

KULA GO SKUL

CHARACTERS

Dr. Professor Bindu Pratt
Kula Vandi

*Prof. Bindu of Law at the University of Sierra Leone
Childhood friend of Dr. Pratt who was given in marriage at
the age 12
Adult Literacy Teacher*

Ester Kamara
Voices of women in class
Mariama
Salimatu
Student
Class

Kula was taken out of school at 12 and given in marriage to a 55 year old Paramount Chief. The marriage ended with his death after 2 years. Kula was forced to married the Chief's brother. Her childhood friend, now a college professor, paid her a visit.

OPENING MUSIC

SCENE ONE: *Kula's house*

SFX: A knock at the door

Kula: Yes, who is that at the door?

Dr. Professor Bindu: *(off mic)* It's me *(pause)* Kula, don't you recognize my voice?

Kula: *(to herself)* Who is this person? I can't recognize her voice.

Professor Bindu: Please come and open the door. It's me, Professor Bindu.

Kula: *(to herself)* Professor Bindu? Let me go and open the door and find out who this person is?

SFX: Door opens with a creak and close shut

Professor Bindu: Kula, good afternoon!

Kula: *(happy)* E----- PROFESSOR BINDU!

Professor Bindu: Yes, it's me!

Kula: Is this really you?

Professor Bindu: Yes, it's not any other person, it's me!

Kula: I'm really glad to see you again *(laughter and joy)*

Professor Bindu: Leave me alone! How many times have I sent your brother's daughter to you?

Kula: Me?

Professor Bindu: Yes, to you.

Kula: You know what...

Professor Bindu: No

Kula: Come inside and sit down

SFX: Footsteps walking into the house

Professor Bindu: Kula

Kula: Yes, Professor Bindu

Professor Bindu: Do you want to tell me that your brother's daughter did not deliver my message to you?

Kula: No! She's didn't ever deliver any message to me. Was it Fatu you spoke to?

Professor Bindu: Yes, she is the one

Kula: (*surprised*) So, you still remember that girl

Professor Bindu: Yes, I can still remember her, she is attending the Milton Margai College and am the same Bindu who is the head of it.

Kula: I thought you would have forgotten who she is

Professor Bindu: Every time I see her, I remember that she is your brother's daughter

Kula: Okay. So how are you doing now?

Professor Bindu: I am doing fine, by the grace of god, my college is doing extremely well. After the war, I was appointed there. I re-commission the curriculum, the staff and has made decision that has tremendous impact on my students.

Kula: I heard that you are there but I was ashamed to come and meet her there.

Professor Bindu: Why are you ashamed to call on me. Were we not friends in school?

Kula: I have been thinking that we are both not in the same class anymore. I am poor with nothing and inside this chieftom, we the women, we know our place.

Professor Bindu: What do you mean?

Kula: You have already been to school but look at me. Look at the condition I am in now.

Professor Bindu: Kula!

Kula: (*very quiet*) Yes, Professor Bindu

Professor Bindu: Call me Bindu. I don't want to hear you speaking like that.

Kula: (*still upset*) But, Professor Bindu – I..I mean Bindu, I will never be able to compare myself with you.

Professor Bindu: I am not here to compare. Am here because we need more women at the decision making level. The present government promised 50/50. Our women need to take part in the political process, they need to educate themselves. And as for you, I want to say that all is not lost for you in this world. You still have a chance.

Kula: Really! Is that true?

Professor Bindu: Yes. In fact, this is why I am here to talk with you

Kula: My sister, Just look at the condition of my place. The government people always say they are going to make better for us. But nothing has happened and when we go to our leaders to find how we can beet our lives, they chase us like rats and say you are a woman, know your place.

Professor Bindu: Kula forget about all that – you can still make it in life if you believe in God. You know that? There is a lot that you don't know my friend about your own rights.

Kula: I know

Professor Bindu: You see, when I heard how you suffered in war and that the war drove you out of Liberia, I was trying to find you all this time but to no avail.

Professor Bindu: What really happened?

Kula: It's a long story

Professor Bindu: Try to explain to me so that I will understand

Kula: Do you remember when my father took me out of school for me to be married to Chief Nyamoseh at 12 year old?

Professor Bindu: Yes, I remember very well.

Kula: Fine. You remember. Do you know that the marriage did not last one year? died?

Professor Bindu: Is that so? (*surprised*)

Kula: I just want you to believe me

Professor Bindu: Ok. Go on. I am listening to you

Kula: Chief died and left me with one daughter, and they say I should marry his younger brother – I did not want to but I had no choice.

Professor Bindu: Lord, have mercy!

Kula: I was with this brother when the war broke out again...we ran and we reached Gaygedu, near the Guinea border where the rebels killed him.

Professor Bindu: Jesus Christ! What kind of hardship you are going through?

Kula: This brother left me with three children – he just left me and no one cared anything about us.

Professor Bindu: WHAT?

Kula: I struggled with these four children until I crossed over to Koindu.

SFX: Pause

Kula: Look at the oldest one who I bore for the chief

Professor Bindu: What is her name?

Kula: Her name is Aye

Professor Bindu: Is she going to school?

Kula: Yes. She's going to school.

Professor Bindu: Kula

Kula: Yes, Professor Bindu

Professor Bindu: I am here to talk to you about something very important

Kula: What is that?

Professor Bindu: I know that your family removed you from school to be married but you can go back to school and make a new life

Kula: But, Professor Bindu...

Professor Bindu: Listen to me, please listen to me. When we were in school, you were a genius...

SFX: Pause

Professor Bindu: So, it doesn't matter how old you are now. You can still go to the adult literacy school and do something there for a better life.

Kula: I do not dispute that, Professor Bindu.

Professor Bindu: What is it now?

Kula: It's the money that I must pay to the adult literacy school

Professor Bindu: Don't worry about that. I will take care of it.

Kula: What? (*disbelief*)

Professor Bindu: If you are ready right now, I want you to go and change your clothes so that we go to the adult school together so that you can be enrolled.

Kula: (*happy*) Please, wait for me so that I can go and get myself ready

SFX: Footsteps – fades out

MUSIC

SCENE TWO: *A class in the school*

Teacher: Class, please repeat after me. B-E-A-T – BEAT

{class repeats – B-E-A-T, BEAT}

Teacher: S-e-x-u-a-l

{class repeats}

Teacher: G-e-n-d-e-r

{class repeats}

Teacher: B-a-s-e

{class repeats}

Teacher: V-i-o-l-e-n-c-e

{Class repeats}

Teacher: Now, do you know the reason why I want all of you to take note of these particular words?

Class: No!

Teacher: Do you know that it has been a long time that women have suffered at the hands of me?

Class: Yes, madam

Teacher: They always beat us and turn us like football. Is that not so?

Class: YES!

Teacher: You heard the news on the radio about the number of rape of little girls and women up to recently where a male teacher allegedly raped a student. Is that not so.

Class: YES!

Teacher: Now, we the women have made up our minds that we are not going to take any of that from the men cause the war has been done for 5 years and because we have the same rights just as the men.

Student: But teacher, the men in Sierra Leone always beat us, and rape is a normal thing inside this country. The government don't care the police don't care so we are hear to learn to read and write so we can read the newspapers. We have no protection inside this country. At all, at all.

Class: Exactly so, ma! (*cacophony of noise*)

Teacher: Wrong! You are protected by an agreement that our government made with the United Nations Security Council--the most powerful governing body within the United Nations. The agreement is called Security Council Resolution 1325 and our government must now begin to implement it. A portion of this resolution--which is like a law--protects you . . .

A portion of this law protects you against Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and also protects woman human rights. And our own African agreement - that is the African Charter on Human Rights that all of our country in Africa adopted in 1986. Article 18.3

"The State shall ensure the elimination of every discrimination against women and also ensure the protection of the rights of women and the child as stipulated in international declarations and conventions."

So once you know those rights, you will be able to protect yourself and your children.

Salimatu – (student): Salone sign law to protect us women from being battered and to punish those who rape us and our children. Haiye!

Jeneba – (student): No one told us anything until now that such law exist. Any way the men are powerful.

Teacher: Now answer me this, what the men can do, we the women can also do it. Not so?

Class: Yes!

Teacher: At times, we the women can do even more than the men can do!

SFX: Pause

Teacher: Just recently, a man in Makeni who had a extra marital relationship beat his wife and stripped her naked and sent her out into the streets. So, as women we should never allow any man to mess up our prestige and just dump us like outcasts are worst like garbage.

SFX: Pause

Students: *(talking to each other)*

Teacher: We as women should be sure to make up our minds to do something so that at the end of the day, no man can treat us any way they want. Cause we suffered I the war and now is peace time and the country pass acts to protect us also. Not so?

Student: Teacher, I hear on the radio that they have another something to protect us name Seesaw.

Teacher: That's C-E-D-A-W – *(writing on the board)* as matter of fact let me write all these things on the board. CEDAW is the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women. That also come out of the UN.

SFX: Footsteps walking into the class and one of the women was clapping as she walked in.

Professor Bindu: Teacher Esther, good evening! Le us not forget our own acts that the government passed to protect woman.

Teacher: Oh yes: Class, can any of you tell us what those three Bills are:

Mariama: That is the *Registration of Customary Marriages and Divorce Act*, the *Domestic Violence Act* and the *Devolution of Estates Act*, were unanimously adopted by Parliament in just one day. Them address age-old inequalities women have faced in family relations, inheritance and ownership, bringing customary law and the Constitution into closer alignment with international human rights standards.

Teacher: Yes, Madam Professor Bindu, how are you doing?

Professor Bindu: I am doing fine

Teacher: Ok

Professor Bindu: I have been here for some time now listening to you teaching the class

Teacher: Alright, that's no problem

Professor Bindu: Em...as I was talking to you last time...

Teacher: Uh-huh

Professor Bindu: This is the lady I was telling you about – the one who should join the adult class

Teacher: Ok. How are you doing, madam?

Kula: I am doing fine

Teacher: Are you prepared to join the adult literacy school?

Kula: Yes, ma

Professor Bindu: This woman is very clever.

Teacher: Well, if she wants she can start now so that she won't be left behind

Professor Bindu: Kula, do you hear what the teacher is saying?

Kula: Yes

Professor Bindu: So, you can start your class now and join your companions

Kula: Alright. No problem

SFX: Footsteps walking

Professor Bindu: So, Esther, we need to talk, eh?

Teacher: Yes

Professor Bindu: Let's go to the verandah so that we can talk before I go

Teacher: No problem. Let's go.

SFX: Footsteps walk out – fades out

MUSIC

SCENE THREE: *In the school*

SFX: Noises in the background. Phone rings

Professor Bindu: Hello?

Kula: Yes, Professor Bindu. It's me! Kula, on the line

Professor Bindu: Kula, how are you doing?

Kula: I'm doing great, Professor Bindu.

Professor Bindu: Is that so?

Kula: *(happy)* Yes!

Professor Bindu: Where are you calling me from?

Kula: I'm at the school.

Professor Bindu: Wow! Kula, you are really enjoying the school

Kula: My sister, I'm really enjoying myself.

Professor Bindu: Why are you so happy today?

Kula: You won't believe this, Professor Bindu. All what I have lost in the past years, I have got it back when I am in school.

Professor Bindu: Talk to me, Kula

Kula: Right now as I am talking to you...

Professor Bindu: Uh-huh

Kula: In the class that I am in, they have made me the prefect

Professor Bindu: *(shouts)* That's great!

Kula: Yes – sometimes, the teacher even gives me her chalk so that I can teach my companions

Professor Bindu: I believe in you, Kula. You were always very good at your studies when we were in school

Kula: This is why I decided to call you – to give you thanks for all that you've given me to be able to go to school again

Professor Bindu: Kula, let me tell you something

Kula: I'm listening

Professor Bindu: Life is like playing the game of ludo.

SFX: Pause

Professor Bindu: If you don't throw the dice, you will never get the number that you want

Kula: Yes, that's true

Professor Bindu: That's the same thing with you. If you had not made up your mind to go to the adult school, you would have never felt the way that you are feeling right now

Kula: That's so true

Professor Bindu: The only thing that I am going to tell you now is for you to continue the hard work, ok?

Kula: I hear you

Professor Bindu: Just believe that what happened to you in past is all over and you are turning a new page

Kula: By the grace of god

Professor Bindu: That's all I have to say to you for now. And wait, I want to tell you something else. We need more women in decision making to move the country forward and I know one or two of you who got this second chance will be leaders in our society one day. You know the UN agreement the teacher was talking about, I looked it up – and a portion of it also said that women must be included at all level of decision-making, they should be ambassadors, police, soldier, ministers, you name it. Congratulations for taking that first step.

Kula: Ok. Thank you. I will call you from time to time

Professor Bindu: At any time you are welcome. I will be waiting for your call

Kula: Alright, So, bye.

Professor Bindu: Bye-bye

SFX: (Phone hangs up)

END