



I N E N G L I S H

Written by

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The following event is set in an idealized India of the early 1960s.

(It's in Black and White)

I N E N G L I S H

1 FADE IN:

1

A vixen: her face is bony; her eyes are cold. She has dark hair. She is wearing an ivory shirt and a black skirt. She is looking at you. Her stare is nothing but an impassive leer. As the song "Love You To" by THE BEATLES starts, her slender body begins to move in a spasmodic order. Her movements resemble as of a goddess in hysteria; yet they are composed, graceful, and calculated in their own supercilious way. It appears that she is dancing. Her steps are in total harmony with the beat and the rhythm. As the song progresses, her spirit becomes livelier and her steps more rapid. The expression on her nubile face is one of euphoria.

FADE TO BLACK:

2 INT. A ROOM IN TV STUDIO

2

P. CHATTERJEE: A man in his 40s is sitting in a chair. He is wearing a tailored suit and rectangular spectacles. His partially grey hair are brushed back. He looks modest, virile, and dignified. He is looking straight ahead, as if addressing us, as he begins his monologue most earnestly:

CHATTERJEE

Journalism. - I believe journalism is changing every day - into something more. To proceed any further, we have to understand what it really is, in its nature, and if, is it necessary - "If yes, then why?"

(beat)

Events occur in this world of ours all the time. Events that may have some significance, and events that are just frivolous. Events that may have consequences, and events that are inconsequential. Even I, in my youth, said to myself, "**Why should I care about anything that is happening out there, as long as it doesn't affect me?**" Of course, such a perspective of mine was wrong. But I didn't know that. Nevertheless, I took the subject and studied it without thinking of it to be nothing more than a branch of literature.

(MORE)

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)

Then one day, I said to myself - "What is it?" I mean, radically speaking, it's about information - It's about knowledge of current affairs, and the means by which it is delivered to the public. But then it dawned upon me - that why it is so essential in our lives. If it weren't for the radio, the newspapers, or the newsreels, then I believe it would be very difficult for people, in general, to get to know what is happening around the world.

(beat)

I think to myself - "What if most people have the same disposition as I had in my youth - that why should they care about something, as long as it doesn't concern *them*?" But now I can say with absolute certainty, that everything that happens out there, every little or bigger thing, has a meaning of its own. That meaning will have an effect on our community and it will shape, if not our lives, but the kind of system we live in. Everything that happens out there, concerns each and every one of us - in a blunt or oblique way. We only realize the enormity of something when we become the subject of it. Otherwise, we just turn a blind eye to it. Journalism is a medium that connects the people with the kind of world, or reality, they live in. If you say modern civilization is a cart, then I would say Journalism is one of its wheels. It's not an accessory for our society, but an indispensable segment of it. It's as important as the law is to keep order. But more and more lately, it's drifting away from its actual sphere. It's changing into something more - *or should I say something else*. Let's say, it's becoming more of an opinion, rather than a fact. Now it's not about what people *should* know - but what they *wanted* to know; Which sounds absurd to me, because one can never know what the public wants. Because the public is not one face, but many. I know that this allusion of mine may perplex some minds, but it's the truth.

(MORE)

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)

Journalism is becoming more and more of an entertaining enterprise, rather than an educational institution. Which deeply saddens me and demoralizes the men of my profession, with whom I share the academic view of it. Because journalism didn't start out as something that should have any commercial value. Of course, no institution can survive, if it overlooks the business side of it. But then again, if the same institution's foundation is laid with an intent to run it like a brokerage firm, then we are just abandoning the very principles that govern the *idea* behind it; because we have begun to use it for financial gains. The whole point of this monologue is that Journalism is not a commodity, that we are selling, but an obligation that we owe to the people. Our sole duty is – not to provide varnished news, which is smeared with provocative language and dubious content, just in order to create a sensation or a fuss among people – but to provide an honest news, which is accurate in its origin and enlightening in its expression. Because if Journalism really ought to change, then it should change into something *better*. I believe that our civilization has a far way to go, and so does Journalism.

FADE TO BLACK:

3 INT/EXT. SOUP STALL - EVENING

3

OMAR and DONNY, both men in their 20s, are sitting at the counter of the soup stall. Both men have a dark BLUE UNIFORM (JUMPSUIT) on them. OMAR has dark, amorphous hair and is smoking a cigarette. Meanwhile, DONNY, who has blonde, curly hair, is finishing his soup. Before them, the PROPRIETOR, a corpulent and swarthy man in a white apron is working in the interior of the stall. In the background, there is a wall with graffiti of a Hindu deity: a presumably male figure of bluish complexion, effeminate features, four arms, elegant clothing and accoutrements, and a self-satisfied look on the face. The deity is resting on a colossal snake that has a multitude of heads. The Leviathan is floating either on the surface of the water or in the nebula. Beyond the wall a few cranes at a port loom in sight. The sky is dark blue with white clouds lingering in view.

OMAR

(meditative)

You know, in all my years of experience, I have come to one conclusion about life:
it's hopeless.

DONNY

But you are only twenty-three.

OMAR

(unheeded)

You know, when you are young, you have a very different outlook. You always think that someday you'll be doing something that will be considered - *worthwhile*. And even at that age, you are very certain that it will happen - like it's a *cinch!* - And then you grow up and realize that there is very little, or no resemblance, between your and the actual world, which comes as a kind of disappointment. Then you grow up some more and find yourself in a mess. And when one finds oneself in a mess, one finds himself in adulthood. Sometimes, I think, we aren't living our lives, Donny. We are just passing it. Adulthood is a sham.

DONNY

You are just being a pessimist.

A black bitching car pulls up on the curb. RAY, in his 20s, with shaggy hair, wearing a leather jacket, steps out. He approaches the soup stall in haste.

OMAR

(continues his moaning)

No, I am being a realist. What I was posing to be was an idealist.

DONNY considers this, and speaks as if he doesn't know what to say:

DONNY

Well, you know what they say -
"the answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind, the answer is blowing in the wind."

RAY

(to the PROPRIETOR)

Excuse me, do you know where is Red Fort apartments?

PROPRIETOR

(directs him using his
hand)

Go straight down the road, and then
take the first left turn, you'll
see a Maroon building on that road
on the right corner.

RAY

Thanks.

DONNY

(to RAY)

Ray?

RAY shoots a look at DONNY. RAY's demeanor is of a man: if a
shrink will see him, he will call him a neurotic.

RAY

Yes?

DONNY

(jovial)

It's Donny, Donny from school,
remember?

RAY stares closely at DONNY for a moment.

RAY

Yes... Donny - Donny from school.

DONNY

Well, how are you?

RAY

(fumbling for words)

Fine - fine... how are you?

DONNY

I am good, too. How long it's
been... seven - eight years?

RAY

Yes, something like that.

DONNY

So, you live around?

RAY

No, no... I was just passing...
visiting... a relative.

DONNY

Oh, I forgot, this is "Omar," you
remember Omar?

RAY

No.

DONNY
Well, Omar was in the same class
with us.

OMAR and RAY exchange superficial nods.

DONNY (CONT'D)
So, what do you do?

RAY
What? Oh, I am in construction.
What about you?

DONNY
(modestly proud)
Me and Omar work at the Chidambaram
Plant, on the outskirts.

RAY
Yea, that explains the outfit.

It seems that this remark by RAY has bitten OMAR; But DONNY carries on exuberantly.

DONNY
Come on, pull a stool, have a seat.

RAY
(wistful)
No, I can't, I have to be
somewhere.

DONNY
Are you all right? You are
sweating.

RAY
Yes - I was a bit under the
weather, lately, but I am fine now.
Well... I think I should get going.

DONNY
You sure you don't want some soup,
it's *delicious*.

RAY
No, thanks anyway.

DONNY
Well... see you some other time,
maybe.

RAY
Yes, I hope so.

RAY and OMAR exchange the same superficial nods. As RAY turns on his heel and heads to his car, out of earshot, OMAR opens his mouth.

OMAR
I can't believe that schmuck didn't
remember me.

DONNY
It's been a long time.

In the background, we see RAY reaches his car.

OMAR
Well, he remembers you.

RAY turns around and looks at DONNY and OMAR, nostalgically.

DONNY
Maybe, you have changed.

OMAR
(not paying heed to DONNY)
And I remember him!

DONNY
So, what's the big deal if he
doesn't remember you?

RAY strides back to the stall.

OMAR
(sheepish)
Nothing, it's just embarrassing,
when you remember someone but they
don't remember you.

RAY reappears and startles OMAR and Donny.

RAY
Or maybe you fellas want to hang
around or something?

DONNY
(to RAY)
Oh - but didn't you have to *be*
somewhere?

RAY
Yes, I do have to pick something up
from my uncle's. You guys can wait
in the car, it won't take long.
Afterwards, we can go and have a
beer or two maybe.

FADE TO BLACK:

OMAR (wearing a GOATEE) and DONNY are walking along the
sidewalk. Both are in street clothes.

DONNY

How did you get his number, anyway?

OMAR

I bought a copy of his newspaper.
It was on the last page, below the
comics.

DONNY

So that's his office number?

OMAR

Well, he's not gonna leave his home
number there.

OMAR and DONNY stop. OMAR enters a telephone booth. He picks
up the receiver and dials a number. It rings.

TELEPHONE BOOTH:

OMAR (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Hello?

LADY (O.S.)

(on phone)

Thank you for calling
"The Sentinel," how can I help you?

OMAR

(cordial)

Yes, hi! I was wondering if is it
possible to talk with Mr.
Chatterjee?

LADY (O.S.)

Mr. Banerjee?

OMAR

No, Chatterjee with the "C."

LADY (O.S.)

(as if confirming)

Mr. Chatterjee is the publisher,
sir.

OMAR

Yes. The same.

LADY (O.S.)

May I know what it's regarding?

OMAR

Well, uh, it's a thing.

LADY (O.S.)

A "thing?" Can you be more
specific, sir?

OMAR

It's a matter, I want to- we want to discuss with him. I guess he must be interested in it.

LADY (O.S.)

Is it some information?

OMAR

(cagey)

Well, you can say that.

LADY (O.S.)

And you want to share this information?

OMAR

(vague)

Uh-huh.

LADY (O.S.)

Well, then you don't have to talk with Mr. Chatterjee himself. I can simply connect you with one of our editors-

OMAR

No! Listen, lady - I think it will be much better if I talk with Mr. Chatterjee himself.

LADY (O.S.)

(beat)

Hold the line, please.

Donny pokes his head into the telephone booth.

DONNY

What's going on?

OMAR

(to DONNY)

Some bitch is stalling the call.

LADY (O.S.)

(on phone)

Hello?

OMAR

(on phone)

Yes.

LADY (O.S.)

Thanks for being patient, sir. I am connecting your call.

OMAR

Thank you.

A different, yet feminine voice speaks:

SECRETARY (O.S.)
(on phone)
Mr. Chatterjee's office.

OMAR
(quivering)
Mr. Chatterjee?

SECRETARY (O.S.)
I am sorry, Mr. Chatterjee is away
at the moment, this is his
Secretary; how can I help you?

OMAR
Well, do you know when he will be
back?

SECRETARY (O.S.)
I am afraid that is rather
difficult to say. He went into a
meeting which lasts indefinitely.

OMAR
Oh...

SECRETARY (O.S.)
The operator informed me about the
nature of your call, sir, and also
that you were shy to talk with one
of our editors. Is that correct?

OMAR
Yes, but...

SECRETARY (O.S.)
May I ask, why?

OMAR
(blunt)
Well, it's none of their business.

A silence ensues.

SECRETARY (O.S.)
Should I take the impression, that
the information you wanted to
share, is imperative, in your
opinion?

OMAR
(uncertain)
Well, yes.

SECRETARY (O.S.)
May I know your name?

OMAR
(hesitates)
Uh, actually no.

SECRETARY (O.S.)
Are you calling from the city?

STREET VIEW:

DONNY looks about the street, and then at OMAR, who is still mumbling on the telephone. OMAR hangs up and exits the telephone booth.

DONNY
Well, what happened, did you get through?

OMAR
We got a 4 o'clock appointment with him at his office.

DONNY
"At his office?" - I thought you were gonna ask him somewhere out?

OMAR
(somewhat cynical)
Yeah, tell that to his secretary.

CUT TO:

5 INT. BAR - EVENING

5

A small and modest establishment. The place has an air of antiquity, with its arched doorways and vaulted ceiling. It has an outward quality of being exclusive, and yet an inward quality of being humble.

Two bartenders, dressed in the height of their profession. One is in his early 40s, who is serving a party of his own at one end of the bar (and he seems to be doing a fine job). The other bartender is merely a boy, who has the look of a geek, and whose puberty is driving him mad. His bow tie is coming apart, which he doesn't mind; meanwhile, he is cleaning the glasses, meticulously.

On the other end of the bar, a WOMAN in her mid-40s is sitting. She has three empty glasses before her; she is beyond tipsy. The WOMAN is dressed above mediocrity. Her face is slightly creased. But, she has the kind of cruel, dominating beauty that women of her age often possess. Her eyes are nothing but a pool of sadness.

The ADOLESCENT BARTENDER puts the glass down and walks up to the WOMAN.

ADOLESCENT BARTENDER

Can I get you anything else, ma'am?

No reply comes from the WOMAN. The ADOLESCENT BARTENDER turns and trots back to the till. He scribbles something on a piece of paper, walks back to the WOMAN, and places a slip of paper before her.

ADOLESCENT BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Your bill, ma'am?

The WOMAN doesn't respond. She sits quietly in her seat.

ADOLESCENT BARTENDER (CONT'D)

Is anything the matter, ma'am?

The WOMAN looks at the ADOLESCENT BARTENDER.

WOMAN

(flaccid)

I don't have any money.

ADOLESCENT BARTENDER

(beat)

Have you lost your purse?

The ADOLESCENT BARTENDER peers at the WOMAN, then he turns and scurries to the other end of the bar. He mumbles something in the ear of the SENIOR BARTENDER, who gives the WOMAN an examining glance. The SENIOR BARTENDER excuses himself from the party, and strides to the other end of the bar.

SENIOR BARTENDER

(to the WOMAN)

(hospitable)

Is everything in order, madame?

WOMAN

(beat)

I don't have any money.

SENIOR BARTENDER

(kind)

Are you waiting for someone?

WOMAN

No.

SENIOR BARTENDER

(empathetic)

Do you want me to call someone for you?

WOMAN

There is no one to call.

The SENIOR BARTENDER considers this. He summons some courage and speaks apologetically:

SENIOR BARTENDER

But forgive me for being rude,
madame. You owe the bar for three
drinks.

WOMAN

I told you, I don't have any money.

SENIOR BARTENDER

(suspicious)

Were you aware of the fact, that
you didn't have any money when you
came in here?

WOMAN

Yes.

SENIOR BARTENDER

But you still ordered three drinks,
despite for the fact that you can't
pay for them.

WOMAN

(almost acidly)

Well, that seems to be the case,
Professor.

SENIOR BARTENDER

(somewhat reproachful)

But it isn't very civilized, to
behave in such a manner, madame.

WOMAN

(indifferent)

I'll pay you later.

SENIOR BARTENDER

But this is not a credit joint,
madame, and I hardly know you.
There is a telephone back there...

(he turns and points to
the telephone)

If you be kind enough to call
someone to pick you up...

The WOMAN picks up the piece of paper that lies before her and crumbles it into a ball. As the SENIOR BARTENDER turns his face to look at her, she hurls the pellet at him, slightly spoiling his hairdo, and she snarls at him:

WOMAN

I told you I don't have *no* money!
— And there is *no one* whom I could
call! So why don't you get lost,
you persisting little *fuckface!*

The murmurs from the other end of the bar cease. They all look at the distant scene. The SENIOR BARTENDER raises his hand above his shoulder and snaps his fingers. The ADOLESCENT BARTENDER trots over to him. The SENIOR BARTENDER looks over his shoulder at his protégé, and speaks calmly:

SENIOR BARTENDER
Call the police.

The ADOLESCENT BARTENDER nods, spins on his heel, and marches to telephone--

VOICE
Wait.

The ADOLESCENT BARTENDER stops midway and looks at the man to whom the voice belonged: It was RAY; who is sitting on a stool, in the middle of the counter. RAY, who looks slumberous, produces a banknote from his pocket and offers it to the ADOLESCENT BARTENDER; who takes it and spreads it, end to end. The ADOLESCENT BARTENDER gazes at the banknote, then at his mentor, who is already looking at him. The SENIOR BARTENDER nods slightly to the ADOLESCENT BARTENDER. The latter puts the money in the till. The SENIOR BARTENDER gives the drunken WOMAN a last questioning glance and then strides back to his party.

RAY takes a slug from his bottle, and stares at the ADOLESCENT BARTENDER, languorously. The ADOLESCENT BARTENDER is rubbing an obstinate stain off the counter, fastidiously.

RAY
Can I have my change?

The ADOLESCENT BARTENDER freezes and looks up.

ADOLESCENT BARTENDER
The *madame* had three drinks.

And he resumes his drudgery. RAY looks at the ADOLESCENT BARTENDER in a stupor. Finally, RAY gets up and leaves.

5A EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

5A

As RAY gets out of the bar, he sticks a cigarette to his mouth, and takes out a lighter; But every time he attempts to light it, the wind fails him. He steps back into an alley and lights his cigarette. The door of the Bar bursts open, and the WOMAN materializes from it. She flounders to the edge of the pavement, then suddenly turns and plunges into the alley -- only to puke onto a wall. She crooks her neck and discovers RAY, who is watching her with revulsion.

WOMAN
(derisive)
You aren't in love with me, are you?

RAY lowers his eyes and moves to his car. He unlocks its door, opens it, and gets inside. He starts the engine. The WOMAN appears on the window sill.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Since you are being so chivalrous,
why don't you give me a lift home?

(beat)

I don't think I can make it
- without getting hit by a truck.

RAY

(haughty)

If you know where you live.

WOMAN

Of course, I do! After all, I am
not that drunk.

She grabs the car's door handle and pulls it open; her hand slips, and she plummets to the ground.

CUT TO BLACK:

6 INT. OMAR APARTMENT - MORNING

6

The shower gets turned off. A moment goes by. OMAR comes out of the bathroom with damp hair and a towel dangling round his waist. He turns on the gramophone nonchalantly. He steps into the kitchenette, fills a kettle from the tap, and puts it on the stove. He walks back into the living room. His eyes fall on the sofa; a crumpled Overcoat is lying on it. OMAR tentatively picks up the Overcoat and puts it on. He looks at himself in the mirror (fixed in the wardrobe) admiringly, changing his pose, pompously. He feels the fabric, fondly, and pats the pockets. As he senses something, he fishes his hand into the Overcoat's inner pocket and withdraws - what seems to be - a photographic print. He fixes his gaze on the print, until the kettle in the kitchen lets out a shriek.

6A EXT. BUS STOP - MORNING (8:30)

6A

DONNY (BLUE UNIFORM) is standing on the pavement, next to a signpost. He sees OMAR (BLUE UNIFORM), who waves at him from a distance, and crosses the street. They give each other a familiar, imperceptible nod. A shabby-looking bus rolls in; they embark it.

6B INT/EXT. BUS (MOVING) - MOMENTS LATER

6B

DONNY and OMAR are sitting on one of the last seats.

DONNY

(somewhat poignant)

You know, it just baffles me.

(MORE)

DONNY (CONT'D)

I mean, you hear about these things; you read about them in the papers. But when you realize that you know a person who *does* these things – these burglaries and all, – You begin to question yourself, wondering what would've made that person, choose such a way of life. – "*Why was he doing what he was doing?*" – And then, all of a sudden, you start to relate yourself with that person.

OMAR

(phlegmatic)

I gave it some thought, too. I can see what you mean. But if you think about what happened last night, in a certain... context, – It really doesn't surprise you *that* much.

DONNY

How do you mean?

OMAR

I mean, if you remember what he was like in school, and you put it in with what you saw yesterday; You'll see, that, it was not all that... unexpected, after all.

DONNY

He was not a thief in school.

OMAR

Well, he wasn't a model boy either. I mean, he had a reputation, Donny. He was infamous.

DONNY

Well, everybody tends to be a little mischievous when they are in school. That's not an argument.

OMAR

Yeah, but the things he did weren't considered regular schoolboy mischiefs.

DONNY

What are you trying to say?

OMAR

You know the story, Donny.

DONNY

What are you talking about?

OMAR

Ninth standard, second semester. It was math period. The teacher was giving a lecture on arithmetic. He was sitting on one of the last benches with his head down, on the pretext that he wasn't feeling well, that he was sick. It was only the students who were sitting around him knew how *sick* he *really* was. — The little brat was playing with himself. And when he was done, he tore a page from his textbook and wiped the floor clean with it. He has contaminated the whole class!

DONNY

Rumors. You know how they start. Some kid holding a grudge, starts to badmouth him. You didn't see him doing that *yourself*.

OMAR

Don't be so naive, Donny. We all *knew* he was doing it. Even the girls in the next lane knew. — Look, all I am trying to say is that there were things going on in his head that were deemed perverse and unnatural. But he still did them anyway. It was a sign that this boy will have trouble in life.

DONNY thinks about it.

DONNY

(admitting)

I think I can see now... what you mean. But, what I don't understand is, if he was really going to commit burglary; then why did he invite us for a hangout?

OMAR considers this.

OMAR

(beat)

Maybe he did wanted to have a drink with us, after all.

6C

EXT. PLANT - MOMENTS LATER

6C

The bus stopped near the Plant's main gate. Blue uniforms are disembarking the bus; among them are OMAR and DONNY, walking towards the Plant building.

OMAR

By the way, I found something funny
in that Overcoat.

DONNY

What Overcoat?

OMAR

The one I accidentally took from
that apartment last evening.

DONNY

But I thought you flung it away.

OMAR

Yeah, but then I retrieved it. It
was a nice Overcoat, and it seemed
like a waste.

DONNY

(beat)

What you found in it?

OMAR

It's a photograph.

DONNY

"A photograph?" – of what?

OMAR

Of a couple. They are sitting in
the front seat of this automobile.
And they are sort of... canoodling.

DONNY

"Canoodling?"

OMAR

Yeah, they are kissing and cuddling
with each other. And I think they
are doing it.

DONNY

You mean, they are doing "*it*?"

OMAR

Well, you can't see anything below
their chests. But the looks on
their faces tells it – that they
aren't just holding hands.

DONNY

(beat)

Is it porn?

OMAR

(reflective)

No, I don't think it qualifies as pornography, since you can't see any of the real stuff. - And I don't think they are even aware that they are being photographed.

DONNY

How do you mean?

OMAR

(with a smirk)

Well, the coat owner must be some kind of a pervert, who was taking a stroll on a windy evening by some rivulet, with a Kodak around his neck. He saw these lovebirds smooching and touching each other; he felt goaded and took a picture of them. Probably so he could go home and touch himself a little.

CUT TO:

7

EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON

7

CHATTERJEE, in a three-piece suit, is standing on a deserted street. In the background, there is an uncanny-looking, circular building surrounded by wilderness. OMAR (CLEAN-SHAVEN, wearing a CHEAP, DARK SUIT along with a BLACK TIE) comes out from behind a tree. He slinks towards CHATTERJEE, and quietly stands beside him. A vulture lands adroitly on the roof of the circular building in the background. OMAR produces an envelope from his jacket's inner pocket and hands it to CHATTERJEE. CHATTERJEE takes the envelope, stuffs it in his own jacket's inner pocket, and withdraws a small envelope of his own. He gives this envelope to OMAR and leaves, abruptly. OMAR sidles back to the tree.

FADE TO BLACK:

8

INT. WOMAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING

8

The WOMAN is sprawled on the bed, asleep. She wakes up and stretches herself. She looks disheveled, wasted, yet sober. She gets on her feet and feels a pang in her ankle. She lurches toward the open door of her apartment and pushes it. As the door swings shut, she discovers RAY, reclining on a settee, asleep.

She approaches him and notices his leather jacket is lying on the floor. She stoops to pick it up; As she does this, she feels something, goes thru the jacket's pocket, and withdraws a small metallic object in the shape of a handgun. She stares at it, and then at RAY, with great curiosity.

She puts the gun back in the pocket and places the jacket back on the floor. She walks to the bathroom, unhurriedly, and shuts the door.

CUT TO BLACK:

9 INT. OMAR'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

9

A tiny bed-sitting room. Shabby furniture. Soiled walls. Some inexpensive artifacts are lying here and there. European classical music is playing on an old-fashioned record player.

BATHROOM:

OMAR is standing before a mirror, naked, with a towel dangling from the waist. He is SHAVING OFF HIS GOATEE. The doorbell rings. He moves out -

BED-SITTING ROOM:

- And unlocks the front door, opens it slightly to peek out, then steps back and opens it fully. DONNY steps inside, dressed as a COLLEGE BOY. OMAR walks back to the bathroom. DONNY takes a seat on the bed. A moment later, OMAR walks back into the room, CLEAN-SHAVEN. He picks up his clothes from the chair and begins to dress.

DONNY

What's on the gramophone?

OMAR freezes. He stares at DONNY in disbelief.

OMAR

That's *Vivaldi*, Donny.

DONNY seems a little restless.

DONNY

Are you nervous?

OMAR

A little. - You?

DONNY

Me too. It feels like going to an exam. I hope this thing works out all right. We've already missed a day of work.

DONNY looks over his shoulder at OMAR, who is putting on a CHEAP, DARK SUIT.

DONNY (CONT'D)

Don't you think it's a bit formal?

OMAR

Well, I had this suit for two years. And I hardly found an occasion fit to wear it. Besides, it gives the whole situation a touch of decency, don't you think?

OMAR looks about, searchingly. DONNY gets on his feet and walks towards the window. OMAR notices something on the bed. He scoops up his crumpled tie.

OMAR (CONT'D)

You were sitting on my tie!

OMAR dons his tie, and picks up an envelope from the side table, gives his room a thorough look, then turns off the gramophone.

OMAR (CONT'D)

Let's go.

9A EXT. BOULEVARD - LATER 9A

A busy street corner, bustling with a cosmopolitan crowd. The tram pulls up. OMAR and DONNY alight from it. They march along the pavement and cross a zebra crossing. As they stop before a tall, handsome-looking building that has a multitude of windows, they enter it.

9B INT. LOBBY/BUILDING - CONTINUOUS 9B

They walk down the lobby and enter an elevator.

9C INT. 4TH FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER 9C

The door of the elevator opens; OMAR and DONNY step out of it and head towards the reception desk. A YOUNG, PERKY-LOOKING GIRL with a boyish haircut, wearing oblong spectacles, receives them.

OMAR

(to the RECEPTIONIST)

Hi, we have a 4 o'clock appointment with Mr. Chatterjee.

The girl glances at OMAR, then she looks into her registrar.

RECEPTIONIST

May I know your names, please?

OMAR

(meek)

Well, we haven't given any.

She looks again at OMAR for a moment and then picks up the telephone and presses a key.

RECEPTIONIST

(on phone)

There are two anonymous men here to see Mr. Chatterjee on a 4 o'clock appointment. Uh-huh. Right.

She puts the telephone down.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

(warm)

Go right down the aisle. Mr. Chatterjee's office is at the far end of it, on the right.

OMAR nods, and enters through the double doors into a large room partitioned by paneled glass.

DONNY

(to RECEPTIONIST)

Thank you!

OMAR and DONNY march down the aisle. On one side, staff members go about their business in cubicle-style offices. On the other side, a row of small, individual offices with titles stenciled on closed doors. As OMAR and DONNY reach the end wall, they turn right to a door that says "Office of the Publisher." They enter it.

9D

INT. ANTEROOM - CONTINUOUS

9D

As OMAR and DONNY enter, a woman in her 30s, sitting behind a small desk with a presumptuous air of being an amiable personal secretary, greets them.

SECRETARY

Ah, you must be the "anonymous people." Have a seat. Mr. Chatterjee will be available in a moment.

They nod meekly and sit on a large sofa by the wall. They look around the office. DONNY looks at a portrait of a deity hanging on the wall. OMAR looks at the other door with "Private" written on it. An elderly man with a flourishing white beard comes out of the Private room, walks across the anteroom, and walks out.

SECRETARY (CONT'D)

(to OMAR And DONNY)

You can go inside now.

OMAR and DONNY get on their feet, walk to the Private door, and enter it.

9E

INT. PRIVATE - CONTINUOUS

9E

As OMAR and DONNY enter the room, which seems a little dark and inspires a sense of austerity and reverence. They linger by the door and gaze at CHATTERJEE, who is sitting behind his desk, poring over some papers. CHATTERJEE raises his eyes as if in thought, and notices the two young strangers lingering by the door, almost insolently.

CHATTERJEE
(to OMAR And DONNY)
Who are you?

OMAR
(apparently nervous)
We... we have a 4 o'clock appointment with you, Mr. Chatterjee. We talked over the phone with your secretary this morning.

CHATTERJEE remembers something. He makes a gesture with his hand and speaks gently:

CHATTERJEE
Oh, yes. Why are you standing there? Come and have a seat.

OMAR and DONNY move to the chairs and sit on them.

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)
Can I offer you gentlemen some refreshment - tea, coffee, or a cup of cold water, perhaps?

OMAR
Thanks, but no thanks.

CHATTERJEE
(beat)
I was told that you were reluctant to talk with one of our editors.

OMAR
(uneasy)
Yes, that is correct, Mr. Chatterjee.

CHATTERJEE
I understand this circumspection. People with information tend to feel that way, and it's perfectly rational.

OMAR
We would really appreciate it if we could have this conversation somewhere private.

CHATTERJEE

(condescending)

Well, you are sitting in my office, gentlemen, and that's the most private we can get. So, what is it?

OMAR

Well, it's a little hard to explain, but we must tell you that we have come after much deliberation and think it's only fair to tell you about this...

CHATTERJEE discerns a certain trepidation in OMAR's behavior.

CHATTERJEE

I must let you know, gentleman, that whatever you are going to say will be kept confidential. If the paper has any interest in your piece - providing it is true, for which we have to double-check with our other various sources - I don't know if I should say this, but you gentlemen might even entitle yourself to some compensation as a token of the initiative. So, what's it's about?

OMAR

(beat)

Well, it's about *you*, Mr. Chatterjee.

CHATTERJEE looks tranquilly at OMAR and DONNY. He extends his arm to open a small box that is lying on the desk and takes a cigar out of it. He cuts the ends of it with an implement, sticks the cigar in his mouth, and lights it. He inhales a mouthful and blows away a puff of cloud, which hovers over the desk before fading away into thin air. He does all this in a cool, calm, and collected manner. OMAR and DONNY watch all this quietly, yet attentively.

CHATTERJEE

Who sent you?

OMAR

(as if not understanding the question)

Nobody sent us, Mr. Chatterjee--

CHATTERJEE slams his clenched fist on the desk and points his index finger at OMAR in a threatening manner.

CHATTERJEE

(severe)

Listen you *punk!*

(MORE)

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)

You think I don't know what you are trying to do here!

OMAR peers at CHATTERJEE in confusion and surging fear. OMAR abruptly takes his hand into his jacket's inner pocket, withdraws an envelope, and puts it on the desk. CHATTERJEE looks at the envelope; He picks it up, and as he takes out its contents, he frowns. His face goes pale. He shoots a look at OMAR; then at DONNY, and then at the photographic prints, which he is holding. He flips them over one another. He gets up slowly and gawks at each print in terror. CHATTERJEE moves away from his desk, with his back to OMAR and DONNY. A deadly silence reigns. CHATTERJEE raises his head, turns it a bit, and he speaks in a low voice:

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)

(morose)

What do you want?

No answer.

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)

(thickly)

Okay. - how much do you want?

OMAR is still having some difficulty in understanding the situation.

OMAR

(naive)

Well, how much can you pay?

CHATTERJEE twirls and plunges himself onto his desk.

CHATTERJEE

(vehement)

I am not going to play any games with you people! I want to get this thing over and done with!

OMAR stares at CHATTERJEE as if he is staring at a buffoon in disguise. CHATTERJEE begins to melt.

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)

(beat)

What about the negatives, - or any other prints?

OMAR looks at CHATTERJEE for a moment; then he extends his hand.

OMAR

(deadpan)

Can I have the photos back?

In a moment, CHATTERJEE, desperately, tentatively, let go of the photographic prints. OMAR picks up the envelope and gets on his feet.

He walks to the door, stuffing the prints into the envelope. He looks over his shoulder at DONNY, who is still sitting on his chair, almost befuddled. OMAR opens the door and leaves. DONNY gets up and skitters after him.

9F INT. ELEVATOR/4TH FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER 9F

OMAR enters the open elevator; DONNY enters it after him. OMAR presses a button and the door gets shut.

DONNY
What the *hell* was that?

OMAR
We've got to get out of here!

CUT TO BLACK:

10 INT. WOMAN'S APARTMENT - MORNING 10

The bathroom door opens. The WOMAN comes out of it. She sees RAY, who is still asleep on the couch. She, purportedly, slams the door shut. RAY awakes, his eyes open and looks around strangely. The WOMAN walks to her dresser and sits on it. She picks up a hairbrush and starts using it on her hair. She addresses RAY without looking at him.

WOMAN
(urbane)
Do you want some coffee?

RAY
(orienting himself)
No, thanks.

WOMAN
How old are you?

RAY
What? Uh, I'll be twenty-four next April.

RAY, without moving from his seat, gawks at her.

RAY (CONT'D)
So, you are divorced or a widow?

WOMAN
(beat)
Neither. I don't believe in marital ties.

RAY
You are not a hermit, of course?

WOMAN

No, I am not very religious,
either.

The WOMAN puts down the hairbrush. She takes out a cotton ball from a box and starts to rub it on her face. RAY looks about the room, which is oddly small and has an air of aesthetic poignancy mingled with worn-out grandeur.

RAY

So, what are you?

The WOMAN cast her eyes on RAY's reflection in the mirror.

WOMAN

I am an actress — or *was* — when it still used to be a glorified profession. Of course, nothing can remain sacred in this decadence nowadays.

RAY takes out a pack of red apple cigarettes and sticks one in his mouth.

RAY

What did you appear in?

As he is about to light it, he offers her the pack. She shakes her head lightly.

WOMAN

Mostly theatre.

RAY lights his cigarette and smokes heartily.

RAY

You mean, like in one of those
"plays?"

WOMAN

(beat)
Yes.

RAY

So, what happened?

WOMAN

I retired.

RAY coughs roughly. He pounds his clenched fist on his chest until his coughing subdues. As he recuperates, his gaze falls on a rough sketch pasted on the wall. Ray looks at it rather curiously.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

What about *you*?

RAY
What about me?

WOMAN
(condescending)
What are you called, anyway?

The WOMAN notices that RAY is looking at the sketch on the wall.

RAY
"Ray."

She gets up slowly and turns around to face him.

WOMAN
And do you like art, Ray?

CUT TO:

11 INT. ORIENTAL RESTAURANT - EVENING

11

OMAR and DONNY are sitting at a table in an elegant restaurant. They are having dinner and seem to be a bit drunk. Both are dressed rather fashionably and are smoking cigarettes.

OMAR
You know, I've been reading a book by this astronomer-cum-philosopher - and it's a gem. It will leave you paralyzed, with its richness of knowledge and text. I read just a couple of pages, and I was unable to sleep afterwards. It just made me feel so petty and *intrigued*. You know, we know very little about our universe. And that little we know, we don't even fully appreciate it. Humans are so trivial and insignificant, and yet at the same time, they are so rare and precious. "There is so much that lies beyond the bright blue sky, that only on a clear moonless night when we see those twinkly little stars, can we appreciate our role in the cosmos in a greater respect."

DONNY
(beat)
Do you think there's life, like us, exist somewhere else, on some other rock?

OMAR

Well, I guess I like to think so.
It'll make things all the more
interesting for us down here,
wouldn't it?

DONNY

You know, it's been said that all
creatures live their lives in a
cycle. In the end, it's just our
body that dies, but our soul; it
just passes into another body. Of
course, we don't remember anything
about our past lives. I think there
could be a spiritual explanation to
all this. Maybe we are just not
that insignificant, after all.

Omar reflects on this.

OMAR

I think these "sayings" are just
the fancy of some ancient writers.
You know, for a good deal of time,
it was believed that the earth was
the Centre of the universe. And
that belief was shattered by a
slick mathematician. Of course, his
claims were not welcomed and were
heavily criticized by a party of
theologians because they didn't fit
well with their own philosophy of
existence and were a big blow to
their pride, since such an axiom
would rule out the existence of an
Omni-being among us, hence it would
put the fanatics out of business.

DONNY smiles, musingly.

DONNY

But it hasn't.

OMAR

(pensive)

Sadly enough.

(beat)

I believe we are all just nothing
more than a biological concept.
Life is given to one out of
complete accident.

DONNY

(beat)

Or maybe it is just what we are led
to believe.

CUT TO:

12 EXT. COURTYARD/PLANT - EVENING 12

Clouded day. A herd of uniforms comes out of the Plant building; among them is OMAR (GOATEE, BLUE UNIFORM), who looks stinky and greasy. He takes a cigarette out of his pocket, sticks it in his mouth, and lights it. He moves to the communal faucet and washes his hands.

12A EXT. STREET - LATER 12A

OMAR treads along the sidewalk with his hands buried in his trousers' pockets. As he reaches an apartment building - a bland and gloomy-looking structure - he turns and enters it.

12B INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - CONTINUOUS 12B

OMAR climbs the drab staircase. As he arrives on the landing, he walks along the narrow corridor and stops before a door. OMAR produces a key, inserts it into the lock, and turns it. He notices a newspaper is lying in front of another door, flanked by a bottle of milk. In a flash, he scoops up the newspaper, turns the doorknob, and skips into the room.

12C INT. OMAR'S APARTMENT - CONTINUOUS 12C

The light comes on with a flicker. OMAR chucks the newspaper on the bed. He enters the bathroom. A toilet flushes. He returns, steps into the kitchenette, and comes back with a bottle of juice. He puts the bottle on the small table next to the single seater sofa. OMAR strips to his white undies. He ambles to the gramophone and puts on a record. Vivaldi's Four Seasons: Winter Segment: The first movement fills the room.

OMAR prances to his bed, fetches the newspaper, and slumps on the sofa. OMAR takes a big gulp from his juice bottle as he unfolds the paper and glances at the headlines, written in thick capital letters; He turns to the second page, his eyes drifting and settling on a picture in the top column. The picture is of two men, both formally dressed; one is in his 40s, and the other is marginally older. Both men are shaking hands with big grins on their faces as they pose for the camera. A headline at the top reads:

"Press Society Appoints P. Chatterjee As New Secretary."

OMAR looks closely at the picture. He reads the caption:

"Press Society President A.S. BOSE (Left) Congratulating P. Chatterjee (Right) on His Appointment."

OMAR gazes at the picture, briefly. Suddenly, he springs from his sofa, dashes to his wardrobe, opens it, fumbles about, and takes out an Overcoat. He places the Overcoat on the bed. He stares at the creaseless Overcoat for a moment, then his hand goes into the front pocket of it and comes out with a folded photographic print. OMAR quickly unfolds the print. He puts the photographic print next to the picture in the newspaper and ogles at them, simultaneously. He takes a seat.

A moment goes by. He carefully picks up the newspaper and the photographic print off the bed and balances them on his lap. He stares at them again. His lips curl, and he snorts, almost hypnotically. He lifts his head ponderously, and glances at the Overcoat in thought. He leans forward on his seat; his hands go through the pockets of the Overcoat; first the outer pocket, and then, as his hand goes into the inner pocket, he feels something.

12D INT. CAFÉ - LATER

12D

The café is small and looks inexpensive. OMAR is sitting on a table with an empty bottle of Coke before him. DONNY enters. As he sees OMAR, he walks to him and sits down.

OMAR

I called you ages ago.

DONNY

(exonerating himself)

I was about to start dinner.

The WAITER comes.

OMAR

(to WAITER)

Two cokes.

WAITER

We also serve food, you know.

OMAR looks at the WAITER, blankly; the WAITER leaves.

DONNY

So, what is it?

OMAR looks over his shoulder to see if the WAITER is out of earshot, then he turns to DONNY, and speaks solemnly:

OMAR

You remember the evening when we went into that strange apartment... with our felon friend, under the impression that it belonged to his uncle?

DONNY recalls positively.

DONNY

Yes. - Ray.

OMAR feels a little surprised; for DONNY's response was quicker than he expected. This excites OMAR a little.

OMAR

And you also remember the
photograph I told you about, Which
I found in the *Overcoat*.

DONNY, again, remembers positively.

DONNY

Yes. The dirty picture.

OMAR looks at DONNY as if he's about to show him a magic trick. OMAR produces the photographic print and puts it before DONNY, as if it was something consecrated. DONNY picks up the print from the table and leers at it. The WAITER arrives with two cokes, which he puts on the table. DONNY flips the print; the WAITER leaves. OMAR picks up the print and puts it aside on the table.

DONNY (CONT'D)

Well, it *is* dirty.

OMAR feels a little discouraged; as if he has expected something more from DONNY.

OMAR

Don't you wanna know why I am
showing it to you now?

DONNY pretends to look inquisitive. OMAR produces the newspaper and puts it before DONNY.

OMAR (CONT'D)

Second page, first column.

DONNY picks up the newspaper, turns to the second page, and stares at it for a moment. He picks up the photographic print from the side and looks at it closely.

DONNY

(genuinely curious)
Is that the *same* man?

OMAR

(somewhat delighted)
Yes!

DONNY

But... that's interesting.

OMAR looks at DONNY with restrained excitement.

OMAR

There's more.

DONNY looks up.

DONNY

What?

OMAR Speaks, almost fervently, at length.

OMAR

When I saw this picture in the newspaper, I took the Overcoat out of my closet - to look at the photograph - to see if it was the same man, you know. And when I saw that it was - something *struck* me, and I went through the Overcoats' pockets - and I found this -

(OMAR produces an envelope and places it before DONNY)

- in the same inner pocket from which I found *that* print for the first time.

OMAR's babbling hardly gets through DONNY; to cut it short, he asks:

DONNY

What's in it?

OMAR

Take a look for yourself.

DONNY picks up the envelope from the table and takes out the contents from it, which are: four photographic prints of a similar size. DONNY looks at each print with growing interest. OMAR continues with the same zeal:

OMAR (CONT'D)

It turns out that the day I took that print *out* of the inner pocket, under the impression that I was taking it *out* of the inner pocket, in actual, ***I was taking it out of this envelope, which was in the inner pocket.***

DONNY feels some concern, but he's unsure of what he should feel concerned for.

DONNY

Well, that's strange.

OMAR's tone changes; it becomes serious yet sarcastic.

OMAR

It appears that the coat owner wasn't some voyeur after all. Who took these pictures only to get his jelly up. He knew who the man was - and he also knew that *this* woman-
(points to the photographic print)
-isn't his wife.

(MORE)

OMAR (CONT'D)

Because if she *was*, they would be doing this stuff in her boudoir - instead of, in the front seat of a blooming sedan.

(beat)

This means the coat owner took these photographs, purposefully.

DONNY

You mean to scam him?

OMAR

(beat)

Well, to expose him.

DONNY

"Expose him?" - expose him to what?

OMAR

Well, to his wife, of course. This man is fornicating; his wife must know that her hubby is up to something. It isn't hard to imagine how insecure the wives of these big shots tend to feel. So, she hired herself a snoop, and *bingo*, this was his homework.

DONNY considers this and raises his eyebrows.

DONNY

(skeptical)

You seem pretty sure in your conclusions.

OMAR

(beat)

Do you have any alternative theory?

DONNY

I didn't even know you had a newspaper subscription.

OMAR lights a cigarette. The WAITER comes.

WAITER

Time, people.

OMAR

(to WAITER)

Why don't you bring us a couple of sandwiches?

12E

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

12E

OMAR and DONNY are walking along the sidewalk. Both are smoking cigarettes. OMAR has the newspaper under his arm.

DONNY

So, what are you gonna do with the photos?

OMAR

I don't know. I haven't thought about it.

DONNY

(playful)

Well, you can return it to the coat owner with an apology note. I am sure he'll understand.

OMAR

Yeah, and he probably will want the coat back too.

DONNY

You can say that he forfeited it when you wore it in his apartment.

OMAR

(beat)

I think I'll burn them. That will be the best thing.

DONNY

You know, it's a pity, though.

OMAR

What?

DONNY

Well, I mean, you unwittingly saved this Paperman from facing what the grown-ups call "a mid-life crisis," and he won't even know about it.

OMAR

(introspective)

Yeah... that's a pity.

CUT TO:

13

EXT. FUNFAIR - AFTERNOON

13

OMAR (in a CHEAP, DARK SUIT AND BLACK TIE) is standing with his back to a merry-go-round. He is sucking on a beverage with a straw and eating a chocolate bar. DONNY is in the back, enjoying the ride. OMAR looks around searchingly; he promptly tosses the beverage and candy bar into a bin and walks across to the other side. CHATTERJEE notices him and braces himself. As OMAR reaches CHATTERJEE, OMAR puts his hand inside his jacket's inner pocket, but he hesitates, and the hand comes out empty.

OMAR
 (polite)
 Would you mind going for a ride
 with me?

OMAR moves to the Ferris wheel without obtaining a reply, and takes a seat. CHATTERJEE sits beside him, awkwardly. The wheel begins to move.

OMAR (CONT'D)
 Would you mind if I asked you a
 personal question?

CHATTERJEE
 (laconic)
 It depends on how personal it is.

OMAR
 Oh, it's mildly personal.

CHATTERJEE
 (apathetic)
 What is it?

OMAR
 Would you call yourself a religious
 man?

CHATTERJEE
 (beat)
 No. — And I am not very proud of
 it, either.

OMAR
 (solicitous)
 Oh, that's alright, neither am I.
 — If I were to ask you, how would
 you describe our existence, in its
 entirety, — Well, how would you
 describe it?

CHATTERJEE
 I am afraid; I don't understand the
 question.

OMAR
 Oh, let me paraphrase it. Would you
 say our existence is purely a
 biological concept, or is there a
 spiritual explanation behind it?

CHATTERJEE looks at OMAR from the corner of his eyes,
 wondering where his questions are coming from.

CHATTERJEE
 (conceptualizing)
 I don't suppose I think of life in
 terms of biology or theology;
 (MORE)

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)

that is for the scholars to decide. But I do believe that when a person is born, he chooses his own destiny - by choice, commitment, dedication, and a little bit of luck. But first, he has to set some beliefs before him, so he won't go astray - like the gypsies.

OMAR chews on this and nods heavily. He takes out an envelope and gives it to CHATTERJEE. CHATTERJEE pockets the envelope and gives OMAR an envelope of his own. Omar looks at CHATTERJEE's double-breasted suit.

OMAR

(beat)

That's a nice suit.

The ride comes to an end. They both disembark. CHATTERJEE leaves.

CUT TO:

14 INT. STUDY/CHATTERJEE'S HOUSE - NIGHT 14

CHATTERJEE is in his pajamas, reclining on an easy chair, reading a book. He closes the book, gets up, and turns off the lamp.

14A INT. HALLWAY/CHATTERJEE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 14A

CHATTERJEE steps out of his study and yawns. He notices that the kitchen light is on. He walks into it.

14B INT. KITCHEN/CHATTERJEE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 14B

As CHATTERJEE enters the kitchen, he sees his two children: A BOY (aged 4) and a GIRL (aged 6) playing with building blocks right next to an informal dining table. CHATTERJEE moves and stands behind them. The children carry on, unheeded.

CHATTERJEE

Do you know what time it is?
Shouldn't you be in bed?

GIRL

We aren't sleepy.

CHATTERJEE

But you've got to have some sleep.
Otherwise, you'll feel restless,
tomorrow. Come on now, get up.

The children obey reluctantly. The father grabs the BOY by his forearm and offers his hand to the GIRL, who takes it while rubbing her sleepy eye.

14C INT. CHILDREN'S ROOM/CHATTERJEE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS 14C

CHATTERJEE enters the room with his children. The GIRL climbs onto her bed; CHATTERJEE puts the BOY on his.

GIRL

Read us a rhyme, will you?

CHATTERJEE looks at the small, neat bookshelf. He takes out a book of nursery rhymes, drags a chair nearer to their bed, and sits on it. He opens the book, reads the index, and turns the pages.

CHATTERJEE

(reading)

"In the east lay a kingdom of a king;
Its sky was blue and its pastures all green.
Its court was fair because it obeyed the sire;
Its people were happy because their needs weren't dire.
The king was benevolent and venerated, but fickle-
(CHATTERJEE momentarily stops at this bizarre word; as he continues, his tone changes)
The court and the people were ignorant of such infidel.
When such rumors aroused the people's curiosity;
The court was disgusted with its sire's mendacity.
The king denied all ignoble allegations;
The queen left him in his onerous situation.
To maintain the order, the court was compelled;
They tried the king for justice to tell.
The verdict was told in the midst of the night;
The king was hanged before the sunrise."

CHATTERJEE closes the book, slowly, as if in shock. He exclaims:

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)

What absolute piffle!

Suddenly, he realizes where he is sitting, and looks up at his children, who are, deep in slumber.

CUT TO:

15 INT. PIZZERIA - EVENING

15

OMAR (in a CHEAP, DARK SUIT AND BLACK TIE) and DONNY (COLLEGE BOY ATTIRE) are sitting at a table opposite each other. OMAR's jacket is lying on the chair next to him. On some distant radio, JANIS JOPLIN is singing "Mary jane."
(The dialogue begins after the first verse of the song.)

OMAR

(musing)

So, he thought we were some goons
who came to chisel him.

DONNY

(clamorous)

What? But why didn't you *corrected*
him?

OMAR

(almost with a shudder)

I didn't understand it myself at
first, but then it was too late. He
was letting his imagination run
wild. The whole thing was built
into a moronic affair. It must've
been usual in his line of business,
since he took a quick fancy to such
an idea.

DONNY

(ingenuous)

What should we do now?

OMAR

We can't do anything now; it's all
in the past!

DONNY

But couldn't we call his office,
and clear him of this
misunderstanding?

OMAR

(not paying any heed to
Donny)

I thought he was gonna plunge on
the desk any moment and take a
swing at me! You know, for a
publisher, he's got a very ill
temperament.

DONNY

(remembering something)
 When he asked you about the negatives, why didn't you tell him that they were inside the envelope. Instead, you asked for the photos back and headed out of the room.

OMAR

(somewhat hysterical)
He was giving me the jitters! I thought the only sensible thing to do was - to leave. But then I thought, if we leave in an abrupt manner, it would only tense things up. So I asked for the photos back, kind of thought that maybe it would make him forget about the whole matter.

DONNY

(critical)
 But, didn't you thought that if you had told him that the negatives were *inside* the envelope, he might've realized that he could be making a mistake. That he is misjudging the situation somehow, - or at least, it would've given you the window to enlighten him. Instead, you acted in the most reckless manner. You probably would've made the impression on him all the more viable.

OMAR

(riled up)
 Well, if you were so *perfectly* calm to do all this prudent thinking of yours. You should've emitted a word or two yourself! *Stop feeling sorry for him now!*

OMAR takes out a pack of red apple cigarettes from his shirt pocket. He searches for a lighter on him. He looks over his shoulder at the FUNKY-LOOKING GIRL standing behind the counter desk.

OMAR (CONT'D)

(to the GIRL)
 Excuse me, can I have a light?

15A INT. WASHROOM/PIZZERIA - MOMENTS LATER

15A

OMAR is standing before the washbasin, smoking a cigarette. DONNY is at the urinal doing his business.

OMAR

(contemplative)

He probably would've thought that we were sent by some shady organization, which specializes in this sort of a - racket!

(beat)

You know, in retrospect, it all looks very comical.

(DONNY comes to the basin to rinse his hands)

Poor bastard! If only he knew what a joke he'd made of himself. I bet it was his conscience that let him make an utter fool of himself. Once he saw that the episode of his infidelities was a product of the common market, he must've felt the floor sink beneath his feet.

CUT TO BLACK:

16

INT. MUSEUM - NOON

16

A Palatial Room. One of the walls of the room is covered with a mural depicting a scene from archaic times. Another wall has a lineup of sculptures: a gang of partly nude women posing with a dance move. The third wall is adorned neatly with colored paintings in wooden frames. RAY and the WOMAN waddle about the room before stopping in front of a painting by RAJA RAVI VERMA.

WOMAN

(unassuming)

Isn't it marvelous? Something to look at with wonderment. It's a scene from the Scriptures and was painted by a man of noble birth. Don't you think there is a teasing quality about it? Man, who believes he is the toughest of all creatures, is, after all, the weakest of all animals. How pathetic he can seem, when he desires for a thing that he can't fully possess, and acts very much like a child does, when an intriguing toy is taken away from him, without ceremony or justification.

They move to another painting: an erotica; a Kama Sutra in procession.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Well, what do you think of *this* one?

RAY

A bit smutty, isn't it?

WOMAN

Don't be a complete ass. It's the work of a millennia. Look at the man, what frenzy he must've been in - to procure a brief moment of sensual pleasure, before committing himself to the doom, for some vain piece of land. Now, look at the woman. What ecstasy she must've been in! It's like she has already triumphed over all the glories men seek to add to their names, - not merely by being a courtesan in a hierarchy, but, by vanquishing the man in the most crucial of all his battles. Hence, the pleasure for her isn't momentary, but eternal.

RAY moves his hand perfunctorily and touches the WOMAN's crotch. She turns her head and glares at him in alarm.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

What do you *think* you are doing?

RAY looks at her self-consciously.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

(admonishes discreetly)

Put your hand away!

RAY moves his hand away.

CUT TO:

17 INT. CARPET SHOP - AFTERNOON

17

OMAR and DONNY are roaming about in a set of rooms. Each room has a display, and they are filled with piles of Persian carpets.

OMAR

(somewhat disapproving)

I don't see what you didn't understand in it. It was perfectly told.

DONNY

I am not saying that I didn't understand it. I am saying that I find it kind of, well, a bit boring.

OMAR masquerades to be in a great shock.

OMAR

Either you don't know what you are saying or you didn't pay any attention to it at all. It was one of the finest films I ever saw, Donny.

DONNY

Well, each has his own taste.

OMAR

(resentful)

Yeah, I know what shitty taste you have. Only if you were paying a little more attention to the screen, instead of stuffing your mouth with those popcorn.

DONNY

Look, I didn't even wanna go, anyway. It was you who insisted.

OMAR

(subdued)

Can you at least tell me what you found so "boring" in it?

DONNY

Well, each character told the same story, over and over again. What was the point of it?

OMAR

Each character told a *different* version of the same story. Now I can see you weren't paying any attention, after all.

DONNY

Well, what was the whole point of it, anyway?

OMAR

That *was* the whole point of it! Each character told a different version of the same story. Each character gave a different account of the same incident. Each character, in their own version of the story, manipulated the facts. The very facts that manifest their own faults and guilt. But it was the old man's version of the story, which was impartial. And it wasn't just impartial – it was the truth. Let me elaborate it to you:

(MORE)

OMAR (CONT'D)

The bandit told, in his version, that after he ravished the wife of the samurai; he crossed swords with the samurai – *for her*. The bandit said that they fought with great bravery and proficiency – alas he slays the samurai.

The wife, in her version, said, after she was ravished by the bandit, "she fainted." And when she recovered consciousness, her husband, the samurai, had committed suicide.

Now, the reincarnated husband, the samurai, recited in his version, that after his wife was ravished by the bandit, the bandit *induced* her to leave the samurai and elope with *him* instead. She agreed but demanded that the bandit slay her husband first. As the bandit refused to do so, she ran away when the bandit had his back on her, and her husband committed suicide in despair.

Each character told his story in a way that gave him a higher moral ground, and somehow made him look good. Because he had aroused a sense of sympathy or audacity for himself in the eyes of his audience. But it was the truthful account of the old man which revealed the masks of hypocrisy from the other characters' faces. In his version of the story, the old man explains that the wife didn't faint after she was ravished, but instead insinuated both men to fight for *her*. The samurai who should have fought for his wife, at first, refused to do so. Because he thought that, now, she was nothing but damaged goods. But eventually, when she called on their manhood, the samurai and the bandit clashed swords. Both men said that they fought with bravery and great skill. But in reality, they fought goofily and with cowardice.

(beat)

None of them was good, but they presented themselves as if they were better than one another.

(MORE)

OMAR (CONT'D)

Which is, after all, a trend that has embodied the human race since the beginning of mankind.

CUT TO:

18

INT. PRIVATE/CHATTERJEE'S OFFICE - EVENING

18

The room is dimly lit. CHATTERJEE is sitting in an easy chair. He looks concerned and preoccupied. A man in his late 30s is sitting on the settee. He is wearing a black, leathery suit with a black round hat. He looks mysterious and sharp. CHATTERJEE speaks to him in a vague yet familiar manner. The MAN IN BLACK listens patiently and attentively.

CHATTERJEE

I don't want anything in-depth. I just want to see what's on the surface - without attracting any attention. So, discretion is the number one priority here. I don't want you to use anything "flash." It has to be carried out most informally.

MAN IN BLACK

Forgive me, but you are being very coy on this. What kind of information do you want here, exactly?

CHATTERJEE

Just where he hangs out, and where he lives. If that's possible...

MAN IN BLACK

(cocky)
It's possible.

CHATTERJEE

Look, I know I may sound a little cautious, but there is a reason for that. There is always a reason for that.

MAN IN BLACK

(somewhat servile)
I understand completely. You don't have to explain any further. You can rely on me.

CHATTERJEE

I'll give you a call when I leave the office tomorrow, and tell you the location, - and see if you can get some leeway.

CUT TO:

19

EXT. AVENUE - AFTERNOON

19

OMAR stands ostentatiously on the sidewalk. He is wearing a loud, double-breasted suit with white sports shoes. He is looking down the road as if he is waiting for someone. Most of the shops in the vicinity are closed. The street looks pretty much deserted, as if in attribute to a pleasant holiday. OMAR casts a glance around and notices a MAN, dressed in a black leathery suit and a black round hat, has appeared out of nowhere, and is now standing on the sidewalk. OMAR ignores The MAN IN BLACK, and looks expectantly on the other side of the road.

OMAR casts another glance to the opposite side of the road. The MAN IN BLACK is standing still with his hands plunged into his coat's pockets. OMAR finds him interesting and gives him another unobtrusive glance. OMAR discovers that the MAN IN BLACK is slyly looking at him from the corner of his eyes; OMAR promptly looks away; So does the MAN IN BLACK. Suddenly, a thought gets hold of OMAR, and he begins to brood. OMAR tentatively straightens himself and takes a peek out of the corner of his eyes at the MAN IN BLACK. To OMAR's great aggravation, The MAN IN BLACK is already looking at him with a sidelong glance. OMAR frowns; he slowly turns around, and shuffles into the alley behind him; a moment later, he reappears. OMAR, again, drifts back into the alley, and emerges, momentarily. The MAN IN BLACK looks at OMAR and his foolish act condescendingly. OMAR, again, drifts back into the alley; a moment goes by, but OMAR doesn't come back. The MAN IN BLACK turns his neck inquisitively. He walks slowly, then quickly, to the alley. As he reaches it, he sees that the alley is deserted; OMAR is gone. The MAN IN BLACK scans the surrounding area, hungrily and aggressively, as if looking for a lost dog. OMAR creeps out from behind a dumpster, scrambling on his all fours like a monkey. Suddenly, both men look at each other. It seems to both that the cat is out of the back. OMAR gets up awkwardly and gradually on his hind legs, turns with feigned calmness, and walks away, deep into the alley. Now and then, OMAR throws a glance over his shoulder and sees that the MAN IN BLACK is following him. OMAR quickens his pace; So does the MAN IN BLACK. OMAR spins on his heel and takes a sharp turn. As the MAN IN BLACK reaches the turn, he halts and sees that OMAR is running away, like a wild rabbit in full flight. The MAN IN BLACK bolts after OMAR. A gust of wind blows the MAN IN BLACK's hat off his head, revealing his bald. The MAN IN BLACK lifts up his chin, to look at his flying hat, while still on the run; his foot trips and he collapses on the road.

19A EXT. AVENUE - MOMENTS LATER

19A

OMAR canters along the pavement. He halts before an ice cream parlor, where DONNY is lolling on a bench licking a double scoop.

OMAR
(furious)
What the hell are you doing here?

DONNY
(happy-go-lucky)
I am having an ice cream. What happen? You look washed out.

OMAR
(petulant)
Because I have to run the whole *fucking* block to get here, - I told you to keep a lookout!

DONNY
Why?

OMAR
Why!? Because I just saved my ass from being clamped! There was a *man* there, dressed in all black, who was keeping an eye on me and then started following me. I just managed to escape.

As DONNY done licking the flavors, he begins to munch on the cone.

DONNY
Why was he keeping an eye on you?

OMAR
Donny, you dunce! Can't you see that? Chatterjee is trying to be cute with us! Maybe he suspects something.
(beat)
Well, stop gnawing on that cone!
This is serious!

19B INT. PRIVATE/CHATTERJEE'S OFFICE - LATER

19B

CHATTERJEE is sitting on his chair behind the desk. He is talking on the telephone. OMAR's shrill and whining voice can be heard from the receiver.

CHATTERJEE
(on phone)
(defensive)
I looked all around the avenue.
(MORE)

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)

You weren't anywhere. — What are you talking about? Don't be ridiculous. You can assume anything you want.

— I deny all allegations. I waited for you for fifteen minutes, but you didn't show up. — Yes, I have.
— I'll be at the Avenue in 20 minutes.

19C INT. TELEPHONE BOOTH — SAME TIME 19C

OMAR has the receiver pressed against his ear.

OMAR

(somewhat neurotic)

No! — Let's meet someplace lively.

19D INT/EXT. ZOO — LATER 19D

OMAR is standing outside a lion's den, with the lion sitting outside it. CHATTERJEE approaches OMAR.

OMAR

(fretful)

That was very foolish of you, Mr. Chatterjee.

CHATTERJEE takes an envelope out of his jacket's inner pocket and offers it to OMAR.

CHATTERJEE

(bold)

Your paranoia is not my concern.

OMAR, after a moment's hesitation, takes the envelope and pockets it.

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)

(expectant)

Well?

OMAR

(gloomy)

It's on your *car*.

CHATTERJEE

"On my *car*?"

19E EXT. PARKING AREA/ZOO - MOMENTS LATER 19E

CHATTERJEE heads to his car, which is parked near the fence. He notices an envelope sticking to the windshield under the wiper. CHATTERJEE hurriedly removes the envelope, and looks around with the eyes of a criminal.

CUT TO BLACK:

20 INT. PLANT - AFTERNOON 20

Loud noises of metallic clattering, crushing, and cutting. OMAR (GOATEE, BLUE UNIFORM) is working on a piece of machinery. He seems diligent, then gradually becomes nervous, and then grows absentminded. An alarm sounds.

20A EXT. COURTYARD - MOMENTS LATER 20A

OMAR walks out of the Plant building, cleaning his grease-smearred hands with a rag. He stands still for a moment, looking around intently; then strides to the fence, where DONNY (BLUE UNIFORM) is sitting on a crate, munching on an apple. As OMAR reaches DONNY, he addresses him without standing on ceremony.

OMAR

Listen, I've been doing a little thinking, and I guess you were right.

DONNY

(oblivious)
About what?

OMAR

The Paperman. I am thinking of returning him the photos.

DONNY

(taken aback)
You've been thinking of doing what?

OMAR

Returning him the photographs.

DONNY

Returning whom the photographs?

OMAR

The Paperman. Chatterjee.

DONNY

(confused)
"The Paperman" - but why?

OMAR

What do you mean "why?" – you said it yourself – that I saved him from a fix.

DONNY

Well, I was speaking hypothetically. I didn't mean it.

OMAR

But, there was truth in what you said. Suppose if I hadn't taken that Overcoat, even accidentally, – what would've happened? That "Peeper" would've disclosed Chatterjee's sordid deed to his wife – and where would his life be now – in a mess. His wife would've probably left him, and I bet he wouldn't have had that big grin on his face when they took his picture for the second page. But only – if he knew, that somebody has saved him.... he would be grateful. – I don't even know why I am explaining all this to you. You were the one who gave me the notion in the first place.

DONNY

Well, I never said that you should return him the photographs.

OMAR

No. But you suggested it.

DONNY looks at OMAR; OMAR looks Resolute.

DONNY

You aren't serious, are you? I mean, yesterday, you said you were gonna burn them. And besides, what good will it do, anyhow?

OMAR

It's a matter of acknowledgement...
(with an undertone)
And he can also take it as a forewarning, for any future contingencies, if you know what I mean.

DONNY

But, is it really necessary?

OMAR

(beat)
Yes.

As DONNY sees that his friend has quite made up his mind, he decides to conclude the conversation.

DONNY

Well... if you had made up your mind, what can I say? Good luck, I guess.

OMAR

What do you mean "Good luck?" I am not gonna do this on my own. *I want you with me on this.*

DONNY

Well, I don't wanna get involved in this. Besides, it was you, who took that coat and unraveled the whole thing.

20B INT/EXT. BUS (MOVING) - LATER IN THE DAY

20B

OMAR and DONNY (BLUE UNIFORMS) are sitting in the mid-seats. They look weary.

OMAR

Do you have any thoughts, about how we are gonna broach the subject?

DONNY

(yawning)
How do you mean?

OMAR

Well, how to explain the situation? Once we meet him.

DONNY

(inconsiderate)
Isn't it pretty obvious?

OMAR

(diligent)
Well, no - I mean, you are not saying he would be expecting that someday two strangers will be bringing him seedy photographs of his soggy love affair and telling him that they found it in some Overcoat, which they took from a strange apartment. It may all come as a surprise to him. And who knows, he may even be embarrassed to see that now we are privy to his - adulteries.

(MORE)

OMAR (CONT'D)

But, on the other hand, he would be relieved that it's just only us who are privy to it. It's a very complicated and sensitive situation. We have to keep it in our heads not to make him feel ashamed, like as if we are judging him or anything.

(beat)

Regarding the part about his wife's implicitness in all this, I think we should better let him figure it out for himself. We have to handle this situation in a cool and tactful manner.

DONNY

(beat)

What do you think would happen, once you return him the photographs?

OMAR

I don't know. I guess, he will probably want to return the favor.

DONNY

You mean he would ask, if we ever needed his advice or assistance on any matter - he would be obliging?

OMAR

(somewhat timid)

Well, I don't suppose he would like to keep any kind of association with us, once he sees that we are aware of his... entanglements. I suppose, he might try to return it in a monetary fashion.

DONNY

You mean, money? - How much do you think he would pay?

OMAR

I don't know. But I can say that it would not be a nominal sum.

CUT TO:

21

INT. PIZZERIA - EVENING

21

OMAR (in a CHEAP, DARK SUIT AND BLACK TIE) and DONNY (COLLEGE BOY ATTIRE) come out of the washroom. They sit at their table, with the hot and fresh pizza waiting for them. They begin to devour it. OMAR's jacket is still draped on the chair next to him. A moment goes by.

OMAR
 (thoughtful)
 How much do you think he would've
 paid us?

DONNY sprinkles pepper on his slice of pizza.

DONNY
 (unchallenging)
 You asked him that.

OMAR
 Yeah, the words just blurted out of
 my mouth. — I thought he was asking
 in terms of the reward.
 (beat)
 Do you think if I had made him an
 offer, he would've paid?

DONNY looks up and stares at OMAR with a questioning look in
 his eyes; and a mouth full of cheesy pizza.

21A EXT. SHORE - MOMENTS LATER

21A

OMAR and DONNY are standing on a pier. A cool wind is blowing
 about; small waves are crashing on the stones below. They are
 debating. DONNY's conduct is that of a bereaved plaintiff,
 while OMAR is acting as the devil's advocate.

DONNY
 Do you even know what you are
 suggesting?

OMAR
 I am not suggesting anything... I
 am merely stating that he would
 still want the prints and the
 negatives back, wouldn't he? We
 will return it to him. Only, we
 won't debunk him from any of his
 beliefs.

DONNY
 I thought the whole thing was
 supposed to be a matter of
 acknowledgement!

OMAR
 Well, *it was*, Donny.

DONNY
 And now it all starts to look like
 a deal to me.

OMAR

Well, we only discovered that we have a better footing in the situation. How often do you think one finds himself in a spot like this?

DONNY

But can't we just tell him the truth and see what comes out of it?

OMAR

The situation is too sweet to spoil with a little truth, Donny.

DONNY

But... don't you think it's all gone in bad taste, now?

OMAR

"Bad taste?"

(beat)

Well, the man has committed adultery, Donny. He has violated the principles of a solemn - and a sacred agreement. *That's in bad taste!*

(beat)

Why don't you just suppose that we will be redeeming him.

DONNY

(beat)

I am just curious. - What gives *us* the right to be his redeemers?

OMAR

(beat)

Providence.

CUT TO BLACK:

22

INT. BAKERY - AFTERNOON

22

A small and delicate establishment, something between a bistro and a cosmetic shop.

RAY and the WOMAN are perched on a small round table. They are having a light luncheon of cake and coffee. They are feeling a little awkward and incongruous.

WOMAN

(breaking the ice)

So, you haven't told me what you do.

RAY
 (mildly surprised)
 What... what do I do?

WOMAN
 Yes, how do you make a living?

RAY
 Well, I got a job.

WOMAN
 (Sarcastic)
 You have already spent a good deal
 of the day, most unproductively.
 What kind of work do you do,
 anyhow?

RAY
 (short)
 I am in construction. It's a "on-
 call" kind of thing.

WOMAN
 What kind of construction company
 do you work for?

RAY
 (puzzled)
 What?

WOMAN
 I mean, what kind of structures
 does it build?

RAY
 (vague)
 Uh, *buildings*.

WOMAN
 And I thought it only made *wells*.
 — And what did you do before
 getting into this erection
 business?

RAY
 Why are you so interested in what I
 do all of a sudden?

WOMAN
 (sociable)
 I am just making conversation. And
 besides, we are spending time
 together. So, I guess it's only
 fair that we know a little bit
 about one another.

RAY

(coy)

Well, I've done a few odd jobs
before.

RAY takes his cigarette pack out.

WOMAN

Tell me about them.

RAY

I don't feel like talking.

RAY takes a cigarette out of the pack and sticks it in his
mouth.

WOMAN

If that suits you, all I was
wondering is why you need that
little gun of yours?

RAY takes the unlit cigarette out of his mouth.

RAY

(snotty)

I didn't know you went through my
clothes.

WOMAN

Your jacket was lying on the floor.
You are not some fugitive, are you?

RAY

What? - No!

WOMAN

So, you are just carrying it for
the thrills; I presume.

RAY lights his cigarette.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Do you mind?

RAY offers her the cigarette pack, nervously. She takes one
and places it between her teeth. RAY presents her with the
light. A BAKERY GIRL, wearing an apron and passing by, stops
at their table.

BAKERY GIRL

No smoking, please.

As the BAKERY GIRL walks away, the WOMAN takes a drag. RAY
also smokes heartily. The WOMAN looks at RAY intently for a
moment.

WOMAN

Can I interest you in a proposition?

RAY

What proposition?

WOMAN

(beat)

That's what I am getting at, darling. — You see, there's a friend of mine, — an old friend. He, uh, did something—

RAY

(impatient)

What?

WOMAN

Well, he took some photos of me.

RAY

So?

WOMAN

With a man.

RAY

(beat)

And?

WOMAN

Well, they are not decent.

(beat)

You don't need to strain your imagination, honey. When I say they are not decent, I don't mean they are *crude*.

RAY

And why did your friend take indecent pictures of you with a man?

WOMAN

(blatant)

Because I told him to.

(beat)

You see, the man in the photos with me is a married man. And he has quite a reputation to look after. I assume now you can deduce the big "why" in it.

RAY

(cynical)

I think I can.

They both looked at each other. It seems that a curtain that was hanging between them has just fallen. The WOMAN continues plaintively:

WOMAN

To my disappointment, that friend of mine turned sissy, and told me that he couldn't proceed any further with our design. On account of that he had found out that the man in the photos with me is a newspaper publisher.

RAY

(taking an interest)
But he *did* took your photos with him.

WOMAN

Yes, but he didn't know about it then. And I was taking great comfort in his ignorance. Well, since he grew wise to the facts, he told me that he couldn't stake his two-bit of a life for my precarious venture. Meanwhile, he already has the negatives developed. When I asked him, since he wanted no part in it, he should turn the negatives and prints over to me, but then he became very pragmatic. He enunciated a list of expenses he bore, and all of a sudden, the photos grew too valuable. He told me that I could have them, after I recompensate him for his "labors," as he put it.

RAY

(sly)
Some friend, eh?

WOMAN

He used to be my manager a while ago. My vicissitudes had a rippling effect on his career, too. Now he holds the position of a day clerk in a sleazy little hotel on a squalid district. I don't know where he lives. But I do know that he has the negatives and prints stashed away in some slimy cabinetry of his dull apartment.

(beat)

You do understand what I am driving at, — I hope I am not sounding like some woman from a Russian novel making fatuous claims.

RAY

(smug)

You are suggesting that I should lift the photos for you.

WOMAN

And have them traded for a reasonable sum with the party concerned. We'll split the winnings in half.

RAY

What makes you so sure that the party *will* pay?

WOMAN

Oh, he will pay like a chimney. He's a family man... and a very dedicated one. He wouldn't want to put his life in discord for a couple of lousy photos.

RAY

(beat)

You are a wicked woman.

WOMAN

Only if he knew I had an angle in it. Since you'll be doing the handoff, he might take it for granted that it's the work of some disgruntled or degenerate adversary. I'm sure he has plenty of those in his line of work.

RAY

(slightly accusing)

What makes you so sassy about that I *will* partake in this scheme of yours?

WOMAN

Because it's succulent and will ripen.

RAY

(beat)

And what if I say I am disgusted and leave?

WOMAN

Darling, if you were the scrupulous kind, you would've left even before we got here.

(beat)

But let me do the honors, anyway.

(MORE)

WOMAN (CONT'D)
"Will you do it?" - or should I
 say, *"Are you game for it?"*

CUT TO:

23 INT. OMAR'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

23

Insert: An intricate door lock gets unlocked.

The front door opens, and OMAR enters the room. As he walks across, he trips and tumbles on the floor. He notices that the Persian carpet has done the mischief. The room seems somewhat dark and congested. One wall is covered with a stand, on which hang some suits and blazers. The other wall is covered with tapestries. On the place where the bed used to be, there now lies a round thing with padding on top. In place of a closet, there is only a large, free standing mirror. The front wall is lined with a new record player, a globe, and a bookshelf. In the middle of the room is a new sofa, flanked by a small table, on which stands an elegant lamp. The room, taken together, has a hedonistic appeal.

23A INT. DISCOTHEQUE - EVENING

23A

OMAR and DONNY, dressed rakishly, struts down the walkway, and they sit at the bar. The place is jammed with teenagers and young adults galivanting. The song "Around and Around" by THE ROLLING STONES is being played. The bartender comes.

DONNY
 (to the bartender)
 Two beers.

OMAR looks about the dancing crowd. The bartender puts two beer bottles in front of Donny. OMAR spots an empty table somewhere in the middle.

OMAR
 (pointing)
 Why don't we sit down over there?

They grab their bottles, walk to the table, and sit on it. The table next to them is occupied by a pack of FOUR YOUNG CHEEKY GIRLS, who guffaw now and then. OMAR and DONNY light cigarettes. A GIRL (ARHANA) from the next table, hesitatingly getting up, followed by whispers and giggles, walks to OMAR and DONNY's table and begins addressing them without standing on ceremony.

ARHANA
 I know, it might seem silly, but me
 and my friends are playing "spin
 the bottle."

OMAR
 (surprised, but doesn't
 show)
 Oh, that's alright.

ARHANA
 The bottle has stopped at me. And
 I've been dared to come here and
 ask if I could borrow four
 cigarettes.

Donny's hand goes into his pocket. OMAR sees this.

OMAR
 (to DONNY)
 Wait a minute, Donny.
 (to ARHANA)
 Suppose we give you the cigarettes;
 what will we get in return?

ARHANA
 (slightly indignant)
 What do you want in return?

OMAR
 How about you dance with one of us?

ARHANA
 (icy)
 I don't know how to dance.

OMAR
 Well, neither do I.

ARHANA
 So why did you ask?

OMAR
 (realizes his foolishness)
 I don't know.

OMAR and ARHANA glare at each other, childishly. DONNY takes his cigarette pack out and opens it.

DONNY
 I am shy "two cigarettes."

OMAR reaches into his pocket for a new pack of red apple cigarettes. As he is about to open it, he thinks for a bit and presents her with the pack.

OMAR
 (to ARHANA)
 Here, you can keep the whole pack.
 Maybe, then you and your friends
 have something more to giggle
 about.

ARHANA looks at OMAR, angrily. She snatches the pack from his hand.

ARHANA
I don't giggle!

ARHANA returns and puts the pack on her table. The music stops, the crowd begins to disperse from the dancing bay.

"Carol" by THE ROLLING STONES sets things on track. The dispersing crowd converges on the dance floor, rhythmically. OMAR looks on the scene, and peers at a GIRL; who is making the most, if not the wildest, but flamboyant moves. And who once told him that she doesn't know how to dance. OMAR turns to DONNY, and takes a slug from his bottle.

OMAR
I think I am going to have something stronger than that.

23B INT. CINEMA - LATER

23B

OMAR and ARHANA are moving through a crowded gangway. Their movements suggest that they are tipsy.

ARHANA
My mother has told me several times not to go out with boys at late hours.

OMAR
Then you are being a very disobeying daughter.

ARHANA
What do you do, anyway?

OMAR
It's none of your business.

ARHANA
Give me a reason to stay. Tell me about yourself. Otherwise, you are a complete stranger to me.

OMAR
When we were having those drinks, you didn't seem too inquisitive then. Besides, there is nothing to know about me. I am a very dull person.

As they reach their seats, they both observe that their seats are next to the aisle (so they didn't need to use the huddled gangway).

ARHANA
 (ironic)
 I can see that.

ARHANA circumvents OMAR, and takes the seat adjacent to the aisle.

OMAR
 (still standing)
 Let me sit *there!*

ARHANA
 Why?

OMAR
 Cause if I want to leave, I
 wouldn't have to attract much
 attention.

ARHANA
 Why would you wanna leave?

OMAR
 I don't have to tell you - why I -
 Oh, never mind.

OMAR sits next to ARHANA.

ARHANA
 Do you wanna know what *I* do?

OMAR
 (nasty)
 Mercy, you asked. I was dying.

ARHANA
 I am a philosophy student.

OMAR
 And I thought it was out of
 fashion.

ARHANA
 Are you always this impertinent?

OMAR
 Not when I am talking to my elders.

ARHANA
 How old are you?

OMAR
 About twenty-three.

ARHANA
 Well, I am twenty-five. So you
 better show some respect.

(MORE)

ARHANA (CONT'D)
 (she looks around,
 searchingly)
 Where did your friend go? I *really*
 liked his curls.

OMAR
 He went away with one of your
 girlfriends, I suppose. Donny's a
 real sucker for girls with short
 hair.

ARHANA
 (beat)
 What are you called, anyway?

OMAR
 "Omar." What do you go by?

ARHANA
 "Arhana."

The footlight goes out. A beam of light hurls out of the
 projection room, and everybody goes quiet.

FADE TO BLACK:

24

INT. KITCHEN/CHATTERJEE'S HOUSE - MORNING

24

CHATTERJEE is halfway dressed for the office. He is sitting
 at his modestly small dining table, reading "**THE TIMES.**"
 Mrs. CHATTERJEE enters in her nightie. She opens the fridge
 and takes out bread and a jug of juice from it. She puts the
 bread in the toast machine and pours the juice in a glass.
 She looks at CHATTERJEE, who is poring over the newspaper.

MRS. CHATTERJEE
 Don't you get enough of this at
 work?

CHATTERJEE
 (without looking up)
 One should know how one's
 contemporaries are doing. - Where
 are the kids?

MRS. CHATTERJEE
 They are still in bed.

CHATTERJEE
 Don't they have school?

MRS. CHATTERJEE
 It's only half-past eight.

Mrs. CHATTERJEE brings the juice and toasted bread, and puts
 it before CHATTERJEE. She sits down at the table.

MRS. CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)
Their vacation starts next month.

CHATTERJEE
Oh...?

MRS. CHATTERJEE
Why don't we go someplace? You
promised them last year that you'd
take them somewhere - If they be
good.

CHATTERJEE
And have they *been* good?

Mrs. CHATTERJEE chuckles.

MRS. CHATTERJEE
Yes. In their own way.

CHATTERJEE
Where would they want to go?

MRS. CHATTERJEE
I don't know. - Europe, maybe.

CHATTERJEE
"Europe?" Sounds more like a
crusade than a vacation. And it
certainly will eat up a lot of
time... and money, of course-

MRS. CHATTERJEE
(short)
Not the whole continent, you silly.
Just a city or two.

CHATTERJEE considers, casually.

CHATTERJEE
Why don't you go alone - with the
kids? I am gonna be a bore,
anyway... with the long phone
calls, and the tight scheduling,
and caps on shopping.
(Mrs. CHATTERJEE smiles)
And I have seen that you have had a
much mellower time without me. I'll
join you later - in the last week
or so.

CUT TO:

OMAR (in a CHEAP DARK SUIT and BLACK TIE) is standing inside
the telephone booth.

He is holding the receiver close to his ear; it is ringing. DONNY (in COLLEGE BOY ATTIRE) is leaning against the open door.

LADY (O.S.)
(on phone)
Thanks for calling "The Sentinel."
How can I help you?

OMAR
(on phone)
Uh... Chatterjee's office, please.

LADY (O.S.)
Hold the line, please.

CHATTERJEE (O.S.)
(gruff)
Hello.

OMAR
(surprised)
Uh, hello?

CHATTERJEE (O.S.)
Yes?

OMAR
Mr. Chatterjee?

CHATTERJEE (O.S.)
Yes?

OMAR
Oh... Well, hello... Sir. We, Uh -
we came to your office, this
evening... Uh, and we talked.
(beat)
You would still want the photos...
and the negatives, back, I
suppose... Are you there... Mr.
Chatterjee?

CHATTERJEE (O.S.)
I am listening.

OMAR
(humble)
Oh, good. So, I hope we can
conclude - whatever business was
left. We can meet tomorrow morning
about at... Elevenish? - *Would you
hold on for a second?*

(OMAR puts his hand on the
mic and turns to DONNY)
I think we should invite him
somewhere out. We can't go back to
his office;

(MORE)

OMAR (CONT'D)
 the place feels *dead* to me. We
 should invite him someplace -
 quiet, cheery, and airy.

DONNY
 How about the old tenement block?

OMAR
 "Old tenement block?" Where is
 that?

DONNY
 It's just in our backyard.

OMAR
 You mean those old and ugly
 buildings?

DONNY
 Yes. And they are all abandoned.

OMAR weighs this. He puts his hand away from the mic.

OMAR
 (on phone)
 Uh... Yes... Mr. Chatterjee. In the
 South of the city, near the
 beginning of the coastal road,
 right next to the oil refinery; you
 will see a residential complex on
 the left hand side. You wouldn't
 have any difficulty in locating it.
 The buildings are condemned.

A MEDIUM SHOT of OMAR talking on the phone for another moment
 before he hangs up.

25A INT/EXT. STREET CAR (MOVING) - LATER

25A

OMAR and DONNY are sitting in the mid-section of the slow-
 moving and almost empty tram. They both look languid and
 laconic.

DONNY
 So, how much are you gonna ask from
 him?

OMAR
 Well... In all sincerity, I haven't
 given it much thought. How much do
 you think he would've paid us - if
 things had gone... *normally*?

DONNY
 (apathetic)
 Three... four... or maybe five
 hundred?

OMAR

Or maybe he would've paid us a whole thousand.

DONNY

Only if he was being generous.

OMAR and DONNY exchange a quick yet uneasy glance.

OMAR

How about five thousand?

DONNY

"Five thousand?" – He's not gonna pay five thousand.

OMAR

(merchant-like)

Well, it's negotiable.

DONNY

He's not gonna pay that much with the best of bargains.

OMAR

Well, you quote a price, then.

DONNY

How about one thousand?

OMAR snorts.

OMAR

(as if talking to a child)

Donny, our conduct must uphold his expectations. We have to act as if we are *professionals*. One suspecting move, and the gig is up. Five thousand is the right price. I think it should be the base price. We'll ask him a little higher and settle on the five. I am sure he can spare that much.

(as an afterthought)

You know, when I really come to think of it. The money is not entirely what *excites* me here. It's something else. Something that I've never felt before. It's a funny feeling. – It's almost like holding a gun.

DONNY

Or maybe being aimed before one.

25B INT. OMAR'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

25B

OMAR is reclining on his bed, half-naked; he is contemplating. His CHEAP, DARK SUIT is lying on the single seater sofa. An envelope is lying on the table. OMAR gets on his feet and starts to walk about his messy room, abstractedly. He stops and looks at the soiled wall; on which a picture frame is hanging, crookedly. The picture is a profile portrait of a man, with quaint features, who is dressed in full regalia. The persona of the Man shares a resemblance to that of a class which once ruled a land on which now lay a great democracy. OMAR gazes at the portrait, almost mesmerically.

FADE TO BLACK:

26 EXT. SQUALID DISTRICT - EVENING (6:00)

26

A row of hotel buildings. Each building is somewhat analogous to the other one. Their façade is a blend of vivacity and discretion.

A MAN: THE HOTEL CLERK, in his 40s, comes out of the entrance of a hotel building (HOTEL NAME: VANITY NIGHTS). The HOTEL CLERK is dressed a little extravagantly; and has a creeping personality (the kind that grows on you). He has neck-long groomed hair, and is fashioning a rather thrifty mustache; which adds to his character: a fleeting air of being a Ponce.

RAY, who is sitting in his parked car, on the other side of the street; sees the HOTEL CLERK, and glances at a piece of paper that he is holding in his hand, with a description written on it in a child's scribble.

INSERT: WRITING ON THE PIECE OF PAPER:

Tall, Medium built, Dark hair, Overly dressed, Looks like a toad

The HOTEL CLERK takes out a hanky and pats it on the lower part of his face in a slightly vexed manner. He picks up a pace.

RAY crushes the paper and tosses it out of the window. He starts the engine and puts the car in motion. The HOTEL CLERK walks along the street, unperturbed, and takes a turn. RAY begins to follow the HOTEL CLERK, discreetly. An elderly man; who has the aspects of being a sage, is sitting outside a building on a parapet, smoking a hashish, while looking on the scene. The HOTEL CLERK walks along the street; he stops, crosses it diagonally, and takes a turn unsuspectingly. RAY, as he reaches the spot, takes a sharp turn, letting the tires make a screeching sound. The HOTEL CLERK looks over his shoulder casually, and sees the car in the distance, moving. A moment later, the HOTEL CLERK throws another glance at the car, and becomes slightly perturbed; however, keeping his pace.

A moment later, the HOTEL CLERK casts another glance at the car, which is moving slowly and somewhat sinisterly. The HOTEL CLERK halts. He looks over his shoulder; to his growing fear and annoyance, the car has also stopped. The HOTEL CLERK resumes his pace at a trot and takes a sharp turn. The car speeds up and turns. RAY watches the HOTEL CLERK turn into an alley. The car races and stops outside the alley. RAY peers into the alley; the HOTEL CLERK has disappeared. The car turns its wheels, mounts the curb, and enters into the murky alley. As the car crawls in, RAY drifts his eyes from wall to wall for any sight and sound; until he reaches – what seems to be – a brick wall. RAY switches the gear to reverse.

A sharp and pointed object touches the side of RAY's neck; he freezes.

HOTEL CLERK

(croak)

One move and I'll carve you. Kill the engine, *now!*

RAY, without moving a muscle, rolls down his panicky eyes, and sees that the pointed object the HOTEL CLERK is holding is no less than a dagger. RAY moves his hand, slowly, and turns off the ignition.

HOTEL CLERK (CONT'D)

Why are you following me, *boy?*

RAY

(scared shitless)

I am not following you, mister.

HOTEL CLERK

Well – *this jalopy is.*

The HOTEL CLERK takes a closer look at RAY, and becomes more puzzled and anxious.

HOTEL CLERK (CONT'D)

I've never seen you in my *bleeding* life before. What do you want from me, *boy?* Why are you following me?

RAY

I told you, mister – I wasn't following you. I was just – wandering about.

HOTEL CLERK

"Wandering about?" – In the middle of this *stinking* alley?

(beat)

Okay, get out of the car.

RAY

I told you, mister. It's all just a misunderstanding.

HOTEL CLERK

You heard me, *boy*. I said, get out of the car!

RAY opens the door, cautiously. The HOTEL CLERK moves his dagger an inch away. RAY gets out of the car, warily. The HOTEL CLERK holds the dagger near RAY's face in a menacing manner; then darts his eyes to a corner.

HOTEL CLERK (CONT'D)

Get into that corner, *boy*.

RAY moves to the corner; with the HOTEL CLERK on his back.

HOTEL CLERK (CONT'D)

Turn to the wall, now.

RAY turns to the wall, tentatively.

HOTEL CLERK (CONT'D)

Unbutton your pants.

RAY shoots a look over his shoulder with a start.

RAY

What?

The HOTEL CLERK pricks the pointy edge of the dagger in the back of RAY's neck.

HOTEL CLERK

Do as you are told, *boy*.

RAY, hesitantly, unfastens his waistbelt. As he unbuttons his pants; he lifts his zipped jacket, slightly, inconspicuously, so as not to attract attention; and takes out a gun from the waistline. The HOTEL CLERK, now aware that RAY's pants are loose, moves the dagger away, and starts to unbutton his own pants. As he puts his hand on RAY's waistband; Suddenly, RAY spins, with the gun in his hand. The HOTEL CLERK flinches in time and sweeps the dagger, blindly, grazing RAY's jacket sleeve. The gun slips from RAY's hand and falls on the ground at some distance. RAY flings his other arm and hits the HOTEL CLERK's hand; the dagger flies away from the HOTEL CLERK's hand and drops, not so far from the gun, onto the ground. Both men look at their weapons with their eyes bulging out, then promptly, look at each other in horrifying amazement.

The HOTEL CLERK throws his arms around RAY's neck and plunges him against the brick wall. RAY flutters his arms, unsuccessfully, around the HOTEL CLERK's neck. RAY moves one of his arms, groping, about the wall, and feels something; He rolls his eyes and sees that it's the dumpster. He puts his hand inside in and fumbles for something. In a moment, his hand reappears, holding an object; Ray thrashes it on the back of the HOTEL CLERK's head. The arms of the HOTEL CLERK go numb and sink to his sides; he moves backwards, dizzily, and touches the back of his head with his hand;

and brings the hand before his eyes, only to see, his own thick and smeary blood oozing away from a possible crack. The HOTEL CLERK turns around in shock and takes two steps forward, before plummeting to the ground.

RAY watches the performance in awe. He walks near the fallen figure; uses his feet to assure himself of the man's unconsciousness. RAY turns the body on its back – and without beating about the bush – he goes through his pockets and finds an ID in his wallet; He sees a key, which is attached to his coat with a chain. RAY pulls the key, roughly; the chain breaks away. RAY stoves the two articles in his pocket. He buttons his pants, and picks up his gun from the ground; glimpses at the dagger, then kicks it away. He gets in his car and reverses it out of the stinking alley. As he reaches the curb, he swerves, and sees a SEVEN YEAR OLD BOY, sitting on a bicycle, looking at him, quietly. RAY looks at the boy, befuddled. He puts the gear in first, steps on the gas, and speeds away.

26A INT/EXT. RAY'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

26A

RAY parks his car on the curb and gets out of it. He approaches a soup stall, hastily. We see him asking something from the soup stall PROPRIETOR; and then he gets into a conversation with TWO YOUNG MEN, wearing BLUE UNIFORMS, sitting at the counter. A moment later, RAY leaves them and walks back to his car; he stops, and turns to look back at the YOUNG MEN at the soup stall. He walks back to the soup stall, exchange a word with them, and the three of them walks up to the car, and enter it. RAY and DONNY in front; OMAR in the back. RAY starts the engine; and they drive away.

26B INT/EXT. RAY'S CAR (MOVING) - CONTINUOUS

26B

COLTRANE is playing on the radio.

DONNY

So, have you seen anybody after school?

RAY

No, everybody kind of disappeared after school. You are probably the first mates I've laid my eyes on in years.

OMAR, at the back, is looking about the car, assessing its interior.

OMAR

Is this *your* car?

RAY

Uh-huh.

OMAR
It's pretty.

RAY
(indifferent)
Thanks.

OMAR leans in his seat.

OMAR
So, how long have you been in this
"construction business?"

RAY
For quite a while.

OMAR
And in what capacity do you work
in?

RAY
What?

OMAR
I mean, what is your job; is it
like "bricklaying" or something?

RAY
No. - I am in the recruitment.

OMAR
Really?

DONNY
(reminiscent)
Do you remember that girl - Oh,
what was her name? It starts with
a... "e", or an "o", or a "p". She
was this skinny-looking girl, had
very long dark hair, with thick
eyebrows... and she wore these long
skirts. - Yes, and her mother was a
teacher; she also used to stand on
the stage with the group that led
the prayers in the morning.

OMAR
"Jyotsna?"

DONNY
Yes! That's the one - "Jyotsna!"

OMAR
What about her?

DONNY
Oh... nothing. She was just in my
games class.

(MORE)

DONNY (CONT'D)

I used to play ping-pong with her. She was not very good, though. It's just that, her presence always enlivens the room. She used to hold the bat in a peculiar way.

(DONNY makes a sweeping gesture with an imaginary bat)

And she had this funny gait. Some boys used to tease her, and some others went too far. I wonder what happened to her?

RAY looks out of his window; makes a U-turn, parks the car on the other side of the street, and kills the engine. He tries to appear casual; gives an excruciating calm look to his friends.

RAY

I won't be long.

RAY gets out of the car.

26C EXT. STREET/RED FORT APARTMENTS - CONTINUOUS 26C

RAY crosses the street, and gets inside a building: Red fort apartments; whose façade tells that the building is old, but has managed to keep its modesty.

26D INT. LOBBY/RED FORT APARTMENTS - CONTINUOUS 26D

RAY marches along the lobby, cautiously; enters the empty elevator and presses a button. Nothing happens. A figure walks past him, unseen. RAY presses the button again. The figure walks back and stops in front of RAY. RAY looks at it in surprise and bewilderment: It's OMAR.

RAY

What are you doing here?

OMAR

(light-hearted)

Well, I have to use the loo. But I don't think there's any convenience in the lobby. Do you mind if I come up with you?

RAY

(cussed)

What for?

OMAR

Well, to use the lavatory.

RAY

Can't you do it on the *street*,
somewhere?

OMAR

It's a residential district.

RAY

So?

OMAR

Well, if somebody saw me, that
would be embarrassing.

RAY

Then, can't you hold it! I'll be
down in a couple of minutes. Then
we'll all go to the nearest bar,
where you can relieve yourself.

OMAR stares at RAY for a moment, as if he's hurt.

OMAR

You are going upstairs to a flat.
And there must be a toilet in it
which I could use. I don't see
what's the big fuss about it?

RAY

There is a big fuss about it!
(checks himself)
You see, my uncle, - he's old - and
going senile. He don't like
strangers in his house. He may
start yelling or cursing if he
finds out, that there *is* one.

They both look at each other for a sacred moment. Then, OMAR
speaks with an effort:

OMAR

Well, I'll *tip-toe*. If it's just
your uncle you are worried about.
Besides, I am a bit sensitive about
doing out in the open.

RAY stares at OMAR, and without saying anything, he presses
the lift's button - again. Nothing happens. RAY notices a
paper hanging from a string near the dial. He flips it around
and sees "OUT OF ORDER" is written on it. He gets out of the
elevator, hurriedly, and catches sight of DONNY, loitering in
the lobby.

DONNY

(cheerful)

Say! What you two lovebirds are up
to?

26E INT. STAIRCASE/RED FORT APARTMENTS - MOMENTS LATER 26E

RAY is climbing a revolving stairway, with DONNY and OMAR following him.

OMAR
Why didn't you stay in the car?

DONNY
Well, you left without saying a word. I felt marooned.

OMAR
I have to use the toilet.

DONNY
What for?

OMAR
To urinate.

DONNY
But... Couldn't you do it on the street, somewhere?

OMAR
We all live in different worlds, Donny.
(beat)
And besides, you better be careful. He's got a maniac for an uncle.

26F INT. THIRD FLOOR/RED FORT APARTMENTS - CONTINUOUS 26F

As they reach the landing; they march along the corridor in the same formation. RAY looks on each door on the sides. As he stops before one door (No. 307), he shoots a look at his pals; and rings the doorbell. No response. He rings it again. But, again, no response. With enough decorum, RAY produces a key from his pocket; inserts it into the lock and turns it. The door gets unlocked. RAY removes the key, puts it back in his pocket, and he lightly pushes the door open. Suddenly, a black cat dashes out of the ajar door, sprints down to the end of the corridor, and vanishes at the turn. The trio looked at it in dumb astonishment.

DONNY
Shouldn't we run after it?

RAY
(beat)
No. It'll come back.

26G

INT. ROOM 307/RED FORT APARTMENTS - CONTINUOUS

26G

RAY enters the darkly lit apartment; he walks to the middle of the room and peers around him. As he is about to walk to a bedroom door, OMAR feigns a cough. RAY turns and sees OMAR and DONNY standing in the doorway.

OMAR

Uh - *the loo?*

RAY turns, and walks, uncertainly, to a door on the other side of the room; he opens it: It's the bathroom. He points it out to OMAR. OMAR walks inside it and shuts the door. RAY sees DONNY, who is lingering near the opened front door.

RAY

(low-pitched)

Shut the door, Donny.

DONNY steps inside and shuts the door.

DONNY

Should I turn on the light? Where's the switch?

RAY

Don't mind that... Why don't you sit down? There's a sofa here. Just... don't make any kind of noise. I won't be long.

As RAY says these words, he advances to the other door; opens it; gets inside and shuts himself in.

DONNY looks around the darkly lit room, and saunters into the kitchen, whose light is on.

A moment later, OMAR comes out of the bathroom. He sees the empty room and hears a noise in the kitchen. He strolls into it.

KITCHEN:

OMAR

What are you doing here?

DONNY

I am parched.

DONNY picks up a glass and places it below the sink faucet. He turns on the faucet, but no water comes from it.

OMAR

Where's *he*?

DONNY

He went into the bedroom, I think.

DONNY turns around and opens the fridge.

DONNY (CONT'D)
My, my, my - Look at those lemons.

OMAR peeks inside the fridge.

OMAR
Looks like the season's crop in it.

DONNY
Why does he need so many lemons
for?

DONNY takes a water bottle out.

OMAR
(scratching his chin)
His uncle must've some sort of
ailment. And lemons are supposed to
contain some vitamins and stuff,
which are good for our health, or
something. So, there must be a
medical reason behind it.

DONNY
(filling his glass)
Or maybe he just likes lemonade. Do
you think he would mind, if we made
some?

OMAR
(taken in by the idea)
No, I don't think he would mind if
we help ourselves with some
lemonade.

DONNY, at first, somewhat encouraged by the thought, then
added conscientiously:

DONNY
No, I don't think it's a good idea.
We are in somebody's home. It will
probably look rude.

OMAR
Well, he's not gonna lament over a
couple of lemons.

DONNY
(persuaded)
Oh well, what the hell.

DONNY picks up a fistful of lemons from a crate in the
fridge. OMAR walks out of the kitchen and roams into the
living room.

LIVING ROOM:

OMAR bumps into a small table and knocks down a table lamp; he straightens it up and turns it on. As the lamp lightens the room, OMAR let his eyes drift across, and settles it on a painting, hanging onto the wall. The painting is a portrait of a young woman, who is taking a nap, naked. OMAR gapes at the painting with some fascination, then parts himself from it. He notices an Overcoat hanging on a coat stand. OMAR takes the Overcoat off the stand. And after a moment's hesitation, he slips it on, and starts looking around, possibly, in search of a mirror. A voice makes him spin his head.

DONNY (CONT'D)

You know, some people don't *like* that.

DONNY stands in the doorway, holding a jug and a ladle stirring in it.

OMAR

I just wanted to see how I look in it.

A thud like sound comes from the bedroom. A moment later, the door to the bedroom forcefully threw open. RAY, ferociously, comes out of it; he catches the sight of a chest of drawers in front of him. He plunges himself before it and begins opening its drawers, savagely; rifles through its contents, frenetically. As he hauls out another drawer, it comes loose and tumbles onto the floor. RAY crouches, and goes through its contents like a hungry dog goes thru his meat. As he is doing this; he freezes, and lifts his head up, promptly, at his companions, who, to his apparent surprise, are looking at him in dumb amazement. In the momentary silence, RAY hears the sound of light footsteps outside the front door. All of a sudden, the doorknob of the front door starts to move. RAY frowns. He casts his frightened eyes on his companions; first at OMAR, and then at DONNY; and then again at the doorknob; which is turning slowly, persistently, and somewhat insidiously. He gets on his feet and, unceremoniously, bolts to a window; shimmies it open, and leaps out of it. — OMAR advances, almost impulsively — as if for an explanation; But RAY is gone. OMAR looks over his shoulder at DONNY, who is more perplexed than him. As OMAR moves his eyes, he glimpses, then peers inside the bedroom; which is a mess; as if by the result of a rummage. OMAR's countenance changes as if from cognition and fear.

OMAR (CONT'D)

(barely lets the word out of the mouth)

Thief.

(looking at DONNY; loudly)

He's a thief!

OMAR shoots a look at the door and sees the whirling doorknob. Without any ceremony, OMAR darts to the window and leaps out of it. DONNY puts the jug on a nearby table and practices the ritual.

26H EXT. FIRE ESCAPE/RED FORT APARTMENTS - CONTINUOUS 26H

OMAR descends, hastily; DONNY is behind him. RAY, who has already reached the ground, is now running out of the alley; as he reaches the turn, he disappears. OMAR reaches the ground, and gallops out of the alley. He hears an engine of a car comes to life and revives.

26I EXT. ALLEY/STREET - CONTINUOUS 26I

As OMAR reaches the turn, with DONNY at his tail; OMAR sees RAY's car, which is zooming away towards the horizon. OMAR rushes across the street with DONNY, and enters into an alley. He takes the first turn he finds in it, and races along until he reaches an open area.

26J EXT. RAILROAD TRACK - CONTINUOUS 26J

OMAR and DONNY zig zag their way across the railway lines, until they reach a water tank structure, and finds harbor beneath it. OMAR puts his hand on his kneecaps and pants for air. DONNY leans against the column, breathing heavily.

OMAR
(chaotic)
I think I am gonna have a heart
attack!

DONNY
(appalled)
I don't understand. Why do you
think he was doing it?

OMAR
I don't know - because he's a
thief!

DONNY
I can't believe it. It's just so...
so strange. What about his *uncle?*

OMAR
I looked into the bedroom. There
was no one inside. The room was
ransacked. He was there to steal,
alright!

DONNY raises his eyes and looks at OMAR.

DONNY
 (unaffected)
 You got the coat on.

OMAR notices.

OMAR
 Shit!

OMAR peels off the coat and flings it away.

OMAR (CONT'D)
 (brooding)
 We must've left a thousand
 fingerprints there! That bastard!
That phony fuck!
 (beat)
 At least he did the courtesy of not
 shutting the window when he leapt
 out of it. - Whoever was at the
 door, if he had got inside, he
 would certainly call the police -
 if he hadn't done it already!
 (beat)
 I think we should split, just in
 case, you know.

DONNY nods absentmindedly; a moment later, he walks away,
 quietly.

INSERT CUT: A BLACK CAT IS CLINGING ONTO THE DOORKNOB, OF THE
 ROOM 307, WITH ITS PAWS; CAUSING THE KNOB TO MOVE
 UNRELENTINGLY.

OMAR walks a few steps back, on a heap of soil. He picks up
 the Overcoat; rolls it around his arm, and walks away.

CUT TO BLACK:

27 EXT. OLD TENEMENT BLOCK - 11:00 AM 27

A courtyard surrounded by a cluster of condemned residential
 buildings. A sedan rolls into the frame and pulls up.
 CHATTERJEE emerges from it. He looks about the area
 distrustfully. A VOICE calls to him; he looks about and sees
 OMAR (in a CHEAP DARK SUIT and BLACK TIE) standing at some
 distance behind a backyard fence, waving his hand,
 appealingly; then points him towards the entrance gate.

27A INT/EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS 27A

OMAR's POV: CHATTERJEE heads towards the entrance.

OMAR turns and enters a room from the backyard. DONNY is
 leaning against a shelf.

OMAR

(quick)

All right, he's here. You remember what I've told you?

DONNY

Yeah. "Stay out."

OMAR

Very good.

DONNY

Well, I hope it all works out fine. It's the second day of our uncalled holiday. The foreman's gonna raise hell tomorrow.

DONNY walks to an open window and climbs out.

27B INT. DILAPIDATED BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

27B

CHATTERJEE plods along a bleak hallway. As he reaches the end, he sees an open door on his right. He enters it and sees OMAR standing very ungainly, yet ceremoniously in - what appears to be - a filthy kitchenette.

OMAR

(nervous)

Good morning, Mr. Chatterjee.

CHATTERJEE runs his eyes about the room for a moment; until it meets OMAR's.

OMAR (CONT'D)

Sunny day, isn't it? They said it was gonna rain, but the winds from the Arabian took the clouds away.

(beat)

They told that on the radio.

CHATTERJEE

(icy)

You didn't invite me into this rathole to tell me about the weather?

OMAR

(lamblike)

Of course, not. I was merely stating a fact.

CHATTERJEE

Well, have you brought the prints and the negatives?

OMAR

(timid)

They'll be here in a moment.

(beat)

How old are you, Mr. Chatterjee?

CHATTERJEE

(testy)

What's *that* got to do with anything?

(beat)

Forty-four.

OMAR

That's an interesting age, isn't it?

CHATTERJEE

(with an effort)

Does sh... Does *she* have anything to do with it?

OMAR

(don't know what he's talking about)

No...

(almost diplomatically)

I guess I owe you an apology for my yesterday's behavior — which was a bit erratic. But we do have to take certain measures, you know. I hope you understand.

CHATTERJEE

(with distaste)

Don't you think you are too young to get yourself mixed up in a thing like this? Why don't you find yourself some decent, honest work?

OMAR

Well, you're being a little presumptuous in your speculations, sir.

CHATTERJEE

(grave)

You do realize that you're just a patsy. You haven't done anything that could be said as being... "considerably wrong." Not yet, anyway. There is still out for you.

OMAR

(quirky)

Would you excuse me for a moment, please?

OMAR climbs out of the window into the backyard.

27C EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS 27C

OMAR takes out an envelope from his jacket's inner pocket and gives it to DONNY.

OMAR
(to DONNY)
Hold this for me, will you?

27D INT. FILTHY KITCHENETTE/DILAPIDATED BUILDING - CONTINUOUS 27D

OMAR creeps into the room and summons some courage.

OMAR
I think we should be getting to
business now.

CHATTERJEE
All right.

OMAR withdraws a folded photographic print from his jacket's front pocket and offers it to CHATTERJEE. CHATTERJEE takes the print and unfolds it. He raises his head, as if in bewilderment.

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)
What's the meaning of this?

OMAR
Well, this is the *arrangement*, Mr.
Chatterjee.

CHATTERJEE
"Arrangement?" - *What arrangement?*

OMAR
You see, there are five prints and
a strip of negatives; that makes
them six items in total. You'll
receive *each* item, in a period of
four weeks: that is, one print
every month, and the negatives in
the last. The price of each item
will be the same... and it's
written on the back.

OMAR, timidly, points to the print. CHATTERJEE clenches his fist, and involuntarily takes a step toward OMAR in a hostile yet terrorized manner.

CHATTERJEE
Are you *kidding* me?

OMAR

(beat)

No.

CHATTERJEE

I am not gonna stand here and listen to this *baloney!* More or less – I am not going to be your *goat!* You know that I can put you and your pals in jail!

(beat)

Or you can simply tell me who is running this. – So, I can sort this thing out with him... in a gentleman's way.

OMAR

(somewhat bold)

I am afraid that is out of the question, Mr. Chatterjee – look, I've strict instructions to follow.

(beat)

And those are your photos, aren't they?

CHATTERJEE leans on a shelf in a helpless manner. OMAR speaks with a slight touch of empathy.

OMAR (CONT'D)

It's just a matter of five months... that'll be over in no time.

CHATTERJEE flips the print in his hand, and read the figures. He looks up in a strange hope.

CHATTERJEE

What if I pay you all the money – *today?*

A deadly pause.

OMAR

(beat)

That's very thoughtful of you, Mr. Chatterjee – But it won't do. *As I've said,* we have strict instructions to follow.

27E

EXT. STREET ACROSS A PARK – NOON

27E

There are dark clouds all over the sky. OMAR and DONNY are standing under a tree. OMAR is holding a pair of binoculars; looking through it across the street, from time to time.

DONNY

I don't know *whether* I should laud you, or admonish you.

OMAR

I thought you were gonna pat on my back and praise me on my ingenuity.

DONNY

But your ingenuity is dangerous – and it's *evil*.

OMAR

Donny, we can't go on being partners in this, if you are gonna use such strong words on me.
(somewhat Romantically)
Don't you think there's a *poetic* quality about it all? Like it has a certain "order" to it. Besides, it has made the transaction considerably lucrative.

DONNY

I didn't know you were trying to make a *poem* out of it all this time! – Anyway, he *did* said he was willing to pay all the money in *one go*. I don't see what "poet" would've waived such a proposal.

OMAR

(cryptical)
Yes, I was tempted for a moment to take it. But then it would've defeated the whole *idea* behind it.
(OMAR looks through his binoculars)
A car is pulling up – *That's him!*
(looks at DONNY)
Okay, trot along, now. He's waiting.

DONNY

(protesting)
Why do *I* have to go? I thought you wanted to handle this thing *solo*.

OMAR

Well, we can't make it look like that I am running the enterprise alone. Go on, he's waiting!

DONNY, hesitates for a moment, then crosses the street and approaches CHATTERJEE's car. The clouds gives a thunderous applause. DONNY collects a small envelope from the figure in the car, and then returns to OMAR.

OMAR takes the envelope and opens it a bit; his eyes glimmer as he gazes on the crisp banknotes.

27F INT. CHATTERJEE'S CAR/STREET ACROSS THE PARK - CONTINUOUS 27F

CHATTERJEE is sitting in the driver's seat. He is staring at the steering wheel, absentmindedly. The rain starts, slowly and then suddenly; covering the windshield of the car with a rush of an enraged shower. CHATTERJEE switches on the windshield wipers, and rolls away.

CUT TO BLACK:

28 INT. RAY'S BASEMENT APARTMENT - MORNING 28

A medium-sized, adequately furnished bed-sitting room. The room is a mess in itself; the less said about it, the better.

RAY is lying on a mattress, asleep.

BANG! BANG! BANG! - Someone is knocking on the front door. RAY is undisturbed. BANG! BANG! BANG! - The knock becomes persistent and loud. RAY gets up, rubbing his eyes. He holds his head in his hands. BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! RAY looks at the door, frightfully. He walks to the wall below the staircase and climbs on a crate to look out of the vent window. He steps down from the crate and ascends the staircase; he opens the door just one foot wide.

The WOMAN shoves the door wide open and steps inside.

WOMAN

I thought you were going to have me stand in that filth and cold.

She looks around, observing the place.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Very exclusive. You aren't paying for this dump, are you?

She climbs downstairs, walks to the middle of the room, and turns around. RAY comes down the steps, walks past her, and disappears behind a curtain. He reappears a moment later with a glass of water in his hand. He drinks it.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

So? - Do you have any news you want to share with me?

RAY

(apathetic)

I went to his place, and I didn't find your photos.

WOMAN

"You went to his place, and you didn't find the photos."

RAY

Yes.

She stares at RAY, dubiously.

WOMAN

How did you get inside?

RAY

I used his key.

WOMAN

And what did *he* have to say about it?

RAY

He didn't come along.

RAY sits on a chair and starts donning his boots. The WOMAN seems uncertain about RAY's strangely calm demeanor.

WOMAN

And you searched his whole apartment?

RAY

Yes.

WOMAN

Are you sure you went into the *right* apartment?

RAY

I took his address from his ID. His ID is on the table.

She looks at the table, picks up the ID, and stares at it closely.

WOMAN

Did you search *him*?

RAY

Yes.

WOMAN

(sharp)

And you searched his whole apartment?

RAY

(slightly annoyed)

Yes.

WOMAN

I mean – *thoroughly*. You searched every corner of it. You didn't overlook any drawer or a cabinet – and did you check under the mattress or below the kitchen sink?

RAY

Yes.

WOMAN

Yes, what!?

RAY

(brittle)

Yes! I searched his whole apartment, – *and there was nothing to be found.*

The WOMAN begins to think, and as if aroused by a sudden notion, she turns to RAY in appeal.

WOMAN

Maybe he isn't hoarding them at his apartment, after all! – But someplace else. Perhaps his place of work – The hotel! He *must* have a locker there.

RAY

Or maybe he just threw them away out of care. Or maybe he already *had* them traded. I don't care!

WOMAN

There is no need to get discouraged. He still has the photographs; otherwise, he wouldn't be working on that measly job.

RAY gets up from the chair, picks up his shirt from the floor, and slips it on.

RAY

Lady, you haven't listened to me – I said "I don't care," whether he has the photographs or not. I don't want any part in it. I have already embarrassed myself enough. The first and the last thing I want is to forget about *what* happened, and *how* it happened!

The WOMAN stares at RAY, ponderingly.

WOMAN

Did you *kill* him?

RAY
What? - No!

WOMAN
Did you hurt him, then?

RAY
Not more than he tried to hurt *me*.

RAY walks to his kitchenette and takes out a pan from the cupboard. The WOMAN bites her lip; she looks despondent. RAY lights the stove and puts the pan on it. As he hears a slam of the door, he turns, only to discover that the WOMAN is gone.

CUT TO:

29 INT. OMAR'S NEW APARTMENT - MORNING 29

OMAR is standing in a rather large and bright room. His stuff from his last apartment is lying here and there. On the open kitchen shelf, a bottle of champagne stands next to a glass filled with the sparkling liquid. On the new record player, the song "Don't Be Cruel" by ELVIS PRESLEY is being played. OMAR is moving his body moodily to the beat; as the song progresses, OMAR develops a sequence of steps that are spontaneous, whimsical, yet mellow.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. PUBLIC PARK - AFTERNOON 30

CHATTERJEE is standing on a small bridge over a pond. He is staring at the ducks below. OMAR walks and stands next to him, quietly. CHATTERJEE takes an envelope out of his jacket's inner pocket and hands it to OMAR. OMAR takes the envelope and withdraws his own envelope out of his jacket's inner pocket, and he gives it to CHATTERJEE. They both put their envelopes into their jacket's inner pocket, simultaneously.

CHATTERJEE
(still looking at the
ducks)
That conclude the prints.
(beat)
One more month, and we are settled.

CHATTERJEE walks away. Now, OMAR stares at the ducks.

FADE TO BLACK:

OMAR and DONNY are lying on separate massage beds in a prostrate position. They are considerably naked, and are now alone. Their bodies seemed to be freshly oiled. They are quite relaxed and are talking with much ease and delight.

OMAR

I thought my "Back" was never gonna feel good again.

DONNY

When did you leave last night?

OMAR

Oh, at about two.

DONNY

Who were those people, anyway?

OMAR

I don't know. Some riff-raffs, I guess. - But they were funny.

DONNY

And how much did you win *off* them?

OMAR

Nothing. But I did *lose* some.

DONNY

But you were winning when I left.

OMAR

Yeah, but then my luck changed. I start getting straight flush in each game. It was like each one of them had their own deck of cards under the table.

DONNY

(half amused)
Did they?

OMAR

No... I don't suppose they were cheating.

(beat)

I guess they were just... humorous. One of them even gave me a *tip-off* on a horse race that is about to go on this evening.

DONNY

So he took you for a *professional* gambler.

OMAR

(innocent)

I only asked him if he knew how much a pony could cost.

(with a sigh)

You know, I've been brooding this whole past week. - I don't think I can go back to work again - ever. The mere idea of returning to a "normal way of life" is just too dreadful to me.

DONNY

(admitting)

Yes... it has certainly been a pleasant time.

OMAR

It's been *more* than pleasant.

(beat)

It's been Babylonian.

(with an impish grin)

I'll tell you what we should do - we should buy some cameras with telephoto lenses, and start scouting prominent figures about the city, and see if we can find some dirt.

DONNY

(returning the humor)

Well, then we also have to set up our own shop - so we can develop our own negatives.

OMAR and DONNY crane their necks, and exchange a long, unspoken - yet meant a thousand words - look.

31A INT/EXT. RAILWAY STATION - AFTERNOON

31A

OMAR and DONNY (both dressed smartly) are striding down the platform. OMAR is carrying a briefcase. A locomotive's steam engine let out a long, sonorous cry.

31B INT. OMAR'S NEW APARTMENT - NIGHT

31B

CLOSE-UP: The front door gets unlocked.

OMAR enters, carrying a briefcase. He looks weary. As he shuts the door, a VOICE makes him jumpy.

ARHANA

I called you.

OMAR flicks a switch. The lamp on the table lights up. ARHANA is ensconced on the sofa, next to the lamp.

OMAR

Yeah?

ARHANA

I called you all day.

OMAR

I was away.

ARHANA

I called you last evening, too.

OMAR

I guess, I was out yesterday too.

(beat)

Can I get you anything - to drink,
I mean?

ARHANA

No. I am not thirsty.

She glances at a vase placed on the chest of drawers.

ARHANA (CONT'D)

I see you let the lilies *rot*.

OMAR

I am a little pooped. I am going to
lie down for a while.

OMAR walks to the open kitchen and puts the briefcase on the shelf. ARHANA collects her handbag and a paperback from the side table. She gets up and heads to the front door. OMAR moves to the sofa and plonks on it.

OMAR (CONT'D)

(listless)

Listen, I don't suppose I need to
tell you this, but I gave you the
spare key for "emergencies," and my
not being able to pick up your
calls, can hardly be called one.

ARHANA opens the front door and turns slightly; she hurls a key, attached to a hefty keyring, which hits the table lamp and makes it topple. OMAR flinches; he shoots a look at the table, then darts his eyes to the front door - he sees ARHANA's back, before the door swings to a shut.

31C

EXT. PROMENADE - MOMENTS LATER

31C

ARHANA walks along the promenade overlooking the tranquil sea. She is embracing the paperback, and her handbag dangles from her crooked arm.

From a distant radio, the sweet, poignant song "Jaane Woh Kaise" from GURU DUTT'S PYAASA fills the air.

FADE TO BLACK:

32 EXT. ROOFTOP - AFTERNOON

32

The rooftop is only one storey high and is surrounded by a well-mowed lawn. CHATTERJEE emerges from a hatch. He looks around and sees OMAR and DONNY standing near the parapet. CHATTERJEE heads toward them and stops before OMAR. OMAR seems visibly concerned.

OMAR

Hello, Mr. Chatterjee.

OMAR hesitates, but finally takes out an envelope and presents it to CHATTERJEE. CHATTERJEE takes the envelope and feels it. He opens it and takes out the content: which is, one photographic print. CHATTERJEE stares at it, and then at OMAR, blankly.

OMAR (CONT'D)

There's been a change in the arrangement. Mr. Chatterjee.

CHATTERJEE charges toward OMAR, grabs him by his shirt collar, and shoves him, dangerously, over the parapet.

CHATTERJEE

(severe)

Don't kid with me, now! If you didn't give me the negatives right now, I am going to throw you off!

It seems OMAR just shat in his pants.

OMAR

Don't be rash, Mr. Chatterjee! It is not my decision. Besides, I don't have the negatives.

(looks over his shoulder at the drop)

Look - they are not asking that much money; after all, you can afford them!

CHATTERJEE

(giving OMAR a jerk)

That's not the point!

OMAR

(shaking)

Okay! - Okey! Throw me off! If you think that'll solve *anything*.

(MORE)

OMAR (CONT'D)
 (CHATTERJEE pushes him a
 bit)
 But do think what would follow
 next! Could you outlive the
 publicity? Think of your wife...
 (beat)
Your children!

In a moment, CHATTERJEE falters and lets go of OMAR's collar. He slowly shrinks away from OMAR and DONNY, while staring dumbly at the floor. His hand goes into his jacket's inner pocket and comes out with an envelope; which he chucks toward OMAR, on the ground, and walks away, quietly, down the hatch.

OMAR (CONT'D)
 (sorting himself)
 I thought the *bastard* was really
 going to throw me.

DONNY
 (unassuming)
 He certainly tried his best.

CUT TO:

33 INT. PRIVATE/CHATTERJEE'S OFFICE - EVENING

33

CHATTERJEE is sitting in his swivel chair in the dark. The expression on his face is a grim one. Soft murmurs of departing staff can be heard outside the office. After a moment, he turns on the radio, which is lying on the desk. On the radio, THE BEATLES begin singing "All You Need Is Love."

MONTAGE (WITH SONG PLAYING IN THE BACKGROUND):

OFFICE (LATER):

CHATTERJEE plods along the office corridor, wearily, carrying a briefcase.

STREET ON FOOTHILLS (LATER):

A sedan pulls up on a steep street before a mammoth of a house, whose exterior is like something out of a Children's book. CHATTERJEE alights from the vehicle and approaches the gate of the house.

CHATTERJEE'S HOUSE (CONTINUOUS):

CHATTERJEE enters, and his two kids race as if to outrun each other and welcome him. They grab him by his hands and start to pull him into the house, gaily.

CHATTERJEE'S BEDROOM (NIGHT):

CHATTERJEE is reclining on his bed; he's reading a book by the lamplight.

He closes the book and puts it on the bedside table. He looks on the other side of the bed: Mrs. Chatterjee is in a deep slumber. CHATTERJEE puts out the light.

OFFICE (THE NEXT DAY/MORNING):

CHATTERJEE, in a crisp suit, looking fresh as a daisy, strides down the aisle and enters his office.

PRIVATE (NOON):

CHATTERJEE sits behind his desk, looking down on some proofs. He checks the time on his wristwatch.

KINDERGARTEN (LATER):

CHATTERJEE's car is parked outside, near the school gate. A moment later, he emerges with his kids. They all hop into the car.

KITCHEN (NIGHT):

CHATTERJEE is sitting at the modest dining table with his family, having dinner. He scoops up some food from his boy's plate with a fork. The boy protests, playfully.

LIVING ROOM (WEEKEND):

CHATTERJEE is lying on his sofa, eating a fruit salad. The kids are chasing a beagle (family dog), round and round, as if trying to catch him by his tail.

TURKISH BATH (WEEKEND):

CHATTERJEE is reclining on a tiled bench. A towel is wrapped around his waist. He is dozing away.

GOLF COURSE (WEEKEND):

CHATTERJEE, dressed in trousers and a sweater, is playing golf with some associates.

LIVING ROOM (NEXT DAY/NIGHT):

Mr. And Mrs. CHATTERJEE are sitting on the couch, occupied in their pastime work. His daughter is lying on a carpet, reading the funny papers. His boy is sitting at a distance, drawing the family portrait with crayons.

STUDY (NEXT DAY/NIGHT):

CHATTERJEE is dozing away on his writing desk. His wife comes, and she closes the book before him. She notices a glass near his hand. She picks it up and finishes the drink. Then she notices a cigar smoldering away in an ashtray. She picks up the cigar and takes a puff.

BASEMENT (NEXT DAY/MORNING):

CHATTERJEE parks his car in his office building's basement.

PRIVATE (NEXT DAY/AFTERNOON):

CHATTERJEE is sitting in his chair. He is watching a young intern, who is drawing something with chalk on a makeshift board. Two more colleagues sit on assorted chairs, looking upon.

BATHROOM (NEXT DAY/NIGHT):

CHATTERJEE, in his pajamas, enters the bathroom while scratching his cheeks. He opens the medicine cabinet and takes out a razor machine. As he closes the cabinet, he notices in the mirror's reflection that the shower curtains flutter. He turns around and approaches the bath, and parts the curtains a bit, only to see Mrs. CHATTERJEE taking a bath. He stares at her for a moment, then jumps inside.

RESTAURANT (WEEKEND):

CHATTERJEE is sitting at a table with his family. A man, in his 50s, is passing by his table and stops. He greets CHATTERJEE humbly and offers his hand, which CHATTERJEE shakes genially, with a grin on his face.

BEDROOM (WEEKEND):

CHATTERJEE, in casual clothes, enters the bedroom and sees Mrs. Chatterjee packing up the bags.

AIRPORT TERMINAL (WEEKEND):

CHATTERJEE is standing before a large window, looking out as an airplane takes off.

CUT TO BLACK:

34 INT. EMPORIUM - NOON

34

A LADY, in her 50s, trying on a silk shawl, stands before a mirror and peers at her reflection. She changes her posture intermittently, and seems puzzled and indecisive. Eventually, she looks up at the WOMAN, who is standing behind a small counter, staring at the lady in mild contempt.

LADY

Do you have that in *burgundy*?

WOMAN

(beat)

No.

34A INT. TRIMURTI RESTAURANT/ELEPHANTA STREET - AFTERNOON 34A

CHATTERJEE, holding a newspaper, enters the restaurant. The HEAD WAITER walks up to CHATTERJEE, and obsequiously greets him.

CHATTERJEE
 (to HEAD WAITER)
 One club sandwich to go. - Wait,
 make it two.

The HEADWAITER nods and walks away. CHATTERJEE takes a seat at a table and unfurls his newspaper.

34B EXT. ELEPHANTA STREET - CONTINUOUS 34B

The WOMAN is walking briskly along the pavement, next to the restaurant. A handbag dangles from her shoulder. She randomly throws a glance at one of the dining room windows and stops. She looks as if she has seen a ghost; a warm ghost. Her eyes roll as she looks ahead of her at the pavement, while still standing fixedly. She bites her lip.

DISSOLVE TO:

34C EXT. TRIMURTI RESTAURANT/ELEPHANTA STREET - EVENING 34C
 (7 MONTHS AGO)

CHATTERJEE is coming out of the restaurant, with eyes steady on his manifold of a newspaper. As he reaches the pavement, he bumps into the WOMAN; his newspaper falls to the ground.

CHATTERJEE
 Pardon me!

He looks up and then gawks at the WOMAN. He lets out a chuckle. The WOMAN looks at him lethargically; with an undertone of contempt.

WOMAN
 (cheeky)
 What's so funny? Never seen a woman
 before?

CHATTERJEE
 No, I am sorry.
 (he scoops up his
 newspaper)
 You may not have remembered me, but
 I know you.

WOMAN
 Oh... how?

CHATTERJEE
 I took your interview.

WOMAN

(curt)

I haven't given any interviews lately.

CHATTERJEE

No, not lately. It was some years ago. I think it was "Bayreuth theatre" – I can't remember the name of the play you were performing in, but your character was of a woman in this village, who was a–

He's ashamed to speak.

WOMAN

(beat)

"A harlot?"

CHATTERJEE nods.

CHATTERJEE

I took your interview after the play was over. I don't suppose I made much of an impression.

WOMAN

You didn't wear glasses, then, did you?

CHATTERJEE

No.

WOMAN

I think I vaguely remember the incident you are referring to – but only vaguely, for I believe I was drunk that evening.

CHATTERJEE

(humble)

Well, I think you were a little tipsy. But I guess that's only how one balances strain and success.

(beat)

Would you care if I invite you to have some dessert with me at the restaurant? – If I am not keeping you from any engagements, of course.

The WOMAN gazes at CHATTERJEE with a mild curiosity; she hesitates a little.

WOMAN

No. – I think I can spare some time to have some dessert.

34D INT. TRIMURTI RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

34D

CHATTERJEE and the WOMAN are sitting at a table. A WAITER comes and puts two plates of dessert before them and leaves.

WOMAN

So, are you still a journalist?

CHATTERJEE

Yes, but I no longer work for the magazine; I work for the newspaper: "The Sentinel." - You might have heard of it.

WOMAN

No. - no offense, but I had always found newspapers a little greasy.

CHATTERJEE

(humorous)

I am glad to hear that; I am *The Publisher*.

WOMAN

(provoked)

You mean you own a newspaper agency?

CHATTERJEE

Yes. Well, that's enough of me. Tell me about *yourself* - are you still an actress - *no!*

(winces)

I am sorry, I shouldn't have said that. What I mean to say is, "Do you still work in theatre?"

WOMAN

(tense)

No... I mean, *yes*... I do... occasionally; Sometimes when the production insists... That is when they can't find somebody that fulfills their expectations.

(lies determinably)

Rest of the time, I teach acting.

CHATTERJEE

Oh... What school?

WOMAN

No... I teach independently. I have a dozen pupils.

CHATTERJEE

Oh, that's very good. You know, I always say that: It's the present that bestows a foundation for posterity, to build something upon.

(beat)

How about family?

WOMAN

I... I have a husband.

CHATTERJEE

Any children?

WOMAN

Yes... a *son*. How about *you*?

CHATTERJEE

I have a small family.

CHATTERJEE takes a small photograph out of his wallet and shows it to her.

WOMAN

(looking at the photo;
apathetically)

Lovely kids.

CHATTERJEE

So is *their* mother. I have to admit that I have been dealt with a very fair hand.

The WAITER comes.

WAITER

Would you be needing anything else, sir?

CHATTERJEE

(to WOMAN)

Would you?

WOMAN

(after a moment's
hesitation)

I could use a little drink.

(to WAITER)

Red wine, if you have any?

WAITER

Certainly, *madame*.

The WAITER goes away. A Pianist, in the corner, starts to play a number: "A Little Bit Independent."

CHATTERJEE

You know, I have a confession to make. I believe that I owe – the origin of my success – partly to you. You see, the day I took your interview, I submitted a copy of it to my editor for publication. My boss summoned me to his office and told me how much he liked my article. After that, he began to give me more and more coverage, and my career *really* took off. I was the *editor-in-chief* of that very magazine in less than two years, and I never looked back.

The WOMAN swallows her dessert with difficulty.

34E INT. DRESSING ROOM/BAYREUTH THEATRE - EVENING
(10 YEARS AGO)

34E

The WOMAN (about 10 years younger/ as exquisite as a DOSTOEVSKY's women), is sitting before a mirror, touching her face, lightly and curiously. She is wearing a light gown and intermittently sipping wine from a glass. A cigarette is smoldering in an ashtray. On the radio, a female voice is singing "A little Bit Independent." A double knock on the door, and a moment later it opens, gingerly. A man steps into the room: Mr. CHATTERJEE (about 10 years younger) in a sweater, with the quintessential air of an undergraduate.

CHATTERJEE

(gay)

Good evening, ma'am. I just saw the act and I think you were *divine*.

The WOMAN looks up in surprise, but doesn't show.

WOMAN

That's very flattering, but who are you?

CHATTERJEE

I am just one of your well-wishers. And I also happen to be a writer for a local magazine.

WOMAN

(suspicious)

And *who* let you in?

CHATTERJEE quirkily looks over his shoulder, as if not minding the WOMAN's jibe.

CHATTERJEE

(gaily)

Well, I let myself in.

WOMAN

And to *what* purpose, if I may inquire?

CHATTERJEE

Well – in official terms, I am here to take your interview on behalf of our readership–

WOMAN

You young reporters! You think you can barge in any place, anytime. Don't you have any sense of propriety. Pray, leave the way you came in – I am in no mood for corny talk.

CHATTERJEE

On the contrary, I think you'll find the interview most refreshing.

WOMAN

Why's *that*?

CHATTERJEE

Give me a chance, and you'll see.

WOMAN

You sound cocky.
(she looks at him for a moment)
Okay, let me see your questionnaire, anyway?

CHATTERJEE

(innocuous)
I didn't bring a questionnaire. Should I have *brought* one?

WOMAN

If you wanted to take the interview right, you *should* have.

CHATTERJEE

You see, it's not that kind of an interview. What I mean to say is – It's not anything *biographical*. I have been commissioned to write an article for our next issue on "*Contemporary theatre*" and how it is being affected by a more radical form of art in its domain.

WOMAN

(slightly aroused)
Correct me, if you are not referring to this another form of art to be the Motion pictures.

CHATTERJEE

Yes.

WOMAN

Well, then you are *mistaken!*
Theatre holds a very different set
of standards than cinema. And I
don't think it would be right to
mix one with the other.

CHATTERJEE

(taking a seat,
unobtrusively)

Would you care to elaborate on
that?

WOMAN

Well – for first... "Theatre is
real; it's vibrant; it has more
flair in it." Meanwhile, Cinema is
just some dark room with a man
throwing a beam of light on a
barren surface.

CHATTERJEE

I have to beg your pardon, ma'am.
But I do hope that you agree that
cinema *does* hold the ability to
give a more powerful narrative than
theatre does.

WOMAN

Well... then, you have just
undermined the last fifteen years
of my life.

CHATTERJEE

I apologize if I offended you in
the slightest. What I mean to say
is that cinema has made a
considerable leap in a very short
period, in comparison to theatre.

The WOMAN considers this.

WOMAN

You haven't offended me, young man.
But you touched my pride. Of
course, cinema is gaining
popularity by the yard, every year.
And why *shouldn't* it? – it's
diverse; it's profitable; it can
reach more people than a theatre
does, and it promises fame in a
fortnight. But it isn't *real*. Of
course, I am just speaking from a
thespian's point of view.

(MORE)

WOMAN (CONT'D)

You see, there is an enormous difference between giving a theatrical performance in front of hundreds of gauging eyes – and making faces before a camera.

(CHATTERJEE takes out a pencil and starts scribbling on a small textbook, discreetly, of course)

In theatre, there is an endeavor, which in cinema – it simply lacks. Of course, the younger generations are more inclined to work in the movies rather than the theatre, because cinema promises fame and wealth, which in theatre are not entirely easy to come by. But what they've failed to understand is that cinema is just a fling; meanwhile, theatre... *it's for eternity.*

34F INT. TRIMURTI RESTAURANT - EVENING (10 YEARS LATER) 34F

The WAITER brings a bottle of red wine, along with two glasses. He shows the bottle to CHATTERJEE. CHATTERJEE nods. The WAITER uncorks the bottle, fills the glasses, and trots away. CHATTERJEE and the WOMAN sip their drinks. The pianist has stopped playing.

CHATTERJEE

I know this may sound a little forward of me, but uh... you see, our paper, we run a special "Sunday edition" – which contains a couple of pages more than any regular edition. These pages, we add, are a kind of for cultural or artistic enlightenment – and it's *very* fashionable. I have it on good authority that a good many number of our subscribers are only bearing with us for the sake of our Sunday edition.

(beat)

I was just wondering – if you would be interested in giving an interview. Of course, your sentiments would be counted heavily – not just by the populace – but by people of your own profession and community.

WOMAN

(smiles awkwardly)

I don't think I can *do* it anymore.

CHATTERJEE nods understandingly; he smiles.

CHATTERJEE

Well, at least let me invite you to a proper dinner – I mean, not just dessert.

WOMAN

(searching for words)

Well... I...

CHATTERJEE

Please, allow me *that* much!

(beat)

I even got a better idea – You can bring your husband, and I'll bring my wife.

WOMAN

(short)

No! – My husband... he's kind of... Recluse. He doesn't mix well with people.

CHATTERJEE

(playful)

Well – then I wouldn't bring my wife either, and let her be jealous for one evening, by telling her that I am going out with an *actress*.

The WOMAN stares at CHATTERJEE with a cramped grin, and unspoken malice.

34G EXT. ELEPHANTA STREET – AFTERNOON
(7 MONTHS LATER/PRESENT TIME)

34G

The WOMAN stands on the pavement with a fixed look in her eyes. A moment later, she moves; as she reaches the double-door entrance of the Trimurti restaurant, she enters.

34H INT. TRIMURTI RESTAURANT – CONTINUOUS

34H

The WOMAN ambles across the lobby and enters the dining room. She walks along the tables, self-conscious yet pretending to be blithe. CHATTERJEE shifts a little in his seat, glances around randomly, and catches sight of her. The WOMAN approaches CHATTERJEE, opaquely, pretending to be surprised.

WOMAN

I thought I would never see you again!

CHATTERJEE

(beat)

I thought that too.

WOMAN

I was just passing by, and I saw you through one of the windows, and thought - "Why not say *hello*."

She moves to his table and takes a chair.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

So, how's life treating you?

CHATTERJEE

Adequately.

WOMAN

How's the wife... and children?

CHATTERJEE

(reserved)

Fine.

WOMAN

(beat)

You don't seem much happy to see me. - in fact, you seem *particularly cold*. Is there anything the matter?

CHATTERJEE

No - it's nothing. I have been stacked up for some of these past few days. I am a little tired, that's all.

The HEAD WAITER comes to CHATTERJEE's table and looks at the WOMAN subserviently.

WOMAN

(to HEAD WAITER)

I'll have a glass of Sherry.

The HEAD WAITER nods genially and trots away.

CHATTERJEE

(demure)

You look pale and thin - have you been *ill*?

WOMAN

Yes, as a matter of fact, I had an acute case of malaria. Some *wretched* mosquito bit me.

34I EXT. TRIMURTI RESTAURANT/ELEPHANTA STREET - LATE 34I
(SIX AND A HALF MONTHS AGO)

A busy hour. CHATTERJEE and the WOMAN, in evening clothes, are standing outside the Trimurti restaurant, waiting.

WOMAN
(feigning a slight
irritation)
I emphatically told him to wait
here outside - *these chauffeurs!*
They think that the car is there
for running their own private
errands.

CHATTERJEE
I can give you a lift home.

WOMAN
(polite)
No, I don't want to cause any
inconvenience to you.

CHATTERJEE
It'll be my pleasure.

The WOMAN looks at CHATTERJEE with immoderate admiration.

WOMAN
You are a gentleman.

She offers CHATTERJEE her arm; Which he takes.

34J INT/EXT. CHATTERJEE'S CAR (MOVING) - MOMENTS LATER 34J

CHATTERJEE is driving. The WOMAN is sitting next to him.

WOMAN
Take the right on the curve. It's a
shortcut.

CHATTERJEE switches on the indicator and turns the steering wheel gently; The car swerves gracefully along the curve. A moment later, the WOMAN moves her hand and puts it lightly on CHATTERJEE's thigh. CHATTERJEE throws a glance from the corner of his eyes at the WOMAN's hand. As the hand tightens its grip on the thigh, CHATTERJEE hits the brakes; The car comes to a halt. CHATTERJEE turns his head and stares at the WOMAN - who is already looking at him, somewhat submissively. In a moment, their arms embrace one another, and their lips touch each other.

34K INT. TRIMURTI RESTAURANT - AFTERNOON
(SIX AND A HALF MONTHS LATER/PRESENT TIME)

34K

The WAITER comes holding a glass of Sherry; He puts it before the WOMAN, and goes away. The WOMAN lifts the glass and drinks a mouthful.

WOMAN
(barren)
Well - I shall get going.

She gets up and turns slightly.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
(somewhat hurt)
You know, for some reason, I
thought you would stop me and ask
me to stay.
(beat)
I don't want to sound critical, but
you are being *curt* with me.

CHATTERJEE
(somewhat guilty)
I am sorry; I didn't mean to be.

WOMAN
(affected)
You are sore at me - that I never
called you - after... *Why?* I
thought you preferred it that way.
You are married... and have
children - and so have *I*.

The WOMAN waits for a moment as if a reply would come, but it was in vain. She turns and is about to leave.

CHATTERJEE
(grinding)
I am *being* blackmailed!

She freezes in her step and turns sharply.

WOMAN
(with a frown)
What?
(beat)
I don't understand.

CHATTERJEE
Someone has taken pictures of us...
When we were... in the car - that
evening.

The WOMAN sits down, almost hypnotically.

WOMAN
 (choking)
 Who do you think it could be?

CHATTERJEE
 (sardonic)
 I don't know. But whoever they are
 – their timing has been most
 remarkable.

She seems a little relieved, but her curiosity is still bearing on her.

WOMAN
 What do they want?

CHATTERJEE
 Money. I've been paying it *every*
 month.

The WAITER comes, puts a small sandwich bag on the table, and leaves. It appears that the WOMAN has fallen under a spell.

WOMAN
 How long *has* it been?

CHATTERJEE
 It started about a month later...
 when we met, – *that evening*.

WOMAN
 (beat)
 Have you informed anybody about it?
 Any authorities?

CHATTERJEE
 Of course not! I can't risk any
 exposure.

WOMAN
 (beat)
 How do you pay? I mean, do you
 "mail" the money?

CHATTERJEE
 (with distaste)
 I meet them every month.

WOMAN
 "Them?"

CHATTERJEE
 (indignant)
 Yes. I've been dealing with these
college boys. They invite me to a
 different place, every time.
 (beat)

(MORE)

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)

To speak the truth, it isn't the money that bothers me; it's the *harassment*. - Every time the phone rings in my office, I *jump* on my feet to collect the call. My secretary probably thinks that I am going bonkers. It's like walking with a noose hanging around your neck.

The WOMAN's eyes are wide open. She seems to be in a trance.

34L EXT. ELEPHANTA STREET - LATER

34L

The WOMAN is moving along the sidewalk as if sleepwalking. She appears to be in a state of shock and bafflement. She stops and stares at the ground, dumbly.

MONTAGE (With GRACE SLICK singing "Daydream Nightmare" in the background):

RAY, in his apartment, is stooping before a small table, opening a tiny bag of grass. He spreads the grass out on a small piece of paper.

The WOMAN raises her gaze fiercely from the ground. Her eyes sparkle. She swings her handbag violently from its strap. She begins to walk at a hasty pace.

RAY rolls the paper, methodically, with the grass in it. He checks both ends, then sticks it in his mouth and lights it.

The WOMAN bounds along the pavement belligerently. As she reaches the end of it, she crosses the street blindly, causing a passing car to swerve dangerously.

RAY begins to frolic about his room in circles as he takes another drag.

The WOMAN strides ferociously along a bridge overlooking a slum.

RAY is revolving about his room gracefully, holding the cigarette between his fingers. He takes another drag. - Now, it seems that the room is revolving around him.

The WOMAN moves headlong down a filthy street in rabid fury. She glares at the derelict buildings, and the murky alleys surrounding them.

RAY slumps on his bed, feebly. A moment later, he staggers to his feet, getting his bearings.

The WOMAN halts before an alley and charges into it.

RAY fumbles a curtain, which is hanging from a frail rod. He pulls them as he wobbles. The curtain rod bends; RAY trips and tumbles onto the floor.

The WOMAN stops before a familiar door. She rams her clenched fist on it – to the point of exasperation and exhaustion. She takes a few steps back. And as she turns back in despair, she catches a glimpse of something in the adjoining alley. As she cranes her neck to have a better view, she finds herself looking at RAY's black-bitching car. She stares at the door, again, with surging curiosity. She picks up a brick and hurls it onto the panel glass fixed in the door. The glass shatters; she snakes her arm inside the door, unbolts it, and swings it open. She enters, and descends down with goggling eyes to RAY's basement room. She notices the curtains lightly swaying from the bent rod. She walks towards it cautiously and moves away the curtains to see: RAY is lying in a filthy bathtub with his bloodshot eyes, and a euphoric smile on his face.

FADE TO BLACK:

35 INT. OMAR'S NEW APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

35

The living room is large and occupied by sensual articles that may pass for furniture. By the window, which runs from wall to wall, a small telescope is slanted downwards. A large poster of ANN MARGRET is hanging from a wall. A pot of wilted lilies is placed on a small chest of drawers. OMAR is in the kitchenette. He is wearing a satin robe and is smoking a cigarette with a cigarette holder. He is making himself a chocolate milkshake. The song "Puff The Magic Dragon" by PETER, PAUL and MARY is playing on the record player. The doorbell rings. OMAR looks up, walks to the door, and opens it. Donny is standing before him.

OMAR

(jocular)

Hiya, Donny, what are you doing here? Come on in!

DONNY

(worried)

Why don't you step outside for a minute?

OMAR steps out and closes the door behind him. DONNY begins to walk, slowly, along the corridor. Omar follows him.

35A INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

35A

The corridor is wide and carpeted.

OMAR

What's the matter? You look worried.

DONNY
Ray came at my place.

OMAR stops. And so does DONNY.

OMAR
(startled)
What? – What does *he* want?

DONNY starts to walk again. And so does OMAR.

DONNY
He *knows*.

OMAR
(dubious)
"He knows?" He knows what?

DONNY
(uneasy)
You know.

OMAR peers at DONNY's face: which looks restless and muddled.

OMAR
You haven't been mixing your drinks
or anything, have you? You are not
making any sense!

DONNY
(helpless)
Ray knows about Chatterjee! And he
also knows what we are *doing* to
him.

OMAR
(quaking)
What? –
(beat)
How the hell does he know that?

DONNY
He told me that the evening when he
went into that apartment, he was
looking for the very thing *you*
found!

OMAR looks disconcerted; he broods for a long time. Finally,
he recuperates and goes about his wits.

OMAR
(short)
How did he know where you live?

DONNY
(with distaste)
I think he's been at the Plant.
(MORE)

DONNY (CONT'D)

He knew we had quit our jobs three months ago. The clerk at the Plant must've given him my former address, and my old landlord must've given him my new.

OMAR

Those bastards!

35B EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

35B

As OMAR And Donny walk out of the corridor and exit the building. They walk about a few steps into the expansive courtyard, before stopping, with their backs to an impressive-looking building (OMAR'S apartment building); which looks like something that LE CORBUSIER could've designed. A lone bicycle is parked at some distance.

DONNY

(distraught)

What should we *do*?

OMAR summons some courage and makes an attempt to look philosophical.

OMAR

Firstly - we shouldn't get *panicky!*
We have to approach this situation scientifically.

(with a sudden
inspiration)

I'll tell you what we'll do: we'll check into some hotel under pseudonyms, and then we'll--

OMAR stops mid-sentence, and as he notices something before him, he takes a few tentative steps forward.

OMAR (CONT'D)

You didn't, by any chance, bring him *here*, did you?

As no immediate remark comes from DONNY's mouth, OMAR turns his head to take a gander at DONNY.

DONNY

(innocent)

He *asked*.

OMAR

Fuck, Donny.

DONNY

What do you think he wants?

OMAR

(beat)

I think he's gonna *tattletale* on us.

As OMAR turns his eyes on RAY's car, which is parked cheekily in the vacant courtyard. He stares at it for a moment, then walks towards it, slowly but determinably. As he reaches it, he opens the back door and gets inside.

35C INT/EXT. RAY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

35C

RAY is sitting behind the wheel. He moves his eyes to address OMAR in the rearview mirror. His tone is almost cool, but it has traces of mockery in it.

RAY

You are almost living like some *nawab* here.

OMAR

(modest)

I don't live here; it's just a *pied-a-terre*.

RAY

It's a *what*?

OMAR

(evasive)

The rents are very cheap here. So, how are you, Ray?

RAY

Has Donny given you the news?

OMAR

He said some words, but I couldn't make out much.

RAY

You know, for some odd reason, I knew *you* were the brains behind this. Donny didn't have enough villainy in him, to run such a maneuver like this.

OMAR

(beat)

Well - what do you want?

RAY

I want you to hand me over the photographs, and then make a call to the paperman, and ask him to meet.

(MORE)

RAY (CONT'D)

When you meet him – you're going to tell him that *I* am taking over.

OMAR stares blankly at the back of RAY's head, with growing bewilderment.

RAY (CONT'D)

And you better put on some clothes before we leave. You can catch a cold in that silky robe of yours.

A moment later, OMAR opens the door as if in shock, and gets out.

35D INT. OMAR'S NEW APARTMENT – MOMENTS LATER

35D

OMAR is dressing up. DONNY is standing near about, biting his nails.

OMAR

(agitated)

He just pops out of nowhere and tells us to turn over our shop to him. It isn't just uncanny – it's *unfair!* I mean, if he had come here to reproach us, I would've understand – *hell*, I would've even appreciated it; that would've shown that he has some moral sense in his character. *But he's no good himself!*

RAY quietly steps into the room, smoking a cigarette, unperceived by OMAR and DONNY.

OMAR (CONT'D)

I'll tell you what – we don't have to oblige to any of his *rude* demands, not until we get some answers out of *him* first. He can't just come up here and *overcome us!* Who the hell he thinks he is – "Marlon Brando?"

RAY

(snappy)

I don't have to tell you *anything!* You should consider yourself fortunate that I am not ripping you *off* of your comforts, and your fancy attires. Believe me, I have all the temptation to squeal on you.

(beat)

So, quit yammering and get going.

35E INT/EXT. TELEPHONE BOOTH/STREET - LATER

35E

RAY and DONNY are sitting in RAY's car, which is parked on the curb. OMAR is standing inside the telephone booth, talking.

OMAR

(on phone)

I know it's highly irregular of me to call like that, but, something came up, and, uh, can we meet?

CHATTERJEE (O.S.)

(on phone)

What came up?

OMAR

(nervous)

Actually, it's nothing; it's... I'll tell you when we meet!

CHATTERJEE (O.S.)

I can't leave the office right now. My desk is piled with papers. I am all tied up.

OMAR

Oh?

CHATTERJEE (O.S.)

(beat)

However... you can come to my office. We can talk here - if that's suitable to you.

35F INT/EXT. RAY'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

35F

VIEW OF TELEPHONE BOOTH WITH OMAR IN IT:

OMAR hangs up and gets out of the telephone booth. He gets inside RAY's car.

OMAR

(addressing vaguely to RAY or DONNY)

He said he's tied up in work and can't leave. He has invited us to his office.

35G INT. BASEMENT PARKING - LATER

35G

RAY's car wheels in thru the descending ramp and parks next to a column. RAY and OMAR get out of it. They walk to the elevator.

35H INT. 4TH FLOOR - MOMENTS LATER 35H

The elevator door opens; OMAR and RAY step out and stride past the reception desk. The RECEPTIONIST peeks at them as they enter through the partition doors. They move along the aisle; the desks on the other side are partially occupied by beat and studious employees. As they reach "The Office of the Publisher," they enter it.

35I INT. ANTEROOM - CONTINUOUS 35I

The anteroom is vacant. OMAR and RAY walk past the secretary's desk and stops before the "PRIVATE" door. RAY pushes it open.

35J INT. PRIVATE - CONTINUOUS 35J

OMAR and RAY enter the room. CHATTERJEE is sitting in his chair, and looks up at them expectantly. RAY grabs a chair and as he is about to sit on it, OMAR takes a chair too, and they both sit down. Throughout their conversation, CHATTERJEE will seem exceptionally calm.

CHATTERJEE

Y-e-s?

OMAR

(visibly nervous)

Yes, uh, well...

(points, briefly at RAY)

This is my associate, his name is-

RAY

Never mind the name.

CHATTERJEE takes a look at RAY. OMAR gathers some courage and lets out a sigh.

OMAR

(beat)

He's taking over.

CHATTERJEE

"Taking over?"

(beat)

Taking over what?

OMAR

Well, you *know* - our arrangement.

CHATTERJEE

(beat)

I am not sure if I understand this.

Before OMAR can make a remark, RAY snaps in.

RAY

There's nothing to understand in this – it only means that from now on it's *me*, whom you'll be paying your monthly instalments to.

CHATTERJEE looks at OMAR, suspiciously, while reclining in his chair.

CHATTERJEE

(beat)

I think, I am going to need an explanation for that.

OMAR

(beat)

Well, it was his maneuver.

CHATTERJEE promptly cast his eyes on RAY. At first, he stares at him in disbelief, then with growing astonishment.

CHATTERJEE

You don't mean to say, "*he's the one*," who's behind *all* this.

OMAR's silence confirms CHATTERJEE's reckoning.

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)

(beat)

But... he's just a *kid!*

RAY leans on his chair and opens his mouth:

RAY

(snide)

Wasn't she a bit *old* for you?

This remark echoes in CHATTERJEE's ear. He glares at RAY in almost juvenile anger.

CHATTERJEE

(beat)

You got to be *fucking* kidding me!

(sniggers sulkily)

Kids, – *you are in deep shit.*

CHATTERJEE picks up his telephone and starts pressing the keys.

OMAR

(frowning)

What are you doing?

CHATTERJEE

Calling the police.

OMAR

You *can't* do that!

CHATTERJEE
 (derisive)
 "Can't I?"

RAY takes a gun out and points it at CHATTERJEE.

RAY
 (somewhat calm)
 Put the phone down.

OMAR
 (to RAY)
 (petrified)
 What are you doing!? Put that *thing*
 away!

CHATTERJEE
 You can't scare me with a replica.

OMAR
 I don't think it's a fake, Mr.
 Chatterjee. It looks very real from
 here.

CHATTERJEE
 (feels as if they are
 pulling an act on him)
 You *fucking amateurs!*

RAY cocks the gun. CHATTERJEE and RAY stare at each other for a moment. CHATTERJEE knows it's for *real* now, so he puts the phone down, quietly.

CHATTERJEE (CONT'D)
 (to RAY)
 You think that gun in your hand
 makes you more of a man? — It
doesn't! It merely shows how
 desperate you can be. Instead of
 choosing a palatable way to life,
 you dabble in lofty dreams,
 thinking, that you may get what you
 want just by employing fear and
 force. But let me tell you
 something, — you are thicker than
 scum and deeper than lice. You are—

BANG! -- CHATTERJEE, in his chair, topples backwards. Silence ensues. OMAR is still sitting on his chair. He looks at RAY.

OMAR
 (incredulous)
 Did you just *shoot* him?

RAY frowns. They both spring to their feet in unison and goggles at CHATTERJEE, who is still in his chair with his eyes eerily opened behind his glasses. A small hole is visible on his forehead (no blood).

OMAR (CONT'D)
He's dead! *You killed him!*

RAY
(getting the chill)
Don't be ridiculous. Check his pulse.

OMAR
There's a *hole* in his head!

RAY moves across the desk, and squats before CHATTERJEE, examining his hole. RAY takes out a hanky from his pocket and wipes the butt and the trigger of the gun with it. He places the gun carefully beside CHATTERJEE. Suddenly, he gets up, dashes to the window, shimmies it open, and climbs out of it.

35K INT. RAY'S CAR/BASEMENT PARKING - MOMENTS LATER 35K

RAY hurries down the ramp, with OMAR at his tail, and they both get into the parked car. RAY starts the engine and frantically puts the gear in reverse. DONNY, sitting in the back seat, gapes at them and asks:

DONNY
What happened?

OMAR
(panting; looking white as a sheet)
He *plugged* him!

With a jerk, the car moves into reverse; RAY joggles the stick again and steps on the gas.

35L EXT. BOULEVARD - CONTINUOUS 35L

The car lunges out of the basement parking lot and lands on the boulevard; it banks sharply and, in an instant, catches speed as the engine lets out a groan.

35M EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER 35M

The car is running at full throttle along the wide stretch of road. It smoothly switches lanes, ascends a country road that curves uphill, and disappears behind a foothill.

35N EXT. FOOTHILLS - LATER 35N

The car speeds along on an incessantly ascending, narrow roadway.

350 INT. 4TH FLOOR - EVENING 350

The office is vacant. A stout CLEANING LADY in her 50s is moping the floor. She notices a light is on in "The Office of The Publisher". She moves, and enters the Office of The Publisher; first, the anteroom, then a double knock on the Private door before she twists the doorknob and pushes it open.

35P INT. PRIVATE - CONTINUOUS 35P

As the CLEANING LADY enters, she sees that the window is open. She walks to the window, and closes it. She turns around and sees CHATTERJEE lying in his chair, horizontally, on the ground. She walks a few steps forward, with numb curiosity, and peers at the gun lying next to the body.

35Q EXT. FOOTHILLS - EVENING 35Q

RAY's car is parked on a dirt road. DONNY is sitting inside it. OMAR stands out, leaning on the side door. RAY stands near the edge of a cliff, with eyes set on the misty mountain range. All three of them are puffing away on cigarettes like there's no tomorrow.

DONNY, sitting in the back seat of the car, leans forward and turns on the radio. He fondles the dial, running between frequencies, disturbing the somber silence with cacophonies of sports commentaries, news broadcasts, and the howling of GRACE SLICK.

OMAR
(uptight)
Shut this trap, *will you?*

DONNY switches off the radio.

DONNY
(reflective)
They haven't announced it on the radio yet.

OMAR sweeps his wrist about his runny nose.

OMAR
(dispassionate)
Maybe they haven't found his body yet.

RAY looks over his shoulder, slowly. DONNY looks at RAY; OMAR looks at DONNY and follows his eyes, which settle on RAY.

35R INT. PRIVATE - LATE

35R

The office is huddled with men from the homicide department; most of them are in civil clothes. A photographer is taking pictures with an old-fashioned camera. Two men are dusting for prints. A towering figure of a man, in his late 60s, slender as a pencil, with neatly parted hair, wearing a shabby trench coat, stands in the middle of the room, puffing on a cigarette: He is the CHIEF. The photographer changes his position for a different angle, and as he presses the button on his camera, the flash momentarily blinds the elderly man.

CHIEF

(peevish)

What are you trying to do -
blind me? Get out of here!

The photographer - intimidated - sheepishly scuttles out of the room. A SERGEANT crouches before the body of CHATTERJEE.

CHIEF (CONT'D)

What do you think of it, Sergeant?

The SERGEANT picks up the gun, lying next to CHATTERJEE's body, with his gloved hand.

SERGEANT

(speaks as if he's
dictating)

"Adler and Klaus, Series 900,
German made." Holds five in the
cartridge, one in the chamber.
Disastrous in the long-range, but
very promising in the short. And
makes very little noise, too.
Almost a toy gun.

CHIEF

I was asking about the *body*,
Sergeant.

SERGEANT

Oh - forehead wound, instantaneous
death, volley is still in the
victim's head. The gun is lying
about the victim's limb. Probably
suicide.

CHIEF

You *twit!* Journalists don't kill
themselves - *They let other people
do it.*

A fresh-faced YOUNG DETECTIVE enters the room, briskly.

YOUNG DETECTIVE

(to CHIEF)

All the staff members have been called, but none of them recall if they saw anybody entering or leaving this office.

(beat)

But the young receptionist – she said, *see shaw*–

(stops short; realizes his error; but continues)

–Two strangers entering through the front doors at about half-past five, but never saw them leave.

CHIEF

(indifferent)

Sure, *she did!* What do you want for that – a promotion?

(beat)

Why did his secretary say?

YOUNG DETECTIVE

(lame)

She said he let her go at five.

The CHIEF reflects on this.

CHIEF

All right. Get someone to make the caricature of the clowns the fanciful receptionist said she saw.

YOUNG DETECTIVE

But, *she's hysterical!*

CHIEF

Oh? – So, you suppose we should wait until she can get over her hysterics – and then she can say that she doesn't remember what the faces of those fools look like – the one's – "*see shaw.*"

The detective – embarrassed – turns around, and rushes out of the room. The CHIEF turns to a Uniformed officer, standing near the door at guard.

CHIEF (CONT'D)

Officer, fetch that cleaning lady, and ask her to revise her statement again.

The CHIEF moves to the desk, and begin pulling its drawers, in a professionally-casual way; but he stops short, and picks up a framed photograph of Mrs. CHATTERJEE, mounted on the desk top. The SERGEANT notices this, and sets off:

SERGEANT

Wife is in Europe. Went to a
vacation with the kids.

CHIEF

Lucky dame.

The CHIEF puts the picture back on the desk; he opens another drawer. For a moment, he gazes into the drawer, transfixed. Then he takes out – what seems to be – a recording device; which is *still* recording. The CHIEF places the device on the desk, and after a moment's hesitation, he switches it off. He looks up at the flabbergasted SERGEANT, and says:

CHIEF (CONT'D)

Get me an earpiece.

DISSOLVE TO:

36

INT. LIVING ROOM/CHATTERJEE'S HOUSE - EVENING

36

M.L. HUSSAIN, a man of indiscernible age, with a tanned-skin, wearing a tailored-suit, lights his pipe while sitting on a sofa. On the backwall, a large image of peacock on a stained glass. The score of FELLINI'S LA DOLCE VITA is playing on the record player. CHATTERJEE comes out from behind a small bar in the corner, holding a bottle of vodka and two glasses.

HUSSAIN

Where did you say the *missus* went
again?

CHATTERJEE

Rome. Then a week later, she'll be
in Paris.

CHATTERJEE puts the bottle and two glasses beside the ice bucket on a small coffee table in front of the sofa.

HUSSAIN

Ah, Paris, "The City of Poseurs and
Liberals."

CHATTERJEE sits down.

CHATTERJEE

I have heard *different*.

HUSSAIN

You are too unromantic! – I guess
all journalists are. It's something
of a chronic among you people. You
think of things in *too* literal
terms.

CHATTERJEE pours the glasses and drop a handful of ice cubes into each.

CHATTERJEE opens a cigar box lying on the table, takes out a cigar, cuts it, lights it, and starts puffing away, while HUSSAIN smokes his pipe.

CHATTERJEE

You know, for being a lawyer for civil liberties, you speak very highly of nobility.

HUSSAIN picks up his glass, chinks it with the other, and gulps a mouthful.

HUSSAIN

Why *shouldn't* I? Nobility has given birth to sophistication and snobbery. The masses can be too vulgar sometimes.

CHATTERJEE

Maybe because they are always oppressed.

HUSSAIN

They *are!* And what do they do to vanquish their oppressors? They revolt and revolutionize the ideologies with which they are governed. If it's imperialism, they want communism; If it's communism, they want socialism; if it's socialism, they want conservatism; and if it's conservatism, they want nationalism. But what they really grope for all this time *is* individualism. The truth is that people don't want to be ruled. It's a very rudimentary human instinct. It's only a matter of time before they realize this. That's why the world has been in constant turmoil since the first toddler learned to walk. People who allow themselves to be ruled by a state are simply called law-abiding citizens. And those who *don't*, – are deemed radicals or anarchists.

CHATTERJEE

(beat)

You always made me feel too mediocre.

HUSSAIN chuckles.

HUSSAIN

Anyway, enough of this political hoopla talk. What about the hunting season? It opens next week.

CHATTERJEE

I can't go. My little ones had just seen "Bambi" on TV. And, they said they'd be very cross with me, even if I go near a deer.

36A INT. THE SAME - LATER

36A

CHATTERJEE and HUSSAIN are reclining on their sofas. They are sleepy and laconic. On the table there are two empty bottles of liquor.

CHATTERJEE

I'll open another bottle.

HUSSAIN

Not for me.

HUSSAIN moves and sits upright.

CHATTERJEE

You are not leaving, are you? It's not even ten yet.

HUSSAIN

(beat)

I better call my daughter anyway. She tends to get mockingly suspicious if I return home with bad breath.

HUSSAIN gets up on his feet and stretches himself.

HUSSAIN (CONT'D)

Probably thinks I am running a harem somewhere, as if only I were as good-looking as the buffoons she watches on television.

HUSSAIN walks out of the room and into the hallway. CHATTERJEE stares at the ground, abstractedly. A moment later, HUSSAIN returns and collapses on the sofa.

CHATTERJEE

(beat)

If I were to tell you something, - Will I have your word that you'll never mention it to anyone... ever.

HUSSAIN

What is it?

CHATTERJEE

Will I have your word?

HUSSAIN

Only if you're not going to tell me that you are an anarchist.

CHATTERJEE smiles amusingly.

CHATTERJEE

I can assure you, that is not the case.

(beat)

There is a man, I know... who used to be my colleague - I am not going to tell you his name, though. I met him at a club a few weeks ago, where we sat down and shared a luncheon. As we conversed about here and there and this and that, he softened up after a little while and confided something to me, which was both - intriguing and shocking. He told me that a couple of months ago he went out with a lady, who was an old friend of his. They went to see a show, which turned out to be rotten. They decided to have a drink before getting on their way. One drink led to another, and when they left the bar, they were drunk. He gave the lady a lift to her home, but before they could reach it, well... they let things go out of proportion. He said it was the liquor that "did" it. But that was not the worst part. He told me that somebody had photographed them.

(beat)

And he's been paying those people *ever since*, - to keep it under wraps. He doesn't know who these people are, but he said they seem to be... "professionals," as if it's their turf or something. He said he wanted it to come to an end, but he doesn't know how it can. He asked me for my advice on this, but all I could suggest was something he had already thought of and was unwilling to do so. I wanted to help him, but I guess I was useless to him. In your opinion, what do you think his options are?

HUSSAIN

I don't think *he has any*, but to approach the law.

(MORE)

HUSSAIN (CONT'D)

But since he is reluctant to do so, his perpetrators will thrive on his unwillingness and squeeze him dry. And if he stop the payments, there is a chance that they will expose him. The bottom line is - whichever move he makes, it's *he* who falls into the pit. Nevertheless, there is one thing he *can* do, - if only he could get some kind of evidence against these people. Something that will stand in a court of law. Of course, he doesn't have to use this evidence in its practical sense; he can only use it as a counter-productive. Only to let his perpetrators know that he has something *against* them. You see, the law is very stern to extortionists. Any person who's found guilty of practicing such "illicit activities" can find himself accommodated in a one-room cell for five to ten years at the state's expense. If these people are really "professionals," they must know about this for a fact, and they will also see that there is no point in taking chances against it.

DISSOLVE TO:

37 INT. PRIVATE - AFTERNOON

37

CHATTERJEE is sitting behind his desk, working. The telephone rings, and he picks it up.

CHATTERJEE

(on phone)

Hello.

OMAR (O.S.)

(on phone)

Hello, Mr. Chatterjee. It's *me*.

CHATTERJEE (O.S.)

(solemn)

Yes?

OMAR (O.S.)

I know it's highly irregular of me to call like that, but, something came up, and, uh, can we meet?

CHATTERJEE

What came up?

OMAR (O.S.)

Actually, it's nothing; it's...
I'll tell you when we meet!

CHATTERJEE

I can't leave the office right now.
My desk is piled with papers. I am
all tied up.

OMAR (O.S.)

Oh?

CHATTERJEE's thinks.

CHATTERJEE

(beat)

However... you can come to my
office. We can talk here - if
that's suitable to you.

OMAR (O.S.)

(beat)

Well... you sure, that'll be all
right?

CHATTERJEE

Yes.

OMAR (O.S.)

Okay. I'll be there in 20 minutes.

CHATTERJEE hangs up the phone. He sits still in his chair, as if in thought. He gets up, goes to a small cabinet by the wall, and takes a recording device out of it. He returns to his desk and places the device on the desk top. He checks it. A moment later, he starts scanning his desk and the area around it. He opens a drawer, puts the device inside it, and closes it. A moment later, he presses a button on his intercom.

CHATTERJEE

(on intercom)

Mrs. Rai, you can take the evening
off. I won't be needing you.

SECRETARY

(on intercom)

Are you sure? It's *only* five.

CHATTERJEE

(on intercom)

No, that's all right. I'll be
leaving myself in a couple of
minutes.

37A INT. PRIVATE - 20 MINUTES LATER 37A

CHATTERJEE is sitting on his chair. He hears the door to the anteroom open and sees two figures as they enlarge behind the pebbled panel glass of the Private door. He pulls open the drawer quickly, flips a switch on the recording device, and shuts the drawer. The Private door opens, OMAR and Ray enter.

CUT TO BLACK:

38 INT. PRIVATE - NIGHT 38

The CHIEF is standing near the window, with the earpiece pressed against his ear. The recording device is perched precariously on the window shelf. The CHIEF removes the earpiece. A sudden flood of light makes him glance into the alley below. He notices a car has turned and is now creeping into the alley. He looks over his shoulder at his in-awed colleagues.

CHIEF
Kill the lights.

38A EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS 38A

The car crawls into the alley; it halts. RAY, OMAR and DONNY step out of it. They all look up at the window, with anxiety and uncertainty. RAY starts to climb the fire escape; OMAR and DONNY follow.

38B INT. PRIVATE - CONTINUOUS 38B

The office is dark; only the perfidious light from the window is providing any sense of visibility. The window opens, and RAY clambers into the room, followed by OMAR and DONNY. RAY moves to CHATTERJEE's lying body.

RAY
(to OMAR and DONNY)
Okay, - I'll grab him by his legs.
You'll grab him by his arms.

OMAR and DONNY haltingly move to their respective positions.

OMAR
Wasn't a light *on*, when we left?

The ceiling light comes to life. They all cower. OMAR and DONNY meekly raise their arms above their heads. As RAY sees this, he looks over his shoulder. The CHIEF along with three other detectives are standing by the wall brandishing their guns. RAY who had nothing better to do now, slowly, unwillingly, defiantly lifts his hands above his neck.

FADE TO BLACK:

39

EXT. COURTYARD - AFTERNOON

39

OMAR and DONNY, clad in BLUE UNIFORMS, with hands stuffed in their trousers' pockets, are sauntering about.

DONNY
(looking at the sky)
Do you think it will rain?

OMAR looks up at the heavens, hopefully.

OMAR
I hope it doesn't. The
thunderstruck here scares the *shit*
out of me.
(OMAR stares ahead at a
distance)
Look who's out there.

DONNY looks.

DONNY
(beat)
He's angry with us, *isn't he?*

OMAR
I guess so.
(beat)
You know, I kind of feel sorry for
him.

DONNY lifts his hand over his head and waves it, briskly.
OMAR sees this and lifts his own hand to wave.

RAY, wearing a BLUE UNIFORM, is standing behind an iron fence. He is holding a pickaxe and is surrounded by assorted stones. A ball is chained to one of his legs. He is staring at OMAR and DONNY, who are waving at him. He puts his pickaxe down and raises his clenched fist; his middle-finger pops out. OMAR and DONNY stop waving; their arms shrink down in deference.

OMAR (CONT'D)
Twelve years with hard labor is a
very tough sentence, Donny.

As OMAR said these words, we float away from them in the air; seeing in a wider view of, what seems to be, the courtyard of a penitentiary, situated on a small island surrounded by the bustling sea.

FADE AWAY:

CREDITS (Accompanied by the title song from TERRY GILLIAM'S BRAZIL).

THE END

"Two young men in their early 20s found themselves blackmailing a prominent newspaper publisher. But things go wrong when a former friend of the young men gets wind of this and decides to take over."

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