

# Girls and Boys

by Lindsay Price

## Characters

KEITH (17) A guy. A not entirely bright linebacker. Trying to live up to his dad's expectations and beliefs.

CAMERON (16) A girl. Super smart. Super bright. Super focused.

## Setting

A school library. All you need is a table and chairs.

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*CAMERON sets up at a table in the school library. She is happily organizing books and papers. She hums to herself. KEITH enters warily. He looks very uncomfortable in the library. He looks around, but doesn't see what he's looking for. He's about to leave when CAMERON looks up.*

CAMERON: Hello!

KEITH: What?

CAMERON: You must be Keith. *(She strides over to KEITH and shakes his hand. KEITH does not engage.)* Come on in.

KEITH: *(pulling his hand away)* Naw. You're looking for someone else.

CAMERON: Aren't you Keith?

KEITH: Yeah.

CAMERON: I'm looking for Keith.

KEITH: I'm looking for the tutor.

CAMERON: That's me!

KEITH: *(not happy)* YOU'RE Cameron?

CAMERON: That's me! Come on in.

*She returns to the table as she talks. KEITH does not move.*

CAMERON: I've got everything set up here. We'll put together a schedule at the end of today's session, I'm tutoring a couple of other... *(she sees KEITH is not moving)* Aren't you coming in?

KEITH: Naw.

CAMERON: You are here for the tutoring session. For math? So you can stay on the team. You're that Keith?

KEITH: Your name is Cameron.

CAMERON: Yes.

KEITH: That's a boy's name.

CAMERON: (*light with good humour*) And a girl's name. It's a surname, actually. My parents are Scottish. Did you know Cameron means crooked nose? My mom says it means crooked hill, but my dad says –

KEITH: I picked you cause you're supposed to be a guy. Cameron.

CAMERON: Technically, *you* didn't pick me. Mr. Hodges and I –

KEITH: I said I'd let Cameron, not you, I might listen to a guy. I picked a guy to be my tutor, I said it had to be a guy.

CAMERON: (*amused*) How come?

KEITH: Guys are better in math than girls.

CAMERON: Wow.

KEITH: Guys know how to teach other guys. That's the way it works.

CAMERON: How on earth did you manage it?

KEITH: What?

CAMERON: Getting through your whole school career without a single female teacher.

KEITH: Are you making fun of me?

CAMERON: (*with humour*) Of course not. So, I'm a girl and I have the top Algebra grade in the whole county. That would make me better than a lot of boys. Did you bring your math books?

KEITH: Naw.

CAMERON: Why not?

KEITH: Cause.

CAMERON: Ok, well, you can use mine today but don't forget them next time. (*Pause. They stare at each other.*) You do have to sit down for this.

KEITH: A guy would understand.

CAMERON: Understand what?

KEITH: What has to happen here.

CAMERON: Last I checked, we have to get you a C so you can stay on the team.

KEITH: Naw.

CAMERON: We're not getting you a C? Then you're right, I don't understand.

KEITH: (*looking around*) A guy would understand...

CAMERON: Understand...

KEITH: Football is more important than math.

CAMERON: Oh?

KEITH: (*the mere edges of panic*) Coach said he was gonna make sure... You don't understand.

CAMERON: But I do. You want the easy way out. You want a fake tutor, and a fake tutoring session, so you can get a fake grade. You want to sit here and stare at the ceiling with a 'guy,' a 'man,' a 'bro' who gets it, who's down with it all. A dude who understands that cheating the system is an awesome rad idea, that football is more important than math. Boy, you and Coach must be severely deluded if you think there are any dudes in math.

KEITH: What did you call Coach?

CAMERON: (*not afraid*) Have you seen the 'bros' who take math? They'd have a heart attack if you suggested football was more important than math. They live and breathe for math. Football, not so much.

KEITH: (*shaking his head*) A man understands.

CAMERON: Well, you're stuck with a girl.

KEITH: I'm getting another tutor.

CAMERON: You can try. But you're better off with me.

KEITH: Naw.

CAMERON: Yaw. I might be the only math tutor on the eastern seaboard who likes football.

KEITH: You wanna be a cheerleader?

CAMERON: Oh bless your heart. You're really going to hang onto that bone, aren't you? I watch football. The game. I watch it, understand it, like it.

KEITH: You?

CAMERON: Me.

KEITH: Naw, little girl you just stick to girl things,

CAMERON: *(reacting to 'little girl' but still with good humour)* Oh even better!

KEITH: Let the men handle the football.

CAMERON: *(more laughing than mad)* Right up the nose like cayenne pepper, POW! Those juicy stereotypes really clean out the sinuses. So you must be stupid, huh?

KEITH: *(a trigger)* What'd you call me?

CAMERON: Well if I'm a little girl, and if I'm sticking to girl things, twirling my hair, shaking those pom poms, "gee math is so hard" – then you must be stupid. Following the rules of these things. If I'm this, you must be that. Football players are stupid, right?

KEITH: Don't you dare call me –

CAMERON: *(interrupting, still not afraid)* Logic would apply that an F in basic stupid people math would suggest a certain aptitude.

KEITH: *(he can't hit a girl)* Don't call me stupid!

CAMERON: I didn't. You did. If girls are pretty soft things, football players are dumb. Really dumb. Your parents must be so proud.

KEITH: *(pacing, to himself)* I'm not doing this, I'm not doing this. Coach gotta fix this. I'm out of here. *(he turns to go)*

CAMERON: Sure. You go. I can spend the extra time twirling my hair. I'll tell Mr. Hodges you refused tutoring, which will go down so well with the review board, and Mr. Hodges will tell your Coach, and you'll be off the team.

KEITH: *(shoving the table)* You can't throw me off the team!

CAMERON: *(not afraid)* I'm not doing anything. You're the one who's trying to decide if he can hit a girl.

KEITH: *(coming to a dead stop)* I don't – I wouldn't.

CAMERON: Ok.

KEITH: You don't understand.

CAMERON: Ok.

KEITH: I need to be on the team.

CAMERON: So, sit down and let's get to work.

KEITH: No.

CAMERON: You don't have many choices Keith.

KEITH: You, you have to fix this.

CAMERON: Teaching you math is fixing this.

KEITH: I don't hit girls.

CAMERON: I have a boy's name, does that help?

*KEITH takes a deep breath and leans in to CAMERON.*

KEITH: You're gonna tell the math guy that I did just fine in the session. You're gonna tell him –

CAMERON: No.

KEITH: *(shoving the table)* You have to!

CAMERON: No. Sorry. Sit down.

KEITH: I need to be on the team!

CAMERON: So sit down.

KEITH: Don't tell me what to do.

CAMERON: So tell yourself to sit down. Be the man and tell yourself to get your butt in a chair. I won't even watch.

KEITH: Coach said he'd take care of it.

CAMERON: Well he didn't, did he. And why don't *you* take care of it, hmmm? Why don't you get your grades back up on your own. You might need those grades. You're a linebacker, right? Don't you know how easy it is to get injured? Hit someone the wrong way and tear a pectoral, or wreck your shoulder or get a neck stinger that won't go away? You think Coach is gonna be around when in the first week of college you get injured on a blitz and your career is over? You'll have no one to blame but yourself.

KEITH: You talk *some* football.

CAMERON: I told you, I watch. And my dad used to play.

KEITH: For who?

CAMERON: Spent one year as a running back for the Eagles. One stinking season, you'd have thought it was twenty the way he talks down at the car lot. Blew his knee out. He didn't do his math homework either.

KEITH: (*blurting out*) My dad, he says I'm going all the way. I don't need math. I need football.

CAMERON: Why? Why do you need it? What's it doing for you? Is it giving you another kidney? Is it saving you from poverty? You look pretty well fed. You don't need football.

KEITH: You don't understand.

CAMERON: My dad said he needed football. He needed a son to pass it on to. No such luck. Do you know, if I had been a boy I would have, apparently, been the best football player in the entire world? Too bad, so sad.

KEITH: (*trying to find his feet again*) You... Girls... Girls don't like football.

CAMERON: And football players are stupid.

KEITH: Don't start that.

CAMERON: Then don't tell me what I am.

KEITH: I don't know what you are.

CAMERON: Who are you huh? Who are you?

KEITH: A football player.

CAMERON: And that's it?

KEITH: I don't know.

CAMERON: Sure you do.

KEITH: (*Pause. This is something he's never said.*) I am stupid.

CAMERON: You don't try.

KEITH: I practice every day. I work my ass off on the field.

CAMERON: So practise math every day.

KEITH: I'll never get it.

CAMERON: It's not easy. I never said it was easy. Nothing is easy.

KEITH: Math is easy for you.

CAMERON: So what if it is? I hate English. I hate writing essays. Numbers are very logical, words are so (*she makes a face*) subjective.

KEITH: What you get in English?

CAMERON: A.

KEITH: See, it's easy.

CAMERON: It's not easy! (*she slams her fist on the table*) I worked for that A. I want an A. I don't get one handed to me cause Coach is gonna take care of it. There's a difference.

KEITH: Why aren't you scared of me?

CAMERON: Is that what you want? Little girl scared of the big boy? You believe all the stories, don't you?

KEITH: No... I don't know. Everyone's scared of me.

CAMERON: And you like that.

KEITH: My dad says it's good.

CAMERON: Yippy skippy for him. You like beating up people?

KEITH: On the field.

CAMERON: In life?

KEITH: No! No. I don't have to. I just stare 'em down. No one ever fights me.

CAMERON: And you get whatever you want.

KEITH: That's right.

CAMERON: You're gonna end up working the drive thru at Taco Bell. You're never gonna play pro.

KEITH: Shut up!

CAMERON: You sat out six games last season because of a bum ankle, you had a back injury the year before that. Dwayne Tilsonberg is miles better than you and you know it. How many scouts are looking at you? Really? *(pause)* You have two choices. You can hit me and get kicked out of school. But then you don't have to do your math homework, so there's a plus. Or, you can work with me every afternoon, and get your grade up to a C. Those are your only choices. Because I'm not leaving. I chose you, Keith. I've been watching for the right player to tutor and you're it. I think you're a lunkhead, but I've seen you with the younger players. You take care of them and I'll bet if you had less man-things in your brain, you could teach. You will do this. You will have a back up plan. I will not leave you.

*There is a pause.*

KEITH: I don't have my book.

CAMERON: Next time, bring it.

KEITH: What do I tell my dad?

CAMERON: You tell him, Cameron's a guy. Ok?

KEITH: Ok.

— THE END —

## Blue Sky

by Lindsay Price

### Characters

A trio of nameless, faceless homeless kids. All can be either gender.

### Setting

An alley. Try to get something for the characters to lean against.

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*ONE, TWO, and THREE sit on the ground with their backs against a wall. They look dirty and worn. ONE and TWO have their eyes closed. THREE is lost in thought.*

ONE: *(eyes closed)* What do you see?

TWO: *(eyes closed)* Blue sky.

ONE: *(sits up and swats TWO)* You always say that.

TWO: Blue sky makes me happy.

ONE: *(settling back, closes eyes)* You don't need to close your eyes to see the sky.

TWO: It is not the sky above me that I see. It is the sky in my imagination.

ONE: La di da. Your imagination.

TWO: You got one. You should use it.

ONE: *(sits up and swats TWO)* I do not!

TWO: Do too. Everybody does.

*From here THREE tries to inch away without making a sound. THREE is trying to leave without the other two knowing and moves painfully slow.*

ONE: *(settling back, closes eyes)* No thanks.

TWO: Why not?

ONE: Sky is sky.

TWO: It's not the same.

ONE: All you have to do is look up.