

ESCAPE

Written by

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FADE IN:

INT. YARD - DAY

On a bright day on the outskirts of a farming district in India, two young adults play like wild and free children in a nearby field.

KHADIM SHANKAR (KAH-DEEM SHANE-CAR) 20, and SANJA KHABARTI SAHN-JAH KAH-BAR-TEE) 18, position themselves opposite of each other in the tall grass. Both hold knives in their hands.

KHADIM

Focus Sanja. Don't let me win this time.

Sanja's beauty doesn't compare with most. Her dark curly hair whips around her face across a set of bright green intense eyes. It would be hard for anyone, man or woman, to not stare.

Sanja position herself for combat. She grips her knife and makes the first move to attack.

Khadim, a simple man with an innocent smile, reads Sanja moves like a book and jumps out of the path of her attack.

Khadim bounce around as he continue to move away from Sanja's attacks. Eventually, he manages to catch her loose arm, slams her to the ground and puts the knife to her throat ending the duel.

KHADIM (CONT'D)

At least you were faster this time.

Sanja pushes him off. They sit in the grass. Sanja studies the handcrafted knife in her hand.

KHADIM (CONT'D)

You will get better.

SANJA

Maybe.

KHADIM

Are you worried about Dahri?

SANJA

Yes. She marries tomorrow.

KHADIM

You are not happy?

SANJA

She does not know him. No one does.
He is rich and that is all that
matters to my parents.

KHADIM

Your troubles will be over.

Sanja looks out in the distance at a man tending to his farmland.

SANJA

I don't care for troubles. I care
for my sister's happiness. Why must
these wealthy city men come to farm
towns for wives?

KHADIM

Because they are not wild like city
girls.

SANJA

He will ruin her. She doesn't
belong in the city.

KHADIM

What city?

SANJA

Mumbai.

Khadim whistles. He lies back into the grass.

KHADIM

Why so far away?

SANJA

He is a businessman there. He
already has a large home where they
will live. I won't get to see my
sister often.

KHADIM

What will you do?

Sanja shakes her head.

SANJA

Nothing. But, if he hurts her, I
will kill him.

Khadim laughs. He hops off the ground and helps her to her feet.

KHADIM

Come, let's go back. My parents
will be looking for me.

Sanja stops.

SANJA

One more.

Sanja gets into position. Khadim smiles.

KHADIM

Fine. Don't lose this time.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sanja and her sister DAHRI KAHBARTI (DAH-REE KAH-BAR-TEE), 21, lie in bed together and face each other. They giggle like school girls.

DAHRI

I can't believe I will be finally
leaving this house tomorrow.

SANJA

Free from the dungeon.

They giggle.

SANJA (CONT'D)

Are you scared?

DAHRI

A little, mama says he is handsome
and rich.

SANJA

But is he good? Will he treat you
right?

DAHRI

Does it matter?

Sanja grabs her sister's hand.

SANJA

Yes! He must be worthy of you.

DAHRI

No Sanja, us women do not get to
choose a worthy man, you know that.
Mama and papa chose him for the
sake of this family.

(MORE)

DAHRI (CONT'D)

This marriage will increase our family's status in society. We will live like kings and queens.

Sanja frowns.

SANJA

But what of your happiness?

DAHRI

Happiness is for children. We are women now. We must do what is best for the family. One day you will understand when your husband is chosen for you.

Dahri kisses her sister's hand.

DAHRI (CONT'D)

Sleep now, tomorrow is my big day.

Dahri sings a lullaby in her native Hindu language as Sanja sleeps.

DAHRI (CONT'D)

So close your eyes, a paradise is always here, inside your heart. And if you doubt what's wrong or right, go to your beautiful place inside.

EXT. YARD - DAY

The small yard of the farmhouse is decorated in colorful wedding decor. A small gathering of family and friends come to celebrate the wedding.

Dahri stands next to her new husband JAIPAL KAPUR (JAY-PAUL KAH PER), 30s, as the family swarms them with hugs and kisses.

Dahri and Sanja's parents MR. AND MRS. KAHBARTI, bounce around socializing with guests.

Sanja stands off to the side. Her mother comes over.

MRS. KAHBARTI

Sanja, why are you not celebrating with your sister?

SANJA

I am worried mama.

MRS. KAHBARTI
For what?

SANJA
Dhari's happiness. We don't know Jaipal. How do we know he will be good for her?

Ms. Kahbarti snaps at Sanja.

MRS. KAHBARTI
That is non of your concern. He is a good match for your sister. She will be a great wife to him and we will all live a better life because of it.

SANJA
Will we have to move to Mumbai?

MRS. KAHBARTI
If Jaipal commands it. We are in his debt now.

SANJA
Why should he tell us what to do?

MRS. KAHBARTI
Because he is the bread and butter of this family now. If we want to live better lives we must keep him happy. Your sister's beauty and strong virtue will make him very happy. Now stop asking questions and be happy for your sister.

She walks away to greet more guests. Sanja moves through the yard to join her sister. She overhears two women deep in gossip.

WOMAN 1
I hope the mother knows what she is doing. I have heard things about him.

WOMAN 2
What things?

The woman lowers her voice. Sanja zeros in.

WOMAN 1
I hear his previous wife died mysteriously. She was pregnant with his child.

The woman gasps.

WOMAN 2
What happened?

WOMAN 1
I don't know. No one spoke a word of it. I heard she was attacked, but no one was arrested.

WOMAN 2
My goodness. Do you think it was his brother Aseem? Maybe out of jealousy?

Sanja looks over at Jaipal and his older, beefy brother, ASEEM KAPUR, late 30s, they stand together in a conversation.

WOMAN 1
I don't know. But I wouldn't dare let a man involved in that kind of scandal come near my daughters.
What on Earth was she thinking?

Sanja moves away from the women.

EXT. GUEST COTTAGE - NIGHT

The family stands before the entrance door of a small cute cottage. Dahri dresses is a light night gown. Jaipal dress in simple sleep clothing.

The couple walks up the candlelit path up to the front door of the cottage. At the door they turn to their families to say good night.

Jaipal hugs Aseem and whispers in his ear. Sanja notices.

Dahri hugs her parents before she comes to Sanja.

DAHRI
Wish me luck Sanja.

SANJA
Good luck sister.

They kiss each other on the cheek before a hug.

Dahri enters the cottage first, Jaipal follows.

Aseem looks over at Sanja. A dark smirk comes to Aseem's face.

INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

In the far corner of a cramped book store, Sanja is surrounded by stacks of books. She lies on the floor involved in a book on martial arts.

A large woman, MS. KATIKA, 60s, comes over by the corner. She sighs with annoyance when she see the stack of loose books.

MS. KATIKA

Sanja! What did I tell you huh? One book at a time. I have to sell these books you understand?

Sanja nods, too involved in the book. She's heard the speech one too many times.

MS. KATIKA (CONT'D)

Your mom called. Its urgent news about your sister.

Sanja jumps to her feet in a flash. She grabs her bag and darts out the bookstore.

MS. KATIKA (CONT'D)

Sanja!

INT. CAR - DAY

Sanja is in the back seat of a small car looking out at the busy streets of Mumbai.

Merchants flood the roads with carts of goods to sell. Tourist and citizens alike zip in between cars to get to a destination.

MRS. KAHBARTI

Thank goodness we don't have to live here.

SANJA

We will if Jaipal commands it.

MRS. KAHBARTI

If he commands it then we will do it proudly.

Sanja shakes her head at her mother's submissive nature.

INT. DAHRI'S HOME - DAY

Sanja and her parents are escorted by a footman to a glorious courtyard bedazzled in flowers, statues, and marble benches.

Dahri spots Sanja first.

DAHRI
Sanja!

Sanja runs and hugs her.

SANJA
Sister, I've missed you.

DAHRI
I've missed you too. I've missed you all. Thank you for visiting our home.

Dahri hugs and kisses her parents. Jaipal enters the courtyard. He is greeted by the parents.

MR. KAHBARTI
Congratulations on the news of your child.

JAIPAL
Thank you, sir. I was hoping to have a moment in private. After supper of course.

MR. KAHBARTI
Yes, yes of course.

JAIPAL
Good man.

Jaipal slaps his back before he walks away.

EXT. JAIPAL'S OFFICE ROOM - EVENING

Sanja is in the middle of exploring when she hears two male voices. A door to an office is cracked.

She peeps inside to see Jaipal and her father talking.

INT. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Jaipal and Mr. Kahbarti share a smoke.

MR. KAHBARTI

How is my daughter? Are you satisfied with her?

JAIPAL

Yes. She is quiet, strong but absolutely tameable. She will make a great wife, and mother of my children.

MR. KAHBARTI

Good.

JAIPAL

There's just one thing...

MR. KAHBARTI

What is it?

JAIPAL

Your daughter's virginity. I want a virgin again while I'm gone.

Sanja squints confused.

MR. KAHBARTI

I don't understand.

JAIPAL

Repurification.

MR. KAHBARTI

I thought such practices were forbidden?

JAIPAL

Yes, in some cultures. But I will be gone on business for an entire month and I want to be sure my wife will remain pure for me only.

MR. KAHBARTI

Jaipal, I can assure you, on my honor, that my daughter is faithful to you alone. She is a good and obedient young woman.

JAIPAL

And I can assure you, father, that her faithfulness and obedience isn't enough. I want her to have the procedure while I am gone.

MR. KAHBARTI

I'm sorry, but I can not allow my daughter's life to be at risk.

Jaipal towers over Mr. Kahbarti.

JAIPAL

You don't have a choice. Or have you forgotten our agreement?

Mr. Kahbarti looks away with regret.

JAIPAL (CONT'D)

You would lose your farm without my money. I'm a businessman, I've seen the numbers. Your family could live on the streets without my help.

Jaipal retracts from his face and takes another cigar. He floats about the office. Sanja ducks away to avoid being seen.

JAIPAL (CONT'D)

I own your family now Mr. Kahbarti. If my demands are not met, your family suffers. Agreed?

MR. KAHBARTI

Yes.

JAIPAL

Good. I leave in a week. My specialist will perform the surgery. I want her healed before I return so that I may have a virgin in my bed waiting for me.

Mr. Kahbarti gets up to leave. Sanja runs away.

JAIPAL (CONT'D)

Father?

Mr. Kahbarti faces Jaipal wearing a sinister smile.

JAIPAL (CONT'D)

Welcome to the family.

INT. GUEST BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sanja stands by the window looking out. She sings the lullaby from before in her native tongue.

Dahri enters the room.

DAHRI
Sanja, go to bed.

Dahri climbs into the bed. Sanja joins her.

SANJA
Where is your husband?

DAHRI
He is out with Aseem.

SANJA
Are you happy Dahri?

Dahri's bites her lip nervous.

DAHRI
Sometimes.

SANJA
What do you mean? Does he hurt you?

DAHRI
He is rough with me sometimes. On
our consummation night, he was
rough. But I am pregnant now, so he
cannot touch me.

Sanja shakes her head.

SANJA
I heard him talking to papa about
some kind of surgery.

Dahri's eyes expand.

DAHRI
What surgery?

SANJA
He wants to have you repured.

DAHRI
What is that?

SANJA
I don't know. Some way to make you
a virgin again.

Dahri panics.

DAHRI
Will he hurt my baby Sanja? Will he
take my baby from me?

SANJA

I don't know. I will talk to papa.
He will help you Dahri, I promise.

Dahri nods.

SANJA (CONT'D)

Let us rest now.

Dahri closes her eyes. Sanja remains wide awake.

INT. BOOKSTORE - DAY

Sanja sit with Ms. Katika in the corner of the store.

MS. KATIKA

He wants his pregnant wife repured?

SANJA

Yes. I heard him talking to father.
What is repurification?

A deep sadness wash over Ms. Katika's face, almost lost for words.

MS. KATIKA

It is a forbidden procedure now.
But in some dark places of the
world it is still performed on
women, mostly women. If the husband
wants to prevent the wife from
temptation of her taking another
lover, he will demand her to have
the surgery.

SANJA

What do they do?

MS. KATIKA

A specialist straps the wife down
and tries to numb the woman's body
before she takes a scorching rods
to reseal the vaginal skin,
recreating the hymen. It is a
dangerous procedure. Plenty of
women have died from the pain
alone. If she is lucky, she will
not become infected.

Sanja trembles with fear.

SANJA

I must stop him.

MS. KATIKA
He is her husband, he may do as he
please.

Sanja stands to her feet, swollen with confidence.

SANJA
That is my sister. I will die first
before I let him hurt her.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Sanja follows her mother about the kitchen as she prepares dinner.

SANJA
Mama, I heard papa talking to
Jaipal about some sort of surgery
for Dahri.

MRS. KAHBARTI
You know better than to eavesdrop
on mens business.

SANJA
Jaipal wants Dahri repured?

Mrs. Kahbarti freeze. She turns to Sanja.

MRS. KAHBARTI
You are sure of this?

SANJA
Yes mama, I heard it with my own
ears.

MRS. KAHBARTI
What did your father say?

SANJA
At first he refused, but Jaipal
threatened to destroy our home and
make us live on the streets if he
did not please his commands. Father
had no choice.

MRS. KAHBARTI
Well then, neither do we.

Sanja gasps.

SANJA
Mama!

MRS. KAHBARTI

Your sister must honor her husband's wishes. It is her duty as his wife. Your father was right to agree to his command. We lose everything if we don't comply.

SANJA

But mama, it is dangerous and forbidden. We should tell the police.

Mrs. Kahbarti whirls around. She explodes.

MRS. KAHBARTI

You will do no such thing! You will mind your business and do as you are told Sanja.

SANJA

She is your daughter. She bears your grandchild. The baby could die.

Her mother turns away from her to hide her sadness.

MRS. KAHBARTI

Some sacrifices must be made for happiness. She will have opportunities for more children.

Sanja's eyes fill, defeated.

SANJA

(barely audible)

Mama...

Mrs. Kahbarti hardens.

MRS. KAHBARTI

Go clean yourself for supper and never speak of this again.

INT. CLINIC - NIGHT

Dahri is strapped down to a leather incline bed. Sanja and her parents stand around her.

A short, female Indian WITCHDOCTOR comes into the room without a word. She holds a metal rod glowing red with heat. Everyone stare in horror.

SANJA
What is that?

The woman doesn't answer. She hands the parents a drink.

WITCHDOCTOR
She must drink.

MR. KAHBARTI
What is it?

WITCHDOCTOR
Drink! Numb her body.

Mr. Kahbarti turns to Dahri

MR. KAHBARTI
Okay daughter, drink.

DAHRI
No, papa. Don't do this, please.

SANJA
Please father.

MR. KAHBARTI
It is for your own good.

SANJA
No it's not. This isn't legal!

WITCHDOCTOR
Get out!

Mrs. Kahbarti drags Sanja from the room.

SANJA
No! You can't do this! Papa don't
do it. Please!

Mr. Kahbarti feeds the drink to Dahri. Dahri cries. He plants
a painful kiss on her forehead before he leaves.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Mr. And Mrs. Kahbarti sit still and uncomfortable as they
listen to Dahri's ear-shattering screams of extreme pain.

Unable to stand it anymore, Sanja runs from the hallway.

EXT. CLINIC - NIGHT

Sanja burst from the doors. She falls to her knees crying hard, helpless.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Dahri lies in bed. Her face covered in sweat. She's sick with fever.

Sanja sits at her bedside. She dabs at her face with a cool towel.

Their mother enters.

MRS. KAHBARTI

How is she?

SANJA

Sick.

MRS. KAHBARTI

She needs to get better. Her husband will be home in two weeks.

Dahri and Sanja stare at each other. Dahri's eyes plea.

SANJA

What happens in two weeks?

MRS. KAHBARTI

He will be expecting his virgin wife.

SANJA

She is sick with fever mama. She may not be ready by then.

MRS. KAHBARTI

Well, she had better, our future depends on it.

She leaves.

DAHRI

(weak)

Sanja...

SANJA

Shhhh sister. Rest.

DAHRI

Help me Sanja, please.

SANJA
I will. I promise. Now rest.

Sanja sings the lullaby. Dahri closes her eyes with a weak smile.

EXT. HOME - DAY

Jaipal is home at last. The family greets him on the grand driveway.

Dahri doesn't look the happy wife anymore. There is sternness etched on her face. Jaipal goes to kiss her, she barely makes an effort to kiss him back. He notices.

JAIPAL
I have missed you my flower.

Dahri stalls for words. Her gaze burns.

DAHRI
I have missed you as well husband.

Mrs. Kahbarti smiles big as she stands aside.

JAIPAL
How is my unborn son? Is he well.

DAHRI
It is a girl, my love. She grows.

Disappointment show on Jaipal's face, but he smiles big.

JAIPAL
Very good. I shall have the prettiest daughter in the city. Her beauty will be unmatched just like her mothers.

Dahri gives a slight bow to show thanks.

JAIPAL (CONT'D)
Come. Let us all have supper.

The family goes into the home. Jaipal catch Mr. Kahbarti at the end of the train.

JAIPAL (CONT'D)
Was the procedure successful?

MR. KAHBARTI
Yes. She has healed perfectly. A fresh virgin.

JAIPAL

Good, I will have her tonight.

Jaipal walks ahead, showcasing his dominance over him.

INT. DRESSROOM - NIGHT

Dahri dress into a beautiful white nightgown. Sanja does her hair. She places tiny white flowers all over her dark hair. Dahri looks stunning.

Both are silent. Dahri avoids Sanja's eyes in the mirror's reflection.

SANJA

Have you healed completely?

DAHRI

Yes.

SANJA

You don't have to do this. You are with child.

DAHRI

That does not matter. I am his wife. I am to do as he bid. I have no choice.

SANJA

I can try and talk to papa.

DAHRI

Papa cannot help me. Mama cannot help me. You cannot help me. No one can.

SANJA

Please Dahri, don't do this. Think of your baby.

Dahri snatch herself away. She hops up from the chair.

DAHRI

That is all I think about Sanja, day and night. I think of nothing else. Mother is right, in order for me and my family to live a good life, I must keep my husband happy. Nothing will ever change that.

SANJA

I can help you.

Dahri shakes her head.

DAHRI

Go home Sanja. Go home to your safe bed. I must be with my husband.

Dahri leaves. Sanja looks into the mirror with disappointment.

INT. ROOFTOP - NIGHT

Sanja and Khadim lie on the roof.

SANJA

I have failed her.

KHADIM

You did what you could.

SANJA

I didn't do enough. I couldn't save her from the surgery, I can't save her tonight. She will never forgive me.

KHADIM

She is your sister and she loves you. She will forgive you in time.

They stare at the sky together in silence. Khadim chuckles.

KHADIM (CONT'D)

If you could help her in any way with success, how would you save her?

Sanja doesn't answer right away.

SANJA

I'd cut his throat.

Khadim's smile evaporates. He turns to her.

Sanja keeps her eyes on the night sky, her face all business.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dahri moans in pain as her and Jaipal make love. He is rough with her. Tears spill from her eyes.

INT. GARDEN - DAY

Sanja helps her sister walk through the full rose garden.
They take a break at a marble bench.

Dahri holds her belly. She looks hurt.

DAHRI

Jaipal is leaving on business
again. He wants to have me again
tonight and then have me repured
again while he is gone.

Sanja squeeze her eyes shut.

DAHRI (CONT'D)

I pray that it kills me. Me and my
child.

SANJA

Don't talk like that Dahri.

DAHRI

I will not survive another
procedure. That is okay. My child
will be free from this life, and so
will I.

SANJA

What about me?

Dahri place a hand on her little sister's beautiful face.
Their eyes swell with sadness.

DAHRI

Run Sanja. Run away. It was always
our dream to travel distant lands
and escape this life. Do it for
both of us. Be free.

Sanja can't help but to cry. She buries her face in her
sister's lap. Dahri rubs her hair.

DAHRI (CONT'D)

We will meet again one day Sanja.
No pain, no sadness. Only freedom.

Dahri begins to sing the lullaby, Sanja joins in and they
sing in duet.

INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT

The sisters hug.

DAHRI
Goodnight Sanja.

SANJA
Goodnight Dahri.

They share a sad smile, like a goodbye forever.

Dahri goes into the room.

Sanja starts down the hall. Jaipal comes from the opposite end. As they past, Jaipal gives Sanja a sinful dominant smile as he goes to his bedroom.

Sanja hardens.

INT. SANJA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sanja whispers on the phone.

SANJA
Khadim, I need you to do me a favor
please, we don't have much time.

INT. DAHRI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dahri and Jaipal are in the middle of lovemaking.

Sanja creeps through the cracked door with zero sounds. Her beloved knife is steady in her hand.

When she gets up to the bed, Dahri spots her and jumps. Jaipal turns around.

JAIPAL
What are you doing? Get out.

Sanja's eyes burn with fury.

JAIPAL (CONT'D)
I said get--

Before he could finish, Sanja moves the blade across Jaipal's throat. Blood rush from the gash. He falls back onto the bed.

Dahri moves away terrified.

DAHRI
Sanja! What have you done?

SANJA

Come, we must go. Pack some bags.
Hurry!

Dahri jumps from the bed and does as told.

EXT. DAHRI'S HOME - NIGHT

Dahri and Sanja run out of the house with their bags.

Khadim waits for them in the truck. He hops out to help them.

Sanja notice his bags in the bed.

SANJA

Whose bags are these?

KHADIM

Mine. I'm coming with you.

SANJA

No Khadim! You can't be apart of
this.

KHADIM

Too late. I have disobeyed my
parents and I am helping a
fugitive. If I stay, they will lock
me away forever.

SANJA

We're leaving for good Khadim.
Never coming back.

KHADIM

A better life in another part of
the world? Sounds good to me.

Sanja hugs Khadim.

KHADIM (CONT'D)

Come on, let's go. We have to find
a place to hide for the night. We
travel at day break.

DAHRI

Where can we go?

SANJA

I know the perfect place. Hurry.

INT. MS. KATIKA COTTAGE - NIGHT

Ms. Katika tends to Dahri's body.

Sanja and Khadim watch from a nearby table. They baby-sit their tea.

KHADIM

What is the plan Sanja?

SANJA

Get out of India. We're not safe here. Jaipal's brother is military. He won't stop until he finds us.

KHADIM

And if he finds us? What will happen?

Sanja looks in Khadim's eyes answering his question.

SANJA

She has been through enough. We must get her to safety.

KHADIM

What about your safety?

Sanja stare at her cup.

SANJA

It does not matter.

Khadim lay a hand on her arm.

KHADIM

It matters to me.

Sanja sport a grateful smile.

Ms. Katika comes over.

SANJA

How is she?

MS. KATIKA

She is fine as long as she never has to go back to that awful man. What will happen if he comes to find her?

Sanja and Khadim look at each other.

MS. KATIKA (CONT'D)
What have you done?

CONTINUOUS

Ms. Katika pace back and forth in a panic. Dahri lies in Khadim's lap.

MS. KATIKA
Do you know what you have done
child?

SANJA
He hurt her.

MS. KATIKA
It does not matter! You killed a
man, that is the greatest sin.

SANJA
It is no more a greater sin to kill
a man than to hurt another.

Ms. Katika throws her chubby arms in the air.

MS. KATIKA
Have you gone mad? He was a very
popular man, his brother too. They
will find you. I am sorry, but I
cannot be apart of this.

SANJA
Please Ms. Katika. My sister needs
to escape. We must protect her
child. Mercy, please.

Ms. Katika look into Dahri's frightened face. The face of a defenseless mother.

MS. KATIKA
Fine. You may stay a few days more
then you must move on.

SANJA
Thank you.

Ms. Katika walks away cursing under her breath.

INT. DHARI'S HOME

Aseem stands over his dead brother's body covered in dried blood. He is swollen with rage. A few of his men stand off to the side.

Mr. and Mrs. Kahbarti walk into the room. Mrs. Kahbarti gasps and covers her face.

MR. KAHBARTI
What happened here?

Aseem pivots around. A snarl on his face.

ASEEM
Where are they?

MR. KAHBARTI
I don't know.

Aseem pulls a semi-automatic handgun from his holster. The parents jump.

MR. KAHBARTI (CONT'D)
I don't know! Sanja stayed here the night. Everything was fine before we left. We don't know where they are?

Aseem hesitates before retracting the gun back into its holster.

Aseem walks past them. He turns to one of his men.

ASEEM
Kill them.

The men fire their guns on the parents. Aseem walks away.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Sanja and Khadim play in the field with a knife fight.

Dahri sits in the grass nearby. She giggles at her sister's inability to defeat Khadim.

A voice calls out to them. It's Ms. Katika, she trots toward them, horror on her face.

SANJA
What is it?

MS. KATIKA

They are coming for you. You have
to go, now!

Dahri, Sanja, and Khadim exchange horrified glances. Sanja helps Dahri to her feet.

EXT. MS. KATIKA COTTAGE - DAY

The truck is loaded. Ms. Katika hands Sanja a map and phone.

MS. KATIKA

Go to the coast. My sister and her family live there. They will shelter you. Her husband works aboard the tourist ships. He can get you access that will take you out of India.

SANJA

Bless you, Ms. Katika.

Ms. Katika points to Dahri's rising belly.

MS. KATIKA

Just get that child out of here.

SANJA

Right. Let's go.

Khadim punches the gas pedal.

EXT. KHADIM FARM - DAY

Khadim's PARENTS (late 40s) kneel on the ground, their hands tied and their mouths stuffed with cloth. They tremble as they watch Aseem pace in front of them. His automatic handgun dangling in his hand. His men stand aside.

ASEEM

Where is your son?

The parents shake their heads in fear.

Aseem shakes his head unsatisfied with their answer. He aims and shoots the mother. The father screams through the cloth.

Aseem points the gun at the father's head.

ASEEM (CONT'D)

Where... is... your son?

The father shakes his head. He cries and lies his head on top of his wife's body.

ASEEM (CONT'D)
Fool.

Aseem shoots the man in the head.

ASEEM (CONT'D)
Bury them.

INT. TRUCK - EVENING

Khadim, Sanja, and Dahri stare out of the windows with wide-eyed at the beauty of India's coast. The sky is orange-pink as the sun makes it way toward sunset.

Dahri, sitting in the center, looks back and forth between Khadim and Sanja. The three hold hands and laugh. Finally free.

EXT. HOME - NIGHT

Khadim parks the truck outside of a two-story modern beach home.

KHADIM
Stay here. I'll make sure it's safe.

Khadim runs up the path and taps on the door. A tall MAN answers the door.

A few minutes of conversation pass. Khadim returns to the truck.

KHADIM (CONT'D)
Come, we are in the right place.

Khadim grabs the bags. Sanja helps Dahri out of the truck.

INT. LITHIA HOME - NIGHT

LITHIA (50s) and her husband LHADAR (50s) stand in the center of their family room.

Lithia is the first to hug the three.

LITHIA
My sister has told me all about you. You are welcome here, come.

LHADAR

I will show you to your rooms.

SANJA

Thank you very much for your
kindness.

Sanja and Khadim follow Lhadar. Lithia stops Dahri. She places a gentle hand on her belly.

LITHIA

Boy or girl?

DAHRI

It is a girl.

LITHIA

Have you chosen a name?

Dahri shakes her head.

DAHRI

No. I have tried. No name seems to suit her.

LITHIA

Good. You must wait until she is born. You look into her eyes and they will tell you her name.

DAHRI

Is that possible?

LITHIA

Yes. A baby's eyes are purer than anyone else's. Her name is all she will know and all she will respond to.

DAHRI

Thank you.

LITHIA

Go now and rest.

INT. MS. KATIKA COTTAGE - NIGHT

Ms. Katika rush through her house. There's pounding on her door.

MS. KATIKA

One moment please!

Ms. Katika swings open the door. Some of Aseem's men stand before her.

MS. KATIKA (CONT'D)
Can I help you?

The leader of the men, TILAK, 30s, military stiff, cold, tall, steps forward.

TILAK
Have you seen Sanja?

MS. KATIKA
No, why?

TILAK
We have some questions about her whereabouts.

MS. KATIKA
What questions? Is she in some sort of trouble?

TILAK
That's none of your business.

MS. KATIKA
I've known those girls since they were tiny children. Their business is my business. Is she in danger?

TILAK
She may be. We just need to ask her some questions. If you see her, you report her to Aseem Kapur, her brother-in-law.

MS. KATIKA
I shall make some calls.

Tilak gives a signal and the men leave.

Ms. Katika closes the door. She leans against the door in panic. She grabs her religious necklace charm and squeeze tight for hope.

INT. ASEEM OFFICE - DAY

Tilak enters Aseem's cluttered office. Aseem studies a wall covered with maps, Jaipal's crime scene images, and pictures of Sanja, Dahri, and Khadim.

ASEEM
Where are they?

TILAK
We don't know. The trail has gone completely cold. No one has seen them or heard from them.

Aseem swells. Enraged, he knocks everything off his paper-filled desk.

ASEEM
Find them! Put out an award, 300,000 Rupees for each of their heads!

Tilak gives a strong nod.

TILAK
Yes sir.

Tilak leaves. He barks orders at the others.

Aseem turns back to his wall. He stares at Sanja's photo. He snatches it from the wall.

ASEEM
I will find you.

MONTAGE - VARIOUS

- A) Sanja, Dahri, and Khadim play on the beach.
- B) Dahri studies her enlarged belly in the bedroom mirror.
- C) Tilak post up reward posters of Sanja, Dahri, and Khadim in the city.
- D) Khadim receives a call about his parents. He cries. Sanja and Dahri comfort him.
- D) Sanja, Dahri, and Khadim sleep in the same bed together. Sanja is in the middle. She looks over at them both. She pulls one of their hands together. She lie Khadim's hand on Dahri's hand, playing matchmaker.

End Montage.

EXT. MARKETPLACE - DAY

Sanja walks the beach outdoor marketplace.

Tilak hands out papers to shoppers when he spot Sanja.

TILAK

Hey!

Sanja looks up.

Tilak bolts through the crowd toward her.

Sanja drops her basket of goods and run. She disappears in a crowd. She snatch a large head wrap from a table and wrap her head exposing only her eyes. She pretends to shop for necklaces.

Tilak and his men run past her through the crowd.

INT. LITHIA HOME - DAY

Sanja comes into the dining room where Dahri and Khadim eat and gossip.

SANJA

We must go, now!

DAHRI

What has happened Sanja?

Lithia and Lhadar come into the dining room.

SANJA

Aseem's men found me at the market.
They know we're here. We must go.

LHADAR

Yes, my friend works the ship
today. One will leave in an hour or
two. We must hurry.

DAHRI

Sister, I can't run. I am too
heavy.

LITHIA

She's right. It will harm the baby.

SANJA

This is our only chance to get them
out of India safe.

KHADIM

Okay, let's go. I'll grab our bags.

SANJA
Come Dahri.

Dahri struggles to get up out of the chair. Sanja helps her.

DAHRI
Is there really no other way Sanja?

SANJA
They have seen my face. They will come. Come, we must leave now.

EXT. LITHIA HOME - DAY

Lhadar cranks up his SUV.

LHADAR
I will drop you off. Come now. The ship will be leaving soon.

Khadim toss the bags in the back. Sanja helps Dhari into the SUV.

An elder NEIGHBOR tending to hedges watch the group.

The SUV guns down the street.

INT. JEEP - DAY

Tilak drives with Aseem through the beach neighborhood. They spot the white truck.

ASEEM
There! That's the farm boy's truck.

They park the jeep.

ASEEM (CONT'D)
Find them.

The men jump from the jeep, draw their guns, and creep around Lithia's home.

The elder walks to the edge of the street. Aseem spots him. He holds a flyer up to the man.

ASEEM (CONT'D)
Excuse me, sir, have you seen these people here?

The old man squints.

OLD MAN

Yes. They left here not too long ago, they were talking about a ship leaving.

ASEEM

Thank you, sir.

Aseem whistles. The men return.

ASEEM (CONT'D)

They're escaping the country by ship. Go to the docks.

The men jump in the jeep.

EXT. SHIP DOCK - DAY

The dock is packed with tourists. The SUV pulls to the passenger loading deck. Khadim hops out to grab the bags.

Sanja helps Dahri out of the SUV.

Lhadar hands Sanja papers.

LHADAR

I have a friend on board who will show you around the ship. He has your room and passes for food. I will pay for everything.

Sanja hugs Lhadar.

SANJA

Thank you so very much sir. You have been very kind.

LHADAR

A friend of my family, is a friend of mine. Now go, this small passenger ship will take you to where the ship is docked. You must hurry.

A horn blows.

KHADIM

Come on! They're leaving!

The three rush to the boats.

Outside the crowds, Aseem pulls up in his jeep. Other jeeps filled with men pull up as well.

ASEEM
Find them!

Dahri hangs onto Khadim and Sanja for support. Sanja looks back to see Aseem and his men.

Aseem spots the three.

ASEEM (CONT'D)
There! Get them!

The men rush through the crowd.

The three climb onto the boat with the other passengers. The boatmen toss away the large rope and the boat come to life.

The three watch as the flood of men come closer to the boat.

KHADIM
What is taking them so long?
They're going to catch us.

Dahri winces in pain. She grabs her stomach. Water spills from beneath her dress.

DAHRI
My water broke!

The boat begins to move, but it is too late.

Sanja looks at her sister and then at Khadim. Khadim is confused by her deep gaze.

SANJA
Take care of her.

KHADIM
What?

Sanja breaks from the group, she runs and jumps off the boat.

DAHRI
SANJA!

Sanja lands at the edge of the dock. She catches her balance and stand.

She looks back at her best friend and sister. She smiles, a smile of happiness and sorrow.

She turns back to the group of men who now surrounds her. She draws her blade and stand in combat position as Khadim have showed her.

The men draw their guns on her. Aseem steps before the men. He signals for them to lower their weapons.

ASEEM
You killed my brother.

Sanja doesn't answer. She wears the snare of an angry animal waiting for an attack.

ASEEM (CONT'D)
Take her.

The men come at Sanja. Sanja manages to jab one man in the chest and cut the throat of another before she is overtaken.

Dahri and Khadim watch as Sanja is arrested and taken. Dahri screams in agony.

INT. DUNGEONS - DAY

Sanja is chained up in a dark, wet room with a tiny window that allows a small amount of sunlight to enter.

Sanja sings the lullaby. She is badly beaten and weak.

A door opens. Footsteps are heard.

Sanja's head is suddenly snatched back, her very own blade at her throat.

VOICE
May your soul never find rest...
like my brother's.

We see blood spills to the floor. A door opens then slams close.

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

Dahri lies in a bed. She sings the same lullaby to a newborn baby girl swaddled in cloths. She cries in pain for her sister.

EXT. LONDON - DAY

Dahri walks down a busy London sidewalk. She looks healthy and much changed in London fashion.

SUPER: FIVE YEARS LATER

Dahri yells out.

DAHRI
Sanja!

A five-year-old SANJA stops and turns around to the sound of her mother's voice. The little girl is a spitting beauty of Sanja with the unmatched beauty and bright green eyes. The little girl turns back around and run.

DAHRI (CONT'D)
Sanja, come here now!

A few feet ahead Khadim walks in their direction. He is handsome and well grown up.

LITTLE SANJA
Daddy!

Khadim lifts Sanja off the ground and embraces her. He walks to Dahri. They kiss.

KHADIM
Where do you want to go for our vacation? We've been just about everywhere, except India.

Dahri saddens. Khadim notices.

KHADIM (CONT'D)
I have a better idea, let's just stay home this time.

Dahri smiles. They kiss again. He takes her hand and the small family stroll down the sidewalk towards the heart of London.

FADE OUT.

THE END.