

MAJBOORIYAN

**A Spec Screenplay
by
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**Adapted from
The Story of Nasuh
in 'The Masnavi' by
Rumi – 13th-Century
Persian Poet & Scholar**

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FADE IN:

EXT. HAKIM HAROON'S CLINIC - DAY

SUPER: LAHORE - 1735

A weathered Mughal-era structure, modest yet dignified.

Water trickles through narrow stone channels. Arched corridors. Carved jali windows. Soft sunlight filters in – architecture designed for calm.

Above the arched entrance, a wooden board, hand-painted in Persian: "Hakim Haroon – Shikastaband."

INT. HAKIM HAROON'S CLINIC - EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

A serene, ordered space. Shelves lined with ceramic jars, dried herbs, glass vials – a traditional shifakhana.

HAKIM HAROON (30s), composed, prepares a low table.

Opposite him, MIR AMEEN (30s), a Shahi officer. A stiffness in his shoulders betrays his pain.

HAKIM HAROON
Bade dino baad...

MIR AMEEN
(nods, a half-smile)
Dard lekar aaya hoon, dost.

Haroon gestures to the table.

HAKIM HAROON
Phir aaiye. Pehle vardeeh utaar
dijiye. Dard kapdon se nahi... haddiyon
se baat karta hai.

Mir Ameen removes his sword belt, hands it to an ATTENDANT, lies face-down.

Haroon's fingers move along his spine – practiced, precise.

MIR AMEEN
(yanking a breath)
Yahin...

HAKIM HAROON
Purani moch hai. Jang ka zakhm andar
hi rah gaya hai.

He presses. Mir Ameen's knuckles whiten on the cot.

HAKIM HAROON (CONT'D)
Badan... jang ko yaad rakhta hai.

Nearby, oil warms over a small flame. A pause.

HAKIM HAROON (CONT'D)
Waise... aulaad?

MIR AMEEN
Ek beta. Yousuf. Saal bhar ka.

A flicker in his eyes. Pride.

HAKIM HAROON
Mashallah. Khuda usey lambi umar de.

A beat.

HAKIM HAROON (CONT'D)
Meri bhi ek beti hai. Maria. Aur
kuch dinon mein doosra mehmaan.

MIR AMEEN
Inshallah. Jis ghar mein ilm ki roshni
ho...

Haroon finishes the adjustment.

HAKIM HAROON
Ab garm aaba mein maalish hogi. Dard
jadd se nikaal degi.

Mir Ameen nods, eyes closed.

INT. HAMMAM - CONTINUOUS

Steam coils through marble. Mir Ameen sits on a heated slab,
wrapped in linen.

A MASSAGE ATTENDANT's hands move with rhythmic precision,
kneading Mir Ameen's tense muscles as the steam swirls around
them.

Mir Ameen exhales - a deep, shuddering release of tension.

The SOUND of the steam HISSING blends, shifts, becomes...

A woman's low GROAN. Muffled.

INT. HAKIM HAROON'S HOUSE - INNER CHAMBER - NIGHT

Oil lamps flicker. Women murmur prayers.

MARIA (1½), wide-eyed, clutches a doll.

On the bed, HAROON'S WIFE, SARAH (30s), writhes. The DAI kneels, focused.

DAI

Zor lagaiye, bibi... bas thoda aur--

Haroon waits outside the curtain, hands clenched.

INSIDE --

The baby's head crowns. The DAI freezes.

DAI (CONT'D)

(soft gasp)

Arre... dekho to.

ONE FINAL PUSH --

A BABY cries, strong and clear.

The DAI lifts him. Studies the child. A beat too long.

DAI (CONT'D)

Mubarak ho... beta hua hai.

(quieter)

Chehra bilkul nazuk... jaise kisi
ladki ka ho.

Haroon steps in. Takes the child - overwhelmed.

HAKIM HAROON

(whispers)

Nasuh.

The baby grips his finger tightly.

HAKIM HAROON (CONT'D)

Khuda tumhein apni hifazat mein rakhe.

MONTAGE - NASUH'S WORLD

INT. HOUSE - STUDY - DAY

Seven-year-old NASUH traces letters in a manuscript. Lips moving.

From the doorway, Haroon watches.

HAKIM HAROON (O.S.)

Ilm talwar se tez hota hai.

Nasuh looks up. Absorbs it.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Young Nasuh and YOUSUF run. A BLACK FOAL stamps, nervous.
Nasuh steps forward. Calm. Rubs its neck. The animal settles.

NASUH
(softly)
Aaj se tumhara naam Toofaan.

EXT. MIR AMEEN'S GARDEN - DAY

Mir Ameen demonstrates sword forms. Yousuf strikes hard.
Nasuh moves with precise control.

Mir Ameen watches Nasuh, a thoughtful crease in his brow.

EXT. COURTYARD - DUSK

Nasuh kneels by a WOLF PUP. Places food. It growls. He doesn't
flinch. It calms. Eats.

NASUH
SAYYAD.

The wolf pup closes its eyes.

INT. CLINIC - DAY

Nasuh (12) hands his father a bone-setting tool. Watches
intently as Haroon works.

HAKIM HAROON
Haddi se zabardasti nahi... samajh
se.

EXT. OPEN FIELDS - DAY

Nasuh (17) rides TOOFAAN at a gallop. SAYYAD runs beside.

Three silhouettes against the sun - boy, horse, wolf - one
fluid motion.

END MONTAGE

EXT. MADRASA GATE - DAY

Students pour out.

ZAFAR (18), arrogant, has a YOUNGER BOY by the collar. The
boy clutches a small clay pot of ointment.

ZAFAR
Chamaron ki dawa le ja raha hai? Yeh
madrassa paak hai!

He snatches the pot. Raises it to throw.

A hand grabs his wrist. Firm. Controlled.

NASUH (17) holds him. Calm.

NASUH

Wapas karo.

ZAFAR

Jaanta hai main kaun hoon?

NASUH

Haan. Aur yeh bhi ke dawa insaan ke liye hoti hai... zaat ke liye nahi.

Zafar jerks free, humiliated.

YOUSUF steps beside Nasuh. Solidarity.

ZAFAR

(seething)

Kotwal ka beta hoon main...

YOUSUF

Aur main Faujdaar ka.

A tense standoff. Zafar backs down. Thrusts the pot back at the younger boy.

ZAFAR

Aaj bach gaye.

He storms off. Nasuh watches him go. The seeds of a future enemy, sown.

EXT. MIR AMEEN'S HOUSE - BACK GARDEN - DAY

Quiet, green. Yousuf (18) stands before a low mud embankment.

A FLINTLOCK PISTOL rests on a cloth.

Nasuh watches. Yousuf measures powder. Packs it. Every movement deliberate.

NASUH

Itna waqt?

YOUSUF

Musket jaldbaazi maaf nahi karti.

A SHARP CRACK. Smoke. Birds explode from trees.

Nasuh flinches -- then steadies, eyes locked on the weapon.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)

(turning)

Abba jaan kehte hain... talwar wafadar
hoti hai. Bندوق sirf mauqa.

He wipes the barrel, wraps it.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)

Barood mehnga hai. Aur khatarnaak.
Har haath ke liye nahi.

Nasuh nods. The lesson is about more than guns.

EXT. HAKIM HAROON'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - SUNSET

The courtyard glows. Distant azaan begins.

Nasuh moves through sword forms -- fluid, meditative.

Maria watches from beneath a tree.

MARIA

Agar natak mein talwar chalani ho...
tum sab se behtar ho.

He finishes. Lowers the blade. Walks to a marble bench.

NASUH

Talwar sirf vaar nahi... hifazat bhi
hoti hai.

He picks up a BOW and QUIVER.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Par yeh... yeh faasla badalta hai.
Balkh aur Bukhara ke log sirf jeena
jaante the, lekin bachna nahi. Isliye
Jhengiz Khan ke sawaron ke qadmon ke
neeche, woh sab kuchal gayi.

He holds the bow out to her.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Himmat bhi... aur hifazat bhi...
zaat nahi dekhti.

Maria hesitates. Takes it. He guides her stance.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Nishana wahan. Darr se nahi... saans
se.

He points to a heart-shaped leather target, stuffed with
straw, tied to the trunk of a large tree, about 50 meters
away.

Maria draws. Releases.

WHOOSH -- The arrow misses, thudding into the ground.

She lowers the bow, embarrassed.

MARIA

Mujh se nahi hoga.

Before he can answer -- SAYYAD darts forward. Grabs the arrow. Brings it back. Drops it at her feet.

Nasuh smiles.

NASUH

Dekha? Girne wali cheez bhi wapas aa sakti hai.

Maria looks from the arrow to him. A new resolve. She lifts the bow again. Steadier.

INT. HAKIM HAROON'S CLINIC - EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Dusty sunlight filters through hanging herbs.

Two MEN carry in a YOUNG LABORER - semi-conscious, body battered, leg twisted unnaturally.

Behind them, his WIFE (late 20s), shaken, clutching her dupatta.

Haroon steps forward.

HAKIM HAROON

Aahista. Yahan litao.

He examines the wounds. His expression darkens.

HAKIM HAROON (CONT'D)

Girne se yeh zakhm nahi hote. Sach batao... kya hua?

The woman hesitates. Her hands tremble.

WOMAN

(soft)

Uski nazar... mujh par thi.

Haroon looks up sharply.

HAKIM HAROON

Kiski?

A long beat.

WOMAN

Zafar... Kotwal ka beta.

Silence thickens the room.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Bazaar mein roka... hans ke baat ki.

Raat ko uske aadmi aaye.

Her husband groans.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Mere shohar ne mana kiya... bas itni

si himmat.

Tears fall.

Haroon places a cloth on the man's forehead – his jaw tight.

HAKIM HAROON

(quiet, heavy)

Jab zulm aadat ban jaaye... toh shehar
beemar ho jaata hai.

Nasuh, standing nearby, absorbs the name.

Zafar.

NT./EXT. LAHORE – VARIOUS – DAY / NIGHT – MONTAGE

EXT. BAZAAR – DAY

The WIFE from the clinic hurries past a spice cart, clutching her shawl.

A MAN in rough clothes leans against a wall, idly spinning a ring on his finger. His eyes track her.

INT. CARAVANSERAI COURTYARD – NIGHT

A SERVANT whispers urgently to a TRAVELING MERCHANT. The servant's hand subtly gestures toward the direction of the KOTWALI.

The merchant nods, slipping him a few silver coins.

EXT. STREET – DUSK

The same THUG from the bazaar drops a coin into a BEGGAR's wooden bowl.

Without looking up, the beggar's grimy finger points down the lane toward a modest house with a freshly painted blue door.

EXT. DOORWAY - NIGHT

A YOUNG GIRL's hand frantically slips bangles from her wrist. They clatter to the ground just as the blue door is pulled shut from the inside. A man's hand (wearing the ring) reaches down, picks up one bangle, pockets it.

INT. KOTWAL'S MANSION - PRIVATE HALL - NIGHT

Golden lamps. Silk drapes. A brass INCENSE BURNER smoulders, a thin grey spiral of OUD smoke coiling toward the ceiling.

ZAFAR (21), average-looking, lounges on a divan with wine in hand.

Before him, two RAQQASAS sway in rhythm - silks whispering, silver bells chiming with every step.

Zafar watches, bored rather than enchanted.

The music trails off.

With a lazy flick of his fingers, he dismisses the musicians.

Silence settles.

His gaze lingers on the dancers.

ZAFAR
(indolent)
Aaj... tu.

He points to one.

ZAFAR (CONT'D)
Aur tu... kal raat wapas aana. Ya yahin
ruk jao.

The chosen girl lowers her gaze and follows him into the room.

The other dancer bows and retreats, silent.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HAKIM HAROON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

SUPER: THREE YEARS LATER

Sunlight. The quiet hum of a peaceful home.

Haroon and Mir Ameen sip chai. Both men look older, weathered by time and loss.

Nearby, Nasuh and Yousuf - older now - sit quietly.

HAKIM HAROON

Teen saal... lamha lamha gin ke guzre.

MIR AMEEN

Yousuf ki ammi ke inteqaal ke baad
Dilli chala gaya tha. Bhai ke paas.
Kapron aur abrisham ka bada karobaar
hai uska.

(beat)

Wahin kuch arsa raha... phir fauj se
rihaai mil gayi.

HAKIM HAROON

Aur ab?

MIR AMEEN

Lahore ke bahar. Ek haveli... aur aam
ka baagh. Fauj se mili rihaai ki
raqam se.

HAKIM HAROON

Yousuf, beta. Ab tumhara din?

YOUSUF

Chacha jaan, kitabon aur kalam ke
beech... shehr ki sarguzasht bhi padh
raha hoon. Har gali apna waqia sunati
hai.

MIR AMEEN

(eyes on Nasuh)

Aur hamara Noor-e-Chashm? Hikmat ke
silsele ko aage badha raha hoga?

Nasuh meets his gaze, a quiet certainty there now.

NASUH

Abba jaan ka fan seekh raha hoon.
Lekin...

(chooses his words)

Mera andar jo jang hai, wo aur kisi
kaam mein zinda hai. Wo jo jazba har
chehre se baat karta hai.

YOUSUF

(smiling)

Toh theek hai! Kal shaam Shahi Maidan
mein "Farhad-Shireen" ka parde-baazi
hai. Chalein?

Nasuh looks to his father. Haroon's nod is slow, thoughtful.
He sees the longing in his son's eyes.

HAKIM HAROON

Jao. Dekho ke sach kahan tak jhooth
se milta hai.

EXT. SHAHI MAIDAN - LAHORE - EVENING

Lanterns flicker with warm light against the evening's cool,
casting long shadows across the stage.

A large curtain is drawn, revealing a painted backdrop of
mountains and a royal palace. The stage comes to life.

Actors, in elaborate costumes, step into position as the
music swells.

The audience murmurs—nobles in jeweled attire, their gazes
sharp.

A drumbeat sounds. Silence falls.

Mir Ameen, stern and decorated, sits among the elite — Yousuf
and Nasuh beside him — restless, observant.

ON STAGE - THE NATAK BEGINS

FARHAD enters — ADZE in hand, clothes dusty, eyes burning
with devotion.

SHEERIN appears on a balcony above, veiled, luminous.

FARHAD

Sheerin... agar pahaad bhi raasta
rokein, ishq unhein cheer deta hai.

SHEERIN

Farhad, tera junoon meri badnaami
ban jaayega. Shahon ke shehr mein
ishq gunah hai.

FARHAD

Agar gunah hai, toh qubool hai. Kyuki
ishq ke siwa Farhad ka koi deen aur
mzahab nahi.

Music swells. Farhad strikes the rock with his adze.

FARHAD (CONT'D)

Har vaar tere naam ka hai, Sheerin.
Jab tak pahaad jhuk na jaaye.

Sheerin descends the steps, trembling.

SHEERIN

Ruk jao, Farhad. Yeh pahaad tumhaari
jaan le lega.

FARHAD

Agar meri jaan mein tera naam likha
hai, toh maut bhi inaan hai.

A MESSENGER rushes in.

MESSENGER

Farhad! Sheerin mar chuki hai!

A gasp ripples through the crowd.

Farhad staggers.

FARHAD

Agar Sheerin nahi... toh saans bhi
jhooti hai.

He raises his ADZE, strikes his chest, collapses.

Sheerin screams, runs to him.

SHEERIN

Farhad! Ishq ne tujhe mita diya... aur
mujhe khaali chhod diya!

She picks up the blood-stained adze with both hands, holds
it before her eyes.

SHEERIN (CONT'D)

Aye sar-khum tesha... tera sar is duniya
mein hamesha jhuka rahega... kyon ke
aaj tu mere Farhaad ke qatl ka zariya
ban chuka hai.

Her hands tremble. The adze slips from her grip.

She collapses beside Farhaad's body.

Music stops. Silence.

Then – thunderous applause.

VIP ROWS

Nasuh stares, breathless.

NASUH

(whispering)

Yeh sab... bilkul sach lag raha tha.

YOUSUF

(nudging)

Natak ka kamaal. Jhoot ko wajood de
deta hai.

Mir Ameen remains impassive, eyes fixed on the stage.

MIR AMEEN
(measured, amused)
Aisa jazba sipahi mein ho, toh jang
jeeti jaati hai.

Actors return to the stage and bow. SHEERIN steps forward – the veil slips slightly.

Nasuh notices – a jawline, a hint of beard, painted lips. A MAN in disguise.

Nasuh's eyes widen.

NASUH
Woh... woh mard hai.

YOUSUF
Kala libaas pehanta hai. Jism ka
rang dikhata hai, zaat nahi.

The crowd applauds. Nasuh doesn't move. The truth of it hits him—a revelation.

NASUH
(quiet, definitive)
Yahi. Main bhi yahi karna chahta
hoon.

YOUSUF
Kya? Roti hui aurat ban na?

NASUH
Logon ko woh sach dikhana... jo wo
dekhna chahte hain. Aur jo main
chhupana chahta hoon.

Yousuf's smile fades. He sees this isn't a whim.

Mir Ameen rises, glancing back at the boys.

MIR AMEEN
Chalo. Raat ke andhere mein saaf
soch nahi aati.

As they leave, Nasuh casts one last look at the empty stage. It's no longer just wood and paint. It's a doorway.

INT. SHAHI NATAK KHANA - LAHORE - DAY

A high-ceilinged hall of white marble and carved arches. Sunlight filters through jali windows. One wall lined with masks, costumes, wooden swords, veils.

A dozen STUDENTS rehearse in a semicircle. At the center stands USTAAD KAMALUDDIN (50s), refined, once a famed court performer.

Among them: Nasuh (21), soft-featured, long-lashed eyes, almost feminine. His black hair is neatly tied.

Ustaad claps once.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN

Natak na naqal hai... na hi tamasha.
Natak ek ilm hai - jism, saans aur
khamoshi ka.

He gestures toward Nasuh.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN (CONT'D)

Tum. Aage aao.

Nasuh steps forward. A STUDENT hands him a dupatta and a light veil. Murmurs ripple - a boy playing a woman again.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN (CONT'D)

Aaj tum Rajkumari Feroza ho. Apne
baap ke qatl ki khabar sunne wali
shahzaadi.

Nasuh drapes the dupatta. The transformation is immediate - posture softens, chin lowers, eyes deepen.

Ustaad circles him slowly, sandalwood beads clicking between his fingers.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN (CONT'D)

Yaad rakho - aurat banne ke liye
awaaz patli karna kaafi nahi. Tumhein
duniya ko aurat ki tarah mehsoos
karna hoga.

Nasuh closes his eyes. Breath steadies.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN (CONT'D)

(soft)

Jab dard aaye... usey mat dikhao. Pehle
usey chhupao. Phir tootne do.

A beat.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN (CONT'D)

Ab khabar suno.

A STUDENT steps forward, playing a court messenger.

MESSENGER (STUDENT)

Shehzaadi... bahot buri khabar hai.
Badshah-e-waqt qatl kar diye gaye
hain.

Silence. Nasuh doesn't react immediately. Then – a subtle tremor in his fingers. Breath catches. He swallows. Eyes well, but no tears fall.

NASUH / FEROZA

(soft, breaking)

Toh... ab taaj bhi bojh hai... aur khoon
bhi.

The hall goes still. Even murmuring students fall silent.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN

Bas.

He studies Nasuh, impressed but cautious.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN (CONT'D)

Tumne roya nahi. Achha kiya. Aurat
ka gham aksar aansuon se zyada gehra
hota hai. Woh sambhalti hai... kyunki
sab usi ko dekh rahe hote hain.

He turns to the others.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN (CONT'D)

Yaad rakho – Jism sirf zariya hai.
Asal kirdaar andar janam leta hai.

He looks back at Nasuh.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN (CONT'D)

Tumhara chehra madad karta hai... magar
tumhari khamoshi tumhari taqat hai.

Nasuh lowers his gaze, absorbing every word.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN (CONT'D)

Aaj se tum sirf talib-e-ilm nahi.
Tum zimmedari uthana seekh rahe ho –
kirdaar ki... aur us sach ki jo uske
peeche chhupa hota hai.

A distant drumbeat echoes from outside –

Nasuh gently removes the veil. He is changed.

INT. HAKIM HAROON HOUSE - VERANDA - LATE AFTERNOON

Soft sunlight filters through jaali windows. A gentle breeze
moves the curtains.

Nasuh sits cross-legged on a TAKHT, pretending to read a book.

NASUH
(perfectly mimicking
his mother's voice)
Maria... zara adrak aur zafraan wali
chai bana do. Sar bhari lag raha
hai.

MARIA (O.S.)
Abhi banati hoon, Ammi jaan.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Maria, dutiful and warm, hurriedly prepares tea. She adds crushed ginger, a pinch of saffron. Steam rises.

INT. VERANDA - MOMENTS LATER

Maria enters, brass tray in hand.

MARIA
Ammi jaan... chai le aayi hoon.

She stops. Only Nasuh sits there, calmly turning a page.

MARIA (CONT'D)
(confused)
Ammi kahan hain?

NASUH
Chai yahin rakh do... Ammi aa jaayegi.

Maria hesitates, then places the cup on the small wooden table.

As she turns - Nasuh quickly picks up the cup and takes a loud sip.

MARIA
(outraged)
Arre! Yeh chai Ammi ke liye thi!

She rushes forward and lightly slaps his head.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Badmaash! Tumne pee li!

Nasuh grins, then suddenly - he changes his posture, tone, and voice.

NASUH
(imitating his mother
perfectly)
Iss waqt main hi teri Ammi hoon...
Ammi jaan abhi so rahi hain.

Maria freezes, then bursts out laughing, chasing him.

MARIA
Nalayak! Tu kab sudhrega?!

Nasuh jumps up, dodging her, laughing.

NASUH
Adaakaari seekh raha hoon, Maria! Ek
din kaam aayegi!

Maria shakes her head, smiling despite herself. The boy sips the tea proudly.

FADE TO BLACK.

SUPER: SIX MONTHS LATER

EXT. MIR AMEEN'S MANGO ORCHARD - LAHORE OUTSKIRTS - DAY

A vast mango orchard bathed in warm afternoon sunlight.

Mango and neem trees sway lazily, casting long shadows across the dew-specked grass.

Yousuf holds a MATCHLOCK BANDOOK - heavy, old, well-used.

It rests on a forked wooden stand.

Nasuh stands beside him, watching attentively.

The fuse smolders, smoke curling upward in the golden light.

NASUH
Agar chook gaye toh?

YOUSUF
(smiles faintly)
Toh phir... dua.

Yousuf FIRES.

The shot echoes through the orchard. Birds scatter. Leaves rustle.

Nasuh flinches - then steadies himself, eyes fixed on the target.

The target is cracked, not destroyed.

Yousuf exhales.

YOUSUF (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
(deceptively calm)
Dekha? Isliye jang ab bhi haath se
jeeti jaati hai.

He hands the bandook to Nasuh – unloaded.

Nasuh feels its weight. Heavy. Unwieldy.

He hands it back.

NASUH
Talwar zyada sach bolti hai.

Yousuf smiles. Approval.

They face each other. Practice swords raised.

A beat.

They MOVE.

Wooden blades CLASH – fast, controlled.

Yousuf attacks with raw force.

Nasuh slips aside, economical, precise.

YOUSUF
Talwar haath mein ho toh jism nahi...
niyat chalni chahiye.
Nasuh parries, spins – taps Yousuf's shoulder.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)
(smiling)
Ab zyada tez ho gaya hai.

They reset.

Another exchange – faster now.

Nasuh retreats... then suddenly STEPS IN –

He LOCKS blades.

NASUH
Talwar bhi ek kirdaar hai, Yousuf.
Har vaar ka matlab hota hai.

Yousuf breaks free, laughing.

EXT. ARCHERY RANGE - SAME GARDEN - MOMENTS LATER

A straw target beneath a tree.

Nasuh takes position. Breath steady.

He releases -

The arrow MISSES.

Yousuf raises an eyebrow.

YOUSUF

Lagta hai tamasha yahan tak chala
aaya hai.

Nasuh smiles faintly.

Closes his eyes. Inhales.

He SHOOTS again - BULLSEYE.

Yousuf nods, impressed.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)

Jab mann saath ho, haath kabhi dhokha
nahi deta.

They walk through the garden toward a modest, sturdy COTTAGE,
tucked deep among the trees.

Yousuf kneels beside a large decorative GULDAN, lifts it,
retrieves a key.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)

Yeh aashiyaana maine banwaya hai...
apni shamshir-baazi aur teer-andazi
ke liye. Chaabi hamesha yahin rehti
hai.

He unlocks the door.

INT. COTTAGE - CONTINUOUS

Practice weapons line the walls. Bows. Swords. Shields.

A simple CHAARPAI. A rolled DUREE. A clay water jar with a
brass cup.

YOUSUF

Aaj achha khela, Nasuh. Lage raho.

NASUH

Shukriya, Ustad.

Yousuf studies him, curious.

YOUSUF

Aaj kuch zyada mehnat thi... koi khaas wajah?

Nasuh hesitates.

NASUH

Is Jumma, Shahi Baagh mein natak muqabla hai.

YOUSUF

Tum?

NASUH

(quiet pride)

Is baar... ek aadil malika ka kirdaar.

Yousuf searches his face. Finds only resolve.

YOUSUF

(smiles)

Talwar aur taaj... dono tum sambhaal sakte ho.

NASUH

Tum aaoge na?

YOUSUF

Zaroor. Malika ko apne sipahi ki zarurat hoti hai.

They share a quiet smile. Wind moves through the trees.

CUT TO:

EXT. ANARKALI FRUIT MARKET, LAHORE - DAY

A vibrant Mughal-era fruit bazaar.

Rows of mangoes, bananas, pomegranates, melons.

Cloth canopies sway above narrow lanes.

VENDORS shout prices. BUYERS bargain loudly.

A wooden HANDCART piled with MANGOES moves through the crowd.

A FARMER COUPLE strain at the handles - poor, travel-worn, alert.

From the shadows steps a WHOLESale MERCHANT - heavy-set, richly dressed, authority in his eyes.

WHOLESALE MERCHANT

Naye lagte ho. Is bazaar ka ek hi qanoon hai – maal pehle mujhe doge. Main mandi ka thekedar hoon.

MALE FARMER

(firm)

Yeh khula bazaar hai. Hum apni mehnat khud bechenge.

FEMALE FARMER

(calm, sharp)

Aadhe daam pe rozi nahi bechi jaati.

The merchant's smile tightens.

WHOLESALE MERCHANT

Ghulam ho ya azaad... bazaar mera hai. Ya mere saath kaam karo – ya kaam hi mat karo.

MALE FARMER

Hum dabne walon mein se nahi.

The merchant flicks his fingers.

From the crowd emerge GOONS – short blades glinting in their fists.

GOON #1

Ab akal aa jaayegi.

GOON #2

Is mandi mein thekedar ko koi inkaar nahi karta.

The merchant steps back.

WHOLESALE MERCHANT

Aakhri mauqa.

The FEMALE FARMER steps forward.

Still. Unshaken. Her voice cuts through the noise.

FEMALE FARMER

Bazaar tumhara ho sakta hai... magar zulm kabhi tumhara nahi hota.

A beat.

The air tightens.

STEEL FLASHES.

Two blades appear – swift, controlled.

The CROWD GASPS.

A goon charges.

The MALE FARMER pivots, blocks the strike mid-air.

CLANG!

He shoves the man back.

Another attacker lunges –

But the FEMALE FARMER is already moving.

A graceful spin.

A flash of silver.

Her blade kisses the wrist.

The sword FLIES, skidding across stone.

She turns – fluid, precise –

A sweeping move sends another goon crashing to the ground.

Silence.

Breath held.

The MALE FARMER locks blades with the last attacker –
twists – disarms him – and shoves him away.

Now only one remains. The WHOLESale MERCHANT. Panicked.

He lunges blindly.

IN A BLINK –

Steel rests against his throat.

The FEMALE FARMER stands inches away. Unmoving. Unafraid.

FEMALE FARMER
Tumhari dadagiri... yahin khatam hoti
hai.

The merchant trembles.

THEN –

She reaches up. Unties the rough shawl. Lets it fall.

Beneath it – refined fabric. Regal posture.

Not royalty by birth... But authority by presence.

The MALE FARMER steps beside her.

He pulls back a dust-soaked HOODED RIDING CLOAK, exposing the Queen's elite BODYGUARD uniform. Disciplined. Alert.

The illusion breaks.

The CROWD GASPS again.

Whispers ripple: *She's not a farmer... She's-*

The FEMALE FARMER raises her hand.

Silence.

She turns slowly, surveying the bazaar – a queen inspecting her realm.

A beat.

The world SHIFTS.

WIDE PULL BACK –

The bazaar dissolves.

REVEAL:

EXT. SHAHI MAIDAN THEATRE – DAY

Thunderous applause erupts.

We were watching a PLAY.

Actors freeze in tableau.

The FEMALE FARMER stands center stage – now clearly NASUH in costume.

The MALE FARMER bows beside him – his protector's role complete.

The audience ROARS.

FRONT ROW – ROYAL SECTION

Zafar sits, bored arrogance barely hiding sharp interest.

Behind him – GUARDS.

LADIES' SECTION --

Maria watches, transfixed.

A FEMALE SPY beside her notices – subtly signals Zafar.

ZAFAR

(low)

Kaun hai woh... jo rani jaisi lagti
hai?

FEMALE SPY

Natak ka kirdaar hai... magar khoobsurti
asli hai.

Zafar's gaze sharpens.

ON STAGE

The actors bow.

Nasuh – still in the Female farmer's attire – stands luminous.

Yousuf watches proudly.

The Head of the Shahi Natak Khana – the Royal Acting School –
steps forward, regal and commanding.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN

(elated)

Ab inaaam ka elan kiya jaata hai.

A beat.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN (CONT'D)

Behtareen adakaar – Bazaar-e-Insaaf
ke liye... Nasuh!

A young attendant steps forward, carrying a robe of honor
intricately embroidered in gold thread, and a small tray of
coins.

USTAAD KAMALUDDIN (CONT'D)

(gesturing to the VIP
section)

Main adab se guzarish karta hoon ke
Shahi Subahdar ke farzand, Janab
Zafar, is saal ke behtareen adakaar
ko inaaam ata karein.

A moment's pause. Zafar rises, deliberate, controlled. Every
eye in the theater on him. He steps forward, and approaches
Nasuh.

He takes the robe from the attendant and drapes it over Nasuh's shoulders, fingers brushing slightly. Then he picks up the tray of coins, presenting it ceremoniously.

ZAFAR

(poisoned calm)

Kamaal ka kirdaar tha. Lahore tumhe yaad rakhega.

NASUH

(bowing, respectful)

Inaam ka shukriya, huzoor.

Maria smiles politely from the ladies' section, unaware of the undercurrent of danger.

Zafar's gaze slides past Nasuh – locks onto Maria, calculating, possessive.

ZAFAR

(low, to himself)

Aaj nahi... bahut jald tu mahal tak aayegi.

CUT TO:

INT. SUBEDAR'S DIWAN-E-KHAS – LAHORE FORT – NIGHT

Carved marble walls glow under flickering oil lamps.

SUBEDAR MIRZA QASIM BEG (late 50s), stern, sits on a low throne – a man shaped by discipline and power.

Zafar stands before him. Relaxed. Careless. A hint of arrogance in his posture.

SUBEDAR

(suppressed fury)

Kotwaal se Subedar banna aasaan nahi hota, Zafar.

Zafar remains silent.

SUBEDAR (CONT'D)

Maine apni zindagi qanoon, nizam aur wafadari ki raah mein sarf kar di.

He leans forward slightly – voice tightening.

SUBEDAR (CONT'D)

Aur tum–

(voice hardens)

Tumhari ayyaashi, zulm aur be-hayayi... meri saari mehnat mitti mein mila degi.

ZAFAR
(smiling faintly)
Abba... Lahore meri jaib mein hai.

The Subedar rises and steps closer.

SUBEDAR
Na-khalaf. Agar Delhi tak tumhari
aik bhi kahani pahunch gayi... toh
sirf tum nahi – main bhi tabaah ho
jaaunga.

Zafar's smile flickers. Just for a moment.

SUBEDAR (CONT'D)
Tu shaadi karoge.

ZAFAR
(startled)
Shaadi?

SUBEDAR
Najma bint Ghulam Mustafa Khan.
Darbaar ke Imam ki beti.

ZAFAR
(irritated)
Mujhe iski ko-i

SUBEDAR
(cutting, iron-clad)
Yeh hukm hai.

He turns sharply.

SUBEDAR (CONT'D)
Diwan Abdul Rahim!

DIWAN ABDUL RAHIM (40s), sharp-eyed and obedient, steps forward and bows.

DIWAN ABDUL RAHIM
Huzoor.

SUBEDAR
Nikah ki tayyari shuru karo.
Saada... magar shahi.

DIWAN ABDUL RAHIM
Jaisa hukm, Subahdar sahab.

Zafar looks away – jaw tight, eyes burning with quiet rage.

INT. IMAM GHULAM MUSTAFA KHAN'S HAVELI - DAY

Soft daylight filters through jali windows. White sheets cover the sitting area. A Qur'an rests on a wooden rehal. Incense smoke curling gently upward.

NAJMA (18-20), composed and dignified, sits with her gaze lowered. Her veil is modest. Her posture steady.

Across from her sits Zafar - detached, impatient, barely present.

IMAM GHULAM MUSTAFA KHAN (50s) stands nearby, watchful, burdened with concern.

Between them sits MAWLANA ABDUL HAQ (60s) - calm, respected, voice steady with authority.

MAWLANA ABDUL HAQ

Aap dono is nikah ke liye razamand hain?

A beat.

NAJMA

(clear, composed)

Ji.

Silence hangs for a moment.

ZAFAR

(flat)

Ji.

The Mawlana nods and begins the Khutba-e-Nikah - slow, measured, sacred.

MAWLANA ABDUL HAQ

(in Arabic/ subtitled)

An-nikahu min sunnati... fa-man raghiba an sunnati, fa-laysa minni.

Hands clasp. Witnesses listen. The Mehr is announced.

MAWLANA ABDUL HAQ (CONT'D)

Qubool hai?

NAJMA

Qubool hai.

A breath.

MAWLANA ABDUL HAQ

Dobara... qubool hai?

NAJMA

Qubool hai.

A pause.

MAWLANA ABDUL HAQ

Teesri martaba?

NAJMA

Qubool hai.

He turns to Zafar.

MAWLANA ABDUL HAQ

Aap qubool karte hain?

ZAFAR

Qubool hai.

The Mawlana raises his hands in prayer.

MAWLANA ABDUL HAQ

(soft, solemn)

Allah is nikah ko barkat aur rehmat
ata farmaye.

A murmur of "Ameen."

Najma lowers her gaze, serene but distant.

Zafar shows no emotion.

Imam Ghulam Mustafa Khan exhales quietly – relief mixed with
unease.

INT. ZAFAR'S HAVELI – NIGHT

SUPER: TWO WEEKS LATER

Music. Laughter. Wine cups.

RAQQASA woman dances. Zafar reclines, indulgent, drunk.

INT. ZAFAR'S PRIVATE CHAMBER – LATE NIGHT

Lantern light flickers.

Zafar lies asleep with a RAQQASA beside him.

The door CREAKS.

Najma freezes in the doorway – shock, controlled fury.

NAJMA
(low, trembling)
Yeh... kya hai?

Zafar stirs, opens his eyes – irritated.

ZAFAR
(annoyed)
Tu yahan kya kar rahi ho?

NAJMA
(steadying herself)
Tumne mujh se nikah kyun kiya, Zafar?
Agar yahi karna tha...

ZAFAR
(cold, dismissive)
Shaadi meri nahi thi... mere baap ki
siyasat thi.

NAJMA
(firm, cutting)
Toh main sirf aik mohra hoon?

ZAFAR
(cruel chuckle)
Mohra? Tu apni aukaat se zyada bol
rahi ho. Rakheel ho. Bas.

NAJMA
(hurt but resolute)
Islaam mein shaadi zimmedari hai –
ayyaashi ki chhoot nahi.

Zafar's face darkens. He SLAPS her – sharp, sudden.

Najma stumbles, hand to her cheek. A soft gasp, but no cry.

ZAFAR
(threatening)
Bas! Mujhe deen aur mazhab mat sikhao.
Tum jaisi teen aur mohre main khareed
sakta hoon.

NAJMA
(controlled, fearless)
Main Imam ki beti hoon, Zafar. Yeh
baat jahilon ko samjhao. Khuda ne
chaar shaadiyon ki ijazat di... lekin
insaaf ke saath.

ZAFAR
Main apni quwwat aur apni zaroorat
ke mutabiq faislay karta hoon.

NAJMA

(voice rising)

Agar insaaf na kar sako – Allah ka hukm hai, sirf aik. Bimaar biwi ho, aulaad na ho, ya kisi bewa aur uske bachon ka sahara banna ho – tab doosri shaadi rehmat hoti hai. Yeh toh ... fasaad hai.

Zafar towers over her, threatening.

ZAFAR

Is ghar mein meri marzi chalti hai. Samajh gayi?

NAJMA

Zulm zyada dair nahi chalta, Zafar. Raat kitni bhi gehra ho... subah aati hai.

She turns and walks out.

Zafar watches her leave – fury simmering.

The RAQQASA shifts uneasily.

ZAFAR

(grabbing her, mocking)

Aao meri jaan... achha hua woh mujhe jaga gayi. Raat abhi baqi hai.

He pulls her close. Picks two roses from a brass bowl, crushes them, lets the petals scatter across her and the sheets.

ZAFAR (CONT'D)

(reciting Hafiz Sherazi)

*Gul dar bar-o, mai dar kaf-o,
mahshooqa ba kaam ast- Sultan-e-
jahaanam ba chuneen roz ghulaam ast.*

He whispers the translation, his breath hot against her neck.

ZAFAR (CONT'D)

(soft, vicious)

Jab haath mein sharaab ho, daaman mein gulaab, aur mehbooba paas... duniya ka baadshah bhi aisi raat ka ghulaam hota hai.

He drinks deeply from a cup, then kisses her – a performance of power.

The lantern light DIMS. ROSE PETALS tremble on the rumped sheet.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. HAKIM HAROON'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - AFTERNOON

A serene backyard enclosed by white marble walls. Tall trees sway gently, their leaves filtering the sunlight.

A heart-shaped straw target is bound to a tree trunk.

Maria stands with a bow, quiver at her side.

Nasuh watches from nearby. Sayyad, the wolf-like dog, sits alert.

Maria draws. RELEASE.

MISS. The arrow THUDS into the wall behind the tree.

NASUH
(quietly)
Phir se.

Maria draws again. RELEASE.

MISS. The arrow strikes the tree beside the target.

MARIA
(sighs)
Yeh teer meri baat kyun nahi maanta?

NASUH
(stepping closer)
Kyon ki tum hukm de rahi ho.
(beat)
Besabri ki talwaar ko niyaam mein
rakho, aur teer turkash se bahar
lao.

Maria pulls another arrow. This time, she focuses deeply, drawing the string back slowly.

Nasuh places his hands over hers, steadying the shot.

NASUH (CONT'D)
Hadaf par nazar mat daalo. Usay khud
aane do.

Maria nods, draws, and RELEASES.

The arrow strikes the edge of the target - not center, but solid.

A small smile tugs at Maria's lips. Her confidence grows.

MARIA
(smiling)
Kya yeh theek hai?

NASUH
(nods, proud)
Mashq jaari rakho... Bahut jald ek
maahir teer-andaaz ban jaogi.

Maria stands tall, a glimmer of pride in her eyes as she prepares for the next shot.

CUT TO:

INT. ZAFAR'S HAVELI - PRIVATE CHAMBER & CORRIDOR - NIGHT

A lavish chamber. Silk cushions. Low oil lamps cast dancing shadows. Incense smokes the air.

ZAFAR reclines, swirling a cup. Before him, his SCARRED RINGLEADER stands, eyes lowered.

Just outside the heavy door, in the shadowed INNER CORRIDOR, Najma presses herself against the stone. She dares a peek through the KEYHOLE. One eye. One held breath.

ZAFAR
Us ladki ka poora pata lag chuka?

RINGLEADER
(respectful)
Ji, huzoor. Naam Maria hai. Hakim
Haroon ki beti.

Zafar's eyes sharpen - interest sparked.

RINGLEADER (CONT'D)
Aur jo Shahi Maidan ke natak mein
inaam jeeta tha... Nasuh - woh uska
bhai hai.

Zafar rises slowly. The room seems to shrink around him.

ZAFAR
(low, venomous)
Wahi Nasuh... jo saalon pehle Shahi
Madrasa ke darwaze par apne dost ke
saath mujhe aankh dikha gaya tha.

Through the keyhole, Najma's own eye widens in horror.

ZAFAR (CONT'D)
Us ladki ko meri khaas mehfil mein
le aao.

RINGLEADER

(hesitant)

Magar huzoor... woh shehar ke mashhoor
hakim ki-

ZAFAR

(cutting him off,

leaning in)

Mujhe farq nahi padta woh kis ki
beti hai. Kisi bhi keemat par...

Najma flinches back from the door as if struck. Her hand
slaps over her mouth.

ZAFAR (CONT'D)

(smiling coldly)

Aur phir... us adaakaar ko bhi ek sabak
sikhaunga. Aisa sabak jo Lahore yaad
rakhega.

The RINGLEADER bows deeply, then exits through the separate
door leading to the courtyard.

Alone, Zafar turns. Pours another drink. Satisfied.

INT. INNER CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Najma staggers. Her back slams against the cold wall. Breath
ragged.

NAJMA

(whispering a frantic
prayer)

Ya Allah... mujhe unhein khabar karni
hai... warna...

She can't finish the thought. Pushing off the wall, she
gathers her skirts and FLEES down the shadowed corridor.
A ghost swallowed by the dark.

EXT. HAKIM HAROON'S CLINIC - FEMALE SECTION ENTRANCE - DAY

Najma, veiled in a NIQAAB, is supported toward the entrance
by her MAID.

She winces in pain, clutching her ankle - convincingly playing
the role of an injured patient.

INT. HAKIM HAROON'S CLINIC - EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Cool. Quiet. Shelves lined with ceramic jars, dried herbs,
and glass vials.

SALMA (40s), modestly dressed, approaches with concern.

SALMA

Hakim sahab ki tabiyat aaj na-saaz hai. Woh ghar mein aaram kar rahe hain.

NAJMA

Suna hai unka beta, Nasuh, bhi unhi ki tarah haazir-dimaagh hai... Use bula dijiye.

Salma nods and exits into the back corridor.

Moments later, Nasuh enters – calm, alert, observant. He kneels beside Najma's feet.

NASUH

(gently)

Yeh chot kaise lagi?

As he examines her ankle, Najma discreetly slips a folded paper into his hand.

NAJMA

(low, urgent)

Is mein sab likha hai... padh lijiye.

Nasuh's fingers pause. He glances down briefly and opens the paper just enough to read.

INSERT - THE NOTE

URDU SCRIPT:

"Zafar ki niyat kharab hai. Maria khatre mein hai."

A flicker of alarm crosses his eyes – instantly controlled.

He folds the note and slips it smoothly into his pocket. His focus returns to the examination.

NASUH

Salma behen... zara kafoori marham le aaiye. Inki patti karni hogi.

Salma returns with a small stone jar.

She applies the thick MARHAM, then carefully wraps Najma's ankle with a clean white PATTI.

Nasuh watches closely – measured, authoritative.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Bas... itna kaafi hai.

Salma pauses, instinctively deferring. She finishes the wrap.

Najma rises. Her eyes meet Nasuh's – brief, alert. A silent understanding passes.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Ab dard mein ifaqa hoga. Aap ghar
jaa sakti hain. Khuda aapko hamesha
salamat rakhe.

Najma exhales softly – relief mixed with urgency.

INT. HAKIM HAROON'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Soft sunlight filters through carved wooden screens. The room is modest and calm.

Maria stands near her mother, Sarah, adjusting her chaadar. A quiet excitement in her eyes.

MARIA

Ammi... Rukhsaar ki shaadi hai. Woh
meri bas ek hi saheli hai. Sirf shaam
tak jaaungi.

The MOTHER studies her – concern wrapped in affection.

SARAH

Theek hai... magar andhera hone se
pehle wapas aa jana. Raaste mein
dair nahin.

Maria smiles and gently touches her mother's hand.

MARIA

Ji, Ammi jaan. Dair nahin hogi.

The mother adjusts Maria's chaadar herself – protective, loving.

SARAH

Khuda tumhein apni hifazat mein rakhe.

Maria nods and exits.

EXT. HAKIM HAROON'S HOUSE - COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

Maria steps into the daylight.

She walks away, toward distant sounds of celebration.

EXT. OLD LAHORE STREET - AFTERNOON

Narrow lanes. Ancient brick walls. Slanted sunlight.

Wedding music drifts faintly through the air.

Maria walks ahead, wrapped in her chaadar – unaware.

AT A DISTANCE BEHIND HER –

An OLD MAN rides a BLACK STALLION.

Bent posture. A grey shawl draped over his head. A walking stick lies across the saddle.

Harmless. Almost frail.

The stallion moves with disciplined calm. The OLD MAN keeps his distance – close enough to watch, far enough to be ignored.

Maria turns a corner.

The OLD MAN follows.

EXT. WEDDING COURTYARD – LATE AFTERNOON

Music. Laughter. Women in bright new dresses and saris glide through the space, their joy echoing in the air.

Maria sits beside RUKHSAAR, dressed as a bride, smiling politely.

Across the courtyard, a WOMAN in fine clothes – ZAFAR'S FEMALE SPY – watches Maria intently.

She leans toward another WOMAN, whispers.

The woman slips away.

INT. WEDDING KITCHEN – CONTINUOUS

Steam. Fire. Chaos.

The WOMAN murmurs something to a MALE SERVANT.

He stiffens, nods, and hurries out.

EXT. WEDDING GATE – LATE AFTERNOON

Maria steps out alone, adjusting her chaadar.

The sun hangs low – light thinning, but not gone.

EXT. OLD LAHORE STREET – LATE AFTERNOON

Long shadows stretch across the narrow lane.

Maria turns into a quieter alley.

FROM BEHIND –

The OLD MAN on horseback follows – careful, measured.

A SHAHI TONGA rolls in, bearing imperial markings.

The DRIVER wears uniform.

The tonga halts abruptly beside Maria.

Two ARMED GUARDS jump down.

IN ONE SWIFT MOTION –

One clamps a hand over Maria's mouth.

The other lifts her legs.

A THIRD MAN steps out, flings open the tonga door.

Maria struggles – her scream muffled.

They shove her inside. The door SLAMS.

FROM BEHIND –

The old horseman sees everything.

NASUH
(under his breath)
Toofan...

He digs in his heels.

EXT. OLD LAHORE STREET – CONTINUOUS

TOOFAAN charges forward, hooves thundering, blocking the tonga's path.

The tonga skids to a halt.

Nasuh turns his horse sharply, facing them. Horse to horse. Eyes lock.

INT. TONGA – SAME

LEAD THUG
Kya hua, Aslam? Tonga kyun roki?

ASLAM (O.S.)
Sahib... ek buddha ghoda-sawaar rasta
rok raha hai.

One THUG pins Maria down, forcing cloth over her mouth.

The LEAD THUG steps down, followed by his cohort, hands on swords.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

LEAD THUG

Bad-tameez buddha... shahi tonga ka
raasta rokta hai?

NASUH

(in an old man's rasp)
Yeh choron ki tonga lagti hai... shahi
hukumat ki nahi.

He nudges Toofaan forward.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Meri beti ko chhor do.

The LEAD THUG laughs, draws his sword.

LEAD THUG

Lagta hai maut se mohabbat hai.

Nasuh dismounts swiftly, blade flashing from beneath his robes.

STEEL CLASHES.

He slashes the LEAD THUG across the shoulder.

The COHORT lunges.

Nasuh pivots sharply, strikes, sending the thug crashing into the tonga wheel.

The THIRD THUG attacks from behind.

HE SWINGS—

Nasuh SIDESTEPS.

The blade MISSES — and slices into his own man's abdomen.

A beat.

The man collapses. Dead.

ASLAM

(screaming)
Khoon! Khoon! Zafar sahab ke aadmi
ka khoon ho gaya!

Panic erupts. Nasuh doesn't wait. He yanks open the tonga door. Maria — terrified. He pulls her free.

TOOFAAN steps forward, steady. Maria mounts behind him.

TOOFAAN kicks sharply – gallops away as shouts echo behind them.

INT. HAKIM HAROON'S HOUSE - AANGAN - NIGHT

A half-moon hangs over Lahore. Oil lamps glow in the courtyard walls.

A wooden SWING hangs from thick beams at the center of the AANGAN.

A simple DASTARKHWAN lies spread on a low table, surrounded by CHARPAIS.

Hakim Haroon and his wife, SARAH, sit on one side. Nasuh and Maria sit opposite.

Hakim Haroon eats calmly, dignified.

Nasuh, his sword sheathed beside him, remains alert.

Sarah pours water into clay cups. A quiet moment.

NASUH

Kal raat... jab Zafar ke aadmi Maria
ke peeche aaye... main buzurg ka libaas
pehne hua tha. Unhe rokna pada.

Sarah's hand freezes mid-pour.

Maria lowers her gaze.

HAKIM HAROON

Izzat ki hifazat mein uthaya gaya
haath gunah nahin hota, beta.

Maria manages a faint, grateful smile.

SUDDENLY—

THUD.

The thick wooden door SHUDDERS.

Another THUD.

Everyone freezes.

THUD – THUD – THUD.

The door TREMBLES under violent kicks.

FINAL STRIKE-

BOOM! The door BURSTS inward.

Wood SPLINTERS across the courtyard, smashing an oil lamp.

Flames hiss.

TORCHLIGHT floods in.

Zafar strides through the smoke, his boots crunching on splintered wood.

Behind him, ARMED THUGS flood into the aangan, blades drawn.

ZAFAR

Badi pur-sukoon raat thi, Hakim sahib.

Hakim Haroon rises, placing himself protectively ahead of his family.

HAKIM HAROON

Zafar... tum apni had se kaafi aage badhte ja rahe ho.

Zafar smiles thinly.

ZAFAR

Kal raat mere aadmi lahu mein naha gaye... ek zameen mein dafan hua... do zakhmon se karah rahe reh gaye. Aur tumhein laga yeh yahin khatam ho gaya?

Nasuh moves forward, eyes locked on the enemy.

NASUH

Yeh sab maine kiya. Mere Abba ka qasoor nahin.

Zafar turns toward him, amused.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Tumhare aadmi meri behen ko uthaane aaye the. Maine sirf apne ghar ki izzat bachayi hai. Aur jo mara... woh tumhare hi aadmi ki talwaron se mara.

Zafar's eyes harden.

ZAFAR

Iss baar main khud tumhari behen ko lene aaya hoon. Usne mera dil jeet liya hai.

(MORE)

ZAFAR (CONT'D)
(beat, a thin smile)
Ab tu phir se apni izzat aur apni
behen ko bacha le...

He flicks his fingers.

ZAFAR (CONT'D)
Maaro.

Chaos EXPLODES.

Steel FLASHES.

A thug SLASHES at Nasuh-

Nasuh PIVOTS, parries-

The blade MISSES and SLAMS into the wooden beam of the swing.

CRACK!

The beam SHATTERS.

The swing COLLAPSES violently.

Another thug lunges at Hakim Haroon-

He SIDESTEPS-

The sword slices through a CHARPAI, splintering its leg.

Hakim Haroon GRABS the broken wooden leg. As the thug charges, he DRIVES the jagged wood straight into his abdomen.

The man HOWLS, collapsing. His sword slips free- Hakim Haroon SNATCHES it mid-fall. He turns, blade ready.

Plates SHATTER. Oil spills and FLARES.

Sarah pulls Maria toward the inner room-

INT. INNER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Maria grabs a BOW and QUIVER from the wall.

Her jaw tightens.

She runs back.

INT. AANGAN - CONTINUOUS

Maria plants her feet. Draws. RELEASES.

The arrow STRIKES a thug's shoulder.

He staggers.

Before she can nock another—

A THUG RUSHES her.

He grabs her bow arm, twists it painfully, sword raised.

THUG

(leering)

Teer aur kamaan ki kya zarurat,
shehzadi... tumhari palkein hi kaafi
hain.

Nasuh SPINS—

His blade FLASHES.

The thug's taunt dies in a wet gurgle. Blood splashes across Maria's sleeve.

The severed hand hits the floor, still gripping the sword.

NASUH

(ferocious)

Jo haath meri behen ko chhoone ki
koshish karega, main woh haath kaat
kar uski laash par rakh doonga.

Hakim Haroon and Nasuh stand BACK TO BACK.

ZAFAR

(laughing softly)

Khoob... baap beta dono sher nikle.
Magar sher sirf do hi toh hain.

Hakim Haroon strikes another attacker aside, breathing hard.

HAKIM HAROON

(reciting Shahnameh)

"Siyaahi lashkar naya-yad ba kaar,
yaki mard-e-jangi beh az sad hazaar."

A blade STRIKES his side.

Hakim Haroon STAGGERS. Blood seeps through his kurta.

NASUH

Abba—

More thugs CLOSE IN.

Hakim Haroon straightens, forcing himself upright.

HAKIM HAROON
Nasuh... meri baat suno.

Steel CLASHES around them.

HAKIM HAROON (CONT'D)
Ammi aur Maria ko le jao. Khufiya
raaste se.

NASUH
Main aapko tanha nahin chhod sakta!
Without turning, Hakim Haroon elbows him back.

HAKIM HAROON
Yeh mera hukm hai.

A beat.

HAKIM HAROON (CONT'D)
Agar tum zinda rahe... toh iss zulm ka
jawab bhi zinda rahega.

Zafar steps forward.

ZAFAR
Aaj koi nahin bachega.

HAKIM HAROON
(shouting)
Jao!

Nasuh hesitates—a final, agonized look at his father—then
turns and RUNS toward the inner room.

INT. INNER ROOM / BASEMENT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Nasuh pulls aside a carpet. A stone hatch.

Sarah lights a small oil lamp.

They descend.

INT. HOUSE STABLE - NIGHT

A THUG enters, torch raised.

FROM ABOVE -

SAYYAD launches from the loft.

Jaws clamp onto the man's arm.

He SCREAMS. The torch DROPS.

FLAMES spread across straw.

TOOFAAN rears violently.

SAYYAD tears the tether loose.

TOOFAAN KICKS –

The stall door BURSTS open. The stallion charges into the night.

INT. AANGAN – NIGHT

Hakim Haroon fights alone now. Firelight dances across bloodied walls.

Zafar watches – satisfied.

Hakim Haroon straightens. Bleeding. Unbroken.

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL – NIGHT

A narrow stone passage. An oil lamp flickers weakly.

Nasuh leads. Behind him – Maria and Sarah.

They move on.

INT. AANGAN – MOMENTS LATER

Hakim Haroon cuts down another man.

SHADOW rises behind him –

ZAFAR.

The blade DRIVES into Haroon's back.

ZAFAR

Lagta hai Lahore aaj ek hakim se
mehroom ho jayega.

Hakim Haroon turns. Pain etched deep.

HAKIM HAROON

Peechhe se vaar... buzdilon ka tareeqa.

ZAFAR

Saltanat mein sirf jeetne walon ko
yaad rakha jaata hai.

Zafar raises his hand.

ZAFAR (CONT'D)

Isse jala do. Is ghar ko bhi raakh
kar do. Koi nishaan zinda mat rehne
dena.

Torches flare.

ZAFAR (CONT'D)

(cold, commanding)

Main thak gaya hoon... mujhe aaraam
chahiye.

(beat)

Shikaar ka kaam kal shaam tak anjaam
tak pahuncha diya jayega. Waise bhi,
Lahore se Amritsar tak, sab mere
qabze mein hai. Woh Nasuh... do
auraton ke saath kahaan bhaagega?

INT. UNDERGROUND TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS

Nasuh stops. At the end of the tunnel -

A heavy WOODEN DOOR. A rusted CHAIN.

He kneels. Works the lock.

CLINK. The chain falls.

INT. HIDDEN BARN / STABLE - NIGHT

The tunnel door creaks open.

A barn packed with STRAW and DRIED HAY.

Nasuh steps inside. Pushes aside bundled hay.

Revealing -

A SMALL STABLE.

Two HORSES tied quietly.

NASUH

Yeh Shifakhana ka tabela hai.

He moves fast. Starts saddling one horse.

Maria follows, saddling the other - hands shaking, but steady.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Ammi pehle.

He lifts Sarah onto the horse. Maria mounts beside her.

A distant BARK. SAYYAD appears – followed by TOOFAAN, smoke-streaked, eyes wild.

Relief flashes across Nasuh's face.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Maria... baagh mein ek chhota sa kulba hai. Yousuf ka. Chabi guldaan ke neeche hogi. Sayyad tum dono ko baagh tak le jaayega.

MARIA

(holding back tears)
Abbu ko wapas laana.

Nasuh nods – steady, resolved.

NASUH

Apni turkash aur kamaan mujhe de do.

She hands him the BOW and QUIVER.

Nasuh mounts TOOFAAN – bareback.

One last look at them.

THEN –

He kicks Toofaan forward.

EXT. HAKIM HAROON'S HOUSE – NIGHT

The house smolders in ruins. Charred beams jut from glowing embers. Smoke coils into the half-moon sky.

TOOFAAN skids to a halt.

Nasuh dismounts. Stares.

INT. BURNT HOUSE – CONTINUOUS

Ash drifts with every step. The ceiling CREAKS.

Underfoot –

A blackened teapot. A shattered cup. Burnt cloth.

He stops.

A BODY. Charred. Shrunken. Unrecognizable.

The skull stares back.

Nasuh collapses to his knees.

NASUH

Ba... Abba... nahin-

Wind whistles through the hollowed ruins. His hand finds a WARPED SWORD fused to debris.

CLINK -

A clay JAR. Miraculously intact. Half-filled with water.

He lifts it. Pours water over the remains.

STEAM rises - ghostlike.

With trembling hands, he gathers the bones. Places them into the jar.

NASUH (CONT'D)

(breaking)

Mujhe tumhare saath hi mar jaana
chahiye tha...

He closes his eyes. Grief tightens his chest.

NASUH (CONT'D)

(low, resolute)

Woh dua karenge... kaash main hi mar
gaya hota.

EXT. BACKYARD - CONTINUOUS

Toofaan paws the earth beneath a lone surviving tree.

Nasuh digs with sword and hands.

The jar is lowered. Earth falls. Final.

Nasuh mounts Toofaan. No saddle. No hesitation.

They vanish into the night.

EXT. VAST ESTATE - OUTER PERIMETER - NIGHT

The half-moon cuts through drifting clouds.

High walls cast long shadows.

Fifty meters from the gate, Nasuh halts.

Bow drawn. Quiver ready. Sword scarred. Eyes scan upward.

EXT. WATCH TOWER - NIGHT

A bored SENTRY scratches his neck. Helmet loose.

NASUH'S POV – exposed throat.

TWANG.

The arrow hits.

The sentry jerks once –
then slumps silently.

EXT. ESTATE GATE – NIGHT

Two GUARDS stand watch.

Nasuh spurs TOOFAAN forward.

Steel FLASHES.

One guard drops mid-breath.

The other raises his blade– Too late.

Nasuh slices across his ribs.

The sword CLATTERS. The man collapses, gasping.

WOUNDED GUARD

(breathless)

Khuda ke liye... mere bachche hain–

NASUH

(flat, cold)

Zinda rehna hai toh darwaaza khulwao.

The guard nods desperately.

EXT. ESTATE GATE – NIGHT

The wounded guard KNOCKS.

WOUNDED GUARD

Asher! Madad chahiye... Ek ghoda bhaag
gaya hai. Main pakadne jaa raha hoon.
Tum thodi der meri jagah le lo. Aadhi
kamaai tumhari.

A beat.

The gate CREAKS open.

Nasuh yanks the guard aside and drives his sword into ASHER'S
belly.

Asher drops silently.

NASUH
(to the wounded guard)
Bhaag jao. Aur dua karo ke hum phir
na milen.

The guard flees.

Nasuh pulls on Asher's uniform and disappears inside.

EXT. ZAFAR'S HAVELI - FRONT GARDEN - NIGHT

Nasuh moves through trimmed hedges. A ghost in stolen armor.

Torchlight flickers ahead.

EXT. HAVELI DOOR - NIGHT

Three sharp KNOCKS.

A peephole slides open.

GUARD
Kaun?

Nasuh steps into the lantern light.

A GUARD'S UNIFORM - soaked dark with blood.

Helmet low. Breath heavy.

The door opens-

SHNK.

Nasuh's blade punches through the guard's stomach.

The body collapses.

INT. FOYER - NIGHT

Nasuh steps in.

CREAK.

A guard freezes halfway up the stairs.

GUARD
R-

THWIP.

An arrow slams into his throat.

He tumbles forward, crashing down the steps.

INT. CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Nasuh moves fast.

Guard turns-

THUNK.

Arrow through the eye.

Nasuh leaps forward, catches him as he falls, blade at his throat.

NASUH
Zafar kahan hai?

The guard trembles, points.

Nasuh slashes.

The body drops.

INT. ZAFAR'S BEDCHAMBER - NIGHT

Nasuh KICKS the door open.

Zafar bolts upright, drenched in sweat.

Beside him - the RAQQASA, frozen in terror.

ZAFAR
Tu?! Yahan kaise-

NASUH
Maut ko koi rok nahi sakta.

Zafar grabs his sword.

CLANG!

Steel SCREAMS.

Furniture shatters.

Sharp strike-

Zafar's forearm SPLITS open.

His sword falls.

NASUH (CONT'D)
Tumhare aadmi bheekh maangte hue
mare.

Zafar stumbles back, cornered.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Unse milo.

One clean strike. Zafar collapses.

His head rolls across the marble floor.

Nasuh hurls a lantern.

FLAMES ERUPT across silk and wood.

RAQQASA

Aag! Aag!

EXT. BALCONY - MOMENTS LATER

Nasuh vaults the railing, grabs a drainpipe, slides down.

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

He lands running.

Behind him, the Haveli ROARS in flames.

Two guards rush past.

NASUH

(shouting)

Zafar sahab khatre mein hain!

They panic and sprint away.

Nasuh disappears into smoke.

EXT. HAVELI GROUNDS - MOMENTS LATER

A sharp WHISTLE.

HOOFBEATS thunder.

TOOFAAN bursts through fire and ash.

Nasuh mounts in one fluid motion.

Horse and rider vanish into the darkness.

CUT TO:

EXT. MEER AMIN MANGO ORCHARD - NIGHT

An open mango orchard - no walls, no fences.

Dense, ancient trees. Moonlight filtering through leaves.
Long, eerie shadows across the ground.

Nasuh rides in fast, hooves muffled by the soft earth.

Near a secluded cottage, he reins Toofaan to a halt.

EXT. COTTAGE DOOR - NIGHT

A mud-plastered cottage among the trees.

Nasuh dismounts, alert. He listens. Knocks - urgent, controlled.

MARIA (O.S.)

Kaun hai?

NASUH

Main hoon, Maria. Darwaaza kholo.

The door creaks open.

INT. COTTAGE - NIGHT

Nasuh steps inside.

Maria and Sarah pull him into a tight embrace.

MARIA

Bahut der se aaye ho, bhai.

SARAH

Tumhare Abba... kahan hain?

Silence. Nasuh's eyes well with tears.

NASUH

Ammi... Maria... Abba nahi rahe. Ghar
raakh ban chuka hai.

(beat)

Magar maine badla le liya. Zafar...
mere haathon mara gaya.

Maria gasps, covering her mouth.

Sarah sinks onto a stool, shaken.

SARAH

Ab hum kya karenge?

NASUH

Main Sayyad ko Yousuf ke paas
bhejunga. Sirf wahi hai jis par
bharosa hai. Humein Lahore chhodna
hoga.

From the shadows, SAYYAD pads forward.

Nasuh kneels, resting his forehead briefly against the hound's. He removes a SMALL LOCKET and ties it around Sayyad's neck.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Yeh Yousuf tak le jao. Use yahan le aao. Jaldi.

Sayyad lets out a low bark.

Nasuh opens the door. A rush of night air floods in.

Sayyad darts out, vanishing between the trees.

Nasuh watches him disappear into the darkness.

EXT. MIR AMEEN'S HOUSE - COURTYARD - NIGHT

Sayyad races across the courtyard, leaps, and scrambles up a downpipe.

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

He lands and barks sharply at the window.

INT. MIR AMEEN HOUSE - YOUSUF'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Yousuf wakes, pulls aside the curtain.

He freezes at the sight of Sayyad.

YOUSUF

Sayyad? Yahan kaise?

Sayyad nudges the locket with his paw.

Yousuf picks it up - recognition hits him.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)

Nasuh museebat mein hai.

Behind him stands Mir Ameen, his father. White beard. Commanding posture.

MIR AMEEN

Yeh kis ka kutta hai? Aur yeh raat ka shor kyun?

YOUSUF

Nasuh ka hai. Mujhe jaana hoga.

MIR AMEEN

Khoon-kharaabi ke peeche mat jaana.

YOUSUF

Agar mumkin hua... toh nahi.

Mir Ameen studies him, then nods once.

Yousuf straps on his sword and exits.

INT. MIR AMEEN MANGO GARDEN - COTTAGE - NIGHT

A single oil lamp flickers.

Nasuh, Yousuf, Maria, and Sarah sit close.

NASUH

Yousuf... main tumhara ehsaan kabhi nahi chuka paunga. Magar hum yahan zyada der nahi ruk sakte. Subedar ke aadmi humein dhoondhenge.

YOUSUF

Abhi safar karna khatarnak hai. Jab tak talaash kam na ho jaaye, yahin rehna hoga.

Nasuh exhales, conflicted.

NASUH

Phir hum chhupe kaise rahenge?

A faint, daring smile appears on Yousuf's face.

YOUSUF

Tum yahan rahoge... magar apni asli shakal mein nahi. Tumhein aurat ka bhes lena hoga.

Nasuh blinks.

NASUH

Tum keh rahe ho ke main-

YOUSUF

Tum achhe adakaar ho. Aur yeh sabse mehfooz raasta hai.

Nasuh looks to his mother. Sarah nods silently. Maria meets his eyes, steady.

NASUH

Agar isse meri maa aur behen mehfooz rahengi... toh main tayaar hoon.

YOUSUF

Main zaroori cheezein le aata hoon. Tab tak chhupe raho.

NASUH
Shukriya, Yousuf.

YOUSUF
Dost isi liye hote hain.

CUT TO:

INT. DAROGA CHAWKI - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Raqqasa, Zafar's mistress, sits wrapped in a heavy chaadar that conceals her form.

Across from her - DAROGA RANJEET SINGH (late 40s), sharp-eyed, composed, authoritative.

An ARTIST sketches NASUH'S likeness from her description, charcoal scratching softly.

Footsteps echo. The door swings open.

Subedar Mirza Qasim Beg enters - imposing, richly dressed - followed by two armed Guards.

The Daroga rises instantly.

DAROGA RANJEET SINGH
(respectful)
Subedar Sahab... aapko khud tashreef
laane ki zarurat nahi thi. Kisi
numainde ko bhej dete.

SUBEDAR
(cold, contained)
Mere bete ka qatl hua hai. Main kisi
aur par bharosa nahi karta.

DAROGA RANJEET SINGH
Humne qaatil ki shanakht kar li hai.
Nasuh... Hakim Haroon ka beta.

SUBEDAR
(startled, rising)
Nasuh? Woh shikasta-band ka beta?
Yeh kaise mumkin hai?

DAROGA RANJEET SINGH
Tahqiqaat jaari hain. Gawah ke bayan
par tasveer tayyar ho rahi hai.

The Subedar's eyes lock onto the ARTIST. Jaw tightens.

SUBEDAR
Jaise hi tasveer mukammal ho... seedha
mere paas laana.

DAROGA RANJEET SINGH
Ji, Subedar Sahab.

The Subedar steps aside with the Daroga.

SUBEDAR
(low, controlled)
Ranjeet... mujhe pata hai Zafar naa-khlaaf
tha. Zulm aur ayyashi mein dooba hua.
(beat)
Magar, agar qaatil ko misaali saza
na mili... toh awaam ka qaanoon aur
hukoomat dono se bharosa uth jaayega.

DAROGA RANJEET SINGH
Itminaan rakhiye. Insaf hoga – sab
ke saamne.

The Subedar gives one last cold look at the sketch.

EXT. LAHORE CITY BAZAAR - DAY

A suffocating crush of bodies.

Fruit splits under flies.

Yousuf pushes through the crowd – then stops.

TAP. TAP. TAP.

A nail hammers into wood.

A FRESH WANTED POSTER: NASUH'S FACE.

Below it – 3000 SILVER RUPIYA.

A MAN IN A DUSTY CLOAK watches nearby.

Yousuf swallows hard. He slips into–

INT. LADIES' DRESS SHOP - DAY

Dim light. Silk gleams softly.

A BEARDED VENDOR smiles as coins CLINK.

VENDOR
(oily)
Begum ke liye kharidari?

YOUSUF
Bas... dekh raha hoon.

Behind him – in a mirror – the cloaked man enters silently.

Yousuf fingers a gown. Costly.

Beside it: braided hair extensions.

A tag swings – 10 RUPIYA.

The cloaked man watches.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)
(loud, dismissive)
Itne mein toh kisi kisan ki wafadari
kharid loon.

He exits quickly.

EXT. BACK ALLEYS – LATER

Yousuf runs. Vaults a wall. Presses into shadow.

Silence.

A dog barks somewhere far off.

INT. MIR AMEEN'S BEDCHAMBER – NIGHT

A single oil lamp.

Mir Ameen polishes a dagger.

Yousuf enters, breath ragged.

MIR AMEEN
Badan se darr ki boo aa rahi hai,
beta.

YOUSUF
Abba... mashwara chahiye.

He hesitates.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)
Nasuh ki tasveer shehar bhar mein
hai. Teen hazaar rupiya... uske sar
par.
(beat)
Maine socha... use aurat ka bhes de
doon. Madrasa-e-naatak mein ladkiyon
ke kirdaar karta tha.

MIR AMEEN
Kapde nahi kharide.

YOUSUF
Nahi. Dukaanon mein jasoos hain.

Mir Ameen rises, walks to his bed. He bends, pulls out an old wooden chest hidden beneath. The hinges groan as he opens it.

INSIDE:

Silk gowns. Breast bindings. A braided hairpiece. A faded portrait of a young woman.

He pauses.

MIR AMEEN

Tumhari maa... chandan ki khushboo.
Hamare pehle saal ki yaad.

Yousuf gathers the clothes gently.

MIR AMEEN (CONT'D)

Le jao. Dosti ka farz hota hai.

INT. MANGO ORCHARD - COTTAGE - NIGHT

A candle flickers.

THUD - a sack hits the floor.

YOUSUF

Pehno.

Silk spills out.

Yousuf tears open a cushion, stuffs cotton into a breast band.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)

(flat)
Lo... ban gayi shehzadi.

He ties it tight.

The gown slips over Nasuh's shoulders.

Nasuh turns to the mirror. A stranger looks back.

Soft hair. Altered shape. A woman of twenty-two.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)

(dry, almost amused)
Sach bolun... ladki hoti toh shayad
mohabbat kar baithta.

EXT. LAHORE - FRUIT MANDI - DAY

A vast wholesale market bursting with life.

Bullock carts creak past. Porters shout.

Crates of mangoes, bananas, guavas, and pomegranates are stacked before open shops, their colors glowing through dust and heat.

A HEAVY CART rolls in and stops near a merchant's stall – its wooden crates still tied and sealed.

Yousuf stands beside it, wiping sweat from his brow.

He waits. Across the lane, his eyes catch something.

A POSTER nailed to a wall. NASUH'S FACE.

WANTED.

"ZAFAR KA QATIL – ZINDA YA MURDA"

A reward announced below.

Yousuf freezes – just for a heartbeat.

Then he exhales slowly, regains composure.

He turns toward the FRUIT MERCHANT – sharp-eyed, experienced – who approaches the cart.

YOUSUF

Taaza aam hain, huzoor. Subah hi
bagh se aaye hain. Dekhiye.

The merchant nods, gestures.

MERCHANT

Dikhao.

Yousuf unties one crate and lifts the lid.

The merchant reaches in, selects a mango, slices it open with a small knife.

He smells it. Tastes a piece. His expression softens.

MERCHANT (CONT'D)

(satisfied)

Mashallah... aisa meetha aam arse baad
dekha hai.

He glances at the stacked crates.

MERCHANT (CONT'D)

Yeh sab main loonga.

Yousuf nods quietly.

MERCHANT (CONT'D)

Pandrah rupiya...

He counts out silver rupees, dropping them into Yousuf's palm.

YOUSUF

(softly)

Inshallah. Kal aur behtar maal
laaunga.

The merchant signals his men.

MERCHANT

Utaaro.

Porters move in and begin unloading the crates.

Yousuf steps back, tying the money into his cloth pouch.

Behind him, the WANTED POSTER flutters in the breeze.

Nasuh's eyes seem to follow him.

Yousuf lowers his gaze, grips the cart handle, and walks away – calm, controlled.

EXT. MIR AMEEN'S MANGO ORCHARD – DAY

Golden sunlight filters through heavy branches.

Workers move quietly, cutting fruit, stacking baskets.

Yousuf oversees the work.

Nearby, MIR AMEEN supervises.

Under a tree, Maria and Sarah sort mangoes.

A short distance away, NASUH IN DISGUISE as a woman, works silently, veil lowered.

SUDDENLY–

HORSE HOOVES.

A DAROGA arrives with THREE CONSTABLES.

Dust rises. The orchard stills.

The Daroga steps forward.

DAROGA

Is shakhs ko pehchaante ho?

He holds up a SKETCH – Nasuh's face.

Yousuf studies it carefully, as if thinking.

YOUSUF
(hesitant)
Haan... dekha toh hai.

The Daroga leans in.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)
Phal mandi mein. Log keh rahe thay
iska naam Nasuh hai... Zafar sahab ka
qaatil.

A pause.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)
Teen hazaar rupiya ka inaan bhi hai...
uski sar par.

The Daroga scans the workers.

DAROGA
Zafar ke qatl ke baad poore shehar
mein talaash chal rahi hai. Har baagh...
har ghar.

Nasuh – well disguised as a young woman – sorting mangoes,
stacking them into crates behind Yousuf.

The Daroga's eyes stop on her. The portrait in his hand.

Her face. Back to the portrait. A flicker of resemblance.
Gone.

DAROGA (CONT'D)
Yeh aurat kaun hai?

YOUSUF
Meri biwi hai. HAMIDA.

Hamida lifts her gaze slowly.

HAMIDA
(respectful)
Darogaji... Yousuf mere shauhar hain.

A soft beat.

Mir Ameen steps forward.

MIR AMEEN
Koi masla, Darogaji?

DAROGA

Aap ka ta'aruf?

MIR AMEEN

Mir Ameen. Badshahi fauj ka sabiq
faujdar.

The Daroga registers this. His tone shifts.

DAROGA

Naam suna hai.

He looks around – the orchard, the workers, the calm.

DAROGA (CONT'D)

(to his men)

Chalo.

He turns back once more.

DAROGA (CONT'D)

Yaad rakhna... qaatil zinda ho ya murda,
pakda zaroor jaayega. Agar yahan
mila... koi nahi bachega.

The constables mount up and ride off.

Silence returns. A mango drops softly to the ground.

Maria exhales.

Yousuf meets her eyes. Life slowly resumes.

EXT. MIR AMEEN'S HOUSE – DAY

A TWO-HORSE CARRIAGE waits at the gate.

The DRIVER sits upright, reins in hand.

SUPER: TWO WEEKS LATER

Sarah and Maria, their soft veils drawn, climb in first.

Then HAMIDA – Nasuh in disguise – follows, veil lowered.

SAYYAD hops onto the front bench beside the DRIVER, alert.

Yousuf enters last, pulling the door shut.

INT. CARRIAGE – CONTINUOUS

On one cushioned bench, Sarah and Maria, veils drawn.

Opposite them, Yousuf sits beside Hamida, a respectful space
between them.

The carriage sways gently over the uneven road.
Sunlight filters through lattice windows.
Hamida glances back – the house shrinking behind them.

HAMIDA
Delhi kitna door hai, Yousuf?

YOUSUF
Kam se kam paanch din ka safar hai.
Chacha ki haveli pahunchte hi thoda
aaram milega.

EXT. LAHORE OUTSKIRTS - DAY

The carriage rolls past the last mud-brick homes.
Small gardens. Fruit trees.
Camels and carts move along dusty roads.

EXT. MUGHAL CHECKPOST - DAY

A ROAD GUARD raises his hand.
The carriage slows.

ROAD GUARD
Gaadi mein kaun hai? Aur kahan ja
rahe ho?

SERVANT DRIVER
Faujdaar Mir Ameen ke bete, Yousuf
sahab. Apni ammi, behen aur begum ko
Delhi le ja rahe hain.

The guard peers inside.

ROAD GUARD
Achha... Faujdaar sahib ke ghar se ho.
Safar mubarak.

He waves them on.

EXT. PUNJAB PLAINS - DAY

Fields stretch endlessly. Canals shimmer. Villages drift
past.

SUPER: FIVE DAYS LATER - NEARING DELHI

INT. CARRIAGE - DAY

Hamida leans forward.

HAMIDA
(asking Yousuf)
Aur kitni der?

YOUSUF
Bas teen ghante. Chacha ke haveli
pahunchte hi sab theek ho jaayega.

HAMIDA
Is nayi zindagi mein... main kya karoon,
Yousuf? Kisi par bojh nahi banna
chahti.

YOUSUF
Mere chacha asar-daar hain. Tumhare
liye kaam aur rehne ka intezaam ho
jaayega.

HAMIDA
Tum hamesha mujhe hairaan kar dete ho.

YOUSUF
Tumhari hifazat ke liye ek chhota sa
jhooth bolna padega.

HAMIDA
Kaisa jhooth?

YOUSUF
Safed jhooth. Kyun ke maslihat-aameez
jhooth, fitna-angez sach se behtar hai.

EXT. CHACHA KARIM'S ESTATE - DELHI - DAY

A grand DELHI HAVELI behind high walls. Polished marble gleams
in the sun. Ornate iron gates. Trees and trimmed grass. Quiet.
Commanding.

INT. CHACHA KARIM'S HAVELI - LIVING HALL - DAY

A vast hall of restrained luxury. White marble. Sandstone
pillars. JAALI SCREENS filtering soft daylight.

CHACHA KARIM (50s), broad and commanding, reclines on a
cushioned divan.

Before him stands Yousuf, earnest and formal.

Opposite, Hamida (Nasuh) sits on a low carved takht-back
straight, hands folded, eyes lowered. Poised.

Beside her, her mother Sarah and younger sister Maria.

Yousuf steps forward.

YOUSUF

Chacha jaan, main aapse apni hone wali dulhan ka ta'aruf karwana chahta hoon.

(indicating)

Yeh Hamida hain. Aur yeh unki walida Sarah... aur behen Maria.

Karim studies them. His gaze lingers on Hamida.

CHACHA KARIM

Achha khandaan lagta hai. Aap sab ka khair-maqdam hai.

HAMIDA

Aapki inayat hai, huzoor.

CHACHA KARIM

Delhi kis wajah se aana hua?

The lightness leaves Yousuf's face.

YOUSUF

Chacha... Hamida ke walid, Hakim Haroon ko ek zalim subahdaar ke bete ne shaheed kar diya... aur iske bade bhai jan, Nasuh... jo mera aziz dost tha... ab tak ghayab hain. Uska zinda ya murda, koi pata nahin.

(voice tightens)

Aapko yaad hoga... Hakim Haroon aur mere abba... dono se bahut gehri dosti thi.

A heavy beat. Yousuf looks at the women.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)

In khawateen ki jaan aur izzat khatre mein thi. Main... inhein yahaan, aapke paas, Delhi le aaya. Aur ab aapka ghar hi inki panah-gaah hai.

A heavy silence. Karim's expression darkens. He looks at the women anew—not as guests, but refugees.

CHACHA KARIM

Zalimoon ka zikar baad mein. Pehle yeh batao... tu shaadi kab kar raha hai?

YOUSUF

Pehle main Lahore wapas ja kar... abba jaan ke saath mashwara kar loon. Magar us waqt tak... aap Hamida ko koi munasib kaam de dijiye.

Karim looks at Hamida again. Assessing her strength.

CHACHA KARIM

Is ladki ko kya hunar aata hai?

YOUSUF

Hamida shikasta haddiyan, mouch aayi kamar aur jism ke aadhe hisse ko dawa aur maalish se theek kar sakti hai.

(beat)

Uske abbajaan, Shaheed Hakim Haroon, bhi Lahore ke mashhoor shikastaband the.

Chacha Karim's interest sharpens.

CHACHA KARIM

Shahi Hammam ke maalik se meri pehchaan hai. Main sifaarish kar dunga.

Maria stiffens. Sarah lowers her gaze.

HAMIDA

Main aapki ehstaanmand rahungi, huzoor.

Karim studies her a moment too long.

CHACHA KARIM

Shahi Hammam mein sirf kaam bolta hai. Rehmat nahi.

Footsteps.

MEHRUN-NISA (late 40s), Karim's wife, enters—elegant, dignified. She takes in the guests with a warm smile.

MEHRUN-NISA

Khush aamadeed. Mehmaan khuda ka tohfa hote hain.

She moves to Sarah. Performs a graceful AADAAB—a slight bow, hand over heart.

MEHRUN-NISA (CONT'D)

Aap ka intezaar tha.

Sarah, with dignity, reciprocates.

Mehrun-Nisa repeats the gesture to Maria, who reciprocates shyly.

Then, she turns to Hamida. Her gaze is welcoming but appraising.

MEHRUN-NISA (CONT'D)

Beti. Ghar aaye ho. Yahaan ghar jaisa mehsoos karo.

Hamida gracefully rises. Steps forward, stops at a respectful distance, and performs a deep, flawless aadaab.

HAMIDA

Aadaab arz hai, Begum Sahiba.

Before Mehrun-Nisa can respond, Hamida adds, her voice layered with humble regret:

HAMIDA (CONT'D)

Maaf kijiye... safar ki thakan aur toda sa zukaam aapki khidmat mein poora qadam na uthane de raha. Beshak aapki har khushi mere liye amr hai.

She bows her head slightly.

MEHRUN-NISA

(eyes softening)

Ijizat? Aise mehsoos na karo, beti. Aapka aadaab hi kaafi hai.

Mehrun-Nisa glides to sit beside her husband.

A MAID appears.

MAID

Khana tayyar hai, maalik.

CHACHA KARIM

Aur meri beti?

MAID

Kapde tabdeel kar rahi hain, huzoor.

INT. DINING HALL - MOMENTS LATER

A vast, carpeted hall. A lavish DASTERKHWAN at its center: golden platters, roasted peacock with gilded feathers, towers of glistening fruit, spiced lamb on saffron rice.

Mattresses and cushions encircle the spread. Chacha Karim settles at the head.

ZEIBUN-NISA (21), radiant and graceful, enters. Her silk gown whispers across the floor.

YOUSUF

(smiling warmly)

Meri pyaari behen!

Zeibun-Nisa offers a respectful adaab to him first—a graceful nod, hand to her forehead—then they share an affectionate look.

ZEIBUN-NISA

Kya main mehmaanon se mil sakti hoon?

YOUSUF

Zeibun-Nisa... yeh hain Hamida, Sarah,
aur Maria.

Zeibun-Nisa offers the traditional aadaab to Sarah, then Maria. Both reciprocate.

She turns to Hamida. Hamida repeats her shallow, seated nod from before.

ZEIBUN-NISA

(noticing the formality)

Aadaab. Suna aap thaki hui hain safar
se?

HAMIDA

(nodding, fragile
voice)

Haan, Behen... aur zukaam bhi. Aap
se door rah kar hi aapki khidmat
hogi.

Zeibun-Nisa's eyes don't leave Hamida. She notes the composed posture, steady hands, clear eyes that don't match the weak voice. A flicker of curiosity.

MARIA

(brightly, breaking
tension)

MashaAllah. Aapka makan toh waqai
bohat khubsurat hai!

Zeibun-Nisa offers a final, thoughtful look at Hamida before taking her seat.

Everyone settles. Chacha Karim raises his hands solemnly.

CHACHA KARIM

Bismillah... shuru karein.

Heads bow in respect.

Hamida subtly mirrors the women around her – hands folded, movements restrained, perfectly composed.

EXT. SHAHI HAMMAM - DELHI - DAY

SUPER: THREE DAYS LATER

The grand Shahi Hammam stands on the edge of Shahjahanabad. Sandstone arches. Intricate carvings. A gold-trimmed plaque glints in the sun. Water trickles from stone fountains. Rose and orange trees line the entrance.

INT. SHAHI HAMMAM - RECEPTION HALL - DAY

Soft light reflects off polished marble floors. Plush divans. Embroidered cushions. Incense drifts lazily through the air.

Behind a carved wooden counter stands GOWHAR KHATOON (early 30s), elegant, authoritative.

Staff, clad in uniforms, move silently around her. Nearby stands HAMIDA - Nasuh in disguise - dressed in a neat pink uniform.

HAMIDA
(soft, polite)
Yeh jagah... waqai dil ko chhoo leti hai.

GOWHAR KHATOON
(smiles with pride)
Honi bhi chahiye. Shahi Hammam sirf aaraam ke liye nahi hota. Yahaan log apni thakaan, dard aur gham chhod jaate hain.

HAMIDA
Jaise sukoon ka ek alag hi jahan.

GOWHAR KHATOON
Aur ab tum bhi isi jahan ka hissa ho, Hamida.
(beat)
Tumhari mehnat aur hunar... hamari pehchaan ko aur buland karega.

GOWHAR KHATOON (CONT'D)
Shahi Hammam mein tumhara khush-aamdeed hai.

HAMIDA
(nods, respectful)
Shukriya. Main apni taraf se koi kami nahi chhodungi.

CLOSE ON - A NOTICE BOARD.

Hamida's eyes stop. Nasuh's face stares back at her.

Beside it – DAAKU CHANGEZI.

Her breath catches – just for a moment. She regains control.

HAMIDA (CONT'D)

(casual)

Yeh tasveerein... yahaan kyun lagayi
gayi hain?

GOWHAR KHATOON

Daaku Changezi aur uske log tijaarati
raaston par hamle karte hain.

(points)

Aur yeh – Nasuh. Subehdaar ke bete
ka qaatil.

(shrugs)

Hukm upar se hai. Agar kahin dikh
jaaye, pehchaan ho jaaye.

HAMIDA

(slight nod)

Samajhdari bhara ehtiyaat hai.

A beat.

HAMIDA (CONT'D)

Meri aaj ki duty khatam ho rahi hai.
Mujhe chalna hoga... tayyari karni hai.
(soft)

Hum nayi jagah muntaqil ho rahe hain.
Paas hi hai... kuch khaas nahi.

GOWHAR KHATOON

(smiles)

Achha. Kal milte hain, Hamida.

HAMIDA

Ji. Insha'Allah.

EXT. COBBLESTONE ROAD – DAY

Sunlight beats down on ancient stone.

LACQUERED HORSE-DRAWN COACH rolls to a stop before—

AN IMPOSING IRON GATE.

Black bars twist into vine-like patterns, set into weathered
stone walls.

EXT. IRON GATE / COACH – DAY

The coach door CREAKS open.

Yousuf steps down, boots crunching on gravel.

Behind him – HAMIDA.

She pauses, fingers resting on the doorframe, eyes scanning the estate.

Maria and Sarah exchange quiet looks of awe.

SAYYAD sniffs the air, alert.

YOUSUF
(unlocking the gate)
Yeh hai tumhara Delhi ka ghar.

The hinges GROAN as the gate swings open.

EXT. COURTYARD – CONTINUOUS

A flagstone path winds through overgrown rose and chameli bushes.

Bees drift lazily. White jasmine trembles in the heat.

A weathered pergola leans at one end.

A broken incense burner lies half-buried in the grass.

They step inside. Dry petals scatter beneath their feet.

Maria sneezes.

HAMIDA
(eyeing the shutters)
Yeh ghar kiska hai?

YOUSUF
(touching the wall)
Chacha Karim ka.
(grins)
Tum bas yeh dekho ke aam meetha hai –
baagh aur malik ki chinta mat karo.

EXT. WOODEN DOOR – MOMENTS LATER

A tarnished brass key.

CLICK. The heavy door CREAKS open.

INT. LIVING ROOM – CONTINUOUS

A shaft of sunlight cuts through dust.

A vast carpet lies beneath folded gaddas and bolsters, wrapped in yellowed cloth.

Low wooden chowkis. Aged trunks.

Faded portraits of ancestors lining the walls.
A cold stone fireplace – long unused.
Hamida lifts a corner of the carpet.
Dust rises. she coughs.

HAMIDA
(smiling)
Lagta hai kaam mil gaya.

MARIA
(at the window)
Bagicha toh jungle ban chuka hai.

She pulls the curtains apart. Sunlight floods in.

YOUSUF
(opening the back
door)
Lagta hai nayi kahaani shuru ho rahi
hai.

Hamida stops him with a look.

HAMIDA
Bas. Ab tum wapas Lahore jao.
(soft, firm)
Is waqt Abba ko tumhari zarurat hai.
Yahaan hum sambhaal lenge.

A beat.

Yousuf nods. Hands her the keys.

YOUSUF
Teh-khana mein bhi ghar ka samaan
hai.
(smiles)
Aur... agli baar tumhara ghoda bhi le
aaunga.

Their handshake lingers.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)
Chacha Karim jaante hain mujh tak
kaise pahunchna hai.

Yousuf turns to leave.

SAYYAD whines softly, ears drooping – sensing the farewell.

INT. SHAHI HAMMAM - STORAGE ROOM - DAY

Shelves lined with glass and brass bottles - amber, gulab, chandan, zafran-infused oils. Thick ittari sealed with wax.

Hamida tests the oils between her fingers - precise, controlled. Almost ritualistic.

BEHIND HER -

Two STAFF GIRLS whisper near stacked linens, eyes tracking her every move.

STAFF GIRL 1

(murmuring)

Dekho... khushbu-dar tail ko kaise chhooti hai. Jaise koi ibadat ho.

STAFF GIRL 2

(fanning herself)

Yeh sirf hunar nahi... ilm aur daanish hai.

The door BANGS OPEN.

A HAMMAM RUNNER - young, breathless, grips the frame.

HAMMAM RUNNER

Hamida - Hujra-e-Dovom! Jaldi! Surayya Begum Sahiba tashreef laayi hain.

A beat.

Hamida's hand hovers... then selects a dark, potent oil - chandan blended with herbs.

INT. SHAHI HAMMAM - RECEPTION DESK - MOMENTS LATER

Gowhar Khatoon taps a manicured nail against her ledger.

Her gaze pins Hamida.

GOWHAR KHATOON

Wazir ki begum hai. Ek bhi khata hui... toh sab barbaad.

Hamida meets her eyes. Unblinking.

HAMIDA

Woh jaise aayi hain... usse zyada khush hokar jaayegi.

A charged silence.

THEN —

GOWHAR KHATOON
(smiles thinly)
Toh phir... sabit karo.

INT. SHAHI HAMMAM — MASSAGE ROOM 2 — CONTINUOUS

Candlelight flickers. SURAYYA BEGUM (30s), fair-skinned, elegant, lies face-down. Her fingers grip the table edge.

HAMIDA
(warming oil between
palms)
Sabse zyada dard kahaan hai, meri
malika?

SURAYYA BEGUM
(muffled, weary)
Aisa koi hissa hai... jahan nahi hai?
Hamida's thumbs press into a hardened knot along the spine.

SURAYYA BEGUM (CONT'D)
(sharp inhale)
Ya Khuda—

HAMIDA
(steady, controlled)
Saans lijiye... aahista.

Surayya's back arches involuntarily. A stifled moan escapes.

LATER — MASSAGE IN PROGRESS

Sweat beads along Surayya's nape.

Hamida's hands move with authority — kneading, releasing.

SURAYYA BEGUM
(gasping)
Tum... bilkul wahi jagah... kaise jaan
leti ho?

HAMIDA
(quiet, certain)
Jism woh sach bata deta hai... jo zubaan
chhupa leti hai.

Surayya's fingers clutch the sheet.

POST-MASSAGE

Surayya sits up slowly. Her robe slips from one shoulder.
Breath loose. Eyes glassy.

SURAYYA BEGUM

(dazed)

Saalon baad... aaj zinda mehsoos ho
raha hai.

Hamida takes a fresh linen towel. Dabs the hollow of the
neck. One slow pass down the spine.

Then – from her sash – a small crystal vial.

HAMIDA

(presenting it)

Oud-e-khaas. Shahi Hammam ka tohfa.

The bottle warms in Surayya's palm.

SURAYYA BEGUM

(turning it)

Tumhari... khaas tarkeeb?

HAMIDA

(bowing slightly)

Un raaton ke liye... jab darwaaze band
ho jaate hain.

(steps back)

Tasleemat, Begum Sahiba.

INT. ROYAL PALACE – JAHANARA'S CHAMBER – DAY

A thin trail of smoke curls from a burning OUD stick in a
silver holder.

SHEHZAAADI JAHANARA (22) reclines on a gilded divan, reading
a Persian manuscript.

Pearl-embroidered peshwaz spilling like silver across silk.

A KANEEZ enters, bowing low.

KANEEZ

Shehzadi-e-Aalam... Surayya Begum haazir
hain.

Jahanara does not look up. A slight nod.

Doors CREAK open.

Surayya glides in, violets in hand. Her smile carries intent.

SURAYYA BEGUM

Shehzadi... Shahi Hammam mein ek naya
qissa janam le raha hai.

Jahanara closes her book – soft, final.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA
Humein bhi us qisse ka hissa banaiye.

Surayya leans in, dupatta whispering.

SURAYYA BEGUM
Hamida. Uske haathon mein ajeeb si
taaseer hai... jaise koi purana afsoon.
(pause)
Meri thakaan... mera bojh... sab dhuan
ban kar udd gaya.

Jahanara unconsciously rubs her neck.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA
Khush-naseeb hain aap.

Surayya smiles, twirling a violet.

SURAYYA BEGUM
Kya aapke liye Hujra-e-Awwal makhsos
kar doon?

Jahanara takes the flower.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA
Abhi. Isi waqt.

EXT. SHAHI HAMMAM - DAY

Thundering hooves.

A GRAND CARRIAGE, draped in crimson silk and embossed with
the Mughal Sun, rolls to a halt.

SHAHI SAWARS dismount in perfect unison, forming a protective
corridor, shielding the royal presence from the crowd.

EXT. HAMMAM ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Gowhar Khatoon and attendants in silken peshwaz stand ready,
each holding a silver tray of fresh roses and daffodils.

The carriage door opens. Surayya Begum steps out, offering
her hand.

Shehzaadi JAHANARA follows, taking Surayya's hand, descending
with regal poise.

Gowhar Khatoon and staff bow deeply, foreheads nearly touching
the ground.

GOWHAR KHATOON
Khush-amdeed, Shehzadi-e-Aalam.
(MORE)

GOWHAR KHATOON (CONT'D)
Shahi Hammam ki khush-kismati hai ke
aaj aapne yahan qadam ranja farmaya.

Jahanara accepts the flowers, passing them to an attendant.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA
Suna hai tumhare Hammam mein koi
purana jaadu bais hai. Hum bhi us se
mas-hoor hona chahte hain.

Gowhar Khatoon smiles, guiding them into the cool marble interior.

INT. RECEPTION HALL - CONTINUOUS

The vast hall is lined with staff bowing in synchronized reverence.

The soft payal of the princess echoes against the domed ceilings.

INT. HUIJRA-E-AWWAL (MASSAGE CHAMBER 1) - MOMENTS LATER

Luxurious chamber. White marble floors. Pietra Dura walls. Candlelight flickers softly.

GOWHAR KHATOON
Yeh Hujra-e-Awwal sirf Shahi Khandaan
ke liye makhsos hai. Umeed hai aap
yahan sukoon payengi.

Jahanara steps in, eyes scanning the room.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA
Sukoon ki talaash hi toh humein yahan
layi hai. Ab us "jaadugar" se bhi
milwa do.

Gowhar Khatoon exits. Surayya assists Jahanara in removing her jewelry. A soft, rhythmic knock.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA (CONT'D)
Haazir ho, Hamida.

The door glides open. Hamida (Nasuh in disguise) enters in a modest yet elegant pink Angarkha, carrying a silver tray with crystal vials. She bows gracefully.

HAMIDA
Shehzadi ki khidmat mein haazir hona,
hamari bandagi hai.

She places the tray down. Faint strains of a sitar drift from outside.

HAMIDA (CONT'D)

(touching the vials)

Aapke liye: Chameli aur Sandal –
rooh ko qaraar dene ke liye. Mushk
aur Zafran – zehen ko taza-dam karne
ke liye. Aur yeh... Oud-e-Khaas – un
bojh ke liye jo dikhayi nahi dete,
magar bhari hote hain.

Jahanara looks at Hamida a beat too long.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA

Sandal aur Chameli.

Hamida begins. As her hands press into Jahanara's shoulders,
the princess exhales sharply.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA (CONT'D)

Tumhare hathon mein woh sakhti hai
jo aksar talwar pakadne walon ki
hoti hai.

HAMIDA

Zameen se jura kaam karne walon ke
haath aksar sabaq seekh jate hain,
Shehzadi. Hum dehaat mein pale-barhe
hain – asli doodh, taza hawa, aur
khet ki mehnat mein meri parwarish
hui hai.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA

Shayad humein tumhe Qila-e-Mualla
bulwa lena chahiye.

HAMIDA

Hamara naseeb... magar is Hammam ka
sukoon, Shehzadi, kahin aur aapko
mehsoos na hoga.

Hamida runs a warm silk towel over her back, wiping away
excess oil.

HAMIDA (CONT'D)

Khidmat mukammal hui, Shehzadi-e-
Aalam.

Jahanara lingers, eyes half-closed, then rises with effortless
grace.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA

Hamida. Tumhari haathon ka jadoo
waqayi humein mas-hoor kar gaya...

HAMIDA

(bowing)

Aur aapki khidmat mein haazir hona
mujhe mashkoor aur masroor kar deta
hai, Shehzadi-e-Aalam.

(beat, polite)

Agar aur koi khidmat na ho, Shehzadi,
toh main aapki huzoor se rukhsat
lena chahungi.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA

(soft smile)

Chaliye, Hamida. Aaj ka kaam yahin
khatam. Shukriya. Agle hafte phir
milenge.

EXT. HOUSE BACKYARD - DAY

Golden sunlight washes over a modest yard.

Nasuh and Sarah sit with steaming cups of tea on worn but
sturdy wooden chairs.

Across the yard, Maria draws a recurve bow. Breath controlled.
Focused.

SUPER: FOUR MONTHS LATER

MARIA

(grinning, breathless)

Nasuh - dekho.

She releases.

THWACK. The arrow strikes the hand-painted target, just shy
of dead center.

NASUH

(low whistle)

Bas ek hafta aur... phir teer bhi raasta
bhool jayenge.

Maria's smile fades. She runs a thumb along the bowstring.

MARIA

(soft)

Agar pehle se seekhi hoti... shayad
abba-

NASUH

(cutting in, firm)

Nahin.

(beat)

Hum us waqt se ladte hain jo humein
diya gaya ho.

He rises, placing a steady hand on her shoulder – gentle but purposeful.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Tum sirf is ghar ki hifazat nahin kar rahi. Tum apni kahani likh rahi ho.

Maria nods. Sets another arrow. Focus returns.

SARAH

(hushed, leaning in)
Nasuh... Shahi Hammam. Ab bas.

Nasuh stiffens. Sarah's fingers tighten around her teacup.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Agar kisi ne jaan liya ke tum aurat ka bhes-

NASUH

(flat)
Mujhe pata hai.

Sarah grips his wrist.

SARAH

(worry etched)
Toh kuch karo, beta. Kyun ke yeh nah-jahiz aur gunaa hai... Khuda na-khwasta agar tumhein kuch ho gaya, toh hum kya kareinge?

Nasuh places a hand on her shoulder.

NASUH

(gently, with conviction)
Ammi jaan... Khuda Kareem hai. Main yeh sab shauq se nahin, majboori se kar raha hoon.

A beat.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Yousuf agle maheene Lahore se laut raha hai. Uske baad hum Bombay ki taraf nikal jayenge.

Sarah looks at him – torn between fear and hope.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Aaj kal paaitakht ke halaat theek nahin.

(MORE)

NASUH (CONT'D)

Na-amni hai, chori-dakaityan badh
rahi hain...

(voice lowers)

Suna hai Bombay mein Angrezon ki
Company ne apni pakad mazboot kar li
hai. Wahan kaanon sakht hai... aur
hukm chalne laga hai.

Sarah listens, silent.

NASUH

Jo mehnat kare, uske liye kaam hai.
Bandargah hai, tijarat hai, rozgaar
hai. Zindagi kam az kam aman ke saath
guzarti hai.

Sarah exhales slowly, surrendering to fate.

SARAH

Theek hai, beta... Yousuf ke aane tak
sabr karte hain. Khuda sabr karne
walon ke saath hota hai.

Nasuh looks at her – grateful, resolute.

NASUH

Ammi... humein sirf zinda rehna nahin,
mehfooz rehna bhi seekhna hoga.

Sarah's eyes moisten. She nods faintly. Nasuh exhales.

BEHIND HIM – THWACK.

Maria's arrow strikes dead center.

NASUH (CONT'D)

(to Sarah)

Kal Gowhar Khaton se baat karunga.
Maria – hifazati dastay mein hogi.

Sarah watches Maria, now releasing three arrows in quick
succession.

THWACK. THWACK. THWACK.

SARAH

(soft, proud)

Khuda reham kare... jo bhi iske raaste
aaye.

INT. ROYAL PALACE – JAHANARA'S CHAMBER – DAY

Morning light filters through stained glass, scattering jewel-
toned shadows across silk cushions and carved marble.

Shehzaadi Jahanara reclines on a velvet divan, fingertips circling the rim of a gilded teacup – distracted, thoughtful.

Opposite her, Surayya Begum pours tea with measured grace. Steam rises between them – words unspoken.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA

(softly)

Hamida ke haath... sirf jism ko nahin
chhoote. Woh baat karte hain.

Her fingers drift to the nape of her neck, pressing lightly. A faint flush blooms beneath her skin.

SURAYYA BEGUM

(teacup set down)

Shehar mein afwaah hai. Kehte hain
usne registan ke faqeeron se seekha...
ya phir kisi aur quwwat se.

A beat. Jahanara's fingers still. Then – a slow, dangerous smile.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA

Phir toh yeh quwwat hamaare liye
lazzat hai... aur uske liye izzat aur
shohrat.

She rises. Silk whispers against silk. Moves to the window. Below, palace guards drill with swords – steel clashes, discipline, power.

Behind her – the faint chink of porcelain.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA (CONT'D)

(soft, amused)

Tumhara qarz hai mujh par. Hamida se
milwaane ka.

She watches sparrows flit along the palace wall.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA (CONT'D)

Shahi Hammam ke yeh haftay... tabdeeli
le aaye hain.

(beat)

Uski ujrat dugni kar do. Aur har
Shanivaar... mera waqt khaali rahe.

Surayya inclines her head. Her smile does not reach her eyes.

SURAYYA BEGUM

Jaisa aap ka hukm.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MOUNTAINOUS DAKU HIDEOUT - DAY

SUPER: TWO WEEKS LATER

A CLIFFSIDE FORTRESS, jagged and unforgiving, claws at the sky. The wind has a voice here--it howls.

BELOW, carved into the living rock, lies a DAKU ENCAMPMENT.

MEN unload a cart. Crates crack open to reveal:

-- Grain sacks.

-- Bundles of dried meat.

-- Swords, arrows, spears.

-- Coils of waxed bowstrings.

-- THREE FLINTLOCK PISTOLS, polished and ready.

-- TWO MATCHLOCK RIFLES, oiled and deadly.

AT THE CENTER stands DAAKU CHANGEZI. A statue of grim patience. His silence is a command.

Beside him, ARMAAN SINGH (late 30s), scans the camp like a hawk. A born predator.

Nearby, TAAJIR NESAAAR (60), a Delhi merchant, wrings his hands.

ON A NARROW RIDGE ABOVE -- TWO ARCHERS stand guard, bows half-drawn.

Changezi picks up a FLINTLOCK PISTOL from a crate. Tests its weight. His movements are economical, military.

DAAKU CHANGEZI

Sab kuch le aaye ho?

NESAAAR

Behtareen ghalla. Aur woh hathyaar
jo aap ne maange thay.

(leans in, voice
dropping)

Magar is se bhi zyada... achi khabar
laaya hoon. Munafa dene wali.

Changezi looks up. His eyes harden.

DAAKU CHANGEZI

Upar se neechi tak kana hoon... bolo,
jaldi.

NESAAR

Shehzadi Jahanara aur uski ameer
saheliyaan har Juma Shahi Hammam
jaati hain.

(beat)

Magar wahan pehra zyada hota hai...

Changezi's jaw tightens.

NESAAR (CONT'D)

Magar do hafton baad Eid ka jashn
hai. Aur is baar zanaana jashn
Roshanara Bagh mein hoga.

A flicker of interest in Changezi's eyes.

NESAAR (CONT'D)

Shehzadi... waziron ki begumaat... aur
shahenshahi khandaan ki auratein -
Sab ek hi jagah.

A slow, dangerous smile creeps across Changezi's face.

DAAKU CHANGEZI

Jaari rakho.

NESAAR

Bagh khula hoga. Pehra kam. Nishaan
saaf.

(beat)

Zewar. Sona. Daulat. Auratein. Ek hi
vaar... aur saalon ka kharch.

Changezi studies him.

DAAKU CHANGEZI

Aur tumhara hissa?

NESAAR

(smiling)

Aap jaante hain... main tajir hoon.

Changezi exhales sharply.

DAAKU CHANGEZI

Laalach budhaape mein bhi tum se
chipak kar baithi hai, Nesaar. Yaad
rakho - kafan mein jaib nahin hoti.

NESAAR

Magar jab jaib bhari ho, toh badan
ko kafan ki fikr hi nahin rehti.

A beat.

DAAKU CHANGEZI

Theek hai. Agar taqdeer ne saath
diya aur hamari tadbeer rang layi
toh tumhara hissa tumhe mil jayega.

Nesaar's face lights up. He rubs his hands together.

NESAAR

Toh phir, Roshanara Bagh aap ke
hawale. Woh bhi Eid-e-Qurbaan ke
din... Unki aish... mitti mein mil
jaayegi.

Changezi's smile darkens.

DAAKU CHANGEZI

Waise bhi... Eid par log qurbani dete
hain. Toh ham jaise ghareebon ka bhi
thoda haq banta hai.

INT. SHAHI HAMMAM - BACKYARD - DAY

Sunlight, soft and dappled, filters through manicured neem
trees. A world away from the howling cliffs.

Maria stands poised, a living statue of concentration. Bow
drawn, string kissing her cheek.

Nearby, Hamida (Nasuh) and Gowhar Khatoon observe.

GOWHAR KHATOON

Chalo, Maria. Us daali se bandhi
resham ki patti.

A single crimson silk ribbon flutters from a low branch twenty
paces away.

Maria's world narrows to the ribbon. She inhales. Holds.

RELEASE.

The arrow WHISTLES--a streak of fletching and steel.

It SNATCHES the ribbon cleanly mid-air--

--and pins it, ribbon and all, to the trunk of the tree
behind.

THWUK.

Silence, but for the rustling leaves.

GOWHAR KHATOON (CONT'D)

Masha'Allah... aisi nazar aur haath
Delhi ke sipahiyon mein bhi kam hota
hai.

HAMIDA

Maine kaha tha. Maria kabhi chookti
nahi.

MARIA

Teerandazi mera shauq hai. Aaj kaam
aa gaya.

Gowhar lowers her voice.

GOWHAR KHATOON

Toh phir tay raha. Eid ke jashn ke
liye tum hamari hifazati jamaat ka
hissa ho.

Maria nods.

Hamida watches – pride mixed with unease.

INT. NASUH'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT

A single OIL LAMP fights the darkness.

CLOSE ON A MIRROR – reflecting Nasuh's exhausted face. Dark
circles under eyes that have seen too much.

THE COUNTER: A battlefield of disguise. Scissors. Strips of
HARDENED ADHESIVE. A shallow brass bowl of murky water.

He rolls up his sleeve. Reveals a forearm mapped with raw,
red patches.

NASUH

(to his reflection, a
whisper)

Ek aur din...

He SLAPS a fresh adhesive strip onto clean skin. Winces. He
GRIPS the edge and YANKS. A sharp GASP escapes his lips.
Muscles in his jaw cord tight. He presses his palm against
the fiery sting, eyes squeezed shut.

He repeats the ritual. CALF. A strip. A pull. A suppressed
hiss. He unties the cloth wrapped around his head. His NATURAL
HAIR tumbles down--longer, heavier, real.

He runs fingers through it, a moment of stolen authenticity.
He hangs the FALSE BRAID on a nail. It swings--a ghost of
the girl he pretends to be.

NASUH (CONT'D)
(soft, to the braid)
Shukriya... ab aaraam kar.

He washes his hair slowly, the water turning grey with dust and exhaustion. Dries it. Combs it back with a soldier's precision. Re-binds it all away.

The mask is back on. Hamida stares back from the mirror.

HAMIDA
(quietly)
Eid ka jashn... bas sukoon se guzar
jaaye.

INT. NESAAR'S GODAAM - NIGHT

A vast, dim storage hall behind Merchant Nesaar's house.

Mud walls. Thick wooden beams. Oil lamps flicker low.

Stacks of CLOTH BALES, SPICE CRATES, and SEALED CHESTS line the walls.

Everything appears ordinary. Respectable.

The heavy door CREAKS open.

SHADOWS slip in. One by one - DAKUS, faces half-covered, dressed as porters and traders.

Their movements are quiet. Disciplined.

A man drops a grain sack. THUD.

The sound is wrong. He unties it.

A CURVED TALWAR glints inside.

Another sack opens - SPEARHEADS wrapped in oiled cloth. Shafts bundled neatly.

From a long crate marked "INDIGO" -

A FLINTLOCK RIFLE. Old. Heavy. Mughal-era.

An daku checks the flint.

SNAPS it softly. Satisfied.

Nearby, two men slide DAGGERS and KATAR BLADES into a false-bottom chest.

Nesaar watches everything. His voice stays low.

NESAAR

Hoshyaari se. Har cheez apni jagah.

A Daku gestures to the rifles.

DAKU

Goliyan kam hain.

NESAAR

(scoffs, under breath)

Goliyan mehngi hoti hain. Aaj talwaar
aur neza hi kaafi hain.

They nod.

Weapons are concealed with practiced ease –

- Spears slid behind sugarcane bundles
- Swords hidden inside hollowed trunks
- Rifles wrapped in wool, buried beneath cloth bales
- Powder horns tucked inside spice jars

FROM OUTSIDE –

A night WATCHMAN'S call.

WATCHMAN (O.S.)

Khabardaar... hoshiyaar...

(beat, fading)

Jaagte raho...

Everyone FREEZES. Silence. Footsteps pass. Breaths return.
The final chest is sealed.

Nesaar surveys the room. To any eye--a merchant's stock.

He blows out the final lamp. DARKNESS SWALLOWS THE SCENE.

NESAAR

(low, final)

Eid-e-Qurbaan... khoon maangegi.

The LAST ECHO of Nesaar's line FADES, replaced by...

...the distant, joyful ADHAN for Eid prayer.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH - EID MORNING

The Mughal gardens are in full bloom. Fountains sparkle.
Flower beds blaze with vibrant colors. Sunlight floods the
scene—a picture of serene beauty.

Women and children, clad in silk anarkalis, brocade lehengas, saris, and embroidered dupattas, move gracefully, their laughter and jewelry glinting in the light.

Children dart between the marble paths, barely able to contain their excitement.

Guards stand at attention, their vigilance subtle, but unwavering.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH - SHAHI ENCLOSURE - CONTINUOUS

Silk canopies sway above the gathering. Rose petals are scattered across the marble floors. Rows of noblewomen sit in composed elegance.

BEHIND THEM, ON CARVED WOODEN CHAIRS -

Hamida (Nasuh), composed but alert. Maria, watchful. Gowhar Khatoon, dignified but tense.

A soft murmur rises as SHEHZADI JAHANARA rises and moves toward the JHAROKHA—a raised pavilion overlooking the garden.

Her dupatta catches the sunlight, and the crowd falls into an expectant silence.

JAHANARA

(soft, clear)

Ahl-e-Dilli, hazraat, aur meri pyari
behton... assalamu alaikum wa
rahmatullah.

A respectful hush deepens. Every eye is on her.

JAHANARA (CONT'D)

Meri is dilli ke tamaam baasiyon ko,
aap sab ko... is pavitra din par, mera
Pranam.

She places a hand over her heart and gives a slight, graceful bow. The gesture is noticed, especially by the Hindu families, who return warm, appreciative smiles.

JAHANARA (CONT'D)

Jab Khuda ki rahmat zameen par itni
khubsurti lekar utarti hai... toh samajh
lena chahiye ke woh hamare imtihaan
ka waqt bhi hai.

She pauses, letting the weight of her words sink in. A few people exchange knowing glances.

JAHANARA (CONT'D)

Aaj Eid-ul-Adha hai. Hazrat Ibrahim (A.S.) ka woh aazmaish bhara lamha... jahan qurbani sirf ek janwar nahi, balki apni har khwahish, har gham, har dard ko Khuda ke aage pesh karne ka naam hai.

She surveys the crowd with a serene expression, though a flicker of solemnity clouds her face.

JAHANARA (CONT'D)

Is sheher ki mitti ne hazaron saal se qurbaaniyon ka khoon piya hai. Yeh sheher bana hai... toota hai... aur phir bana hai. Kyunki yahan har tootne ke baad... koi na koi istiqlal ka diya jalta hai.

A profound silence hangs over the crowd. Even the children hold still.

JAHANARA (CONT'D)

Meri dua hai ke is Eid par, hamari qurbani sirf mohabbat ki ho. Hamare dilon ka ghubar dho de is barish-e-rahmaat mein. Aur jo dard hamare sheher ke dil mein chhupa hai... woh is khoon-e-qurbaan se dhal jaye.

Her eyes drift beyond the garden, toward the horizon.

JAHANARA (CONT'D)

Aap sab ko... mere pyaare Hindustan ko... Eid Mubarak.
(a deliberate, gentle pause)
Khuda is mulk ki hifazat kare. Aur hamein us raah par chalne ki taufeeq de... jahan noor hai, jahan aman hai.

She lowers her head in a graceful salaam—more a blessing than a mere greeting.

The crowd stands motionless for a moment—then, slowly, applause begins. Not loud, but deep, resonant, and filled with warmth.

Jahanara turns with measured grace and returns to her canopy, Surayya Begum following closely behind, a shadow of loyalty.

The tension lifts. MUSIC SWELLS. Dancers whirl forward in vibrant green and red silk. Laughter bursts forth.

Guards relax their posture.

EXT. DELHI ROAD - MORNING

A MERCHANT CARAVAN advances steadily.

Scores of horses. Camels. A few donkeys.

Men wrapped in coarse shawls, faces lowered. Purpose hidden.

From afar, the faint echo of music drifts on the wind.

EXT. PLOUGHED FIELD NEAR ROSHANARA BAGH - CONTINUOUS

Freshly turned earth. Furrows waiting for seed.

The caravan veers off the road.

A HAND rises. HOOVES STOP - all at once. Too precise.

Bundles are lowered.

THUD. THUD.

Cloth shifts -

STEEL GLINTS beneath grain sacks.

CHANGEZI steps forward.

CHANGEZI

(quiet, controlled)

Baagh tayyar hai. Shehzadi aur Shahi
auratein bhi.

A sack is SLIT OPEN.

INSIDE -

- Swords wrapped in straw.

- Spears bound in twine.

- Scarred round shields.

- A FEW MATCHLOCK RIFLES, oiled and ready.

- Powder horns hidden in spice jars.

CHANGEZI

Pehli awaaz barood ki hogi.

He raises a hand.

Changezi's OUTLAWS - seasoned DAKUS - fan out...

EXT. NESAAR'S GODAAM - SAME MORNING

Doors CREAK open. Dust. Shadow. Steel.

Nesaar oversees the final movement - calm, lethal.

Men disguised as porters slip weapons beneath garments.

A SHAHI GUARD nearby yawns.

A MATCHLOCK FIRES.

BOOM.

The guard drops before the echo fades.

Another guard reaches for a horn -

An arrow pierces his throat.

The road to Roshanara Bagh is sealed.

NESAAR

(low)

Ab koi madad nahi aayegi.

They disperse - into alleys, rooftops, shadows.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH - DAY

The RAQS reaches its most delicate beat.

Anklets chime - hypnotic.

Drums join softly.

Dancers turn, wrists blooming like flowers.

CUTAWAY DETAILS -

- Rose petals crushed under silk slippers

- Bangles flashing in sunlight

- Sherbet spilling red across marble The MUSIC SWELLS.

FINAL TURN -

BOOM.

A MATCHLOCK shot rips through the air.

The music SHATTERS.

A SHAHI GUARD near the gate jerks – blood blooms across his chest.

SCREAMS erupt.

Pigeons explode into the sky.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH – MAIN GATE – CONTINUOUS

The massive gate SLAMS open.

CHANGEZI'S MEN POUR IN –

Bare-faced. Blades raised.

Another MATCHLOCK FIRES.

A second guard falls.

ARROWS FOLLOW – THWACK. THWACK.

Horns sound too late.

Changezi rides through the breach, sword low, eyes blazing.

DAKU CHANGEZI

(roaring)

Aaj sheher yaad rakhega!

His men surge forward.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH – SHAHI ENCLOSURE – CONTINUOUS

Chaos. Women scatter. Platters shatter. Canopies tear loose.

SHAHI GUARD SWINGS –

CUT DOWN.

It becomes war.

Dakus flood in from between the cypress trees.

Too many. Too fast.

The Princess Guards waver.

THEN –

A calm, commanding voice cuts through the chaos.

Hamida (Nasuh), composed, deadly focused, steps forward.

HAMIDA
(razor-sharp)
Shahi pehra – meri suno.

The guards hesitate... then obey.

HAMIDA (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
Teen idhar. Do pichhle raaste par.
Koi bhi Shehzadi ke qareeb nahi
aayega.

CUT TO:

MARIA – poised, a skilled archer in the midst of chaos. She draws an arrow and releases.

The first DAKU falls, a precise strike to the chest. A second arrow is loosed, grazing another daku's arm, injuring him. The daku stumbles but continues to fight.

CUT BACK TO:

HAMIDA – she snatches a fallen guard's sword. Her stance – trained. Movements certain.

A DAKU CHARGES –
One clean strike.
He drops.

The guards exchange looks – steadied.

They firm up. Blades rise.

The attackers hesitate.

CAMERA HOLDS on Hamida – calm inside the storm.

HAMIDA
(shouting)
Maria! Sheher jao! Fauj aur kotwal
ko khabar do!

Maria takes it in – the fire, the chaos, the blood.

Her eyes lock onto –

GOWHAR KHATOON'S long silk dupatta trailing over a railing.

MARIA
(urgent)
Mujhe aapka dupatta chahiye!

She yanks it free and RUNS.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH - GARDEN WALL - CONTINUOUS

Bow in hand, quiver tight against her back, dupattas looped around her neck and shoulder - Maria vaults onto the wall in one fluid motion. Barefoot. Fast. Fearless.

Arrows WHISTLE past below as she runs along the narrow ledge.

She reaches a higher outcrop and stops.

Quickly pulls the dupattas free - hands urgent, movements sure.

She knots the silks together. Rough. Tight.

YANKS once. It HOLDS.

She throws the length outward. Below - a sheer drop.

Beyond it - a tall CYPRESS TREE, its thick branch just within reach.

Maria loops the cloth around the branch, pulls hard.

MARIA
(under her breath)
Bismillah.

She swings.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH - OUTER WALL - CONTINUOUS

Maria slides down the makeshift rope, palms burning, breath steady.

The ground rushes up.

She releases -

HITS. Rolls.

Comes up running. Silent. Agile. Gone.

She disappears into the maze of trees and stone.

BACK INSIDE ROSHANARA BAGH:

Chaos reigns. Guards fall back. Screams echo.

Smoke curls through the garden.

Daku CHANGEZI rides forward through the turmoil - Gun in hand, sword strapped at his side.

His eyes lock onto the ROYAL AWNING.

A slow, hungry smile spreads across his face.

CHANGEZI
(raising the pistol)
Aaj qismat khud chal kar aayi hai.

HE FIRES – aiming at a Shahi soldier who's trying to attack him. The soldier collapses, dead.

The echo tears through the garden.

His men surge forward.

EXT. DELHI BACK ALLEYS – SAME TIME

Maria bursts between two crumbling walls.

She vaults a low stone divider and lands in a narrow GALI.

A HORSEMAN reins in sharply – startled.

Before he can react –

Maria snaps up her bow, arrow already drawn.

MARIA
Sawaari se utro.

The man freezes. Slowly dismounts.

Maria keeps the arrow trained.

MARIA (CONT'D)
Daroga ki chauki kidhar hai?

The man points, shaken.

MAN
(awed, under breath)
Aurat... aur woh bhi daku chheen kar
Daroga ki chauki jaa rahi hai...

Maria swings onto the horse in one smooth motion.

MARIA
Aaj sheher bachana hai.

She spurs the horse hard.

It surges forward, hooves hammering stone.

Maria vanishes into the twisting streets.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH - GARDEN COURT - MOMENTS LATER

Screams ripple through the garden.

Women clutch children, running in all directions. Silks tear.
Jewelry clinks wildly as bodies collide.

A GROUP OF DAKUS storm in - blades drawn, faces hard.

ONE WOMAN stumbles, clutching her child.

A DAKU yanks her back by the arm.

DAKU
(teeth bared)
Zewar. Abhi.

She trembles, hands shaking as she removes her bangles.

Another woman pleads, tears streaming.

WOMAN
Khuda ke liye... bachche hain...

A daku RIPS the necklace from her throat. The thread snaps.
Beads scatter across marble.

A YOUNG GIRL clings to her mother's dupatta.

A daku crouches, pries open the mother's fingers.

DAKU
Zinda rehna hai toh sab chhod do.

She slips off her earrings, sobbing.

Nearby, a group of women kneel, emptying their palms - rings,
coins, amulets - into a growing pile.

A terrified ELDERLY WOMAN hesitates.

A sword POINTS at her face.

She hurriedly removes a gold nose ring, hands shaking.

The outlaw snatches it, shoves her aside.

They move on - hunting the next victims.

Behind them, women collapse to the ground, clutching their
children, stripped but alive.

INT. DAROGA CHOWKI - DAY

Maria BURSTS through the doors.

CONSTABLE RAHMAN (30s), mid-adjustment of his belt, spins around.

MARIA
(breathless)
Daroga sahib kahan hain?

CONSTABLE RAHMAN
Arre- ky-a

MARIA
(overlapping)
Roshanara Bagh. Daku Changezi.
Shehzadi Jahanara khatre mein hai!

Rahman's face drains of color.

INT. DAROGA OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

DAROGA HARISH slams his ledger shut.

DAROGA HARISH
Rahman... sab sipahi tayyar chahiye.
Ghode, hathiyaar - abhi!

CONSTABLE RAHMAN
Jee, Daroga sahib!

The Daroga scribbles a note, folds it tight.

EXT. CHOWKI VERANDA - DAY

A pigeon coop rattles as Daroga Harish selects a bird.

He ties the message to its leg with practiced speed.

Whispers to it. The pigeon LAUNCHES skyward.

Maria watches, chest heaving.

MARIA
Kitni der lagegi madad ko?

Daroga tightens his belt, hand on his talwar.

DAROGA HARISH
Ab sawaalon ka waqt nahi.

Daroga Harish snaps up his MATCHLOCK MUSKET.

DAROGA HARISH (CONT'D)
Chalo.

The constables fall in behind him.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH - ROYAL AWNINGS - LATER

Chaos everywhere. Screams. Clashing steel.

Surayya Begum glances back—fear sharp in her eyes. She turns, scrambling toward the stone steps. She doesn't go up; she dives for the shadows beneath the marble landing.

Shehzadi Jahanara is left momentarily alone.

A DAKU breaks through the confusion, charging straight toward her.

Before he can reach out—

A FLASH OF STEEL.

The daku jerks violently, eyes wide, and collapses to the ground.

REVEAL:

Hamida, blade still raised, breath steady. She pulls Jahanara back behind her, positioning herself as a shield.

HAMIDA
(low, urgent)
Mere saath rahiye... gareeb.

She scans the battlefield, then barks to the remaining guards.

HAMIDA (CONT'D)
(to the guards)
Gherao tootna nahi chahiye. Koi peeche
nahi hatega.

SUDDENLY —

FIVE DAKUS burst in from the side arches.

Steel CLASHES.

One guard falls. Another is slashed. The third is dragged down.

Hamida reacts instantly.

She grabs SHEHZADI JAHANARA's arm.

HAMIDA
Shehzadi — mere saath! Abhi!

They race down the stone steps.

INT. INNER CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

They burst into a narrow corridor lined with flickering oil lamps and carved stone walls.

Their footsteps ECHO sharply.

Behind them - BOOTS THUNDER closer.

A DAKU steps into their path, blade raised.

Hamida instantly pulls the Princess behind her.

HAMIDA

Peeche!

The thug lunges.

Hamida parries the strike, twists sharply - and drives her blade into his side.

He gasps, collapses.

Hamida doesn't look back. She grabs Shehzadi Jahanara's hand and pulls her forward.

INT. STORAGE CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

They turn into a darker passage.

Crates of grain, fruit, and oil line the walls.

Hamida slams the door shut behind them and drags a heavy crate across it.

She steadies her breath, eyes alert.

HAMIDA

(soft, firm)

Yahin rahiye, Shehzadi. Jab tak main na kahoon... bahar mat aaiye.

Jahanara nods - shaken, but composed.

Outside, distant SHOUTS and CLASHING STEEL grow louder.

EXT. DELHI STREETS - DAY

Maria gallops through a crowded street, shouting to the guards riding with her.

MARIA

Shehzadi ke liye! Seedha Bagh ki taraf!

The CONSTABLES spur their horses, swords drawn, hooves pounding stone.

INT. ROSHANARA BAGH - RECEPTION HALL - DAY

The HALL lies in ruins. Broken furniture. Blood. Smoke.

Daku Changezi strides in, a FLINTLOCK PISTOL in hand, surveying the chaos.

A SHAHI GUARD stumbles forward, defiant.

Changezi raises his GUN calmly.

BANG. The guard drops dead.

DAKU CHANGEZI

Aaj talwaar bhi chali... aur aag bhi.

He exhales slowly, almost amused.

DAKU CHANGEZI (CONT'D)

Wafadaar sipahi... Eid-e-Qurbaan ke din, ek bimaar aur doobti hui saltanat ke liye jaan qurbaan kar di.

He steps over the body without a glance.

A distant SCREAM echoes through the palace.

DAKU CHANGEZI (CONT'D)

(quiet, pleased)

Shehzadon ka sheher... aaj khaamosh hai.

His BODYGUARD rushes in.

BODYGUARD

Sardar! Auratein bhaag rahi hain!

Changezi's eyes narrow. A slow, cruel smile forms.

DAKU CHANGEZI

Kahan tak bhaagengi... Bakri ki maa kab tak khair manayegi?

His gaze drops to the leather satchel slung over the guard's shoulder – gold glinting inside.

DAKU CHANGEZI (CONT'D)

Sab auraton ko yahin jama karo. Zewar, haar, kangan – sab utarwao. Aaj is mahal ka har zarra... qarz chukayega.

His men surge forward.

Women are dragged in. Bangles yanked off. Necklaces torn away. Gold CLATTERS into the satchel – rings, chains, heirlooms.

Changezi watches, expression cold, satisfied.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN ROAD LEADING TO ROSHANARA BAGH – DAY

Police forces surge forward.

THWIP!

An ARROW cuts through the air – buries itself in a daku's neck.

He staggers, choking, then collapses.

A POLICE ARCHER reloads in one fluid motion.

Nearby, CONSTABLE RAHMAN clashes with a DAKU. Steel screams.

ONE SAVAGE SWING –

The Daku's HAND is severed at the wrist.

Blood sprays across the dirt.

CONSTABLE RAHMAN
(grim, breathless)
Yeh haath dehshat phailaata tha... ab
is par sirf kawway baithenge.

Police press forward, overwhelming the remaining outlaws.

DAROGA HARISH
(booming)
Aaj koi qaidi nahi! Yeh zalim reham
ke layak nahi! Ek bhi zinda na bache
– aage badho!

They charge ahead.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH – SIDE PATHS – DAY

Chaos. Terrified guests flee through narrow garden paths.

DAKUS burst from behind hedges and pillars.

Jewelry is ripped away – bangles snapped, rings torn off, earrings yanked free.

A WOMAN SCREAMS as her necklace is ripped from her throat.

A CHILD cries as her mother is shoved to the ground.

DAKU

(gruff)

Zewar chhod do... jaan le jao.

INT. ROSHANARA BAGH - PALACE CORRIDOR - DAY

Surayya Begum moves quickly through the corridor, breath tight, eyes alert.

A Daku steps into her path - grips her arm.

DAKU

Aaj kahin nahi jaogi, Begum.

She struggles, but he drags her toward the hall.

INT. ROSHANARA BAGH - RECEPTION HALL - DAY

Ruins. Overturned trays, furniture. Smashed lamps. Fallen guards.

At the center stands DAKU CHANGEZI.

Calm. Unhurried. In control.

Surayya Begum is shoved forward.

Changezi looks up.

Recognition flashes across his face.

FLASHBACK - INT. MUGHAL COURTROOM - DAY

SUPER: NINE YEARS AGO

A younger CHANGEZI stands in chains.

Surayya Begum stands among the witnesses, veiled but steady.

A COURT SCRIBE reads aloud.

JUDGE

Gawah ke bayan aur saboot ke bunyaad par... Changezi ko jurm-e-dakaiti ka mujrimm qarar diya jaata hai. Saza - teen saal qaid-e-ba-mushakkat.

Guards seize Changezi.

As he's dragged away, he twists back -

Locks eyes with Surayya Begum.

She does not flinch.

FLASHBACK ENDS.

BACK TO PRESENT - RECEPTION HALL

Changezi steps closer to Surayya Begum.

DAKU CHANGEZI

Gawah... tumhari zubaan ne mujhe gaid
tak pahunchaya tha. Aur aaj... tum
meri gaid mein ho.

SURAYYA BEGUM

Woh sach tha. Aur sach kehna farz
hai.

A slow, cruel smile spreads across Changezi's face.

DAKU CHANGEZI

Aur aaj main apna farz ada kar raha
hoon... aur tum apna qarz.

He leans in.

DAKU CHANGEZI (CONT'D)

Woh bhi hamare saath chal kar.

Surayya Begum holds his gaze - unbroken.

SURAYYA BEGUM

Yeh tumhara shaitani khwaab hai,
Changezi. Jo kabhi haqeeqat nahi
banega.

Changezi chuckles softly.

DAKU CHANGEZI

Haqeeqat?
(smiling darkly)
Haqeeqat yeh hai ke shahi fauj abhi
tak yahan pahunchi bhi nahi hogi.

He spreads his arms slightly.

DAKU CHANGEZI (CONT'D)

Mere aadmi har raaste par baithe
hain. Jab tak madad aayegi... hum yahan
se ja chuke honge.

He turns sharply to ARMAAN SINGH.

DAKU CHANGEZI (CONT'D)

Shehzadi ab tak nahi mili.
Ja... dhoondh kar laa.

ARMAAN SINGH

(smiling)

Kahin na kahin isi mahal mein hogi.

DAKU CHANGEZI

Tumhare paas aadha ghanta hai.

Uske baad – aag aur rawangi.

Armaan Singh signals his men and disappears into the palace corridors.

INT. ROSHANARA BAGH PALACE – FOOD STORAGE ROOM – DAY

Dim light filters through high vents.

CRATES of bananas, oranges, grain sacks, and oil jars are stacked high, forming narrow aisles of shadow.

Hamida guides the Princess behind a wall of banana crates and presses a SWORD into her hands.

HAMIDA

(whispering)

Neeche. Awaaz nahi.

Footsteps approach.

The door CREAKS open.

A DAKU steps in, sword loose in his hand, eyes scanning the darkness.

Hamida steps forward deliberately – trembling, helpless.

HAMIDA (CONT'D)

(beseeching)

Main ghareeb aurat hoon... na sona hai, na zevar. Mujhe bakhsh do.

The daku smirks. Lust flickers across his face.

DAKU

Tere paas sone-chandi se bhi mehnga cheez hai... jawaani. Aur husn.

(leans closer)

Zinda rehna hai toh uski qeemat ada karni padegi.

He steps toward her.

Hamida backs away, fear carefully measured.

HAMIDA
(soft, pleading)
Theek hai... par yahan kharay kharay
mujhe achha nahi lagta.
(gesturing)
Udhar... let jao.

The daku hesitates – then grins.

He lowers himself onto the floor, carelessly loosening his filthy outer cloth.

As he fumbles with it, the fabric falls over his face – his vision momentarily blocked.

Hamida's eyes harden.

IN ONE SWIFT MOTION –

She lifts a HEAVY WOODEN CRATE of oranges and SLAMS it down on his head.

CRACK.

The DAKU howls, clutching his skull, rolling in pain.

Before he can recover –

Hamida grabs a MANGO CRATE and brings it down again.

THUD.

He collapses, dazed.

From behind the stacked crates –

Shehzadi Jahanara, trembling but resolute, hurls the SWORD toward Hamida.

Hamida SNATCHES it mid-air –

and drives it cleanly into the DAKU.

Silence. The body goes still.

Hamida stands there, chest heaving, blade lowered.

A beat.

Jahanara rushes forward and grips Hamida tightly – in shock and relief.

Hamida steadies her, eyes still alert.

HAMIDA

Abhi khatra khatam nahi hua.

Jahanara nods, gathering herself.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH - BACK WALL - DAY

The tall rear wall glows in late morning light.

Maria arrives with Daroga Harish and a unit of policemen.

They halt in the shadows.

MARIA

(low)

Yahin se andar jaayenge.

Daroga Harish scans the wall.

Signals.

GRAPPLING HOOKS fly up - metal bites into stone.

The policemen begin climbing.

SHADOW MOVES ABOVE -

A DAKU appears on the wall, blade raised.

THWIP!

Maria's arrow pierces his throat. He drops soundlessly.

Maria slings her bow and grabs a rope.

She looks to Harish.

MARIA

Dhiyaan rakhiyega... peeche se waar ho sakta hai.

Daroga Harish nods, lifting his weapon.

DAROGA HARISH

Tum aage badho. Yahan hum sambhaal lenge.

Maria climbs.

One by one, nearly TWENTY POLICEMEN follow, climbing the thick, ancient wall and sprinting toward the rooftop.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH - PALACE ROOF - CONTINUOUS

Then spill onto the rooftop.

Two DAKUS rush out from behind a dome.

The first raises his blade –

Daroga Harish steps forward, levels his Matchlock Musket.

BOOM!

A thunderous blast.

White smoke erupts.

The DAKU is thrown backward – dead before he hits the stone.

The second outlaw turns and runs for the stairs.

Maria sprints after him.

Without slowing –

She twists mid-run and RELEASES AN ARROW.

THWIP!

It buries into the man's back.

He collapses.

Silence.

Maria signals sharply.

Daroga Harish gestures.

The policemen fan out, securing the rooftop.

Below them, Roshanara Bagh still burns with chaos.

EXT. MAIN ROAD TO ROSHANARA BAGH – DAY

Dust rises along the road leading to the garden gates.

SUDDENLY –

SHOUTS.

A MUSKET fires.

A SHAHI SIPAHI falls as DAKUS emerge from behind ruined walls.

Before they can reload –

A WAR HORN BLARES.

Thunderous hooves approach.

A column of SHAHI FAUJ charges forward – green banners snapping, steel flashing.

At their head rides SARDAR ALEM KHAN (50s) – scarred, commanding, unshaken.

SARDAR ALEM KHAN
(raising his sword)
Shahi fauj! Aage badho – raasta saaf
karo!

The sipahis advance in formation.

A VOLLEY OF MATCHLOCK FIRE erupts.

Two DAKUS drop instantly.

Another tries to flee –

A spear cuts him down.

SARDAR ALEM KHAN (CONT'D)
(scolded, absolute)
Koi bhi daku zinda na bache.

Panic spreads among the remaining dakus.

Some leap over low walls.

Others flee toward the outer road – away from Delhi.

INT. ROSHANARA BAGH PALACE – FOOD STORAGE ROOM – DAY

Hamida stands close to Shehzadi Jahanara, shielding her.

Distant SHOUTS echo. Steel CLASHES somewhere in the palace.

HAMIDA
(whispering, urgent)
Shehzadi... apni peshwaaz mujhe de
dijiye.

Shehzadi hesitates, fear in her eyes.

SHEHZADI JAHANARA
(lethally soft)
Par–

HAMIDA
Ab waqt nahi hai. Agar woh aaye... toh
unhein lage ke main hi aap hoon.

A beat.

Shehzadi nods.

They move behind stacked crates.

With trembling hands, Shehzadi removes her richly embroidered peshwaaz.

Hamida slips out of her plain outer clothes.

They exchange quickly, breath held.

MOMENTS LATER—

Hamida steps forward, now dressed in the royal peshwaaz, her posture instantly commanding.

Behind her, Shehzadi Jahanara stands in simple clothing — suddenly just another frightened woman.

Hamida adjusts the folds of the peshwaaz.

HAMIDA
(soft, steady)
Ab aap aam aurat lagengi... aur main
Shehzadi.

LOUD BANG—

The door shudders.

CRATES crash as two DAKUS burst inside, swords drawn.

Hamida rushes forward, sword raised. Flash—

The first OUTLAW drops instantly, skull cracking against the floor.

The second DAKU — taller, stronger — freezes in shock.

Then he ROARS and charges.

CLANG!

Their swords collide.

The impact throws Hamida backward into stacked crates.

He swings again.

She ducks — the blade rips through hanging sacks.

Grain bursts into the air like smoke.

Hamida kicks his knee.

He stumbles — but recovers — grabbing her wrist.

They struggle, crashing into baskets.

The sword slips from her grip.

It skids across the floor.

The outlaw towers over her, breathing hard.

DAKU

(smirking, cruel)

Ladne se kuchh haasil nahi hoga,
Shehzadi... mere saath chalo... shayad
jaan bakhsh di jaaye.

BEHIND HIM –

Shehzadi Jahanara, trembling but resolute, steps forward.

With all her strength –

She SLASHES his WRIST with the sword's edge.

The blade bites deep.

The DAKU SCREAMS, dropping his weapon.

Before he can recover –

Hamida grabs a HEAVY GRAIN SACK and hurls it into his face.

THUD!

He staggers back, blinded, coughing.

Grain explodes across the floor.

Hamida dives forward, snatches the fallen sword.

The DAKU lunges blindly –

Hamida charges.

With a brutal thrust, she drives the blade straight into his stomach.

The force carries them both backward–

They CRASH into stacked crates.

WOUD SPLINTERS.

ORANGES AND MANGOES BURST open.

The crates COLLAPSE, burying them both.

Silence.

THEN—

A hand pushes through the wreckage.

Hamida rises slowly, bloodied but standing.

The DAKU lies motionless beneath crushed fruit and wood.

Hamida steadies her breath.

SUDDENLY—

BANG!

The storage door is KICKED open.

Armaan Singh storms in, sword drawn.

His eyes flick to the dead men.

Then to Hamida.

A slow, dangerous smile.

ARMAAN SINGH

(toying)

Lagta hai Shehzadi ke paas koi muhafiz
nahi bacha...

Hamida raises her sword.

HAMIDA

(smirking)

Sherni ko muhafiz ki zaroorat nahi
hai...

They clash.

Armaan lunges — Hamida parries, spins, slashes his arm.

He GRUNTS as blood sprays.

She kicks him back.

Their blades lock — eyes locked.

HAMIDA (CONT'D)

(low, deadly)

Aaj nahi, Armaan.

She HEADBUTTS him.

Armaan stumbles back, wounded.

He glares – fury and fear mixed.

ARMAAN SINGH

Yeh kissa yahin khatam nahi hoga.

He retreats, vanishing into the corridor.

Hamida exhales sharply. She looks to Shehzadi.

A nod.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH – MAIN GATE – DAY

SHAHI FAUJ, mounted on cavalry, charges toward the gates.
Hooves thunder against the ground.

Sardar Alem Khan watches from behind as the cavalry advances
with war cries filling the air.

The cavalry clashes with the DAKUS at the gate – a brutal
skirmish. One Siphahi falls, dead. A second is wounded,
stumbling back.

A few DAKU archers and armed men with FLINTLOCK RIFLES,
stationed at the top of the gate, fire down, preventing the
Shahi Fouj from advancing.

Sardar Alem Khan signals, his gaze cold and calculating.

SARDAR ALEM KHAN

(commanding)

Top le aao... chalado, darwaze par!

A MUGHAL ARTILLERY piece rumbles forward, its wheels creaking
as it nears the Bagh's main gate.

With a thunderous CRASH, the cannon fires, sending a massive
explosion toward the gates.

The iron doors shudder violently under the force, then
explode, sending debris flying. Several DAKUS near the gate
are killed or wounded by the blast.

The gates BURST OPEN.

SHAHI FAUJ pours in, now reinforced and ready. War cries
echo as steel flashes, hooves thunder, and muskets fire.

The remaining DAKUS scatter, retreating deeper into the Bagh.

Sardar Alem Khan, raises his sword.

SARDAR ALEM KHAN (CONT'D)
(commanding)
Aage badho! Ek bhi zinda na bachne
paaye!

The royal soldiers advance in tight formation, swords clashing as they move through the gate.

Swords clash.

Gunshots thunder.

A DAKU tries to flee – a spear takes him through the back.

Another is dragged down by a SIPAHI and cut down.

The garden turns into a battlefield.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH – OPEN LAWNS – CONTINUOUS

DAKUS Retreat toward the palace, fighting desperately.

Some climb over hedges.

Others fall beneath blades.

Blood stains the grass.

A SHAHI SOLDIER tackles a DAKU near a fountain – both disappear into the water.

Another DAKU runs, wounded, clutching his neck. Blood gushes between his fingers. He stumbles toward the palace doors.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH – PALACE ENTRANCE – CONTINUOUS

The wounded daku bursts inside—

INT. ROSHANARA BAGH – RECEPTION HALL – CONTINUOUS

Changezi stands near the looted table, fury simmering.

The wounded DAKU collapses to his knees.

DAKU
(hissing, panicked)
Sardar... Shahi fauj aa gayi hai... Bagh
unke qabze mein ja raha hai...

Blood spills from his mouth.

DAKU (CONT'D)
Har taraf se ghair liya hai...

Changezi's jaw tightens. His eyes burn.

Before he can respond—

Footsteps rush in. Armaan Singh storms into the hall, one arm bleeding lightly. His face burns with rage and disbelief.

ARMAAN SINGH
(through clenched
teeth)
Sardar... woh aurat—
(beat)
Shehzadi... sherni ki tarah ladti hai.

Changezi turns slowly.

ARMAAN SINGH (CONT'D)
Khoon baha kar chali gayi... jaise
mujhe nishaan bana kar chhod diya
ho.

He grips his wounded arm, furious.

ARMAAN SINGH (CONT'D)
Aisi aurat maine zindagi mein kabhi
nahi dekhi.

A heavy silence settles.

Changezi exhales slowly. A cruel smile curls across his lips.

DAKU CHANGEZI
(soft, dangerous)
Toh... shikaar shikaari ban gayi...

He turns toward the marble staircase leading upward.

DAKU CHANGEZI (CONT'D)
Chalo... chhat ke raaste nikalte hain.

SUDDENLY—

He grabs Surayya Begum, yanking her in front of him.

His MUSKET snaps up, pressed against her temple.

Surayya Begum gasps.

Changezi moves deliberately toward the stairs, every step measured, eyes darting.

Beside him, his towering BODYGUARD follows closely — the stolen SATCHEL of gold and jewels on his shoulder clinking with each step.

Several of his remaining cohorts trail behind, alert, swords ready.

Changezi tightens his grip on Surayya Begum as they approach the first step –

THE AIR SPLITS–

WHIZ!

An arrow streaks through the flickering oil-lamp light.

INT. UPPER STAIRCASE / LANDING – CONTINUOUS

Maria stands firm, bow drawn, eyes locked.

Beside her, Daroga Harish, braces his MATCHLOCK MUSKET, jaw clenched.

THWACK!

The arrow SLAMS into Changezi's hand.

His gun spins free, skittering across the marble.

Changezi howls, stumbling back, clutching his wound.

BEFORE ANYONE CAN REACT –

Daroga Harish charges down, raising his MATCHLOCK MUSKET.

BOOM!

The shot tears through the hall.

INT. RECEPTION HALL – CONTINUOUS

Changezi's BODYGUARD is hurled backward, crashing onto the floor.

The SACHEL EXPLODES open – gold coins, jewels, bangles, necklaces spraying across the chamber.

The bodyguard hits hard – lifeless.

Two DAKUS dive for the treasure, greed eclipsing fear.

They scoop up gold–

THWIP!

An arrow punches through one daku's chest. He drops.

The second freezes – then bolts.

SPEAR FROM THE STAIRCASE whistles through the air –

It takes him down.

Shouts erupt. CONSTABLES FLOOD IN, blades bare, spears leveled.

Maria advances with them, bow still trained.

Changezi bares his teeth. He jerks Surayya Begum tight against him, sword snapping to her throat.

A thin red line blooms.

Daroga Harish stops mid-stride.

Maria lowers her bow – taut as a drawn wire.

DAKU CHANGEZI

(quiet, lethal)

Ek qadam bhi aage nahi.

(presses the blade)

Iski saans... meri ijazat se chal rahi hai. Agar khon gira –

(to Harish)

– toh pehla gunah tumhara hoga.

Changezi backs away, dragging Surayya with him, cohorts and bodyguard close behind, eyes scanning for escape.

THEN –

From the shadows –

A FIGURE STEPS FORWARD.

Hamida, clad in Shehzadi Jahanara's richly embroidered peshwaaz.

The hall stills. Every gaze locks on her.

HAMIDA

Main Shehzadi hoon. Mujhe lo. Us aurat ko chhod do.

A deadly silence. Changezi's eyes lock onto her—the royal peshwaaz, the bearing. Greed and calculation war in his gaze.

DAKU CHANGEZI

(eyes narrowing)

Shehzadi... khud apni jaan ki qeemat laga rahi hai?

HAMIDA

(steady)

Usse zyada, jo tum soch rahe ho. Ek zinda shehzadi tumhare liye ek murda begum se zyada kaam ki hai.

Changezi processes this. A hostage worth a kingdom's ransom.
His grip on Surayya relaxes a fraction.

DAKU CHANGEZI

Aage aao.

Hamida takes one deliberate step after another. The only sound is her breath and the clink of Changezi's men shifting nervously.

She stops an arm's length away.

A BEAT. The entire hall holds its breath.

THEN, IN A FLASH—

Changezi's arm shoots out. He yanks SURAYYA BEGUM free, shoving her roughly aside.

She stumbles, crashes against a wooden bench—gasping.

IN THE SAME MOTION—

Changezi SNARES Hamida, yanking her viciously close.

Steel flashes. The cold edge of his blade kisses her throat.

Hamida does not flinch.

DAKU CHANGEZI (CONT'D)

(to his men)

Chalo! Har aadmi apne liye!

The spell breaks. Chaos erupts.

Armaan Singh and the remaining thugs rush toward the exit, shoving, panicked, desperate.

NEAR THE EXIT —

Armaan Singh spots a DEAD SHAHI SIPAHI sprawled on the floor.

He rips off the soldier's uniform jacket, slips it on in haste —

—and bolts toward the shattered doorway.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH — MOMENTS LATER

Sunlight floods the manicured gardens.

Near the outer wall, ARMAAN SINGH crouches high in a neem tree, tense, waiting.

A mounted SHAHI SIPAHI rides past below.

IN A BLINK –

Armaan DROPS from above.

Steel flashes. Man and horse CRASH to the ground.

The SIPAHI lies still.

Armaan Singh rises, breath heaving.

He swings onto the horse riding near Changezi.

ARMAAN SINGH
(urging the horse)
Sardaar! Main nikalta hoon!

DAKU CHANGEZI
(teeth clenched)
Apni ghodi mujhe do... doosri le lo!

SUDDENLY –

TWANG!

An arrow slices through the air.

It STRIKES Armaan Singh square in the LEFT EYE.

He SCREAMS – animal, raw.

ARMAAN SINGH
(agonized)
Meri aankh!

With trembling hands, Armaan yanks the arrow from his eye, blood spilling over his fingers as he reels in the saddle, trying to stay upright.

ANGLE WIDENS –

On the palace awnings, closer to the lawn and ground areas of the Bagh –

Maria stands perfectly still. Bow lowered. Another arrow already nocked.

BACK TO THE GARDEN –

Blinded, shaking, Armaan Singh somehow steadies himself.

He turns once – toward the palace.

ARMAAN SINGH
(choked, bitter)
Maaf kijiye, Sardaar... Aapke alfaaz...
har aadmi apne liye...

He digs his heels in.

The horse BOLTS toward the main gate.

Changezi watches, fury erupting.

DAKU CHANGEZI
(roaring)
Armaan Singh! Namak haraam! Main
tumhein zinda nahi chhodunga!

Changezi's attention breaks – just for a breath. That is enough.

Hamida MOVES.

She twists hard, clamping both hands around Changezi's sword arm at the wrist.

With all her strength, she forces the blade away from her throat –

and DRIVES a brutal kick into his knee.

Changezi buckles.

Hamida's eyes snap to the grass –

A fallen sword glints beside a corpse.

She dives, snatches it up in one clean motion.

Changezi recovers fast, slashing wildly –

Steel WHISTLES past her face.

Hamida rolls, rises, SLASHES.

Changezi blocks.

Their blades LOCK.

Breath against breath.

DAKU CHANGEZI (CONT'D)
(grinning, breathless)
Shehzadi ho ya sherni... farq nahi
padta.

HAMIDA

(low, steady)

Main sherni hoon. Shehzadi nahi.

He comes at her with raw force.

Hamida staggers under the blows –

then DROPS low, slipping beneath his guard.

She spins behind him –

A sharp SLICE tears into his thigh.

Changezi ROARS, stumbling forward, sword raised for a desperate strike.

Hamida sweeps his legs out.

He SLAMS onto the grass.

As he scrambles up – She slashes his sword hand.

The blade CLATTERS away.

Hamida steps in, sword flashing to his throat.

Pins him down. He freezes.

HAMIDA (CONT'D)

Hilna mat, Changezi. Warna zinda
nahi bachoge.

Blood seeps from his leg. His breath turns ragged.

A beat.

DAKU CHANGEZI

(gaspng)

Tum... talwaar chalana jaanti ho...

HAMIDA

(a faint smile)

Maine kaha tha –main shehzadi nahi
hoon.

Footsteps thunder in.

SHAHI FAUJ soldiers rush forward.

Daroga Harish follows.

They form a tight circle. Weapons ready.

HAMIDA (CONT'D)
(indicating him)
Yeh Changezi hai. Shehar ka sabse
khatarnaak daku.

Daroga Harish steps in.

IRON CHAINS SNAP SHUT around Changezi's wrists.

Silence settles over the sunlit garden.

EXT. ROSHANARA BAGH - LATER

The garden is now a grim tableau. Bodies are being covered.
The fountain runs pink. Women are led away, shrouded in
borrowed cloaks.

TRACKING SHOT - Hamida, still in the royal peshwaaz, now
stained with dirt and blood, is guided by a maid toward a
secluded palanquin.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROYAL PALACE COURTYARD - GOLDEN HOUR

The SHAHI QILA. The very heart of the Mughal Empire.

SUPER: THREE DAYS LATER

A ceremony of controlled majesty unfolds—a stark, serene
contrast to the Roshanara Bagh chaos.

ON THE GRAND DURBAR STAGE, a masterpiece of carved teak inlaid
with gold. A CRIMSON CARPET flows toward the elevated Takht-
e-Murassa.

PRINCESS JAHANARA stands before it, a portrait of grace. Her
moon-silver peshwaaz glimmers. The CROWN upon her head catches
fire in the dying sunlight.

She turns to face the assembly. The entire courtyard—nobles,
soldiers, survivors—FALLS INTO A REVERENT SILENCE.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA
(voice calm, commanding)
Dilli ke bashindo... aaj hum bahaduri
ko salaam pesh karte hain.

She gestures gently.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA (CONT'D)
Hamida... aage aao.

REVEAL – VVIP SECTION

Hamida sits rigid on a gilded couch. Modest clothes. Eyes lowered. Hands clenched in her lap.

A ROYAL ATTENDANT approaches, carrying a GOLDEN TRAY heavy with gleaming coins.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA (CONT'D)

Ek hazaar ashrafi... us aurat ke liye
jisne Changezi ko qaid karwaya aur
Shehzadi ko bachaya.

A hush spreads.

Hamida rises slowly – almost mechanically.

TRACKING – HAMIDA'S POV

The crimson carpet stretches ahead like a trail.

ON HAMIDA – every step measured. Breath shallow. Fingers trembling despite resolve.

She reaches the throne.

Jahanara lifts a handful of gold – light dancing across her face.

Hamida lowers herself to her knees, almost faltering, and accepts the tray.

HAMIDA

(soft, controlled)

Main ne sirf apna farz ada kiya hai,
Shehzadi.

Jahanara leans closer, voice low – private.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA

Tumhara inkisaar aur tumhari tawazo-
sab se badi taqat hai.

The crowd ERUPTS in applause. Drums beat. Trumpets sound.

Hamida hears none of it, lost in the moment.

INT. NASUH'S HOUSE – KITCHEN – DAY

Steam rises from a boiling pot. Spices crackle in hot oil.

SARAH

(calling out)

Nasuh!

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

Yousuf aa gaya hai... maine usse mehmaan-
khaane mein bitha diya hai!

NASUH (O.S.)

Ghusl kar raha hoon! Bas aaya!

Sarah smiles faintly, continues stirring.

INT. NASUH'S HOUSE - GUESTROOM - LATER

Nasuh enters, hair damp, sleeves rolled up.

Yousuf sits with Sarah.

Nasuh and Yousuf embrace – warm, familiar.

Maria enters quietly with a tray of tea and cups, her head covered with a dupatta, leaving only her face visible.

NASUH

(sitting beside Yousuf)
Toofaan ko bhi le aaye?

YOUSUF

(nods)
Chacha Karim ke tabela mein hai.
Bilkul mehfooz.

A beat. Nasuh's face tightens – heavy thoughts behind his eyes.

NASUH

Yeh shehar... ab saans lene nahi deta.
Yeh bheis bhi... zyada der nahi chal
sakti.

YOUSUF

Chacha jaan ka bhi yahi khayal hai.
Unhein lagta hai Delhi ab mehfooz
nahi raha. Isliye dheere dheere apna
karobaar Bombay ki taraf le jaa rahe
hain.

Nasuh looks up, surprised – hopeful.

NASUH

Bombay?

YOUSUF

Haan. Agar chaho... unke saath jaa
sakte ho. Naya shehar. Nayi shuruuat.

A long silence.

NASUH

(thankful)

Shukriya, Yousuf... Main bhi yahi chahta tha. Tum na hote toh shayad main kab ka toot chuka hota.

YOUSUF

(smiling)

Dosti mein shukriya nahi hota, Nasuh.

They hold each other's gaze – two men who've survived too much.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SHAHI HAMMAM – HUJRA-E-AWWAL (MASSAGE CHAMBER 1) – DAY

SUPER: ONE WEEK LATER

Soft steam drifts through the marble chamber. Oil lamps glow. Water murmurs somewhere unseen.

Shehzadi Jahanara reclines on a marble slab, layered with warm silks and soft cushions, wrapped in blue silk.

A heavy gold-and-diamond necklace rests against her collarbone, catching the lamplight and scattering soft glints across the steam-filled room.

Hamida (Nasuh in disguise) kneads her calves – precise, practiced, controlled.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA

(eyes closed, content)

Hamida... tumhare haath mein jaadu hai.

HAMIDA

(soft, respectful)

Yeh meri khush-qismati hai, Shehzadi... ke aapki khidmat ka mauqa mila.

Jahanara opens her eyes, studies her face.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA

(teasing, half-smile)

Agar tum mard hoti... toh shayad main duniya ki parwah kiye baghair tumse nikaah kar leti.

A fraction of a second. Hamida freezes – then recovers.

HAMIDA

(mild smile)

Kuch khwaab... khwaab hi achhe lagte
hain, Shehzadi.

A beat.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA

Bas. Aaj ke liye kaafi hai. Gowhar
Khatoon se kaho meri daasi bheje.
Iran ke wafd ke liye tayyar hona
hai.

HAMIDA

(sar jhuka kar)

Jaisa hukm.

She gathers the oils—bottle by amber bottle—fingers steady,
gaze low. At the door, she bows and exits.

INT. SHAHI HAMMAM - BREAK ROOM - LATER

A quiet chamber. Low stools. Steam fading. Hamida sips tea,
tense.

Across from her sits NARGIS, a fellow Shahi Hammam attendant,
quietly observing her.

The door SLAMS open.

Gowhar Khatoon enters — sharp, commanding.

GOWHAR KHATOON

Tamam khawateen tawajjoh karein.

The room stills.

GOWHAR KHATOON (CONT'D)

Shehzadi ka qeemti haar gum ho gaya hai.
Wahi... jo daku Changezi bhi chura na saka.

A hush.

GOWHAR KHATOON (CONT'D)

Hukm hai — hammam ke har shakhs ki
talaashi hogi. Sab log Diwan-e-
Istiqbaal mein haazir honge.

Hamida's fingers tighten around her cup. The tea trembles.

INSERT — IMAGINATION:

EXT. GUILLOTINE SQUARE - DAY

A vast, brutal square.

Nasuh – in his true form – dragged in chains. A scaffold towers above him.

The EXECUTIONER waits.

The QAZI, robe flowing, steps forward holding a rolled parchment.

QAZI
(unrolling the parchment,
reading from it)
Badshahi adalat ke hukm se elan hota
hai-

He unrolls the parchment.

QAZI (CONT'D)
Nasuh walad Haroon par yeh do sangeen
jurm saabit hue- Pehla... Zafar ka qatl.
Lahore ke subehdaar ke waaris ka khoon.

The crowd roars.

QAZI (CONT'D)
Doosra, Shahi Hammam ki behurmati.
Aurat ka bhes bana kar... muqaddas
hudood ko paamaal karna!

The executioner raises the blade.

QAZI (CONT'D)
Is liye faisla sunaya jaata hai-
sar tan se juda!

THE BLADE SWINGS-

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. SHAHI HAMMAM - BREAK ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A hand grips Hamida's shoulder.

She GASPS.

NARGIS
Arre... kya hua? Kahaan kho gayi ho?
Chehra bilkul peela pad gaya hai.

HAMIDA
Bas... sar mein thoda dard hai. Tu
chal, main apni chhaai pee kar aati
hoon.

Nargis nods and moves away.

Hamida exhales – shaking.

HAMIDA (CONT'D)

(whisper, broken)

Ya Allah! Aaj bacha liya toh wada
karti hoon... iss raaste par dobara
qadam nahi rakhungi. Tu jaanta hai...
sab majboori mein tha... sirf apnon ko
bachane ke liye.

INT. RECEPTION HALL – MOMENTS LATER

Tense silence. All staff stand in a line.

Hamida enters, visibly unsettled, and takes her place.

Whispers ripple.

STAFF WOMAN #1

(murmur)

Mujhe toh pehle se shak tha...

STAFF WOMAN #2

Magar isi ne toh der-sadri zevaraath
Daku Changezi se bachaye thay...

SUDDENLY –

A CLEANER rushes in, breathless, holding up a necklace.

CLEANER

Mil gaya! Shehzadi ka haar mil gaya!

A stunned beat.

CLEANER (CONT'D)

Maalish ke takht ke neeche tha!

Relief surges through the hall.

GOWHAR KHATOON

Alhamdulillah...

Shehzadi Jahanara steps forward, emotional.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA

Yeh sirf zavar nahi... meri daadi ki
amaanat hai.

She removes a ring and places it in the cleaner's hand.

SHEHZAADI JAHANARA (CONT'D)

Tumne ek shehzadi ka dil bacha liya.

Hamida watches from a distance. Unseen. Unaccused. Alive.

INT. CHACHA KARIM'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Dinner is underway. Familiar space. Familiar routine.

Yousuf eats absent-mindedly, weighed down by thought.

YOUSUF

Lahore ke halaat din ba din kharaab
hote ja rahe hain, Chacha jaan. Bazaar
mein pehle wali raunak nahi rahi.
Har shakhs khauf ke saaye mein jee
raha hai.

Chacha Karim listens, concern etched on his face.

CHACHA KARIM

Dilli ka haal bhi kuch zyada behtar
nahi hai. Yahan bhi bechaini hai...
siyasat aur saazish har gali mein.
Karobaar chal toh raha hai, magar
bharosa dheere dheere khatam hota ja
raha hai.

He lowers his voice, firm now.

CHACHA KARIM (CONT'D)

Isi liye Bombay ka khayal aa raha
hai. Mere tajir doston ke mutabiq,
angrez company ne wahan nizaam sakht
kar diya hai - kanoon bhi, hifazat
bhi.

Yousuf looks up, a spark of resolve.

YOUSUF

Main bhi yahi soch raha hoon ke aap
ke saath Bombay jaa kar pehle jagah
dekh loon. Phir abba jaan ko paighaam
bhej diya jaaye ke woh haveli aur
baagh bech kar udhar aa jaayein.

Karim studies him - approval, relief.

CHACHA KARIM

Nayi jagah... nayi shuruat.

A beat.

CHACHA KARIM (CONT'D)

Kapron ka karobaar Bombay tak
phailaayenge. Yahan reh kar ab sirf
intezaar reh gaya hai... taraqqi nahi.

They resume eating, quieter now...

INT. SHAHI HAMMAM - RECEPTION HALL - DAY

A YOUNG MESSENGER bows before Gowhar Khatoon.

MESSENGER

Surayya Begum ka paighaam hai. Aaj
dopahar ke liye Hamida ko talab kiya
gaya hai.

Gowhar Khatoon's smile doesn't reach her eyes.

GOWHAR KHATOON

Hamida do din se ghaayib hai. Keh
rahi thi tabiyat nasaaz hai.

The messenger nods and exits.

Gowhar Khatoon's controlled mask slips. A flicker of fear.
She glances toward the inner chambers--now empty.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. DESERT - DAY - AERIAL

SUPER: TWO WEEKS LATER

Endless golden dunes. Warm spring sun. Gentle light softening
the vast expanse.

A MASSIVE CARAVAN cuts through the wasteland - hundreds of
camels, carts, horses, mules.

ARMED GUARDS ride in disciplined formation. Dust rises behind
them like the tail of a moving army.

TIGHT ON - a TWO-HORSE CARRIAGE jolting forward.

Ahead rides Hamida (Nasuh still in disguise) on TOOFAAN.
Flanking her are Yousuf and Chacha Karim - alert, hands never
far from their weapons.

Hamida wipes sweat from her brow, glancing back toward the
faint silhouette of Delhi on the horizon.

HAMIDA

Khuda ka shukar hai... yahaan se nikal
aaye.

YOUSUF

(quiet, bitter)

Jab apni hi zameen dushman ban jaaye...
toh insaan naya aasmaan dhoondhta
hai.

Hamida looks ahead, the desert swallowing the road before them.

HAMIDA

Mujhe lagta hai... Mughal saltanat
apni aakhri saanse le rahi hai.

YOUSUF

(dry smile)
Meri bhi yehi soch hai... farq sirf
itna hai ke kuch logon ko yeh baat
thodi pehle samajh aa jaati hai.

They ride on.

INT. CARRIAGE - MOVING - DAY

The carriage sways with the rhythm of hooves.

Inside, Maria and Sarah sit opposite Zeibun-Nisa, daughter of Chacha Karim, and his wife, Mehrun-Nisa.

At their feet lies SAYYAD, the wolf-like hound, ears alert.

Beneath Maria's seat, a HEAVY WOODEN BOX rattles softly.

ZEIBUN-NISA

Is sandook ko oont par kyun nahi
rakha gaya?

MARIA

(faint smile)
Kyun ke iski hifazat sirf main kar
sakti hoon.

She nudges the box with her foot.

CLINK - metal shifts inside.

Mehrun-Nisa glances nervously toward the window as she sees her husband, Chacha Karim, riding beside the carriage.

MEHRUN-NISA

(to Karim, pulling
the curtain)
Karim... iss safar mein hum dono ko
saath le jaane ki kya zarurat thi?

CHACHA KARIM

(grim, without looking
at her)
Is waqt Dilli mein tum aur teri beti
ko akela chhodna aqalmandi nahi.
(MORE)

CHACHA KARIM (CONT'D)

(beat)

Aadmi apni daulat kho sakta hai...
magar apni aurat aur izzat nahi.

Mehrun-Nisa lowers her eyes, absorbing the truth.

EXT. VALLEY PASS - LATER

The caravan enters a VALLEY.

Jagged cliffs rise on both sides, their shadows stretching
across the tightening path.

The pace slows. Hooves echo. Voices drop.

An uneasy silence settles.

Hamida scans the ridgelines.

HAMIDA

(to Karim)

Chacha jaan... itni hifazat kyun?

Karim's eyes remain fixed ahead.

CHACHA KARIM

(serious)

Changezi ke kutton ka shikaar abhi
khatam nahi hua.

He leans closer.

CHACHA KARIM (CONT'D)

Mera taqreeban aadha sarmaya iss
qafile ke saath Bombay ja raha hai.

(beat)

Is liye bina hifazat chalna khudkushi
hai.

Hamida nods.

HAMIDA

Aap bilkul theek keh rahe hain. Abba
jaan hamesha kehte thay-

(beat)

Khuda par bharosa karne ka matlab
yeh nahi ke insaan haath par haath
rakh kar baith jaaye. Tadbeer aur
ehtiyaat bhi tawakkul ka hissa hoti
hai.

A faint, grim smile crosses Karim's face.

CHACHA KARIM

Tumhare abba samajhdaar aadmi thay.
Isi liye maine chaalees sawari peeche
se aane ko kaha hai.

(beat)

Aadha ghanta ka faasla hai hamare
darmiyan... taake agar aage kuch ho,
toh peeche se sambhala jaa sake.

The wind suddenly dies.

A small STONE slips loose, tumbling down the cliff.

Hamida's eyes snap upward.

HAMIDA

(urgent whisper)

DAKU...

BEFORE ANYONE CAN REACT—

THWIP! THWIP—THWIP!

A RAIN OF ARROWS erupts from both cliffs.

Shouts explode.

HAMIDA

Sipar! Sipar uthao!

In a heartbeat, Hamida, Yousuf, Karim and their men raise
their SHIELDS, forming a moving wall around the caravan.

ARROWS SLAM into metal and wood.

CLANG! CLANG!

Some splinter. Others ricochet.

ONE ARROW SLIPS THROUGH —

RIPS into a guard's neck.

Blood sprays. The man tumbles from his horse, dead before he
hits the ground.

Chaos erupts. Horses rear.

Men shout orders as arrows continue to rain down.

The caravan is trapped.

WIDEN –

DAKUS pour down from the cliffs, scimitars flashing, war cries tearing through the valley.

INT. CARRIAGE – CONTINUOUS

An arrow THUDs into the wall beside Sarah's head.

Zeibun-Nisa SCREAMS.

Maria yanks open the wooden box.

INSIDE: ARMOR. A BOW. A QUIVER.

Straps on armor with lethal calm.

MARIA

Namak ka haq ada karne ka waqt aa gaya hai.

She KICKS the door open, emerges firing.

EXT. VALLEY – CONTINUOUS

The BATTLE ERUPTS.

DAKU SCREAMS –

Hamida draws her sword and DECAPITATES him mid-charge.

Blood sprays.

Maria dives behind the carriage, NOCKS an arrow, LOOSES –

THWACK!

A DAKU clutches his eye, arrow buried deep, collapsing with a scream.

Hamida SPURS TOOFAAN forward.

DAKU CHARGES –

WHAM!

Hamida's blade cleaves through – the bandit's head spins off, body slumping from the saddle.

WIDE SHOT – CARNAGE.

The caravan is engulfed.

Yousuf and Chacha Karim fight back-to-back, cutting down attackers.

Guards fall. Dakus swarm.

Maria's arrows THUD into throats and chests – but they keep coming.

AT THE CARRIAGE, now at a complete stop –

A DAKU scrambles up the rear.

ZEIBUN-NISA jumps down, fearing the bandit.

The Daku lunges –

Hamida intercepts.

CLANG! CLANG!

Steel shrieks.

Hamida twists – a DEVASTATING STRIKE.

The Daku gurgles, collapses.

ZEIBUN-NISA
(breathless, awed)
MashaAllah... sherni ki tarah ladti
hai.

INT. CARRIAGE – CONTINUOUS

The door BURSTS open.

Another DAKU lunges inside, trying to snatch Sarah's necklace.

SAYYAD springs. His jaws CLAMP onto the man's wrist.

CRACK!

The daku screams, drops his sword.

Sayyad DRAGS him out of the carriage.

EXT. VALLEY FLOOR – CONTINUOUS

WHAM!

Chacha Karim swings his sword, crushing a daku's skull.

SAYYAD leaps back to the carriage, teeth bared.

Steel clashes. Men scream.

WIDE SHOT – THE BATTLE RAGES.

Dakus press harder.

Guards fall.

Yousuf spots a breach and SPRINTS.

A DAKU lunges –

Yousuf's blade drives through his gut.

ON MARIA

She nocks, draws, releases.

An arrow THUDS into a daku's throat.

She is a statue of lethal calm.

ON HAMIDA

Her sword is a blur. It SEVERs a limb.

She spins, parries another attack.

THUNDER OF HOOVES and dust billows from behind, as Chacha Karim's RESERVES charge in, SLAMMING into the attackers with brutal force.

CHACHA KARIM

(grinning)

Mera intezaam kaam aa gaya.

HAMIDA'S POV - THROUGH THE CHAOS

Maria fires arrow after arrow.

Behind her, unnoticed: a scarred, eyepatched Daku raises his scimitar.

HAMIDA'S EYES WIDEN.

She DIGS her heels into Toofaan. The horse LEAPS forward.

CRASH!

Hamida SLAMS into the eyepatched Daku. They tumble from their saddles, roll in the dust.

They spring apart, swords drawn. Recognize each other instantly.

ARMAAN SINGH

(breathless, a savage
grin)

Shehzadi? Is karwaan mein?

HAMIDA
(cold, fierce)
Main kabhi Shehzadi nahi thi.
(her voice drops,
deadly)
Aur ab toh bilkul nahi hoon.

ARMAAN SINGH
Roshanara Bagh ke baad bhi zinda?

HAMIDA
(a dangerous smile)
Kismat achi thi. Aaj teri kharab
hai.

BLUR OF MOVEMENT – STEEL SCREAMS.

CLANG! CLANG! CLANG!

Rapid, brutal exchanges.

Armaan lunges – Hamida parries, spins, counters.

Armaan's blade skids along Hamida's sword, sparks flying.

They lock, face to face, breathing hard.

With a savage twist, Hamida KNOCKS Armaan's sword aside.

It spins through the air, landing in the dust.

Armaan staggers back.

ARMAAN SINGH
(breathing hard)
Himmat hai toh nangi haath se lad!
Hamida studies him. A slow, dangerous smile spreads.

HAMIDA
Khushi se.
Hamida lets her sword fall. It sticks upright in the sand.
They COLLIDE. A brutal, close-quarters brawl.
Fists CRACK on bone.
Elbows SLAM jaws.
Boots grind into dust.
Armaan grabs Hamida by the collar and YANKS.
RIP! Hamida's tunic tears.

The concealed padding, filled with cotton, falls free to the ground, exposing the false breast.

Long strands of hair spill loose, revealing Hamida's true identity.

Armaan freezes.

ARMAAN SINGH
(staggering back)
Tu... tu mard hai?!

Nasuh's eyes burn.

His fist EXPLODES into Armaan's face.

CRACK!

Armaan crashes backward, blood spraying.

NASUH
Haan... is waqt main tera mard hoon,
aur mardon wali kaam karta hoon.

Nasuh kicks him hard. Armaan collapses.

Nasuh tears his own already torn tunic and loops the strips around Armaan's wrists, binding them tight behind his back.

Nasuh jerks him upright, eyes burning.

NASUH (CONT'D)
Ab tu ek aurat ki tarah iss mard ke
peeche-peeche aajao.

Zeibun-Nisa stands frozen beside the carriage, her gaze fixed on Nasuh in stunned silence.

ZEIBUN-NISA
(whispering)
Yeh... mard hai...

SUDDENLY –

A daku lunges from her blind side. Rough hands. Ripped sleeve. She is lifted—hoisted—thrown across the saddle like grain.

She SCREAMS.

The horse turns. Hooves tear earth.

Nasuh hears it.

He releases Armaan. Armaan falls. Nasuh does not look at him.

He raises two fingers to his lips-

A whistle, sharp as a blade.

ON TOOFAAN -

A black stallion bursts through the fray, mane like smoke, hooves like thunder. He rears, neighs, finds his master.

Nasuh mounts in one motion. The horse does not slow. They are already moving. They do not ride. They explode.

ONE STRIKE -

The Daku's arm holding the reins FLIES, a fountain of blood as he screams.

The horse bolts.

Zeibun-Nisa falls from the saddle, rolls, rises-alive, gasping, her veil torn, her face bare.

She looks up at him.

Nasuh CHARGES.

Blade FLASHES -

The daku drops lifeless, neck severed.

Nasuh swings down from Toofaan before the body hits the earth.

He moves toward her-not running. He doesn't need to. The daku is dead, the horse still. For this breath, the world is the space between them.

He reaches her. Their eyes meet.

His: fierce. Protective. A wall with no gate.

Hers: wide. Not fear. But something else. Something she cannot name.

He does not speak. He lifts her-not roughly, not gently. Simply. As if she weighs nothing. As if she weighs everything.

She settles into the saddle. His hands leave her waist. He steps back.

Their eyes meet again.

NASUH

(to Toofaan—not a
command, a quiet
trust)

Suno, Toofaan... Yeh ladki Chacha Karim
ki amaanat hai. Isko sahih salaamat
Ammi jaan ke paas gadi tak le jao.

Toofaan neighs—softly, a question answered.

He turns. He moves—not with the thunder of before, but with
a deliberate, measured pace. A guardian's gait.

Zeibun-Nisa looks back. Once.

Nasuh does not move. Does not speak. Does not blink. He
watches her go.

ACROSS THE FIELD —

Yousuf cuts down another Daku.

Chacha Karim's men overpowering the attackers.

A DAKU flees, spurring a camel loaded with goods.

Maria draws — steady as stone.

She exhales.

THWACK!

The arrow pierces the bandit's spine.

He collapses into the sand.

MARIA

Yun hi apni cheezon ki hifazat ki
jaati hai.

Karim stares at her, impressed.

CHACHA KARIM

Maria... tumne meri daulat bacha li.

The remaining dakus break and flee — too late.

Karim's men cut most of them down.

THREE DAKUS manage to escape.

Yousuf and IBRAHIM, one of Karim's Guards, spur after them,
swords raised.

Silence slowly settles.

Bodies scattered.

Horses panting.

Men breathing hard.

The caravan regroups – battered, bloodied, but alive.

Nasuh drags the bound Armaan Singh toward Chacha Karim.

Armaan stumbles. Nasuh does not slow.

NASUH

Chacha jaan... yeh leijiye. Aapka aur samaj ka mujrim.

Chacha Karim stares at Nasuh. Not at the prisoner. At the man holding him.

Recognition wars with disbelief. His voice is low, steady—but his eyes search.

CHACHA KARIM

Pehle yeh batao—tum kaun ho?

NASUH

(flat. Final.)

Meri baat ab chhodiye. Yousuf sab kuch bata dega.

(beat)

Aap yeh bata dijiye—
Is kameene ke saath kya sulook kiya jaaye?

Karim studies Armaan, then nods calmly.

CHACHA KARIM

Saath le chalte hain. Raaste mein kisi darogha ki chauki par hawale kar denge.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL –

Yousuf and Ibrahim return. Their blades are wet. Stained with blood.

YOUSUF

Ek farari daku maar gaye. Ek bhaag nikla. Aur ek qaidi bhi tha... magar—

CHACHA KARIM

Magar kya?

YOUSUF

Use Ibrahim ne maara.

IBRAHIM

Maalik... yeh log gutta-ut-tariq hain.
Zameen par fasaad, wehshat aur dehshat
phailaate hain. Khuda ka hukum inke
baare mein saaf hai – Maut, woh bhi
sakhti aur mushaqqat ke saath. Taake
zameen par aman aur amaan qayam rahe.

Karim chuckles, dismissive.

CHACHA KARIM

Chalo... jo ho gaya so ho gaya.
Ab safar jaari rakho.

The caravan moves again – slower now, wounded, but unbroken.

EXT. DESERT – NIGHT

An ocean of sand beneath a diamond-scattered sky.

A crackling fire throws dancing shadows across tents and
resting camels.

Smoke curls from cooking pots. Spices sizzle softly.

Nasuh, draped in indigo silk, sits near the fire, flanked by
Maria and Sarah, their soft veils drawn.

ACROSS THE FIRE –

Zeibun-Nisa sits beside her mother, Mehrun-Nisa. Their veils
are drawn—not the full purdah of the court, but light dupattas
pulled forward, shadows within shadows.

Chacha Karim sips tea, steam curling around his thoughtful
smile.

CHACHA KARIM

(leaning in, eyes
crinkling)

Yousuf... Nasuh ka raaz chhupane ki
kya zarurat thi?

YOUSUF

(hands spread)

Chacha jaan... uske walid ka qatl ho
chuka tha. Ghar jala diya gaya. Us
waqt iske siwa koi raasta nahi tha.

A shadow crosses Karim's face – then fades into a slow nod.

CHACHA KARIM

(grudging approval)

Tumne usey wahin boya... jahan woh
panap sakta tha.

MEHRUN-NISA

(soft)

Jaise uski taqdeer mein likha tha.

Karim straightens – the merchant prince returns.

CHACHA KARIM

(decisive)

Nasuh... Bombay ke tamaam tijaarati
maamlaat tum sambhalo. Munafa – teesra
hissa tumhara.

Nasuh sits taller, firelight flickering in his eyes.

NASUH

(carefully)

Aap ka bharosa sar aankhon par... magar
manch bhi mujhe pukaar raha hai.

Beat.

Karim bursts into warm laughter.

CHACHA KARIM

(wiping his eyes)

Dono karo! Bas meri reshmi kapdon se
tumhara libaas zyada chamakna nahi
chahiye.

Nasuh smiles.

Across the fire, Zeibun-Nisa looks at him, her gaze steady.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF BOMBAY – DAY

SUPER: THREE WEEKS LATER

Rolling green plains. Palm trees sway in the sea breeze.

Distant waves crash rhythmically.

Hooves thunder. Camel harnesses groan. Wagon wheels creak.

The caravan presses forward.

Ahead – a MARATHA CHECKPOST.

Rough timber posts. A raised barrier. A saffron flag snaps
in the wind.

ARMED MARATHA GUARDS stand watch, spears grounded.

The caravan slows. Karim raises a hand.

The procession halts. Dust settles.

Karim dismounts, composed.

Nasuh and Yousuf bring forward Armaan Singh, bound and bloodied.

A MARATHA OFFICER steps out, eyes sharp. He studies the caravan... then Armaan.

The officer gestures to a wooden board nailed to the post – WANTED SKETCHES. Armaan's face stares back.

OFFICER

(grim)
Armaan Singh.

A beat.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

(to guards)
Isko qaid mein daalo. Yeh raaste ka daku hai.

Guards seize Armaan.

ARMAAN

(gritting his teeth)
Chhod do...!

A spear butt slams into his ribs.

The iron gate CREAKS open. Armaan is thrown inside. CLANG.

The officer turns to Karim.

OFFICER

Raah-dari ka lagaan.

Karim nods. A servant steps forward, opens a pouch – silver mohurs spill into a brass tray.

The officer weighs them, nods. He takes a parchment, seals it with a wax stamp, and hands it to Karim.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

Ja sakte ho.

The barrier lifts. The caravan moves again.

EXT. ROAD TO BOMBAY – CONTINUOUS

Nasuh rides Toofaan, eyes scanning the horizon.

Yousuf rides beside him.

SAYYAD pads silently.

The land flattens.

CHACHA KARIM
(smiling faintly)
Bombai... aakhir hum pohanch hi gaye.

EXT. BOMBAY - SARAI GATE - DAY

A massive stone gateway towers ahead.

The caravan winds through the street, flanked by SARAI buildings filled with drapers and silk merchants.

Bolts of cloth – crimson, indigo, saffron, gold – spill from balconies and open shops.

British redcoats, flanked by sepoy, patrol the street.

The caravan enters a large SARAI courtyard –

EXT. SARAI COURTYARD - DAY

Chaos and commerce. Camels kneel. Ropes snap. Wooden crates and bales of cloth shift and tumble. Vendors shout prices.

The caravan halts before a large WAREHOUSE.

Karim dismounts. Nasuh follows.

Yousuf scans the crowd, alert.

SAYYAD stands guard near the ladies' carriage, muscles taut.

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Sunlight cuts through high rafters. Dust floats in golden shafts.

Karim places his palm on a silk crate – calm, authoritative.

CHACHA KARIM
(slow, controlled)
Yeh maal sirf tijarat nahi hai... yeh
bharosa hai. Aur bharosa sirf ek
baar toot-ta hai.

Workers stiffen. Heads bow. No one dares speak.

Yousuf leans against stacked crates, watching.

YOUSUF
(to Ibrahim, dry)
Lagta hai baat samajh aa gayi.

IBRAHIM
(calm, quoting Farsi)
"Dar khana agar kas ast, yak harf
bas ast."

YOUSUF
(faint smile)
Aqil ke liye ishaara hi kaafi hota
hai.

Karim turns, already walking away.

CHACHA KARIM
Nasuh!

Nasuh looks up.

CHACHA KARIM (CONT'D)
Khawateen intezaar kar rahi hain.
Unhein akela chhodna munaasib nahi.

A beat.

CHACHA KARIM (CONT'D)
Aur Bombay... yeh aahista chalne walon
ka shehar nahi.

Nasuh nods and follows.

EXT. BOMBAY - TRAVELLERS' SARAI - DAY

A large stone SARAI with carved wooden gates. Life hums around
the courtyard.

A HORSE-DRAWN CARRIAGE rolls in, wheels crunching gravel.

Nasuh steps forward, standing respectfully aside as the LADIES
descend. Their finely woven linen garments and veils ripple
in the breeze. Gold-threaded belts glint in the sun.

SERVANTS RUSH FORWARD:

One servant offers an arm, while another steadies the step.

One takes the reins with a bow. Another presents a copper
ewer and basin for washing.

A third spreads fresh reed mats at the entrance.

Chacha Karim watches, satisfied.

INT. SILK SHOP - DAY

Silks cascade from wooden beams – crimson, indigo, gold.
Shafts of sunlight catch the shimmer of threads.

At a polished table, Chacha Karim and Nasuh meet RAGHUNATH (60s), a respected Bombay Merchant.

CHACHA KARIM

(friendly)

Mera dost, yeh Nasuh hai – Hamari
Bombay ki shoba ka mudeer. Ab yeh
hamari family ka hissa hai aur yahan
ke karobar sambhalega.

RAGHUNATH

(smiling at Nasuh)

Beta, aapse milkar khushi hui. Umeed
hai hamare karobari rishtay phal-
phoolenge.

NASUH

(grateful)

Raghunath sahab, mujhe bhi khushi
hui. Aap jaise tajruba-kaar shakhsiyat
ke saath kaam karne ka intezaar hai.

CHACHA KARIM

Bhai Raghunath, maine bahut saari
bari silk aur kapas laayi hai. Aap
kitna lena chahenge?

RAGHUNATH

(smiling)

Bhai Karim, aapka bharosa hai – sab
le loonga. Sattar fi-sad foran, baaqi
tis fi-sad chhe mahine mein. Theek
hai?

CHACHA KARIM

(extending hand)

Bilkul. Bohot acha intezaam hai.

They shake hands. Karim's face lights up – relief and satisfaction.

RAGHUNATH

Aapka maal hamare behtareen grahak
ke wardrobe ko sajaayega. Shelves
mein der tak nahi rahega.

CHACHA KARIM

Aapke bharose ka shukriya, Bhai
Raghunath.

(MORE)

CHACHA KARIM (CONT'D)

Ab mujhe chhutti leni chahiye. Sarai
wapas jaake aaram karenge.

INT. SARAI RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A festive dinner. Laughter, clinking plates. Then, silence
as plates clear.

Chacha Karim stands. All eyes turn to him.

CHACHA KHATIM

Alhamdulillah. Safar kamyab raha,
karobar bhi.

His eyes twinkle. He places a hand on Zeibun-Nisa's shoulder.

CHACHA KARIM

Aur aaj... ek aur khushkhabri.

He pulls Nasuh to his side. A hush falls.

CHACHA KARIM (CONT'D)

Main apni beti Zeibun-Nisa ki shadi
ka elaan karta hoon... Nasuh ke saath.

BEAT.

Then -- UPROAR. APPLAUSE. CHEERS. Zeibun-Nisa blushes
furiously. Nasuh looks stunned, then deeply moved.

Sarah wipes a tear, smiling at Nasuh.

Yousuf grins, clapping.

CHACHA KARIM (CONT'D)

(raising hands for
quiet)

Shukriya. Aur... ek guzarish.

He turns to Sarah, his voice thick with emotion.

CHACHA KARIM (CONT'D)

Behen Sarah... kya aap Maria ka haath
mere Yousuf ko dein ge?

All eyes swing to MARIA. She freezes. Yousuf stands, his
usual swagger gone, replaced by naked earnestness.

YOUSUF

Maria... zindagi bhar tumhara saath
nibhaane ki izzat dogi?

Maria's eyes dart to her mother.

Sarah looks at Yousuf, at karim's family, then back to her daughter. A slow, warm, definitive nod.

Maria turns to Yousuf, a smile breaking through like sunlight.

MARIA

Haan, Yousuf. Haan.

THE ROOM ERUPTS – joy, cheers, tears. The two families merge, embracing in celebration.

MEHRUN-NISA

(removing her ring,
placing it in Yousuf's
hand)

Pehnao. Apni dulhan ko.

SARAH

(removing her own
heirloom ring)

Yeh tumhare Abbu ki daadi ne di thi...
humari khandaan ki zindagi ki kahani
hai.

(she places it in
Nasuh's hand)

Isse Zeibun-Nisa ki zindagi ka hissa
banao.

CLOSE ON: Nasuh sliding the ring onto Zeibun-Nisa's finger.
Her shy smile.

CLOSE ON: Yousuf doing the same for Maria. Her confident
grip on his hand.

WIDER: Chacha Karim watches, overwhelmed. He raises his hands
for a prayer. The room settles into a reverent silence.

CHACHA KARIM

(voice trembling)

Aaj... hamara khandan ek ho gaya
hai.

He looks at the two couples, his vision stretching into the
future.

CHACHA KARIM (CONT'D)

Allah in dono joron ko khushi de.
Aur aisi aulaad de... jo is naye
watan ki aazadi aur taraqqi ke liye
jeeyen.

A chorus of "Ameen" echoes.

The camera PULLS BACK, showing the unified family, a portrait of hope in the flickering light.

DISSOLVE TO:

SUPER: FOUR YEARS LATER

EXT. BOMBAY - CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY

Workers climb ladders, hammer beams, adjust ropes. Dust floats in golden sunlight.

A wooden board rises, intricate calligraphy reads:

PARSI NATAK MANDALA

INT. PARSİ NATAK MANDALA - DAY

Nasuh stands before a line of young students, demonstrating the "Grand Entrance" technique. Face painted, movements precise and deliberate.

STUDENTS mimic every step, eyes wide.

NASUH

(teaching)

Jab manzar par qadam rakho... har nazar
tum par ho... aur har andaaz tumhari
kahani sunaye.

A student trips. Nasuh adjusts him with a gentle hand.

NASUH (CONT'D)

Har harkat mein jazba ho, har lehja
asal ka ho.

Students nod, practicing again with more confidence.

EXT. LARGE HOUSE - COURTYARD - DAY

Courtyard of a large house. Lanterns hang from carved wooden beams. A long table laden with dishes.

Mehrun-Nisa and Sarah spin gracefully in flowing traditional attire. Maria and Zeibun-Nisa join, laughter bright and musical.

Chacha Karim, Mir Ameen (white-bearded, older), Nasuh, and Yousuf sit at the head of the table, smiling. Two small children run and play nearby.

Zeibun-Nisa laughs softly, glancing at Nasuh with trust.

INT. YOUSUF'S STUDY ROOM - NIGHT

Yousuf sits at a desk, papers scattered, pen in hand. A small oil lamp casts a warm glow.

In the adjoining room, MIR AMEEN sits cross-legged on a rug, gently playing with his TODDLER GRANDSON - rolling a wooden toy across the floor. The child giggles.

Maria enters the study, carrying a cup of tea.

MARIA

(chuckling)

Aap kya likh rahe ho? Naya naatak?

YOUSUF

Haan... is baar Laila aur Majnun ki kahani. Nayi rooh ke saath.

Yousuf glances toward the next room - Mir Ameen lifts the child in the air. Laughter fills the house.

Yousuf smiles, returns to his writing.

CUT TO:

INT. PARSİ NATAK MANDALA - NIGHT

A packed theatre. Oil lamps glow along carved balconies.

Parsis, Indians, British officers - all sit rapt.

On stage: A STYLIZED DESERT.

Painted dunes in warm ochers. A blazing sun disc suspended above.

MAJNUN (NASUH), skeletal, wild-haired, wrapped in tattered cloth, staggers across the sand.

Dragging feet. Moving lips - prayer, madness, devotion.

He drops to his knees, traces a name in the sand with trembling fingers.

A distant CLINKING OF BELLS.

From stage left, a CARAVAN enters - camels evoked through shadows and rhythm.

Bells sway. Silk banners ripple.

The SAARBAAN steps forward - stern, worldly.

SAARBAAN

Ay Majnun-e-be-dil! Rok apni deewangi.
Kis haal mein pada hai tu?

Majnun does not look up. He whispers to the wind.

The Saarbnaan scoffs, steps closer.

SAARBAAN (CONT'D)

Kiske liye marta hai? Uss Laila ke
liye? Uss bewafa ke liye? Ek khud-ro
phool – jismein na rang hai, na
khushboo.

Majnun's fingers freeze in the sand.

SAARBAAN (CONT'D)

Woh dagha baaz nikli. Iss tapte sehra
mein tujhe chhod kar kisi aur ki
dulhan ban gayi.

A hush ripples through the theatre.

The Saarbnaan gestures grandly.

SAARBAAN (CONT'D)

Main tere liye hoor jaisi ladki
launga. Aisi jo qabr ki deewar tak
tera saath nibhaye.

Slowly – Majnun lifts his head.

Nasuh's eyes burn. Not madness. Revelation.

MAJNUN

(soft, devastating)
Ja... ay saarbnaan. Humein yun na sata.

He rises.

Sand slips from his cloak like gold dust.

MAJNUN (CONT'D)

Ja aur apni saarbnaani kar. Ja... apne
oont chara.

A ripple of unease in the audience.

MAJNUN (CONT'D)

Aashiqi ka kaam sirf aashiq jaanta
hai.

(beat)

Woh kya jaane... jo sirf janwaron ki
saath safar karta hai.

Majnun steps closer to the blazing sun disc.

MAJNUN (CONT'D)

Agar duniya poori ki poori chaand se
bhar jaaye... phir bhi meri nigaah ka
markaz sirf meri Laila rahegi.

His voice grows luminous.

MAJNUN (CONT'D)

Tum Laila ko mitti mein dhoondhte
ho... aur main usey apni rooh mein
dekhta hoon.

A beat. Absolute silence.

MAJNUN (CONT'D)

Agar Laila ko Majnun ki nazron se
dekhoge... tumhein husn aur khoobi ke
siwa kuch aur dikhai hi nahi dega.

Then – softly, like a prayer, in Farsi:

MAJNUN (CONT'D)

*Agar dar deeda-e-Majnun nishini,
Ba ghair az khoobi-ye-Laila nabini.*

MAJNUN TURNS –

and walks into the desert light.

BLACKOUT.

A hushed, suspended moment.

Then -- THUNDEROUS APPLAUSE. The curtain rises.

Nasuh and Yousuf stand center stage, breathless. Nasuh is
Majnun incarnate. Yousuf, the humble scribe.

The audience is on its feet.

A PRESENTER steps forward with a gleaming plaque.

PRESENTER

Parsi Natak Mandal ki taraf se
behtareen naatak, "Laila-Majnun" ke
musannif... YOUSUF SAHIB!

The applause SWELLS. Yousuf is frozen. Nasuh gently pushes
him forward.

Yousuf accepts the plaque, his voice thick with emotion.

YOUSUF

Yeh kahani meri nahi... har uss dil
ki hai jo mohabbat jaanta hai.

He turns to Nasuh.

YOUSUF (CONT'D)

Aur uss fankaar ki hai... jo ise har
raat zinda karta hai.

Nasuh bows deeply, his eyes meeting Yousuf's -- a lifetime
of friendship in a glance.

FROM THE WINGS --

Chacha Karim wipes a tear.

Mir Ameen nods, a proud soldier seeing a different kind of
victory.

Maria and Zeibun-Nisa hold hands, beaming.

Their CHILDREN clap, laughing without understanding, yet
feeling the joy.

The theatre is a whirlwind of flowers, cheers, and radiant
faces.

SLOW PUSH IN on Nasuh's face. Sweat, paint, and pure,
transcendent peace.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.

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