

A HERO

A film by ASGHAR FARHADI

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Adapted by Massoumeh Lahidji

1 – INT. DAY – PRISON/REGISTRY OFFICE

Rahim is sitting in the corridor behind the registry office with his bag on the floor next to him. Another prisoner is also waiting to be called and go out on leave. In the office, the screen of the computer on the desk shows the images of four surveillance cameras focused on the corridor, on the two adjacent offices and on the exit of the prison. A guard comes out of the small door of the office and calls Rahim.

GUARD
Rahim Soltani.

Rahim takes his bag, passes close to the guard, and goes into the office. Two adjacent rooms with a few desks, where some guards supervise the prisoners entering and leaving. This office leads to the outside through an iron door. The camera pans from the computer screen to the register on the desk. Rahim's hand gives a paper to the guard sitting at the desk. The guard notes his name and references in the register, Rahim signs next to his name and leaves the office.

2 – EXT./INT. DAY – STREET/BUS

Rahim comes out of the prison with his bag on his back. He sees a bus in the distance. He starts to run to the bus stop. He just makes it and gets on the bus before it leaves. The bus starts. The high walls of the prison pass before Rahim's eyes.

3 – EXT. DAY – IN FRONT OF THE NAQSHE ROSTAM SITE

A taxi travels towards camera along the road leading to Naqshe Rostam site and stops by its fence. Rahim gets out, takes his change from the driver and walks to the fence. He jumps over it and enters the site's enclosure. There are many groups of Iranian and foreign tourists on the site. Rahim passes among the groups, who are mostly listening to their guide's explanations. Loudspeakers play traditional Iranian music.

4 – EXT. DAY – NAQSHE ROSTAM – XERXES' TOMB

Since the tomb of King Xerxes is built into the mountainside, there is long scaffolding with stairs to allow access to the workers doing restoration works inside and outside the necropolis. Rahim climbs the barrier and goes up the stairs. There are a lot of steps, making you breathless. A wide sequence shot shows Rahim climbing up. The credits fade in and out on this shot. Hossein, Rahim's middle-aged brother-in-law, is at the top of the ladder, repairing cracks in the reliefs. He is wearing a dusty uniform of restoration workers. He sees Rahim coming up.

HOSSEIN (surprised)
Hey! You should have called me, I'd have come down.

RAHIM
Hello!

Rahim gets to the top of the stairs at last, while Hossein stops working to go and meet him.

RAHIM
I wonder how they managed in the old days to climb up here to visit their dead!

HOSSEIN
They probably smoked less than you! Great to see you!

Hossein hugs Rahim warmly.

HOSSEIN
Why didn't you warn us?

RAHIM
It wasn't planned.

Dehghan, Hossein's colleague, who is also repairing cracks, notices Rahim's presence.

DEHGHAN
Congratulations, Rahim. Are you done?

RAHIM
No, it's just some leave.

DEHGHAN
Enjoy.

5 – INT. DAY – NAQSHE ROSTAM – NECROPOLIS, NEXT TO THE TOMB

A vault with Xerxes' tomb in the middle, opening on to the outside via a narrow door. A lamp hung on the wall lights the vault a bit. A fan is in a corner. Jahromi, another colleague of Hossein's, older than him, is filling cracks in the ceiling of the vault. A tablecloth is spread on the tomb itself, with plates with leftovers from lunch on them. Rahim sits down in a corner and puts his bag down next to him. He looks at the ancient walls of the vault. Hossein pours him some tea from his flask.

Hossein gives Rahim the cup of tea and tidies away the tablecloth and plates.

HOSSEIN
How long are you here for?

RAHIM
Day after tomorrow.

HOSSEIN
Only two days?

RAHIM
I had to move mountains to get them.

HOSSEIN
Jahromi, can you pass him the sugar?

RAHIM
Don't bother, I had a tea before coming.

JAHROMI
How dare you compare prison tea to that served on the tomb
of Xerxes!

Jahromi brings him a tray and a sugar bowl.

HOSSEIN
You should save up your leave to stay for a week or two, at
least.

RAHIM
I'm more looking at a way to stay out of the hole.

HOSSEIN
What way?

RAHIM
Let's go and see Bahram together and talk to him.

HOSSEIN
If talking had made a difference, he wouldn't have sent you to
prison.

Hossein gives him a glass of tea.

RAHIM
I can have 75,000.

HOSSEIN
How?

RAHIM
Somebody will give it to me.

HOSSEIN
Is it a loan with interest?

RAHIM

No. I'll get one without.

HOSSEIN

You'd better wait until you have the money for sure. Then, we can go to him and he'd have to shut up. Now if we make promises that we can't keep...

RAHIM

I'll have the money this afternoon.

HOSSEIN

For sure?

RAHIM

For sure.

HOSSEIN

Jahromi, do you want me to bring your tea there?

JAHROMI

No, thank you. I'm coming.

HOSSEIN

Then call him.

RAHIM

He doesn't answer my calls.

HOSSEIN

Go and get the money. I'll arrange an appointment for this afternoon.

RAHIM

Is your car here?

6 – EXT. DAY – STREET/OUTSIDE FARKHONDEH'S BROTHER'S HOUSE, WALKWAY, STAIRCASE, ENTRANCE

A street with multi-story brick buildings, all identical, in a social housing neighborhood. Farkhondeh, wearing a chador, comes out of a flat, comes up the walkway and goes down the stairs to the entrance of the block. A few children are playing noisily in the yard. Farkhondeh hurries to the street, and walks to another street.

7 – EXT/INT. DAY – STREET/HOSSEIN'S VAN

Rahim is waiting on the street at the wheel of a van. He sees Farkhondeh, cheerful, about to cross and come towards the van. He stares at her. She's so excited that she doesn't pay attention to a car that passes nearby. The car honks. Rahim is scared. Farkhondeh gets in quickly.

FARKHONDEH

Hello...

RAHIM

Hello.

FARKHONDEH

Let's go somewhere else, it's too busy here.

Rahim starts the van.

FARKHONDEH

What a beard!

RAHIM

You like it?

FARKHONDEH

I love it! Keep it.

She looks at him lovingly.

RAHIM

You doing OK?

FARKHONDEH

I was going crazy.

RAHIM

Why?

FARKHONDEH

I don't know what was harder, waiting all this time or since last night when you told me you were getting out!

Rahim looks at her as he drives.

RAHIM

I'd never seen you with a chador before.

FARKHONDEH

I put the bag under the chador so nobody would see it.

Farkhondeh puts an unremarkable handbag with a broken strap in her lap. She unzips it. Inside is a plastic bag full of gold coins, some beauty products, a pack of cigarettes and a lighter. Rahim stares at the coins. Farkhondeh looks at him questioningly. Rahim is silent. Farkhondeh zips the handbag.

8 – INT. DAY – GOLD DEALER

In a small shop, Rahim and Farkhondeh are standing at the counter, watching the hands of the gold dealer who is counting the coins. The dealer brings his calculator and starts counting.

GOLD DEALER
Seventeen times 4.300...

FARKHONDEH
Has it gone down?

GOLD DEALER
When did you ask for the rate?

FARKHONDEH
Last week.

GOLD DEALER
Coins' rate changes every hour.

Farkhondeh looks at Rahim, trying to feel what he thinks. The dealer types on the calculator but it runs out of battery.

GOLD DEALER
Damn...

The dealer opens the back of the calculator and takes the batteries out and puts them back in to no avail.

RAHIM
Can it go up again tomorrow?

GOLD DEALER
Anything is possible.

The dealer leaves the calculator aside and starts looking for a pen. Farkhondeh is looking at the wedding rings in the window. The dealer tries to write the figures on a piece of paper, but the pen is dry. He keeps trying, annoyed. Rahim is lost in thought, hesitating.

GOLD DEALER
Shit!

9 – EXT. DAY – STREET/SIDEWALK

Rahim and Farkhondeh are walking on the sidewalk towards the van parked across the street.

FARKHONDEH

You should have let me sell them last week. Shall we go and check the price somewhere else?

RAHIM

It's the same everywhere.

FARKHONDEH

So, let's sell them here.

Rahim is silent. They cross the street while talking and get to the van.

FARKHONDEH

What's wrong?

RAHIM

Nothing.

FARKHONDEH

So why do you seem hesitant?

RAHIM

We should be sure first...

FARKHONDEH

About what?

RAHIM

Let's see if he gives his consent.

FARKHONDEH

Why wouldn't he?

RAHIM

I don't know. He might want all his money back.

They get in the van. Rahim unlocks the steering wheel lock.

FARKHONDEH

Keep them so I don't take them back home.

RAHIM

Put them in my bag.

Rahim starts the van. Farkhondeh takes Rahim's bag and unzips it. She takes out his plastic bag of dirty laundry and slips in the handbag with the coins. She zips it

RAHIM
Leave my laundry.

FARKHONDEH
You've only got two days' leave. You're excused from washing duty.

Rahim goes on driving.

10 – EXT. DAY – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/YARD

A little one-story house. In the yard, Maliheh, Rahim's sister, is making tomato sauce, surrounded by trays full of tomatoes. Negar, her seven-year-old daughter, is playing in the yard. The door rings.

MALIHEH
Can you open it, darling?

Negar runs in to go and open the door. Maliheh looks inside curiously.

11 – INT./EXT. DAY – MALIHEH'S HOUSE

Negar opens the door. Rahim comes in carrying his bag and a box of cakes.

NEGAR
Hello, uncle!

RAHIM
Hello, sweetheart. How's it going?

Rahim lifts his niece and kisses her.

RAHIM
Who's at home?

NEGAR
Mom. (loud) Mom, uncle's here!

RAHIM
Hey, you've got really heavy!

Rahim walks along the corridor carrying his bag, the cakes, and his niece. He comes into the living room and sees Maliheh from the window. She is happy to see him and comes in.

12 – INT. DAY – MALIHEH’S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM, KITCHEN, BATHROOM

Rahim lights the burner of the boiler and Maliheh fills the kettle and puts it on the hob. Negar takes a cake from the box.

MALIHEH
You’ve got a lot thinner since last time.

RAHIM
You tell me that every time... How’s Siavash?

MALIHEH
He’s at school.

Rahim finally manages to light the boiler. He lights the gas under the kettle with the same match and goes into the living room.

RAHIM
Mali, could you give me a towel so I can take a shower?

Rahim takes his bag and goes towards the bathroom. Maliheh goes into a bedroom to get a towel.

NEGAR
Uncle, they called mom from his school this morning.

RAHIM (to Maliheh)
Why?

MALIHEH
For nothing. Do you want a razor?

RAHIM
No. What has he done now?

NEGAR
He got into a fight at his school yesterday.

MALIHEH (to Negar)
Your uncle’s hardly arrived and you’re starting to tell tales already?

RAHIM
They should call his mother! Why do they call you?

MALIHEH
They must have called her and she asked them to call his father's family. You should go to the school tomorrow to see what’s happening.

Rahim goes into the bathroom.

RAHIM

What's up with him now? He was getting better ...

NEGAR

Uncle, his mother is remarrying.

MALIHEH

Who told you that?

NEGAR

Siavash.

MALIHEH

He just said someone had proposed to her.

Rahim is unbuttoning his shirt. He is troubled by this news and stops for a second, in silence. He then undoes the last button, takes off his shirt and closes the bathroom door.

MALILEH (off screen)

I left the towel behind the door. Call me when you want me to wash your back.

13 – INT. DAY – COVERED MARKET/BAHRAM'S SHOP

A small photocopy shop in a covered market. A young girl, Nazanin, is making photocopies for a student. Hossein enters the shop, followed by Rahim. Nazanin behaves coldly with them.

HOSSEIN

Hello.

RAHIM

Hello.

NAZANIN

Hello.

HOSSEIN

Isn't your dad here?

NAZANIN

He went out. (To the client) Anything else?

THE CLIENT

No, thank you.

NAZANIN

Fifty two fifty.

The student pays.

HOSSEIN
He told me he'd be here this afternoon.

THE CLIENT
Good bye.

NAZANIN
Have a good day.

The client goes out.

RAHIM
Could you please give him a call and ask him when he'll be back?

Without answering him, Nazanin takes the phone that is charging and makes the call. Rahim and Hossein are waiting.

NAZANIN (on the phone)
Hi, Dad. Where are you?... Rahim's brother-in-law is here, he says you were supposed to meet... Okay.

HOSSEIN
Can I please talk to him?

NAZANIN
Hold on.

Hossein takes the phone. Nazanin goes back to her work. Rahim listens carefully to the conversation between Hossein and his creditor.

HOSSEIN
Hello, Bahram. How are you?... You said you'd be here at 5.... Nothing serious, I hope... I would have preferred to see you, to sort this out after three years. He's put together part of his debt.... Around 70,000.

Hossein puts the loudspeaker on for Rahim to hear.

HAMID (offscreen)
We've had many of these meetings. I've heard many of these promises from this...

Rahim is uncomfortable. Hossein cuts the loudspeaker.

HOSSEIN
For the 70,000, I'm promising! His friends and family found it for him.

He puts the loudspeaker back on.

HAMID (offscreen)

Well then, let some of his friends and family come and write me four or five post-dated checks to pay off all his debt, and then, I'll withdraw the case.

HOSSEIN

Listen, if he gets out, he'll make sure he pays off the rest bit by bit.

HAMID (offscreen)

You are his relatives and you wouldn't write checks for a loser like him. Why do you expect me to trust him?

HOSSEIN

I can hardly pay my rent, otherwise I would never have let him spend one night in prison...

HAMID (offscreen)

You're saying if he comes out, he'll pay it off bit by bit. Give me a bond check and he'll pay you back later...

HOSSEIN

Do him a favor and let him out.

HAMID (offscreen)

He didn't even feel sorry for his own wife and child, he doesn't deserve any favors.

HOSSEIN

Don't worry about what he deserves. Do you want your money or don't you? Half of your debt is ready, cash.

HAMID (offscreen)

You don't trust him enough to write a check for him. This scum ruined three years of my life and you want me...

HOSSEIN

It's not about trust...

HAMID (offscreen)

What is it about, then? I don't trust him anymore. If he says it's day, I'll believe it's night. I was fooled once by his hangdog look, but that won't happen again.

Hossein is obliged to cut the loudspeaker again. Rahim is very embarrassed by what has been said and feels humiliated. Nazanin looks at him in a reproachful way. He leaves the shop without a word. Hossein doesn't know what to do. He keeps listening to the voice on the phone while watching sadly as Rahim goes.

13 – INT. NIGHT – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN

Maliheh and her two children, Nima, ten, and Negar, plus Hossein, are there for Rahim's leave. Maliheh has made dinner, and Siavash, Rahim's eleven-year-old son is in a corner, engrossed in his tablet. In the kitchen, Maliheh serves cabbage rice into dishes. Nima takes the dishes and puts them on the tablecloth spread on the living room floor. Rahim lays out the plates and spoons.

MALIHEH

Come and eat before it gets cold. Come on, Negar.

RAHIM

Where is Hossein?

MALIHEH

In the bathroom, I guess. Come Siavash, my nephew, leave your tablet and come... It's chronic, as soon as we sit down to eat, my husband has to go...

Maliheh goes to the kitchen to bring the rest of the dinner. Nima and Negar sit down. Siavash has a slight stutter.

RAHIM

Come on, Siavash, come.

SIAVASH

I'm not hungry.

RAHIM

Come on, son, we're finally going to eat together after all this time.

Siavash doesn't reply. Rahim gets up and suddenly lifts Siavash over his shoulder, turns him and puts him down by the tablecloth. This makes the kids laugh. Hossein comes out of the outdoor toilet in the yard and switches off the light. Hossein's phone rings. Siavash gets up and goes back to his tablet. Maliheh comes out of the kitchen carrying bowls of yoghurt and fresh herbs. She puts them on the tablecloth and goes to the door that leads to the yard. Hossein is washing his hands and face at a tap in the yard.

MALIHEH

Come and see who's calling you on your cell phone!

Hossein comes in and takes his phone.

MALIHEH

Siavash, cut your tablet's sound, it's getting on my nerves.

HOSSEIN

Who's that?

Maliheh takes Siavash's tablet off him and puts it in a bedroom. Hossein speaks on the phone.

SIAVASH (protesting)
Hey!

MALIHEH
Your father has come home after all this time, come and sit with him for a bit.

HOSSEIN
Hello?... Hello, how are you?... Sorry, I was outside... I'm listening.

Siavash goes to the bedroom, takes his tablet and switches it back on. Hossein goes back out to the yard to continue the conversation. Maliheh signals to him to cut it short and come back and eat. At last they are sitting down ready to eat. Maliheh serves the rice to the children. Hossein continues his conversation in the yard. Then he comes in, puts his phone down, and joins the dinner.

RAHIM
Come on, Siavash.

MALIHEH
Who was that calling at dinner time?

HOSSEIN
Bahram.

RAHIM
What does he want?

HOSSEIN
To fix an appointment for tomorrow morning to take the money and the checks. Could you pass me the bread?

MALIHEH
What did you tell him?

HOSSEIN
We're having dinner now.

Annoyed by her husband's answer, Maliheh eats, like all the others.

MALIHEH
Who is this friend who wants to give you 70,000 toman?

RAHIM
Somebody you don't know.

MALIHEH

You're not going to borrow from a loan shark again, I hope!

RAHIM

Who mentioned loan sharks?

MALIHEH

Where else would you find 70,000?

RAHIM

A friend promised me it.

MALIHEH

Right...

RAHIM

I'm telling you it's not loan!

MALIHEH (to Hossein)

Did you agree to meet?

HOSSEIN

I told him I only had three checks left and I had to go to the bank to order a new checkbook.

RAHIM

How long will that take?

HOSSEIN

What?

RAHIM

That. Your new checkbook.

MALIHEH

Wait to see if your friend gives you the seventy thousand first. Between what people promise and what they actually do...

RAHIM

You only meant to humiliate me in front of that jerk?

HOSSEIN

I'm telling you I don't have enough checks in my book!

MALIHEH

Even if he had checks and wrote them for you, how are you going to pay him back every month?... Siavash, turn it down.

RAHIM

Hossein offered to write checks. I didn't force him...

MALIHEH

I'm not saying you shouldn't give checks. I just think you should find a job first and then give them. If you give him checks that bounce, it'll be the same story all over again.

HOSSEIN

He's going back to prison in two days. How do you expect him to find a job?

MALIHEH

It's up to you.

Rahim, irritated, gets up, grabs the tablet from Siavash, puts it on top of a cupboard and sits back down. Siavash, sulking, gets up, goes into the bedroom and slams the door. Rahim starts eating without a word. Hossein and Maliheh are upset. The atmosphere is tense.

16 – INT. NIGHT – MALIHEH'S HOUSE /KITCHEN

In the middle of the night, Rahim is sitting in the kitchen under the window, smoking. He's tormented. Maliheh slowly opens the door and comes in.

MALIHEH

Why aren't you sleeping?

RAHIM

I'm going to bed soon.

MALIHEH

Stop smoking so much, you've become like a skeleton.

RAHIM

OK.

Maliheh seems to struggle to say something to Rahim.

MALIHEH

Rahim... If I ask you a question, can you swear on Mom's soul you tell me the truth? Whose handbag is it in your bag?

RAHIM

Have you been rummaging in my bag?

MALIHEH

Don't do anything that would disgrace you and the family for the rest of our lives.

RAHIM

Like what?

MALIHEH

Where does this handbag with all these coins come from?

RAHIM

A friend gave it to me.

MALIHEH

The pack of cigarettes, the lighter, the handbag are also your friend's?

RAHIM

Don't you dare say I've stolen them?

MALIHEH

If not, what are you doing with a bag with a broken strap?

RAHIM

I found it...today.

FARKHONDEH

You're not being consistent.

Hurt by what his sister said, Rahim gets up and leaves the kitchen.

17 – INT. DAY – SPEECH THERAPY CENTER/CORRIDOR

Rahim is sitting in the waiting room. Through a glass wall, he sees a doctor working with Siavash and a few other children. Farkhondeh is helping the doctor with the young patients. Rahim looks at Farkhondeh.

18 – EXT. DAY – SPEECH THERAPY CENTER/ALLEY

In the alley in front of the center's old building that leads to the street, Farkhondeh and Rahim are talking, standing.

FARKHONDEH

Don't you know anyone else who can give you the bond checks?

RAHIM

No-one would take the risk.

FARKHONDEH

So, what are you going to do?

RAHIM

I don't know. I don't feel up to it.

FARKHONDEH (surprised)
What do you mean, not up to it?

RAHIM
My conscience won't allow it.

FARKHONDEH
What?

RAHIM
Taking somebody else's money.

FARKHONDEH
You're just thinking of that now?

RAHIM
Since the beginning, ever since you offered, I've had doubts.

FARKHONDEH
And me who thought that all that praying and begging God made him have pity on us and provide a miracle to help us get out of this...

RAHIM
If he'd wanted to do a miracle, instead of 17 coins, he'd have put my total debt in that bag!

Discouraged, Farkhondeh falls silent.

FARKHONDEH (upset)
What do you want to do with the coins now?

RAHIM
You found them, you decide.

FARKHONDEH
My idea was to give them to you so you'd be freed.

RAHIM
Why are you upset?

FARKHONDEH
I'm not upset.

RAHIM
Yes you are. What's wrong?

FARKHONDEH
Nothing.

RAHIM

But what can I do? I can't cope with this...

FARKHONDEH

OK, find the owner and give it back to her.

RAHIM

We have to go together.

Farkhondeh goes back into the center, upset. Rahim is unsettled, overwhelmed with uncertainty.

19 – INT. DAY – BANK

Rahim goes into a bank. Clients of various ages are at the counters and the employees are busy with their jobs. Rahim sees an employee sitting at a desk farther away, doing paperwork.

RAHIM

Excuse me, sir...

ZEIGHAMI

You have to take a number and wait your turn.

RAHIM

It's not for a banking process. Can I see you for a second?

Zeighami gets up and goes towards Rahim, nearer the counters.

RAHIM

Hello. How are you?

ZEIGHAMI

Hello. I'm listening.

RAHIM

I was wondering if anybody came to see you about a lost bag.

ZEIGHAMI

No, why?

RAHIM

Because we found some gold.

ZEIGHAMI (to his colleagues)

Did anybody come to report something missing?

The colleagues say no.

ZEIGHAMI
How much is there?

RAHIM
A lot.

The employees and customers are getting curious.

ZEIGHAMI
Was it just outside the bank?

RAHIM
No, at the bus stop.

ZEIGHAMI
When?

RAHIM
The other day.

ZEIGHAMI
Nobody has come to ask.

RAHIM
If anybody does come, tell them I found it so they can contact me and get it back.

ZEIGHAMI
Well done... Give me your number.

RAHIM
Give me some paper and I'll write it down for you.

Zeighami, visibly impressed by Rahim's action, brings him a paper and pencil. Rahim writes down his number and hands it to him.

RAHIM
Tell them to call this number and to ask for me.

ZEIGHAMI
What is this number?

RAHIM
A prison.

ZEIGHAMI
Do you work there?

RAHIM
No, I'm an inmate, for a debt. I'm out on leave.

ANOTHER EMPLOYEE

If you like, write an ad with your number and I'll give it out to the local shops.

RAHIM

Thanks a lot.

THE EMPLOYEE

Thank you!

A CLIENT

If only everybody was like you...

On another sheet of paper, in beautiful handwriting, Rahim writes an ad saying a bag has been found, and giving his name and phone number.

ZEIGHAMI

And you have nice handwriting too!

20 – INT./EXT. DAY – HOSSEIN'S VAN/ IN FRONT OF THE BUS STOP NEAR THE BANK

Sitting in the parked van, Farkhondeh, still upset, sees Rahim on the other side of the street, a bundle of papers in his hand, going into different shops. He leaves the ad at each one and comes back to the van and gets in. He puts the rest of the pile on the dashboard.

RAHIM

It's done. We got rid of it.

FARKHONDEH

We got rid of it and nobody suspected a thing!

RAHIM

Why should anyone suspect anything?

Farkhondeh doesn't answer.

RAHIM

Are you regretting it?

FARKHONDEH

No.

RAHIM

So, what's wrong?

Farkhondeh looks out the window in silence.

RAHIM
Please stop sulking.

Rahim turns on the engine.

RAHIM (joking)
If you're really regretting it, instead of sulking, go to the bank and say you lost the bag. They'll give you my number, you call me, you describe the bag, and I'll give you an appointment somewhere discreet to give it back and get a worthwhile reward from you!

Farkhondeh smiles to Rahim. He starts off.

RAHIM
Just think of this poor woman who will be told her bag has been found...

FARKHONDEH
You really have a pure heart.

RAHIM
And what will it do tomorrow when it goes back to jail and is dying to see you, this pure heart?... And you want me to stop smoking!

FARKHONDEH
Go somewhere calmer.

RAHIM
What for?

FARKHONDEH
I couldn't see you these two days. I'd like at least to say goodbye properly.

Rahim drives. Farkhondeh puts a small bag between their seats.

RAHIM
What's this?

FARKHONDEH
Your clothes.... And I got you a new toothbrush.

She feels sad and looks out the window. Rahim notices her sadness and drives, heavy-hearted.

21 – INT. DAY – PRISON'S ADMINISTRATION BLOCK

Next morning. In the corridor of the prison's administration block, Rahim is on a stepladder, painting the ceiling. The prison's employees come and go and Rahim keeps working. From a window, Rahim sees Mrs Marvasti, the director of the prison's secretary. She's on the phone, doing her daily tasks. A little time after, Marvasti comes out of her office.

MARVASTI
Mr Soltani!

RAHIM
Yes?

MARVASTI
Did you give our number to anyone?

Rahim comes down the ladder.

RAHIM
I'm sorry, Mrs Marvasti, I had to.

MARVASTI
I should never have given you this number...

RAHIM
I found a bag, I gave the number in case the owner is found, so that she can get her bag back. Did you receive a call?

MARVASTI
She'll call again. But please, don't give this number out to anyone anymore.

RAHIM
I won't.

22 – INT. DAY – PRISON'S ADMINISTRATION BLOCK/ MARVASTI'S OFFICE

Rahim is standing in front of Mrs Marvasti's desk, the phone at his ear, in the middle of a phone call. Mrs Marvasti is sitting at her desk.

RAHIM
I don't have your bag here, it's at my sister's in a safe place. I've just got back from leave, I won't get another one any time soon...

MARVASTI
If there's somebody at your place, you could give her the address so she can go and get it. She's about to have a heart attack, poor thing...

RAHIM (to Marvasti)

I'll have to call to see if my sister is there. (On the phone)
Madam, first tell me exactly what was in the bag. Then I'll see if I can arrange for you to go to the house to get it back... You're welcome... Where did you lose it?... How long ago?... What did the bag look like?... How many coins were there?... What else was there in the bag?... What brand of cigarettes?

Marvasti looks at Rahim admiringly.

23 – EXT. DAY – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/ALLEY

Siavash opens the door. A woman in her fifties, with a tired, marked face, is at the door. Maliheh, curious to see who it is, comes to the lobby.

THE WOMAN

Hello. Is this Mr Soltani's house?

SIAVASH

Yes.

MALIHEH

Can I help you?

THE WOMAN

Excuse me, was it you I just spoke to?

MALIHEH

Yes, please come in.

24 – INT. DAY – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM

The woman is sitting in the living room, crying tears of joy. Maliheh comes from the kitchen with a glass of syrup on a tray. Siavash is standing next to the door, staring at the woman. Negar and Nima, curious, look at her too.

THE WOMAN

Thank you so much. I'm so blessed.

She controls herself.

MALIHEH

Why did you put so many coins in your bag?

THE WOMAN

I was going to sell them. Each time I left the house, I was afraid my husband and his brother would find those coins and they'd be gone in a puff of smoke. I wanted to sell them quickly and put them in a bank account before anyone realized I had them.

MALIHEH
Where did you lose them?

THE WOMAN
I remember that at the bus stop, I still had my bag on my shoulder. I took out my ticket. When the bus came, I hopped on. I don't know if my bag fell off when I was getting on or if somebody stole it on the bus. At the next stop, I realized I didn't have it anymore. I shouted to the driver that I'd lost my bag and to stop. He was very kind. He closed the doors of the bus and searched all the passengers. It wasn't there. He said I'd maybe dropped it somewhere.

MALIHEH
Siavash, dear, go and get the bag your father talked about.

Siavash goes to the bedroom.

THE WOMAN
This morning, I came across the ad saying the bag had been found. You can't imagine how happy I was!

MALIHEH
You deserve it.

THE WOMAN
God knows I earned them one by one weaving rugs. I've been saving them secretly, in case I need them one day.

MALIHEH
It was God's will that my brother had some leave from prison and found it on his way. I'm not sure anyone else would have given it back to you...

THE WOMAN
May God get your brother out of prison. Someone so good shouldn't be there.

Siavash comes back into the living room carrying the bag full of coins. The woman starts crying with joy again. She notices the broken strap.

THE WOMAN
Look, the strap is broken. It must have fallen off.

26 – EXT. DAY – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/FRONT STREET

The house door opens. The woman comes out, carrying the bag and goes to the taxi waiting for her. Maliheh and Siavash accompany her. Before getting into the taxi, she calls Siavash.

THE WOMAN
Hey, kid!

Standing next to the open car door, she is holding a few banknotes she wants to give to Siavash who approaches.

THE WOMAN
Here, son.

SIAVASH
No...

THE WOMAN
Here, take it. It's really my pleasure.

SIAVASH (stuttering, barely audible)
My father wouldn't want me to.

THE WOMAN
What?

MALIHEH
He says his father wouldn't like it if he found out.

THE WOMAN
Take it for yourself. Don't tell your father. Here...

Siavash hesitates.

MALIHEH
That's very kind. Go on, dear, take it. There's no problem.

Siavash takes the money. The woman gets in and the taxi starts.

26 – INT. NIGHT – PRISON – CELL BLOCK/ CORRIDOR

Rahim goes up the stairs towards the corridor, carrying a flask of tea. He passes in front of the prayer room, where some prisoners are watching television. Others stroll along the corridor chatting. From one of the cells, we hear the beautiful voice of an inmate singing. Rahim goes in his cell.

27 – INT. DAY – PRISON'S ADMINISTRATION BLOCK/CORRIDOR

Rahim goes on painting the corridor. A guard calls him.

GUARD
Soltani... You're called to Mr Salehpour's office.

28 – INT. DAY – PRISON/SALEHPOUR'S SECRETARY'S OFFICE

Rahim enters the office. Marvasti is sitting at her desk. Rahim stays near the door. Marvasti gets up to go to Salehpour's office to say Rahim has arrived.

RAHIM
Hello...

MARVASTI
Hello. Write your sister's number down. Mr Taheri wants to talk to her.

RAHIM
What for?

MARVASTI
About the coins. He wants to ask her a few questions.

Rahim writes his sister's number on a piece of paper. Marvasti takes it to Salehpour's office. Rahim sits down on a chair near the door, waiting.

29 – INT. DAY – PRISON/SALEHPOUR'S OFFICE

Taheri, in charge of social and cultural activities, is sitting at a desk, talking on the phone. Salehpour, the prison's governor, is sitting on an armchair. A few other employees of the prison are present. Rahim is sitting on a chair, silent.

TAHERI (on the phone)
He's in prison for a debt... Yes, I've just talked to his sister... He found it during his leave.... Whenever you make it, he'll be here, of course... Yes, it can be outside, we'll give him some leave... OK, let me know. Thank you.... Good bye.

Taheri hangs up.

SALEHPOUR
Well?

TAHERI
He'll organize it and call us back... So, Rahim? You're going to give back money to people on the sly?

Rahim is puzzled.

SALEHPOUR
What you did is beautiful, Mr Soltani. It's a worthy gesture.

RAHIM
I didn't do anything...

TAHERI

He hasn't spoken about it to anybody.

SALEHPOUR

That's what makes it so beautiful!

TAHERI

A TV crew wants to interview you.

RAHIM

I didn't do anything special, Mr Taheri. I only gave a few coins back to their owner.

SALEHPOUR

It's not the number of coins that matters. What matters is that in spite of your situation, you've taken time during your permission to find her and to give them back.

TAHERI

There's also a newspaper that would like to arrange an interview.

RAHIM (a bit worried)

Thank you very much.

SALEHPOUR

Thank you. We all have something to learn from you.

TAHERI

Go and get ready quickly.

Rahim gets up to go.

SALEHPOUR

Make a couple of congratulatory banners to hang in the yard.

TAHERI

He should do them himself, he's our calligrapher.

SALEHPOUR

No, he's not going to congratulate himself all the same! Have them done outside.

RAHIM

You're embarrassing me. I didn't do anything special.

TAHERI (joking)

A screw-up like that doesn't go unnoticed! You let loads of gold get away and you say you've done nothing special?

Everybody laughs.

SALEHPOUR

Let him go, stop bothering him.

Rahim leaves the office, content.

30 – INT. DAY – PRISON/ ADMINISTRATION BLOCK - CORRIDOR

Rahim comes out of the office. Marvasti looks at him admiringly. Rahim says goodbye to her, leaves her office and goes down the corridor. Taheri comes out too and calls him.

TAHERI

Soltani...

Rahim comes back to the doorway.

TAHERI

Have you got something decent to wear or do you want things sent from home?

RAHIM

I've got what I need.

TAHERI

Well, go and tidy yourself up. And trim your beard a bit... what's that?

RAHIM

M. Taheri, can you come here for a second?

Taheri gets close to him.

RAHIM (whispering)

It's just that... it wasn't me who found the bag...

TAHERI (astonished)

Who was it then?

RAHIM

Well... my partner.

TAHERI

But who gave it back to the owner?

RAHIM

I decided to return it.

TAHERI

So, it was you who gave it back to the owner.

RAHIM

Yes.

TAHERI

No problem. Tell them that.

RAHIM

The problem, it's that nobody knows this lady is my partner. I can't give her name.

TAHERI

You're not married?

RAHIM

Not yet, no.

TAHERI (joking)

You're definitely naughty!

RAHIM

No, I assure you... We're getting married.

TAHERI

Whatever, you gave the coins back, didn't you?

RAHIM

Yes.

TAHERI

Don't worry about the rest, but hurry up, they're arriving.

RAHIM

OK.

Rahim goes, Taheri returns to Salehpour's secretary's office.

31 – INT/EXT. DAY– VARIOUS PLACES

A report with rapid fire editing. Interviews with different people in different settings, accompanied by the journalist's voice and music and at times other footage.

Prison yard

RAHIM (standing, looking at the camera)

I am Rahim Soltani, Mostafa's son, born in neighborhood, in Shiraz.

JOURNALIST

What did you do before prison?

RAHIM

I was a sign painter and calligrapher. Then the printed banners came and I had to close my business.

JOURNALIST

Why are you in prison now?

RAHIM

I got a loan from the bank to start a turkey farm, but it didn't work. They caught some disease, died, and I went bankrupt. I couldn't pay back the loan. My guarantor had to pay for me, he brought a case against me, and I found myself in prison.

Salehpour's office

SALEHPOUR (sitting at his desk, looking at the camera)

Mr Soltani is a very capable and talented man. He's the one who looks after all the prison's writing and decoration needs. He is very conscientious and trustworthy.

Street

Images of the street where the bag was found, Rahim explains, looking at the camera.

RAHIM

Here. I got off the bus to buy cakes or something, not to go home empty-handed. I saw a handbag on the ground, exactly where I am now. The strap was broken. I was intrigued, I took it, opened it, and saw it was full of coins. I looked around, there was nobody... I must admit I was tempted at first.

Prison yard

Images of the yard, the prison walls, prisoners in the shadow of the walls, sitting on steps chatting, or walking.

JOURNALIST'S VOICE

Time passes slowly here. The sun rises more slowly over these walls than elsewhere and takes its time setting. The walls are high and discouraging here, but still, they give some shade where you can meet for a few moments, dream about after, after getting out...

Images of the walls' paintings and inscriptions. Then a shot of Rahim writing on the wall of the prison's sports hall, accompanied by the journalist's voice.

JOURNALIST'S VOICE

But the courage of this man is higher than the walls.

Street

Rahim's voice over images of the ads at the bus stop and in shop windows.

RAHIM

I thought it over all night. I thought to myself that if I took another's belongings, sometime later in my life I'd pay it back a hundredfold. Next day, I went to place the ads saying that I'd found a bag.

Taheri's office

TAHERI

He's an inmate who participates very diligently in all the training courses and cultural activities we offer in our detention center. Thank God, we can see well the consequences of this diligence.

32 – INT. DAY – PRISON/BATHROOM AND TOILETS CORRIDOR

Rahim is washing his clothes and hanging them on a clothesline. Other prisoners come and go. One of them rushes to the door.

PRISONER

Rahim, come quick, you're on TV again.

Rahim rushes out.

33 – INT. DAY – PRISON/PRAYER ROOM

In the prayer's room, several prisoners are standing or sitting watching the TV fixed to the wall showing the report. Rahim is standing in the doorway. The rest of the report is seen on TV.

Street

JOURNALIST (addressing the camera)

See how this model prisoner, who has spent 13 months in the financial crimes section because he couldn't repay his debt, explains such a noble gesture:

Image of Rahim talking to the journalist on camera

RAHIM

At first I thought it was a miracle. I thought God had put this bag in my path to free me from my burden, from the harassment and insulting behavior of my creditor. But later I thought maybe it was a test.

JOURNALIST

This inmate isn't content just to embellish the prison walls and open windows of hope for his fellow prisoners. He also embellishes in the most beautiful fashion the walls of his own existence, offering us a model of humanity, conscience, integrity, despite his needs. We should learn from him.

Prison

RAHIM

I sincerely thank the prison management, Mr Salehpour, the governor, Mr Taheri, in charge of social and cultural activities, for all their efforts to improve the inmates' wellbeing.

The last images of the report are accompanied by music. Hubbub among the prisoners. They all surround Rahim to hug him and congratulate him one by one. Rahim is happy.

34 – INT. DAY PRISON/CELL BLOCK CORRIDOR

The corridor is lively, Prisoners are going back and forth and talking. In one corner, Rahim is using the prison phone to talk to Farkhondeh.

RAHIM

Did I look OK? ... Really? ... Did your brother see it?

A prisoner passes behind him, carrying a flask of tea.

THE PRISONER

You know how to fool people.

Rahim is shocked. The prisoner goes away. Rahim continues his conversation, although affected by this remark.

RAHIM

It's ringing, Farkhondeh, it's going to cut out soon... I'll call you... Take care... (Low voice) Me too, a lot.

Rahim hangs up and looks for the inmate who made the remark among those passing in the corridor.

35 – INT. DAY/PRISON/ CELL BLOCK CORRIDOR/KITCHEN

Rahim comes in the kitchen and sees the inmate who made the remark pouring tea into his flask.

RAHIM

What did you say?

INMATE
What did I say?

RAHIM
I know how to fool people?

INMATE
So what? You paint optical illusions, don't you?

Seeing that he's mocking him, Rahim is about to go. But the man says something while closing his flask that makes him turn back.

INMATE
What do they give you in exchange for all this?

RAHIM
Who?

INMATE
The ones you thanked for their efforts.

RAHIM
Nobody will give me anything.

INMATE
So you cover up their thuggery for free?

Without waiting for Rahim's reply, he goes towards the kitchen door.

INMATE
I wish you had the guts to feel offended and slap me. Being a man is not just about growing a beard. If you were a man, instead of thanking them, you would have said that two weeks ago, in the same block's bathroom, Abbas Shokuri killed himself after six years in prison.

The inmate goes out of the kitchen. Rahim is very affected by what he said.

36 – EXT./INT. AFTERNOON – MALIHEH'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM/YARD

The yard is crowded. A not very big pot of celebration soup is in the middle. Maliheh pours soup into bowls on a tray. Rahim is sitting on a stool, decorating the bowls with fried onions and sauce. Maliheh's children are playing in the yard and some neighbors have come to help. Siavash films with his tablet. Hossein is cheerfully talking over the phone in the living room, while looking outside through the window.

HOSSEIN (on the phone)
You're very welcome. Come whenever you like... For the moment, he's been granted special leave. They're going to try

to get the creditor's agreement so he doesn't go back to prison... I hope so... Of course... Rahim, come here, your aunt wants to congratulate you. I'll pass him to you.

Hossein has come towards the yard while talking. Rahim takes the phone. Siavash, carrying a tray with bowls of soup, walks towards the door.

RAHIM

Good evening, aunt. How are you?

37 – EXT. AFTERNOON – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/STREET

A long, narrow street with old one and two-story buildings, with numerous children playing soccer noisily. Siavash is standing at a neighbor's door with his tray. Ramezani, one of their neighbors, takes a bowl.

RAMEZANI

Tell your father he redeemed the honor of the neighborhood, not just in Shiraz, but in the whole of Iran! Give him my regards and say Ramezani thanks him a lot.

Siavash is proud. The woman whose bell he rang, opens the door. Siavash goes to her and holds out the tray.

SIAVASH

Good evening. Here.

ESHRAT

Good evening, son. Thanks a lot. What are you celebrating?

SIAVASH

My father's liberation.

ESHRAT

Ali told me he's seen him on TV.

SIAVASH

And his photo is in the newspaper.

Eshrat takes a bowl.

38 – INT. DUSK – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/KITCHEN

The house is now quiet. The kids are watching TV in the living room. Rahim is in the kitchen decorating the soup which is served in a beautiful china tureen. His cigarette is burning in the ashtray and he takes a puff from time to time. He is carefully drawing flowers with the fried onions, sauce, and dried mint. Maliheh comes in the kitchen with dishes to wash.

MALIHEH

Who are you going into so much trouble for?

Rahim replies with a smile. Hossein comes in with a suit in a cover, looking happy. He hangs it on the door handle.

HOSSEIN

It's the talk of the neighborhood! I've had at least a dozen calls from people who want me to tell you that you make them proud.

MALIHEH

Some cousins called you. They're coming to see you.

RAHIM

Do we have everything we need to welcome them?

HOSSEIN

I'll do some shopping. We're going to have loads of people over the next few days. Try the suit to see if it fits.

RAHIM

Thank you so much.

Hossein goes out the kitchen. Maliheh takes some money from a cabinet and slips it into Rahim's suit pocket, hanging behind the door.

MALIHEH

Take it, you might need it in the next few days.

RAHIM (out of politeness)

I don't need it.

MALIHEH

Don't make a fuss. And don't smoke in front of people, bro, it's not worthy of you.

RAHIM

OK.

She takes the cigarette and puts it out under the tap water.

MALIHEH

Rahim, I'm sorry about what I said the other night.

RAHIM

What are you talking about? Go and get dressed, I'm taking you somewhere.

MALIHEH

Where?

RAHIM

I'll tell you on the road. We'll be back soon.

Maliheh goes out, delighted.

39 – EXT./INT. DUSK – STREET/ HOSSEIN'S VAN

Rahim is driving Hossein's van quickly, crazy with joy. He is wearing the suit Hossein brought him. Maliheh is sitting by his side, with a tray on her lap. On the tray, there is the tureen with a newspaper showing Rahim's photo and telling his story.

MALIHEH

Did you tell her you were going with your sister?

RAHIM

No. You'll stay in the car and tell me how you find her from a distance.

MALIHEH

How did you find her while you were in prison?

RAHIM

I met her before. She works at the speech therapy center.

MALIHEH

Doesn't she mind your situation?

RAHIM

No.

MALIHEH

Does Siavash know?

RAHIM

Not yet.

MALIHEH

Does she have children?

RAHIM

She can't have children. That's why her husband separated from her.

Maliheh starts thinking.

40 – EXT. DUSK – OUTSIDE FARKHONDEH'S BROTHER'S HOUSE

Farkhondeh opens the door. Rahim is standing there, carrying the tray with the soup.

FARKHONDEH
Hi.

RAHIM
Hi. Are you OK?

FARKHONDEH
Thank you. It's very nice of you.

Farkhondeh takes the tray and notices Maliheh sitting in the car, looking at her. She greets her from a distance and Maliheh greets her back.

FARKHONDEH
You said you'd come alone.

RAHIM
It's my sister. She wanted to see you.

FARKHONDEH
Then we should ask her in.

RAHIM
Another time. Is your brother home?

FARKHONDEH
Yes.

RAHIM
Can you ask him to come here and give me a few minutes?

Farkhondeh goes back in. Rahim looks back at the van parked in the area, with Maliheh inside, looking in another direction, seeming happy to have seen Farkhondeh.

41 – INT. DUSK – FARKHONDEH'S BROTHER'S HOUSE/BEDROOM

Morteza and Afsaneh are in the bedroom. The door is half open to the living room where the children are watching TV. They whisper, so as not to be overheard.

MORTEZA
But why is he showing up unannounced?

AFSANEH
He's brought some celebration soup.

MORTEZA
Tell Farkhondeh to come here.

AFSANEH

Don't be ridiculous. He must have planned it with her.

MORTEZA

I already told him no. If I go to the door now and see him, I'll say it again. Stop trying to force me all the time. Farkhondeh!

AFSANEH

It's not as if he was in prison for murder.

MORTEZA

Fine, he's a saint. But he has a big son, he's been to prison, he's got no job. I don't agree at all. Farkhondeh!

AFSANEH

Since when did you start being macho? Your sister is 37!

MORTEZA

I don't give a damn who she sees. She does what she likes. But she shouldn't come back again in tears saying she wants to split up!

Farkhondeh comes to the half open door, holding a newspaper with a report about Rahim.

FARKHONDEH

Read that, then go and tell him what you like.

MORTEZA

What is it?

FARKHONDEH

Just read it.

Farkhondeh gives her brother the newspaper and goes out. Morteza takes the newspaper reluctantly. He starts to read, his curiosity aroused.

42 – EXT. NIGHT – FARKHONDEH'S BROTHER'S HOUSE/BALCONY AND OUTSIDE

Rahim is waiting next to the van. Maliheh is still sitting in the van. Morteza has put on a shirt and comes out of the flat. He goes down the stairs leading to the parking area. Farkhondeh is looking outside through the door that is ajar. She sees Morteza greeting Rahim very warmly. We can't hear them. Maliheh gets out of the van to show respect to Morteza. Farkhondeh is delighted.

43 – INT. NIGHT – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/KITCHEN AND LIVING ROOM

Maliheh's house is full of people. The guests, mainly relatives, are sitting all around the living room. Hossein is serving syrup cheerfully. A couple of guests are singing. Maliheh takes out a drum from a cupboard. She heats the skin that covers it on the flame of the stove. She goes to the living room laughing and hands the drum to Rahim, sitting in the middle of the guests. Rahim starts playing the drum beautifully. The children sing and the guests applaud them. A joyful, happy, busy evening.

44 – INT. DAY – PRISON/TAHERI'S OFFICE

Taheri is at his desk and receives Rahim, Hossein, and Bahram, Rahim's creditor.

BAHRAM

What did you tell me on the phone the other day? You said he already had 70,000, right?

HOSSEIN

That's right.

RAHIM

Mr Taheri, to be honest, the 70,000... It was when I found the bag I thought I could sell the gold to pay back some of my debt. But then my conscience didn't allow me to do it.

BAHRAM

But your conscience doesn't bother you with me?

HOSSEIN

Maybe he did wrong, in his situation, to listen to his conscience and give a poor woman her money back? You wouldn't have minded receiving someone else's money?

BAHRAM

Mr Taheri, can I talk to you in private for a couple of minutes?

TAHERI

I'll ask you to leave, if you don't mind.

Rahim and Hossein leave the office. Taheri gets up from his desk and sits beside Bahram.

BAHRAM

What proof do you have that this story about finding a bag isn't just made up?

TAHERI

And what makes you think it is?

BAHRAM

I know him better than you. His ex-wife is my wife's sister.

TAHERI

That doesn't prove anything. Whatever you say, he made a very humane gesture.

BAHRAM

How come he became so human overnight? If he was so human, why would his wife leave him although they had a child?

TAHERI

Do you have any proof he has lied or anything?

BAHRAM

I do.

TAHERI (surprised)

What proof?

BAHRAM

I know that he's been bullshitting people all his life.

TAHERI

What bullshit?

BAHRAM

He said on TV that he got a loan and wasn't able to pay for it. What bank would ever give a loan to a guy like him? What doesn't he say it was from a loan shark. Why does he keep lying?

TAHERI

Maybe he was embarrassed to confess it was from a loan shark. That's no proof.

BAHRAM

I'll wait and see if he pays me. But if he doesn't, I'll denounce him.

TAHERI

Denounce what? About the bag he found, if the owner hadn't called the prison, nobody would have known anything.

BAHRAM

If he didn't want anybody to know, why did he plaster the prison number all over the place? He could have just given his cellphone number so the owner could contact him directly.

TAHERI

There are no cellphones in prison.

BAHRAM

So how could he text me from prison then?

TAHERI

He sent you a text from the prison?

BAHRAM

Do you want to know what his story is all about? Ever since he learned that his ex, my sister-in-law, is getting married again, he started to hassle me with his texts. Full of bullshit and promises to get my agreement and get out of jail. And why all that? To stop her from getting married.

TAHERI

All that's his private life and none of my business.

BAHRAM

You asked me how I knew his story was fake. That's why I'm telling you all this. He feels humiliated by his wife's remarrying. He invented this whole story to restore his reputation and become respectable, in the hope that his wife would change her mind and go back to him. That's what it's all about.

TAHERI

No. You're wrong. I have information that proves what you say isn't right.

BAHRAM

Yes, it is.

TAHERI

He has a partner... He plans to marry her when he gets out of jail.

Bahram is taken aback by this information.

BAHRAM

Anyway, I don't give a damn about knowing whether he really found this bag or not. All I want is to get my money. And not in driblets and drabs. I don't want to get three cents a month...

TAHERI

OK. Give him a few days. I'll talk to him and see how he can pay you back.

BAHRAM

And if he doesn't?

TAHERI

Then it'll be up to you to decide.

45 – INT. AFTERNOON – CHARITY ASSOCIATION/MEETING HALL

Many people from the neighborhood are in a hall attending an evening in honor of Rahim. A TV camera is covering the event. Rahim is sitting in the front row, next to Siavash, Hossein and Maliheh. Bahram and Taheri are also present. Rahim goes up on stage, to applause. Maliheh pushes Siavash to get up and go with his father. Siavash joins Rahim. Mrs Radmehr, head of a charity association, takes a certificate of merit brought by the evening's MC, Mazrooei, and gives it to Rahim. Everybody applauds. Radmehr takes the microphone to speak.

RADMEHR

In a TV interview, Mr Soltani said that when he found this money, he first believed it was a miracle, before realizing God was putting him to the test. I'd like to say it really is a miracle, Mr Soltani!

Rahim smiles without knowing how to react.

RADMEHR

I'll tell you why. I received a call from a dear friend from the local council. As a sign of appreciation of this gentleman's bravery, they have found him a job in their administration!

The audience applauds and Rahim, delighted, puts his hand on his chest as a sign of thanks. Maliheh cries with joy.

RADMEHR

I do hope that thanks to the efforts of the prison management, of the town's benefactors and also thanks to the generosity of the audience tonight, we can get the creditor's agreement and have him return to his family as soon as possible.

Applauses. Radmehr gives Rahim the microphone so he can speak. Rahim, all choked up, has difficulty speaking.

RAHIM

Thank you so much... I don't know how to thank you. I must confess I was at first tempted to sell the coins and pay off my debt... But something very simple happened at the gold dealer that made me change my mind... When the dealer wanted to calculate the price of the coins, his calculator broke down. He took a pen but it didn't work either. I suddenly thought to myself these were signs that I was doing the wrong thing and I'd better give the coins back to their owner...

The audience, touched, applaud. Bahram doesn't, and looks at Taheri furiously. Mazrooei takes the microphone from Rahim and holds it to Siavash's mouth, who starts to speak, stuttering. Somebody whispers something to Radmehr.

MAZROOEI

Would you like to say a few words about your father?

SIAVASH

Me... I'd like us to collect enough money... so he doesn't go back to prison... I've brought my money.

Siavash's diction provokes compassion and affects the meeting.

MAZROOEI

How much do you want to give?

SIAVASH

50 toman.

Siavash takes a banknote from his pocket. The audience applaud.

46 – INT. AFTERNOON – CHARITY ASSOCIATION/MEETING HALL (CONT.)

Mazrooei and a few other people move along the rows taking up the collection, passing round a tray covered in banknotes, as well as a card reader held by Ramezani. The attendees donate in cash or by card. The names of the donors are noted on a list.

47 – INT. AFTERNOON – CHARITY ASSOCIATION/OFFICE

A large office in the association's premises. Mrs Radmehr, Bahram, Rahim, Hossein, Siavash, Ramezani and Taheri are present. A few men and women from the association are counting the donations. A modest gold bracelet is on the tray. Mazrooei reads the list of the donations and Mrs Radmehr adds them up with a calculator.

MAZROOEI

250 toman...100... another 100 ... and 500.

RADMEHR

That makes 32,750.

KIANI

Plus 1,400 in cash and a gold bracelet.

RADMEHR

A total of 33,400.

TAHERI

The prisoners chipped in 840 toman that we'll give to the association. And 200 toman from Mr Salehpour and me.

RAHIM

Mr Taheri, you've already helped me a lot, I'm embarrassed.

TAHERI (to Rahim)

It's our pleasure.

RAMEZANI

Hossein, while everybody's here, go and get your checkbook and write several checks for...

BAHRAM

Wait! My debt is 150,000. And 150,000 from three years ago. What should I do with 34,000...?

MAZROOEI

Listen, sir. That poor lady took off her bracelet, even the prisoners donated to get him out. You must cooperate a bit too.

BAHRAM (furious)

Come on, you're talking to me like I was conning him!

RADMEHR

This man did a good deed. You could make an effort...

BAHRAM

What good deed, madam? Even if he found a bag and brought it back to its owner, he only did his duty. Not bringing it back would have been a problem!

HOSSEIN

In his place, would you have brought it back?

BAHRAM

Of course! Why not?

MAZROOEI

You're not in prison, like him. If you were in his situation...

BAHRAM

Excuse me, but many people are in far worse situations than him. They could steal and they don't: will there be an evening organized for them? I've never dishonored anybody, will they give me a certificate for that? Where in the world are people celebrated for not doing wrong?

RAHIM

Your problem is the certificate?

BAHRAM

My problem is you being so ungrateful!

RADMEHR

The certificate is the least we could do for someone who's had such an exemplary attitude...

BAHRAM

What exemplary attitude are you talking about? My attitude was exemplary when, three years ago, because I considered him a member of my family, I gave a bond check so that he could get a loan, start a business and help his family get through. I'm the one who did a good deed! When he didn't meet the payments, I had to sell my daughter's dowry and my wife's jewelry to pay off all his debt plus the interest and penalties to the loan shark! And now he's presented as a hero and me, who did so much for him, I'm the bastard creditor!

TAGHIAN

Not at all...

BAHRAM

He was about to sell the coins for 70,000 and give them to me and I refused. Didn't I?

HOSSEIN

Yes, you did.

BAHRAM

What if I'd accepted to take them? He would have happily come out of jail and wouldn't have said a word about the coins he found. It's because I refused that he built up all this story...

RAHIM

I won't reply because I'm too kind to disrespect you...

BAHRAM

Please do reply...

RAHIM

You've been slandering me for three years...

BAHRAM

Slandering? Do you want me to call your wife on loudspeaker, so everybody hears what she says about you?

RADMEHR

What has his wife got to do with all this?

RAMEZANI

Listen, for years now, any time our neighborhood has been in the news it's been for a murder or some hanging offence. For once somebody restores our reputation, please don't sabotage it!

MAZROOEI

Now he's got a job and he'll pay you with his salary. He'll give you guaranteed checks.

BAHRAM

I don't want a staggered payment. Otherwise, I would have accepted it three years ago and wouldn't have sent him to jail.

HOSSEIN

But he doesn't have the money! Look at his son! This poor kid has no-one to look after him, that's not fair!

Bahram looks at Siavash sitting sadly and silently in a corner.

BAHRAM

It's for this kid's sake that I haven't protested so far. I have behaved as a father to him when he was in jail.

TAHERI

Can you come here for a second?

Taheri takes Bahram's arm and leads him to the side of the room to talk to him in private. The others are sitting around a table and carrying on their conversation. Siavash stares at Bahram.

TAHERI

We have arranged for him to appear on a TV show on the holy evening of Shaban. I will have him call you during the show and you should say that you consent to have him released because of the good deed he did. You would teach a good lesson to the audience and restore your image.

BAHRAM

Restoring my image will give my daughter a dowry?

TAHERI

Do you know that if he pays that amount to the court as a bail and signs a staggered payment for the rest, he will be released the next day? But if you take this money and let him out, it has much more impact.

Bahram looks at Siavash who hasn't stopped staring at him.

BAHRAM

If I agree, it's only for this poor kid.

TAHERI

Well done. Thank you very much. Let's go.

Taheri goes back to the table looking satisfied. Bahram is still sitting on the other side, upset.

TAHERI

Mrs Radmehr, write up the minutes for this evening and have it signed by everyone. He has given his agreement.

TAGHIAN

In the name of God!

They all take up his prayer.

49 – INT. DAY – LOCAL COUNCIL /HR DEPARTMENT'S WAITING ROOM

Rahim, neat and tidy, is sitting waiting and looking at the director's office half open door. Soon after, the secretary, a young man, comes out of the office and closes the door.

SECRETARY

He wants you to go and see Mr Nadali downstairs, at the moral department. He's waiting for you.

Rahim gets up, happy.

50 – INT. DAY – LOCAL COUNCIL /MORAL DEPARTMENT

Mr Nadali, the middle-aged head of the moral department is sitting at his desk and Rahim in front of him. On his desk there is a newspaper with the report about Rahim. While talking, Nadali occasionally glances at the newspaper.

RAHIM

I can do all kinds of jobs. Calligraphy, painting, construction painting...

NADALI

Good for you... Have some tea.

RAHIM

Thank you very much.

NADALI

Tell me, the gentleman you gave the coins back to...

RAHIM

It was a lady.

NADALI

Could you give me her number so I can call her now?

RAHIM

Well... I don't have her number.

NADALI

But she called you though. Her number didn't show up?

RAHIM

She called the prison.

NADALI

Do you have her address or something? Could you ask her to drop by here?

RAHIM

I don't think I've got her address, why?

NADALI

You've got no information about her?

RAHIM

I never saw her. My sister gave her the bag. Why? Is there a problem?

NADALI

Do you have any proof you found this bag and gave it back to its owner?

RAHIM

I have no proof. I just have a certificate from the charity association that says...

NADALI

How about witnesses?

RAHIM

Yes, of course. The prison managers.

NADALI

Apart from them.

RAHIM

My sister and my son are witnesses. Is there a problem?

NADALI

No, but in order to approve your application, I have to make sure of some points.

RAHIM (surprised)

What points?

NADALI

There are rumors going round.

RAHIM

What rumors?

NADALI

That it might be all made up.

RAHIM

Made up?

NADALI

Is there anything wrong with my checking the facts?

RAHIM

Did my creditor call you?

NADALI

No.

RAHIM

Any of the inmates?

NADALI

There are rumors on social media.

RAHIM

You mean you're doubting me?

NADALI

Not personally. But this rumor has been spreading.

RAHIM

By who?

NADALI

Who spreads rumors? Some lazybones...

RAHIM

But why would they do that?

NADALI

It's gone viral on social media that the prison authorities have invented this story to create a diversion from the recent suicide that happened there.

RAHIM (stunned)

But I swear on my son's life...

NADALI

Why are you swearing on your son's life?... Did you bring that bag back or didn't you?

RAHIM

I did.

NADALI

Then ask the owner, your sister and your son to come here, so I can ask them a few questions. And they'll sign a statement. If one day, some loony comes and criticizes you, we'll know how to shut their mouth. Is that hard to do?

Rahim is disturbed and doesn't know what to say.

51 – INT. DAY – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM

Maliheh is on her cellphone waiting for someone to answer, watching Rahim sitting in a corner, lost in thought. Hossein is standing in the doorway. Siavash, intrigued, is looking at his father. Maliheh's children are playing.

MALIHEH (on the phone)

Hello. How are you? Sorry to disturb you. A few days ago, a lady called us from this number. If she's there, I'd like to speak to her... I'm Mr Soltani's sister... This lady came to our place by taxi. She called me from this number. Are you her husband?... I see. Sorry to disturb you. Do you know how I can reach her?... No, no, nothing's wrong... Yes, thanks. Bye.

Maliheh hangs up.

MALIHEH

It was the taxi driver. She called from his phone.

HOSSEIN

You couldn't have asked for a phone number before giving her the bag?

MALIHEH

Come on! She'd just called, I thought I had her number. Why would I ask again?

HOSSEIN

And you, Rahim? You didn't ask for an address or a phone number?

RAHIM

How was I to know we'd need them?

HOSSEIN

She didn't give any indication? Where she lived, where she came from, where she was going afterwards?

MALIHEH

I said all I can remember. Siavash, did you hear her say anything else?

SIAVASH

No.

NEGAR

Uncle, she said nobody knew she had the coins, that she was too scared to tell anybody.

MALIHEH

Take me to the council tomorrow. I'll tell them I saw her and I gave her back the bag.

SIAVASH

I saw her too.

RAHIM

He insists on seeing her... Call the taxi driver again.

Maliheh calls the number and hands Rahim the phone.

HOSSEIN

Ask where he picked her up.

52 – EXT. DAY – STREET

Rahim and Siavash are waiting on a square with heavy traffic. Siavash is holding the certificate of merit under his arm. Shortly, a yellow taxi pulls up in front of them. The driver is the one seen earlier. Rahim and Siavash get in.

53 – INT./EXT. DAY – TAXI/STREET

Rahim is sitting in the front of the taxi. Siavash, now as worried as his father, is sitting in the back. The driver, whom we know already, is a calm, friendly man. The taxi drives through the streets of the town.

DRIVER

She got in. She was very agitated. I asked her if something had happened. She said no. After, she asked if she could call on my phone. I think she spoke to your sister. Right?

RAHIM

Yes. She didn't talk to you on the way?

DRIVER

Not really. She just asked if I had some water so she could take a pill.

RAHIM

Where did you leave her?

DRIVER

She got back in in front of your place then in the rear-view mirror I saw her counting coins. She asked me stop by a gold dealer on her way back. I found one and she went in.

RAHIM

Could you take us there?

DRIVER

Sure.

54 – INT. DAY – GOLD DEALER

In a small shop, Rahim, holding his certificate of merit, is talking to the dealer and his young apprentice who are behind the counter.

DEALER

She was quite dark-skinned.

RAHIM

I didn't meet her.

APPRENTICE

It was about eight or ten days ago, right?

RAHIM

Yes. And her coins were not rimmed.

APPRENTICE (to dealer)

She's the one who asked us to check if the coins were real gold.

DEALER

Ah yes...

RAHIM

There were seventeen of them.

APPRENTICE

Yes, she handed me them one by one and I told her that they were gold all right. She asked the price and wanted to sell me one. Since I found her a bit dodgy, I told her I wasn't buying anything that day.

RAHIM

What was dodgy about her?

APPRENTICE

Well, if the coins were hers, she wouldn't have asked if they were real gold.

DEALER

Were these coins yours?

RAHIM

No. Can we see the footage from the security cameras?

DEALER

You need a warrant from the police for that.

RAHIM

Can we just take a picture with a phone?

APPRENTICE

No, I'm sorry.

RAHIM

Have a look at this certificate.

Rahim hands the dealer his certificate.

55 – INT./EXT. DAY – STREET/TAXI

Siavash, sitting in the back, is looking at the woman's photo on his father's phone.

RAHIM

Maybe she wanted to check I hadn't replaced her coins with fake ones.

Rahim looks at the photo of the woman on the phone.

DRIVER

I don't want to scare you, but if this woman had nothing to feel guilty about, she would at least have called you the next day to thank you.

RAHIM

What could she be feeling guilty about?

DRIVER

I don't know. I found it odd that she asked to call from my phone. She smoked two cigarettes by the time we arrived. When she got out, I told her it was dangerous to walk around with all those coins and offered to drive her home. She said no, I'll go home on my own.

Rahim starts to doubt.

56 – INT./EXT. DAY – SQUARE/TAXI

The taxi arrives at a busy square. It pulls over to let Rahim and Siavash out. On the other side of the square, some minibus taxis are waiting.

DRIVER

She went towards that neighborhood.

Rahim and Siavash get out. Rahim reaches in his pocket to pay.

DRIVER

No way.

RAHIM

Yes. Why?

DRIVER

Do you think I'd make a prisoner pay for a ride?

RAHIM

But it's not fair.

DRIVER

Nothing is fair in this world. I also spent seven years in jail, unfairly.

Rahim says nothing. The driver is about to drive off.

DRIVER

I hope you find her. But if you don't, just find another lady, brief her, and take her to the office and say you gave the bag back to her.

Rahim is surprised by the suggestion.

DRIVER

Let me know if I can help.

RAHIM

Thank you very much.

The driver waves and drives off. Rahim and Siavash, holding the certificate, stay on the busy square.

57 – EXT. DAY – STREET

Rahim and Siavash walk around the neighborhood where the woman got out. Siavash is holding the certificate. Rahim shows the photo of the woman on his mobile to a couple of shop attendants. But nobody seems to know her. Rahim and Siavash walk around, hopeless.

58 – INT./EXT. DAY – PHOTOCOPY SHOP

The photo of the woman taken from the footage of the security camera comes out of the copy machine. Rahim and Siavash are standing by the machine.

RAHIM

Can you make another one where her face shows up more?

The owner of the shop makes another copy.

59 – EXT.NIGHT – HAFEZIEH

The TV show is being broadcast from outside, in front of the Hafezieh site. The set is put on around the necropolis, along with the chairs for the audience for the live broadcast. The lights are set up. The crew is getting ready to record. Further away there is a table with several monitors, a kind of control room. The cameramen are preparing the cameras and the sound engineers are putting a mic on the presenter. Many of the audience are waiting further away in the garden for permission to sit down. One of the crew, young, goes to the waiting people.

YOUNG MAN

Farzad, open up, let them in.

Farzad removes the barrier blocking the passage and the crowd rushes to the chairs.

YOUNG MAN

Take a seat and switch off your phones, please, no muttering during the show. And ladies, please keep your heads well covered.

Everybody has rushed to the recording area and is looking for a chair. On the other side of the barrier, only Rahim and Siavash are left, sitting on a bench, a bit stressed. The young production assistant goes towards them.

YOUNG MAN
Are you not going in?

RAHIM
Hello, how are you?

YOUNG MAN
Hello. Have a seat in the audience. We'll be starting soon.

RAHIM
Excuse me, but we're not members of the audience. We're the show's guests this evening.

YOUNG MAN
Who is your contact here?

RAHIM
They called Mr Taheri, in charge of social and cultural activities at the prison, on behalf of the program. He told me yesterday to come here this evening.

YOUNG MAN
What's your name?

RAHIM
Rahim Soltani.

The young man glances at a paper he's holding.

YOUNG MAN
I don't have your name here.

RAHIM
I'm the prisoner who found a bag and gave it back.

YOUNG MAN
Take a seat, I'll see who's looking after it.

The young man hurries away. Rahim sits back down beside Siavash. Everybody has taken a seat for the recording, except them. The producer, a middle-aged man called Masumi, rushes over to Rahim and Siavash.

MASUMI
Mr Soltani?

Rahim stands up.

RAHIM
Hello.

MASUMI

Hello. How are you? Mr Taheri didn't call you?

RAHIM

No!

MASUMI

I left a message at his office earlier.

RAHIM

Nobody told me anything.

MASUMI

Maybe he didn't get the message. In any case, you're not tonight's guests.

RAHIM

Why? Did something happen?

MASUMI

I don't know either... They told me this afternoon that your interview was cancelled until further notice. I thought Mr Taheri had told you.

RAHIM (upset)

But I'm with the boy. We did all this...

MASUMI

Excuse me, we're about to start. We can talk on the phone later.

Masumi leaves. Rahim is distraught and Siavash is sad.

RAHIM

Mr Masumi!

Masumi stops and Rahim joins him. He pulls a folded copy of the woman's picture out of his side pocket.

RAHIM

I must show this picture during the show tonight. I'm hoping to find this lady this way.

MASUMI

It's not in my power to let you in the show...

RAHIM

Could you call the person who...

MASUMI

There's nobody in the office just now.

RAHIM

But the boy is so looking forward to it... He's told his mother and all his friends he's on TV tonight.

MASUMI

I don't know why you were cancelled. We had a lot of trouble finding another guest at the last minute.

Rahim is devastated. Masumi glances at Siavash and feels sorry for him.

MASUMI

Do you want him to join the audience? (To Siavash) Come!

Siavash looks at his father and doesn't answer.

MASUMI

If he wants to, he'll have to go and find a place quickly before we start recording.

Masumi leaves. Rahim, hopeless, looks at Siavash, who is looking down sadly. The recording has started next to them.

60 – INT. NIGHT – FARKHONDEH'S BROTHER'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM/KITCHEN

The show is on the TV. An elderly father and his son are sitting facing the presenter. They are finishing telling a dramatic story that got them invited on. The presenter praises their heroic behavior and the program finishes. Farkhondeh, Morteza, Afsaneh and the children, who were waiting for Rahim to appear on the TV, are surprised. Farkhondeh is very disappointed.

AFSANEH

But it's finished!

FARKHONDEH

I don't know what happened.

AFSANEH

Call him.

MORTEZA

No, come on...

AFSANEH

We need to know what happened.

MORTEZA

Who cares what happened?

Farkhondeh, demoralized, goes into her room without a word.

AFSANEH

OK, don't call. In any case, we don't have the right to speak in this house!

Farkhondeh closes the door. She takes her phone to call Rahim.

61 – EXT./INT. NIGHT- STREET/BUS

Rahim and Siavash are sitting in the back of a bus, both disconsolate, looking out, lost in thought. Rahim's phone rings, but he doesn't feel like answering. The streets are still illuminated for Shaban. Rahim softly takes Siavash's little hand in his, without looking at him.

62 – INT. DAY – PRISON/MARVASTI'S OFFICE

Mrs Marvasti is sitting at her desk, looking at the screen of her computer. On the screen, there is the list of the numbers who called her office. Taheri is standing by the desk, also looking at the list. Rahim is waiting on the other side of the desk.

MARVASTI

What week day was it?

RAHIM

Sunday morning... Around ten.

MARVASTI

This one is the number of the headquarters. This... It must be one of these two.

RAHIM

She called twice. The first time, she talked to you. The second, you called me and I talked to her.

MARVASTI

So it's this one.

TAHERI

Call her and put me through. I'll talk to her.

RAHIM

Thanks a lot.

TAHERI

Come with me.

Marvasti writes the number down. Taheri goes to Salehpour's office, followed by Rahim.

63 – INT. DAY – PRISON/SALEHPOUR'S OFFICE

Rahim is standing in front of Salehpour's desk. Salehpour is sitting at his desk, reading something on his cellphone. Taheri is sitting on a chair on the side.

SALEHPOUR

But who wrote this rubbish?

TAHERI

Impossible to find out. Somebody writes something and it goes viral.

RAHIM

That must be why they cancelled the TV show the other night.

TAHERI

Do you think your ex-wife might have set you up?

RAHIM

I don't think so. She's living her own life, she doesn't care about me.

TAHERI

So why did your creditor say we should call her and see what she says about you?

RAHIM

As we split up, of course, she won't praise me...

SALEHPOUR

Why did you split up?

RAHIM

She was a very suspicious person. She kept doubting me. At some point, I just couldn't take it anymore.

Salehpour and Taheri remain silent, which shows that in a way, they doubt Rahim too. Rahim gets the sense of their silence. Marvasti knocks at the door and comes in.

TAHERI

What happened?

MARVASTI

It was the number of a juice shop... She called from there both times.

TAHERI

Did the shopkeeper know her?

MARVASTI

No, he said she was just a passerby who asked if she could use the phone.

SALEHPOUR

How strange...

TAHERI

She has carefully avoided leaving any trail.

SALEHPOUR

Are you sure she was the owner of the bag?

RAHIM

All the information she gave was right.

Marvasti goes out. Salehpour starts thinking.

SALEHPOUR

Why did you give the prison's number? Why not your sister's?

RAHIM

Well... I wanted to be the one to tell her the bag was found.

TAHERI

How come you had the number?

Rahim doesn't know what to answer.

TAHERI

So?

RAHIM

Mrs Marvasti gave it to me.

TAHERI

What for?

RAHIM

Once, when I went on leave, she asked me to go to her place to do some painting job... So she gave me her phone number here.

Salehpour and Taheri exchange a meaningful look without saying a word. Rahim feels they doubt him.

SALEHPOUR (to Rahim)

You can go now. We'll see what happens.

Rahim goes out.

SALEHPOUR

When you talked to his sister, did you sense anything awkward?

TAHERI

Like what?

SALEHPOUR

Like they may have made the whole thing up.

TAHERI

No...

SALEHPOUR

Call Mrs Marvasti.

Taheri gets up and goes out.

64 – INT. DAY – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/KITCHEN

Rahim is sitting in the kitchen, upset. Maliheh is making him something to eat. Hossein is getting dressed to go out and comes and goes between the living room and the kitchen. We can hear the children in the living room.

HOSSEIN

What if the taxi driver was in cahoots with her?

RAHIM

Of course not. The poor guy even offered to bear witness for me.

HOSSEIN

Well, what you tell us makes me think that there's something fishy about this woman. Maybe the coins weren't hers, maybe she stole them.

Maliheh serves Rahim.

MALIHEH

You should tell the council.

HOSSEIN

Tell them she's a thief?

MALIHEH

Who cares if she's a thief or not? What matters is he gave the gold back.

HOSSEIN

Gave it back to a thief. With what Bahram was saying the other day, they're already starting to have doubts. All we need now is

for them to learn that Rahim gave somebody else's gold to some fishy person.

MALIHEH

I don't know, I'm lost now.

Hossein leaves the kitchen. Siavash, in the living room, is looking at his father, lost in thought.

RAHIM

Mali, there's still one thing we can do.

MALIHEH

What?

RAHIM

Siavash, come here, son.

Siavash comes in the kitchen. Rahim gets up and closes the door.

65 – INT/EXT. DAY – STREET/TAXI

The taxi driver we've seen before is driving his cab. Rahim is sitting in the front, Maliheh and Siavash in the back. They are all quite nervous.

66 – INT. DAY – LOCAL COUNCIL/MORAL DEPARTMENT/SECRETARY'S OFFICE

Rahim, Maliheh and Siavash are sitting in the waiting room of the office of M. Nadali, the head of the moral department. The taxi driver is sitting in front of them. Saghafi, the secretary is working at his desk. Mr Nadali's door is half open and some people are talking to him. Rahim is stressed.

SAGHAFI

Mr Nadali will leave at one.

RAHIM

The lady said she was going to be here at 12:30. I don't know why she's late...

The people in the office say goodbye to Mr Nadali and come out of the office. They say goodbye to the secretary and leave. Farkhondeh arrives in the doorway and sees Rahim and the driver. Rahim pretends to hardly know her.

FARKHONDEH

Hello.

RAHIM

Hello.

DRIVER
Hello. Come in.

Farkhondeh sits down.

FARKHONDEH
Sorry I'm late.

MALIHEH
We're sorry to disturb you.

FARKHONDEH
Not at all.

The secretary gets up, goes into Mr Nadali office and closes the door. Rahim, the driver, Maliheh, Siavash and Farkhondeh are left alone. They all try to hide their anxiety. Heavy silence. The secretary comes back quickly.

SAGHAFI
Go ahead.

They all get up to go in.

SAGHAFI
Not you. She wishes to see madam alone.

Rahim, Maliheh, Siavash and the sit down. Farkhondeh enters the office. Saghafi closes the door. Rahim looks at the door, worried. Heavy silence.

67 – INT. DAY – LOCAL COUNCIL/MORAL DEPARTMENT

Nadali is sitting at his desk and Farkhondeh facing him. While talking to Farkhondeh, Nadali is holding the newspaper with the report about Rahim and glances at it at times.

NADALI
You could at least have left your number.

FARKHONDEH
I was afraid to give it to him.

NADALI
Why?

FARKHONDEH
I didn't tell my husband I'd lost my bag. I didn't want him to call and give the game away.

NADALI

Once the bag was found, why were you afraid of your husband finding out?

FARKHONDEH

I don't want him to know we've got these coins. If he learns, he'll squander them right away. I worked hard to get them, one by one, weaving carpets.

NADALI

What does your husband do?

FARKHONDEH

He's unemployed.

NADALI

I find you very imprudent for somebody who works so hard to earn a living.

FARKHONDEH

I wanted to sell them and put the money in the bank. Anytime I went out I was worried he'd find them and take them. I thought to myself it was better to sell them and put the money into an account.

NADALI

You went to get the bag from their home with the taxi driver sitting outside?

FARKHONDEH

Yes, he took me there to get it from the gentleman's sister, then brought me home.

RADMEHR

How come you took a taxi for such a long trip? A ride share would have been cheaper.

FARKHONDEH

I was so stressed, I wanted to have my bag back as soon as possible.

RADMEHR

OK, write all that down and sign.

FARKHONDEH

Very well.

Nadali gives Farkhondeh a pen and paper and blotter. She gets ready to write.

68 – INT. DAY – LOCAL COUNCIL/ MORAL DEPARTMENT/ SECRETARY OFFICE

Rahim, Maliheh, Siavash and the driver are still sitting waiting. The phone rings, the secretary answers.

SAGHAFI (on the phone)

Yes?... Very well (To Rahim and the others) You may go in.

They stand up, go in and close the door.

69 – INT. DAY – LOCAL COUNCIL/ MORAL DEPARTMENT

Farkhondeh is still writing. Rahim and the driver are standing facing Nadali sitting at his desk. Maliheh and Siavash are sitting.

NADALI

Read madam's statement and sign. (To the driver) You sign too, as a witness.

DRIVER

OK.

RAHIM

Thank you very much.

Farkhondeh hands Nadali the note she wrote. Rahim, the driver and Maliheh have a look at it and sign it, satisfied.

RAHIM

Are we done?

NADALI

Yes. You can go and you'll be kept informed.

MALIHEH

Thank you.

Nadali glances at the note. They all stand up, say goodbye and go towards the door.

FARKHONDEH

Thank you, goodbye.

NADALI

Goodbye.

Rahim comes back to the doorway to ask a question.

RAHIM

Excuse me, when do you think I can start the job?

NADALI

Madam's statement must be verified first.

RAHIM (surprised)

What needs to be verified?

NADALI

Everything.

MALIHEH

Excuse me, but he's already giving checks to his creditor relying on this job...

They are all standing in the doorway, not willing to leave.

NADALI

For now, you shouldn't count on the job. We have to make sure first whether he fulfils the conditions for being hired.

RAHIM

You asked for this lady to come here to ask her a few questions. I moved heaven and earth to find her and bring her! This gentleman is my witness. Ask them as many questions as you want...

DRIVER

At your service, if you have any questions...

RAHIM (to the driver)

Do you want him to tell you where he drove her and what happened?

DRIVER

I picked up this lady in the street. She called the gentleman's home on my phone and described her bag. Didn't you, madam?

MALIHEH

I gave the bag to this lady... My nephew is my witness. Tell him, sweetheart.

SIAVASH

This... lady... came....to...

NADALI

What?

RAHIM

He can't speak well.

DRIVER

The lady even gave 50 toman to the kid as a reward.

NADALI (to Siavash)

Can you wait outside, please?

Siavash leaves Nadali's office and sits down in the secretary's office, worried and upset.

NADALI

Would you close the door, please?

They all come in and Rahim closes the door.

NADALI

When did you find the bag?

RAHIM

The day of my leave.

NADALI

And you wanted to give 70,000 to your creditor thanks to the sale of the coins?

RAHIM

Yes, he accepted the same day, but I couldn't bring myself to take somebody else's money to pay my debt.

NADALI

But you offered him 75,000 a week before finding any coins.

RAHIM (astonished)

No, I didn't! Who said that?

NADALI

You sent him a text.

RAHIM

What text?

Nadali takes his phone, searches for a message and reads it. Farkhondeh, Maliheh and the driver are shocked.

NADALI (reading the message)

"Hello Bahram. I've got 75,000 toman. I can give it to you in cash. If I get out of prison, I'll give you checks for the rest of my debt. Rahim »

Rahim is disturbed.

RAHIM

I sent this message the day I found the bag.

NADALI

No, you didn't. It's dated a week before.

MALIHEH

A week before, my brother was in prison. How could he find a bag in the street?

NADALI

That's exactly my question. A week before supposedly finding the gold coins, how could you promise your creditor 75,000?

RAHIM

I didn't make that promise.

NADALI

Come on, it's your text. I got it yesterday.

Rahim is overwhelmed.

RAHIM

How can I prove I gave back these coins? I swear I did!

NADALI

To this lady?

RAHIM

Yes.

NADALI

So now, you have the coins.

FARKHONDEH

The coins... yes.

NADALI

Then Mr Soltani will stay here and you will go with the driver and bring the bag with the 70 coins.

Farkhondeh doesn't know what to answer. Rahim and the driver are also silent.

FARKHONDEH

My husband is at home. I sneaked out for this poor man who had insisted so much. Now I can't go back and leave again.

NADALI

Call your husband, I'll explain everything to him, so that he doesn't bother you.

FARKHONDEH

My husband doesn't know anything about the coins and the rest...

DRIVER

Excuse me, but I find your behavior very unfair towards a prisoner who did a good deed despite all his difficulties.

NADALI

If we find out tomorrow this was all a fraud, will you take responsibility?

MALIHEH

What fraud?

NADALI

We've received a call here and it's been on social media...

RAHIM

I know who called you. My creditor who also sent you this text message...

NADALI

It's not him.

RAHIM

This man is sick. He harassed me so much he destroyed my life and my wife left me.

This sentence does not please Farkhondeh.

NADALI

This is none of my business.

RAHIM

What is your business?

NADALI

I wish I could approve your application and let you have this job.

DRIVER

Do you think at my age, I would bother to give false evidence to someone I don't know?

NADALI

This is our procedure.

DRIVER

Who's your boss here?

NADALI

Who are you to worry that much about him?

DRIVER

I'm nobody. But you who are somebody, you shouldn't mistreat this poor man!

NADALI

Get out, sir. Mr Saghafi...

Saghafi opens the door but stays in the doorway.

SAGHAFI

Please leave. Sir... Madam.

Upset, Farkhondeh takes her statement and leaves the office.

RAHIM

I'll get the bastard who's badmouthed me and drag him here. If he's a man, he'll have to say it in front of me!

DRIVER

I pity this country for being in the hands of people like you!

The driver and Maliheh try to get Rahim out. He's raging.

NADALI

Go out.

RAHIM

You're playing with my honor. I don't want this job or the salary. If you've decided to give me a hard time, you'll see, I'll give interviews everywhere and say you didn't keep the promise you made. I'll drag you and your administration into the mud!

While Rahim is talking, Saghafi tries to get him out.

NADALI

Do whatever you want. But just stop making a fuss.

RAHIM (furious)

You stop making a fuss! You stop making a fuss!

DRIVER

Come on, let's go.

The driver and Maliheh finally get Rahim out. Siavash follows them, distressed.

70 – INT. DAY – COVERED MARKET

Rahim, enraged, heads for Bahram's shop.

71 – INT./EXT. DAY – PHOTOCOPY SHOP

Bahram and his daughter Nazanin are sitting at a small table in the back shop, eating some lunch they've brought from home. Rahim comes in, angry. Bahram is surprised to see him but ignores him. Nazanin, feeling uncomfortable, looks at Rahim.

RAHIM

Come out when you finish your lunch.

BAHRAM

What do you want?

RAHIM (furious)

Why did you do that?

BAHRAM

Do what?

RAHIM

Forward my text to that guy.

BAHRAM

What guy?

RAHIM

The council's moral department.

BAHRAM

What moral department? What are you talking about now?

RAHIM

Why did you threaten to denounce me in front of everybody?

Why did you call them?

BAHRAM

I didn't call anybody.

Rahim remains silent. Bahram finishes his lunch. Nazanin clears the table. Rahim pulls some checks from his pocket.

RAHIM

I've brought you these checks, but after what you've done, I have no chance to find a job and pay you back.

BAHRAM
What the hell are you talking about?

RAHIM
Now, they're doubting me...

NAZANIN
They're not doubting you, they've got to know you.

BAHRAM
Don't interfere.

Rahim holds himself back from reacting.

BAHRAM
I was dumb enough to be fooled by you again.

About to close the shop, Bahram takes a stick, goes out and draws the shutter half down. Rahim stays inside. Nazanin talks to him.

NAZANIN
How do you dare come here again?... Look at the state my father is in... He looked very different three years ago. It's all your fault.

RAHIM
What have I done?

NAZANIN
What have you done?

RAHIM
I was plagued by bad luck... I went bankrupt.

NAZANIN
After all he did for you, you couldn't find anything better than insulting him on TV?... If you had just a little pride, you wouldn't show up here.

Rahim goes out. Bahram is putting a padlock on the shutter.

RAHIM
Bahram, didn't we agree at the association?

BAHRAM
Agree that instead of paying me, you'd slander me?

RAHIM
You're jealous.

BAHRAM
Of you?

RAHIM
Of people's interest in me.

BAHRAM
Poor people who consider you a hero.

RAHIM
Poor you who can't stand seeing people show respect for someone.

BAHRAM
You think you're somebody because you were on TV for two minutes? You idiot, they big you up, just to say that this country is paradise.

RAHIM
Watch your mouth!

BAHRAM
"People show respect for someone"! People have pity for you! They feel sorry for your poor kid's stutter, and for you who drag him in front of people to cry and beg.

Bahram goes back in the shop. Rahim is outraged by what he heard. Bahram takes the lunch plates to go and put them in the basket of his motorbike parked in front of the shop. Rahim suddenly rushes at him and attacks him, furious. They grab and hit each other. Worried for her father, Nazanin tries to intervene. Bahram goes inside to grab a stick. Rahim follows him in. Some neighboring shopkeepers and passers-by arrive, alerted by Nazanin's cry. They try to separate them. Neither wants to let go the other. Bahram falls down and hurts his arm. His nose is bleeding and his shirt is torn. Rahim's eye vessels are broken. Nazanin shouts and is about to hit Rahim. Rahim leaves the shop.

NAZANIN
Don't let him go!

Two men from the neighbor shops grab him, Rahim struggles and manages to leave.

NAZANIN
Where are you going?... Wait... Bastard.

NEIGHBOR
Someone should call the police.

BAHRAM
Let him go.

Bahram's clothes are ripped and his nose is still bleeding. His neighbors sit him on a chair. Nazanin takes her cellphone to call the police.

74 – INT. DAY – COVERED MARKET

Rahim walks across the market, shattered, under the accusing look of people who came out of the shops intrigued by the shouts. Some shopkeepers are running from near Bahram's shop to stop him.

SHOPKEEPER 1

Wait. Where are you going?

SHOPKEEPER 2

Hold him until the police arrive.

Rahim angrily tries to get free. Other shopkeepers arrive and together, they immobilize Rahim, push him in a shop and lock him in. Rahim is trapped, a crowd gathers around the shop and looks at him through the window, as if a thief had been caught.

RAHIM

Open the door! Do you think you've caught a thief?... Open the door!

73 – INT. DAY – COVERED MARKET/NEARBY SHOP (CONT.)

Exhausted and embarrassed by all the people looking at him curiously, Rahim sees through the window Bahram in front of his shop, his face and his shirt covered with blood, talking to other shopkeepers. Nazanin is on the phone talking to the police. Rahim sits on a chair. He gets his cellphone and calls Farkhondeh. People keep watching him through the window.

RAHIM

Farkhondeh...

74 – EXT. DAY – COVERED MARKET'S PARKING

Farkhondeh rushes out of the van towards the market, worried sick.

75 – INT. DAY – COVERED MARKET/NEARBY SHOP

Rahim is still sitting on the chair. Farkhondeh makes her way through the crowd gathered around the shop. She is shocked when she sees Rahim.

FARKHONDEH

Rahim... Rahim, what happened to you? Hey, open this door!... Why have you locked him in?

SHOPKEEPER 2

We'll open when the police arrive.

FARKHONDEH (to Rahim)

Did he hit you?

Rahim doesn't reply. Farkhondeh rushes to Bahram's shop. There are many people there. From the distance, Rahim sees Farkhondeh talking angrily to some people and asking them to go and open the shop's door. The crowd is growing. Farkhondeh goes in the shop and argues with Nazanin. Soon after, Bahram goes out of the shop and asks for the door to be opened and Rahim to be released. The shopkeeper opens the door. Rahim comes out observed by the crowd.

76 – EXT. NIGHT – OUTSIDE MALIHEH'S HOUSE

Ramezani, the neighbor seen at the charity evening, arrives in front of the house on a motorbike, stops and rings. Nima opens.

NIMA

Hello.

RAMEZANI

Is your uncle there?

NIMA

Yes.

RAMEZANI

Why doesn't he answer the phone? Ask him to come quick.

77 – INT. AFTERNOON –CHARITY ASSOCIATION/OFFICE

All the members of the board of the association are meeting, obviously to take a collective decision. Ramezani opens the door and comes in, along with Rahim, Siavash and Hossein. The assembly greets Rahim coldly. He sits down with Siavash. Ramezani stays standing.

RADMEHR

Mr Soltani, what possessed you to do that?

RAHIM

What did I do?

RADMEHR

Show him.

Taghian brings out his phone and opens a message. He gives Rahim his phone so he can see the video. Rahim can't believe his eyes. Everybody watches him in silence. Hossein and Siavash look at the phone screen.

Video of Bahram's shop security camera

The images of the security camera in Bahram's shop show the clash between him and Rahim, then their fight. The video was recorded by a phone off a computer screen. Nazanin's voice comments.

NAZANIN'S VOICE

These images were filmed today in my father's shop. The man we see attacking my father is the one who's been presenting himself these past few days on TV as a model prisoner who generously gave back a lady her bag with a lot of gold coins in it.

Other images follow of Farkhondeh storming in and shouting at Bahram who is tidying up his shop. Two people who came in to stop the fight are still there. Nazanin can also be seen.

NAZANIN'S VOICE

The woman coming into the shop seems to be his girlfriend and she defends him very aggressively, because she thinks my father denounced them for inventing this story of coins being found. My father explained to both the prison authorities and the charity association who robbed poor people for this guy that this whole story was made up. I don't know what's behind it, but in any case, they didn't want to listen to him. There we see the woman threaten me and my father and leave the shop.

Rahim is dumbfounded by the video. Siavash looks at his father stunned. Everybody looks at him in silence.

RAHIM

Has he shared that?

TAGHIAN

His daughter sent it to Mrs Radmehr and says if her father's not paid in two days she'll share it everywhere.

Rahim is ashamed.

RAHIM

He started insulting me.

TAGHIAN

The video speaks for itself. You attacked him all of a sudden.

RADMEHR

Now that you're known as a role model, that people follow you, you can't do things like that... I'm sorry, but that's thug-like behavior.

MAZROOEI

Do you know how many dowers we find each year for young brides in need? How many dialyses we finance for the sick? How many convicts sentenced to death we save from hanging by paying the recompense? Do you think people will still want to give us money once this is shared?

RAHIM

What's that got to do with me?

TAGHIAN

What's that got to do with you?

RAHIM (to Siavash)

Son, did you give the lady the bag, yes or no?

SIAVASH (stuttering, with difficulty)

Yes... I gave it to her... Dad called from prison and said a lady was coming to get it.

RADMEHR

Was it the lady in the video?

SIAVASH

No.

RAHIM (furious)

Why are you making him say things?

HOSSEIN

Shh... Rahim!

RADMEHR

Your creditor's daughter also sent this video to the local council. They called me and said that the lady in the film who is apparently related to you went there today and claimed your family gave her back the bag. Is that right?

RAHIM (ashamed)

I had to do this, because it's impossible to find the real owner.

TAGHIAN

Does someone who lies so easily deserve us collecting money to get him out of prison?

ANOTHER MAN

Your lying is your problem, but if this video gets out, do you think people's trust in us will ever be restored? Who would want to help our association? You have harmed all the other poor people we could help.

RAHIM (hopeless)
The truth is, these coins were found by a lady.

They are all stunned.

HOSSEIN
What lady?

RAHIM
The one in the video.

RADMEHR
So why did you say you found them?

RAHIM
I told the prison authorities it was a lady who found them, they said it didn't matter, I could say it was me.

MAZROOEI
So you didn't find them. Yet another lie...

KIANI
Why did they tell you to say it was you?

RAHIM
I don't know.

RADMEHR
You played with the reputation of our association. We've been struggling for twenty-five years to try and help people and you ruined it overnight.

RAHIM
Let me explain.... I can even call this lady and have her come and explain everything now!

MAZROOEI
What lady?

RAHIM
The one who found the coins and gave them to me.

TAGHIAN
I don't understand a word of his story.

Rahim takes out his phone and goes out while calling a number. Hossein goes with him, under the disapproving looks of the whole assembly.

78 – INT. AFTERNOON –CHARITY ASSOCIATION/CORRIDOR

Rahim and Hossein talk standing in the corridor of the association. A young woman and her little daughter sitting on chairs look at them.

HOSSEIN

An unknown person finds 70,000 in coins and decides to give them to you to pay your debt?

RAHIM

She's not unknown, I know her.

HOSSEIN

How come I don't?

RAHIM

She's the lady I'm supposed to marry soon. Maliheh saw her.

HOSSEIN

You said everywhere you found them, you made it all up... What is it all about? Tell me the truth, at least.

RAHIM

It's the truth.

HOSSEIN

Instead of all this, you should call your creditor and apologize so he doesn't share the video.

Rahim can't decide. Hossein takes out his phone to call a number. Ramezani comes out of the office and approaches them.

RAMEZANI

Come back in, everybody is waiting for you. They want to go home.

79 – INT. AFTERNOON – CHARITY ASSOCIATION/OFFICE

The board members are still engrossed in lively discussion. Siavash listens, affected.

MAZROOEI

If the video gets shared and creates a scandal, we'll have trouble explaining ourselves and apologizing, it'll be hellish.

Siavash listens to these conversations without anybody noticing that he's there. Ramezani opens the door and comes in.

RAMEZANI

He's trying to convince his creditor not to share the video.

RADMEHR

Even if the video isn't shown, we still have to make a statement. People trusted us with their money. We have to make a statement this evening.

KIANI

Saying what?

RADMEHR

That we checked afterwards and realized the story wasn't crystal-clear and as a consequence, the money collected will stay in the association's funds.

MAZROOEI

We could say we'll use it for the recompense of this poor guy.

TAGHIAN

Yes, I agree.

Siavash, stuttering worse than ever, tries to speak, with difficulty.

SIAVASH

Excuse me... My father didn't lie.

The whole assembly is touched.

RADMEHR

Son, we're not saying he lied... The problem is we don't understand what he says.

Rahim opens the door and comes in with Hossein.

RAMEZANI

Well?

HOSSEIN

Please transfer the money to the creditor's account tonight. Tomorrow, Rahim will give him the checks for the rest and he'll agree not to share the video.

RADMEHR

We can't give him the money with all this...

RAHIM

Why not?

RADMEHR

Morally, we have to contact every donor and let them decide if they want their money back or if they accept to give it to another needy person.

RAHIM

But the money was collected for him.

MAZROOEI

No, it wasn't. It was thanks to our dependable reputation.

RADMEHR

Would it be fair to give the money of these poor people, of these prisoners to this man who is now confessing that the coins were found by someone else?

RAHIM

Will you let me explain, madam?

RADMEHR

Explain what?... You took that lady to the council saying you gave her the bag and now we find out she's your friend... What's left to explain?

HOSSEIN

If he shares the video, the association's reputation will be ruined...

RADMEHR

Mr Taghian, call him again and request him not to share the video until we find a solution...

TAGHIAN

He's more accommodating, but his daughter won't let it go.

RADMEHR (to Rahim)

You paid us back very badly.

Radmehr leaves, upset. Rahim is confused. Radmehr bumps into the young woman in the corridor who gets up and talks to her. Siavash looks at Rahim.

80 – INT. NIGHT/ MALIHEH'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM

It's late. Siavash and Rahim are lying on their beds. Rahim is tormented and can't sleep. Siavash isn't sleeping either.

SIAVASH

Dad?

RAHIM

Yes, son?

Siavash doesn't answer.

RAHIM
Why aren't you sleeping?

SIAVASH
Why did you ask Ms Nourbakhsh to come and say we gave her the bag?

RAHIM
Because I couldn't ask anyone else.

SIAVASH
Why did she give you the coins she found?

RAHIM
To get me out of prison.

SIAVASH
Are you going to get remarried too?

RAHIM
Would you agree?

SIAVASH (choked up)
No.

Rahim turns to Siavash, holds him from behind, with his head against his chest.

RAHIM
I thought you liked her!

Siavash is worried and can't get to sleep. Rahim sniffs his son's hair.

81– INT. DAY – PRISON/TAHERI'S OFFICE

Taheri and Salehpour are in the office, furious, and Rahim is standing facing them.

RAHIM
I told Mr Taheri!

TAHERI
You told me your partner found it.

RAHIM
I said the lady I was going to marry.

TAHERI
And what did I say?... I said to repeat the same thing to them.

RAHIM

No, in fact you told me it wasn't worth bothering saying all that.

TAHERI (annoyed)

You're lying to my face?

RAHIM

You told me that in the other room... Mrs Marvasti was there. I can call her if you want.

Rahim goes towards the door to ask Mrs Marvasti to come in as a witness.

TAHERI

Come here... I told you to go and give the same story. You told me you couldn't name the lady because nobody knew you were together.

RAHIM

Yes, but...

TAHERI

Was it also me who told you to go in front of the camera on the sidewalk and say that was exactly where you found it?

RAHIM

You told the papers and TV to come and interview me. It never even crossed my mind that this story would be made public!

SALEHPOUR

If you didn't want anybody to know, you would have given your sister's number. When she called the prison, of course we would find out...

RAHIM

I swear on my only child's life that I never calculated all that...

TAHERI

What do you expect from us now?

RAHIM

Mr Taheri has to come and tell the association that I'd already said somebody else found the bag.

TAHERI

Why not tell them yourself?

RAHIM

I did but they don't believe me.

TAHERI

There is already this rumor that the prison authorities invented this story. All we'd need is for me to go to the association and everywhere else and say that we knew from the start that this man didn't find the bag and somebody else gave it to him.

SALEHPOUR

How many days leave have you got left?

RAHIM

It's my last day.

SALEHPOUR

Go today and give the checks to your creditor and ask him to forgive you, on your knees if you have to. You have to convince him not to share the video. Wait until he deletes it in front of you. And tomorrow, come back to prison and don't breathe a word about this affair until it's gradually forgotten.

RAHIM (shocked)

What do you mean, forgotten? I gave the coins back!

TAHERI

You just said you didn't think about anyone else finding out. So now just imagine you did the deed without anyone knowing about it.

RAHIM

That would have been different. Now they're saying I've lied. I didn't lie.

SALEHPOUR

But you didn't tell the truth.

TAHERI

You're either very smart or very naïve.

RAHIM

If I was smart, why would I be in prison?

SALEHPOUR

For now, go and don't do anything.

RAHIM

I'll go to my creditor and convince him not to share the video, but on the condition that first you go to the association and the council and tell them I told you it wasn't me who found the bag.

TAHERI (angry)
You're imposing conditions on us?

RAHIM
If he shares the video, you'll be in trouble too.

SALEHPOUR (to Taheri)
Call the newspaper and deny everything right away. Tell them we were tricked by this individual too.

This remark enrages Rahim. He leaves slamming the door.

SALEHPOUR
Call him back.

Taheri goes to the door and opens it.

TAHERI (to Rahim)
Come here.

Rahim comes back into the doorway.

SALEHPOUR (with authority)
What's with slamming the door? Eh?

RAHIM (resigned)
Sorry.

Silence among the three. Rahim leaves closing the door quietly.

82 – INT. DAY – COVERED MARKET/OUTSIDE BAHRAM'S SHOP

Rahim is walking towards Bahram's shop. He looks into the shop. Bahram is making photocopies. His arm is in plaster, in a sling around his neck, which makes his task difficult. Rahim is still looking at the shop. He can't bring himself to go in. He thinks and hesitates. Nazanin arrives and helps her father with the photocopies. They see Rahim. Rahim moves forward but stops again. He looks away and leaves.

83 – INT. DAY – CHARITY ASSOCIATION/RADMEHR'S OFFICE/CORRIDOR

Rahim and Farkhondeh come in, walk through a hall towards the desk of Radmehr's secretary in the corridor. A middle-aged woman is sitting at the desk.

RAHIM
Hello.

SECRETARY
Hello.

RAHIM

Is Mrs Radmehr here?

SECRETARY

She's with someone. Sit down, I'll let her know you're here.

Rahim and Farkhondeh sit next to each other on the chairs in the corridor. Radmehr's office's door is open. The young woman we've seen before and her daughter are with her. The woman is talking to Radmehr. The secretary goes in and tells her Rahim and Farkhondeh are there. The little girl comes in the corridor and gets a cup of water from the fountain. Radmehr sees the woman out of her office. She comes out saying goodbye. Rahim and Farkhondeh get up to go in.

RAHIM

Hello...

RADMEHR

Hello. Come in.

Rahim and Farkhondeh go in. The woman takes her daughter's hand and they walk towards the hall. But she suddenly seems to hesitate and sits on a chair in the hall, looking at Radmehr's office's door that is ajar. Her daughter is tired and goes towards her mother complaining.

LITTLE GIRL

Let's go, mom.

WOMAN

Sit down. We'll go soon.

LITTLE GIRL

I'm tired.

The woman is still looking curiously at Radmehr's office.

84 – INT. DAY – CHARITY ASSOCIATION/RADMEHR'S OFFICE

Rahim and Farkhondeh are sitting facing Radmehr in her office. She is listening to them in silence. The door is ajar.

FARKHONDEH

He called me from the prison and I told him I'd found this bag. Rahim, tell the lady what you replied to me.

RAHIM

I told you to find its owner to give it back.

FARKHONDEH

I didn't have the heart to do it. I called him the next day to suggest selling the coins to pay off a part of his debt so he

could be freed from prison, then we could finally settle down a bit after two years. How long can I go on sponging off my brother?

RAHIM

I sent a few messages to my creditor from the phones of fellow prisoners. He didn't reply. That's the text he forwarded to the council.

RADMEHR

He didn't forward it.

RAHIM (surprised)

I didn't send it to anybody else.

Radmehr says nothing.

RAHIM

Was it the guys in the prison who forwarded it?

RADMEHR

Why do you care who did?

FARKHONDEH

I asked him to come out on leave to try to persuade his creditor.

RAHIM

I got leave the following week. But my conscience didn't allow me to use the coins.

FARKHONDEH

Tell her that you told the truth to the prison managers and they asked you to say you had found the bag.

RADMEHR (to Farkhondeh)

But you are the one who found the bag and gave it back to its owner...

RAHIM

No, I gave it back. The employees of the bank are my witnesses.

FARKHONDEH

I didn't agree with giving it back. He really insisted on doing it...

Rahim pulls the folded copy of the woman's picture from his pocket.

FARKHONDEH

I told you the whole truth. (Sobbing) I swear on the life of this man who is my only happiness in life.

Radmehr takes the picture from Rahim and glances at it.

RADMEHR

You have no way to find her?

RAHIM

I took this picture yesterday and went to her neighborhood and showed it to all the shopkeepers. Nobody knows her.

RADMEHR

I don't know what to do. On one side, I have you coming to see me and on the other, this young woman you just saw. Since she heard your story, she's kept coming here for the money... She's as needy as you are. If the recompense of her husband is not settled in the coming days, he'll be hanged.

Rahim and Farkhondeh remain silent.

RADMEHR

What do you suggest I do?

FARKHONDEH

Can't you organize an evening to raise funds for her husband?

RADMEHR

We did a couple of times and raised some money. But people don't give easily when there's a murder involved.

Rahim is lost in thought.

RADMEHR

If I give the money to your creditor and this kid's father gets executed tomorrow, won't I be blamed for helping somebody with such an unclear situation? Won't people tell me it's my fault if this young man is executed?

FARKHONDEH

But this money was collected for him.

RADMEHR

Yes, but now the same donors are calling us to protest, saying they don't want their money to be given to him. And if the video is shared, it will be much worse...

RAHIM

I don't care about this money anymore. I care about my honor.

RADMEHR

Agree for us to give the money to this woman and save her husband from execution. I promise I'll go and see your creditor today and beg him not to share the video.

RAHIM

What if he doesn't agree?

RADMEHR

I'll do my best to convince him.

Rahim and Farkhondeh are silent, thinking.

85 – INT. DAY – CHARITY ASSOCIATION /HALL AND CORRIDOR

Rahim and Farkhondeh come out of the office towards the hall leading to the exit. On the side, they glimpse the woman and the little girl still sitting waiting. Rahim looks at the little girl. They pass by them. The woman looks at Rahim imploringly. They carry on walking. The woman goes to Radmehr's office. The little girl plays between the chairs.

86 – EXT. DAY – CHARITY ASSOCIATION /EXIT

Rahim and Farkhondeh go out of the building towards the gate, both preoccupied. Farkhondeh suddenly stops.

FARKHONDEH

Go in the van, I'll come in second.

RAHIM

Where are you going?

FARKHONDEH

I won't be long.

Rahim stands still, surprised. Farkhondeh goes back in the building.

87 – INT. DAY – CHARITY ASSOCIATION /RADMEHR'S OFFICE

The woman – the wife of the convict about to be executed- who apparently was told the good news by Radmehr, is crying out of joy. The door of the office is open. Farkhondeh comes in the doorway and knocks to come in. As soon as she sees her, the woman stands up crying and holds Farkhondeh in her arms without saying anything.

WOMAN

You saved my life... This child and I owe you our lives. I don't know how to thank you.

Farkhondeh doesn't know what to answer. She doesn't feel good.

RADMEHR

Go tell your daughter, she'll be happy.

WOMAN

Thank you so much. It's so kind of you.

She goes out thanking them continuously. Radmehr closes the door. Farkhondeh is still standing silently.

RADMEHR

What's up?

FARKHONDEH

I want to tell you something privately.

RADMEHR

Sit down.

FARKHONDEH

If the word spreads that you've given the money to someone else instead of him, it will bring more shame on him.

RADMEHR

We can't give him the money anyway.

FARKHONDEH

OK, fine... But can you please say that he offered to give the money that was raised for him to a needy convict to save him from execution?

Radmehr thinks in silence.

FARKHONDEH

Now that you are giving the money to someone else, at least let him take the credit.

RADMEHR

OK. I'll ask for the news to be spread on social media today.

Farkhondeh doesn't know if she did the right thing.

88 – EXT./INT. DAY – IN FRONT OF THE CHARITY ASSOCIATION /VAN

Rahim is sitting at the wheel, tormented, staring into space. Farkhondeh opens the door and gets in. She notices Rahim's state.

FARKHONDEH

What's happened?

RAHIM
The video was shared.

FARKHONDEH (in shock)
No! When?

RAHIM
This morning.

FARKHONDEH
Who told you?

RAHIM
Hossein called.

Farkhondeh is stunned.

FARKHONDEH
What are you going to do now?

RAHIM
Nothing. That's what I deserve.

FARKHONDEH (choked up)
No, you don't deserve that. You deserve none of it!

RAHIM
Yes, I do... I'm too naïve for this world.

Farkhondeh bursts in tears.

89 – INT. AFTERNOON – FARKHONDEH'S BROTHER'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM

Farkhondeh rings the bell. Her niece opens the door, she goes in.

FARKHONDEH
Hello.

There is a heavy atmosphere in the house. Her brother Morteza is in front of the television and answers her coldly. Afsaneh, in the kitchen, is not much cheerier. Farkhondeh goes directly to her room.

90 – INT. AFTERNOON – FARKHONDEH'S BROTHER'S HOUSE/FARKHONDEH'S BEDROOM

Farkhondeh takes off her coat and is about to change her clothes when Afsaneh, her sister-in-law, pushes open the door.

AFSANEH
What got into him?

FARKHONDEH (astonished)
Who?

AFSANEH
Rahim. Haven't you seen the video?

Farkhondeh doesn't answer.

MORTEZA
Farkhondeh...

FARKHONDEH
Yes?

MORTEZA
Can you come here for a minute?

Farkhondeh goes to another bedroom.

92 – INT. AFTERNOON – FARKHONDEH'S BROTHER'S HOUSE/BEDROOM

Morteza stands waiting for Farkhondeh in his bedroom, furious, his phone in his hand. Farkhondeh comes in.

MORTEZA
Whatever relationship you have with this guy, end it now.

FARKHONDEH
What guy?

MORTEZA
The charlatan you're in cahoots with in this swindle!

FARKHONDEH
Calm down. Why are you shouting?

MORTEZA
I'm shouting because it falls on deaf ears!

FARKHONDEH
Morteza, just because you're housing me doesn't mean I will allow you to speak to me however you like!

MORTEZA
How many times have I asked you to leave this jerk? Were you waiting for it to end like this?

FARKHONDEH
End like what?

MORTEZA
Like what? Aren't the two of you ashamed? How can one be so...

Afsaneh comes in, worried. She tries to calm them down.

AFSANEH
Calm down, the children are scared.

MORTEZA
Who is this scumbag you disgrace yourself and your family for?

FARKHONDEH (sobbing)
This scumbag means everything to me! I'd die for him if I had to. (crying) Don't ever talk to me like that again!

Farkhondeh leaves the bedroom. Morteza sits down, furious. The children, very upset, watch their father from the doorway.

92 – INT./EXT. DUSK – MALIHEH'S HOUSE NEIGHBORHOOD/STREET/CAR

The night is about to fall. Rahim is sitting in a taxi, in the front, exhausted, staring into space. The car travels on a street that leads to a steep mountain. The radio is playing music.

93 – EXT. DUSK – IN FRONT OF MALIHEH'S HOUSE

Rahim gets out of the car by the street of Maliheh's house and crosses the avenue. A woman waiting at the corner walks towards him.

WOMAN
Excuse me, Mr Soltani...

RAHIM
Hello.

WOMAN
Hello, I just went to your home but your son said you were not there.

RAHIM
Can I help you?

WOMAN

My mother lives nearby... The other night, at the charity event, she gave her bracelet for you... She asked me to come and get it back from you.

Rahim is hurt by her request.

WOMAN

This bracelet meant a lot to her.

RAHIM

I don't have her bracelet. You should call the charity.

WOMAN

We did, but they said that it was sold and they can give her the money. But she says she doesn't want money, she wants her bracelet back.

Rahim remains silent.

WOMAN

I'm sorry. I feel really embarrassed...

RAHIM

I'll ask my sister to go and see who they sold it to and to buy it back.

WOMAN

That's very kind of you.

Rahim walks along the street without saying anything. The woman looks at him going.

94 – EXT. DUSK – IN FRONT OF MALIHEH'S HOUSE /CAR

Rahim heads to his sister's house. He stops as he hears Taheri, who was apparently waiting for him, get out of his car. Rahim is astonished to see him.

TAHERI

Hello. Could you join me in the car for a couple of minutes?

Rahim, bothered, does not reply.

TAHERI

Come on.

Taheri goes to his car and gets in. Rahim follows him. They talk to each other in the parked car. Some children are playing in the street.

TAHERI
Did you talk to your creditor?

RAHIM
No.

TAHERI
He shared the video.

Rahim doesn't reply.

TAHERI
Salehpour really resents you.

Rahim remains silent.

TAHERI
He wanted to publish a denial and say you tricked us. I convinced him not to do it for the time being.

Rahim still says nothing.

TAHERI
Between the video and all the rumors, we absolutely have to find the owner of the coins.

RAHIM
How?

TAHERI
Is your son there?

RAHIM
Yes.

TAHERI
Can I pop in with you?

Rahim is surprised and curious.

94 – INT. NIGHT – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM

Siavash is sitting on a chair in the living room. Taheri is filming him with his phone. He is holding the folded picture of the owner of the coins. Rahim is farther away, watching his son's efforts to speak well. Hossein is also sitting there, uncomfortable. Maliheh is in the kitchen, the children watch Siavash. Facing the camera, Siavash is trying hard not to stutter, and speaks candidly.

SIAVASH

Hello... I'm Siavash Soltani... the son of Mr Rahim Soltani... who has to go back to prison tomorrow. My father found a... a bag with gold coins... that a lady had lost...

Siavash starts stuttering. He is embarrassed and doesn't continue.

TAHERI

"And he gave them back to her. But later, since he couldn't find this lady again, they didn't believe him and they said my father was lying". Let's start again.

SIAVASH

I'm Siavash Soltani... the son of Mr Rahim Soltani... Tomorrow, my father has to go back to prison...

Rahim interrupts him. Maliheh arrives from the kitchen with a plate of fruits.

RAHIM

It didn't work, sweetheart. Start again.

TAHERI

It was fine...

RAHIM

No. Have some tea, and I'll rehearse a bit with him...

TAHERI

No, on the contrary. That's how it's good.

HOSSEIN

When he's stressed, he can't speak well.

RAHIM

Come on, Siavash, we'll go over there...

Siavash is about to get up.

TAHERI

No, sit down. (To Rahim) I'm telling you it's better like that... He's much more credible like that. Speak like earlier... Don't force yourself to speak well. Start again.

Siavash is embarrassed, Taheri films. Rahim is very upset. Siavash says the same thing, stuttering even more.

SIAVASH

Hello...

TAHERI

Wait... Go ahead now... Just one thing, Siavash. If somebody sees his dad going to prison, he's a lot sadder than that. Do you love your dad?

SIAVASH

Loads.

TAHERI

So why aren't you sad? You look like you're happy not to see him again after tomorrow... Start again. And hold the lady's photo higher.

SIAVASH

Hello. I'm Siavash Soltani, son of mister... mister Rahim Soltani...

Siavash is blocked again, but tries to continue. His blockage makes him cry. Rahim can't stand this situation and leaves the living room to go to the kitchen.

96 – INT. NIGHT – MALIHEH HOUSE/KITCHEN (CONT.)

Rahim is standing in the kitchen, tormented. Maliheh brings some small plates into the living room. Through the door, she looks at Siavash who is trying not to cry and to speak clearly. Rahim is devastated and can't stand it. He goes back to the living room.

97 – INT. NIGHT – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/LIVING ROOM (CONT.)

Siavash continues stuttering, crying, in a tone that elicits pity. Rahim is standing in a corner, Maliheh sitting on another side. All eyes are on Siavash.

SIAVASH

They said that my father was lying... They want to put him back in prison... I saw this lady... She gave me 50 toman... Now I want this video to be shared to say to the lady... who lost her bag to call us so we have proof my father... he didn't lie and he won't go to prison. My aunt's number... Our number is 89... 75... 36...51. Please call...

The tears prevent him from finishing. Taheri stops recording.

TAHERI

Well done! You were perfect, son.

Siavash looks at Rahim, obviously displeased.

MALIHEH

Your tea has got cold.

TAHERI

Thanks, I had some. Tomorrow, I'll ask for it to be shared everywhere.

HOSSEIN

Thank you very much.

RAHIM

Can I see you outside, Mr Taheri?

Siavash is shocked by his father's reaction. Taheri gets up and goes out with Rahim to the patio. Rahim closes the patio's door. Hossein and Maliheh look at him surprised. Siavash is intrigued.

98 – EXT. NIGHT – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/PATIO

Taheri and Rahim are talking on the patio.

TAHERI

Even me, hearing him, I nearly cried. Whoever sees this will be touched.

RAHIM

OK, but I don't want my son to be seen like that.

TAHERI

It's to your advantage! Yours and his! You can be sure that if it's shared, everybody will be on your side. And maybe the lady will see it and call you and everything will be fixed.

RAHIM

No, delete it immediately.

TAHERI

Think a bit. Your son didn't say anything bad...

RAHIM

I don't want to.

TAHERI (annoyed)

Do you think it only depends on what you want? All our reputations are at stake.

RAHIM

You want to win back your reputation with my son's stutter?

Taheri, furious at what has just been said, goes towards the front door without a word.

99 – INT. NIGHT – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/HALLWAY

Taheri angrily heads to the front door. He puts his shoes on, but Rahim catches up with him and blocks his way. Hossein, worried, has come in the hallway and Maliheh watches them from the living room.

HOSSEIN
Mr Taheri...

RAHIM
Wait. Delete it in front of me.

MALIHEH (to Rahim)
What happened?

Taheri opens the front door. Rahim slams the door and pulls Taheri back in. Taheri is in shock. Hossein intervenes.

TAHERI
What are you doing? Get out of my way.

RAHIM
Delete it.

HOSSEIN
Rahim...

RAHIM
Delete it.

TAHERI
Let go of my arm.

Taheri furiously frees his arm, opens the door and goes out. Rahim follows him.

RAHIM
Wait.

HOSSEIN
What's got into him?

Hossein follows Rahim outside. Maliheh, worried, comes to the doorway.

100 – EXT. NIGHT – IN FRONT OF MALIHEH'S HOUSE

Taheri has got to his car. He's about to open the door and go in. Rahim slams the door and blocks Taheri.

RAHIM
I won't let you go until you delete it.

Hossein tries to calm Rahim down. Maliheh is still in the doorway.

HOSSEIN
Rahim, this poor man wants to help you.

RAHIM (ignoring him)
Delete it.

Taheri, shocked by Rahim's attitude, deletes the video he has just recorded. Rahim stops blocking him. Taheri gets in the car.

TAHERI (threatening)
I'll see you again at the prison tomorrow.

Rahim goes back in the house without a word. Taheri unlocks the steering wheel lock. Hossein and Maliheh have come close to him and try to make up with him. Taheri starts the engine.

MALIHEH
Please forgive him, Mr Taheri. You shouldn't leave like this...

HOSSEIN
Please come back in for a second... Mr Taheri...

101 – INT. NIGHT – MALIHEH'S HOUSE /LIVING ROOM AND KITCHEN

Rahim is sitting on a chair on the side of the living room, staring into space. Siavash is standing on the other side in silence. Nima and Negar are staring at their uncle. Negar goes to him.

NEGAR
Uncle, what did he do that hurt you?

RAHIM
Nothing, sweetheart.

NEGAR
So why did you ask him to delete it?

RAHIM
I didn't like it.

SIAVASH
Because I spoke badly?

RAHIM
No.... I don't want anyone to pity us.

This answer does Siavash some good. The children look at Rahim silently. Hossein and Maliheh come in, upset, still shocked by Rahim's attitude. Heavy silence. Rahim

gets up, grabs the photocopy of the woman's picture, heads to the corridor to take the bag he brought from the prison and then passes by everyone to go to another room. Hossein goes to the patio and lights a cigarette.

102 – INT. NIGHT – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/SIAVASH'S BEDROOM

Rahim is silently folding his clothes and packing his bag. He tucks the woman's picture in his bag. Siavash comes in discreetly. Rahim takes a few banknotes out of his pocket.

RAHIM
Take this.

SIAVASH
No, I don't want to.

RAHIM
Take it. You may need money while I'm away... Put it in your backpack.

Siavash takes the money and sits down on the edge of his bed. Rahim sees he's sad.

RAHIM
Do you want to grab your things so I take you to your mom's?

SIAVASH
No... Can I come with you tomorrow?

RAHIM (astonished)
Where? To the prison?

SIAVASH
To the door.

RAHIM
How would you get back?

SIAVASH
By bus.

RAHIM
It's too far, sweetheart, you can't.

Siavash doesn't answer. Rahim takes a towel and goes out. Siavash looks at the money in his hand. He gets up and goes towards his father's bag. He unzips it and tucks the money under Rahim's clothes. He zips the bag again.

103 – INT. NIGHT – MALIHEH'S HOUSE/BATHROOM

In the bathroom, Rahim is standing in front of the small mirror hanging on the wall. He's holding his electric shaver in his hand. He turns it on and starts shaving, choked up. He also shaves his head. He burst into tears but grits his teeth so as not to be heard.

104 – INT./EXT. DAY – STREET/BUS

Early in the morning, a few passengers are sitting on the bus driving along an avenue. Rahim, clean shaven, is wearing a knit hat and holding his bag, sitting with Siavash by his side. Siavash is sad and he leans his head on his father's shoulder. Rahim takes Siavash's hand and with his finger, he seems to write something on his palm. Then Siavash takes Rahim's hand and writes something on his palm. Rahim kisses Siavash's palm. A young passenger standing is staring at them. Rahim notices he looks at Siavash. He doesn't know whether he has recognized them or whether he is looking at them randomly. Rahim looks away.

105 – EXT. DAY – OPPOSITE THE PRISON

Rahim and Siavash get out the bus in front of the prison. Rahim looks around. Siavash glimpses Farkhondeh, waiting on the opposite sidewalk, holding a small bag. Rahim and Siavash cross between the cars to join her.

RAHIM
Hello.

Farkhondeh is surprised to see Rahim clean shaven.

FARKHONDEH
Hello... What have you done to yourself?

Rahim smiles bitterly. Farkhondeh goes towards Siavash and kisses him. Siavash feels strange with Farkhondeh.

FARKHONDEH
Take off your hat to let me see.

Rahim takes off his hat. Farkhondeh looks at him, choked up. He puts his hat back.

FARKHONDEH
Here.

She gives a bag to Rahim.

RAHIM
What is it?

FARKHONDEH
Some clothes.

RAHIM
Do you want us to sit for a bit?

FARKHONDEH
No, you'll be late, you'll get into trouble. Have you got the woman's picture?

Rahim opens his bag and gives the photocopy of the picture to Farkhondeh.

FARKHONDEH
I'll find her. Even if Siavash and I have to go everyday to her neighborhood, I'll find her.

Rahim sits down, takes Siavash in his arms and hugs him for a long time.

RAHIM (to Siavash)
Son, if you need anything while I'm not around, you only tell Farkhondeh, OK?

Siavash doesn't answer.

RAHIM
Siavash... OK?

SIAVASH
OK.

Siavash hugs his father tightly too. Farkhondeh is choked up. She turns her head so the passers-by can't see. Rahim gets up.

RAHIM
Don't cry now... I'll be back soon. Farkhondeh... Farkhondeh...

Farkhondeh turns to the side of the bus shelter so they can't see her crying. Siavash is surprised by the relationship between Farkhondeh and his father. Farkhondeh controls herself so as to stop crying, for Rahim's sake. She looks for something in her bag. She takes out a small Koran she brought to bless Rahim before he goes. In the bus shelter, she holds the Koran over Rahim's head, who passes under it before placing his lips on the book. Farkhondeh puts it back in her bag.

RAHIM
Right, you go now, I'm off.

FARKHONDEH (choked up)
No, you go first.

RAHIM
I'm going... You go.

Farkhondeh, holding back her tears, shakes her head. Siavash is sad. Rahim kisses him. They separate sadly.

RAHIM

Goodbye, son. (To Farkhondeh) Look after him.

Farkhondeh replies with a look. Rahim crosses the road to the prison, carrying his two bags. Farkhondeh and Siavash don't let him out of their sight. Farkhondeh holds Siavash's little hand, and with her other hand, pulls her scarf over her mouth to hide her trembling lips. Rahim has crossed and is heading towards the prison entrance. He turns once more to see Farkhondeh and Siavash, side by side, like a mother and child. A bus stops and blocks Farkhondeh and Siavash from sight. They move quickly to see him again. Rahim is no longer there. They stay there looking at the same place now left empty by Rahim. Farkhondeh looks at the woman's picture in her hand.

106 – INT./EXT. DAY – PRISON/REGISTRY OFFICE EXIT

Rahim gives his paper to a guard sitting at a table supervising the exits and returns. Another prisoner is signing the register to go out.

GUARD (to Rahim)

Sit down, we'll call you.

Rahim sits on a chair facing the exit. He looks sadly through this little guarded door the outside of the prison and the street. A woman in her fifties is waiting outside with a box of cakes. The prisoner who has just finished signing, goes out, bag on his back, delighted.

THE PRISONER (happy)

Thanks a lot, bye.

He leaves by the small door. The woman who was waiting rushes towards him and hugs him for a long time, with tears of joy. Rahim is still sitting looking out. The man opens the box of cakes his wife has brought and comes back to offer some to the guards, out of frame. We hear them. Then the man comes into frame and offers Rahim some.

THE PRISONER

Have some.

Rahim takes a cake.

THE PRISONER

Take the box and give them to the guys inside.

Rahim takes the open box. The man waves and goes out. He goes off with his wife, framed by the door. On the other side of the door, cars circulate. Life goes on. The closing credits fade in and out on this image until the end.