

Curry Favour

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. KASHMIR- DAY.

MR KHALAM and his beautiful young daughter SHAZANA arrive upon a RICKSHAW at the front yard of a rundown HOUSE belonging to the family of the CHOUDREY'S.

As they carefully dismount the rickshaw and pay the RIDER, they stand for a moment looking at the house exterior.

Mr Khalam looks to Shazana and uncomfortably sighs as he wipes his brow with a handkerchief.

MR KHALAM  
(hot and bothered)  
Look at this place. Why they don't  
give it a lick of paint or  
something?

Moments later the creaking door opens and they are greeted by the Choudrey's.

Mrs Choudrey has a friendly rounded face and a warm smile, but is too thin and weary looking. Mr Choudrey is clean shaven on this day, but formal and somewhat overweight.

They walk forward to greet the waiting Khalam's.

MR CHOUDREY  
(to mr Khalam)  
Salam malakim.

The hug and shake hands warmly.

MR KHALAM  
Salam malakin. It is very hot  
today.

Mr Khalam greets Mrs Choudrey as he wipes his brow with a handkerchief once more.

MR KHALAM (CONT'D)  
Salam malakin. Too hot, isn't it?

MRS CHOUDREY  
(nods head)  
Salam malakin.

MR CHOUDREY  
Ah! Shazana. Salam. You are looking  
more pretty each time I see you. My  
son is a very lucky man.

SHAZANA

Salam malakim, mr Choudrey.

MRS CHOUDREY

Shazana. Salam malakim.

SHAZANA

Salam, Mrs Choudrey.

MR KHALAM

So where is Aahil? Is he not at home today or what?

MR CHOUDREY

Don't worry, he will be here soon. Come, you must be very thirsty. Come and drink something. It is very, very hot today.

MR KHALAM

You can say that again.

(pause)

You know, it is so cold in England, but I think I prefer it.

The Khalam's grab their luggage and follow the Choudrey's inside the house.

EXT. DISUSED FACTORY - DAY

AAHIL stands patiently waiting by an old pick up truck smoking a cigarette. Two heavily bearded young MEN appear from the warehouse wearing dirty vests.

The Men look down to see what is loaded on the back of the truck.

MAN 1

(angrily)

Is this it? Where is the rest of them?

AAHIL

That's all they put on the truck.

MAN 2

They should have given you five sacks. What happened to the rest of them?

TAHER appears from the factory dressed in a clean white vest and green army type trousers. He is tall and muscular, unshaven with thick hair and mischievous green eyes.

TAHER

Don't worry about it. It is all they had left. I just checked on the phone.

MAN 1

(vexed)

But it is only three bags!

Taher calmly approaches the Men.

TAHER

(austerely)

I said to forget it!

The two hostile Men lift a sack each from the back of the truck. Taher clutches the final sack and carries it towards the warehouse.

TAHER (CONT'D)

(looks back)

Go to your princess, Aahil. She is waiting!

Aahil grins, then quickly jumps inside the truck and starts the engine. He wheel spins away, sending a thick dust into the heat ridden air, as Taher smiles back whilst shaking his head.

ONE WEEK LATER

EAST LONDON - ENGLAND

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The Khalam's are congregated in the spacious kitchen area of their three bedroom house.

Sitting at the table is ASIF, and his father Mr Khalam, whilst two small CHILDREN of nursery age playfully run about the room screaming with excitement.

Mr Khalam's three daughters HALIMA, FATIMAH and NOSHEEN are reticent as they sit upon a threadbare sofa, reading magazines as Mrs KHALAM cooks some food.

CUT TO

INT. FLAT ABOVE - DAY.

ADAM, a single white male in his mid twenties is sleeping, but is beginning to stir as the noise volumetrically increases from the Khalam's kitchen directly below. He hides his head under the pillow to drown out the unrelenting noise.

CUT TO

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUED.

Mr Khalam sits at one end of the table, drinking a cup of tea, whilst Asif who is heavier in frame, and with long hair, put into a pony tail, sits at the opposite end of the table, reading a car magazine. Asif lifts up the car magazine, to show a picture of a RED FERRARI.

ASIF

(turns)

You see this? Look at this! This is the car you will see me driving one day, for sure.

KHALAM

(intercepts)

Hah. Don't make me laugh. In your dreams more like.

Halima, Fatimah and Nosheen look up and giggle in unison.

ASIF

We'll see. We'll see. Just watch... when you see me pull up outside in this one day. You'll be begging me to take you for a cool spin up the high road, so you can show off to your friends, hah?

Asif introspects as he continuously nods his head. The Girls continue to laugh at him.

ASIF

Hm hm. Hm hm. You'll see.

MR KHALAM

I don't know what you are dreaming about. You need to find yourself a proper job, first, especially if you want to drive a car like this.

MR

MRS KHALAM

Yes. You work such long hours,  
Asif... for such little money. What  
is it they are paying you?

Mrs Khalam shows great sympathy as she continuously shakes  
her head at her son.

MRS KHALAM (CONT'D)

Less than four pounds an hour? And  
less than the minimum wage. It is  
terrible.

MR KHALAM

Why don't you, instead of wasting  
your time working in that silly  
security job, learn a proper skill  
or something? You are a bloody  
idiot.

ASIF

Hah? What you chatting about? You  
don't know anything. Security is a  
proper trade, see.

MR KHALAM

Oh, don't be so silly. No it is  
not.

ASIF

You can talk. What do you know? You  
work in a crappy restaurant for  
less pay than me.

More laughter from the Fatimah and Nosheen.

MR KHALAM

And don't be so bloody cheeky to  
your father, right! Or I will beat  
you. You're not too old for a  
bloody good hiding.

MRS KHALAM

Why you don't learn heating and  
plumbing, like Shiraz? He is  
earning very good money. His mother  
tells me that he is bringing home,  
over five hundred pounds a week.

MR KHALAM

Ah, you see! So he can afford to  
buy this Ferrari, not you. Ha! All  
you can afford to buy is a rust  
bucket. Ha! Ha!

The Girls continue to laugh aloud.

ASIF

(turns angrily)

Shut your big fat mouths!

(short pause)

Bitches!

MR KHALAM

You see...look at you. Even the girls are laughing at you.

ASIF

They don't know anything.

FATIMAH

Take no notice of Mrs Khalim, mama. She is always bragging. She is such a lying old bag.

NOSHEEN

Yeah, yeah. She's a bloody liar. Remember what she told you, when she said she got all that money for breaking her ankle, when she fell out of that mini-cab?

MRS KHALAM

Yes, so what of it?

NOSHEEN

Well she never got six thousand pounds, that's what: She only got three thousand. She is always beefing things up.

ASIF

How do you know this?

NOSHEEN

Shiraz told me himself. But don't go telling the whole street. I am not supposed to tell anyone about it. He will kill me if he finds out I told anyone.

ASIF

You should keep your fat mouth shut then, shouldn't you?

HALIMA

Is this when I saw you and Shiraz in the park together, Nosheen?

NOSHEEN

What?

HALIMA

They were holding hands in the park, mama.

MR KHALAM

What! What did you say, Halima? Holding hands... in the park? Who was holding hands in the park? Which park?

NOSHEEN

I was not! Liar, Halima! Bloody liar! You stupid bitch! Why are you lying?

Mrs Khalam holds her head in shame.

MRS KHALAM

Stop it! Stop it! All this shouting! I can't stand it.

MR KHALAM

Right! You are grounded from this moment. And I will speak with that boy.

(to Mrs Khalam)

And you will speak with the boy's mother. Tell her what he is doing with my daughter.

ASIF

She is only holding his sodding hand. It is not like she is kissing him or anything, is it?

MR KHALAM

You shut your mouth. Nobody is asking you for advice, right!

ASIF

No I won't shut my mouth. You people are so backward. This is England, not Kashmir.

MR KHALAM

And don't be so bloody cheeky to your father!

Nosheen gives Halima a wry look.

MRS KHALAM  
Asif, are you ready to eat something now?

ASIF  
Yes, I'm bloody starving.

MR KHALAM  
Never mind him, what about me?

MRS KHALAM  
I am going to ask you. Be patient.

MR KHALAM  
Just give me a small bowl please.  
(rubs stomach)  
This bloody indigestion is killing me.

MRS KHALAM  
Halima, do you want something to eat or not?

HALIMA  
Not for me. I'm going to work in a minute.

MRS KHALAM  
Nosheen?

NOSHEEN  
Not yet. I'm not hungry.

MRS KHALAM  
Fatimah, what about you?

FATIMAH  
No thank you, mama.

Asif closes his magazine.

MR KHALAM  
So why you always bring shame upon this family, Asif? All you must think... is to bring shame to your father. What did we do to you, hah? Tell me? What did we do?

ASIF  
What? What you chatting about now?

MR KHALAM

You! You never visit mosque anymore. People are asking if you even bother to pray to Allah... That you are acting like you don't give a damn... You are staying out all night. And I never see you pray to Allah once this year. Not once in this whole year, did I see you going to mosque, to pray.

Asif chews his gums as he waits for food.

ASIF

Where's this bloody food?

MRS KHALAM

Be patient. It is coming.

MR KHALAM

Oh, what must people be thinking of this family? My only son avoids going to mosque. And Mr Abdu tells me he has seen him smoking around by the garages, with those trouble makers from The Grange.

(Pause)

So why are you hanging around with these idiots from that terrible estate? Those boys will get you into serious trouble, do you know that?

ASIF

Hm hm.

MR KHALAM

Hah? So tell me why are you doing this, Asif? What have I done to deserve this from you, hah? Tell me, please... I want to know, now? Mrs Khalam brings food to the table and they begin to eat during conversation.

Halima stands by the table as the Children are kept amused by Nosheen and Fatimah.

ASIF

Actually for your information, I do go mosque. I might not go to your mosque, but I go to mosque. Ask Saheed, if you don't believe me. I

ASIF  
 don't really care. Think what you want.

MR KHALAM  
 So which mosque is it that you go to then? Tell me, I want to know, which one is it?

ASIF  
 I go to a mosque in Leytonstone. It's Saheed's community mosque. We do kickboxing and stuff, you know.

MR KHALAM  
 I asked you which mosque in Leytonstone do you go...? So bloody answer it!

ASIF  
 Kings Road Mosque, if you must know.

MR KHALAM  
 So you are telling us, you go mosque in Kings Road, yes?

ASIF  
 Hm hm.

MR KHALAM  
 You hear this? Did you hear what our son is telling us?

MRS KHALAM  
 Oh no. Here we go again.

MR KHALAM  
 I see. I see it now. How stupid of me. I should have known, right?  
 (Pause)  
 You are a lying bum! You are lying to your father! You never go mosque in Kings Road, because Mr Mohammed is the Imam at mosque in Kings Road. And he would ring and tell me if he sees you there, because he would ask me why you are doing there? Why you are not coming to your own mosque. I want you out of my house.

ASIF

No! You are lying. This is my house too. I am the one paying most of the bloody bills in this bloody house! You are working in that silly restaurant for practically nothing! And when they find out, they will catch you, and you will be the one shaming this family, not me. Shame on you! Hah? Hah?

Mr Khalam attacks Asif with his CANE. Asif easily blocks with his elbows.

MR KHALAM

How dare you speak to your father like this! I want you out of this house! Get out! Get out of my house now! I swear I will kill you, you cheeky sod!

ASIF

You are bloody mad! And don't be calling me this! I am your only son! You should be ashamed to call your only son names! And I will tell everybody! Shame on you!

They are quickly separated by the intervening Mrs Khalam and Halima as Mr Khalam holds his back in pain.

MR KHALAM

Argh! Oh shit! My back! Argh! You bloody git! You did this to my back! Get out!

ASIF

Ah? What are you chatting about? You silly old man!

MRS KHALAM

Please stop this now! Shameful! How you call each other names like this. What must the neighbours be thinking of us?

INT. FLAT ABOVE - CONTINUED

ADAM briefly peers over the quilt and then slumps back again.

INT. HOUSE BELOW - CONTINUED.

FATIMAH

Asif, please just go. Go now. Leave it. Come back later.

MR KHALAM

Now my back is hurting again. You are hurting my back. Piss off! Go!

NOSHEEN

Yes go, Asif. You are always upsetting everyone. Go to the gym or something.

MR KHALAM

Get out! I don't want to see you in this house.

ASIF

I told you, I am not going. This is my house. Who pays most of the bills, hah?

MRS KHALAM

Asif, do as your father asks you. Be a good son and go out somewhere.

The Children begin to chase each other about the room once more.

MR KHALAM

Take these children out of here. I can't think with all this bloody noise. Take them out to the other room, Halima.

HALIMA

Come! What did I tell you! Stop running!

Halima, without tolerance picks up Child whilst the other Child cries for attention at her hip.

MRS KHALAM

Why you have to do like this, Halima? Take them to the other room, like your father told you.

HALIMA

OK.

Halima and Children enter hallway. Halima kneels before them and kisses them upon the cheek.

HALIMA (CONT'D)

Now be good, and stop screaming.  
Granddad has headache and will hit  
you with his big stick if you keep  
screaming, okay?

HALIMA rises and goes to the entrance door.

HALIMA (CONT'D)

I'm going to work. I'll be back  
around five.

MRS KHALAM

OK. And if you are going to be late  
back, please let somebody know this  
time!

HALIMA

Yeah yeah.

Halima exits. Entrance door closes.

Children scream for their mother as they continuously kick  
entrance door.

CHILDREN

Mama! Mama! Mama! Mama! Mama! Mama!  
Mama! Mama!

Mr Khalam intolerantly rises, holds his back, then goes  
through and collects his coat.

He is about to exit, then turns to the screaming children.

MR KHALAM

Oh, be quiet!

Mrs Khalam goes quickly to the Children and ushers them  
through living room door.

SHAZANA enters through entrance door as her father exits.

Shazana is wearing a green sparkly T-Shirt.

She carries a shopping bag filled with groceries and  
immediately goes towards the kitchen, as Mrs Khalam pops her  
head round the living room door.

SHAZANA

What's wrong with papa? He has a  
face like thunder.

MRS KHALAM  
It's his back, it is hurting him.

SHAZANA  
Oh.

MRS KHALAM  
Oh, Shaz, please take some food up to Mr Adam and apologise for all the shouting this morning.

SHAZANA  
What shouting? Who's shouting?

MRS KHALAM  
Never mind. Just do it.

SHAZANA  
OK.

Shazana enters kitchen.

Fatimah and Nosheen are sat on the sofa reading magazines. Asif sits at the table nonchalantly eating.

NOSHEEN  
(looks up)  
Where have you been, Shazana?

SHAZANA  
Where do you think I have been? And I am doing everything around here. You do nothing at all, but sit on your backsides waiting for someone to serve you. You are so lazy; both of you.

NOSHEEN  
Well, we are not the ones practising for a husband.

Nosheen and Fatimah giggle childishly.

FATIMAH  
You just missed the fireworks with dad and, him.

Asif rises aggressively as Nosheen giggles.

ASIF  
Shut your mouth, or I will slap you, bitch!

FATIMAH

Get off me, you fat arse! Mama!  
Mama!

Asif angrily exits the kitchen and then the house as the door slams shut.

FATIMAH

I hate that boy. He is always causing arguments in this house.

SHAZANA

What is it this time?

FATIMAH

Mosque, what'd you think? He never wants to go. Papa is very angry with him.

SHAZANA

So what if he doesn't want to go mosque. He is old enough to make his own decisions.

NOSHEEN

It is disrespectful to the family. He should go, even if he doesn't want to go. He should still go for papa's sake.

SHAZANA

You know... most boys are the same as Asif, these days. They don't want to be told what to do and where to go.

FATIMAH

Well, he should try harder.

SHAZANA

Yes, well, Asif is Asif.

INT. FLAT ABOVE - CONTINUED.

Adam grabs the CLOCK on the side cabinet and looks at the time.

He sits up for a moment, then slumps back, holding his head in his hands.

After a moment, he rises and lethargically climbs out of bed and walks through to the lounge.

He turns on his COMPUTER and enters the kitchen for a moment.

Adam returns clutching a hot mug of tea. He sits down in the armchair for a moment and takes a couple of sips of his tea when the doorbell rings.

ADAM  
Jesus! What now?

He puts down his drink on the coffee table and walks down the stairs. He opens the door to the smiling Shazana.

INT - EXT - DOORWAY

Shazana stands in good posture, clutching a small Tupperware dish.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
Oh, hello Shazana. What can I do for you?

SHAZANA  
Hello. My mum asked me to bring this for you. We are sorry for all the noise, again.

She hands the dish to Adam.

ADAM  
Oh, thanks. What is it?

They eye one another knowingly and smile.

SHAZANA  
Just some food we are cooking. Rice and meat, you know.

ADAM  
Oh, right. I think your mother is trying to fatten me up, don't you?

SHAZANA  
Well if you don't want to eat it, you can always give it to the goldfish.

Adam chuckles as Shazana stands waiting.

ADAM  
Do you want to come in for a minute? Actually I have some empty dishes for you to take back.



They laugh in unison as their eyes meet.

ADAM

Yes, I see your point. I can see what it must be like. Just imagine if you open your blinds one morning, and you see a giant eye just staring at you.

SHAZANA

Yes.

More laughter.

SHAZANA (CONT'D)

You are very funny, Adam. You make me laugh.

A short silence as they look into each others eyes once more.

SHAZANA (CONT'D)

Look, I better go.

Shazana moves to the door as Adam moves closer to her.

ADAM

Look, you don't have to go right away. Why don't you stay a bit longer? I'll make you a nice cup of tea if you like?

SHAZANA

No. I better go. They will be asking what I am doing all this time.

ADAM

It's alright, we know each other.

SHAZANA

No, it is not alright, Adam. You don't know my father.

ADAM

Yes, but you've been here before, lot's of times, haven't you?

SHAZANA

Yes, I know that.

ADAM

Actually, I'm starting to think of you as my personal maid.

SHAZANA

Well don't, Sexist. I am going to Kashmir next week. And you won't be seeing me for two weeks.

ADAM

To visit your relatives, you mean? Isn't it dangerous in Kashmir?

SHAZANA

No. Not where my family come from. I am getting married. My father is telling me to marry this horrible boy, Aahil. He is so disgusting and he has no manners.

ADAM

Oh, I see. You mean an arranged marriage, like?

SHAZANA

Yes exactly. But I don't want to marry him. I am too young to be washing dirty socks.

ADAM

No, of course not. Look it's none of my business or anything, but have you mentioned this to your father, at all?

SHAZANA

I have more than mentioned it to him, but he doesn't understand. And I wouldn't expect you to understand either. Maybe I shouldn't be telling you all this, you know.

ADAM

Try me, Shazana. I'm quite attentive.

SHAZANA

Look, I have to go.

ADAM

Well you're always welcome to come up for a chat if you want to. Or we can listen to some music...or watch a film: Whatever you like, really.

SHAZANA

Thanks, Adam. Maybe I will then,  
we'll see, okay?

ADAM

Look, why don't you pop up later,  
if you're not doing anything? I  
bought a new DVD. We can watch it,  
if you like?

SHAZANA

You don't give up, do you?

ADAM

Sorry.

SHAZANA

OK. What is the DVD?

ADAM

Do you like comedy?

SHAZANA

Of course I like comedy! What do  
you think, that I am a miserable  
old cow?

ADAM

Alright. So have you heard of Adam  
Sandler?

SHAZANA

Adam Sandler? Who is Adam Sandler?  
Is it you?

ADAM

No, I wish. But if you like comedy,  
you will love Adam Sandler, I  
promise.

SHAZANA

OK, maybe? We will see later.

ADAM

Cool. See you at seven, then?

SHAZANA

I never said yes.

ADAM

So you will let me know?

SHAZANA

Yes. I will let you know, Adam.  
What is it, Chandler?

ADAM

No, Sandler.

More laughter.

SHAZANA

Oh yes.

ADAM

Wait... Actually I'll give you my  
card. Call me, or send me a text.

Adam collects a card from his wallet and hands it to her.

SHAZANA

Thanks.

Shazana studies the card.

SHAZANA (CONT'D)

So you are a copywriter?

ADAM

Yes. That's why I work from home  
most of the time.

SHAZANA

So what does a copywriter do, then?

ADAM

Press releases, and stuff like  
that. And I write the literature  
you see sometimes on  
advertisements, you know, "only the  
smoothest taste makes you think of  
paradise."

More laughter.

SHAZANA

You are so funny sometimes.

ADAM

Oh, sorry.

SHAZANA

It's okay. Look, I really must go.

ADAM  
Call me?

SHAZANA  
I will.

Shazana descends the stairs with Adam following behind her.  
Shazana exits. Adam closes the door and punches the air.

ADAM  
Yes! Yes!

CUT TO

KASHMIR:

EXT. ARMY BARRACKS - DAY

Taher and a group of MILITANTS are involved in a heavy shoot out with Government FORCES as they attack from a hilltop.

SFX. Hand grenades are thrown inside the compound as the explosions occur simultaneously along with machine gun fire.

Government SOLDIERS with assault RIFLES, some with SNIPER RIFLES seek out Militant targets hiding behind trees.

CU. A Militant takes a direct hit to the FACE as his head explodes.

Another Militant is blown to pieces and flies through the air.

Inside the barracks, a Soldier is blown off his TOWER and falls to the ground as another Soldier takes a round to the chest and the abdomen.

Taher calls his Men to retreat.

TAHER  
Go! GO! GO! Go!

The Militants finally disappear into the terrain.

DISSOLVE TO

LONDON ENGLAND

INT. HOUSE BELOW - CONTINUED

Shazana, Fatimah and Nosheen are sat at the table in the kitchen.

SHAZANA

I told him, "You can give it to your goldfish then."

Laughter.

FATIMAH

What did he say, when you said this to him?

SHAZANA

He said nothing. He just smiled at me, and then made me feel really stupid. He is so cool... you know, for an Englishman.

NOSHEEN

Is he gay? He looks gay.

Fatimah laughs aloud. Shazana agape.

SHAZANA

(angrily)

What? Why do you say this, Nosheen? You are always assuming things. And you are always wrong. You know, you are never right about anything.

NOSHEEN

No? Then how come I have seen a strange looking man going up there?

Laughter, except from Shazana.

SHAZANA

What strange looking man have you seen, hah?

NOSHEEN

He has long hair... tied into a ponytail. Oh yes...and he has two earrings; one in each ear.

Nosheen and Fatimah look at each other suspiciously.

SHAZANA

You are so ignorant. People are allowed to have friends, Nosheen. Just because he has a friend you accuse him of something. You are so stupid, you know. Get a life or something. You are so immature. Grow up!

NOSHEEN

Yes, but with a pony tail and a pink shirt? And I don't see any girls going up there since he moved in.

SHAZANA

Well, give him a chance, woman! My god, he has only just taken over this flat, and he is very busy. He works from home.

NOSHEEN

Does he?

SHAZANA

Yes.

NOSHEEN

So what is it that he does all day?

SHAZANA

Oh it is way above your head, Nosheen, so don't you worry about it.

FATIMAH

Anyway, he has been living here for six weeks now.

SHAZANA

No. He moved in one week after I returned from Kasmir, and that was the beginning of last month, because I remember the first time he looked at me, when he saw me getting out of Asif's car.

FATIMAH

(puzzled)

Looked at you? Why would he look at you?

SHAZANA

Yes. What is wrong with that?

FATIMAH

Well how did he look at you then?

SHAZANA

You know, like this.

Shazana shows how he looked at her, with her hands placed upon hips, eyes wide, tongue out, and head askew.

A burst of laughter.

FATIMAH

Well anyway he did not, Shazana. He moved in when you were still in Kashmir actually, but he went on holiday, because we never saw him for two weeks after this, and when I saw him next, he was very brown, you know suntanned.

NOSHEEN

Who cares about him anyway, I don't.

FATIMAH

Same, so let us forget it.

Mrs Khalam is about to enter from the hallway, but eavesdrops.

SHAZANA

Well I happen to like him, you know. He is very good looking, and very nice. And he is always polite to me when I take food to him.

NOSHEEN

(childishly)

Well you can't marry him, Shaz. He is not a Muslim. And he has not been chosen for you.

FATIMAH

(chuckles)

Can you imagine papa's face, if he heard us speaking like this? Oh my god.

NOSHEEN

Yes. Aw...I can just imagine his angry face.

SHAZANA

You know, I never said I wanted to marry him, you stupid idiot, Nosheen.

NOSHEEN

Well stop going on about him then. You are love-struck.

SHAZANA

(vexed)

I am not love-struck! And I am not going on about him. I just said he is handsome, that is all I said.

Mrs Khalam finally enters and collects some biscuits from the cupboard.

MRS KHALAM

Yes, he is a very nice boy. I like him too, Shazana. He is very good boy.

FATIMAH

(aghast)

What?

More laughter.

SHAZANA

Mama have you been listening to our conversation?

MRS KHALAM

Yes, so what of it? Be quiet now, your father will be back very soon, and if he hears you speaking about boys, he will hit you with his stick. Anyway your prince is waiting for you, Shazana. Aahil is preparing for you. He likes you very much.

SHAZANA

Well it's not mutual! Tell him that!

Shazana angrily exits the kitchen, to the dismay of her Mother.

INT. FLAT ABOVE - CONTINUED.

Adam works at his computer as he listens to music.

Some moments later his mobile telephone begins to sound off. He answers the call as he turns down the music.

ADAM

Adam speaking... Nothing is happening... No, I'm just working on my timetable... Yeah I know... I'm finding it really difficult to concentrate actually... It's just so noisy here... And don't laugh, but I think I'm falling in love with my noisy neighbour's daughter... Well we keep crossing paths. And she came into my flat again this morning, to collect some dishes... Believe it or not, I think her family are trying to ingratiate me, for all the noise... They keep bringing me curry... Oh, she is really nice ... Emerald green eyes, long black hair, high cheek bones... I can't get her out of my head... I know... I know... I will... I will... Yes... See you at headquarters then... I'll be there in half an hour.

Adam ends call and collects his jacket then descends the stairs.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Adam is joined by Mr Khalam as he is locking his door.

MR KHALAM

Ah! Mr Adam, how are you? You are looking very happy about something this morning. Have you won the lottery?

Mr Khalam laughs aloud as Adam cheerfully nods his head.

ADAM

Oh, alright Mr Khalam. No, I wish. How's yourself?

MR KHALAM

What is all this with the weather nowadays, Mr Adam? Where is the Global Warming? You know my back hates this cold weather.

(Holds back)

All the time my back is hurting me. Killing me, you know? Between you and me, I can get a handicap parking space outside my house, but I don't want to upset the neighbours. You know people are looking all the time, watching my business. And my doctor... he tells me, Mr Khalam you just let me know and I will write you a letter, simple...no problem at all.

ADAM

Maybe you should then, Mr Khalam. It doesn't infringe on me; I don't drive.

MR KHALAM

No. These people, they are very nosey, Mr Adam. I think they are spying on me, but I know them. I know who they are?

ADAM

Really? Oh, who do you mean?

Shazana opens the entrance door and spots Adam talking to her Father.

Mr Khalam steps forward.

MR KHALAM

Alright. See you then, Mr Adam. Oh and thank you for the little chat.

ADAM

Oh, that's alright Mr Khalam, anytime.

MR KHALAM

Look. You see my daughter, Shazana? She will be married very soon to a nice boy from my town in Kashmir. You know he is an accountant. He will do very well here in London. He will get work in the city, in one of those big office buildings.

MR KHALAM

You know Mr Adam, my daughter's will never marry beneath them. You know my eldest daughter Halima? She is married to a solicitor and he works in Holborn. He is very clever you know. And they are buying a house together in Stratford, because they are renting a small flat in Leyton. You know they are paying over two hundred pounds a week, for a little place above a small chemist shop. It is terrible you know, Mr Adam, what they are charging ordinary people like you and me to rent a place, even here in Walthamstow.

ADAM

Really?

MR KHALAM

Oh yes, believe it, I know.

SHAZANA

Dad! Shut up! Adam does not want to know all of this.

MR KHALAM

Of course Mr Adam wants to know. Mr Adam is our good neighbour. You are a very good neighbour, Mr Adam. Not like the other tenants who lived here, before you came. They were shit, rubbish people you know. I think they were selling drugs. Some crazy people going up there.

ADAM

Look sorry, but I must go, I'm very late for a meeting.

MR KHALAM

Of course.

Adam walks down the street as Mr Khalam enters the house.

INT. HOUSE BELOW.

Mr Khalam goes towards the kitchen as Shazana despondently follows.

SHAZANA

Please stop embarrassing me like this papa!

MR KHALAM

Who is embarrassing you? Shut up you silly girl. And don't speak to your father like this.

SHAZANA

Please papa, I don't want to marry Aahil! I hate him! He is so rude and has no manners! Please don't make me marry him.

MR KHALAM

You will do as I tell you! You will marry Aahil, as arranged. Don't think of bringing shame on your family, like your brother, or you will wish you had not! Believe me!

SHAZANA

Please papa! I do not love him! And I will never love him.

MR KHALAM

You will get to love him when you know him better, believe me, you will, I know.

SHAZANA

But what if I don't, papa? What if I never get to love him?

MR KHALAM

You will! Now do as I tell you!

SHAZANA

No I will not!

Shazana, runs crying from the kitchen with Mr Khalam angrily following behind with his CANE raised.

MR KHALAM

You will do as I say! Or I will beat you, understand this!

He stops in the hallway as Shazana exits the house.

Moments later Mr Khalam returns to the kitchen as Mrs Khalam enters house and goes through to him.

Mr Khalam sits at the table holding his back and then painfully looks up at his wife as she sits opposite him with a look of deep concern upon her face.

MRS KHALAM

What has happened now?

MR KHALAM

Shazana. She is disobeying her father. What is wrong with these children nowadays?

MRS KHALAM

That's because she doesn't want to marry Aahil. She told me.

MR KHALAM

She will marry Aahil! Whether she likes him or not! And she will do as I say!

MRS KHALAM

But she doesn't like him. She told me he is always cursing, and that he is a bully. He pinched her arm when she spoke her mind to him. He made her cry in front of the whole family.

MR KHALAM

Will you be quiet! She is going to marry Aahil, and that is that!

MRS KHALAM

Do you know how this must feel for her?

(pause)

Not to be in love with him, hah?

(pause)

she will runaway if you make her do this.

(pause)

She is a good girl. And I don't like the sound of this family. Shazana told me she saw the police in the house, and they were asking questions about Aahil's older brother, Taher. He is a very naughty boy you know.

A moments Silence.

MR KHALAM

Taher? Why? What did he do?

MRS KHALAM

Yes. He is doing things... you know, very bad things.

MR KHALAM

Shazana said this to you?

MRS KHALAM

Yes. You must believe her... She is better than this.

MR KHALAM

No. She will marry Aahil. He is a good boy. He is an accountant. They will have their own family, and they will live in a beautiful big house, maybe in Ilford. You will see, I am right because I know. And She is disrespecting her family because of other people poisoning her mind, and putting it in her head about this and about that. You will see, they will be happy, believe me, I know.

MRS KHALAM

But this is not the world she knows. Arrange marriage is not good for young people anymore. I see it everywhere. Young girls are living in fear of their families. They are hiding in safe houses and changing their hair and their clothes, in fear of being found out.

(pause)

Is this what you want for our princess? Halima is happy because she likes her life and she loves her husband.

MR KHALAM

No! What you see is her mind being poisoned by this bloody country, and its infidelity. What you are saying is that all young people who have been born in this country are not listening to the Koran, and they disrespecting their religion, right!

MRS KHALAM

No, this is not what I am saying.

MR KHALAM

Then we will go back to Kashmir. I will sell everything; including the car. And Shazana will marry Aahil in Kashmir. She will not shame this family. I will not tolerate my own children disrespecting me or their God.

MRS KHALAM

Why can't you give her more time? She is just a young girl. She is still at university, doing her studies. She is a very clever girl. She wants to be a solicitor. She is very bright girl, you know.

MR KHALAM

No, no, no. Shut up woman!

A moments silence.

MR KHALAM (CONT'D)

Our only son doesn't want to attend mosque, and now my daughter is refusing to marry Aahil. She will never meet anyone like Aahil in this sodding country. Everybody is out for themselves here. I see it. Young people are disrespecting their parents and their duties. We must not let this happen to us.  
(pause)

And you will not interfere with this subject again. I will not have it! Do you hear me? I will not have it!

MRS KHALAM

You are too strict with them. This is why they will not listen to you. You are always shouting at them.  
(Pause)

Look I know what she is feeling. You are not a woman. And you can never know the pain of a frightened woman.

MR KHALAM  
Oh? Is that right?

Mrs Khamlam bows her head in shame.

MR KHALAM (CONT'D)  
So what do you mean? Explain to me... this sodding accusation.

MRS KHALAM  
Hah?

MR KHALAM  
Explain?! What do you mean? About you know what she is thinking?

MRS KHALAM  
Feeling. I said, "what she is feeling." And as a young Muslim girl... she is in turmoil.

MR KHALAM  
What about my turmoil? What about what I am feeling, hah?

A short silence.

MR KHALAM (CONT'D)  
Ah! I get it. So is this how you were feeling when we were married then?  
(pause)  
Well? Answer the bloody question, woman!

Mrs Khamlam obediently shakes her head.

MRS KHALAM  
No it is not.

MR KHALAM  
It better not bloody-well be, either.

MRS KHALAM  
It is not! So please stop this.

Long silence.

MR KHALAM  
You will speak with her and remind her that we are still going to Kashmir next week. And to see how

MR KHALAM

comfortable Halima is with her family. And they are getting stronger, and soon they will have their own house. This is success. We see them. They are going from strength to strength.

(Pause)

And I think between you and me that Aahil has a strong mind, and will be very successful in this country. Believe me I know. I can see it now. His father tells me he is really focused and determined in his life.

MRS KHALAM

I will ask Halima to talk with her.

MR KHALAM

Yes, do it.

Asif enters with his kit bag.

MR KHALAM (CONT'D)

Where have you been, Asif?

ASIF

At the gym. Why?

MR KHALAM

I am taking Shazana back to Kashmir next week. It is just for one week. Will you work in the restaurant for me next week, ah?

ASIF

Hm hm.

MR KHALAM

You will do it?

ASIF

Hm hm.

MR KHALAM

That's good: Very good. It is only Tuesday and Wednesday. I will let them know you are coming, in my place.

Asif goes to FRIDGE, collects a bottle of water, picks up his bag and casually exits.

MRS KHALAM

He is a good boy. If you speak to him nicely, he will always do something for you, always.

Mr Khalam rises and leaves the room as Mrs Khalam sits with her head in her hands.

CUT TO

KASHMIR

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Shazana and her father Mr Khalam sit uncomfortably on a red sofa as the Choudrey's sit quietly at a small table opposite, they are drinking from China cups.

INTERCUT

EXTERNAL - INTERNAL - HOUSE

A truck pulls up outside the house sending a thick dust into the air as Mr and Mrs Choudrey joyfully anticipate Aahil's arrival.

MR CHOUDREY

Ah! Aahil is here.

Aahil quickly exits the vehicle and enters the house.

Aahil enters the room excitedly through a glass panelled door as Shazana and Mr Khalam rise to their feet to greet him. The Choudrey's also rise in unison as the greetings begin.

Shazana, disciplined goes directly to Aahil. They warmly embrace.

AAHIL

(joyfully)

Salam malakim, Shazana. Good to see you. Good to see you.

MR KHALAM

(proudly)

Salam malakim, Aahil. You are a fine young man, I can see you have been working hard.

AAHIL

Salam malakim, Mr Khalam. Thank you. Thank you.

MR KHALAM

So my daughter's Prince has been studying hard with his exams as well, yes?

SHAZANA

Papa? Give Aahil a chance to catch his breath.

AAHIL

(smiles awkwardly)

Oh yes, Mr Khalam. I think of England every day. I dream of it.

MR KHALAM

And who wouldn't? A fine young man like yourself will make his wealth in Britain. Believe me, I know.

(pause)

And Shazana is also doing very well at her college. Did she tell you she is studying to be a lawyer?

SHAZANA

(irked)

Papa!

Aahil looks to Shazana and smiles awkwardly.

AAHIL

Shazana. Your hair, it seems much longer than the last time you were here.

MR KHALAM

(intercepts)

She is beautiful, yes? I am blessed. All my daughters are very beautiful.

(proudly)

I am a very lucky dad, yes?

MR CHOUDREY

(playfully)

She looks more like Mrs Khalam than Mr Khalam, I would say.

MR KHALAM  
 (chuckles)  
 Don't forget... I am her father.

Ice breaking laughter as Mr Khalam wipes his brow.

MR CHOUDREY  
 And how is Mrs Khalam doing? It  
 would have been very nice if she  
 had come, very nice.

MR KHALAM  
 Oh yes, yes... But you see, she is  
 too busy looking after the  
 grandchildren.

Aahil and Shazana sit down and make themselves comfortable  
 on the sofa.

Mrs Choudrey walks towards the kitchen.

MRS CHOUDREY (CONT'D)  
 It is too hot today. It is getting  
 hotter every day here.

MR KHALAM  
 It is Global Warming you know.

SHAZANA  
 He always says that. Take no  
 notice.

MR CHOUDREY  
 It is too hot, even for me.

MR KHALAM  
 But at least my back is feeling  
 much better. I am walking  
 everywhere with a stick back in  
 England.

MR CHOUDREY  
 So are we all ready to eat, now we  
 are all together?

Mr Khalam nods his head in acknowledgment as Mrs Choudrey  
 subserviently exits.

Aahil shouts after his mother to the annoyance of Shazana.

AAHIL  
 Mama! Taher said he will be home  
 soon!

MR CHOUDREY

Taher is a very angry young man. Not to come home when we have special visitors, coming all this way from England. He makes me feel so ashamed.

MR KHALAM

Ah! Leave it. My son is exactly the same. He doesn't even attend the same mosque as his father. You know what he tells me?

(pause)

He says he goes for the kick boxing.

(chuckles)

What can you do, huh? Kickboxing.

MR CHOUDREY

Yes. What can you do? The police have been here four times in the last two weeks. What am I to do with him? They are searching his room. We feel like we are criminals in our own home.

MR KHALAM

But why are the police coming here? What is he doing? Is he mixing with-

MR CHOUDREY

-He is mixing with the wrong people. Bad people. I am so worried about him. One day they will come and tell us that he is dead...lying in a ditch somewhere in Kashmir.

AAHIL

No he is not! Don't believe them, papa. They are lying. They just want to cause trouble.

Mrs Choudrey enters from the kitchen with a large pot of food. She carefully puts it down on the table.

MR KHALAM

(rubs stomach, pleased)

Ah yes. I am very hungry, very hungry.

MRS CHOUDREY  
Shazana, are you ready to eat something?

SHAZANA  
Yes. Thank you, Mrs Choudrey.

CUT TO

EXT. DISUSED WAREHOUSE- SUNDOWN

Taher and three other young bearded Men stand nervously smoking cigarettes on the forecourt, kicking the dust.

A prestigious BLACK CAR pulls slowly onto the forecourt with two serious looking MEN sat in front.

One of the Men is BASEL. He is tall, stocky and smartly dressed, wearing a clean white shirt and black trousers.

Basel casually exits the vehicle with a certain authority about him as he approaches the group of Men.

BASEL  
(wipes brow)  
Salam malakim. It is so so bloody, bloody hot today. I swear I cannot breathe

TAHER  
(proudly)  
Salam malakim. Yes.

Basel calmly takes out a revolver and without mercy or thought shoots one of the Men in the head.

Taher and the two other Men wince as they jump back in shock.

BASEL  
(coldly)  
I understand your relatives have arrived, Taher. Is this correct?

TAHER  
Yes. I will speak with Mr Khalam tonight.

BASEL  
And when you do this, you call us immediately after. Take notes. Look for negatives from him. Body language.

(pause)

You will speak with him diplomatically... with hope, before you deliver our demand.

(pause)

You must not let yourself get carried away with... if's and what's. We do not want feeble explanations either.

(pause)

And if he should be questioning you in this suspicious manner, you let him know who asked him for this help. You tell him, a still mouth has a wise mind.

TAHER

Yes. I will do it.

(pause)

When do you want Mr Khalam's answer?

BASEL

If he does not agree immediately then he will bring trouble to us.

(pause)

There can be no refusal. Tell him.

TAHER

But what if he does, refuse? What should I say to him?

BASEL

You tell him that he cannot refuse! Or his family will die.

Basel checks his watch.

BASEL (CONT'D)

Right. I have to go.

Basel swaggers back to his car, then turns as he opens the passenger door.

BASEL (CONT'D)

No refusal! And clean up this mess! He was a Government agent.

Taher nods his head reassuringly.

The car speeds off as the dust rises.

EXT. CHOUDREY'S YARD- NIGHT

Shazana and Aahil are sat on a bench at the rear of the house.

AAHIL

You know when we are married next month, and I come to live in London with your family It will be very special for me.

SHAZANA

I know.

AAHIL

Do you think we will have to live with your family for more than one year?

SHAZANA

Yes. What do you think, that my parents are rich and can buy us somewhere to live? I am a student.

AAHIL

But what about the dowry? Isn't it the duty to make sure we have enough to live in our own place?

Shazana rises angrily and points her finger at Aahil wildly.

SHAZANA

What! No it is not! If you don't want to get married, it is fine by me! I will tell my father you changed your mind.

AAHIL

(chuckles)

Sit down you crazy English woman!

Aahil tries to grab her hand and pull her down to him. Shazana angrily pulls back.

SHAZANA

What! How dare you call me this!

Aahil laughs aloud to himself.

SHAZANA (CONT'D)

Tell me you are joking! Why are you laughing at me, hah? You don't call me this!

AAHIL

You are too easy to wind up. I thought that all you English girls were cool. You are not cool.

SHAZANA

Cool? I never heard you say this word before. Have you been checking up? Have you?

AAHIL

Yes. My brother Taher is teaching me words. Cool, man. Dude. Ha ha ha ha.

Shazana laughs aloud.

AAHIL (CONT'D)

Is it wrong? Did I say it wrong?

(pause)

Why are you laughing? I am going to beat you! Come here!

Shazana runs about the bench laughing and screaming as Aahil makes chase.

AAHIL (CONT'D)

You bitch face! I am going to give you a burn to your arm! Come here! It is an order, wife!

SHAZANA

I am not your wife! We are not married yet!

Shazana and Aahil stop suddenly when they begin to hear loud voices from inside the house.

INT. HOUSE

Mr Khalam is in dispute with Taher in the kitchen which backs onto the yard.

MR KHALAM

I will not do it! Do you hear! I will not do it! Never! Never! Never!

TAHER

(calmly)

Look, Mr Khalam, be reasonable. We only want you to put something in

TAHER

the food. No one will ever find out it was you who did it.

MR KHALAM

You think I will listen to this! I am a respectable man. And my family are a respectable family. Living in England means everything to me and my family. Oh my God!

(pause)

And do you think I would just throw it away, just like that! To do this is unacceptable, Taher. I will not do it! You go and tell them I will not do their dirty washing!

TAHER

Then you leave us no choice, Mr Khalam.

Mr Khalam holds his stomach as if in pain.

MR KHALAM

No choice? No choice! You are such a silly boy if you are acting with this kind of people. They will get you killed, do you understand? And what for... So you can be a Martyr?

(pause)

Oh my God, Taher. I cannot believe you are mixed up with these people. And what you are asking me to do is completely unacceptable to me and my family. I will not do it!

TAHER

Then you must go, immediately. You must leave. You must leave this country now.

MR KHALAM

What is this? I must go? I must leave India now? Who are you to tell me I must leave my country!

TAHER

Look, Mr Khalam. It is in your best interest to do as we ask.

MR KHALAM

No! You piss off! Shazana and I will leave! I will not be blackmailed!

(pause)

I can't believe that you are asking me to do something like this.

(pause)

Life for every Muslim in Britain will be hell after this. Do you know what it was like after 7/7... for our people? We could not even get on a bus... with a bag. People staring at us like we did something terrible.

(pause)

And do you know what will happen if I did this?

TAHER

Look!-

MR KHALAM

-No! You look! All the restaurants will be shut down, that's what!

Shazana and Aahil enter the room, quietly.

SHAZANA

Papa? What is all this shouting? What is going on? Why are you shouting at each other?

MR KHALAM

Get your things, Shazana. We are going home.

SHAZANA

But...what, what is going on?

MR KAHALAM

Just do it! Get your things. We are leaving. There is no wedding.

SHAZANA

No wedding? Why, papa?

TAHER

You are being unreasonable, Mr Kham. Why don't you stay a bit longer and speak with Basel? He-

MR KHALAM

-You Piss off! You are despicable. You make me sick...! What you think you can achieve by this, hah?

SHAZANA  
Papa...what is going on?

AAHIL  
(to Taher)  
Where is papa?

TAHER  
They have gone to the village.

MR KHALAM  
Aahil I am afraid you cannot marry  
my daughter. It cannot take place,  
ever.

AAHIL  
But why not? What has happened?

SHAZANA  
Papa?

MR KAHLAM  
Ask him. Ask your crazy brother.  
(pause)  
And you can tell your mum and dad  
why we have gone home.

Shazana quickly exits the room, followed by her Father.

FADE OUT

SUPER. TWO WEEKS LATER

LONDON ENGLAND

INT. ADAM'S FLAT - EVENING

Shazana sits upon Adam's knee as they relax together  
watching a DVD.

Shazana shows more interest in Adam as she curls his hair  
round her finger tips.

Moments later the film finishes. Adam switches off the TV  
using the remote control.

ADAM  
So did you enjoy it, Shazana?

SHAZANA

Yes, but I didn't think it was that funny. The other one we watched was much funnier than this one.

ADAM

No?

SHAZANA

Not really? But you did. You were in hysterics.

ADAM

I love that bit at the golf club; hilarious wasn't it? (chuckles).

SHAZANA

The golf club? Sorry, I can't remember that bit. I must have closed my eyes or something.

ADAM

Oh.

SHAZANA

Or I must have been too busy curling your hair. Why is your hair so curly? Does your father have curly hair, like you?

ADAM

No, he doesn't. He's bald actually.

SHAZANA

Do you think I could meet him?

ADAM

Of course, why not?

SHAZANA

I would love to meet your parents.

ADAM

I'm sure they would love to meet you too. I'll arrange for you to meet them.

SHAZANA

How far is Kent?

ADAM

Aw...about one hour from here by car.

SHAZANA

Which parent do you take after?

ADAM

I don't know really.

(Pause)

Probably my mother, actually.

SHAZANA

Why? Does she have blue eyes, like you?

ADAM

Yes. Actually, my mother was very beautiful as a young woman.

SHAZANA

What about your father? Was he good looking, like you?

ADAM

That's very nice of you Shazana, but you ask very impertinent questions, don't you?

He playfully tickles her as she jumps off him and stands, with hands on hips, cockeyed and askew.

SHAZANA

Please, don't do that! You know I hate it.

ADAM

Oh? Sensitive to touch, are we?

SHAZANA

What? Oh, Adam, I am just so happy tonight. I want to scream!

Shazana begins to dance about the room bare foot as she hums a tune with arms stretched out wide.

Adam studies her proudly, with affection.

SHAZANA (CONT'D)

You know, my dad's face when he met Aahil's brother. It was beautiful to see. I wish I would have taken a picture.

(pause)

Oh, Adam, I wish you could have seen his face when Aahil's brother showed up.

ADAM

Why? What happened?

She stops dancing for a moment and speaks excitedly.

SHAZANA

My father nearly had a fight with him, that's what. They had a big argument about something.

ADAM

What for?

SHAZANA

He told my father to, "fuck off back to England and never come back to Kashmir, or he will kill him."

ADAM

Isn't Aahil supposed to be an accountant or something like that?

SHAZANA

No, he is not an accountant. He is just very good at arithmetic. And his father tells every person that he is an accountant. To think that I nearly had to marry this stupid arrogant boy with no manners, hah!

She continues to dance freely about the room.

SHAZANA (CONT'D)

I am free! I am free! I am free to do what I want! I am free to study. Oh, Adam, I am so, so happy!

Adam rises and goes to her.

ADAM

Yes, me too, Shazana. I am very happy for you, you know that. But you are not really supposed to be here with me, are you? So you are not totally free, not really.

SHAZANA

Oh, I know. But as long as we are friends they cannot say anything about it.

ADAM

Yes, but I am finding it very difficult, Shazana. I really like you, and I have told all my friends about you. They want to meet you.

She puts her finger to his lips.

SHAZANA

Please say nothing. You may regret it later, Adam.

ADAM

But I-

SHAZANA

-Stop.

ADAM

This is too much, Shazana. I'm starting to feel confused.

SHAZANA

I know. For me too. I like you a lot... but we must not be stupid. We will get into serious trouble, Adam.

He looks into her eyes as he holds her loosely in his arms.

ADAM

But why not? For heavens sake.

SHAZANA

You know my mum says you are a nice boy. You know, I think she secretly likes you.

ADAM

Really? Is that supposed to make me feel better?

SHAZANA

No, stupid.

She smacks his arm playfully.

ADAM

Are you playing a game with me, Shazana?

SHAZANA

Playing a game? What do you mean, Adam?

ADAM

Maybe this is all too one sided, you know? Maybe I'm just imagining the whole thing and you only like me as a friend?

SHAZANA

No, look... I really like you, Adam. I think you are very kind, and I like being with you. You make me feel so happy and alive. And you make me laugh.

ADAM

Do I?

SHAZANA

Yes.

ADAM

But that's just because, you are nice.

SHAZANA

Oh, Adam... you are too soft. You are so agreeable with everything. You know I never even heard you swear, once. You are so different from the other boys here, and at my University. I like a man who is acting older than his age.

ADAM

Not too old, I hope?

SHAZANA

No don't be silly.

(pause)

Oh, and I nearly forgot...I like your personality.

ADAM

OK. So how do I make you feel alive, then?

SHAZANA

Like this.

She goes closer to him and kisses him softly upon the lips.

He stands transfixed for a moment, and then she kisses him again, this time more passionately as he holds her tightly.

ADAM

You are beautiful. You are like a princess in my arms. She gently pulls herself away, whilst they hold hands at full stretch.

SHAZANA

You must not fall in love with me, Adam.

ADAM

What's wrong?

SHAZANA

Because...because we cannot be together, Adam. Not eternally. My religion will not allow it. I am sorry.

ADAM

Yes but like you said, you don't have to marry this other guy anymore.

SHAZANA

I know that, Adam. But you really have to understand that this cannot happen.

Silence as Adam shrugs his shoulders.

ADAM

What because you are a Muslim, and I am a Christian?

SHAZANA

Yes, of course.

(Pause)

Oh, Adam, what are we going to do now?

ADAM

We can move away. We can live somewhere else, it's not a problem.

SHAZANA

But... please wait. We must not rush into anything. We must be careful not to arouse my parent's

SHAZANA  
 suspicion. Oh my god, if my father were to find out I even kissed you, he would probably disown me. You know, Muslim people are very strict about this, Adam, and I don't want to upset them.

ADAM  
 Yes, I know. But rules are there to be challenged, Shazana.

SHAZANA  
 No! You must be joking! Please don't say anything more. You do not understand my religion, so don't speak about it like you know something you don't.

She goes to him again and throws her arms around him as he stands deflated.

SHAZANA (CONT'D)  
 Oh, Adam, I shouldn't love you, but I am falling in love with you and I cannot stop myself.

ADAM  
 Then kiss me again.

She kisses him passionately once more as he lifts her up into his arms.

He begins to carry her towards the bedroom.

SHAZANA  
 Where are you taking me, Adam? No! Wait! What are you doing? We cannot go in there.

ADAM  
 But I can't wait, Shazana.

SHAZANA  
 Adam, please. If you love me, you must stop this.

He carefully puts her down, as she re-adjusts her clothing.

SHAZANA (CONT'D)  
 Thank you. Thank you. You scared me, Adam. You know I am not like that. What do you think?

ADAM

I'm sorry, Shazana. I never meant any-

SHAZANA

Don't be getting the wrong idea about me, please. They study each other questionably for a moment.

SHAZANA (CONT'D)

My parents will be asking, how long it takes to show someone how to make a curry dish.

Laughter.

ADAM

Maybe you had better go, then? We don't want to cause them angst.

SHAZANA

Are you angry with me?

ADAM

No. Don't be silly.

SHAZANA

Are you upset because I turned you down?

ADAM

No, I understand, really. I don't know what I was thinking. I'm sorry.

SHAZANA

So you are definitely not upset with me then?

ADAM

No, of course not, Shazana. I think I should be asking you that, not the other way round.

SHAZANA

Good. I will see you tomorrow then for Gnocci.

Laughter.

ADAM

Yes, Gnocci. I can't wait.

SHAZANA

Be patient. Please be patient,  
Adam, and I will give you  
everything, trust me, I will.

ADAM

I know you will.

SHAZANA

Everything you had ever dreamed of  
and more.

She kisses his lips and exits.

Adam slumps down on the sofa and sighs heavily.

INT. HOUSE BELOW - EVENING.

Shazana enters and goes through to the kitchen.

Shazana is happy and joyful and hums a tune as her mother  
appears from the hallway.

MRS KHALAM

Is that you, Shazana?

SHAZANA

Yes, mama.

MRS KHALAM

You were a long time up there.

SHAZANA

I know.

Shazana sits at the table with a drink.

Moments later her mother sits down opposite her with a  
withdrawn look upon her face.

MRS KHALAM

You know it doesn't take three  
hours to show someone how to make a  
Chicken Karahi, Shazana.

SHAZANA

I know it doesn't.

MRS KHALAM

So what have you been doing up there all this time?

SHAZANA

We watched a film, while the food was cooking.

MRS KHALAM

You watched a film? Which film?

SHAZANA

Yes. Adam had this funny film. It was hilarious, mama. I'm surprised you never heard us laughing.

MRS KHALAM

Look, Shazana. Don't be going up there too often. Adam is a very nice boy, but it is not healthy for you to be going up there so much.

SHAZANA

Why not? He is our neighbour. Adam is not like that, mama. He is sweet, and very intelligent, mama. Not like these boys around here at all. His parents are Irish and they live in Kent. Adam is from Kent. And he has a very good job in advertising.

MRS KHALAM

Look, don't play games with me. Just because your father let you off marrying Aahil, don't you be upsetting him anymore. Your father is not very well. Not very well at all.

SHAZANA

How do you mean? I am not silly, mama. I know what you are thinking. But it is okay. We are just very good friends.

MRS KHALAM

I am your mother. I can see when my daughter is more than liking someone. I can see it in your eyes, Shazana, so don't be lying to me.

SHAZANA

Oh, mama, what is wrong, hah?

MRS KHALAM

What happened in Kashmir?

SHAZANA

What do you mean, mama?

MRS KHALAM

What happened with your father and Aahil's brother, Taher?

SHAZANA

Hasn't papa told you yet?

MRS KHALAM

No. He won't talk about it. But I know something is wrong when he doesn't talk. It is not like your father to be quiet all this time.

SHAZANA

They had this huge row over something, mama, but I missed the beginning of it. I was in the backyard collecting wood with Aahil, when all of a sudden there was this loud shouting. I thought they were going to fight. It was very scary, then papa said we had to leave immediately. So we left and went to the airport. I never even said goodbye to anyone. I have never seen papa this angry, mama. I thought he would have a heart attack or something.

A short silence.

MRS KHALAM

Something very bad is happening to him. He won't even go to work anymore. Asif is working his shifts at the restaurant.

SHAZANA

Well it must be something bad because I don't have to get married anymore. I am free, mama.

SUPER. Mrs Kham's worried stare.

MRS KHALAM

Yes, but at what price my dear? At what price is your freedom?

MONTAGE

Taher and Basel carry suitcases as they walk through the airport in Kashmir.

They check in at the departure lounge.

They look up at the monitors.

They walk to the plane and take their seats.

The plane takes off.

BACAK TO SCENE

INT. MR KHALAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mr Khalam lies in bed, the pillows plumped up behind him. A DOCTOR leans over him and monitors his chest with his STEPHOSCOPE.

DOCTOR

(looks up)

Your husband needs rest, Mrs Khalam. His blood pressure is a little high so I will write you a prescription on my way out. You can collect it from the chemist at Leyton High Road. It's open all through the night.

MRS KAHLAM

OK. thank you, doctor.

MRS KHALAM steps back with a look of sadness upon her face.

CUT TO

INT. LE TAJ RESTAURANT- NIGHT

The sixty seated restaurant itself is fairly quiet as most of the tables are void of customers.

ASIF is keeping busy situated behind the small BAR opposite to the front entrance door.

He is cleaning wine glasses dressed in a purple waistcoat.

Suddenly the door opens and Taher enters with Basel.

They are both clean shaven and well groomed, but offer an air of arrogance upon entrance.

Asif welcomes them as he approaches the door.

ASIF  
(warmly)  
Good evening, gentlemen. Where  
would you like to sit?

Taher checks the table by the window to his left..

TAHER  
Maybe we can sit by the window?

ASIF  
Certainly. Come this way.

Taher and Basel follow Asif to the table.

Asif prepares the table for them and they take their seats.  
Taher looks out of the window as Basel scans the restaurant.

TAHER  
This is a nice view of the street.

Asif stands aptiently with menus in hand.

ASIF  
Can I fetch you something to drink?

TAHER  
Yes. I think we will just have a  
jug of water for now. Thank you.

Asif sighs and exits to the kitchen.

BASEL  
It is not a busy restaurant. It is  
in the wrong area of London. It is  
too quiet.

TAHER  
It is very busy at weekends.  
Shazana told my brother that  
sometimes they even have to turn  
customers away.

BASEL  
Maybe we are wasting our time here.  
I prefer the West end of London.

TAHER  
Trust me, Basel. It will be fine.

Asif re-enters with a jug of water. He takes it to the table where the two Men are sitting.

Some customers rise up from their tables and begin to exit.

ASIF  
(to customers)  
Thank you, sir.

Asif collects their receipt and goes to the till.

TAHER (CONT'D)  
Waiter!

ASIF  
(looks up)  
One moment.

BASEL  
He needs to learn some manners.

Asif politely approaches the table.

ASIF  
Sorry about that, what would you like to order?

TAHER  
Nothing. Sit down.

ASIF  
What?

TAHER  
(grimacing)  
I said, sit down.

ASIF  
Look do I know you or something?

TAHER  
No, but we know who are.

ASIF  
Who are you? What is it?

TAHER  
I will not tell you again. Sit -  
down.

Asif nervously conforms and sits down next to Basel.

TAHER (CONT'D)  
We know your father, Mr Khalam.

ASIF  
So what. Lots of people know my father.

TAHER  
And your sister Shazana was to marry my younger brother Aahil, next month. He is very upset with your father about this. My family feel insulted and your father has brought shame upon my family.

Short silence

ASIF  
(shakes head and shoulders)  
So what happened then? My dad won't talk about it. He is in bed, sick. I'm doing his shifts until he's better.

TAHER  
Shut up and listen to what I have to say.

At that moment CUSTOMERS enter the restaurant.

ASIF  
(rises)  
I will come back.

Asif shows the customers to a table at the far end of the restaurant.

ASIF (CONT'D)  
Good evening, madam.

Asif quickly returns to Taher and Basel.

ASIF (CONT'D)  
Look I am busy working. I can't speak to you right now.

Taher and Basel suddenly rise up in unison.

TAHER  
OK. What time does this shit hole close?

ASIF  
One o clock.

TAHER  
OK. We are coming back at that  
time. And make sure you are waiting  
for us.

ASIF  
Why? What can I do? It's not my  
problem if my sister doesn't like  
your brother.

Taher punches Asif hard in the abdomen. Asif creases over in  
pain.

BASEL  
(looking down)  
It is very much your problem.

Asif looks up concerned as Taher and Basel calmly walk away.

INTER CUT

INT. EXT. ADAM'S FLAT AND STREET- NIGHT

Adam and Shazana are snuggled together upon the sofa and  
watching television.

Mrs Khalam appears at the front door and begins to press the  
door bell with her finger.

Adam looks at Shazana, perplexed.

ADAM  
Does your family know you're here,  
Shazana?

SHAZANA  
(shakes head)  
No.

ADAM  
Are you sure?

SHAZANA  
Yes.

Mrs Khalam continues to the press door bell as she patiently  
waits.

ADAM  
Well I'm not expecting anyone.

SHAZANA  
Then ignore it.

ADAM  
OK.

Adam and Shazana continue to watch television but Mrs Khalam continues pressing the door bell.

Adam eventually rises and sighs.

ADAM (CONT'D)  
Right. I'm going down to answer it.  
They obviously don't seem to  
recognise that we are not in.

SHAZANA  
(giggles)  
Hurry back.

ADAM  
Pause the film.

Shazana pauses the television using the remote control.

SHAZANA  
Quick, go then.

Adam descends the stairs and opens the door.

ADAM  
Mrs Khalam! Sorry I was in the back  
room.

MRS KHALAM  
Fetch Shazana here now, please.

ADAM  
Erm...er-

MRS KHALAM  
-Look, I know my daughter is here,  
so go and fetch her. Her father is  
very sick.

ADAM  
Certainly, Mrs Khalam. Is he okay?

MRS KHALAM  
No. Please fetch Shazana.

ADAM  
Right. OK.

Adam flies up the stairs

ADAM (CONT'D)  
Quickly. Hurry. It's your mum.  
Something is wrong with your dad.  
They know you're here.

Shazana quickly slips on her shoes and runs down the stairs.

SHAZANA  
Mama? What's wrong with papa?

MRS KHALAM  
Your father has suffered a heart  
attack. We are waiting for the  
ambulance. Come inside.

SHAZANA  
(frantically)  
Oh my God! Mama! Is he okay?

Shazana and Mrs Khalam disappear into the house as  
Adam stands by the door in shock.

MONTAGE

Asif slamming the PHONE down at the restaurant, pauses,  
sighs then quickly collects his coat upon exiting the  
restaurant.

ASIF  
I'll be back soon! Tell Zahid!

Mr Khalam being carried on a stretcher wearing an OXYGEN  
MASK to the back of a waiting AMBULANCE with its blue lights  
flashing.

Adam standing in the doorway to his flat looks concerned.

Shazana, Fatimah, Nosheen and Halima are gathered around the  
ambulance with a look of worry and sadness about them.

The ambulance drives off with Mr and Mrs Khalam aboard.

END MONTAGE

INT. EXT. CAR- 12.45 A.M

Taher and Basel sit waiting for Asif to exit the restaurant.

BASEL

Twelve restaurants will deserve their stars this weekend. Trust this one to be number thirteen.

TAHER

Yeah, yeah.

BASEL

And we will be back home by then. And watching Al Jazeera breaking the news to the whole world, God willing.

TAHER

Yeah, yeah. God willing.

Basel's POV

Asif parking outside the restaurant in his OLD RUSTY CAR.

BASEL

Look, it is him, Asif. It is him. Where has he been? I will kill him, no problem! If he has been to the police I will kill him.

TAHER

No! Wait here. I will go. Stay here.

Taher quickly exits the car as Asif opens his car door.

Taher quickly approaches Asif and forces him back inside the car.

They are very quickly joined by Basel who jumps into the back seat.

ASIF

Get off me, man! Get off me! What you fuckin' doing! Get your hands off me!

TAHER

Stay there! We will tell you when you can leave!

(pause)

Listen. You will do as we say or I will fuckin' kill you and your whole family, right? Right?

Taher shows a GUN in his trouser belt. Asif begins to tremble.

ASIF

What do you want me to do, man?

TAHER

That's better. You learn fast for a British Asian. Where have you been?

ASIF

To the hospital. My father had a heart attack.

TAHER

Is he okay?

ASIF

No.

BASEL

(intercepts)

This Friday afternoon, you will come to the restaurant and you will enter the kitchen. And when you have a chance you will pour some powder that we will give to you, into the food while it is still cooking.

ASIF

What powder?

BASEL

Shut up and listen.

TAHER

We will bring it on Friday morning.

ASIF

Bring it? Bring it here? But you cannot bring it here.

TAHER

We know that. Where do you want us to bring it? You tell us, where?

ASIF

Er... er, do you know the Grange Estate?

TAHER

No. Where is it? Is it far from here?

ASIF

Er...n...no. It is just up the road, behind us. You will see a Jet Garage. It is right opposite there. I will meet you there.

TAHER

Where exactly will you be parked?

ASIF

There are some garages. You will see them. Park inside there.

TAHER

This better not be a trap.

(pause)

And if you are not there, we will come to your house and kill everybody.

Basel is sat behind Asif. He suddenly grabs Asif's throat as a warning.

Asif chokes slightly and nods his head violently in agreement.

ASIF

Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

TAHER

Seven o'clock sharp! Do not be late.

ASIF

Sure, sure, sure. I won't.

The two Men calmly exit the vehicle as Asif looks down at his WET pants.

FADE TO

SUPER. NEXT DAY

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Mr Khalam lies sick and oblivious in a hospital bed as a young NURSE takes his temperature.

Mrs Khalam, Shazana and Nosheen stand anxiously about the bed.

MRS KHALAM

(to nurse)

Excuse me. Can I speak to my husband?

NURSE

Not today I'm afraid. Why don't you all come back tomorrow. He will be feeling much better by then and able to speak with you.

MRS KHALAM

All right. We will come back tomorrow. Thank you. Thank you.

The Khalam's move towards the door as the Nurse tucks in the blankets at the foot of the bed.

CUT TO

EXT. THE GRANGE ESTATE GARAGES - NIGHT

Asif and his Friends from the estate are gathered around Asif's old car. TARIQ AND JAZ are dressed in Grunge style clothing and are both thick set young men.

ASIF

No, man! These people are proper scary, believe me, I fuckin wet my pants!

A Loud burst of laughter followed by jumping fits of hysterical behavior.

ASIF (CONT'D)

No listen...listen! Listen right. I'm a fuckin' dead man if I don't do what they say and put the poison in the food, man!

TARIQ

Ah! You won't have to do anything, man, so stop worrying.

JAZ

Yeah, yeah. We are...like, The Posse, man. They can't fuck with us...Know what I mean?

ASIF

Hm hm. But they carry guns, man. Proper guns. I saw it tucked it in

ASIF  
 his belt when he pushed me back in  
 the car. He threatened to kill my  
 family if I refuse to do it. I  
 don't need this shit right now. I  
 can do without it, know what I'm  
 saying?

JAZ  
 Don't worry about it, man. We're  
 your friends. That's what we're  
 here for. We help each other out. I  
 don't give a fuck who they are! We  
 are, The Posse. No one fucks with  
 us, right!

TARIQ  
 Yeah, yeah. The Posse.

ASIF  
 You know my old man is dying. He's  
 in the hospital. He suffered a  
 heart attack yesterday, man. He's  
 old. He don't need this shit. I  
 feel proper sorry for him,  
 man...proper sorry.

TARIQ  
 Don't worry, we'll be waiting for  
 them. We'll sort it out.

Asif thanks his friends as they gather closer together.

ASIF  
 Yeah, yeah. Thanks guys. Know what  
 I mean...?

CUT TO

INT. THE KHALAM'S HOUSE -NIGHT

Shazana, Nosheen and Fatimah are situated in the kitchen  
 when the door bells rings.

FATIMAH  
 I'll go!! You lot are so lazy!

Fatimah exits as Shazana sits at the table with her head in  
 her hands.

A few moments later and Fatimah returns to the kitchen with  
 Adam timidly following behind.

FATIMAH (CONT'D)  
Someone to see you, Shazana.

Shazana looks up a gasp as Adam acknowledges and smiles gently towards her.

SHAZANA  
Adam?

ADAM  
Hello. I'm sorry to call on you at such a bad time, but I was wondering how your father is doing?

NOSHEEN  
(smiles)  
He is better.

SHAZANA  
Oh. He is much better now.

ADAM  
Good. Good. Well if you need anything, you know where I am. Just give me a bell, okay?

SHAZANA  
Thanks, Adam. We will.

Adam turns to go. Shazana quickly rises up as Nosheen looks on knowingly.

ADAM  
OK. See you then.

SHAZANA  
No wait.  
(pause)  
Would you like a drink?

ADAM  
No thanks, Shazana. I have to get back upstairs. I'm expecting a phone call from my father.

SHAZANA  
Oh, all right.

Adam turns to leave.

ADAM  
Bye.

SHAZANA

I'll come to the door with you.

Adam and Shazana exit the kitchen.

NOSHEEN

She thinks we are all stupid.

FATIMAH

Ah! Leave her alone. You're just jealous.

Asif angrily enters with Shazana following behind.

ASIF

You two, go in the other room. I need to talk to Shazana.

FATIMAH

Why can't you talk to her in the other room?

ASIF

Look, it's private.

NOSHEEN

So.

ASIF

Look, please. Just go!

FATIMAH

Come on, Nosh. We know where we are not wanted.

SHAZANA

Go on, Nosheen.

Nosheen and Fatimah stubbornly exit, leaving Asif alone with Shazana.

ASIF

Tell me... what happened over there in Kashmir.

SHAZANA

I'm not sure. I was outside the house in the garden with Aahil. There were lots of shouting. When I went inside the house to see what was going on, dad and Aahil's brother, Taher were almost going to fight about something that they

SHAZANA  
wanted dad to do. And I never seen  
dad so crazed. Oh my god... He  
practically dragged me home without  
even talking about it.

ASIF  
I know why. I know what happened  
out there.

SHAZANA  
Why? What happened?

ASIF  
Get this.  
(pause)  
Taher is a fuckin' terrorist. He  
wanted dad to put poison in the  
food at the restaurant.

SHAZANA  
No! Oh my God. Oh my God. What are  
we going to do? What kind of  
poison?

ASIF  
I don't know, but yeah. And he is  
here, in London with some really  
scary guy. They have guns, man.

SHAZANA  
Why? What for?

ASIF  
Now, I have to do it.

SHAZANA  
What?

ASIF  
Yeah. And if I don't do it they are  
going to kill all of us, even you.

SHAZANA  
Oh my God, Asif. What can we do?

ASIF  
Yeah. So I have to do it!

SHAZANA  
How do you know all of this?

ASIF

They came to the restaurant and threatened me with a gun when I came back from the hospital after dad's heart attack.

SHAZANA

What are we going to do? I'm so scared.

ASIF

I'll think of something. I need to speak to dad about this first.

SHAZANA

You mean if he doesn't die, first.

Fatimah and Nosheen stand listening behind the door. They look at on another aghast.

CUT TO

EXT. SOHO - LONDON - DAY

A busy market street with TAXIS, PEDICABS and TOURISTS prevalent.

Taher and Basel inconspicuously exit a Tandoori restaurant. They walk to a waiting car parked nearby and enter the vehicle. Moments later the vehicle slowly drives away.

CUT TO

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Mr Khalam lies up against plumped up pillows and is looking in better health as he drinks from a cup.

Asif silently enters the room and puts his finger to his lips as not to make a sound.

Mr Khalam looks up in a confused manner. Asif approaches the bed.

MR KHALAM

Asif, what are you doing here?

ASIF

Shush. I need to know what happened in Kashmir?

MR KHALAM

Oh my God. They are here?

ASIF

Yes. They came to the restaurant and threatened to kill us if I don't-

MR KHALAM

-I know. I know. Bloody bastards. I hate them.

ASIF

I don't know what to do. What can I do, papa?

MR KHALAM

OK. Do this. Go to Zahid and tell him to close the restaurant immediately.

ASIF

But why do they ask us to do it? Why can't they ask Zahid. It is his bloody restaurant, not ours.

MR KHALAM

You know why, don't you?

ASIF

No. Why?

MR KHALAM

They are judging us as Muslims. They are testing us. They want to push us around like we are their property. That is why, Asif.

ASIF

I hate them.

(pause)

Well I am not going to do it. I will tell them to close the restaurant.

A NURSE enters carrying a tray of food and is shocked to see Asif standing there.

NURSE

Excuse me! What do you think you're playing at? You shouldn't be here. It's too early for visitors. It's not visiting time yet. We're still serving breakfast.

ASIF  
 Sorry. I had to speak with my  
 father.

MR KHALAM  
 (proudly)  
 This is my son, Asif.

Asif turns to leave as the Nurse prepares the tray at the  
 bottom of the bed.

NURSE  
 You can come back at twelve o  
 clock.

ASIF  
 Cool. Cool. Sorry.

Asif exits.

INT. ADAM'S FLAT - DAY

Shazana stands staring at the goldfish as Adam enters the  
 room with two cups of tea. He hands one to her.

ADAM  
 Here.

SHAZANA  
 What are we going to do?

ADAM  
 Go to the police. I would, Shazana.

SHAZANA  
 I can't. You don't know these  
 people, Adam. They can kill without  
 thinking about it.

ADAM  
 I know that. But your brother has  
 no other choice.

SHAZANA  
 All this has made my dad very sick.  
 (pause)  
 I knew we shouldn't have gone to  
 Kashmir. I had this horrible  
 feeling about it.  
 (pause)  
 I never wanted to be married  
 anyway.

ADAM

We have to go to the police.

(pause)

Look, I never told you this before.  
My father works for the police. I  
can call him up and ask him what  
you should do.

SHAZANA

No. No way. Stop it. This will only  
put all my family at risk. You  
better not do it.

ADAM

It might be your only way out,  
Shazana.

SHAZANA

I need to speak with Asif first.  
Let me speak with him.

ADAM

Bring your brother here. We can sit  
down and talk about it together.

SHAZANA

Do you think he will be angry with  
me for telling you all this?

ADAM

Maybe? But we have to sort this out  
before it's too late, Shazana.

Shazana looks petrified as she is comforted by Adam.

FADE OUT

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Taher and Basel stand over a MAN, his face covered in blood.

BASEL

Get up.

The Man struggles to get to his feet as Taher drags him up.

BASEL (CONT'D)

I am not going to ask you again.

(pause)

Where is the Ricin?

MAN

I don't know! It is not here!

BASEL

Put him in the chair.

Taher forces the beaten Man to sit on a wooden CHAIR.

Basel takes out a GUN and begins to load it with bullets. All the while he stares coldly at the Man.

MAN

Look, please believe me. I don't know where it is. It never arrived yet.

BASEL

You are a fuckin' lying bastard! You think that we are stupid, but we know that the Ricin was delivered to this address yesterday afternoon.

MAN

Look, I am telling you it never arrived. Oh my God, why can't you just believe it? Why would I tell lies to you?

TAHER

Wait. Let me call Imran.

BASEL

Call him.

Taher dials a number on his phone but there is no answer.

TAHER

They are not answering.

(pause)

Maybe he is telling us the truth?

BASEL

OK. We go to them.

Basel puts the gun in his trouser belt and they quickly leave the house.

CUT TO

INT HOSPITAL - DAY

Mrs Khalam and Nosheen stand at the bedside of the sick Mr Khalam.

MRS KHALAM

The nurse told us that you can come home tomorrow. You are looking much better than yesterday.

Mr Khalam looks and smiles warmly at Mrs Khalam.

MR KHALAM

Yes. Yes.

MRS KHALAM

And not to worry because Asif will do the shifts at the restaurant till...when you get better.

MR KHALAM

Yes, I know.

(pause)

My back is hurting. This bed is uncomfortable. It is too soft for my back.

MRS KHALAM

I will tell the nurse.

MR KHALAM

No. Leave it. I coming home tomorrow. It is not worth it.

NOSHEEN

No, mama tell the nurse.

Mrs Khalam looks round for the absent Nurse.

MR KHALAM

Nosheen.

NOSHEEN

Yes, papa.

MR KHALAM

Where is Shazana and Fatimah?

NOSHEEN

Shazana and Fatimah are coming to see you tonight.

(pause)

And Halima will come later this afternoon when she finishes work.

MR KHALAM  
Good. Good.

Mr Khalam lies his head back on the pillow and closes his eyes.

CUT TO

INT. TOWER BLOCK OF FLATS - NIGHT

Taher and Basel stand waiting outside a shabby door situated along the landing inside the building.

The door opens.

MAN  
Taher?

TAHER  
Omar? What are you doing here?

Taher and Basel force their way past OMAR and enter the flat.

INT. LOUNGE

Aahil stands centre, nervously pointing a GUN towards three other MEN who sit upon the SOFA with their hands behind their heads.

Omar positions himself next to Aahil.

TAHER (CONT'D)  
(aghast)  
Aahil. What are you doing here? And why have you brought him with you?

AAHIL  
(panicky)  
I cannot let you do this, Taher. You have ruined my life. My dream is a nightmare because of what you did. You have stolen everything I ever dreamed about. Now I am nothing. And you have shamed all of us. Mama and papa are crying because of you! They feel ashamed of what you did and what are doing.

TAHER  
(chuckles)  
Aahil don't be a silly boy. Put down the gun. Come on.

BASEL

You are an idiot. Look at you! What do you want? You think you scare us because you are holding a real gun like a big man.

Basel chuckles into the silence.

TAHER

Where did you get the money from to come here?

AAHIL

None of your soddin' business!

(pause)

I can't let you do this, Taher. I want to get married to Shazana. I had a future and now you messed it up! I looked up to you, my older brother. I thought that you were cool. But what you are doing is not cool, is it? It is sick.

TAHER

You can still get married to Shazana. We can go to her. I will take you to her.

AAHIL

After you kill everbody?

(pause)

No. I will not let you do it. I came here to stop you.

TAHER

Anyway, she does not love you.

AAHIL

What?

TAHER

She does not love you. I heard her on the phone to her friend talking about some infidel called Adam.

AAHIL

You are lying! You are lying!

Aahil frantically waves the gun at Taher and Basel.

TAHER

Put down the gun. We can sort this out together.

BASEL

Do as your brother tells you,  
before I lose my temper with you.

AAHIL

I am not afraid of you, Basel. You  
will die sooner or later. And you  
will die a horrible death.

BASEL

You mean like this lot.

Basel points to the MEN reticent on the sofa.

AAHIL

What? What do you mean?

Basel quickly takes out his gun and shoots all three Men in  
the head. Blood and pieces of flesh cover the walls.

Suddenly Aahil looks down at himself in horror as pieces of  
blood covered bone and flesh fall from his clothes.

Moments later Aahil looks up at Basel in despair and aims  
his gun at him.

Basel squeezes the trigger but the barrel is empty as a  
clicking from his gun repeats.

AAHIL

(crazed)

You bastard!!!

Aahil aims to shoot Basel but Taher intercepts and shoots  
Aahil twice in the chest. The force throws Aahil back as he  
falls.

Omar runs to the door but he is shot twice in the back by  
Taher. Omar falls as he slides against the door.

Taher then quickly goes to Aahil and holds him in his arms  
as blood trickles from Aahil's mouth.

Taher sobs as he looks up at the ceiling holding his brother  
tightly.

Basel searches the apartment for the Ricin.

TAHER

(to Aahil)

Why did you have to come here? I am  
so sorry. Please forgive him.  
Please forgive him. Oh my God,  
Aahil!

Basel returns clutching a large bag.

BASEL  
Quickly, Taher. We must get out of  
here. I have the Ricin. Come.  
Quickly. Let's go.

Taher slowly rises and looks back at Aahil as he lies dead  
on the floor.

TAHER  
(looks up)  
Please forgive him.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. ADAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Adam, Shazana and Asif are seated in the lounge.

ADAM  
I say we should call my father.

ASIF  
Adam, respect to you, yeah? But you  
don't know these people. If I were  
to tell even one single solitary  
person about this, they will kill  
everyone.

SHAZANA  
It's true, Adam.

ASIF  
I appreciate you wanting to help us  
but I can't let you get involved in  
family business.  
(pause)  
Anyway what's going on with you  
two?

Adam and Shazana anxiously look at one another.

SHAZANA  
What do you mean? We're just  
friends.

ASIF  
Oh come on guy's. I can see the way  
you are looking at one another.  
Don't take me for a fool. I don't  
care if you two are having

ASIF  
 something, but just don't take me  
 for an idiot, know what I mean?  
 (pause)  
 All this business, telling Adam the  
 family problems. You must think I'm  
 stupid, Shazana.

ADAM  
 OK. Look we are really fond of one  
 another, but we're not pushing it,  
 are we Shazana?

SHAZANA  
 (fearfully)  
 Please don't tell dad, Asif. He  
 will kill me for sure.

ASIF  
 What'd you think? D'you think I  
 want to hurt dad after all this?  
 What you two are doin' is your  
 business.  
 (pause)  
 Just don't go rubbing our faces in  
 it, that's all I'm sayin'.

ADAM  
 Thanks, Asif.

ASIF  
 Look, Adam you're nice guy. But be  
 careful. Me and Shazana are more  
 Westernised than some other Muslims  
 round here, know what I'm sayin'?

Short silence as Adam looks to Shazana and gently smiles.

SHAZANA  
 So what are we going to do about  
 Taher?

ASIF  
 I'm meeting him in the morning, by  
 the Grange.

SHAZANA  
 (shocked)  
 The Grange?

ADAM  
 What's that? What's the Grange?

ASIF

Never mind. Anyway, The Posse will be waiting for them. And you don't wanna be knowing the rest.

SHAZANA

Oh Asif. Please be careful. I don't want to be losing my only brother.

ASIF

Hm, hm. Just make sure you don't tell anyone.

SHAZANA

I will not, Asif. I promise.

CU. Asif's strained and fearful gaze.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Taher and Basel sit patiently waiting for Asif to leave the restaurant.

Taher's POV

Asif exiting the restaurant with two older EMPLOYEES.

Asif waves them off and walks a short distance to his parked car.

BACK TO SCENE

TAHER

OK, It's him. You stay here.

Basel tuts and hisses.

BASEL

Yeah, yeah.

EXT. STREET.

Asif is sat at the wheel of his car and turns the ignition. He is suddenly joined by Taher who taps loudly at the drivers window.

ASIF lets down his window and looks up at Taher.

ASIF

(agitated)

Look what is it, man?

TAHER

You remember about tomorrow, yeah?

ASIF

I won't forget.

TAHER

Good. Seven O clock...sharp. And don't be late, or-

Taher motions throat cutting.

ASIF

(nods head)

Hm, hm. Hm hm. Can I go home now? I mean I've got a big day tomorrow, haven't I?

TAHER

Wait. You fool with us and you die. You work with us and you live.

Asif drives off without saying a word.

Taher's POV

The vehicle moves on up the road.

INT. ADAM'S FLAT - NIGHT

Adam holds Shazana tightly in his arms as they stand in the middle of room.

She has been crying and her mascara has run down her soft cheeks. Suddenly she pulls back and looks up at him.

They stare for a moment looking into each others eyes. Their lips meet and they kiss passionately for a long moment.

She pulls away once more and looks up at him and smiles.

Shazana holds him tightly as she rests her head upon his shoulder.

Adam looks up to the ceiling. His emotions clearly evident whilst taken aback by the kiss.

ADAM

What are you going to do, Shazana?

SHAZANA

I don't know. I don't know.

ADAM

We can leave here, tonight.

SHAZANA

No.

ADAM

Why not?

SHAZANA

My family needs me. Asif needs me.

(pause)

What if they come here?

ADAM

Do you think they will?

SHAZANA

Oh I don't know. I just wish all this would just go away.

ADAM

Me too.

(pause)

I love you, Shazana. I want to protect you.

SHAZANA

(looks up)

Maybe you shouldn't love me.

ADAM

Do you love me? Be honest.

SHAZANA

Do you mean am I in love with you?

ADAM

Yes. Don't play games with me, I mean it. If you don't love me just tell me.

Shazana pulls him closer and kisses him again.

Moments later.

SHAZANA

Yes. Yes, I am in love you, Adam.

(pause)

But I don't think we will be able to be together.

(pause)  
Ever.

ADAM  
What if I convert?

SHAZANA  
You would do this for me?

ADAM  
Yes. I will do anything it takes to  
be with you. I want you.

SHAZANA  
Oh Adam, I love you. I love you so  
much. You are so kind and so soft  
and warm.

ADAM  
Thank you, Shazana. Thank you.

They hold each other tightly, with love.

DISSOLVE TO

SUPER. FOLLOWING MORNING

EXT. THE GRANGE ESTATE - 7 A.M

Asif is sat in his car as he waits for Taher and Basel to arrive. He shivers in anticipation as the engine ticks over.

Asif wears a green hooded duffle coat and sports a black woolly hat.

Moments later a black CAR pulls into the garages behind where Asif is stationed.

Asif's POV

The car pulling up behind him.

BACK TO SCENE

Asif exits his car and is approached by Taher and Basel.

Taher looks about the place as Basel goes to the boot and opens it up.

Asif stands shivering with hands in pockets.

TAHER

Good boy. You turned up.

ASIF

Hm hm. Hm hm. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

TAHER

So.

(short pause)

Open the boot then.

ASIF

Yeah, yeah.

Asif turns and nervously thumbles as he opens the boot of his car.

Basel clutches a bag and carries it to the Asif's boot. He carefully places the bag inside.

Asif stands, still with hands in pockets as Basel closes the boot down.

TAHER

OK. Good luck. We will be in touch after the weekend.

BASEL

Let's go.

Basel quickly walks back to the car.

TAHER

You will be honoured.

ASIF

Right. Hm hm. Yeah yeah.

Taher warmly hugs Asif as Basel turns the ignition and leans from the window.

BASEL

Taher, quickly come on.

Suddenly a gang of young ASIAN MEN appear from every angle.

From the GARAGE ROOFTOPS they attack Basel with BASEBALL BATS and KNIVES.

With one blow across the head Basel's car door opens and he is continually beaten to a pulp.

Asif has hold of Taher as they struggle on the ground, but somehow Taher manages to break free.

Taher climbs a wall and escapes.

Asifs lies on the ground with a bloodied face.

ASIF  
Get him!! Go after him!!

The Men make chase as Asif holds his lip upon rising up.

CUT TO

EXT. KHALAM'S HOUSE - MORNING

Taher, bruised and bedraggled hides behind a CAR opposite to the house.

Taher's POV

The street DOOR to Mr Khalam's house remains closed.

Moments later Asif's car is spotted coming down the road.

Asif exits the vehicle, looks up and down the street and then opens the door, closing it quickly behind him.

Adam's door suddenly opens and Adam appears in his dressing gown as he empties the rubbish into his wheelie bin.

BACK TO SCENE

Taher upon spotting Adam makes his move and quickly runs to stop the door closing.

Taher manages to get his foot into the gap.

Adam opens the door in horror as Taher forces him back inside with the gun pointed under Adam's chin.

INT. ADAM'S APARTMENT.

TAHER  
Do as I say and you might not die  
as painfully as my brother died.

Taher forces Adam up the stairs to his apartment.

Once in the main room, Taher releases his grip from Adam and forces him to sit down.

TAHER (CONT'D)  
Don't you move, understand?

ADAM

Yes. Yes.

TAHER

Good.

(pause)

So you are Adam, I guess?

ADAM

Yes.

TAHER

And you are doing shit with the girl who was to marry my kid brother?

ADAM

No. It's not like that. We haven't done anything.

TAHER

But you plan to, don't you?

ADAM

Look, what is this all about?

TAHER

It's about you and them, the Kham's.

ADAM

But I haven't done anything wrong.

TAHER

But you will if I give you the chance to, won't you?.

(pause)

My brother died for that girl, Shazana. He died to save her from you, because he loved her. You are just a worthless infidel like the rest of them. And my brother should never have died so you can take his wife from him whilst she is betraying him.

ADAM

Your brother died? Look-

TAHER

(thoughtfully)

-Yes. He died.

ADAM

I don't know what to say. I am  
sorry to hear that your brother  
lost his life.

TAHER

He never lost his life.

ADAM

Oh. Sorry.

TAHER

Shut up!

(pause)

I took his life in the name of  
Allah! He was a love stuck stupid  
boy!

CUT TO

INT. THE KHALAM'S - MORNING

Asif is in the kitchen washing his hands in the sink when he  
suddenly hears Taher's raised voice from Adam's apartment.

Asif looks up as his mobile phone rings. He answers.

ASIF

(excitedly)

Yeah yeah - Yeah yeah - Hm hm - Hm  
hm - Come quick - Taher, is here -  
I heard him - He is my neighbours  
flat, upstairs - Did you find  
Basel's gun-? Yeah, hurry - please  
hurry, man - Just hurry, and bring  
the gun.

Asif ends the call and stands on the table with his ear to  
the ceiling, listening.

INT. ADAM'S FLAT - CONT'D

Adam continues to be sat on the sofa, watchful as Taher  
nervously marches up and down speaking incoherently in  
mother tongue with gun in hand.

TAHER

(turns)

He was my kid brother! I don't know  
why he should have wanted to help  
the infidels with their  
imperialistic values while they

TAHER  
 invade our land! He could have died  
 for something much more worthwhile.  
 Instead he gave up his life for an  
 ungrateful girl who never even  
 fuckin' loved him! He should have  
 died for Martyrdom, not for a  
 traitor! She will die for this  
 also.

(shakes head)  
 Silly boy. Silly boy.

Taher stops in front of Adam and raises the gun to him, as  
 Adam lowers his head with his hands placed between his legs.

TAHER (CONT'D)  
 I am afraid it is time for you to  
 die. So get down on your knees  
 infidel.  
 (pause)  
 You see my brother would have been  
 able to marry his princess if you  
 had not interfered in his  
 business.  
 (pause)

And as you are the non believer out  
 of the two of us. It is you who has  
 to pay for Aahil's death. It would  
 only be justice that you die as  
 well.

Doorbell rings. Adam looks up in hope as Taher, panic  
 stricken goes to the door and locks it shut.

TAHER (CONT'D)  
 Who are you expecting?

ADAM  
 My dad.

TAHER  
 Your dad? Shit!

TAHER (CONT'D)  
 Why you did not say this before?

ADAM  
 I'm sorry but you never asked.

TAHER  
 OK. OK. I need to think.

Taher nervously paces the floor.

Door bell.

TAHER (CONT'D)

OK. We go together. Come. Get up.

Adam rises and leads the way down the stairs to the door.

INTER CUT

INT - EXT. ADAMS DOOR.

Taher forces the gun into Adam's back.

Adam opens the door to Asif who stands positioned and pointing a gun at his face.

ADAM

(mortified)

Asif, no!!

ASIF

(definitely)

Adam, get down!

Adam ducks as Asif fires the gun at point blank range, but two gun shots are heard simultaneously.

Adam falls down and lies still on the floor as Taher falls backwards, his face covered in blood.

Asif screams as he moves forward continuing to fire the gun whilst stepping over Adam's lame body.

ASIF

Bastard!! Bastard!! bastard!!

Asif fires a final two shots into Taher as he lies slumped upon the stairs bullet ridden.

Asif quickly goes to Adam realising he has been shot. He listens closely for a heart beat.

ASIF

Oh my god. Oh my god. You're still alive. Don't die on me, man. Please don't die on me, Adam. Come on man you can do it. Do it for Shazana, please, man.

Asif struggles to lift up Adam's limp body then carries him towards his car.

Shazana, Fatimah and Nosheen and Mrs Khalam appear from inside the house.

Shazana quickly realises something is seriously wrong as she goes to Asif.

Mrs Khalam peers inside Adam's door and puts her hands to her mouth in shock as she spots the dead body lying on the stairs.

Mrs Khalam ushers Fatimah and Nosheen back inside the house.

Shazana wipes the tears from her eyes as she struggles to grab Adam's arm as Asif quickly moves to the car.

SHAZANA

(hysterically)

Adam! Adam please answer me!

(to Asif)

What did you do to him! What have you done to him! Answer me! Answer me you bloody bastard!

ASIF

Quickly, Shazana! Open the door! Quickly! Help me get him inside the car.

SHAZANA

Why did you do this? We did nothing!

Asif, preoccupied lies Adam on the back seat and then grabs Shazana by the shoulders.

ASIF

Listen to me! Listen to me! Now you must listen! I never shot him! Taher shot him! He is in Adam's flat! I shot him dead. He tried to kill me but Adam was in the way, right?

(pause)

Right? You understand?

Shazana nods her head in shock.

ASIF (CONT'D)

Now go and call the police. Tell them to come. I am taking Adam to the hospital. I will come straight back.

Shazana continues to nod her head.

ASIF  
Now go! Go quickly!

Shazana runs inside the house as Asif turns the engine and speeds off down the street.

FADE TO

MONTAGE.

Adam being rushed to the operating theatre upon a trolley bed whilst a NURSE administers OXYGEN.

The POLICE gather outside the crime scene as two AMBULANCE MEN carry the dead body of Taher into the back of a waiting ambulance.

Asif returns to the street in his car. He exits the vehicle as two DETECTIVES stand waiting to question him.

Asif stands exhausted and collapses in the middle of the street.

Mr Khalam and Halima exiting the hospital go to a waiting taxi.

Adam being administered CPR upon a trolley bed with a CRASH TEAM around him.

END MONTAGE

SUPER. TWO WEEKS LATER

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

Adam's FAMILY and FRIENDS stand around the GRAVE in mourning. The sobs palpable as the heavy rain pours down.

Adam's MOTHER is held up by his distraught FATHER.

CU. Shazana and Asif stand behind Adam's immediate Family, obscured and incongruous. Shazana dressed in a BLACK VALE appears heartbroken as she wipes the tears from her eyes.

PRIEST  
(motions)  
Ashes to Ashes. Dust to Dust.

Suddenly Shazana makes herself seen as she runs to the grave and screams.

Adam's family and friends look on with mortification and murmurs of discontent.

SHAZANA

Adam!! I love you, Adam!!  
(breaks down and sobs)  
Oh Adam. Please!!

Asif lifts her up and gently moves her away as the congregation warmly acknowledge.

MONTAGE

Asif leading the heartbroken Shazana away from the cemetery.

Adam's family standing around the grave with their umbrellas opened as the priest prays for his soul.

FADE TO BLACK