

ABDULLAH SMITH

Written by

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PITCH BLACK. The opening to the popular Arabic eighties song, Warda - "batwanis Beek" PLAYS for few moments before we

FADE IN:

EXT. SKY -- DAY

BRIGHT, resembling a baby's BLUE eyes.

EXT. PASTURE - MOVING -- DAY

The greenest grass. Looking at it, you would think it's artificial. But it's real, it's Vermont.

ABDULLAH

(O.S.)

Do we have to listen to
a stupid Arabic song?

ABBAS

(O.S.)

(native English)

Close your ears.

INT. / EXT. ABBAS CAR -- DAY

ABDULLAH, 9, turns his head away from looking at the cows. He moans.

ABDULLAH

This song is stupid.

36 year old ABBAS, while Arab, he has a mustache like a Texan. Long hair fails to cover his ears which stick out.

ABBAS

Stupid? Stupid? This - This is
Warda.

ABDULLAH

Michael Jackson is better.

ABBAS

He is not son so beat it.

He laughs one of those laughs that make you laugh even if you don't get his sense of humor.

ABBAS CONT'D

When you grow up, you're going to
have to decide son -- do you pick
your song or pick your nose?

Abbas wife's HIND, curly red hair, 29, shoots her husband a
look. Elegant, she always speaks as if she were raised an
Aristocratic but minus the snobbery.

HIND

(*Arabic, Broken English)
Do not tell him that, right.

*Writer's note - as not to serve as a distraction, it will
not be listed when the characters speak Arabic except when
needed. The majority will be in English. This will be
finalized in the shooting script with the director.

INT/EXT. MINIVAN - VERMONT INTERSTATE - 1985 -- DAY

The gunmetal blue Chrysler Voyager cruises. Two or three
vehicles pass.

In the backseat with Abdullah, strapped, books in hand, with
RASHIED (10) who wears a retainer and SHAKER, chubby, (6).

Abdullah looks over at one of the cars passing them; inside
are TWO ELDERLY WOMEN.

ABDULLAH

Dad, why are you driving
so slow?

INT/EXT. MINIVAN -- DAY

Abbas is too busy quietly singing along with Warda. If you
listen, you'll note that he's actually quite good.

ABDULLAH

Dad?

ABBAS

I'm going the speed limit, mister
backseat driver.

He stops singing. Looks up to the rearview mirror and talks
to Abdullah.

ABBAS (CONT'D)

Wait. Why are you asking me if I'm
driving slow, do you have to go to
the --

ABDULLAH

No. No.

The SOUND of CARS PASSING BY. The Arabic eighties Warda song, translated to "I cherish your company when you are with me," continues.

Abdullah looks up from the seat, watches the small inaudible chat in Arabic between Abbas and Hind.

Next, he looks around: Rashied reads a book three times his age. Shaker is occupied with his Cabbage Patch kid.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)

Dad?

Abbas sneezes and his wife, startled, bumps her head.

ABBAS

(O.S.)

Yes, Abdullah

ABDULLAH

I can't hold it anymore.

ABBAS

I knew it! I knew it!

HIND

Abbas!

ABBAS

We all went at McDonald's after eating McDonald's, why didn't you?

In his rearview mirror, he can see Abdullah looking sheepish.

HIND

Abbas!

ABBAS

I chose McDonalds because it gives you the McDoodies.

SHAKER

Ha! McDoodie!

HIND

The bathroom at Magadonaldz is dirty, right.

ABDULLAH

It's McDonalds, Mom.

HIND

What?

ABDULLAH

You said Magadonaldz.

RASHID

Don't make fun of Mom.

HIND smiles, then:

ABBAS

Abdullah's right Hind, you always add an extra "a."

HIND

Oh Abbas. Just stob anywhere.

ABBAS

But we have to get to the airport.

He looks up at the rearview mirror and talks to Abdullah.

HIND

My brother is not due to land for another hour or so.

ABBAS

Number one Abdullah? Can it wait?

The SOUND of a FART.

Shaker explodes with laughter. Abbas' eyes close, in disgrace.

Rashid and Shaker are in hysterics and start covering their nose and fanning the backseat.

ABDULLAH

Number two, Dad.

More laughter.

RASHID

Maintenance to the backseat of mom's Car. Bring mop, toilet paper and clean underwear.

SHAKER

Doodie.

ABBAS

Rashid! Shaker!

Shaker uses his hands and makes farting noises.

HIND

Shaker. You have better manners than that. Wait till your older brother finishes farting first, right.

(to Abbas)

Let him out so he can go.

SHAKER

And take the smell with him.

ABBAS

Hind, we're going to lose time if I stop.

Hind looks at him as if to ask, "So?"

ABBAS (CONT'D)

Let him, I don't know -- do it on himself.

HIND

Shaker! Abbas! I clean those boys underwear. Because you never taught them to wipe properly.

ABDULLAH

Dad. Please.

He winces and then: FART. More laughter from Shaker.

HIND

(whispering)

You never taught yourself properly between us, right?

ABBAS

Look, if he had to pee, I could stop anywhere. But he has to take a crap.

The boys LAUGH.

SHAKER

Our pap said crap.

He claps his hand.

SHAKER (CONT'D)

Clap...if you have to crap...

HIND

Abbas! Don't use that language when a lady's sitting. Next to you. Use the word boob.

They laugh harder.

SHAKER

Mommy said boob.

He talks to his kids through the rearview mirror.

ABBAS

Not boob, Shaker. Poop, She meant poop.

(to HIND)

It's a "p", not a "b."

Poop.

HIND

Boob.

SHAKER

(singing)

Boobies. Doodies. Clap if you got to crap said our pap.

Shaker claps his hands in front Abdullah's face.

ABBAS

Poop. "P." "P."

HIND

For the love of God, you're going to give me the crabs.

ABBAS

Don't yell! I can't stob anywhere. Stop anywhere to let the poy, boob. Let the boy poop.

The minivan pulls over to the side.

We notice the Vermont license plates -- the name of the mother, HIND, falling just under the Green Mountain state.

EXT. STRAWBERRY FIELD - 1985 -- DAY

It's the season. Juicy. Ripe. Ready for the season.

Title Cards appear, OUTSKIRTS OF VERMONT. 1985.

Fade up, "Strawberry Fields Forever" by The Beatles

We move past patches until we come to a pair of BOY'S LEGS, socks up to his knees. Shorts drop to his ankles, socks up.

STRAWBERRY PICKER looks over and does a double take to find:

Abdullah is taking a dump on the beautiful strawberries. Nearby, a WOMAN STRAWBERRY PICKER SCREAMS.

WOMAN STRAWBERRY PICKER
What do you think you're doing!?

SHAKER
He's taking a crap!

His Mom, Dad and brothers watch him.

ABBAS
Abdullah! Hurry up.

The song is loud now as Abdullah pulls his underwear and shorts up and runs.

The oversized man chases him to the minivan. As he runs, the film's title, "Abdullah Smith" appears over him. The minivan's sliding door opens. Quick stop. He gets in the car.

EXT. JFK AIRPORT -- DAY

Planes touch down and take off.

ABBAS
(O.S.)
Hind, you can't be... loud... when
you see Motassem.

INT. JFK AIRPORT - ARRIVALS - DAY -- 1985

ABDULLAH
Yeah mom.

RASHID
For real mom.

SHAKER
Yeah mom. It's so -

ABDULLAH/RASHID/SHAKER
Embarrassing.

INT. JFK AIRPORT - ARRIVALS -- DAY

Hind, Abbas, Abdullah, Rashied and Shaker wait around.

HIND

Enough. Shame on you. I haven't seen my brother in six years and you don't want me to be happy?

ABBAS

No one is telling you that, dear.

ABBAS (CONT'D)

Just don't be...loud. When I get nervous or excited, I remember what I read in my hand reflexology book. I take my thumb and push it into the palm of my hand. I say "palm" each time I squeeze to remind me.

He demonstrates.

ABBAS (CONT'D)

(pressing thumb against palm)

Palm. Palm. Palm.

Hind is the only one focusing on the passengers coming out of the "Arrivals" section.

Abbas, Abdullah, Rashid and Shaker stare at Hind.

From their reaction, we can tell that Motassem comes out.

Hind starts to get giddy, they latch on to her.

Remembering what Abbas told her, she presses her right thumb into the palm of her left hand.

She still tries to hold it in, as if she has to go to the bathroom. But with class.

HIND

Palm. Palm.

ABBAS

Good Hind. Good Hind.

Tears stream down her face.

MOTASSEM is a dark, extremely attractive MIDDLE EASTERN. He's got the smile and perfect teeth. Early 20's, even his Afro-style hair has attitude. He is still not near them.

HIND
 (louder)
 Palm. Palm.

She loses the "p" and replaces it with a "b."

HIND (CONT'D)
 (little louder)
 Balm. Balm.

But the "l" is not coming out of her mouth so it sounds like she's actually saying, yep you guessed it, "bomb."

The kids hear it before Abbas.

ABDULLAH/RASHID/SHAKER
 Mom! Be quiet! Stop! Please!

HIND
 Balm! Balm! Balm!

Then Abbas tries to quiet her.

ABBAS
 Hind, that's going to get us into
 trouble.

Abbas smiles at PASSERBYS staring.

ABBAS/ABDULLAH/RASHIED/SHAKER
 Stop saying that, Hind/mom. It's
 wrong. Mom.

Too late, she is yelling it now as she hugs Motassem.

HIND
 Bomb! Bomb! Bomb!

MOTASSEM
 (to his family)
 (broken english)
 Welcome to America Motassem!

EXT. CCTV

Airport Security and New York's finest run up to them,
 surround the Arab family with guns.

CUT TO:

INT. JFK AIRPORT - SECURITY OFFICE -- 1985

Abbas, Hind, Motassem, Rashid, Abdullah and Shaker sit on a metal bench guarded by TWO POLICE OFFICERS.

TITLE CARD - 3 HOURS LATER.

An 82 year old police officer, wearing an L.A. Lakers hat enters.

COOL POLICE OFFICER

You and your family are free to go, Mr. Ibrahim. Which is good so I can get home to mine. But you have to be careful what you say and don't say at an airport. My name's Jack.

ABBAS/MOTASSEM/HIND/RASHIED/ABDULLAH/S
HAKER

Hi Jack!

The cool police officer reacts.

COOL POLICE OFFICER

That being one of the things you ain't supposed to say at an airport. You don't want us to handcuff you, do ya?

They shake their head in unison.

INT./EXT. HIND'S MINIVAN -- NIGHT

Motassem sits in the back with his nephews Rashid, Abdullah and Shaker.

MOTASSEM

Everyone misses you my sister and -

Murray Head's "One Night in Bangkok" comes on the radio.

He leans in and cranks the volume up.

Motassem looks around at the sights. He lights a cigarette.

EXT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

The blue minivan pulls in and parks to next some Harley's.

INT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT -- NIGHT

Motassem is like a kid on Christmas. Girls check him out. The Waitress comes over and he looks at her chest.

MOTASSEM
What's your name?

WAITRESS
(flirtatious)
Carrie so very.

MOTASSEM
So very what?

She leans in to whisper to Motassem and her breasts lean in, too.

SHAKER
So very what?

Abbas's mouth drops. Rashid reads. Shaker plays with his cabbage patch kid and Hind notices that Abdullah is at eye level with Carrie's chest.

ABDULLAH
Very.

Hind covers her son's eyes.

ABBAS
Excuse me, Miss Carrie so very.

His eyes make to her breasts until Hind notices, so Abbas looks at Hind's chest.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
I like yours.

CARRIE
(lost in Motassem's eyes)
(singing; forgetting
herself)
*I could just feast on all the men
from the Middle East. Be it
molluscs or mammals, I'd be content
on a horse or two camels.*

The tension is thick.

HIND
Abbas, do something, right.

ABBAS
What are your specials today?

CARRIE
Would you like to see the kitchen?

Motassem nods.

He gets up and follows her to the kitchen and just before they disappear, she brings her lips to him.

HIND
Right. Who's horny?

ABBAS
Hungry.

HIND
Yes, that too.

INT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE - BOYS ROOM - NIGHT -- 1985

Rashid and Shaker are changing into their pajamas when Abdullah comes in holding a video camera.

RASHIED
Get that camera out.

SHAKER
I want to play with it.

ABDULLAH
No way. You'll break it. Besides
Khalo Motassem got it for me.

Unbeknownst to them, they are in their underwear when a TEENAGE GIRL comes to the window. Rashid and Shaker notice her, and scream. They run out. Abdullah captures it all on film, then zooms in close to the teenage girl.

He gives her a thumb's up and she smiles.

INT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE -- DAY

Abdullah is filming dough. He moves the camera up to find Hind is making taboun. A popular Arabic song plays.

MOTASSEM
(O.S.)
What do you think?

Abdullah turns the camera on Motassem, wearing a uniform with the emblem "P."

HIND

You got the job then, right.

Motassem nods.

MOTASSEM

Where's Abu Rashid?

ABDULLAH

He took Rashid and Shaker to Arabic.

MOTASSEM

And why don't you go?

Abdullah sticks out his tongue.

Something outside the window catches Motassem's eye and the Arabic song ends and is replaced with: Assi El Helani - Behebik w Bghar, "I love you and I am jealous"

A red 1976 Mustang pulls up, Abbas, shirt and tie, is behind the wheel.

It's gorgeous.

Abbas comes in and notices the uniform. Says something but it's inaudible because Motassem is looking at his car.

ABBAS

What's with the uniform?

Abbas sees him looking.

Motassem glances at Abbas, then the car, then to his sister.

Abbas wants to shake his head but Hind gives him the look which is universal no matter what race, religion you belong to.

CUT TO:

Lyrics to Assi El Helani - Behebik w Bghar begins.
We hear the SOUND of a PISSED OFF POLICE SIREN wailing.

INT./EXT. RED 1976 MUSTANG -- AFTERNOON

MOTASSEM, In the driver's seat. Cigarette dangling from his mouth, he is not concerned with the ashes falling on him as he is with keeping a close eye on his car mirrors. He looks at the side mirror which reveals

a police cruiser coming up -- fast. As Assi sings "I love you and I am jealous"

Motassem looks over to see his brother in law also checking the distance of the cop.

POLICE OFFICER

(O.S.)

Pull over! Pull over!

ABBAS

Pull over! Pull over!

In the backseat,

HIND

Slow down Motassem, will you?

Abdullah is jumping up and down, excited at the chase.

ABDULLAH

Go faster, Khalo (Uncle) Motassem.

The red flashing lights of the 1980's police cruiser reflects off of the Arab boy's curious and gentle face as he puts both films with his video camera and takes a peek over the seat at the cop from the back window, which we see from the pov of the camera. His mother moves him away.

HIND

It's best if you sit down Abdullah, right? Abbas? Berhaps if you switch seats with Motassem.

ABBAS

And how Hind?

MOTASSEM

Reminds me of the Indian who returned from being months away from home to find his wife pregnant. She puts up his hand and says, 'How' and he says, not how, who?

Motassem laughs and Hind cries.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)
 It'll be okay my sister.
 We'll just tell them we're
 terrorists.

ABBAS
 Tourists.

HIND lightly slaps the back of Abbas's neck.

HIND
 It's your fault Abbas. You just had
 to give Motassem the keys.

ABBAS
 Gave? You -- told me to.

HIND
 How come when I tell you something
important, you don't listen?

ABDULLAH
 Are we going to jail?

HIND
 (nodding)
 Unless we - unless I go to God
 first. Give him your driver's
 license, Abbas.

ABDULLAH
 The big house! Cool! It'll be just
 like that movie Attica.

HIND shoots him a look, as she gets an idea.

EXT. VERMONT HIGHWAY -- DAY

The Mustang is pulled over to the side of the road. The right
 turn signal still clicking back and forth. The green license
 plates, Vermont, in full view.

TITLE: BURLINGTON, VERMONT 1989

The police cruiser is at the car bumper, kissing the red
 horse's tail.

The AFRICAN AMERICAN POLICE OFFICER makes some notes and
 speaks inaudibly into the CB UNIT. He gets out and walks with
 determination to the driver's side.

The road is deserted except for the two vehicles and dead
 carcass that hasn't been there too long.

The trees on the left and right side seem like God's hands, shielding them from rain that falls gently atop the vehicle's roof.

Motassem smiles at the cop who signals for him to roll down the window. After reading the name tag, "JEREMY THADDEUS," Motassem does as he is told.

JEREMY THADDEUS

License and -

He doesn't finish the familiar phrase because IMMEDIATELY, we hear the SOUND of 9 year old Abdullah VOMITING.

The cop looks in the back to see the nine year old boy on the floor of the backseat, "throwing up." HIND is holding him.

HIND

Yes, son. You'll feel better. Let it all out. I told you not to but mustard on your Strawberry Mcflurry, right.

We know the truth about the vomitting however, because Abdullah's mouth is turned away from the cop, who can be seen in the driver's window looking in the backseat due to the low angle.

JEREMY THADDEUS

Is your son -

MOTASSEM

(quick)
Nephew.

ABBAS

(quick)
He's my son. Motassem is my cousin.

MOTASSEM

(quick)
Abbas is my brother in law.

JEREMY THADDEUS

-Okay?

Motassem shakes his head no.

HIND

Hurry up officer if you'll please.
My son is sick. If you need to write a ticket, do so.

Abbas' eyes go wide.

JEREMY THADDEUS
You're not from around here, are
you?

ABBAS
No. My brother in law -

HIND
My brother -

ABBAS
-is a visiting student from
overseas.

MOTASSEM
That's right officer, I'm a
terrorist.

ABBAS
Tourist-

MOTASSEM
-Tourist.

Abdullah keeps "throwing up" as the cop decides what to do
next.

JEREMY THADDEUS
Look pal. You were speeding.
But I'm willing to let you off
with a warning because your sick
nephew back there.

ABBAS/MOTASSEM
Thank you!

HIND
Thank you!

Abdullah lifts his head up to open his mouth but
as she did with her husband, Hind lightly slaps the back of
his neck. Abdullah resumes "throwing up" or throwing up as
Hind would say it.

MOTASSEM
God cuss America.

ABBAS
Bless-

The police officer walks away.

MOTASSEM
 (yelling out to him)
 -Bless America. Bless it real good.
 Know what I mean, nigger?

Abbas closes his eyes. The cop stops and turns around.

JEREMY THADDEUS
 What was that?

Motassem goes to repeat it but Abbas covers his mouth to speak

ABBAS
 He meant to say you have a nice
 figure -

The officer puts up his hand.

MOTASSEM
 You're black so you must play
 basketball.

OFFICER JEREMY THADDEUS
 Keep going and I'll make sure you
 wish you were back in the desert
 milking camels.

MOTASSEM
 Like yo momma.

CUT TO:

INT. MUSTANG

They watch as he gets back into his car, pulls on his left turn signal and pulls away.

Abbas puts the ticket in the glovebox.

EXT. PARETTI COLLEGE - CAFETERIA -- DAY

It's a little larger than a community college. The red mustang pulls up to the curb and Motassem gets out.

MOTASSEM
 More good times,
 eh Abu Rashied?

Abbas, relieved, gets in the driver's seat. His wife pushes the seat forward of the mustang, gets out and sits next to her husband.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)

Abdullah, come with me.
I'll make you a hamburger.

Abdullah smiles and looks at his dad for the okay.
Reluctantly, Abbas approves his son's request.

ABBAS

Go ahead, we have to go pick up
your brothers.

COLLEGE GIRLS cannot help but check out Motassem who
acknowledges them via flirting with them.

HIND

Be careful walking home. Those
woods can be scary, right?

Abdullah nods.

To the dismay of his sister, as they drive away, ONE COLLEGE
GIRL, wearing an outfit that leaves nothing to the
imagination writes her phone number with a black marker on
her -- white bra strap. Abdullah looks on in awe at his
hero.

INT. PARETTI COLLEGE CAFETERIA -- DAY

Typically crowded. Diverse crowd. African-Americans,
Caucasian, foreigners.

There are no empty tables so Motassem seats Abdullah next to
a bunch of WANNABE ROCK STARS, writing lyrics to a song.

MOTASSEM

Sit here.
I'll bring out the food.

Abdullah watches as Motassem rushes behind the register, then
into the back, puts on an apron and assumes his duties as a
fry cook until he notices he's being watched by the Keith
Richards worshippers. He slides under the table.

INT. PARETTI COLLEGE CAFETERIA -- DAY

Abdullah is eating his food from under the table where he
sees a bunch of nuns.

He spots his Uncle Motassem flirting with a super sexy
AFRICAN-AMERICAN college student. LYNETTE watches him as he
smokes his cigarette quickly.

MOTASSEM

I smoke fast, Lynette, I know. But my people don't have a middle ground. I guess that's why we're from the Middle East.

He grins.

Her eyes tell him a million times, "I need to fuck you." Then she realizes he has said something humorous and laughs even though she doesn't necessarily think the joke's a funny one or get it.

LYNETTE

Yeah Motassem, but I hope you don't do everything fast.

ABDULLAH

Bye Khalo Motassem. Thanks.

MOTASSEM

Be careful buddy, okay?

Abdullah, nods, leaves the cafeteria.

EXT. PARETTI COLLEGE CAMPUS -- DAY

This academic institution has a lot of open space. Abdullah walks over a bridge, spitting in the small pond below. He walks passed a small lake and a gazebo where a COUPLE make out. Next to it is a forest. Abdullah gets onto a path that leads into the woods.

INT. WOODS/ NEAR PARETTI COLLEGE -- DAY

A few yards before the clearing, he comes onto an area where he discovers an odd plant.

Odd indeed - to his naiveté, it's a bunch of Marijuana joints on a small tree.

ABDULLAH

Mom's going to love this.

He picks it up and carries it out of the clearing, where there is a tree house on his right and a ranch home ahead.

From it, we can make out Rashied and Shaker.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)

Guys, look what I found.

Shaker carefully climbs down the tree house. Rashied jumps. He checks out the plant.

SHAKER

Cool!

RASHIED

It looks like a cigarette tree.

The red mustang, that was driven earlier, is in the driveway of the blue ranch home, alongside Hind's minivan.

Hind, who is working in her garden, watches, as her three sons approach her holding the 'special tree.'

HIND

What do you got there my children?

RASHIED

Abdullah found it in the woods.

ABDULLAH

It's for you, mom.

SHAKER

Yeah, from all of us.

ABDULLAH

But I found it.

HIND

That is nice, now, right.

The boys are so proud.

HIND (CONT'D)

I like it so much I'm going to give it to Ann.

RASHIED

Mrs. Hamlin will know the name of it?

HIND

She will, Shoo-shoo. She's a horticulturist.

They look at her confused. We are, too.

HIND (CONT'D)

An expert on plants, silly.

EXT. HAMLIN RESIDENCE -- LATE AFTERNOON

Hind and her three sons cross the street from their house, Abdullah proudly holding the plant which has a ribbon.

The door opens and it's MRS. HAMLIN, 40's, glasses.

Mrs. Hamlin's eyes drop to the plant which causes her mouth to drop in horror.

MRS. HAMLIN
Hind! Where on earth
did you find that?

HIND
(smiling)
Abdullah found it behind our home
in the woods. I knew you'd like it.

Mrs. Hamlin is speechless.

HIND CONT'D
I liked it so much I wanted
to give it to you.

SHAKER
Because your 'cunt needs to rest.'

MRS. HAMLIN
Excuse me?

HIND
(proud)
I taught them the word for expert
on blants. But it's horticulturist
Shaker. Say it with me, boys.
Right.

ABDULLAH/RASHIED/SHAKER/HIND
Hor-ta-cunt-urist.

Mrs. Hamlin covers her mouth and thinks for a moment.

MRS. HAMLIN
(thinks for a moment)
Horticulturist.

ABDULLAH
A whore-

MRS. HAMLIN
Yes. Yes. Well. Thank you.
It's very thoughtful to give
me marijuana.

HIND

Japanese? (to the boys) And the founder is Mara of the Wana family.

She smells it...and she... likes it.

RASHIED

Mom! Marijuana is a drug.

She playfully slaps him on the back of the neck.

HIND

I know that Shoo-shoo. Now go and shoo shoo. But don't come back without some hummus and falafel that'll probably make me boob.

SHAKER

Say no to drugs! Macgruff the crime dog says woof! Woof!

MRS. HAMLIN

Yes Shaker. Hind, are you okay?

Her eyes are sparkling. She pats Shaker on the head.

HIND

Good boy. I think... we'll keep the blant, Ann.

After a brief struggle for the plant, Mrs. Hamlin successfully takes it out of her neighbor's hands.

MRS. HAMLIN

No one is keeping this. We have to call the police to take it.

ABDULLAH

Are they whores and cunts too?

Off Mrs. Hamlin's stunned look.

EXT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE - KITCHEN -- EVENING

It's dinner time. The food is the popular Mediterranean cuisine of stuffed grape leaves, which the family is eating and enjoying. All except for Abdullah.

Abbas notices.

ABDULLAH

Can we have a dinner where the food
is something other than Arabic
food?

Hind gasps. The family looks at him.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)

What? This is America.

Abbas shakes his head.

ABBAS

Outside that door, you'll find
America.

They resume eating.

HIND

Are you studying Motassem?

Motassem nods.

Abbas shakes his head.

ABBAS

Not enough. He's too busy.

The door bell rings.

MOTASSEM

That's my date.

Hind chokes.

RASHIED

Dad, I thought Khalo Motassem
didn't go on dates anymore.

ABBAS

He doesn't. Motassem?

He follows him to the door.

ABBAS (CONT'D)

How many times have I told you not
to mention dating in front of the
boys?

Abdullah leans from the kitchen table to watch.

MOTASSEM

I'm going to dump her after we...
Got a twenty?

Abbas reluctantly reaches into his wallet and pulls out a twenty dollar bill. Abdullah nods his head.

He returns to the kitchen table as Hind uses a long spoon to put him more food.

Abdullah looks at his dad.

ABDULLAH
Can we order a pepperoni pizza?

Hind coughs again.

ABBAS
You're going to hurt your mother's feelings.

HIND
And in hell, you can have the big you ate as a bet.

SHAKER
We don't eat pepperoni.

ABDULLAH
Pineapple and ham then?

Hind taps him on the head.

ABBAS
No more movies unless you start going to Arabic school.

ABDULLAH
But I don't want to learn Arabic, Dad. It's stupid.

Rashied and Shaker have heard this argument before.

ABBAS
Stupid? It's our language.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - CONCESSION STAND -- DAY

Abdullah, wearing Green Bay Packers baseball cap, buys popcorn and a soft drink.

ABDULLAH (O.S.)
I speak English.

HIND (O.S.)
Shaker is six and he goes to Arabic school.

INT. MOVIE THEATER - LOBBY -- DAY

He checks out the movie posters.

ABDULLAH (O.S.)
I'm never going to need it.

ABBAS (O.S.)
What if you go overseas for a
visit? Or to live -

INT. MOVIE THEATER - SCREENING ROOM -- DAY

Abdullah walks in to the nearly empty room, goes to the middle row and sits.

ABDULLAH(O.S.)
I'll never go back there.

INT. THE BOY'S BEDROOM -- DAY

Shaker and Rashied are putting their books with Arabic writing in their bag.

SHAKER
Amour is cute, right.

Abdullah stands at the doorway, his brothers not noticing him.

RASHID
But she is *jamila*. Beautiful.

Shaker nods his head.

ABDULLAH
Who you guys talking about?

Rashid and Shaker finish.

RASHIED
Why do you care? What movie are you seeing today?

ABDULLAH
Back to the Future.

SHAKER
Again?

Rashid and Shaker leave.

Abdullah thinks for a moment.

HIND (O.S.)
Rashid. Shaker. Yalla (Let's go).

He dives under his bunk bed and gets a notebook and a pen.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER -- DAY

Small classroom. Nine students, foreigners included. More male, then female. All are busy writing and listening. But Abdullah can't stop staring at the teacher:

MISS SANABEL, 20's, attractive Arab girl. No veil. She speaks with a Syrian accent.

She is reviewing the alphabet with them.

MISS SANABEL
Abdullah? Can you answer me?

He didn't hear the question.

ABDULLAH
(stuttering)
Can you repeat the question?

MISS SANABEL
(imitating his stutter)
Yes, I can re-repeat the question.

Laughter.

INT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE - BOYS ROOM -- NIGHT

Abdullah is trying to write his name in Arabic. Next to it, in Arabic, he writes Sanabel. He draws a heart around it. His brothers come in and he quickly puts the paper in his jeans pocket.

ABBAS
Pajamas guys if you want to watch
"Unsolved Mysteries."

The boys start changing in their pajamas.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
Abdullah I am very happy you're
taking Arabic.

SHAKER

Arn't you happy I'm taking it too,
dad?

Abbas nods. The boys turn off the lights. A moment. The light comes back on. It's Hind. She enters with a laundry basket and picks up the boys clothes -- in particular Abdullah's jeans. She turns off the bedroom light.

INT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE - FAMILY ROOM -- LATER THAT NIGHT

Abbas, Hind, Motassem, Rashied, Abdullah and Shaker stare into the camera lens.

ROBERT STACK (O.S.)

Join me next week for another
episode of Unsolved Mysteries.

INSERT TV

Archive -- Closing credits to Unsolved Mysteries.

Motassem looks at Abdullah who seems a bit shaken up. He takes out a one hundred dollar bill.

The boys gasp.

RASHIED

That's real?

ABBAS

Is that mine?

MOTASSEM

No. I'll give you a hundred dollars
Abdullah if you take this and tape
it on the tree stump in the back of
the house.

RASHID

I'll do it.

MOTASSEM

No. Just Abdullah.

RASHID

Why just Abdullah?

ABBAS

Give it to me I'll do it.

HIND

No, brother. I'll do it.

RASHIED
Me, Khalo, me.

MOTASSEM
Abdullah.

Abdullah stands up but then sits back down.

SHAKER
Can I do it?

Everyone laughs.

MOTASSEM
Shaker wants to do it.
You can't?

ABDULLAH
We, uh, don't have scotch tape.

Motassem puts the tape in his face and Abdullah slowly takes both.

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE VERMONT -- DAY (1985)

A maple tree blows. The back door opens.

Abdullah emerges and takes a step towards the tree stump, looking up:

The moon's glow shows his fear.

He takes a second step but freezes. He can't do it. Worse, he cannot turn around. He looks at the backdoor, which seems far now.

He thinks he sees something moving in the woods, which is their backyard.

Just then, Motassem jumps down from the tree house wearing a the Jason mask.

Abdullah YELLS. They are followed by the SOUND of consecutive farts in a row.

He goes back into the house screaming.

EXT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE -- DAY

Abbas, wearing white red shorts and white shirt mows the lawn. The mailman stuffs mail into the mail box.

HIND
Yalla boys. Arabic.

INT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE -- DAY

Abdullah runs down the stairs and is out first.

Rashied and Shaker follow.

Hind is about to leave when the phone RINGS. She comes back to answer it.

HIND
Hello? beace be on to you,too. Oh.
When will there be class? We'll
expect your call soon, then. Thank
you.

She hangs up the phone.

HIND (CONT'D)
Boys!

EXT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE -- DAY

Hind goes to them.

ABDULLAH/RASHID/SHAKER
Yeah. Mom. What is it?

HIND
No Arabic class today, right.

Abdullah goes up the stairs discouraged.

HIND (CONT'D)
Abdullah?

He comes back down.

ABDULLAH
Yeah, mom?

She pulls a chair for him.

HIND
How are you?

He nods his head.

HIND (CONT'D)
 What do you like most about the
 Arabic class?

Abdullah doesn't know what she means but we do.

ABDULLAH
 That I am learning my language.

Her eyes widen. My?

HIND
 "My?" Good. What else?

He shrugs his shoulders.

HIND (CONT'D)
 I washed your clothes the other
 day.

Abdullah looks as if to say, "So?"

She places the washed paper on the kitchen table. Opening it, you can still make out the heart although it's been washed. His name and hers. Silence. She takes out another one! This one in English. Silence. She takes out a third, large "A + S = heart shape."

HIND (CONT'D)
 Since you started butting things in
 your bocket, you've never forgotten
 to take them out.

Embarrassed, Abdullah gets tense when Abbas comes in, sweating.

ABBAS
 The grass only grows longer when I
 have to cut it.

Abdullah is apprehensive. Hind throws a small towel over the papers to cover them.

Abbas drinks a glass of water. Silence.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
 What is it?

Hind shakes her head.

HIND
 No Arabic today. Abdullah is
 discouraged.

Abbas nods although he may have not got it. He goes back out the front door.

She hands it to him. He takes them and runs up the stairs.

INT. COMMUNITY CENTER -- DAY

The class is waiting, Abdullah in particular. Miss Sanabel enters and a big smile appears on her face.

MISS SANABEL
Peace be upon you.

Abdullah returns her greeting as Rashied and Shaker look on.

MISS SANABEL (CONT'D)
A lot of you have no doubt wondered
where I was last week.

Abdullah guffs. Everyone looks at him.

MISS SANABEL (CONT'D)
Wondering why I didn't teach. The
reason I didn't hold class. Right?

The whole class nods.

She looks at the door, smiles, her face becomes red.

Abdullah looks at her face and then the door.

Miss Sanabel uses her hand to indicate to whoever she is looking at to come in.

An ARAB MAN, late 20's, enters. He wears the cross of Jesus around his neck.

Abdullah's jaw drops.

ARAB MAN
Peace be upon you.

Everyone returns the greeting except for Abdullah. Rashied and Shaker look on.

ARAB MAN (CONT'D)
A lot of you were wondering where
Miss Sanabel was last week,
correct?

Abdullah shakes his head.

MISS SANABEL

This is Ramzi. My future husband.

Some are confused.

MISS SANABEL (CONT'D)

He's converting from Christianity
to Islam and we're getting married.

Abdullah reacts. The classroom erupts in applause. We hear the word *mabrouk* - Arabic for congratulations.

MISS SANABEL (CONT'D)

This will be the last class I
teach. Next week, your new teacher
will be -

She looks at the door and a heavy set ARAB WOMAN, wearing a veil, in a jilbab, extremely serious, militarily enters.

MISS SANABEL (CONT'D)

Miss Um Jihad.

If this were an animated film, Abdullah's jaw would drop to the floor.

He stands up.

ABDULLAH

No!

Small giggles from around the room.

Abdullah's eyes find his new teacher, who shakes her head, then points to him.

Miss Sanabel smiles.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)

When am I -- we going to see you
again?

Miss Sanabel looks at her beau, then to Abdullah, her countenance answering him: n e v e r.

Abdullah timidly walks up to her, not looking at her in the eyes.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)

(whisper)
You can't go.

Miss Sanabel looks at Ramzi. He hands her a white envelope.

She hands it to Abdullah.

INT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE -- DAY

Abdullah clips on his tie, with a little help from Motassem.

MOTASSEM

You sure you want to go, buddy?

He is not but unsuccessfully tries to hide it.

ABDULLAH

She invited me.

Motassem opens his mouth to speak.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)

I'm ready.

EXT. BANQUET HALL PARKING LOT -- DAY

The red mustang sits among other vehicles.

Motassem lights a cigarette, takes a drag and then as if he done it a million times, offers it his nephew.

He has never thought of it but now he wants to try.

ABDULLAH

Is this a trick?

Motassem doesn't say anything.

Abdullah takes the cigarette from his Uncle's hand and brings it to his lips when Motassem takes it from him.

MOTASSEM

Yes. A trick. Let's go home.

ABDULLAH

But I want to go the reception.
Please Khalo.

Motassem offers him the cigarette.

He goes to take it but Motassem moves his hand away.

He offers it to him again but for real this time.

Abdullah accepts and brings it his lips but just gives it back to his Uncle.

The church doors open and GUESTS exit.

INT. BANQUET HALL -- NIGHT

1980's songs. Miss Sanabel and Ramzi dance as Abdullah watches.

He goes to the buffet table and looks at the pepperoni pizza. He looks around for his Motassem until he finds him flirting with two YOUNG ASIAN WOMEN.

As if he has waited all his life, he takes a bite from the pepperoni pizza and likes it.

The songs continue. The dancing. Everyone having a good time. Everybody that is, except for Abdullah.

He spots a 2 liter ginger ale bottle on the beverages table. Next it, already poured soda.

He drinks it. Burps. Quickly, he picks up another.

Motassem looks around until he finds Abdullah dancing, rather strangely. Another look and he notices Abdullah is tipsy.

He runs up to him but a couple dancing makes it hard for him to reach his nephew.

ABDULLAH (O.S.)
(microphone)
Miss Sanabel? Miss Sanabel!

The crowd softens along with the music so we can make out his words.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)
I will be a better husband than
Ramzi. Marry me instead.

The audience laughs and others react with an Awww.

The DeeJay picks Foreigner's I want to know what love.

Motassem sees Abdullah in front of the stage as Miss Sanabel and Ramzi sit in their chairs on the stage.

Miss Sanabel gets up from her chair and walks down the steps and takes the microphone out of Abdullah's hand and sets it on the stage floor. She grabs his hand.

They start to dance.

Foreigner: "In my life, there's been heartache and pain, I don't know if I can face it again..."

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)

I love you Miss Sanabel.

She knows and nods. Suddenly, he pulls away from her, holding his stomach.

Motassem, who has been watching the whole time, also knows what's going to happen next to Abdullah.

He runs up to him, picks him up, spots the men's room and sprints towards it.

He runs inside, opens a stall just in time for the pepperoni and champagne to flush out.

Motassem takes him to the sink. He washes.

MOTASSEM

It's okay to cry.

Still unbalanced, Abdullah sits on the bathroom floor. He does not cry.

INT. OLGA'S DINER -- NIGHT

Motassem checks out the WAITRESS, rather her cleavage. As she pours the coffee, she checks him out as well. Abdullah, who is no longer buzzed, observes his uncle. He sips his coffee, but Motassem knows he was looking too. It yields a smile.

INT. PARETTI COLLEGE CAFETERIA -- LATE AFTERNOON

It's slow day. Abdullah and Rashied are taking the last bites of their ice cream cones. Motassem hands Shaker his second ice cream cone.

SHAKER

Thanks Khalo Motassem.

MOTASSEM

See you at home guys.
Be careful walking home.

ABDULLAH/RASHIED/SHAKER

Yeah. Of course. Bye.

They push open the double doors and leave but we don't go with them.

Camera pans to a SANDY BLOND HAired MAN AND SUPERMODEL WOMAN studying Russian.

Then to a lunch table where THREE COLLEGE BULLIES sit smoking. It's safe to say they may be on drugs, drunk, both or hung over.

They get up after them and leave.

Motassem re-appears just as the door closes.

FADE UP, Bonnie Tyler's Holding out for a Hero

EXT. PARETTI COLLEGE CAMPUS -- NEXT MOMENT

Abdullah, Rashied and Shaker are being chased by the three tough looking college kids. Unlike "A Christmas Story," this is anything but comical.

They are about to enter the woods that lead into their house when they're knocked down by the college kids.

COLLEGE BULLY1

Where the fuck is it, fatty?

SHAKER

You sad a very bad word.

COLLEGE BULLY2

Where's our plant?

RASHIED

The cigarette tree?

ABDULLAH

(realizes)

The tree! The police took it.

COLLEGE BULLY3

What?! No way!

RASHIED

It's okay. It's drugs.

SHAKER

And you should say no to drugs.
because they're bad for you.

He grabs Shaker. Startled, he farts.

COLLEGE BULLY2

It's bad for you three baby sand
niggers-

A HAND grabs the lead college bully's shoulder and throws him back. It's Motassem! He manages to get the three college bullies off of his nephews. The three surround him, with College Bully3 taking out a knife; swinging it close to Motassem. They fight. Motassem wins.

Bonnie Tyler's song fades down.

SHAKER

Khalo Motassem,
I didn't finish my second ice
cream cone.

MOTASSEM

We'll get you one tomorrow.

ABDULLAH

That was rad.

Rashied is holding his broken glasses.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)

Dad's going to kill you.

MOTASSEM

It'll be all right, Rashied.

INT. OPTOMETRIST -- EVENING

Motassem hands the FEMALE OPTOMETRIST the cash. WENDY, as the name tag says, hands him the glasses. Hair tied back, she has glasses on. Mentioning this will pay off later.

Rashied tries them on as Abdullah and Shaker look on.

MOTASSEM

Well?

RASHIED

They're great.
Thanks.

MOTASSEM

Thank you Miss -

To point to her nametag, she goes over her left breast first.

OPTOMETRIST

Wendy Wells.

MOTASSEM

Wendy Wells. Guys, there's a Grand
Union next door.

He gives them a \$5 dollar bill to which they react with extreme gratitude.

INT. OPTOMETRIST OFFICE -- DAY

Abdullah slowly pushes open the door, and the bell RINGS, signaling customers. But no one emerges.

Behind him, through the glass, we can see his brothers outside -- Shaker enjoying an ice cream bar, Rashied eating, what looks like a Payday.

It doesn't take long for Abdullah to hear the SOUND of their HEAVY BREATHING from here. He takes a peek and sees:

Motassem has Wendy on the floor, pants off, her legs spread, and he's thrusting into her. They roll over and she is on top now. Abdullah is hypnotized by the movement of her large white breasts swinging back and forth.

He runs back out, sits on the curb.

Moments later, Motassem emerges and they all leave.

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE - VERMONT -- NIGHT

The lights are off.

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE - VERMONT - BOYS BEDROOM --NIGHT

Rashied, Shaker are asleep. Abdullah is in bed, eyes open.

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE - BOY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Abdullah starts masturbating. He slowly turns his head to see a Jack Nicholson poster staring right at him. He moves his head to the right, then to the left but Jack's eyes seem to follow him.

He goes under the covers and from the moving blankets, we can tell he starts to play with himself again but stops.

Out of frustration, he throws the covers off, then gets out of bed and takes down the poster and climbs back into bed. Under the covers he starts masturbating but then the covers stop moving. We hear the SOUND of SNORING.

INT. A DARK PLACE

There is moving around.

JESSICA'S DAD (O.S.)

Jessica!

The closet door is open and we see Abdullah and 9 year old JESSICA scramble apart from each other.

JESSICA

Abdullah's helping me look for my doll -

JESSICA'S DAD

Abdullah!

EXT. JESSICA'S HOUSE -- DAY

Jessica's Dad, whose face we don't see, opens the door, pushing Abdullah out.

JESSICA'S DAD (O.S.)

My daughter's not going to be one of your forty wives.

EXT. HOYT'S MOVIE THEATER - BURLINGTON, VT -DAY -- 1985.

Abdullah is waiting on the curb. Hind's minivan pulls up with Abbas, Hind, Motassem, Rashied and Shaker. Abdullah gets in.

INT. MINIVAN - MORNING - DAY -- 1985

Diana Haddad's Saken song plays as Motassem sings to it. Cigarette in mouth, he claps as well. Abbas and Hind chitchat.

Rashied is reading John Steinbeck's Of Mice and Men. Shaker is playing with his Cabbage Batch kid.

Abdullah turns around to see:

TWO COLLEGE KIDS in a VW Beetle give Abdullah the finger.

Abdullah gasps.

ABDULLAH

Rashid look.

He keeps reading.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 Look.

Simultaneously, Abdullah, Rashied and Shaker turn to the back window to see: the College kids repeat the obscene gesture.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)
 Khalo Motassem. These guys are
 giving us the middle finger.

Motassem looks back to see the college kids give him the middle finger.

EXT. TRAFFIC LIGHT - DAY -- 1985

The light changes to yellow and the minivan stops instead of slows down; a sign of Abbas paranoid character.

HIND
 You could have made that.

Motassem opens the minivan's sliding door and jumps out.

HIND (CONT'D)
 Brother!

ABBAS
 Motassem!

Abdullah watches as Motassem runs over to the college kids.

Absolutely terrified, they roll up their window and he punches it, shattering the glass. Causing his hand to bleed.

He opens their car door, grabs the driver by the shirt when a police car two cars behind SOUNDS its SIREN and flashes its light.

The song by Lebanese singer, ends.

EXT. BURLINGTON POLICE STATION -- NIGHT (1985)

The minivan is parked in front of what looks more like a DMV, than a police station.

INT. BURLINGTON POLICE STATION -- NIGHT (1985)

Hind and Abbas are staring at Abdullah, who knows they're staring.

INSERT TV

Steven Spielberg's The Color Purple.

Shaker pops gum. Rashied is reading his book.

HIND

You're not going to ask about your
brother in law are you?

Abbas is still looking at Abdullah.

ABBAS

You had to tell him.
You couldn't ignore them.

(mimicking)

Khalo Motassem, Khalo Motassem
Those people are giving us the
middle finger.

A door opens and Motassem comes out. Silence.

MOTASSEM

The college kids admitted it was
their fault.

He hugs his sister and his brother in law.

Then Rashied and Shaker, who leap up. Abdullah stays on the
chair.

ABBAS

Let's just go to Ponderosa.

Everyone walks ahead, out through the front doors.

Abdullah can't look at his Uncle.

MOTASSEM

I'm not going to prison.
But for you, I would. Nobody messes
with my buddy.

Abdullah smiles.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)

You see how I hit those guys?

He nods and mimics the move.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)

Let's go find some more trouble to
get into.

A FEMALE POLICE OFFICER, who could have easily had a career as a model or as Miss Israel title, walks by in time to hear that phrase.

FEMALE POLICE OFFICER
Hi trouble, you're gorgeous. I'm
Nehama.

MOTASSEM
Motassem. Nehama that's a -

NEHAMA
Yep. And Motassem is an -

MOTASSEM
Yep. Yes.

Nehama does a martial arts move, which is sexy at the same time.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)
Sonofabitch that was hot.

She gets up to his face.

NEHAMA
You know? They've been trying for
years to make peace. They should
try making love first.

Abdullah looks up at Motassem and Nehama, intrigued. Abbas comes in and takes Motassem.

EXT. LAKE DUNMORE - CLIFFSIDE -- DAY (1985)

The rain is really coming down now hard on a sign that says "No Swimming!"

Abbas, Hind, Rashied and Shaker are cheering on for Motassem to reel in the fish he has on the line.

Abdullah is filming with his video camera:

About eight feet below is the water and they are standing on a small ravine.

Despite the cigarette dangling from Motassem's mouth being wet, he keeps it in there, not stopping to ash the cigarette.

In the water, we see the fins of fish, caught on the line, it is huge. And it's wild, reminding one of a beast that has been tranquilized but refuses to fall without a fight.

HIND
You got him my brother.

ABBAS
Way to go Many Mo!

ABDULLAH & RASHIED & SHAKER
Yeah Uncle Motassem!

MOTASSEM
Get the net! Get the net!

Abbas brings the net near.

Suddenly, the fish, which we can see is a larger than large largemouth bass, jumps out of the water, nearly four feet in length.

When it lands back in the water, it breaks the fishing pole. Snap! Right in the middle!

Motassem dives in after the fish.

They all gasp.

ABDULLAH
Son of a bitch that was hot!

The gasps are louder that Abdullah cursed.

INT. BOY'S BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Motassem is sick in bed, sleeping.

Abbas walks into the room next door, where Rashied, Shaker and Abdullah, on three single beds. The Jack Nicholson poster is back on the wall.

Abbas comes in holding a Koran.

He sits down and using the light from the hallway, starts reading out loud, Sura 55, Ar-Rahman from the holy book.

Although it's a beautiful recitation, Abdullah and Shaker start laughing.

Abbas stops.

ABBAS
Do you know what you're laughing at? Who. These words are his words. Who we are. Who we are supposed to be. Who we will always be.

The three heads nod. Unbeknownst to them, Motassem opens his eyes. Abbas starts reciting again.

Abdullah and Shaker want to laugh but hold it in and start getting into it like Rashied when:

Motassem bursts out laughing. Abbas stands up, shaking his head at him.

MOTASSEM

They're too young Abu Rashied.
Don't force religion on them.

ABBAS

Ramadan is coming and they will
fast. The Eid is coming and we all
go to mosq-

MOTASSEM

- I'm twenty one and don't do that
stuff yet.

"Stuff" is something Abbas didn't want his kids to hear.

ABDULLAH

Does that mean we can do that stuff
when we're older?

ABBAS

(overlapping)
No.

MOTASSEM

(overlapping)
Yes.

Shaker sits up in excitement.

ABDULLAH

No fasting! No fasting.

Hind walks in.

HIND

Why is everyone awake? It's late,
right.

ABBAS

Your brother is-

He leaves the boy's bedroom.

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE VERMONT -- DAY (1985)

There is a knock on the door.

Abbas opens the door to find Nehama but without the police uniform. His eye catches the star of David necklace that sits just above her cleavage. He also notices the Patrol car.

ABBAS
Is there a problem officer?

NEHAMA
It's Nehama, Mister Ibrahim. We met the other day after the middle finger incident with the college kids. Is he here?

ABBAS
Who?

NEHAMA
Motassem.

ABBAS
Oh God. What did he do now?

She shakes her head.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
Is he in trouble?

NEHAMA
Only if he doesn't acknowledge my right to exist.

She chuckles. Abbas stares at her. Her face flushes red when he doesn't laugh at the political joke.

NEHAMA (CONT'D)
We have a date.

Motassem approaches.

MOTASSEM
Shalom Nehama. Shalom Abbas.

Abbas mouths the word, "shalom."

NEHAMA
Nice to see you again Mister Ibrahim.

She goes to her car and Abbas touches Motassem by the arm.

ABBAS

Do you know what you're doing?

Motassem looks at her perfect butt and back to Abbas and shrugs his shoulder.

Abbas closes the door just as Abdullah passes by.

ABDULLAH

Shalom Abbas.

"The End", by The Doors.

EXT. NEHAMA'S APARTMENT -- DAY (1985)

Birds sing. A helicopter flies overhead. All in sync with the SOUND of a Motassem and Nehama having sex.

INT. NEHAMA'S APARTMENT -- BEDROOM

Naked, they both climax and lie back down on the bed. a big bear of a dog, Labrador retriever jumps into bed with them.

She reaches for a pack of red Marlborough from a night stand. He takes out two, lights the both of them and sticks one in Motassem's mouth.

NEHAMA

Would you marry a Jew, Motassem?

The dog looks at Motassem and growls.

MOTASSEM

I wouldn't marry at all.

The dog starts to lick Motassem's face.

NEHAMA

Naughty. Naughty. Sleeping with a hot, sexy police officer. What would they wonder if they knew?

He plays with the star of David necklace that falls just before her sweaty voluptuous breasts.

The dog's eyes and that of Motassem meets.

MOTASSEM

Well first, I would have to find a hot, sexy police officer. She'd have to make wonder woman jealous.

She hits him playfully. They make out again. Nehama pushes the dog down but he won't go.

NEHAMA

"Haver", go bakasha.

"Friend" the dog obeys the Hebrew command and whines as they resume the love making.

EXT. MARY HOGAN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL -- AFTERNOON (1985)

Abdullah, Rashid and Shaker wait to be picked up from school.

RASHIED

We'll find mom on the way.

They get on the sidewalk but are still in sight of the school grounds.

The three college bullies from before approach them.

COLLEGE BULLY1

If it isn't Qadafi, Arafat and the Ayatollah.

The brothers look at one another.

COLLEGE BULLY2

Who is going to fight your fight this time?

ABDULLAH

What would Khalo Motassem do?

This time the brothers start hitting them very creatively.

From the window, the principal flips off his chair when he sees this.

Hind pulls up in the blue minivan and the brothers jump in.

HIND

Come on boys, the food is in oven.

She starts to drive away.

COLLEGE BULLY3

Who said you were allowed to drive a car?!

COLLEGE BULLY2

Yeah where's your camel.

The minivan breaks to a stop. The license plate, "Hind" comes into view as the camera slides to the door which opens and Hind gets out, wearing an apron.

She walks up to the three college kids.

HIND
That was rude, right.

The bullies look at each other and crack up.

COLLEGE BULLY1
(mimicking)
That was rude right.

The others speak to her sardonically.

COLLEGE BULLY1 (CONT'D)
Wrong!

She is startled.

COLLEGE BULLY2
Did we startle you Mrs. Libya,
Saudi, Pakistan. Which wife number
are you?

RASHIED
Mom?

She says something in Arabic.

COLLEGE BULLY2
Is that the language of the terror
towel lady?

The three bullies laugh again.

HIND
No, this is.

In carefully choreographed martial arts, she takes down the biggest of the three. She looks at them. The other two get up and run away.

HIND (CONT'D)
Right.

Walking On Sunshine by Katrina & The Waves fades up as her sons react with shock.

They are silent of course when she gets back into the car, staring at this person that up until this moment was mom.

HIND (CONT'D)
It runs in the family.

SHAKER
Does Dad know?

She smiles, puts on her sunglasses and drives away.

EXT. LAKE DUNMORE -- DAY (1985)

Abbas, Hind, Motassem, Rashid, Abdullah and Shaker.

They're enjoying a picnic on the shore. From the movements we see, the sons are recounting Hind's handling of the bullies. Motassem is proud. The song plays.

Abdullah is filming as usual.

There is perhaps one other family on the beach. Mentioning this now, will come be relevant later.

A seagull comes and lands on the blanket they're sitting on and starts to eat their food.

Hind shoos it away.

ABDULLAH
Mom. I want one.

Motassem hears this.

MOTASSEM
Anything for my buddy. Abu Rashid,
Hind clear all of the food, except
for the chips.

Abbas shakes his head.

ABBAS
You're not going to...birdnap this
seagull.

Abdullah moans.

RASHIED
It's illegal for one.

Motassem points to the many other seagulls.

MOTASSEM
There are dozens. Hundreds
possibly. No one is going to miss
one stupid pigeon. Now back up.

Motassem signals for them to back up, then hide behind a nearby lifeguard tower.

They only thing that remains on the blanket is the chips.

They watch. At first nothing. Then, the same seagull, if you can believe that, returns.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)
Wait for it.

The seagull eats the chips and is not "paying attention."

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)
Yalla!

Motassem storms the seagull and before it has a chance to fly away, he throws a part of the blanket over it.

Then he wraps it and picks it up.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)
Yalla! Yalla! Yalla!

They all run to the minivan.

They throw the red and blue coolers in the trunk and take off.

That other family, we mentioned, may have noticed them.

Kenny Loggins, "Highway to the Danger Zone" fades up.

INT./EXT. HIND'S MINIVAN -- NEXT MOMENT

Abbas is driving at regular speed.

HIND
We can get into trouble.

ABBAS
"Can?" "Into trouble"? We are in trouble.

Motassem is struggling with the wrapped seagull.

RASHIED
He can suffocate to death.

SHAKER
Or die.

ABDULLAH
I'm going to name him Popeye.

MOTASSEM
Want to go faster Abbas?

Abbas shakes his head.

ABBAS
We'll attract attention to
ourselves.

The seagull flies out of the blanket and is now hopping on
the seats in the car.

Shaker starts cracking up.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
Motassem grab him!

HIND
Before he boobs on our heads.

SHAKER
Boobs on our heads. Where?

They all laugh at the mention of the word "boobs" until that
is, they hear the SIRENS.

ABDULLAH
Dad it's the cops!

ABBAS
And I thought the TV was too loud.

The police cruiser is closer.

POLICE CRUISER
(microphone)
Pull over!

RASHIED
Roll down the window it will fly
out!

ABDULLAH
Popeye! No!

Abdullah hits Rashid.

They start to fight.

HIND
Abdullah! Rashid! Stob it!

POLICE CRUISER
 (microphone)
 You in the minivan, pull over!

ABDULLAH
 Dad don't! He'll take my bird!

Shaker is laughing at everything:

The seagull. Motassem climbs over the seat to grab it. His two brothers.

Abbas pulls over to the shoulder and the Police cruiser:

drives passed them at over 100mph.

He wasn't after them, after all.

Shaker, is about to put the chocolate in his mouth, when the seagull lands on his hand.

Motassem grabs him with the blanket.

Motassem starts to sing as Arabs do when they're walking the groom to his bride. It's called Zaffat. Everyone in the car repeats after him.

INT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE - BASEMENT -- NIGHT (1985)

Motassem, Rashid, Abdullah and Shaker are watching the seagull fly around the basement.

Although they've put food for it, it's scared more than anything.

From the top of the stairs, Abbas and Hind watch.

ABBAS
 (whispering)
 He's a bad influence.

HIND
 (whispering)
 Bad or not, he's
 still my brother.

ABBAS
 Imagine it was my brother doing
 this.

HIND
 You don't have any brothers.

ABBAS
You get my point.

Hind shakes her head.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
For you, I'll give him
one more chance.

The DOORBELL RINGS.

Abbas opens the door to find Nehama. She is in uniform. Despite hair tied back, she looks really good - especially with the sunglasses.

NEHAMA
Mr. Ibrahim. We had a report that a
seagull was kidnapped.

HIND
Kidnapped?

NEHAMA
Napped. Birdnapped. A family saw
you take a seagull from Lake
Dunmore beach.

Motassem comes from behind Hind and Abbas.

Nehama changes immediately.

MOTASSEM
Nehama?

NEHAMA
Motassem.

They kiss. It's awkward. Silence. Abbas and Hind stare back and forth at Motassem and Nehama.

NEHAMA (CONT'D)
Conflict of interest.

She thinks for a moment.

NEHAMA (CONT'D)
I'll say it was a false alarm. But
you really need to let the seagull
go.

ABBAS
Will there be charges?

She looks at Motassem.

NEHAMA
Only if fails to protect me. And
buy me a drink?

Hind pushes her brother out the door and slams it shut.

ABBAS
Why did you do that?

HIND
Jew or Jail? The Jew, right.

She leaves Abbas standing in the doorway.

CUT TO:

EXT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE - VERMONT -- LATER THAT EVENING (1985)
Nehama's police cruiser approaches.

INT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE - KITCHEN -- NIGHT

When Motassem walks in, Shaker is crying. Abdullah and Rashid are eating.

MOTASSEM
Hi. Was it hard bringing back the
seagull without me?

Abbas and Hind also have a weird expression on their face.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)
That smells good. What's for
dinner?

Shaker cries.

ABDULLAH
(mouth stuffed)
Seagull!

EXT. LAKE DUNMORE -- DAY (1985)

Abdullah sits on the banks, fishing with Abbas, Motassem and two brothers, Rashied and Shaker. Rashid is reading his book and Shaker playing with his Cabbage Patch Doll.

He reels his fishing line in and stands up.

ABBAS
Where are you going?

ABDULLAH
For a walk.

EXT. LAKE DUNMORE - EAST SIDE -- DAY

He walks up to a FISHING GIRL, 15, carrying a fishing rod,
At the end of which is a northern pike, ten inches.

It's still alive.

ABDULLAH
Did you catch that?

FISHING GIRL
Yeah, so?

ABDULLAH
Wow.

FISHING GIRL
I always catch about 5 to 10 and
throw them back.

ABDULLAH
Do you go to school?

FISHING GIRL
When I'm not fishing.

ABDULLAH
When's that?

FISHING GIRL
Never.

ABDULLAH
Can I have that fish and put it on
my fishing rod?

FISHING GIRL
Are you American?

ABDULLAH
Yeah.

She laughs, takes out a cigarette and puts it in her mouth.

She lights it like a pro and sits as if to say: explain.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)
Almost. I'm also Arab.

FISHING GIRL
Sure. Yeah. I heard about you.
Daddy always blames you guys. Says
you got wells full of oil instead
of water. Says you ride camels
instead of camry's. How much will
you pay me brother A-rab?

ABDULLAH
I'm not carrying money.

FISHING GIRL
There's other ways you can pay, you
know. If you want this fish.

He looks at her confused.

FISHING GIRL (CONT'D)
You've got big ears.

CUT TO:

EXT. LAKE DUNMORE - EAST SIDE -- DAY

He stands in front of her with his pants down, his butt shown
to us.

FISHING GIRL
Okay. That's good.

He pulls his pants up.

Like a pro, she unhooks the now dead fish from her rod and
hooks it to the string at the end of his fishing pole.

FISHING GIRL (CONT'D)
Nice doing business with you.

ABDULLAH
Abdullah. What's your name?

FISHING GIRL
Fishing Girl. (beat) Dad wouldn't
like it if he knew I told an A-rab
my name.

He watches her as she disappears around a tree.

Abdullah walks back to his father, brother and uncle.

ABDULLAH
Look what I caught.
Look what I caught.

They congratulate him.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)
Yes my brother A-rabs Abdullah
rules.

Abbas shoots him a look along with Motassem. Rashied and Shaker don't understand the stereotype remark.

ABBAS
What did you say?

Abdullah thinks for a moment. It wasn't a bad word.

ABDULLAH
A-rabs?

Abbas lunges for him, but Motassem gets in the middle.

ABBAS
Abdullah, we're Arabs. A-rabs is
what people who don't like us refer
to us by. Where did you hear that?

Abdullah is scared, so are his brothers.

It's the first time, they've ever seen their Dad this mad.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
I asked where did you hear that?!

Abdullah looks terrified.

MOTASSEM
From the fish, right? The fish said
it.

He laughs, nervously.

SHAKER
That fish talked to you before he
died?

Motassem nods at his youngest nephew.

He looks at the fish, which still has the hook in its mouth.

SHAKER (CONT'D)
 (to the fish)
 But you're not supposed to talk
 with your mouth full, mister fish?

Abbas is staring at Abdullah who can't look at him.

MOTASSEM
 Abu Rashied. He didn't know.

Nodding his head, Abbas begins to pick up the gear.

ABBAS
 You know what scares me more? That
 he may never know.

Rashied and Shaker jump at the chance to help their dad. If Abdullah's going to get in trouble later, they want their Dad's good side. They start up, back to the car. Abdullah is frozen.

MOTASSEM
 It was a girl?

Abdullah looks at him.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)
 Come on, don't give me that look.
 When you wandered off and caught
 the fish. Was she cute?

Abdullah shakes his head no, then yes.

ABDULLAH
 Older too.

Motassem is impressed.

MOTASSEM
 Buddy, you're just like your Khalo
 Motassem.

He likes that comment. Agreed! He smiles.

EXT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE - EVENING -- 1985

The Mustang and Minivan sit parked outside.

INT. BOYS BEDROOM - NIGHT

The full moon can be seen from the window with the open curtain.

Motassem, Rashied, Abdullah and Shaker are in their pajamas sitting on the bed. Motassem is in the middle of a story.

MOTASSEM

So your uncles Hussein, Nadeem, Nadi have me tied me up, next to the donkey. When the soldiers show up. And they say how could he have been throwing stones, this crazy person has been busy keeping the donkey company.

They all laugh and even Abbas cracks a smile.

ABBAS

I remember that story. Guys, can I talk to Abdullah alone?

They all leave.

ABDULLAH

Dad I didn't -

Abbas puts his hand up.

ABBAS

When I was at Berkeley, these students followed me around. And kept saying, where's your tail? Where's your tail? We hear all you A-rabs got em'. A-rabs. At first, I thought they were ignorant and just didn't know how to pronounce it. They didn't turn out to be the ignorant one.

ABDULLAH

Did you hit them?

He winces - hitting is not a part of Abbas vocabulary or culture.

ABBAS

But they got bored and just walked away. Come on, it's time for suhur.

In the Kitchen.

Hind pours hot tea with mint into special glass tea cups. She has prepared "Suhur," the late meal before Muslims commence fasting. Hummos. Eggs. Jam. Bread. Title Card: "Ramadan."

They eat in silence and then Abbas checks his watch.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
 One more minute before Ramadan
 starts, drink water.

They sit as a family, behind them dusk. Pink and purple
 skies. It's almost like a hallmark card.

The camera tracks down the hall to the boys bedroom where
 Motassem snores. Fast asleep, he could care less.

FADE TO BLACK.

The SOUND of SCHOOL BELL RINGS.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - VERMONT - DAY -- 1985

It's lunch time.

Everyone is eating except for Abdullah. He pretends to eat,
 trying to hide the fact that he's fasting.

MR. SPAULDING, Abdullah's fourth grade teacher (played by the
 writer's best friend growing up) approaches him.

MR. SPAULDING
 (southern accent)
 Fasting for Ramadan?

Abdullah looks guilty.

ABDULLAH
 But I don't want people to know I'm-

MR. SPAULDING
 - Everybody listen up. Some of you
 have been wondering why Abdullah
 isn't eating. It's not because he
 forgot his lunch or that someone
 took it, it's the first day of
 Ramadan.

Abdullah is embarrassed.

MR. SPAULDING (CONT'D)
 Say Ramadan.

The class says it and it doesn't sound right but he moves on
 anyway.

MR. SPAULDING (CONT'D)
 Maybe we can bring your parents to
 talk about it.

One of Abdullah's classmate raises his hand. Mr. Spaulding points to him.

CLASSMATE

Isn't the Ramadan Inn the name of a hotel?

Abdullah is shyer than ever.

INT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE -- EVENING

Not one inch of the table can be seen due to the food.

The glasses of water. Next it to the soup. Dates. Arabic salads. Stuffed Zucchini. Stuffed grape leaves.

The boys are in the family room watching, "You Can't Do That On Television", someone says "I don't know" and gets slimed.

Abbas is in a tobe, reading from his holy book.

ABDULLAH

Is it time?

Abbas is mumbling prayers.

HIND

Turn off the television and come and sit at the table.

The boys reluctantly adhere.

SHAKER

But we'll get hungry.

RASHIED

It's not like you're fasting.

ABDULLAH

Where's Motassem?

Abbas shoots Hind a look. The door opens and Motassem comes in...with Nehama. She has a fruit basket.

MOTASSEM

Abu Rashied, I asked Nehama to join us.

Abbas wants to object, but Hind intercepts.

HIND

I'll get a chair and there's plenty of food.

NEHAMA
Ramadan Harem.

MOTASSEM
(whispers)
Kareem.

Hind takes the fruit basket and everyone is seated.

They break the fast. Everybody eats.

Title Card - "One month later."

INT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE - VERMONT BOYS BEDROOM - MORNING --
1985

He stops playing with himself when his dad comes in.

And pretends to be looking at a map on the wall of his
bedroom.

ABDULLAH
I'm looking for Canada on the map,
dad but can't seem to find it.

Abbas realizes its' Abdullah's attempt to change the subject.

ABBAS
You're not going to find it
down your your pants, son.

He throws him a clip on tie.

ABBAS CONT'D
Put your clip on tie on.

He leaves. Abdullah takes the tie, makes it snap, and thinks
for a moment.

ABBAS CONT'D (CONT'D)
Make sure you clip it on your
shirt this time.

EXT. US-CANADIAN BORDER -1985-- MORNING

The minivan pulls up to the border where there is an OFFICER.

BORDERPOLICE OFFICER
All citizens?

MOTASSEM
No. I'm an alien.

Abdullah's eyes go wide, mouth drops.

Motassem hands him his Green card.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)
Here's my Green Card.

Abdullah's eyes go even wider, mouth drops. He faints, his head on his younger brother's shoulders.

Shaker puts his finger in his mouth and puts it in Abdullah's ear.

Abdullah opens his eyes just in time to read a sign in English and French welcoming him to Montreal.

EXT. MONTREAL - MOSQUE - 1985 -- MORNING

Abdullah, his brothers, Abbas and Motassem enter the mosque.

Hind goes to the left side, where a sign says, "Ladies"

They take off their shoes and put them in the cupboard, on a shelf.

ABDULLAH
Won't they get stolen Dad?

ABBAS
Abdullah, don't worry. They won't.

They enter the mosque.

We stay here for a moment just long enough to see a BOY steal Abbas shoes.

INT. MONTREAL MOSQUE -- MORNING

It's breathtaking inside. The red carpet. The chandeliers. Abdullah takes sight of the SECURITY.

ABDULLAH
Shouldn't they be outside watching to make sure our shoes don't get stolen?

Abbas shakes his head.

ABBAS
When you're going to learn to respect what you are is unknown to me. It's the Eid.
(MORE)

ABBAS (CONT'D)

No one is going to take shoes that
don't belong to them and risk
losing credit from God for fasting.

Going through the dozens of worshippers who have come to the
Holiday of Eid Al Fitr to end the 30 day fast, Abbas, his
sons and Motassem make it up to the first row.

Security frisks Abbas and Motassem.

A man with a familiar face steps up to the carpet line and
stands next to them.

Abdullah looks at him:

It's MUHAMMAD ALI!

Motassem is star struck.

MOTASSEM

Champ. I'm a huge fan.

The Champ points to the Imam who doing he opening sermon.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)

(whispering)

I haven't missed any of your fights
since I was a kid.

A LARGE AFRICAN AMERICAN BODYGUARD approaches Motassem.

He walks him out.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)

Get your hands off of me. We're in
a mosque.

Without force, the bodyguard ignores him and walks to a few
lines back.

Motassem is now far from Abbas, his nephews and what's more,
The Champ.

He cuts through again and almost makes it to the front when
the same bodyguard emerges.

Without a word, he grabs Motassem who punches him.

Within seconds, there are FIVE BODYGUARDS. They were there
the whole time, but as worshippers. They take Motassem out.

Abbas shakes his head as from the front row he can hear the
SOUND of his brother in law SHOUTING.

INT. MOSQUE - FEMALE SECTION -- MORNING

HIND listens for a moment and realizes it's her brother.

BACK TO THE MALE SECTION

The first line is still Mohammad Ali, Abbas, Rashied, Shaker and Abdullah.

He catches a glimpse of his Uncle Motassem who lights a cigarette, just beyond the entrance.

MOTASSEM

(yelling)

I don't want to pray with you guys
anyway.

Times passes.

The Holiday prayers end, the sermon which follows it.
Everyone shake hands with Muhammad Ali and each other.
Congratulating each other on another successful 30 day fast.

Security holds up hands to move him first, but Muhammad Ali
shakes his head. And everyone walks out together. As equals.

INT. MOSQUE MONTREAL - MEN ENTRANCE -- MORNING

Abbas and his sons are getting their shoes.

ABBAS

See how great Islam is.
How the people are.

Abdullah and his brothers grab their shoes.

Motassem approaches.

ABBAS (CONT'D)

You're in a mosque, you shouldn't
have yelled like that.

Abbas realizes that his shoes are missing.

Walking to the car in nonmatching open black ugly flip flops,
Abbas repeats the same line over and over again -- "Can't
believe they took my shoes."

INT. ABBAS BEDROOM -- EARLY MORNING (1985)

Abbas finishes praying the Fajr (morning) prayer. HIND is in bed asleep. He opens the Muslim Holy Book.

He hears a car starting. But it won't start.

He leaves his bedroom.

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE VERMONT -- EARLY MORNING (1985)

In the mustang is a drunk Motassem, next to him drinking an open beer can is the same AFRICAN AMERICAN young woman, Lynette, we saw in the beginning of the story.

In the backseat, it's a WHITE MAN, 20's and next to him is:

Abdullah!

He is holding a fishing pole and in his pajamas, but wearing a Gone fishin hat or similar.

ABBAS

What's going on, Many Mo?

ABDULLAH

We're going fishing, Dad.

MOTASSEM

That's right. We're going fishing,
Dad.

The others laugh and possibly repeat, "Dad."

Abbas shakes his head. Motassem tries to start the car again.

ABBAS

Motassem, give me the keys.

LYNETTE

I thought you said your father
died.

Abbas opens the door to the driver's seat.

MOTASSEM

They're biting. Now. The best time
to catch some fish is when they're
biting. And they bite in the early
morning.

ABDULLAH

Yeah, Dad, you're no fun.

This gets the white man sitting next to Abdullah who starts laughing hysterically. It scares Abbas because he realizes the man is not only drunk, but he's also on drugs.

ABBAS

Leave.

He looks at the African-American woman.

ABBAS (CONT'D)

You too.

They look at him as if he just offended them.

DRUNK WHITE MAN

Just who the hell is asking?

ABBAS

I can tell you or the police can.

DRUNK WHITE MAN

See? Now all you had to do was ask kindly.

Lynette kisses Motassem all over. He does not kiss her back.

LYNETTE

I'll be thinking about you in the shower.

ABBAS

Now Miss.

The two get out of the car and walk off, tipsy, down the hill.

Abbas looks at his son.

ABBAS (CONT'D)

Abdullah. To bed I said.

Abdullah doesn't move.

ABDULLAH

But I want to go fishing with Khalo Motassem.

ABBAS

The only one who is going fishing tonight is the fishes.

Abdullah gets out of the Mustang, slams the door and goes into the house, leaving Abbas and Motassem and the full moon.

Motassem tries to start the car.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
Leave the keys in and get out.

Motassem adheres.

MOTASSEM
Really Abu Rashied, I'm fine.

Before he can finish saying "fine," he pukes all over the front lawn.

Although Abbas is smaller than Motassem, he manages to walk him into the house.

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE VERMONT - BATHROOM -- EARLY MORNING
(1985)

Motassem vomits more as Abbas cleans him up.

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE VERMONT - MOTASSEM'S BEDROOM -- EARLY
MORNING (1985)

Abbas helps Motassem on the bed and he immediately passes out.

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE VERMONT - -DUSK (1985)

Abbas comes out. The colors are real pretty as the sun gets ready to start its shift. He goes to the Ford Mustang, opens the driver's seat and sits down. He turns the ignition key and the car starts at the first try.

He closes his eyes and mumbles something; most likely a prayer.

ABBAS
(whispering)
God help me get that man out of our house.

INT. WOODS - VERMONT -- DAY (1985)

Abdullah is hunting with Rashied. They are overdressed in hunting gear, it's comical. Rashied carries a .22 Caliber rifle and is looking at his hunting license. A rabbit runs by. Rashied puts away the license. He lowers and fires at the rabbit.

HUNTER
Hey! Hold your fire!

Out of the clearing, approach a HUNTER and a SECOND HUNTER, who takes the gun from Rashied.

HUNTER (CONT'D)
That bullet passed right by my ear.

Another look and he is telling this to Motassem, Abbas and a Police officer. Rashied and Abdullah cry.

SERIES OF SHOTS FROM MIDDLEBURY VT TO JFK AIRPORT

Despite the long distance, no one speaks.

Even when they eat at fast food joint, it's silent.

Nobody is happy that Motassem is going home.

EXT. ROAD -- EVENING

Traffic jam. The rain is coming down.

ABBAS
We'll never make it in time.

ABDULLAH
Can we go back?

Motassem scratches Abdullah on the head.

HIND
Can't you go around them?

SHAKER
Dad?

ABBAS
Not now Shaker.

Abbas beeps the horn.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
Come on you jerkamacoughs.

Motassem laughs.

MOTASSEM
I've been in this country a lot less than you and I can swear better.

Abbas tries to get around one car, but to no avail.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)
Easy Abu Rashid.

ABBAS
Two sentences in two days. Not bad.

Beat.

The windshield wipers swipe back and forth as if their automated life depended on it.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
If they knew we were going to the airport. I mean that we have to get to the airport.

HIND
(Arabic)
Are we far?

ABBAS
(Arabic)
Not at all.

MOTASSEM
I got my degree.
That's what I came to do.

ABBAS
(Arabic)
You wrecked havoc.

MOTASSEM
We're friends. Just tell me what's pissing you off.

ABBAS
You ruined my kids.

HIND
Abbas!

MOTASSEM
Let him speak Hind.

SHAKER
Dad?

ABBAS
Not now Shaker.

ABDULLAH
 (overlapping)
 No Dad. He didn't ruin us.
 He taught us about fishing, hunting-

ABBAS
 (overlapping)
 Murdering. They almost killed that
 man.

INT. /EXT. ROAD -- EVENING (1988)

The rain is really coming down.

HIND
 Abbas! They didn't file charges.

ABBAS
 I don't care.

Motassem takes out a cigarette.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
 You're not lighting
 that in my car.

MOTASSEM
 Good thing we're in my sister's
 car, then.

He lights it.

Rashied and Abdullah eyes go back and forth as if they're
 watching tennis. Shaker, meanwhile looks pale...

ABBAS
 You miss this flight,
 I'll swim across the Atlantic with
 you on my back.

SHAKER
 Dad?

ABBAS
 Can it get any worse?

SHAKER
 Dad!

ABBAS
 What is it Shaker?

SHAKER
My stomach hurt -

He vomits.

RASHIED
Oh my God!

ABDULLAH
EWW. Gross.

HIND
Pull over.

ABBAS
I can't stop on the shoulder.
It's illegal.

HIND
So is murder, right.

The car pulls into the shoulder lane.

ABBAS
Hurry.

HIND climbs into the back seat.

ABDULLAH
Dad, are we allowed to stop here?

ABBAS
Don't worry, Abdullah.

HIND
Motassem. Come in the front.

They switch seats.

Abbas rolls his eyes.

Hind cleans up Shaker.

Rashied looks in the trunk.

RASHIED
Dad?

ABBAS
Diarrhea?

RASHIED
No, an idea.

Abbas is waiting.

The SOUND of Shaker vomiting again.

ABDULLAH
Open a window.
It smells like puke.

He does.

ABBAS
What's your idea?

RASHIED
This.

He takes out a large cardboard.

RASHIED (CONT'D)
We write on it, need to get to
airport, Boy sick. And we hold it
up.

ABBAS
No one is going to see it
From in the car.

RASHIED
Not in the car.

EXT. ROAD - EN ROUTE TO JFK AIRPORT -- NIGHT (1985)

Abdullah is on the roof, holding the sign that reads "need to
get to airport", "boy sick."

Motassem holds his legs.

Abbas beeps the horn and has his hazard lights on.

It makes no difference at first.

ABBAS
How are you Shaker?

HIND
He's better.
Are they moving?

RASHIED
I was sure it would work.

MOTASSEM
 (shouting up)
 Abdullah, give me the sign.

He hands it to him.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)
 Rashied, marker.

Abbas is driving but manages to get a glimpse of what Motassem is writing or drawing.

It causes him to do a double take.

EXT. ROAD - EN ROUTE TO JFK AIRPORT -- NIGHT (1985)

Those sitting in the back seats of the cars notice Abdullah on the roof top. They all do a double take. This reminds Abdullah of:

EXT. ROAD EN ROUTE TO JFK AIRPORT -- NIGHT

In various vehicles, the passengers sitting in the backseat tell the drivers. One by one. But we can't make see the sign. We see the result:

HIGH ANGLE

Like Moses parting the water, the cars move off to the side.

THE CAMERA SWOOPS DOWN, TO THE SIGN:

"Need to get to airport"

"Boy sick!"

Outline of a woman's body with large breasts. Sad face.

"Horny, USA!"

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. JFK AIRPORT - DROPPING OFF CURBSIDE

Car pulls up.

ABBAS
 No hard feelings, Many Mo?

On cue, an ATTRACTIVE WOMAN, wearing tight Jean shorts and a pink tang top with the word, "Saint" on it walks by.

MOTASSEM
Not exactly true.

He laughs.

He goes to Abdullah.

MOTASSEM CONT'D
Where's my buddy?

ABDULLAH
I don't want you to go.

Abdullah is a wreck at his Uncle leaving.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)
Give Dad your ticket.

This hurts Abbas.

MOTASSEM
You see that man? That there is the
greatest man in the world who I
have the greatest respect for.

Abbas smiles.

They pull him apart as Motassem heads for his gate.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)
What are things you're not
supposed to say at an airport?

Abbas eyes bulge open.

Motassem points at him.

He waves and turns a corner and disappears.

Title: 1994

INT. CHEROKEE HIGH SCHOOL THEATER -- DAY (1994)

Jeff Peirne trips Abdullah (now 16) as he is about to go on stage.

He crashes into the bridge prop.

JEFF

(singing)

Dumbo the flying camel jockey
Lived by the sea - and often
when he got thirsty, drank from the
animal's pee.

GABE GETZ

Enough Jeff. Want me to show these
guys the tape?

JEFF PEIRNE

You're lying.

GABE GETZ

You were wasted. What you did on
that tape.

Murmurs of "What's he talking about?"

GABE GETZ (CONT'D)

Leave Abdullah alone?

Jeff reluctantly nods.

INT. GABE'S BEDROOM -- DAY (1994)

Abdullah admires Gabe's perfectly organized room. There is a
poster of N'Sync and Backstreet Boys.

ABDULLAH

That was a great rehearsal. Thanks
for standing up for me back there.

GABE

Don't mention it. And my, we're so
ready for next week. Let me show
you something.

He takes out a Penthouse magazine.

GABE (CONT'D)

Ever seen one of these?

Gabe opens it and centerfold revealing a woman in an inviting
position - naked; pussy shaved.

GABE (CONT'D)

You can touch yourself.
It's okay, I got a whole bunch of
these.

Gabe drops his pants and starts masturbating.

ABDULLAH
I'm not comfortable
doing this, Gabe.

GABE
But we're good friends.

ABDULLAH
(unconvincing)
This is not something you do with
your friends.

GABE
Remember that Seinfeld episode
called "The Contest?" This is the
same thing.

ABDULLAH
Yeah.

GABE
It will hurt later if you don't.
Besides, better do it here than at
home. And risk getting caught. My
parents won't be home until much
later.

Abdullah thinks for a moment - Gabe's right.

He puts his hands down his pants. He doesn't even look at the
magazine. He closes his eyes and opens them.

ABDULLAH
Now, can you drive me home?

CUT TO:

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE -- DAY (1994)

Gabe's car pulls up. He switches the engine off.

GABE
Are you gonna tell anyone about
what we did back there?

ABDULLAH
Of course not.
(thinks)
You have a girlfriend.

GABE
Yeah. And you don't date.

ABDULLAH
But you're not gay.

GABE
I hate faggots.

ABDULLAH
You make fun of them constantly.

GABE
Serious homophobia.

Abdullah notices for the first time that Gabe is crying.

GABE (CONT'D)
My parents would disown me. What
about yours? If I became a Muslim,
would your parents adopt me?
Because if it's okay to be gay in
your world, then I'll do it.

Abdullah shakes his head.

Gabe nods his head. Starts the engine. Abdullah gets out and
is on the sidewalk. He looks up to the sky.

EXT. SKY -- SUNSET (1994)

The first star of the evening is a shooting star.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE --DAY (1994)

Abdullah opens the door to find the Evans.

They look troubled.

ABDULLAH
Hey guys come on in.

They look at each other.

EVAN EVANS
You sick?

ABDULLAH
I was tired after rehearsal. Come
on in.

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE - NEW JERSEY - DAY -- 1994

The Evans sit down.

EVAN SCOTT
He's... dead.

Abdullah doesn't think he heard him right.

ABDULLAH
Who is -

EVAN EVANS
They found Gabe's car in a ditch.

EVAN DAVID
Police are not ruling
out...suicide.

EVAN EVANS
There is going to be a wake.

Abdullah is silent; he doesn't know what that means.

EVAN DAVID
Open casket for people to say,
say goodbye.

They stand up.

EVAN EVANS
(hesitantly)
Do you want us to pick you up?

Abdullah nods. The Evans leave Abdullah to react. He is quiet.

The SOUND of the doorbell RINGS.

CUT TO:

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE -- EVENING (1994)

Abdullah, dressed in black jeans and a dark shirt, is brushing his hair.

EVAN EVANS
(O.S.)
Hi Mister Ibrahim
Is Abdullah, ready?

ABBAS

(O.S.)

Abdullah's not going to the wake
Evan. His mother and I don't think
it's a good idea.

Abdullah's eyes widen.

ABDULLAH

Yes I am.

He runs to the banister to see the door slam.

His parents are in front of the door.

ABBAS

I'm sorry about your friend.

ABDULLAH

I'm going.

ABBAS

No, you're not.

He starts down the stairs but stops midway and puts his head
against the wall and start banging.

ABDULLAH AT 16

Why did he die?
How could he kill himself?
He had everything - the lead roles.
The looks to be a movie star. The
name for it.

He sits on the stairs, his tears streaming.

He buries his hands in his face.

HIND

It's okay to cry, Abdullah.

ABBAS

From God we came and to HIM is our
return.

ABDULLAH AT 16

What does our religion say about
people who kill themselves because
they're in pain?

ABBAS

Now is the time for grief.

ABDULLAH
Dad. I need to know.

Abbas looks at Hind not knowing what to do.

ABBAS
Taking your own life means hell's
fire.

ABDULLAH
Even if he were hurting so much and
he had an ailment that was
incurable?

Abbas nods.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)
I hate being who --

HIND
Abdullah!

Abdullah goes out the front door.

EXT. SIDEWALK -- EVENING (1994)

Abdullah is walking around in the middle of the street.

A car comes towards him. It stops. He gets on the sidewalk,
looking up, pointing his finger. Mumbling to himself.

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE - BEDROOM -- NIGHT (1994)

Abdullah writes his name down, and then takes out an eraser
and erases it. Then he opens whiteout and whites it out. Then
he takes scissors and cuts it. Taking the paper and crumpling
it into the trash. On a new line paper, he writes, Alex.

EXT. JFK AIRPORT -- EVENING (1994)

A Royal Jordanian aircraft, that looks just like it came off
the assembly line makes its way to a designated gate number.

TITLE: 1994.

INT. JFK AIRPORT - ARRIVALS -- 1994

Our family are standing in the same places: Abbas, Hind stand
with ABDULLAH (16), RASHIED (17) and SHAKER (13).

Rashied is reading John Grisham's *The Firm*. Abdullah has the same video camera his uncle gave him. He has kept it in good condition.

We know it's them because they're standing in the exact same spot when they were last here with the same occasion.

Motasseem, late 30's now, comes up. His hair is shorter and he has a beard. His clothing suggest he's become a serious man. He is still a devastatingly gorgeous man.

ABDULLAH'S VIDEO CAMERA POV

MOTASSEEM
(Arabic)
Peace be upon you.

His sister, thrown off for a minute, returns the greeting.

He gives HIND a look before embracing her with a half smile, then looks at Abdullah.

HIND
What is it my brother?

MOTASSEEM
I don't like to be filmed, turn off
the camera, Abdullah.

Abdullah looks at Rashad, confused.

ABBAS
How are you Many Mo?

He stops him.

MOTASSEEM
Motasseem.

ABDULLAH
Can you take us fishing tomorrow?

SHAKER
Yeah. Dad bought us new fishing
poles.

RASHIED
There's more fish in the Atlantic
Ocean than Lake Dunmore so the
probability of catching is -

Motasseem ignores them and walks ahead.

RASHIED (CONT'D)

-Higher.

EXT. NJ TURNPIKE/MINIVAN -- NIGHT (1994)

Abbas now drives a white minivan 1994 Plymouth voyager.

INT. ABBAS CAR -- NIGHT (1994)

Motassem seems irritated with the popular 1990's Arabic song.

He is not entirely focused on his sister's conversation.

HIND

Yeah mom told me. We hope to come
next year -

MOTASSEM

-Turn that music off Abu Rashied.

The radio is switched off. Everyone is silent. Who is this man?

EXT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT -- NIGHT (1994)

The white voyager is parked along with other cars who have come to dine - it's packed.

The vehicle may have changed but as before, the license plate reads the name of HIND.

INT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT -- NIGHT (1994)

The 24/7 joint is packed and it takes us a few seconds to find our first family. Motassem sits facing Abbas and his family, who are in a booth. In his right hand, rosemary beads.

ABBAS

We pay more taxes than we did when
we were in Vermont.

Motassem is looking at his sister HIND mostly.

HIND

More insurance.

ABDULLAH

But I wouldn't trade it in for the
world.

A 20's something waitress approaches.

Beautiful doesn't quite describe her. She's the most attractive woman anyone has ever seen or will see. Her name tag says "Katay."

KATAY

Hi. I'm Katay. I'll be serving you tonight.

She immediately notices Motassem.

ABDULLAH

You should be an actress Katay.

She reaches into her apron and takes out a mini headshot.

KATAY

Are you a casting director or the son of Steven Spielberg?

They laugh.

She can't keep her eyes off of Motassem -- she even unbuttons the top button of her blouse.

ABDULLAH

I'm an actor and a writer and a director.

Everybody orders and it's now Motassem's turn.

Motassem does not make eye contact with her, although she squats, revealing a little cleavage.

He says something but we can't make it out at first.

KATAY

What's that hon?

Motassem stands up.

MOTASSEM

(shouting)
Manager!

Abdullah is embarrassed.

Abbas and Hind ask him things like "What's the matter?" in Arabic and English.

The Denny's MANAGER approaches. In his early 40's, white hair just beginning, he is confident and his name tag says "Brian."

BRIAN

Yes Sir, I'm Brian. The Denny's manager here in Marlton, may I help-

MOTASSEM

I want someone else to serve us.

Abdullah shakes his head.

ABDULLAH AT 16

No we don't.

Motasseem stares at Abdullah.

Brian tries to keep control of the situation while Katay wonders what she did wrong.

BRIAN

Can you tell me what's wrong? Katay is our best waitress.

Other patrons watch the scene unfold.

MOTASSEM

This best waitress of yours is unprofessional. She is attempting to flirt with me.

Brian looks at Katay.

KATAY

I just smiled at him.

Motasseem shakes his head.

MOTASSEM

Along with your nipples.

There are GASPS.

Katay buttons the top of her blouse.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)

I'm offended. I want someone new.

BRIAN

We apologize. We are kind of busy as you can see. Let her continue to be your waitress and you and your family's meal is on us tonight.

Motasseem storms out.

MOTASSEM
Yalla! Abbas. Hind. Boys, we're
leaving.

They reluctantly get up.

SHAKER
But Khalo Motassem, I want my
sundae.

MOTASSEM
You can have your sundae Shaker at
a restaurant that doesn't have
whores pretending to be waitresses.

The other customers look on in disbelief.

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE/FAMILY ROOM -- NIGHT (1994)

Abbas, Hind, Motassem, Abdullah, Rashied and Shaker walk into
the house.

MOTASSEM
Hind.

HIND
Yes, my brother.

MOTASSEM
Why aren't you wearing a veil?

At first, she thinks that she didn't hear the question right.

Abbas, meanwhile, is doing something secondary when this
conversation becomes primary.

Hind laughs nervously.

HIND
It's not my time, right. God help
me, I will -

Motassem steps up to his sister.

MOTASSEM
Not right. When you will, he won't
help you. And do you guarantee your
time here on earth? 20 years in
this country, you've become
Americanized.

ABBAS
Motassem. Please.

Motassem turns to face him.

MOTASSEM

What? "Don't tell my wife to protect herself from hell's fire?"

He heads up the stairs.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)

You'll burn before her for not hiding your wife from men's eyes and for your boys not praying till now. All your prayers are a waste.

ABBAS

Motassem. I'm 11 years older than you.

He keeps heading up.

ABBAS (CONT'D)

Don't turn your back and walk away like a coward.

This stops him. They both know, and so we do we because we've seen him in action, that he is anything but that.

He heads back down the stairs and right up to the face of Abbas.

HIND

For the love of God. No. Don't hit him, Motassem.

MOTASSEM

In my younger days, I would have hit you for that, Abu Rashied.

Abbas slaps him hard across his face.

None of us saw that coming.

HIND

Abbas! How can do you do that? He hasn't been here for five minutes. He's a guest!

ABBAS

Then he should act like one.

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE - VERMONT - BOYS BEDROOM -- NIGHT (1994)

They listen to the argument of Abbas and HIND.

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE - KITCHEN -- DAY (1994)

Hind is deep into cooking Matluba.

SERIES OF SHOTS ON THE ARABIC CUISINE; CHICKEN, RICE. EGG PLANT. CAULIFLOWER.

Cooking, doing the dishes, she even waters the plants.

Talks to them in Arabic and English.

The phone rings.

HIND

Hello?

(reluctant)

Yes, sure, no problem, Carol.

I can have Shaker bring it to you.

She listens.

Abdullah? Yeah, he's here, but he might be doing homework. A break. Yeah. He could use that.

She hangs up the phone.

HIND CONT'D

Abdullah! Abdullah!

He comes in, holding a video camera.

He is filming everything around and we see from his POV.

ABDULLAH

This is mom.

Or in Arabic, momma.

As Hind.

HIND

Get that out of my face.

ABDULLAH AT 16

You want to come with me to the Oscars or not?

HIND

Go now!

ABDULLAH

Where?

She hands him the punch bowl.

HIND

Oh.
Bring this to Mrs. Stein
Tell her thank you.
And don't be gone long.

He leaves with the camera and the punch bowl.

HIND CONT'D

(to herself)
She's lonely.

EXT. STEIN HOUSE -- DAY (1994)

Abdullah rings the doorbell. No answer, but the door is partially open, so he pushes it open.

ABDULLAH

Nick? Margo?
Mrs. Stein?

WOMAN

(Texan accent)
In here.
Come in Abdullah.

INT. STEIN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM -- DAY (1994)

SOFT CHRISTIAN ROCK plays on the stereo player.

Abdullah comes from around the corner, holding the punch bowl and filming with the video camera.

His eyes widen when he finds:

CAROL STEIN, 30's, dark hair, tan, is in a two piece bikini.

She is doing seductive exercises.

From the POV of the camera, there is an unopen bottle of wine, and a bottle on the floor.

ABDULLAH

Mrs. Stein?

She laughs.

MRS. STEIN
(Texan)
Call me Carol.

ABDULLAH AT 16
I brought your punch bowl.

MRS. STEIN
And a video camera.
How kinky.
Put down the punch bowl.
And come on over here.

Hesitantly, he does while continuing to film.

He pans to the stereo.

MRS. STEIN (CONT'D)
It's Amy Grant.
Christian rock makes me feel
less guilty about this whole thing
when Delbert is out of town.

ABDULLAH
But Mrs. Stein, you're --

MRS. STEIN
Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

The camera is in her face and she is talking to the audience.

MRS. STEIN (CONT'D)
Now tell me, has my favorite
little Muslim ever heard of a
Lesbian?

ABDULLAH
Is that a French food?

CUT TO:

EXT. STREET -- DAY (1994)

Abdullah runs across the street, holding the camera.

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE -- DAY (1994)

He runs in but doesn't close the front door.

HIND
(O.S.)
Abdullah

He looks at the stairs but decides to go into the guest bathroom.

The SOUND of the KEY LOCKING.

CUT TO:

EXT. NEW JERSEY JEWISH TEMPLE -- EVENING (1994)

Not a large crowd. A Rabbi is giving a sermon - English and Hebrew. Seated among the Jewish crowd is Evan David, Evan Evans and Abdullah. All are wearing the kipa.

INTERCUT

INT. BATHROOM

Abbas washes up for prayer, performing the Muslim washing ritual, known as Wadu.

INT. ABBAS MASTER BEDROOM -- NIGHT (1994)

Abbas prays.

CUT TO:

INT. DAVID RESIDENCE -- NIGHT (1994)

Sleepover at Evan David's home. Evan Evans is there too.

Abdullah takes out the little cassette and Evan Evans puts it into the VHS player.

A little black poodle comes into the room.

EVAN DAVID
Black pepper. Go.

The dog goes.

INSERT TV SCREEN

Carol is dancing slow with a woman much younger than her. Although she is wearing a one piece bathing suit, somehow it is much more sexier than the two piece. Both have pieces of paper in their hand.

EVAN DAVID
"Black pepper" come back.

The dog returns.

EVAN DAVID (CONT'D)
Lap.

She barks and sits in his lap.

Evan David bleats and kisses her.

ON SCREEN CAROL
(reading from the paper)
How long have you been looking at
me, Heidi?

ON SCREEN HEIDI
(whisper)
Don't use my real name.
I told you don't use my real name.
Use the name I gave you.

ONSCREEN CAROL
(to the camera)
You can edit that
out, right?

ABDULLAH AT 16
(whispers)
Yes.

ON SCREEN CAROL
What was that?

The camera nods: Yes!

ON SCREEN CAROL (CONT'D)
(Reading)
So how long have you been watching
me Frannie on fire?

ONSCREEN HEIDI
(reading)
Since you moved in.

ONSCREEN CAROL
 (reading)
 But you have a boyfriend.

ONSCREEN HEIDI
 (reading)
 And you have a husband.

Carol grabs her hair and brings her close and the two clumsily make out.

ONSCREEN CAROL
 I think we're supposed
 to do that, right Abdullah?

The camera nods in the same comedic fashion as before.

ABDULLAH AT 16
 (O.S.)
 If that's what the script says.

They dance and make out, clumsily. Amy Grant gets LOUDER.

"Black Pepper" jumps out from her owner's lap.

EVAN DAVID
 Good girl.
 (to the screen)
 Good girls.

INSERT TV

The words, "Written & Directed By Abdullah Abbas" appear.

The video ends.

They look at him.

EVAN EVANS
 You directed a porno before I could
 direct a porno.

ABDULLAH
 Not just a porno.
 There was a story there.

Pause. Then they start laughing.

Evan David's MOM and DAD come in.

MR. DAVID
 You guys finish watching a movie?

They nod not knowing how long they've been standing outside of the door.

MRS. DAVID

There's oven pizza downstairs,

She yawns. They walk away. The best friends laugh again.

CUT TO:

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE - FAMILY ROOM -- NIGHT (1994)

Abbas is massaging Hind's feet.

It's not hard to tell - how crazy in love these two are.

Shaker is watching The Brady Bunch re-runs on Nick at night.

Motassem walks in. Rashied, too.

ABBAS

Done pre-cal Rashied?

RASHIED

Yeah. Oh not The Brady Bunch again.

SHAKER

There's a marathon.

MOTASSEM

Abdullah didn't come back from the movies?

HIND

He's with the Evans.

ABBAS

They saw a movie and he's sleeping over.

Motassem reacts, unhappily about that.

EXT. EVAN'S HOUSE - PORCH -- NIGHT

They sit on the porch.

Pizza plates. Pizza crusts. Soda.

At the moment, Abdullah and EVAN DAVID are sharing a cigarette.

EVAN EVANS

Your Dad really wants you
to go overseas?

ABDULLAH

He says I'm forgetting my roots.
And becoming too American.

EVAN DAVID

Didn't he come here on a boat when
he was like six years old?

ABDULLAH

Four, yeah, with his older sister.

EVAN SCOTT

So no one is more
American than he is.

ABDULLAH

We fight all the time over this.
My brothers want to go there
to live. I tell him just
because they're learning
to read and write Arabic.
It doesn't mean I have to.
If I went there to live,
I would probably spend 20 years
there and still never learn the
language.

EVAN EVANS

And have four wives?

EVAN DAVID

And four girls?

EVAN EVANS

The situation is nuts over there.
Would a man really give up a job?
Say goodbye to America forever?
To take his family to a dangerous
place so they won't forget their
roots?

ABDULLAH

Not any man no. But my Dad would.
Maybe if I was not. I wanna be
Jewish.

The Evans look at each other.

EVAN EVANS
I think it's really cool that you
want to learn about Judaism.

Evan David agrees.

EVAN DAVID
But forget about converting.

Abdullah is confused.

EVAN EVANS
(reciting)
"You will have bad times, but they
will always wake you up to the
stuff you weren't paying attention
to."

ABDULLAH
The Torah?

EVAN EVANS/EVAN DAVID
Robin Williams.

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE -- DAY (1994)

Mr. David pulls up with Abdullah and the Evans.

He gets out of the car. He waves goodbye to the Evans and
when he turns back, Motassem is standing at the wooden gate
that leads into the backyard.

ABDULLAH
Uncle Motassem?

He walks to gate, and pushes it open to find Motassem sitting
at a picnic table in the middle polishing a .22 Caliber
rifle.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)
Where's mom and dad?

Abdullah notices the bullets for the first time.

MOTASSEM
They went to pick up the pizzas.

ABDULLAH
Couldn't they have been delivered?

Motassem looks at him and nods at him condescendingly and
ignorantly.

MOTASSEM

Yes, Abdullah. But I suggested it.
Because I wanted to have a little
accident - a little *talk* with you.

Using the gun, he indicates for him to sit next to him.

He walks over to him slowly.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)

I don't like your friends. I don't
want them to be your friends. We
don't make friends with people who
don't want to be friends with
anyone.

He starts loading the bullets. Abdullah gets the threat.
Motassem bursts out laughing, startling Abdullah.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)

Sorry. Didn't mean to startle you.
But I just remembered - I just
remembered the time that I took you
and Rashied hunting and you almost
killed a man. For the lives of your
friends, I don't know why I brought
that up.

ABDULLAH

(hard to speak)

I look up to you more than Dad.

MOTASSEM

And I look down on them. Whole
world does, by the way. Which is
why if you tell dad about our
little talk, buddy...

He opens his hand and reveals two bullets.

He checks his watch.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)

Come and join me in prayer.

Abdullah doesn't move.

Motassem picks up the weapon.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)

I wasn't asking.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- LATE AFTERNOON (1994)

Abdullah prays next to Motassem. The camera goes to Abdullah's face, as the tears roll down his cheeks.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

ON SCREEN

ABDULLAH is acting in a music video. A few seconds later, he crosses himself.

INT. SCHOOL AUDITORIUM -- NIGHT (1994)

Abbas covers his mouth in horror and stands up immediately and leaves up the aisle.

ABDULLAH
(whispering)
Dad, sit down.

Abdullah is not sure what to do.

Rashid goes after him. Abdullah can't focus on the movie.

Rashid returns and shakes his head at Abdullah.

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY -- NIGHT (1994)

Abbas is drinking from a water fountain. He throws the water in his eyes.

Abdullah finds him.

ABDULLAH
It's just a movie, Dad.

Abbas turns to his son and Abdullah is taken back to find his dad had been crying, despite the attempt to hide it.

ABBAS
Every day I go to work and I don't want to. I don't want to be there. Want to know why? Because I know what I'm being paid to do is being used against people like us. I deal with it. With difficulty until a better option comes that gets us out of the hole.

He paces.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
Crossing yourself?
Renouncing religion?

ABDULLAH
Dad, it's just acting.

ABBAS
So you don't want to be Christian
or Catholic.

ABDULLAH
No. Dad?

ABBAS
Yeah?

ABDULLAH AT 16
You know what Arabs do with their
dates all day?

Abbas has heard this one.

ABBAS
They sit under the tree and eat
their dates. It's a good thing I
don't allow you to go on dates.

CUT TO:

INT. VERA'S CAR -- DAY (1994)

Parked in a parking lot, Abdullah makes out with 16 year old
VERA. She is Asian.

He touches the cross on around her neck, pretty much the same
way Motassem touched Nehama's star of David. He goes in to
give her a kiss but she stops him.

VERA
Are you sure you're not going to
get into trouble?

He nods his head. Vera checks her watch.

VERA (CONT'D)
We don't want to be late then.

Abdullah and Vera get out of the 1992 maroon Camaro.

They walk into a...church.

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE -- EVENING (1994)

What looks like a nice Arabic meal.

HIND
Motassem's not back?

RASHID
No, he said he will meet us at the
mall after he's done at the mosque.

ABBAS
Even if you change your Arab
Name, you can't change the fact
that you're -

ABDULLAH
(quickly)
Sandnigger? Camel jockey? A-rab?
Terrorist?

Abbas slams the table hard with his fist; the soda spills on
everyone. He takes off his belt.

HIND
Abbas no!

His brothers are too terrified to do anything. So are we.

We never saw Abbas like this.

ABBAS
Monday.

He puts his belt on like he's going to work everyday.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
I'll drive you to court and you can
change your name. I don't want the
drama and yet the drama finds me.

EXT. MOORESTOWN MALL - NEW JERSEY -- EVENING (1994)

Mall security runs.

They are joined by POLICE OFFICERS.

INT. MOORESTOWN MALL - NEW JERSEY -- EVENING (1994)

Abdullah follows the police to

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE

In the dressing room, a man is praying but we cannot make out his face but can guess who.

Guns are pulled on him.

Abdullah's face turns white when the man finishes because the man is:

Motassem.

Abdullah runs.

MOTASSEM
I was just praying.

INT. MOORESTOWN MALL - AUNTIE EM PRETZEL STAND

Abbas and Hind are eating and drinking coffee.

From across the mall, we see Abdullah approaching his parents. He explains. A second later, Abbas and Hind are no longer at the table.

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE - NEW JERSEY -- NIGHT (1994)

The minivan pulls into the driveway.

Abbas, Hind, Motassem, Abdullah and his brothers get out of the car without saying a word to each other.

Abbas is noticeably upset.

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE -- NIGHT (1994)

They sit in the family room.

Hind takes out a tea kettle.

HIND
Rashid, can you get me some mint
please?

Rashid opens the sliding door and goes out back.

HIND (CONT'D)
Mint calms the nerves.

MOTASSEM

You want to ask me something, Abu Rashid, do it. If not, stop staring at me.

ABBAS

Boys, go to bed.

Rashid hands his mom the mint.

The three start for the stairs, when -

MOTASSEM

No. They should hear this.

They stop.

ABBAS

Hear what? Me telling you that you shouldn't pray in public. I pray okay. And the only time to pray in a public place is at the mosque. Not the mall or otherwise.

MOTASSEM

Why are you scared of them?

ABBAS

There are people out there who are scared. They see an Arab man with a beard. And he's praying. They don't think to themselves, oh how nice, he's blessing the lingerie department at Sears. They think, "This man is going to do something. Let me call the police."

MOTASSEM

Then move.

ABBAS

It's going to happen in every state.

Motassem shakes his head. That's not what he means.

Hind brings over the tea along with three of the tea cups, gold rim, that they use in that part of the world.

Abdullah enters, shorts and tee shirt and playing with a plastic baseball bat.

MOTASSEM

Get out of the whole United States.

Abdullah shakes his head at that.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)

Your sons are going to have a hard life here. My sister is going to have a hard time here. Here, we'll always be foreigners. And we'll never be welcome. And a president will come along to enforce a ban on Muslims, preventing them, us from entering the country.

ABDULLAH

Dad, I don't want to go over there. I'm going to Hollywood.

Motassem laughs.

MOTASSEM

You'll never make it there buddy because the Jews run it.

ABDULLAH

Don't say that.

MOTASSEM

It's true. They'll never accept an Arab. An Arab can never win an Oscar. And if you're counting on Evan and Evan, the dynamic jew-o to get you in, they'll stab you in the back the first chance they get.

ABDULLAH

Don't talk about my best friends.

Hind reacts.

HIND

Abdullah! Don't raise your voice to your uncle, right.

MOTASSEM

Friends? The other day when I asked Evan "Promise me that you're not going to forget me when you're famous." He couldn't even say Okay.

ABDULLAH

Because he knows you hate him.

MOTASSEM

Because they break promises, not
keep them and they'll sell you out
buddy.

ABDULLAH

I'm not going to tell dad about
what you did in the backyard.
But I'm not your buddy anymore.

He heads away from him.

ABBAS

What happened in the backyard?

Motasseem laughs.

MOTASSEM

You're choosing to defend them over
me? See Abbas? This is exactly why
he should be the first one to be
sent there.

Abdullah stops.

ABDULLAH

Dad? Uncle Motasseem threatened to
kill my friends Evan and Evan.

HIND

(looks at Motasseem)
He was joking, right?

Motasseem is staring at Abdullah who keeps looking at him.

ABBAS

I don't agree with a lot of
policies but one thing I don't
agree with is teaching my children
hatred. Is Abdullah telling the
truth Motasseem? Did you threaten to
kill these boys?

Not taking his eyes off of Abdullah, Motasseem says:

MOTASSEM

Well, Hind's oven is not big enough
to burn them alive now, is it?

Abdullah charges to Motasseem and hits him on the knee with
the plastic baseball bat.

He drops the bat and runs up the stairs.

Motassem takes off his belt and follows him closely.

Abbas and Hind run after him.

He makes it to the top of the stairs when Motassem grabs him and throws him into his bedroom.

The door closes. And we HEAR the lock turn.

Abdullah is crying out for help.

We can't see it but the SOUNDS of the BELT hitting the skin are enough to make us cringe.

Abbas and Hind scream for the door to open.

Shaker cries. Rashid comforts him.

Hind slides down the door until Motassem comes out and storms down the stairs.

Hind screams at him in Arabic. We don't have to understand the language to know she is kicking him out.

Abbas runs into the bedroom to see Abdullah hurt pretty bad. His legs are red and there are belt marks. He is hurt but not crying.

INT. MOTASSEM'S BEDROOM

SERIES OF SHOTS

A WOMAN'S HANDS throws a suitcase on the bed. The same WOMAN'S HANDS open closet. The hands grab the men's clothes, and throw them into the suitcase.

The WOMAN'S HANDS belong to:

Hind.

As she opens the drawers and empties it.

She closes the suitcase.

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE --DAY (1994)

The suit case is set on the patio.

INT. ABDULLAH & RASHIED'S BEDROOM

Abdullah is on his bed, visibly upset. He looks at the photos taped to the wall:

The PHOTOS - Abdullah and Uncle Motassem when they were both younger. Fishing. At the college cafeteria. In a boat. The good ole days.

Abdullah takes the photos down one by one and then somehow he begins to crumble them one by one.

He throws them in a small Transformers waste basket. Looking out, the window and into the backyard, he finds:

Motassem sitting on their wooden swing, smoking.

After a few moments of watching him, he notices his mom approach his Uncle Motassem.

She says something to him.

Motassem nods. Hind walks back inside.

An airport taxi waits outside.

Motassem grabs his suitcase and walks to the car as everyone but Abdullah look on. Motassem utters something to Abbas who looks at Hind and shakes her head.

CUT TO:

EXT. FREEHOLD NEW JERSEY MUSLIM CEMETERY -- AFTERNOON (1994)

Hind is crying. Abdullah, in his pajamas, looks over and sees Rashid and Shaker in tears.

A wooden box.

Not like the fancy coffins we see. It's just a beige box, being lowered into the ground.

ABDULLAH
Rashid who's in there?

Rashid shakes his head.

RASHID
Stop the stupid acting.

He looks at Shaker.

SHAKER

Yeah Abdullah, Dad wouldn't like that.

Dad.

ABDULLAH

Shaker, where is Dad?

Like something out of Charles Dickens A Christmas Carol, Hind, Shaker, and Rashid point to the grave.

If done right, it will give us chills.

ABDULLAH POV

He looks over and sees Abbas lying in the wooden box.

INT. BOYS BEDROOM -- MORNING (1994)

Abdullah opens his eyes which are full of tears.

For a moment, he lies in bed, looking up and quietly sobbing.

The red digits of the Alarm clock read 5:23.

Abdullah listens for a moment.

Abdullah hears ABBAS VOICE. At first, it SOUNDS like he is reading Koran OUT LOUD.

He gets out of bed.

INT. CORRIDOR

He walks to the stairs. He looks into his parents master bedroom to see Hind sleeping. He holds on to the banister and disappears down the stairs.

INT. FOYER

He continues down the stairs and it's clear, Abbas is quietly SINGING.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Coming across the corner, Abdullah finds Abbas, sitting at the piano. Coffee in one day, hitting the key with his right. His voice isn't too bad. Actually, it's quite good.

While Abdullah doesn't know the name of the song, he does recognize it to be a show tune.

ABDULLAH

Dad?

Abbas is startled but not enough to spill coffee or anything cliché like that.

ABBAS

What are you doing up?

Abdullah looks at Abbas, probably thinking "You're alive, when I just had a dream that you were dead."

ABDULLAH

Dad?

Abbas notices the sweat on his son's forehead. He may be shaking a little too.

INT. KITCHEN

Abdullah and Abbas sit at the kitchen table in front of the sliding glass door; both drinking coffee.

The sprinkler system switches on and waters the backyard grass.

ABBAS

It means I'm going to have a fulfilling life.

Abdullah gives him a look of relief.

ABDULLAH

Did you become what you wanted to be when you grew up?

ABBAS

Forty four came fast. I'm a father and a husband. Yalla, two out of three ain't bad, eh?

ABDULLAH

What's the third thing you wanted to be?

Abbas glances at him as if to say, "I think you know."

Abdullah's eyes light up.

ABBAS

In 1974, I was at Berkeley and your Uncle Samer and this other guy, Joe, we had lunch with this man who asked us to be involved in a little science fiction project he was working on. I told him I would think about it after I got back from the Middle East. And Samer, well, he mocked him. Joe was the only one to say yes to George. That was his name. Well the Joe was Joe Johnston. And the Georege -

ABDULLAH

George Lucas. Oh my God. Star Wars.

Abbas nods as Abdullah's face lights up.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)

You had a chance to work on the biggest movies in cinematic history?

Abbas nods. There's an expression on his face. It may be regret but that wouldn't fit his character. It's something else.

ABBAS

When I was over there, George telephoned and asked me one more time, saying he needed an answer because he was going to start pre-production and would be busy with this the rest of his life. I told him I was getting married. And nothing else was more important. He congratulated me and I never heard from him again.

ABDULLAH

And you never tried to get back in touch with him?

Abbas laughs, shaking his head: no.

ABBAS

Your Uncle Samer tried. George Lucas wouldn't take his call and then he showed up to his ranch and security escorted him out faster than light speed.

A moment of silence.

ABDULLAH
You don't regret turning him down?

ABBAS
If I had, you and your brothers
wouldn't have been born.

He checks his watch and stands up.

ABBAS (CONT'D)
Now, believe it or not, son. I do
work at work and better get there.

ABDULLAH
Dad will you please take me to
court next week?

Abbas shakes his head.

ABBAS
I won't go in with you. But I'll
still love you, support you, no
matter what your name is. But you
once loved that you were Muslim.
There are plenty of Sanabels in the
sea.

He leaves with Abdullah in awe reminding him of his first
love -- the Arabic teacher.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL CAFETERIA -- DAY (1994)

Abdullah at 16 is beaming as the lunch crew look on in shock.

Amanda is signing Abdullah's yearbook.

AMANDA
So what should I write -
Abdullah - Alexander Errickson.

EVAN DAVID
You're kidding.

ABDULLAH
Now I have a shot at acting
At Hollywood. That was what was
slowing me down.

EVAN EVANS
It's not the name.

ABDULLAH
It's all in the name, EVAN EVANS.

EVAN DAVID
I don't like it.

EVAN DAVID (CONT'D)
You don't look like an Alex.

ABDULLAH
Adam?

EVAN EVANS
You look like an Abdullah.

AMANDA
That's because that's all we've
known him as for four years.

ABDULLAH
Right. Amanda is with me.

AMANDA
Now, you're asking your best
friends to call you something else?
That's selfish.

She leaves the table.

EVAN DAVID
Think it over.

ABDULLAH
I have.

EVAN DAVID
What does Mrs. Ibrahim think?

EVAN EVANS
She doesn't like it.
Not only because Abdullah, excuse
me Alex, the writer/actor formerly
known as Abdullah, was named after
Her father, his grandfather.
What about your younger brother?

ABDULLAH
He's too young -

EVAN EVANS
To understand?

Abdullah nods.

EVAN SCOTT shakes his head.

EVAN EVANS (CONT'D)
He lookS up to you. What's that
going to be like?

ABDULLAH
What?

EVAN EVANS
When you come home and you're
not Abdullah?

He hadn't thought about this.

EVAN EVANS (CONT'D)
You're going to Los Angeles. You
may break in. Hell it could happen
this year. And you could get
nominated for an Oscar. Emma
Thompson comes out and says "and
the Oscar for the best actor goes
to Alexander Errickson."

ABDULLAH
That's going to be wonderful.

EVAN EVANS
Is it? Tell me. How?

ABDULLAH
What do you mean, how? I won.

EVAN EVANS
I who? Which "I?" Alex or Abdullah?
Don't tell me they're both the same
guy. Because they're not. All your
life, so you tell us, you've had
this, dream. And you finally make
it. Get nominated. Win.
But not as Abdullah Abbas Ibrahim
but as Alexander Errickson.

EVAN EVANS leaves.

EVAN DAVID
We know you're upset about what
happened with your anti-Semitic
religious fanatic of an Uncle. And
about Gabe but Gabe became friends
with Abdullah, not Alex.

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE -- EVENING (1994)

Another heated argument.

ABBAS

Changing your name is one thing but I won't, under any circumstance, allow you to go to the prom.

HIND

Get dressed up. Tuxedo. You can do that on your wedding day.

ABBAS

And you can't have a wedding night on your prom night.

ABDULLAH

But I'm a senior and all my friends are going.

HIND

And in nine months all your friends are going to be fathers and mothers, right.

ABDULLAH

Can I at least date then?

Abbas shakes his head.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)

But Uncle Motassem dated and had a Jewish girlfriend.

ABBAS

What Motassem did when he was younger was wrong.

ABDULLAH

Because she was Jewish.

ABBAS

Because it was wrong.
We don't date.

ABDULLAH

But all my friends go out on dates and their parents make a big deal of it. They take pictures. They brag. Guy friends get to have girlfriends. Girls in my class, boyfriends.

ABBAS

If your friends jump off the
bridge, will you jump too?

HIND

When it comes time, we'll find
someone and arrange it -

The word "arrange" bothers him. He shakes his head profusely.

ABDULLAH

I'm not getting one of those mail
order brides.

HIND

Oh ours don't come in the mail,
right. You have to go to her Dad's
house, ask for her, and when the
price is agreed on, you can pick
her up, marry her and take her
home.

ABBAS

This discussion is over.

The doorbell rings and RANA enters. Although she has a child,
is a single mom, she could pass for a senior in high school.

RANA

Did I miss a fight? Can I do
anything?

Hind and Abbas look at each other.

CUT TO:

EXT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE - PORCH -- EVENING

Shaker is laughing more than anybody. Rana is smoking. Abbas
is enjoying a cigar.

ABBAS

Shaker stop that.
You wanted to go to the prom?

HIND

This is the only way.

ABDULLAH

I don't want to go that bad
to go with a woman that age.

RANA

I am not offended. It would be fun.

TITLE CARD: Three months later...

EXT. VOORHEES MANSION -- NIGHT (1994)

Limousines pull up and couples get out.

It's prom night - but it might as well be a red carpet event.

Valets have even been hired. Flash photography. Then Hind's minivan pulls up. She gets out and is dressed in the traditional Palestinian tobe.

Next Abdullah gets out and he is dressed, not in a tux, but in a brown suit that was made for someone one size bigger than him.

He is embarrassed. Rana, on the other hand, is living it up. Dragging him to take a picture. Waving as if she's been nominated for more Oscars than Meryl Streep.

PROM HECKLER

Hey Abdullah, brought his mom-

RANA

No, actually. I'm a friend of his mothers.

Abdullah puts his head down. Rana notices.

RANA (CONT'D)

Not a friend of his mother. His Aunt?

Abdullah shakes his head.

PROM HECKLER

What a loser.

PROM HECKLER 2

Didn't know mothers banged their sons in that part of the world.

RANA

Bang! Bang! I shot you down.

She laughs. Abdullah moans.

INT. VOORHEES MANSION -- NIGHT (1994)

The theme is old black and white films.

EVAN DAVID and EVAN EVANS come up with their dates. Dana, African-American, is with Steven and while NORA, unhappy, is with EVAN DAVID.

They are shocked to see him.

EVAN DAVID
Wow! You made it.

EVAN EVANS
Your parents let you come?

He looks around.

EVAN SCOTT
Where's Vera Vakman?

ABDULLAH
I didn't come with Vera.

EVAN DAVID and EVAN EVANS look at each other with curiosity.

EVAN DAVID
You came alone. That's what I should have done.

Abdullah shakes his head. He indicates for them to look over towards the punch bowl. Hind is drinking punch.

EVAN EVANS/EVAN DAVID
Mrs. Ibrahim?!

EVAN EVANS
At least you made it.

EVAN DAVID
Yeah, unlike me, you might have fun.

Abdullah shakes his head.

ABDULLAH
I'm leaving.

He exits. Rana stands at the punch bowl with a drunk student.

DRUNK STUDENT
Want to have some real punch?

EXT. VOORHEES MANSION - PARKING LOT - NJ - EVENING -- 1994

Abdullah is in the parking lot.

ABDULLAH

I can get through one night. It's
just one night.

INT. VOORHEES MANSION -- EVENING (1994)

Abdullah comes back in and his eyes widen as he finds:

Rana -- on the stage and wasted. But the crowd is loving her.
*room for ad-lib.

RANA

The cops bulled me
over one night, right. And the
officer is like do you know why I
stopped you? Stopped me? Honey, I
didn't know we got started. He's
like. No, mam. Why I pulled you
over. To ask me out?

The Seniors laugh.

RANA (CONT'D)

(As the cop)

License and registration. Marriage
license? Shame on you, I'm married.
But give me a month and I'll have a
registration paber that says I'm
divorced.

Laughter.

RANA CONT'D

Prom night?

They cheer.

RANA CONT'D

Everyone ready to have sex, right.

They cheer louder.

RANA CONT'D (CONT'D)

Looking at me I don't think you
believed it, but this body has had
sex once.

They cheer and whistle.

RANA CONT'D (CONT'D)
 Nine months later it was crying and
 his name was Tareq.

Nervous laughter.

RANA
 Ladies, are you going to say no
 tonight?

HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS
 Yes.

RANA
 Guys are you okay with that?

HIGH SCHOOL BOYS
 No.

RANA
 But look at the bright side -- I'm
 drunk. For the first time ever.

The High school seniors cheer her on. Abdullah looks at the
 reaction.

RANA CONT'D
 And on stage showing off this great
 bod. Who can ask for anything more?
 Good -
 (burps)
 Night. Oh wait. Wait.

They clap, cheer. The Prom Hecklers from before turn to
 Abdullah.

PROM HECKLER 1
 Your date is the coolest.

PROM HECKLER 2
 Yeah is your mom married?

Abdullah watches as Rana takes out a cassette tape from her
 purse and gives it to the Dee Jay.

Fade up: Popular 90's Arabic song. Nour El Ein - Amr Diab

She starts doing a dance to it with the kids, who slowly then
 gradually get into it more and more.

INT. RANA'S BROWN VOLVO -- NIGHT (1994)

Abdullah is driving.

Rana is wild. Rolling her window down. Hollering.

RANA
Oh what a night!

Abdullah smiles but is quiet.

RANA (CONT'D)
Why is my prom date glum?

ABDULLAH AT 16
It's nothing.

RANA
Still embarrassed.

EXT - ABBAS RESIDENCE -- NIGHT

The brown volvo pulls up to the Abbas residence.

ABDULLAH
About my behavior at
home -

She hushes him opens the car door.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)
Wait. You're going to go in there?

RANA
Without alcohol would be rude?

ABDULLAH
No, I mean like...this.

RANA
Like what?

She gets out of the car and falls.

She burps. He opens his car door and runs to her and picks her up.

HIND
Just get me to the front door. And
I'll be fine.

He walks with her, the front door opens -

Abbas, Hind, Rashid and Shaker who look like they're ready to crack up.

As if nothing is wrong with her, Rana walks in absolutely fine.

Abdullah is left standing at the door, confused.

INT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE -- EVENING (1994)

They are all seated in the living room, as if they were around a camp fire.

ABBAS
Well, Abdullah?

ABDULLAH
We had fun.

Rashid and Shaker crack up all that they have been holding it in.

Even Abbas laughs, before Rana quiets him down.

ABDULLAH (CONT'D)
We know we did, don't we mom?

RANA
Could have danced all night.

Hind brings the baby.

RANA (CONT'D)
But the one I'll dance with forever
is my baby Tareq.

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE - NIGHT - 1994

The sound of the night insects, Abdullah walks Rana to the car. She puts the seat belt on the car seat.

Abdullah is waiting for an explanation.

RANA
I was acting.

His face "drops."

FLASHBACK

INT. VOORHEES MANSION - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

At the punch bowl.

DRUNK STUDENT

Do you want to drink real punch?

He pours alcohol into her drink.

RANA (V.O.)

He poured the alcohol in the punch.
He handed it to me. When he was
carefully pouring his -

She dumps it just as he looks up.

RANA (V.O.)

- I dumped it out.

SERIES OF SHOTS

RANA taking alcohol punch from same guy and dumping it.

RANA

(V.O.)

I just kept doing that all night.
The art of illusion. David
Cobberfield would be out of a job.
Men really don't pay attention to
women.

Abdullah looks star struck.

ABDULLAH

Thank you for taking me to the
prom.

RANA

You made me happy.

He still looks like he has something on his mind.

RANA (CONT'D)

Life can hit you hard sometime,
Abdullah and that's okay. Just
don't let people.

ABDULLAH

I think a lot less seniors
will be having sex tonight.

RANA

That was kind of funny.

They both laugh.

RANA (CONT'D)

You can change a lot of things but
not who you are.

She drives away.

INT. IBRAHIM RESIDENCE - KITCHEN -- MORNING (1994)

Abdullah runs down the stairs to find his father making
coffee.

ABBAS

Still Monday.

ABDULLAH

What?

ABBAS

You want to change your name to
Alex Errickson.

ABDULLAH

Yeah.

ABBAS

You're still going to the court to
change it Monday. I'll drop you off
before I go to work.

ABDULLAH

Aren't you going to give me the
speech that changing my name
doesn't only mean just changing my
name but who I am and where I come
from?

ABBAS

Go to school, Alex.

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE -- DAY (1994)

Bus drops off Abdullah just as the mail comes.

He opens the mail and goes through it, like we all used to,
and he finds a letter addressed to him with a bunch of
postage stamps and Arabic writing and Hebrew writing - it's a
letter from the Middle East!

He opens the envelope to find a photo of a baby boy.

He turns it over.

MOTASSEM

(Reading)

It's official: Abdullah meet
Abdullah. I named him after you.
When he grows up maybe he can visit
you and you can teach him how to
fish. You're a better teacher than
me. Love, Khalo Motassem.

There is a second photo: Motassem and Nehama. Abdullah looks at it confusingly. It's been ripped from the middle and taped back again. There is writing on the back. He starts reading but we:

FLASHBACK

INT. JFK AIRPORT - DEPARTURES -- EVENING (1985)

Motassem looks behind him and sees Abbas, Hind, Abdullah, Rashied and Shaker waving back at him. He turns his head forward and a big smile comes on his face and he picks up speed. Then the face turns to surprise. His pace slows. Then sad.

Motassem's POV

Nehama is in wearing the uniform of an...Israeli soldier.

They hug but its awkward because Motassem pulls away. TWO ARAB PASSENGERS look at Motassem and shake their heads in disgust. Nehama pulls her hair back. She turns and spins. Israeli soldier or not, she looks spectacular, the uniform exuding the physique of her perfect body.

NEHAMA

What do you think?

MOTASSEM

What do I - what are you thinking?
What is...this?

Because he is so stunned and heartbroken, it may sound as if he is stuttering.

Nehama, who still loves him, responds to his question with a half smile.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)

Answer me Nehama. You don't have to
do this just because your father -

NEHAMA
 (overlapping)
 I want to do.."this."

MOTASSEM
 You wan- but we -

A MIDDLE EASTERN NEWLYWED COUPLE walks by and gives them both a death stare.

MOTASSEM (CONT'D)
 - love each other.

NEHAMA
 (Quickly)
 I love my country.

Translation: I don't love you anymore.

NEHAMA (CONT'D)
 It was fun. That's all it was.

NEHAMA (CONT'D)
 That's all it could ever be.
 Shalom, Motassem.

She walks away, Motassem heart broken.

END FLASHBACK

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE -- DAY (1994)

Abdullah reacts.

EXT. MARLTON COURT HOUSE -- MORNING (1994)

Abbas minivan pulls up to the courthouse.

Abdullah doesn't say anything.

ABBAS
 You better go before you miss your
 appointment.

Abdullah gets out as Abbas rolls down the window, not sure what Abdullah's going to say. He extends his hand.

ABDULLAH
 And you better go before the cops
 ask you to move.

Abbas nods, smiles.

ABBAS

Don't worry...Abdullah.

Abdullah runs into the courthouse, but we stay with Abbas.

He pulls up to the yellow light, which he can easily make, but, as before, he doesn't chance it, and it turns to red.

We're not sure but we think we see a tear rolling down his face, then:

SMASH! GREH! A semi tractor trailer slams into Abbas minivan, thrusting him forward - his forehead cracks the windshield. And he is pinned. His eyes become lifeless as he looks at us.

INT. MARLTON COURT HOUSE -- DAY (1994)

An EMPLOYEE, holding a clipboard, is talking to Abdullah.

There is the SOUND of a POLICE SIREN.

COURT EMPLOYEE

Are you Abdullah Abbas Ibrahim?

She butchers his name, as he stares at her again.

ABDULLAH

What?

She lets out a frustrating breath, rolling her eyes.

COURT EMPLOYEE

Are you Abdullah Abbas Ibrahim?

He gets it. He nods excitedly. He shakes her hand.

The SOUND of the POLICE SIRENS is louder. A fire truck. Ambulance.

She exits. Along with others. And Abdullah.

EXT. MARLTON COURTHOUSE -- DAY (1994)

The minivan or what's left of it sits at a traffic light under a large tractor trailer.

ABDULLAH

No. No. No.

He runs to the vehicle, when a police officer moves him away.

He starts crying and looks in the minivan to see his Dad slumped over, eyes open. He is pressed between the seat and the windshield.

He collapses.

WHITE FILLS THE SCREEN.

SERIES OF SHOTS played to a really pretty song that is the movie's theme, "I don't wanna be someone else, I just gotta learn to be me."

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE -- DAY (1994)

Hind is cleaning the windows and sees: A police car pulls up to the front of the house, with Abdullah inside.

EXT. ABBAS RESIDENCE -- DAY (1994)

Hind is on the front law, tearing but being strong for Abdullah, Rashid, Shaker who she cradles. The Police officer looks on as does Mrs. Stein and other neighbors comfort.

INT. MORGUE (1994)

Hind, Rashid and Shaker are with the coroner.

They've come to say goodbye to Abbas, the body of which lays on a metal table.

Abdullah opens the door.

HIS POV, he slowly approaches his mother, and two brothers.

His eyes go to his father.

BACK TO ABDULLAH

He is unbalanced, grabs for the slab Abbas is on and falls, pulling down the white sheet with him.

EXT. MUSLIM CEMETERY -- DAY (1994)

They are standing around the grave. It's very similar if not extremely the same as Abdullah's earlier dream.

BLACK.

TITLE CARD: 40 Days Later...

FADE IN:

INT. ABBAS RESIDENCE -- DAY (1994)

Hind is about to pull out of the driveway when she sees Abdullah in the rearview mirror. Hind does not want to make eye contact with him but reluctantly pushes the switch which rolls down the window.

ABDULLAH
Can I drive?

Rashied and Shaker holding Arabic textbooks look up.

Hind takes off her seat belt and slides into the passenger seat. Abdullah gets in.

He stops the CD player and puts in a cassette tape.

ABBAS
(V.O.)
I just left you guys for another long drive from Middlebury to Palmyra. And I miss you more than anything. I am on the road about to begin the six hour commute. All this to give you guys a better life. I have a good feeling.

Hind's minivan pulls out of the driveway and turns on to the street. It goes down the street as Abbas's voice continues.

The wheels of the voyager spin and we pan up to find we are now in:

INT. ABBAS'S CAR -- DAY (1989)

As he drives, Abbas records into a cassette recorder.

ABBAS
Rashied - you're going to be in medical school for a long time so don't be too overwhelmed. You're destined for greatness but pace yourself. Shaker - you will have options, I sound like a fortune teller, but you could be a doctor or a movie star.

(MORE)

ABBAS (CONT'D)

Whatever you choose, it will be the right decision because unlike your brothers, you always know what to do and say. And something tells me you'll be the one Hind counts on, not Rashied. And last Abdullah. I know I'm going to come back and find that you got cast in the new Robert Redford movie. Don't give up your dream to work in the film industry. Want to be an actor? Okay. But you're even more talented at writing. Even now, as I pass that cow, I'm moo-ved just imagining the credits. Written by Abdullah A. Ibrahim.

FADE TO BLACK

The End

The title, "For Dad, but dedicated to mom who's taken on the role of Dad since July 23, 1995"

Screenplay By Abdullah H. Erakat