

Two Lost Souls

written by

John Stone

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Formerly Two Moons

NOTE: CONT'D / ASIDE -

FADE IN:

INT. THE KHALAM'S KITCHEN - DAY

HALIMA 22 stands by the fridge freezer and checks messages on her Iphone.

Identical twins NOSHEEN and AYSHA 14 slouch upon a threadbare sofa situated along the left wall and play with their Ipads.

Smiley MRS KHALAM 50s stirs a pot of curry on the gas ring. She wears a traditional shalwar kameez.

Sour face MR KHALAM 50s sits at the head of a wooden oval shaped table with his back towards a small window that looks out onto a courtyard garden. He rubs his back in and grimaces.

Ponytailed ASIF 20s has his head stuck inside a glossy car mag. He turns the page. A RED FERRARI glares back at him.

ASIF

Whoa, bruv! You're shitting me!

He slides back his chair, then turns to face Halima as he shows her the Red Ferrari.

She stares back at him disinterestedly.

ASIF /

You see this? Just look at this beast! I'll be driving one of these one day. You're looking at the motherfucker of all cars, bruv.

He kisses his lips and nods his head like a toy puppy dog.

His siblings ignore his exuberance and continue to gaze at their Ipads.

Mr Khalam gives him the death stare.

MR KHALAM

(to Asif)

Watch your filthy language in my house, or you can spout your shit somewhere else. (grimaces)

Bloody bastard.

Asif cocks a deafen and hides his head behind his car magazine.

HALIMA

(aside)

In your dreams, Asif.

Asif peers over his mag and gives her the evil eye.

ASIF

Yeah, yeah.

AYSHA

(interjects)

Yeah alright. Bore us all later.

Nosheen looks up and sniggers.

ASIF

We'll see... We'll see when I pull up outside in one of these beasts. You'll all be eating your own shit with jealousy, bruv.

Halima raises a brow and shakes her head at him in annoyance.

ASIF /

You just wait, you'll be begging me for a cool spin up the road so you can show off to all your silly mates... giving it the biggun.

He leans back in his seat and stretches his arms as the chair legs give way and he falls on his backside.

ASIF /

FUCK SAKE, BRUV!

His siblings fall about in hysterics as he climbs to his feet then raises a fist towards them.

Mrs Khalam shakes her head at him without pity.

MRS KHALAM

Asif, what are you doing? Sit down properly, otherwise you'll end up like your father with a terrible back.

ASIF

No thanks.

She tuts and vigorously shakes her head at him.

MR KHALAM

(angrily)

Bloody dreamer. You couldn't even afford to buy a filthy old rust bucket. Anyway, I don't know why you are dreaming over cars like this one. You need to find a proper job before you can even think about driving a car like the one in your stupid magazine.

MRS KHALAM

Yes, Asif, your father is right. You must find a proper job first.

ASIF

Oh, don't you soddin' start as well, mum.

MRS KHALAM

I really don't know why these young people cannot find themselves a proper job these days. What is going on in this country? Where is all the milk and honey I keep hearing them talk about?

MR KHALAM

(flippantly)

It's in the fridge... behind the yogurts.

The girls guffaw.

MR KHALAM /

(grins)

You like that one, huh? It's funny, huh? You know I should be on the bloody tele.

He laughs at his own joke.

MRS KHALAM

It is so terrible what they are paying young people to work these days. These zero-hour contracts what they are offering young people are no good for them. No wonder they are so angry all the time.

She shakes her head in disgust as she stares at Asif.

MR KHALAM

They're better off on the lump.

Another burst of laughter from the girls.

Asif jumps out of his seat and begins to shadow-box a cowering Halima.

He swings his fist wildly in front of her and accidentally clips her ear as she tries to dodge the blows.

HALIMA

OUCH! Fuck off, you prick! Papa, tell this idiot son of yours to stop it! He's just punched me in my flippin' ear hole!

MR KHALAM

Sit back down you bloody bastard!
Leave Halima alone!

He waves his wooden stick as a warning to him.

ASIF

(to Halima)

What are you chattin' 'bout, you stupid bitch?

He stands ready to give her another clump.

MR KHALAM

Sit down, you bloody bastard!

Mr Khalam climbs to his feet and waves his stick again.

AYSHA

(to Nosheen)

That's butters.

MR KHALAM

It's in the fridge... behind the
milk and honey.

NOSHEEN

That's so old papa.

Mr Khalam begins to cough relentlessly and rubs his chest.

ASIF

Someone get him a glass of water
for fuck sake. He sounds like
he's dying of TB.

Mrs Khalam brings a glass of water.

MRS KHALAM

Drink this.

She stands over him with a look of concern upon her face.

HALIMA

Why doesn't he go doctors?

MRS KHALAM

Because you have to make an
appointment. They won't see you
if you just turn up there dying.
You cannot just go and see a
doctor like before.

She returns to the stove, still shaking her head.

MRS KHALAM /

You have to be on your deathbed
before they'll even look at you.
And Asif, why don't you get
yourself a security job? I know
lots of boys getting themselves
security jobs because their
mothers tell me so.

He ignores her and buries his head inside the car mag.

HALIMA

Yeah, then you'll be able to
dream over cars all day and get
paid for it.

Mr Khalam looks across the table with an angry stare towards
Asif.

MR KHALAM

Because he's a lazy bum.

ASIF

Oh, what are you chattin' 'bout now? You don't know shit 'bout what I do.

He slides his chair back and jumps to his feet.

ASIF /

(to Mr Khalam)

Why don't you get a security job, instead of telling me what to do? You lot are so full of shit! You don't know nuttin'.

MR KHALAM

I'm not the lazy bum in this house.

Mr Khalam grabs his stick.

ASIF

Ha! Look at you! What do you know, huh? At least I don't work in some filthy rat infested kitchen.

Mr Khalam flies out of his seat and whacks Asif across the back with his stick.

Asif yelps and screams and curls up in a ball on the floor as his siblings huddle together in the corner of the room.

MR KHALAM

Don't be so bloody cheeky to your father, right?! Or I will beat you, you little bastard! You're not too old for a bloody good hiding! Bloody cheeky sod speaking to your father like this! You need to learn some bloody manners, you cheeky bastard!

MRS KHALAM

Stop all this! Leave him! I said leave him! Leave him!

She snatches the cane from his grasp.

He stumbles back to his seat where he scowls and rubs his back.

The girls quickly exit.

Asif nurtures his shoulder and sits at the table.

MRS KHALAM /

Asif, why you don't get yourself a plumbing job like Shiraz? His mother tells me he is earning very good wages now that he is working. She says he is bringing home five-hundred pounds every single week, after tax.

MR KHALAM

There! See! Shiraz can afford to buy a fuckin' Ferrari. You cannot even afford to buy shit on wheels.

The girls return sheepishly as they take up their previous positions. They snigger behind Asif's back.

Asif jumps out of his seat during his frustration.

ASIF

Shut your big fat mouths! You ugly bitches!

AYSHA

You shut yours first, and we'll shut ours.

MR KHALAM

(to Asif)

Look at you. A waste of space I have for a son.

ASIF

You don't know shit.

HALIMA

Missus Kuman is a blatant liar, mama. She is always bragging to everyone about her son.

AYSHA

Yeah. She's a stupid liar, mama. Remember what she told you when she said she got all that money from that insurance claim when she fell out of an Uber and broke her ankle?

MRS KHALAM

So what of it?

AYSHA

Well, she never got six-thousand pounds is what I'm saying. She only got two-thousand. She's always beefing things up. Don't believe a single word of what she says to you, mama. She's a lying old bag.

ASIF

(disbelievingly)

How'd you know all this shit?

AYSHA

Because Shiraz told me. And don't go blabbering your big fat mouth off to the whole flippin' street. I'm not s'pose to know. He'll kill me if he finds out I told anyone... especially you with your big fat gob.

ASIF

You should keep your big mouth shut, then, shouldn't ya?

HALIMA

(grins knowingly)

Is this when I saw you and Shiraz holding hands in the park, Aysha?

Mr Khalam gives Aysha a warning stare.

MR KHALAM

What?

AYSHA

(teary eyed)

She's lying, papa! Why are you saying stupid things like that, Halima?

MR KHALAM

Holding hands! In which park are you bloody holding hands with this boy, Aysha?

AYSHA

I was not, papa! She's lying! Bloody liar you are, Halima! You stupid bloody cow! Why are you lying, huh? Tell the truth, or I will never speak to you again!

She sobs hysterically before she exits.

MRS KHALAM

Please just stop all this shouting. I cannot stand this arguing all the time, every hour of every day of the week.

MR KHALAM

Right!. Aysha is grounded! And I will speak with that boy's father when I see him later at the shop! And you can tell his mother what he is doing with my daughter in front of everybody in that shitty park.

Asif climbs out of his seat.

ASIF

Oh what? She's only holding his soddin' hand. It's not like she's kissing him or anything. You people are so backward. This is England, not Kashmir. What do you expect, huh? This is a free country. If she wants to hold his little hand in the park, let her.

MR KHALAM

You bloody bastard!

He flies out of his seat again with his stick raised.

The girls scream and quickly exit.

He attacks Asif with a significant number of blows to his arms and legs.

Mrs Khalam attempts to intervene.

MRS KHALAM

Please stop this! Asif just
leave! Go!

She attempts to pull her husband away, but screams when she takes an accidental whack to the head.

Halima reenters and joins the ensuing struggle as she grabs her father around the neck with gritted teeth and wrestles him to the floor.

Mr Khalam coughs violently as he exits.

CUT TO:

INT. ADAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

The one bedroom apartment has a staircase that leads down onto the street.

Caucasian ADAM 20 sits up in bed. He scratches his head and yawns, then climbs out of bed in just his underpants.

He exits.

Beat.

He re-enters dressed in a black T and pair of chinos.

DOORBELL.

He hops down the narrow staircase and opens the door to a coy looking SHAZANA 18.

Her long black silky hair shimmers in the gentle breeze. Her soft green eyes coruscate during the sunlight as she looks up at his smiley face.

She pushes a tupperware dish towards his abdomen.

He smiles gratefully as they stand and gaze at one another during a lovestruck moment.

ADAM

Hey thanks, Shazana. How've you
been?

SHAZANA

I'm fine. My mum asked me to give you this, and to apologise for all the shouting again this morning.

ADAM

(knowingly)

Tell her thank you very much, but there's really no need to apologise. I understand. I come from a big family also. Sometimes it's manic when everyone congregates inside a room.

He takes the tupperware dish.

SHAZANA

(Dispassionate)

Whatever.

ADAM

Well, that's really nice of her anyway.

SHAZANA

Well if you don't want to eat it, you can give it to Romeo and Juliet.

He chuckles.

ADAM

The goldfish?

SHAZANA

(Unamused)

What's funny?

ADAM

Seriously?

SHAZANA

Yes, seriously.

ADAM

Sorry. I wasn't laughing at you, Shazana. I just - It's just what you said regarding my goldfish. Romeo and Juliet I just sounded funny, that's all.

Their eyes synchronise and lock during a deep gaze before they descend back to reality.

ADAM /
Actually, I've got some dishes I forgot to give you from last time. D' you wanna come in?

SHAZANA
OK. But just quickly though, or my father might see me.

She glances over her shoulder to make sure she's not being watched.

ADAM
You know Romeo and Juliet have been asking for you, actually.

She grins as she follows him up the narrow staircase.

SHAZANA
Yeah, sure. Liar.

ADAM
No honestly, they have. It's the truth.

SHAZANA
Oh, stop lying.

They enter the apartment where a fish tank is situated along the left wall beneath a window.

ADAM
I'll just fetch those dishes.

He exits through a door in the back wall.

She steps towards the fish bowl and stares deeply at the two little GOLDFISH as they swim in circuitous fashion.

He returns with the dishes and hands them to her.

ADAM /
I've been saving them up.

SHAZANA

Thanks.

(thoughtfully)

I love watching them swimming around. It's so therapeutic. She turns and looks directly into his eyes

ADAM

I agree. Sometimes I stand here for ages just watching them, wondering what's going on in their tiny skulls.

SHAZANA

(chuckles)

Crazy.

ADAM

Yeah, it is. Two lost souls swimming around a fish bowl.

She bursts into uncontrollable laughter.

SHAZANA

Oh my god, you're so funny sometimes. Maybe they're thinking the same about you.

ADAM

What... a lost soul, you mean? Can you imagine what it must be like to have a beady eye staring through a window at you?

SHAZANA

Don't. That's exactly how I feel. We are no different from them really, are we?

He spots her despair and sighs knowingly.

ADAM

You mean stuck inside a fishbowl?

SHAZANA

Exactly.

They move closer to one another and gaze into each other's eyes.

SHAZANA /

Oh, Adam, why do you make me feel
so special?

She searches his eyes for clarity as he places his hand
lightly upon her shoulder and gently pulls her in.

She throws her arms around his neck and kisses him
passionately upon the lips.

Moments later she steps back in a web of embarrassment.

SHAZANA /

Oh. I'm sorry, Adam. I better go.

ADAM

Please. No-no-no. Please stay...
just a bit longer, please...

SHAZANA

Why? What for?

ADAM

Because I really like you,
Shazana.

SHAZANA

Well, you mustn't. I have to go.
They'll be wondering where I am
all this time.

ADAM

Surely a couple of minutes won't
make a big difference, will it?

SHAZANA

No but you don't know my father.
He is very strict. If he finds
out that I've even been inside
your flat he'll kill me.

ADAM

But you've been up here before.
They know that, don't they?

SHAZANA

(irked)

No they don't know that, Adam.

ADAM

I think about you all the time.

SHAZANA

Well, don't! It's dangerous. You must understand that we cannot be together like that.

ADAM

I can't help the way I feel, Shazana.

She steps forward and gently strokes his soft, pale face as she looks into his big blue eyes.

SHAZANA

I'm going to Mumbai next week. You won't see me for a while. In fact, you won't be seeing me for a whole month. This will give you plenty of time to calm down. I don't want you to think about me when I'm gone.

ADAM

Visiting relatives?

SHAZANA

No. I only wish it was like that.

(sighs)

I'm getting married. I have to meet my future husband again. But I don't want to. I am too young to be somebody's wife. Especially somebody I don't even like.

ADAM

(disappointedly)

Oh, I get it - An arranged marriage.

SHAZANA

Yes. Now I must go.

She steps away.

ADAM

Wait! Before you go, let me give you my card.

SHAZANA

What for?

ADAM

We can Whatsapp each other.

He hands her a business card from his wallet. She focuses her eyes upon it.

SHAZANA
(inquisitively)
I never knew you were a
copywriter?

ADAM
For my sins.

SHAZANA
So what does a copywriter do,
then?

ADAM
Write slogans for products. And
press releases.

SHAZANA
That's sick! I've always wondered
what you did. Now I know.

ADAM
It's just a job, Shazana.

She looks at her watch and panics.

SHAZANA
Shit! I've gotta go, or I'm dead.

ADAM
Ping me, please...

She descends the stairs.

SHAZANA
We'll see.

The door slams shut.

He stares thoughtfully into the fish bowl.

BACK TO:

INT. THE KHALAM'S KITCHEN

Shazana enters with a bag of empty dishes.

The twins raise their eyebrows knowingly.

She ignores them, instead makes her way towards the sink unit and empties the tupperware dishes from the bag. She stares into the wall mirror in front of her and catches their moronic reflections.

NOSHEEN

So where've you been all this time, Shazana? .

AYSHA

Yeah, you were gone ages.

SHAZANA

So what of it?

NOSHEEN

What were you doing in Adam's flat all that time you were gone?

She ignores the question.

SHAZANA

Well, I don't see you two ever doing anything around here.

NOSHEEN

Yeah but it still doesn't take all this time to take food for our neighbour.

AYSHA

He likes you. I can tell.

NOSHEEN

No, Aysha, it's mum's curry that he likes.

They giggle like infantile school children.

Shazana stares at them in disgust.

SHAZANA

For your information, I told him to give the curry to his goldfish if he doesn't want to eat it.

AYSHA

Oh my God! You're so bizzy, Shaz. What did he say?

SHAZANA
(grins knowingly)
Nothing much.

NOSHEEN
Liar.

SHAZANA
(euphorically)
He is so cool for an English guy.

NOSHEEN
He's not cool. He's gay. He wears women's clothes and carries a man bag.

SHAZANA
For your information, Nosheen, he is not gay at all. Why do you have to say such nasty things about people? You are always saying bitchy things about people. And you know what, Nosheen... you are always wrong. You are never right about anything... So get a life, instead of trolling people all the time, you silly little girl.

NOSHEEN
Well I don't see any other girls going up to his flat - Just men.

She nudges Aysha for support.

AYSHA
(knowingly)
Only you, Shazana.

She winks at Nosheen.

SHAZANA
Oh be quiet, you silly girls.

NOSHEEN
Touched a nerve, have we?

SHAZANA
Don't be silly. Grow up.

NOSHEEN

So what is going on between you, then?

SHAZANA

Oh it's way over your little heads, Nosheen. Don't concern yourself with things you don't understand.

AYSHA

Aw, you really have hit a nerve, Nosheen. .

SHAZANA

If you really must know he does like me, a lot actually. Most of the boys at college also like me. It's no big deal, is it?

She puts the dishes inside the cupboard.

NOSHEEN

Show off.

SHAZANA

Don't be so jealous, Nosheen. We cannot all be beautiful people. There has to be spaces for angry little trolls like you.

NOSHEEN

Well, you can't marry any of them, can you? So you might as well forget about it.

SHAZANA

I don't want to marry anyone. You are such a stupid little girl. Why can't you just grow up?

Mrs Khalam enters and joins them at the table.

MRS KHALAM

I think he is a very nice boy.

SHAZANA

(aback)

Mama! Have you been listening to our conversation?

MRS KHALAM

Yes. And so what of it?

NOSHEEN

Oh my God, mama!

SHAZANA

You are right, mama, he is. But who do you think we are talking about?

MRS KHALAM

Aahil. His mother says he likes you very much, Shazana. You are a very lucky girl.

Shazana's expression morphs into a deep unhappy frown.

SHAZANA

Well, It's not mutual! You can tell his mother that if you like because I will not marry him! He is a bully!

She exits in tears.

Mrs Khalam looks on in dismay as her eyes follow her out.

MRS KHALAM

What did I say?

She shakes her head in wonder.

CUT TO:

SUPER: MUMBAI

EXT. PITCHED ROOF BUNGALOW - DAY

A veranda incorporates and an orange tree decorate the front of the house.

Tall, strong, bearded TAHER 30s sits down on a wooden bench. He wears a khaki vest and army pants, and drinks bottled water as he stares up at the sky.

He is joined by two uniformed INDIAN POLICE OFFICERS.

OFFICER#1

Salaam alaikum.

Taher ignores the greeting and stares into his water bottle.

OFFICER#2

When did you arrive back from
Kashmir, Taher?

TAHER

None of your business. What do
you want?

OFFICER#1

You need to come with us. We have
some questions you need to
answer.

TAHER

About what?

OFFICER#2

Come... you will find out.

Taher lethargically climbs off his seat and steps down off
the veranda.

TAHER

Am I under arrest?

OFFICER#2

If you don't come with us
peacefully, yes, we will arrest
you.

TAHER

What for?

OFFICER#1

Conspiracy to handle explosives
among other things.

TAHER

Original. While I have been
defending our territories in
Kashmir, what have you two been
doing?

OFFICER#2

We know. Now let's go.

They exit.

At the front door of the bungalow MR & MRS CHOUDREY 60s,
stand and shake their heads knowingly.

CUT TO:

EXT. ADAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

Adam exits his apartment with a man-bag strapped over his
shoulder.

Mr Khalam approaches. He bears a wide grin as their eyes
meet.

MR KHALAM

(enthused)

Ah, Mister Adam. How are you
today?

ADAM

Oh I'm good, Mister Khalam
thanks for asking. And how are
you?

MR KHALAM

Oh, I mustn't grumble.

ADAM

I suppose not.

MR KHALAM

I can see you are looking very
happy about something. Have you
won the lottery or something?

ADAM

(chuckles)

No such luck, I'm afraid. No, I'm
just off to work, actually.

Mr Khalam's expression morphs into a serious stare.

MR KHALAM

Tell me, Adam, what is going on
with this English weather
nowadays? Where is all this
global warming? You know my back
hates this bloody cold weather.
All the time my back is killing
me.

He grimaces as he feels his back.

ADAM

Tell me about it, Mr Khalam. You should get it looked at. It might be something serious like a slip disc.

He steps closer to Adam and speaks quietly.

MR KHALAM

I hope not.

(rubs his back)

You know, between you and me I can get a free parking space outside my house, so my doctor keeps telling me. But I don't want to upset the neighbours. You know, some people are very jealous around here. But my doctor says Mister Khalam you just say the word and I will write you a nice little letter to send to the council. A letter about your bad back, no problem.

ADAM

Well, maybe you should, then. I don't have a car, so I wouldn't be affected by a handicap space.

MR KHALAM

No, but these people living around here - they are interfering people - jealous people. They are not like you and me, Adam. Not nice people at all. But I know them. I know which people they are. They are very sad people... believe me, I know.

He grabs Adam's arm to stop him walking off.

MR KHALAM /

They are not like us. They are really shit people.

Shazana appears from inside the house.

She gasps to see Adam and her father in deep conversation.

Mr Khalam looks at her, then turns back to Adam.

MR KHALAM /
You see my daughter Shazana?

ADAM
(affectionately)
Oh yes I do, Mr Khalam.

Shazana passes her father a wry look.

MR KHALAM
My daughter is getting married soon to a very nice young man back in India. You know he will be working in this country very soon. He is an accountant. He will do very well in this country. He will find work here, no problem, in one of those glass buildings in the city. And you know I will never let any of my daughters marry beneath them. You know my eldest daughter Halima? She is married to a lawyer. He is a very clever man. He works in Holborn. He is a very clever chappie, you know. They have already bought themselves a big house in Ilford, but she comes when he is working abroad. You know they used to live in one room above a chemist shop here in Whitechapel. They were paying five-hundred pounds every single week for a little shit hole like that. It is so terrible what they are charging people like you and me for our rents, even in this shit hole.

Shazana looks on aghast with embarrassment. Adam turns the other way during her awkwardness.

ADAM
(politely)
OK. I must be off now, Mr Khalam.

MR KHALAM
Of course, Mister Adam.

SHAZANA

(interjects)

Papa, Adam doesn't want to know about this. Let him go to work. You're holding him up. He'll be late.

MR KHALAM

Of course Mister Adam wants to know when one of my daughters is getting married. Mister Adam is a very good neighbour. You are a very good neighbour, Mister. Adam. Not like those other tenants who used to live up there before you. They were shit people - rubbish people. They were selling drugs in your little flat. I saw very ugly people going up there at night.

ADAM

(concerned)

The estate agent never mentioned anything like that to me.

MR KHALAM

OK. I will let you go. Sorry for keeping you talking. But it's good to talk, huh?

ADAM

No, I'm glad we did, Mr Khalam.

Adam glances at Shazana as he walks off.

Mr Khalam follows her back inside the house.

INT. THE KHALAM'S KITCHEN - DAY

During her despair Shazana turns around to confront her father.

SHAZANA

Papa, please, you always do this in front of people.

MR KHALAM

(sternly)

What are you talking about? And don't be speaking to your father like this, or I will beat you.

SHAZANA

Oh, please, papa, I don't want to get married to Aahil. I hate him. He is rude to me all the time. He has no manners. Please, don't make me marry him, papa. I beg you not to let me marry him.

She cries as she remonstrates with him.

MR KHALAM

You will bloody do as I say! You will marry Aahil! And don't think of bringing shame upon this family or you will wish you had not, believe it, Shazana!

SHAZANA

Oh but please, papa! I will never love him! I am too young to get married! I will be very unhappy! I do not want to marry anyone yet, papa!

MR KHALAM

You will learn to love him when you know him better. Believe me, you will know it when it happens.

SHAZANA

No I will not!

MR KHALAM

You will love him! Do as I bloody say, or else!

SHAZANA

No! I will not do it! I will not marry him! I will run away if you force me to do this!

She runs sobbing from the house. He chases after her with his cane raised to strike her.

She manages to clear the door, before she slams it shut behind her.

He holds his back in pain.

MR KHALAM -
Bloody ungrateful girl!

He sits down at the table.

Mrs Khalam enters with a worried stare upon her face.

MRS KHALAM
What is all this shouting?

She sits down at the table.

MR KHALAM
Shazana. She is disobeying her
father. What is bloody wrong with
these children?

MRS KHALAM
Because she doesn't want to get
married just yet. She told me
that. She is not ready for
marriage.

MR KHALAM
She will marry him whether she
likes him or not. And she will do
as I say.

MRS KHALAM
But she doesn't like this boy.
She tells me that he is always
cursing, and that he is a bully.
He hurts her when she speaks her
mind to him. He made her cry in
front of Taher.

Enraged, Mr Khalam climbs off his seat and raises his cane to strike her.

His back jars and he grimaces with the pain.

MR KHALAM
Argh...! My bloody back has
broken again!

MRS KHALAM
Go and see the doctor. It is
still open.

She gets up and rubs his back to ease the pain.

MR KHALAM

Be quiet! My daughter is going to marry Aahil and that is that!

MRS KHALAM

Do you not worry how this must feel for her?

They sit back down at the table.

MRS KHALAM /

She will run away if you make her do this. She is a very bright girl. And I don't like the sound of this boy's family at all.

She looks at him with deep pity.

MR KHALAM

What do you know about his family?

MRS KHALAM

His mother tells me that the police came to the house when we were at the village last time. They were asking questions about Taher. He is a very bad boy. She says she heard the policeman say that he is involved with some very crazy people. They were saying he is fighting with militants in Kashmir.

MR KHALAM

(concerned)

Are you sure?

He shows her a disbelieving look and shakes his head at her.

MRS KHALAM

Yes. He is a very bad apple for the family that you have chosen for our daughter. His mother says he is doing very bad things.

He continues to listen intently.

MR KHALAM

Ah! What things?

MRS KHALAM

She heard a phone conversation
with someone called Basel.

MR KHALAM

And?

MRS KHALAM

She says they were talking about
doing something when they came
here. They were laughing about it
in a terrible way.

MR KHALAM

His mother told you this?

MRS KHALAM

Yes. So we must believe her.
Shazana deserves better than
this. She is doing very well at
her college. And we do not know
if they will bring trouble to our
door. I feel it in my heart. I am
scared of what will happen if you
make her marry into this terrible
family.

MR KHALAM

I will speak with him. Aahil is a
good boy, no matter what his
brother is doing. I will talk to
him. Aahil is going to be an
accountant. They will have their
own family one day and live in
their own house. I am right
because I know it. And she is
disrespecting her father because
of other people poisoning her
mind and putting things inside
her head about this and that. You
will see. She will be very happy,
believe me, I know.

A protracted silence as she looks at him in torment.

MRS KHALAM

But this is not what she wants.
It is what you want. These
marriages are not good for young
people in this day and age. I see
it everywhere, young girls living
in fear of their own families,
hiding and changing the colour of
their hair, and their clothes, in
fear of being recognised.

She wipes her teary eyes with a tissue.

MRS KHALAM /

Is this what you want for
Shazana?

Mr Khalam sits in silence as he reflects upon her words.

MR KHALAM

Halima is happy, because she
likes her life, and she loves her
husband. They are right for each
other.

MRS KHALAM

I am not blaming Aahil for his
brother. He is a good boy, I know
you are right. But his brother
will bring shame upon us all one
day.

MR KHALAM

No! What you see is her mind
being poisoned by this bloody
country. What you are saying is
that young people do not want to
listen to their parents any
longer. They are disrespecting
their duties. That is what is
happening.

MRS KHALAM

No! This is not what I am saying
at all.

MR KHALAM

In that case we will go back to Kashmir. We will sell everything, including the car. And Shazana will marry Aahil. I will not let her bring shame upon this sodding family. I will not tolerate it!

MRS KHALAM

Why can you not give her more time? She is just a young girl. She has just finished her A levels. She is a very clever girl. She wants to be a doctor one day. If you make her do this she will end up like me, a slave.

MR KHALAM

You bloody what?! Is that what you think?!

He leans back in his seat with suffused eyes and grimaces.

MRS KHALAM

(sheepishly)

Oh forget it. Forget everything I say.

MR KHALAM

I have a lazy bum son. Now my daughter is refusing her father's wishes. She will never meet anyone like Aahil in this sodding country, believe me, I know it because everyone is just for themselves in this sodding shit hole. I see it... young people disrespecting their parents and their duties. We must not let this happen to us, or we are no better than them.

MRS KHALAM

You are too strict. This is why they will not listen to you. You are always shouting at them. You should be more patient with them. I know what she is feeling. You are not a woman. You can never know the pain of a woman.

He looks at her suspiciously as he climbs to his feet.

MR KHALAM

Huh? Huh? Explain this woman's
pain to me? Explain it, Woman!

She bows her head in shame.

He grabs her by the face and stares coldly into her wet eyes.

MR KHALAM /

Explain what you mean by this?
Explain this sodding accusation?

MRS KHALAM

(shamefully)

I said forget about it.

MR KHALAM

Tell me what she is going
through? I need to know this.

MRS KHALAM

I said what she is feeling. She
is not happy. This is all I am
saying.

MR KHALAM

And what about what I am feeling,
huh? Answer the bloody question
woman!

MRS KHALAM

I am not saying how I am feeling.

MR KHALAM

It bloody better not be.

MRS KHALAM

It is not! Please just stop
shouting at me! Stop shouting all
the time!

She cries into a tissue.

He limps to the sink unit and washes his hands.

MR KHALAM

So you will speak to her and remind her where we are going next week. Tell her to see how comfortable Halima is with her family. They are getting stronger every day. This is success where we are from. I can see it. They are going from strength to strength, and I think between you and me Aahil has a strong mind and will be very successful in this sodding country, believe me I know. His father told me he is very focused and determined to marry our daughter and live in the outhouse until they can afford their own place.

MRS KHALAM

I will ask her.

MR KHALAM

You do that and she will change her mind. Believe me, I know.

Asif enters with his kit bag in hand. He halts as he senses the tension inside the room, before he opens the fridge and grabs a bottle of water.

MR KHALAM /

Asif, where are you going?

ASIF

Gym. Why?

MR KHALAM

I'm taking Shazana to Mumbai next week. We will be gone for one month. They need someone to work at the restaurant until I get back. Can you do it?

ASIF

Hm-hm. Hm-hm.

MR KHALAM

You will do it?

ASIF

Yeah-yeah. Yeah-yeah.

MR KHALAM

Good. I will let them know you
are coming instead of me.

Mrs Khalam smiles warmly at her son, before he casually
exits.

MRS KHALAM

He is a very good boy at heart.
If you speak to him properly he
will always do something for you.

He ignores her as he rubs his back.

So gets to her feet and exits.

BACK TO MUMBAI:

EXT/INT. PITCHED ROOF BUNGALOW - DAY

Mr. Khalam and Shazana pull up outside in the back of a
rickshaw.

He pays the driver, then collects his suitcases before the
driver makes off.

Beat.

Shazana and Mr Khalam enter the aesthetically pretty
dwelling.

Mr Khalam continuously wipes his forehead with a
handkerchief.

Shazana has her hair tied up and sports a white headband. She
wears denims and a red vest.

Mrs Choudrey is a frail woman. Mr Choudrey is a short, thick
set bald headed man.

They greet one another warmly.

MR KHALAM

It is so hot.

Mr Choudrey nods his head in agreement.

MR CHOULDREY

Salaam alaikum.

MR KHALAM

Walaikum salaam.

Mr Khalam immediately makes himself comfortable and slumps down on the threadbare sofa set along the left wall.

Shazana quietly sits down next to him. She shows a worried look.

The Choudrey's take a seat at the dining table situated by a door leading out to a small backyard.

The sound of a diesel truck pulling up is heard outside.

Tall, thin AAHIL 20's enters. He bears a wide grin and has startled brown eyes and cropped hair. His white shirt is unbuttoned, and his muddied trousers hang below the knee. His hands are soiled with grit and dirt.

The Khalam's climb to their feet.

Mr Khalam shows his excitement as he greets Aahil with a hug.

Aahil quickly turns his attention towards Shazana and gazes into her dull eyes when he hugs her.

AAHIL

Shazana, it's so good to see you again. You are looking so beautiful. I am so happy you came. How have you been? Have you missed me?

She shakes her head in denial.

SHAZANA

(bluntly)

No.

Mr Khalam lets out an embarrassed chuckle.

AAHIL

(aback)

But why you say that, Shazana?
You know I've missed you.

Mr Khalam stealthily nudges her and falsely grins to hide his embarrassment.

SHAZANA

(dispassionately)

OK then, I have missed you,
Aahil. Happy now?

MR KHALAM

(interjects)

Just look at you, Aahil. You are
looking very fit. I can see
you've been looking after
yourself for my daughter. Very
good.

AAHIL

Thank you, Mister Khalam. It is
very true. I have been looking
after myself, especially for
Shazana.

MR KHALAM

And I bet you've been working
very hard for your exams, huh?

SHAZANA

Papa! Give him a chance to catch
his breath.

AAHIL

It's okay, Shazana. And yes, I
have, Mister Khalam. I dream of
coming to live in England every
single minute of the day.

MR KHALAM

And who wouldn't, huh? A fine
young man like you will make his
fortune in England. Believe me, I
know.

AAHIL

Oh, I hope so, Mister Khalam. It
is my dream.

MR KHALAM

You know Shazana is going to be a
GP. She is doing very well at her
college.

SHAZANA

Papa, please stop it. It's
embarrassing.

Aahil begins to stroke her long silky black hair affectionately.

Mr Khalam looks at him and grins like a Cheshire cat.

MR KHALAM

My daughter is very beautiful,
huh? I am a very lucky dad.

MRS CHOUDREY

She looks like Mrs Khalam.

MR KHALAM

You are right, she does.

MRS CHOUDREY

It is a shame she couldn't be
here too. Why she couldn't come?

MR KHALAM

She is not well. She is suffering
from a virus.

(wipes brow)

It is so hot. I'm boiling. It
must be all this global warming,
you know? The world is getting
hotter everywhere, except
England. It is so bloody cold
most of the time.

MR CHOUDREY

I'll fetch a jug of ice water to
cool you down.

MRS CHOUDREY

(to Shazana)

You are very beautiful, my dear.
Aahil is a very lucky young man.

Mr Choudrey returns with a jug of ice water and some glasses.
He pours the water as they sit at the table.

EXT. PITCHED ROOF BUNGALOW - NIGHT

Beneath the orange tree Shazana stands on a crate.

Aahil lies supine on the bench.

AAHIL

I cannot wait to come to London.
I will be rich and buy a big
house. You will have lots of
children - lots and lots.

He jumps to his feet and begins filming her with his phone.

SHAZANA

(angrily)

Stop filming me.

AAHIL

Why? You are my wife. I can take
as many videos of you as I like.

SHAZANA

Not yet, I'm not. And it's not as
easy as you think it is. There's
lots of unemployment in London.
There are thousands of people all
chasing every single job. If you
think you can just come to my
country and get a job just like
that, you are so deluded.

AAHIL

Fuck off! You're lying to me.

SHAZANA

No you fuck off!

She jumps off the crate in anger and sits on the steps of the
veranda.

SHAZANA /

And you won't like the weather
either. You heard my father, it's
super cold and wet, especially in
the winter, which is mostly all
year round. I don't even want to
live there myself. I want to live
somewhere exotic, by the sea.

AAHIL

We will only have to live with
your family for one year, before
I buy a big house, so shut up.

SHAZANA

What?! What do you think?! We are not going to live with my parents for one year, or even one day!

AAHIL

Ha! You cannot refuse. And what about dowry? It is the duty of your parents to make sure we have somewhere nice to live.

SHAZANA

What?! No it is not! If you don't want to get married, that's fine by me. I will let my father know what you think and we will call it off. You stupid idiot.

He guffaws at her while she stands vexed.

AAHIL

Come here you crazy woman. I'm just playing with your head. You don't have to be so serious all the time. Why you cannot just be happy and nice to me for once?

He gets up and attempts to grab her by the arm.

She quickly pulls her arm away.

SHAZANA

How dare you say this to me. You should learn some manners, little boy. You have no manners at all.

AAHIL

OK then. We will see who has no manners.

She screams as he chases her around the orange tree.

AAHIL /

Come here, bitch! You bitch, I will beat you if I catch you!

SHAZANA

Leave me alone, you moron!

AAHIL

I said come here at once, or I will beat you in front of your father!

She stops in her tracks and scowls at him, before he pulls her down in uncontrollable fits of laughter.

They wrestle one another and she climbs on top of him and begins to slap his face like a woman possessed.

SHAZANA

How dare you speak to me like this! You are not funny! You don't speak to me like this, ever!

AAHIL

Stop!

She stops and rolls on her back.

AAHIL /

I thought you western girls were supposed to be super cool. You are just another crazy dame. You need to be tamed before I own you.

SHAZANA

Oh my God! Own me! Crazy dame?! You are joking, right? Where did you learn that crass word?

AAHIL

My brother has been teaching me some new words for when I move to England. Sick. Bruv. Arsehole. Bitch. Slag. Motherfucker. Dude. Cockney.

She bursts into hysterics.

SHAZANA

Oh my God, that's so sick. No one speaks like that where I come from. Your brother is going to make you look so stupid if you speak like that in London. People will laugh and make fun of you. You'll get beaten if you speak to people like that.

He becomes angry and grits his teeth at her.

AAHIL

I will beat you if you don't stop laughing at me. And I am not sick. You are sick, bitch!

SHAZANA

If you touch me I will kill you.

She attempts to climb to her feet. He pulls her down.

AAHIL

I am going to give you a Chinese burn. I am going to punish you for being disrespectful to your husband.

SHAZANA

You better not!

AAHIL

You don't speak to me like this, ever, bitch!

He forces himself on top of her and positions his knees over her shoulders as she screams blue murder.

SHAZANA

I am not your wife! I will never marry you! I will run away if they make me marry you! And if you hurt me, I will make sure everyone hears what you are doing to me, you bully! Get off! I mean it - fuckin' get off me, you prick!

He finally climbs off and lies down beside her.

They hear shouting coming from within the house and quietly listen.

MR KHALAM O.S

I will never do that! Never, never, never!

TAHER O.S

Oh, don't be so foolish to think that you are welcome in England. They call you a Paki, and they spit at you on the street. I know because I have been told by friends who have visited there.

MR KHALAM O.S

And you listen to that bullshit?

Shazana and Aahil sit up and gasp at the pursuing argument they hear.

AAHIL

Taher.

SHAZANA

Papa.

AAHIL

Come on, let's find out what's going on.

The raucous dispute tempts them to creep up to the kitchen window.

SHAZANA

But where are your parents?

AAHIL

They went to the village to buy groceries.

SHAZANA

At this time of night?

AAHIL

It's less busy in the village.

They spy through the window to see an incensed Mr Khalam, and a fearsome looking Taher who gesticulates his frustrations.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mr Khalam stands by the sink unit. Taher stands and confronts him.

MR KHALAM

I will not do it! Never!

TAHER

Why not? You will be part of our family soon - one of us. We need you to stand with us.

MR KHALAM

I think it is a bloody insult to ask me to do something of this nature! I will not do it!

TAHER

Just be reasonable, Mister Khalam. We are only asking for a couple of days, that is all. No one will ever know what we are going to do. The authorities will just think we are in London for the wedding of my brother and your lovely daughter. You have my solemn word.

MR KHALAM

Taher, please listen to me. I am a respectable man. My family is respected where I live. What utter rubbish are you thinking about? I will not stand here and listen to this utter rubbish, huh? Do you really think for one moment that just because your brother is going to marry my daughter I would become part of some evil plan to murder people and damage my family's good reputation?

TAHER

Oh, come on, man, be reasonable. Aahil has told me you have built an outhouse in your garden for them to live together when they are married. We only need to use it for our stay while we are there. And the wedding will be a perfect reason for us to be in your country. No one will suspect us. There will be no reason for any suspicions from anyone.

MR KHALAM

My answer is still no! If you think I am going to let you stay in my house for your criminal activities then you are mistaken. You must be bloody insane to even dream about something like this.

He wipes his brow and pours himself a glass of ice water.

TAHER

Outrageous treachery, Mister Kham. I expected more empathy from you of all people.

MR KHALAM

What does that mean?

TAHER

I know what you did before you left for your new life in England.

MR KHALAM

What I did is none of your business. Is that why you thought I would agree to this? Are you so brainwashed by these people, huh? I would never allow you to do something like that in my country. Go and tell your terrorist friends, or whoever they bloody well are that I said no. Bloody cheeky bastard's. I will not assist with your disgusting ambitions... using my daughter's wedding to murder people. What do you think, that I am a bloody criminal like you and your militant friends, huh?

TAHER

You are forgetting that you once fought for the cause.

MR KHALAM

We were being attacked. It was them or us.

TAHER

Besides, you are overreacting. It is not like what you think. It will only be for a couple of days. Once our mission has been carried out we will completely disappear and leave you in peace, you have my solemn word.

MR KHALAM

In pieces more like. No! Find someone else to help you. What you are doing is insane, Taher. You will only bring shame upon your family, and mine if I agree to your idiotic plans. Go to Yemen if you want to fight. Or go to Iran if you want to get yourself bloody killed. Just don't bring your filthy politics to my country or I will go to the police and tell them everything what you are doing. You will be arrested, even before you get on the plane.

TAHER

OK. Fine. In that case you are not welcome in my house any longer. I want you to leave immediately.

MR KHALAM

You bloody well what?! You are such a stupid man! These people you are with will soon get you killed, and for what? So you can claim martyrdom? Is that what you really want, to be a martyr?

An intense silence ensues.

TAHER

OK. You have made yourself clear Mister Kham. I will let my comrades know that you have rejected their offer. I will let them know that you are not interested in the occupation of our lands. You must leave now.

MR KHALAM

What is this bullshit?! Is this a bloody threat?! I must leave now? I must leave, or what is going to happen, huh? Huh?

TAHER

When Shazana and my little brother are married next month you will be part of our family. But you bring shame when you refuse to have us as guests at your home. You have no excuses, unless you are siding with the infidels and their occupation of our lands.

MR KHALAM

Oh my dear God. You are ignorant, Taher. Life in England isn't as bad as you may think. At least it is not a fuckin' war zone. You cannot compare England to Kashmir, Taher. Britain is mostly a tolerant country. The people living there are more trusting in their God than you might believe. You should not have assumed that I would betray their trust. You will be making a big mistake if you only want to come to England to murder people. Believe me, I know.

TAHER

At least I am not betraying my country. At least I am not turning my back on my countrymen.

MR KHALAM

OK. Right then. We will leave. You can explain everything to Aahil when he asks why we are leaving. You are the only one bringing shame upon your family. You will end up like a dog in a ditch. Believe me, I know.

Shazana and Aahil burst in and confront them.

SHAZANA

(fearfully)

Papa, what is going on? Why are you and Taher shouting at one another like this?

MR KHALAM

(to Shazana)

Get your things. We are leaving. We are not staying here a minute longer with this lunatic. We are going home.

SHAZANA

But, papa, why? What's going on, papa? What's happened?

MR KHALAM

Never mind. Just do it. Hurry up. We are not staying here with this bloody criminal.

She quickly exits.

Aahil's eyes well up as he stands quietly.

AAHIL

(nervously)

Taher, what have you done to make them want to leave?

TAHER

Shut your mouth! Go to Shazana! She's upset.

AAHIL

I'm upset!

Taher glances at Mr. Khalam and hisses.

TAHER

I think you are being completely unreasonable, Mister Khalam. Why you don't come and meet with Basel - my comrade. He will explain to you what we have planned for your adopted country.

MR KHALAM

I should bloody coco! You make me sick! What do you think you can achieve by this, huh? Nothing will ever change. I remember when you couldn't change your underpants without shitting yourself, you idiot!

AAHIL

(interjects)

What are you saying this, Taher?

Aahil lunges at his brother and grabs him by the scruff, only to be thrown to the floor, then kicked in the stomach as he cowers through the tears. .

MR KHALAM

Leave the boy alone, you bastard!

He wields his cane to strike Taher.

Taher puts up his arms to defend himself.

TAHER

If you continue to wave that stick at me I will be forced to shove it up your arse!

MR KHALAM

Try it! I will kill you myself!

TAHER

He needs to learn to respect his family. Now get your things and get out before I change my mind and finish you and your daughter right here.

MR KHALAM

We are going, don't you worry.

TAHER

And there will be no more talk of marriage in this house, do you understand, Aahil? I will not let you marry the daughter of our enemy.

Mr Khalam exits. Aahil lies cowering on the floor with Taher standing over him.

Beat.

Taher paces the floor as he speaks on the phone.

TAHER (CONT'D)

(on phone)

He will not do it- Believe me, I tried- I repeatedly begged him- No,no, he wouldn't do it- We will just have to change our plans- Tell your uncle this immediately- I have to leave here before my parents return home- OK. Good.

He ends the call and exits.

EXT. PITCHED ROOF BUNGALOW - NIGHT

Aahil dolefully sits upon the bench and stares into his phone and an image of Shazana.

He gets to his feet and stumbles towards a small tin shed where he collects some rope.

He throws the rope over a branch of the orange tree and ties a noose.

He then stands on the crate beneath the tree and slips the noose over his head, then tightens it around his thin, long neck.

AAHIL -

See you, Shazana. This is for you.

He kicks the crate away, then swings like a pendulum. The crate beneath his feet turns over on its side.

BACK TO:

INT. ADAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A contented Shazana sits on Adam's lap and chuckles as they watch a comedy film on the TV.

She throws her arms around his neck and pecks at his face while she twirls his hair around her finger.

He casually strokes her leg.

SHAZANA

Does your dad have fair hair like you?

ADAM

(chuckles)

What? No, not at all. He's completely bald.

SHAZANA

What about your mama - What colour hair does she have?

She's oblivious to his hand stroking her thigh as she waits for him to answer her.

ADAM

Actually, she's completely bald as well.

She bursts into a fit of uncontrollable laughter.

SHAZANA

Stopit! Liar! Oh Adam, don't make me laugh, my stomach hurts.

ADAM

Actually, she dyes her hair different colours. When I visit it's always a different colour.

SHAZANA

Do they have blue eyes like you?

ADAM

My dad has blue eyes. My mum's are brown.

SHAZANA

What's Brighton like?

ADAM

Camden on sea. There's absolutely everything to do where I come from. It's buzzing. My dad's a policeman so he literally knows everybody.

SHAZANA

Oh my God! Your dad's a fed? Oh Adam, I can't go out with a fed's son. My brother hates them.

She sits up straight and stares at him in disbelief.

ADAM

No, I get it. It's no big deal.
Lots of people hate the police.

SHAZANA

Does he wear a uniform and one of
those silly hats?

ADAM

Sometimes. He sits behind a desk
mostly. It's all intelligence led
policing nowadays.

SHAZANA

Because of terrorists?

ADAM

Probably, yes. He says we live in
one world with two moons and a
bit.

She laughs out loud.

SHAZANA

Now I know you're just winding me
up. You can't have two moons and
a bit. What is the bit doing?

ADAM

I don't know. I will ask him when
I next see him.

She moves his hand away then climbs off him and begins to
pirouette around the room barefooted.

He watches her closely and smiles.

SHAZANA

(freely)

Oh, Adam, I'm so free! Free as a
bird in the sky! I want to spread
my wings and fly, fly, fly to the
moon, and the bit! I'm feel free,
free! Oh, I'm so happy...!

He gets to his feet.

She flies into his arms wantonly.

He lifts her off the ground and squeezes her during a moment of complete desire.

They gaze into each other's eyes then kiss passionately. Her eyes reflect upon her happiness while he shows his utter excitement for her as he kisses her neck.

ADAM

You are so beautiful, Shazana.
I'm so in love with you, I can
hardly think about anything else.
I think about you every second
of every minute of the day. I
can't even concentrate on my
work. I want you so much. I want
you to meet my parents.

SHAZANA

Oh, Adam, I love you too. But my
father has become very sick. The
last thing he needs right now is
him knowing about us being
together. Can you imagine what
that would do to him if he knew
about us?

She spots his disappointment and takes his hands in hers.

She guides them around her neck, before she kisses him again, only this time with even more passion.

He lifts her up and holds her in his arms, before he carries her back towards the sofa and carefully lies her down on her back.

He begins to unbutton his shirt as she anticipates his desire for her.

DOORBELL & BANGING.

MRS KHALAM O.S

*Shazana! Shazana! Shazana! Come
quickly! It's your father, he is
very sick! Shazana! Shazana,
please come quickly!*

She gasps and immediately climbs off the sofa, then picks up her shoes.

SHAZANA

(panicked)

Fuck! Oh my God!

She runs down the stairs as fast as her legs will carry her.
Adam follows her.

EXT. ADAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

She opens the door and witnesses her Mother's torment as she stands and sobs.

MRS KHALAM

(distraught)

Come quickly. We are waiting for
the ambulance. It is on its way
now.

Adam stands deflated as they rush off.

He stands and watches as blue lights flash when an ambulance
pulls up outside the Khalam's household.

Paramedics enter the house with their apparatus in hand.

Beat.

Mr Khalam is loaded into the back of the ambulance. Mrs
Khalam sobs as her husband is driven off.

INT. THE KHALAM'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

An awkward silence as Mrs Khalam sits down at the table
opposite a worried looking Shazana. Mrs Khalam shows her a
look of deep concern.

MRS KHALAM

Tell me what happened in Mumbai?
I must know what happened with
Taher and your father.

SHAZANA

(aback)

You mean papa hasn't told you
anything yet?

MRS KHALAM

No, he has not told me anything. He hasn't been the same person since then. I am very worried about his health. It has worsened since then. He doesn't speak about it at all. He has not been his angry self lately. He just seems very worried about something. I need to know what happened, so please, Shazana, tell me.

SHAZANA

All I know is there was a really bad argument with Taher. Then papa said we had to leave immediately. On the way home, he said the wedding was off and that I wouldn't have to get married to Aahil because of Taher's demands upon him.

MRS KHALAM

What was the argument about?

SHAZANA

I think Taher was demanding to stay in the outhouse for one week, but papa said he couldn't. I think they wanted to stay here while they did something illegal. I'm not sure.

MRS KHALAM

You mean something really terrible?

SHAZANA

I don't really know, mama. I was really scared. I thought they were going to start fighting. Dad was really angry. He cursed Taher all the way home.

MRS KHALAM

What is Taher up to?

SHAZANA

Papa was calling him an evil bastard - a jihadi martyr.

MRS KHALAM

Oh my dear God. What are we going to do, Shazana? What if they come and kill us all?

She buries her head in her hands and sobs.

MRS KHALAM /

You must stop seeing Adam. It's too dangerous.

SHAZANA

But we're only friends, mama. Nothing is going on between us, I promise.

A short silence.

MRS KHALAM

(concernedly)

There is something you must know, Shazana.

SHAZANA

What is it, mama?

MRS KHALAM

Missus Choudrey called me this evening. She said something terrible has happened to Aahil.

SHAZANA

What happened, mama?

MRS KHALAM

He is dead.

Shazana's eyes fill up with tears. She jumps to her feet in shock.

SHAZANA

What?! Why?! What happened to him? Oh my God, mama. What happened? How is he dead?

MRS KHALAM

He took his own life after you left.

Shazana breaks down and sobs, before her Mother gets up and consoles her.

CUT TO:

INT. INDIAN RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The place is empty of customers. Asif keeps busy by polishing tables.

He sits down at a table and checks for messages on his phone when the door opens.

He jumps to his feet as bearded Taher and Basel 40's enters.

They are suited and resemble businessmen in their long overcoats and briefcases.

Asif shows them to a table by the window and hands them a menu.

ASIF

(pleasantly)

Can I get you anything to drink?

TAHER

(hostile)

Sit down and listen to what I have to say to you.

Taher fixes his eyes upon him.

ASIF

Oh.

TAHER

You don't know who I am. But Where is your father? And do not lie to me or I will hurt you.

ASIF

Why... What's he done?

TAHER

Just answer the question.

ASIF

He's in hospital. Why'd ya need to speak to him, anyway? What's he done?

Taher bears an ominous grin as he glances at Basel.

TAHER

(to Basel)

Listen to him. He disrespects us.

ASIF

Leave now please? I'm not serving you.

BASEL

We are not leaving. We will leave when we have what we came for.

TAHER

So, he has left it up to you to carry out our little agreement. The one I made with your father in Mumbai.

ASIF

What little agreement? He never mentioned any agreement to me.

TAHER

We made an agreement in Mumbai.

Asif jumps to his feet and shows them the door.

ASIF

What are you chattin' 'bout, bruv? He never told me nuffink about any stupid agreement.

TAHER

(measuredly)

You mean he never told you about assisting us with our important mission?

ASIF

No he never! What mission?

TAHER

Something he promised to do for us when he was in Mumbai.

ASIF

Well, he's had a heart attack now, so you'll have to speak to him about it when he's better.

TAHER

Asif, are you aware that we are at war with this poxy little country that you live in?

ASIF

What are you chattin' 'bout, bruv? We ain't at war. The Americans are, but we're not involved.

TAHER

(to Basel)

Listen to him.

(to Asif)

Listen very carefully to what I am going to say to you, little English boy.

ASIF

Get out! I'll call the police!

TAHER

Sit down and listen!

Asif sighs and retakes his seat at the table.

ASIF

I'm listening.

TAHER

Good. So, this Friday morning you will meet us here in the car park behind this restaurant. I will give you something to take to your house. You will hide it somewhere safe until I come and collect it.

ASIF

(obdurately)

Nah, I don't think so.

TAHER

You will do it, or your whole family will die before I leave this fuckin' poxy country! That includes that little bitch sister of yours - Shazana.

Asif shakes his head and rolls his tormented eyes, then jumps to his feet and gesticulates his fury.

ASIF

You threatening my family, bro?!

TAHER

That's correct, we are. So do as we ask and you will all live.

ASIF

Get the fuck out of this restaurant before I do summink seriously bad to you, bro. Just get the fuck out!

Taher grits his teeth as he and Basel methodically climb out of their seats and threateningly step towards him. .

ASIF /

I'm not taking nuffink for you, bruv. I don't even know who the fuck you are, or what you even expect from us! Just get out, or I promise I'll call the police!

Taher lands a sucker punch below Asif's rib cage, then adds another to his jaw.

Asif falls to the floor holding his stomach.

A little old chef appears from the kitchen. He wields a machete that's bigger than him.

Basel reacts quickly and chases him back inside the kitchen as he cries for help.

Asif continues to lie on the carpeted floor with Taher standing over him.

TAHER

Now you will do as I say, or you heard what will happen to you and your family.

Asif nods his head in agreement as he looks up at him and squirms.

Taher shows him a firearm tucked inside his belt buckle, before he buttons up his overcoat. He flicks a business card at Asif as he lies on the floor.

TAHER /

Message the number on the card if there is going to be a problem. But remember this, if there is a problem I will kill you and your whole family, understand?

ASIF

Cool, bruv. Cool, bruv. I'll do it. I'll do it.

TAHER

So we have an agreement?

ASIF

Hm-hm, Hm-hm.

They turn their backs and leave the restaurant.

Asif stares at the name written on the business card.

CU: CHOUDREY EXPORTS & LOGISTICS

BACK TO:

INT. THE KHALAM'S KITCHEN - DAY

Shazana, Asif, Nosheen and Halima sit at the table with their heads bowed.

DOOR CHIMES.

Nosheen sighs her frustration as she gets up and exits.

She returns with a knowing grin, and a pale faced Adam.

NOSHEEN

Shazana, someone to see you.

Shazana looks up at him during an awkward situation.

SHAZANA

Adam, what do you want?

ADAM

(concernedly)

I'm sorry for imposing on you at such an awkward time, but I was worried how your dad was?

SHAZANA

He's doing fine. Thanks for asking.

Asif looks up from the table.

ASIF

Sit down, bro. It's good of you to ask about him. He's doing okay. He's sitting up in bed now.

Adam sheepishly sits down at the table.

ADAM

That's good to hear. How bad was it, initially?

Halima stares across the table at him.

HALIMA

Very bad.

ASIF

Yeah, it was a bad one. He's lucky the ambulance came quickly. The paramedic saved his life.

ADAM

It must be a really worrying time for you all.

ASIF

Tell us 'bout it, bro... it is.

SHAZANA

(to Adam)

Would you like a cup of tea or coffee?

Nosheen and Halima get up and exit.

ADAM

No thanks, Shazana. I've gotta get back to working. I left my computer running.

He looks at his watch.

ADAM /

Actually, I better go.

He gets to his feet.

ASIF

Yeah. See ya then, bro.

SHAZANA

I'll see you out.

She follows him to the front door.

Beat.

She returns and sits down opposite her brother. He stares at her suspiciously.

ASIF

I think you better tell me what's going on with you and our neighbour?

SHAZANA

I was going to. But please don't tell papa.

ASIF

Depends, innit?

SHAZANA

You know, don't you?

ASIF

Of course I know. Everybody fuckin' knows, except dad.

SHAZANA

Oh no.

She takes a deep breath.

SHAZANA /

I think I'm in love with him.

ASIF

You can't! You know you can't be like that. You know what dad will do to you if he finds out. He'll fuckin' whip both your arses. You won't be able to sit down for a whole month.

SHAZANA

Blame mama. It's all her fault for making me take her food to him. No one else would do it. We just got talking and it led to this situation.

ASIF

Have you done it with him?

SHAZANA

No, I have not!

ASIF

You better not 've, otherwise you'll be in big trouble, d'ya get me? I can't have you sexing up with our fuckin' neighbour, Shaz.

SHAZANA

You wouldn't understand. It's not like that. He's gentle and kind. He makes me laugh. He's so funny, and educated. He's not like anyone I've ever met before. And he can really help us if you want. His dad's a policeman. He's really high up. He took me to meet them. They are so nice. They're not like the people around here.

ASIF

His dad's a fuckin' fed! Are you mad or what?! Jeez, Shaz!

SHAZANA

That's not his fault.

ASIF

I get that. But I can't have my sis getting involved with someone whose dad's a fuckin' fed. Fuck sake!

SHAZANA

You won't tell dad, will you?

ASIF

Not if you stop going up to his flat. We've got enough problems as it is with these terrorist dickheads coming here to cause us trouble.

SHAZANA

I still want to be friends with him though.

ASIF

Yeah, but that's all. No going to his flat and watching films.

SHAZANA

Whatever.

She gets up and exits.

Asif takes out his phone and taps out a text message.

"Bluhd, I need your help."

PHONE BLEEPS.

"No probs, Bluhd. Come and talk about it."

He gets up and swiftly exits.

Beat.

EXT. PAVEMENTS - DAY

Asif meets with his posse of friends. They are a mixed bunch of all heritages.

They greet one another with a slap handshake and a strong hug.

Indian heritage JAMAL 20's is the ringleader.

JAMAL

(to asif)

Bluhd, what's 'ap'nin?' What's going on?

ASIF

It's not good, bruv. It's not good at all.

JAMAL

What's occurring, then?

ASIF

I've got some big trouble, bruv. There's a couple of jihadis from Mumbai threatening my whole family if I don't do as they say.

JAMAL

Bluhd! Call 'em up and we'll sort it. No one threatens the posse, Bluhd.

ASIF

I've arranged to meet 'em in the restaurant car park in the morning. They're gonna give me summink to hide in my house.

JAMAL

What is it?

ASIF

I'm not sure. They won't tell me. But it's not good. I can just feel it's summink bad, innit?

JAMAL

What time you meeting 'em, Bluhd?

ASIF

Ten, they said.

JAMAL

We'll be there to give them a proper welcome, Bluhd.

ASIF

Cheers. Appreciate it, bruv.

JAMAL

We'll see what their beef is and sort it, innit?

ASIF

They're jihadis, bruv. They want me to hide summink in the house. I think they're gonna use whatever it is to kill people, innit?

JAMAL

They're just idiots, Bluhd. It could be one of us, or one of our families, d'ya know what I mean, innit?

ASIF

Yeah, I do. Innit?

JAMAL

We'll be there nice and early. We'll surprise 'em.

ASIF

Cool, Bluhd.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL OBSERVATION WARD - DAY

Mr Khalam lies up against the plumped up pillows in pyjamas. He bears a huge grin when he spots Asif walking towards him with a bunch of grapes and a serious expression on his face.

MR KHALAM

Asif, you came. How is everyone getting on without their ol' dad, huh?

ASIF

With great difficulty to be fair, I'm not gonna lie. Mum needs you home. We all do.

MR KHALAM

The doctor said I can come home this afternoon if everything is all right. My heart is beating normally again. There's no infection.

ASIF

That's good. Mum'll be pleased.

He notices an abstention in Asif.

MR KHALAM

Asif, you better tell me what is going on? I can see when something is wrong with my son. Is it the restaurant? Are they treating you badly?

ASIF

No, it's not that. Tell me what happened in Mumbai?

MR KHALAM

Why? Has something happened?

ASIF

Taher Choudrey is in London. He's threatening to kill us if we don't do what he wants.

MR KHALAM

(winces)

That bastard has come to my home to cause trouble. Did he do something to you?

ASIF

No, he didn't, not yet. But he came to the restaurant looking for you. He knows you work there.

MR KHALAM

He's going to commit an act of terror in London, believe me, I know. He wants me to hide his shit in the outhouse.

ASIF

It's alright, dad. I can handle it. I've got the posse. They're gonna back me up when I confront them tomorrow.

MR KHALAM

He is a very dangerous man, Asif. Be careful. He is a volatile man.

ASIF

I know.

MR KHALAM

Aahil committed suicide after me and Shazana left to come home. They are blaming us because they say Shazana broke his heart when Taher called off the wedding. He is lying to his own family. He is a shit person, believe me, I know.

ASIF

She knows. Mum told her. She is very upset.

MR KHALAM

Knowing his mother, she's probably told the whole world it is my fault.

CUT TO:

INT. BLACK SALOON - DAY

Taher and Basel sit and wait inside a black saloon.

BASEL

Do you think he will come?

TAHER

If he knows what is good for his family, he will.

BASEL

What if he goes to the police?

TAHER

Then we will go to the house and kill them all.

BASEL

Good.

TAHER

We wait.

Taher checks his watch.

TAHER /

(agitated)

Where is this little shit? He is late.

BASEL

What if he has set us up?

TAHER

OK. Five more minutes, then we go to the house.

Asif taps on his offside window and waits for them to exit the vehicle.

TAHER /

You are late.

ASIF

Yeah, I know. I got held up.

Basel checks the surroundings with suspicion in mind before Taher opens the boot of the car and shows him six sacks filled with a chemical commodity.

TAHER

This is it. Where is your car? I want you to take them to your house until I come to collect them.

ASIF

I need to know what's in them first?

TAHER

Beans. Now get it into your fucking car and take it to your house before somebody sees us.

ASIF

Cool bruv. Relax, innit?

TAHER

Hurry up, you fucking imbecile.

ASIF

Chill, bruv.

The posse creeps up as Basel bends over the trunk to pick up the first bag.

He is smashed over the head and body with a baseball bat several times and left squirming on the ground.

Taher reaches inside his coat for his firearm, but is too slow and is clobbered across the back of the neck, then kicked and punched during a barrage of blows, until he lies unconscious behind his vehicle.

Asif leans over him and stabs him in the abdomen.

ASIF /
You fuckin' prick. Go home.

They scarper as SIRENS are heard approaching.

Basel lies at the boot of the vehicle as Taher climbs to his feet and staggers away holding his stomach.

Beat.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Taher conceals himself as he hides behind a wall. Blood leaks from his stomach wounds as he attempts to stem the flow with a piece of cloth.

Adam empties a bag of rubbish into a recycle bin outside his front door.

Taher stumbles towards him as Adam looks up.

TAHER
(desperately)
You. Come here. Help me please. I
am bleeding heavily. I've been
stabbed.

ADAM
(aback)
What do you want me to do?

TAHER
Get inside.

He forces Adam back inside with his firearm pushed into his ribcage.

TAHER (CONT'D)
Get me something, quickly.

ADAM
(fearfully)
Sure.

INTERCUT:

INT. ADAM'S APARTMENT/ KHALAM'S KITCHEN

Adam grabs a towel and hands it to him.

Taher uses it to soak up the blood.

TAHER

Sit down.

Adam complies and sits on the sofa.

ADAM

Let me call you an ambulance.
You're bleeding to death. Let me
help you.

TAHER

Be quiet!

Taher treats his wounds then moves towards the window and
peers through the blinds.

Asif sits at the table and introspects as he stares down at
the gun he took from Basel.

He hears muffled voices coming from above and looks up at the
ceiling.

TAHER /

This is your fault! Because of
you and that bitch Shazana, my
little brother is dead.

ADAM

I'm sorry. I never knew anything
about that.

TAHER

Were you planning to marry her,
all along?

ADAM

No. Shazana didn't want to marry
anyone. She told me herself.
She's only interested in
completing her studies.

Asif climbs on the table to listen.

TAHER /

That fucking traitor Mr. Khalam has crushed everything my little brother ever dreamed of. He and his family must pay for his death.

Asif climbs off the table.

ASIF

(panicked)

Shaz, come quickly.

She appears with a worried expression upon her face.

SHAZANA

Asif, what is it? What is so urgent?

ASIF

I just heard Taher's voice. He's in Adam's flat. I'm going up there. Call the police and tell them there's an armed jihadi threatening our neighbour.

She covers her mouth in shock as her eyes well up.

SHAZANA

Oh my God! Adam. He will kill him, Asif. What can we do?

ASIF

Just do what I said.

She grabs her phone as he quickly exits.

Asif bangs his fist hard upon Adam's front door. He has the gun wrapped inside a towel.

Taher stands at the window as the banging at the door intensifies.

He spots Asif.

TAHER -

(grits teeth)

Imbecile! I will kill him!

(to Adam)

Right. You, get up!

He pulls Adam up, then forces him down the staircase.

He rests his gun upon Adam's shoulder as they descend towards the front door.

Taher uses Adam as a human shield when he opens the door to a crazed Asif who waves his gun at him like a madman.

ASIF

ADAM, GET DOWN! MOVE OUT THE WAY!

His hand shakes as he points the gun at Taher who bops and weaves and uses Adam as a rag doll as a gunfight ensues.

BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG!

Adam takes a hit and drops to the ground in a bloodied mess.

Taher takes a number of hits and flies back towards the staircase with a bullet through his eye.

Asif takes a hit and lies on the pavement with severe leg and arm wounds. His eyes bulge as he stares at Adam in disbelief.

SHORT SILENCE

He drags himself towards Adam in traumatic desperation.

ASIF /

Adam, wake up, man. Adam, please
wake up. All my days. Adam!

Shazana rushes from the house, followed by her Mother and her siblings.

She immediately spots the carnage and Adam's cadaver outstretched with her brother kneeling down beside him.

She waves her arms in despair as she runs towards him.

Asif's attempts to stop her are in vain as she grabs the gun from his hand and points it at him in a furious emotional wave of desperation.

Her Mother rushes towards her as Asif wrestles with her to retrieve the gun.

MRS KHALAM

SHAZANA! STOP IT! STOP SHAZANA!
OH PLEASE SOMEONE MAKE HER STOP!

SHAZANA

(to Asif)

LET GO! GIVE IT TO ME, YOU
BASTARD!

She pulls herself free from his grasp then points the gun towards Asif who lies on the ground.

MRS KHALAM

PLEASE SHAZANA PUT DOWN THE GUN!

SHAZANA

This is all your fault! You
killed him! YOU BASTARD! YOU
SHOT ADAM!

The tears stream down her contorted face.

MRS KHALAM

Oh please, Shazana, calm down.
Don't shoot your Asif. He is your
brother.

SHAZANA

Go away, mama. I want to be alone
with Adam.

ASIF

Just give me back the gun,
Shazana.

SIRENS.

She looks down at Adam lying motionless with his eyes wide open and sticks the barrel of the gun inside her own mouth.

MRS KHALAM

SHAZANA! NO! STOP! PLEASE
SHAZANA! OH NO! STOP HER ASIF!

She squeezes the trigger.

BANG!

Her eyes show no pain as she collapses over Adam's bloodsoaked cadaver.

Mr Khalam appears with his cane in hand on the doorstep as his wife breaks down on the pavement and laments.

Asif lies next to her in deep shock.

THE END