do Spain. I kick for soccer. I 16 age. I love noodles.

Andrew: (Laughs) Dude you can't speak for crap. How'd they let you in Australia?

Bert: His paren-

Andrew: I wasn't speaking to you. I was speaking to the dummy here.

Kamelio: My padre work Australia.

Big B: Dude we can't speak in your Spanish language. Start speaking English or leave.

Patrick: hey what the hell?! Why are you guys acting so rude, he's just new.

Larry: Why are you defending him?

Patrick: Maybe because he's my friend?!

Andrew: Hey! Who said we aren't his, were just giving him advice, like learning to speak English.

Bert: Yeah LOL, he needs to learn. I can't disagree with maestro, not our fault he can't speak.

Patrick: Bert! So what if he can't, everyone is bad at somethings. You're a fat sh*t and can't run!

Bert: You take that back you backstabber!

Kamelio: (With tears in his eyes) Just stop! I no come for fighting. I come for friend. I leave.

Andrew: I think you should, but you haven't eaten anything. Here, have a pizza.

(Dumps a pizza on top of Kamelio's head)

Larry: Here have another one.

(Big B and Larry throw pizza slices on him)

Larry: Oh and a word of advice, don't mix with us because trust me you'll regret it.

Kamelio: My daddy here. I go now. You fake amigos. You bul-lies.

Patrick: Kamelio! Wait!

As Kamelio rushes out of the door, he spots a flyer on the wall. "AmaChampion Soccer Tournament. Enter at the front desk or call 07895408. Teams of two players. Contact for more info."

Father: Hey, Kamelio my boy! How was it?

Kamelio: (Blankly) Good.

Father: What do you mean good? Did you have fun? Are your new friends cool?

Kamelio: I say good.

Father: Oh cmo-

Mother: Let it go Simon. He had too much fun. He like them friends.

Kamelio: Can go home now?

Father: is everything ok?

Kamelio: (angrily) I say I good!

Mother: he's fine Simon. He just doesn't feel like talking.

Kamelio: I made a friend.

Father: Well that's great son! What's his name?

Kamelio: Patrick.

Mother: Tell you what. You get his phone number and we can invite him over next week. What you say?

Kamelio: Ok.

Father: I'm sure it will be fun. We can have pizza on that day.

Kamelio: (Angry) No pizza. Tacos.

Mother: Whatever you want Kamelio.

Kamelio: Also, can I use your phone?

Mother: For what?

Kamelio: I need to make call.

Kamelio: Hello? Is me Kamelio.

Patrick: Oh hey! What's sup?

Kamelio: I just cleaning pizza of clothes.

Patrick: Oh...Sorry about that. I didn't know they would be rude to you like that. After you left I went home too.

Kamelio: No fault you.

Patrick: So, did you need something from me?

Kamelio: No. I saw picture of soccer game.

Patrick: You mean the AmaChampion?

Kamelio: Si, si, yes, yes!

Patrick: That's like tots the biggest competition in high school.

Kamelio: I want join.

Patrick: ha-ha, so does everyone else.

Kamelio: So join.

Patrick: Believe me I have, but it's not that easy. You have to go for trials and be picked to play in the tournament. You play in a stadium in front of thousands of people. Me and Bert have tried for like 2 years in a row, both times we've missed out.

Kamelio: So let's try. I and you.

Patrick: AmaChampion is a code word for humiliation. You know who wins every year? Andrew and his 'squad.' We don't stand a chance.

Kamelio: Let's try.

Patrick: I don't know Kamelio...

Kamelio: We do!

Patrick: Fine. But if we lose, don't blame me.

Kamelio: Ok, I call soccer person now bye!

Patrick: Yeah sure, cya.

Kamelio: Papa!

Dad: Hey Kamelio. What do you need.

Kamelio: Call soccer person?

Dad: Ahh, you want to enter AmaChampion don't you?

Kamelio: Yes, I and Patrick.

Dad: How marvellous! Finally made a friend, and already entering a soccer tournament?

Kamelio: Si.

Dad: Gimme a sec, I'm calling em now.

Kamelio: Si Papa.

Dad: Hello. My names Simon Tyrone. My son wants to enter the AmaChampion. He has a friend in mind too. Oh so he needs to do a trial? Yeah sure. Where and what time? Wednesday 12th 3pm? Ok Thanks well be there. Yep, thanks. Bye.

Kamelio: What he says papa?

Dad: Well, the lady on the phone said you need to do a trial.

Kamelio: Si.

Dad: Well, I'm going to work now, your trial is tomorrow. She said you're lucky, you had the last entry. Their entries are closed now.

Kamelio: Si, I call Patrick.

Kamelio: We join game!

Patrick: Great! When's the trials?

Kamelio: Wednesday 12th.

Patrick: OMG, but that's tomorrow!

Kamelio: So?

Patrick: We haven't had any practice. Were so screwed. My mums calling me now, I have to go. See you tomorrow then?

Kamelio: Si, bye.

Patrick: Bye!

Coach: Ok! This is the AmaChampion, not a puny soccer game. This is the qualifiers; every pair will verse another pair. There are 16 teams. All you have to do is win one game. Simple. Now get into your pairs and line-up so I can make the match schedule.

Patrick: Kamelio, I'm not so sure about this.

Kamelio: Calm down, we do.

Coach: You two over there! What's with the talk, want to share it with everybody?

Patrick: No ma'am.

Coach: Then zip it. Since you two seem so confident you can go up against team Chi Force. And also what's your team name?

Kamelio: Zup-

Patrick: KamPat!

Coach: Ok team KamPat, get on the field.

The game starts off and Patrick and Kamelio look uncomfortable. They haven't had much possession of the ball and they are

constantly being put under constant pressure. After a dangerous struggle, Patrick squeezes in a small but quick pass to Kamelio, who races down the field only to be confronted by the defender.

Patrick: Go Kamelio, quick!

Kamelio: I no see; I do skill now.

With a quick rainbow and a small roulette past the players Kamelio is confronted by an open goal. Instead of shooting, he waits for the opponents to regain ground, then with a quick powerful stroke of his leg, the ball glides majestically into the back of the net.

Coach: (Blows whistle) That's game. Good effort team Chi, and great job team KamPat. You, boy in the jersey, what's your name?

Kamelio: Kamelio.

Coach: You've got some talent kid, let's just hope you can do that in the tournament. Other than that, well done, you've qualified.

Patrick: (Panting) I can't believe it. We actually made it. Me and Bert have tried for years and we couldn't do it. I just played one game with you and we made it. But it's far from over Kam, we still have to compete in the tournament. Against Andrew's team.

Kamelio: Believe. We good.

Patrick: We sure make a pair. Let's go have a look at the other matches.

Patrick: That's Andrews team. They're hell of a lot good. Look at them go. BruteMei can't even lay a hand on them. They haven't gained possession since kick-off. Andrew can take on a whole team himself, he doesn't even need a team.

Kamelio: No. Andrew no play honour. He arrogant guy.

Patrick: Maybe, but this is a soccer tournament. Not an attitude one.

Kamelio: Si, but arrogant make you make mistake.

Patrick: If that's true, let's hope he gets really arrogant during the tournament.

Kamelio: He will.

Coach: Well, I've been watching all of you guys play, and I see some really good skills in some. Others, not so much. Now, if you don't get picked, don't take it to your heart, this is a lesson for you to improve your mistakes.

Andrew: Hey ma'am. You don't need to feel sorry for them. They came, they lost, end of story. Guys, if you don't get picked, it means you're not good enough so get over it.

Coach: Let's not forget were here to learn and have fun.

Andrew: Yeah whatever, just read the teams that qualified.

Coach: Ok! If your team gets called out, step forward.
AndrewRules.

Andrew: ye baby. That's how I roll.

Coach: Gnomon, Cut nick, Zebra Lord, ShadowTeam, LOL, Red Fury and last but not least, Team KamPat.

Andrew: Who thought of that name?

Patrick: We did! Have a problem? Solve it.

Andrew: Hehe, you guys actually qualified? Don't worry don't get your hopes up. It's not because your good. Between you and me, this year the other teams were absolute crap. I'm sure you're feeling good, but no need to, you'll get trashed in the elimination round. Good luck.

Patrick: (Angry) We'll see about that.

Coach: Ok everyone, these are the teams that have qualified. Everyone give them a round of applause. They are the 8 teams that qualified out the 16 who entered. For those who didn't qualify, there's always next year.

Andrew: Yeh, next year to fail again.

Weeks passed and the day of the tournament closer and closer. Patrick and Kamelio had been hard at work since the day they qualified, spending countless hours perfecting their chemistry and passing and shooting techniques. They trained from 2-6pm, until finally the day of the tournament came knocking on their door.

Patrick: Well, today's the big day.

Kamelio: I'm ready!

Patrick: So am I, but I'm still a bit nervous. We've put in our whole effort, so if we don't win let's not take it hard.

Kamelio: Agreed.

Patrick: You know, to be honest I only entered this contest for one reason.

Kamelio: What?

Patrick: So that if we win, Andrew and his friends would stop bullying you. So that they can respect you.

Kamelio: I want to win, so Andrew learn respect.

Patrick: Yeah me too. Oh crap, it's 11am, 1 hour till the tournament starts. Let's get going or we will be automatically disqualified.

Kamelio: Papa! Quickly!

Dad: I'm coming! Give me a second. Here I was thinking you would be too shy, and you've come dancing out of your shell.

Andrew: Ay boys look at Team Failure coming in.

Larry: Maestro, I was watching Kamelio play, he is really good, maybe even better than you.

Andrew: Shut up you @*\$%*# idiot. You think he is good because your sh*t. And as for him being better than me, you must be blind, he was versing some Chinese 14 year olds in the qualifying round, his opponents were disgusting.

Bert: Yeah what he said!

Andrew: Bert you're going to be my defender.

Big B: Maestro, your promised that I would play in the tournament.

Andrew: yeah well, promises are made to be broken.

Big B: But Mae-

Andrew: Shut it hobo. I don't have time for your drama now. Here comes Patrick, hey Patrick good luck!

Patrick: (Sternly) And to you too.

Andrew: By good luck I mean, go kill yourself. You seriously think you're going to even make it to the finals? Let alone win?

Patrick: All we have to do is one game to qualify to the semis.

Larry: Good luck even trying to make it there, you'll be out before the elimination round finishes.

Patrick: Yeah well, I don't care what you think. I'm going to go get ready, I suggest you do the same.

Andrew: You heard the man, let's go get ready.

The first game Patrick and Kamelio face is against LOL. Kamelio was able to easily get past their defence as they didn't pay much attention to their game. They were content on the fact thousands of people were watching them, causing them to lose concentration and also concede goals. Patrick and Kamelio had each scored 3 goals making the score 6-0. Team LOL didn't seem to mind the loss; they were too busy waving to the crowd.

Andrew: Hehehe, well what do you know, you actually qualified to the **semis**? Humph, I'm surprised you beat your opponents. Ahh well, looks like the other teams will have to give you a beating in the semis. I have to go now; my victory is waiting.

Patrick: Yeah whatever dude.

Kamelio: He so arrogance.

Patrick: Yeah well leave him. Some people don't change.

Kamelio: We go?

Patrick: Yeah we should, looks like our match is about to start. We just need to win this one, and we'll be in the finals.

Kamelio: Then let's do.

Kamelio and Patrick were now facing a much more difficult opponent. They were up against the Shadow Team. They weren't playing well under the pressure, causing them to concede a goal making them down 1-0. But Kamelio perceived putting the pressure towards the defenders. After countless struggles, Kamelio did a rainbow flick, and volleyed the ball towards Patrick. Then the unbelievable happened. Patrick did a bicycle kick and sent the ball flying to the top left corner. The crowd went wild, but there was still much to do. They had equalised but they needed a winner. The opponents were once again gaining control of the field and were advancing towards the goal. Kamelio knew if they scored it would mean the end of everything. One of the opponents confused him for his teammate, and Kamelio used this opportunity to zoom through the field, and with none near goal he gave a small tap, ending the game.

Patrick: Kamelio you sick dog, that was amazing. The way you sped through them was magnificent.

Kamelio: Si, but no arrogant.

Patrick: Of course, I'm just praising you. Nice work.

Kamelio: Si, si thank you.

Andrew: Well look who is going to be making a visit to us in the finals.

Patrick: Mhm, taking into consideration of what you said before, I can tell your upset.

Andrew: Not at all, I just came to have a chat with you.

Patrick: What type of 'chat.'

Andrew: Patrick you take everything seriously, just chill. I just need a word.

Patrick: Fine!

Andrew: Excuse us for a moment.

Andrew: Ok let me get to the point. You see, in all my days I haven't seen someone make it into the finals with this confidence. You know Patrick, there isn't nothing that can be fixed with a little bit of money, you know what I mean?

Patrick: what do you mean? Are you trying to bribe me?

Andrew: Oh no, I never said that. I just said money can make you feel a lot better. Considering your family crisis.

Patrick: That has nothing to do with this tournament.

Andrew: You know; this is a whole \$200. Ally you have to do is just lose. It's not hard.

Patrick: Tell you what. How about you use that to go buy yourself a life scumbag.

Andrew: Ahh well, since you're not going to voluntarily get out of my way, I guess I'll have to.

Patrick: Yeah whatever, see you in the finals.

Andrew: Mhm. Bert! I need a word with you.

Bert: You want me to what?!

Andrew: Yeah you heard me. That's all you have to do.

Bert: Hey, I want to win this tournament as much as you do, but we can't do that.

Andrew: Sure you can. You see this. Its \$200. And over there is a pizza shop. Make the connection.

Bert: Hmm, I do suppose I could buy myself 50 or so pizzas, but I don't know.

Andrew: Oh well, your loss then, guess someone else will have the satisfaction of money.

Bert: No, I mean yes, I mean ill have it.

Andrew: Good boy, but first do what I said.

The two teams entered the field and the crowd fell silent. The ref signalled the ball to be put into play and the game went underway. As expected Andrews team was over powering and taking

possession of the field. It wasn't long before Andrew put the ball into the net putting Patrick and Kamelio down 1-0. At kick-off Patrick gave an excellent ball to Kamelio who took an excellent shot only to be punched away by Bert. During half time, Kamelio witnessed Andrew go over and whisper something and Bert replying in a small nod. The referee blew the whistle and it was time for the second half to begin. It had only been 2 mins before a beefy Bert came sliding down at Kamelio, and in response came an agonizing scream.

Kamelio: Ahh, ooooff, Ahh!

Patrick: Oh f@\$* are you alright Kamelio.

Kamelio: Fine, I fine.

Patrick: Medic, Medic come quickly.

Coach: Hmm, he's been lucky, although his ankle has been badly bruised. I don't think he should play to avoid further injury. He could sprain his ankle.

Patrick: Kamelio. I don't think you should play. Who cares if we don't win, we tried our best. Don't risk your body for this.

Kamelio: No, I do for honour.

Patrick: It doesn't matter! You've gone and fu*@ing bruised the sh*t out of your ankle.

Kamelio: I fine. I continue game.

Patrick: You can't play you wi-

Kamelio: I said fine! Let's continue.

Patrick: If you say so, but take care of that leg.

Kamelio: Tell Bert, he did.

Patrick: Hey Bert! I know you're with Andrew now, but why'd you do this. Have you no respect or dignity? What's happened to you?

Bert: Only the best thing ever. I've finally made friends with the most popular dude. Your just jealous.

Patrick: Why would I be jealous. I was your only friend before. Your TRUE friend. I stood up for you. I helped you.

Bert: Humph, that's what a jealous person would say.

Patrick: Fine! Be that way. Let's get on with the game.

Andrew: Yeah I don't have time for this bullsh*t drama.

Patrick: And you! Shut your mouth before I make you!

The match went on, and Kamelio didn't look like he was struggling, but that didn't mean anything. Right now what they needed was a goal. And time was ticking away, slowly crushing their hope, until Kamelio pulled of a cracking shot. Bert was no match, the ball seared over his head, only to hit the crossbar and tip under into the net. The crowd went wild. The score was now 1-1. Neither team was able to penetrate each other's defences even when both Andrew and Kamelio were clearly taking initiative. Slowly the time went from 20 mins left to 5 seconds, 4, 3, 2, 1... and then met by the ringing sirens. Both teams had failed to scored so the game was brought to penalties.

Patrick: Do you want to go first or should I, I mean I don't mind either.

Kamelio: What do you want?

Patrick: I'll go first if you want.

Kamelio: Si, ok.

Patrick: Here goes nothing then.

Andrew: See you in the stands when we lift the trophy.

Patrick: Yep, the trophy of failure. We'll be there, for now piss off!

The penalties went under way and Patrick took the responsibility of being the goalkeeper. Bert took the first shot with ease, sending the ball past Patrick into the bottom right, 1-0. Patrick took the next shot, also to be met by the soft swish of the net. Now it was Andrews turn, he took a shot which was going far from the goal, what looked like an unfortunate miss, turned out to be a curve ball which Patrick was ready for, punching the ball away. Now it was all up to Kamelio. He took 4 steps back,

took a deep breath and dreamt he was playing on the streets of Spain. The ball went for lift off, only it was not coming down. The ball went flying, higher and higher.....over the cross bar. Kamelio had missed. The crowd felt silent for what seemed hours, only to start cheering the next moment. Shock enveloped Kamelio and Patrick. On the other side however, evil grins spread over Andrews face.

Coach: WAIT!

Patrick: Oh what now?

Coach: Checking the camera, the ball has been placed in a wrong position. It was place further away from the penalty spot, so Team KamPat will get one more chance.

Patrick: Oh my god, did you hear that?! We get another shot; I know you can do it this time.

Kamelio: (Smiling) I knew I no miss.

With the ball now placed at the right distance, Kamelio once again took a deep breath and imagined he was on the streets with his friends. He once again took a shot, which flew high, once again looked like it was going over the cross bar. Bert was smiling in the goals; he knew it would never make. At that exact moment, Bert's nightmares came true. The ball started dipping, and dipping, and dipping. In a matter of seconds Kamelio had scored the winner. The crowd went wild! Now it was Kamelio's turn to celebrate.

Patrick: OMG you did it! I can't believe it!

Kamelio: I did honour.

Patrick: Yes, you did! We actually bet Andrew. Let's go rub it in their faces.

Kamelio: No! No arrogant.

Patrick: I guess you're right. Let's be good about this.

Bert: What do you mean you're not gonna give the money!

Andrew: We didn't win the game. So no money.

Bert: You're a thief, you promised me.

Andrew: Yeah well promises were made to be broken son.

Bert: Patrick was right; you were a fake. Patrick was my real friend. You were using me.

Andrew: Took you long enough hippo.

Bert: I don't know what I was thinking. How could I be so dumb.

Andrew: Having a brain like yours, it's not hard.

Bert: Yeh whatever. I'm going to them now.

Andrew: Pffft, you think they're going to forgive you? Keep dreaming.

Bert: True friends always forgive.

Bert: Patrick, Patrick!

Patrick: Humph, I guess you're here to tell me about what Andrew gave you and how he is your real friend.

Bert: No. I came here to say sorry. Sorry for being an idiot. Sorry for undermining our friendship. Sorry for being blind. Sorry for hurting Kamelio, you. Sorry for everything!

Patrick: Took you long enough!

Bert: You mean you forgive me?

Patrick: True friends always forgive. As for Kamelio, I don't know, I think you should apologise.

Bert: I'm so sorry Kam-man. I'm sorry. Andrew blinded me with my love of food. He promised me money. He tricked me. He was using me. I'm so sorry. If you don't forgive me I understand.

Kamelio: I forgive you.

Bert: You really mean it?

Kamelio: Si.

Bert: Thank you so much. I'm so sorry again. I'm so happy you forgave me.

Kamelio: I not forgive yet.

Bert: What?!

Kamelio: I forgive 1 condition.

Bert: What?

Kamelio: No call Kam-Man.

(All laugh)

Bert: yeah sure, whatever you say.

The End