

A Separation  
by  
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FADE IN:

TITLES

A document is on the glass inside a copier. The copier starts copying, a light moves from one side of the copier to the other and a copy is made of an ID card. A hand removes one ID card and places another in its place. The hand places the ID cards of various individuals – men, women, young, middle aged and old – on the glass plate of the copier and copies them. The titles appear and fade out on this scene.

INT. FAMILY COURT – COURTROOM – DAY

In a branch of the Iranian Divorce Court, SIMIN and NADER are seated across from the judge. The door to the room is open and from the room next door, the voices of people waiting to see the judge and the commotion of the corridors is heard. Nader is quiet and pensive and staring at the judge. Simin speaks continuously.

JUDGE (O.S.)

Madame, the things you are saying are not reasons with which you can file for a divorce, unless there is something else.

SIMIN

Like what?

JUDGE (O.S.)

Like if he is an addict, physically abuses you or does not give you an allowance.

SIMIN

No, he is not an addict. On the contrary, he is a good, decent person...

JUDGE (O.S.)

Then why do you want a divorce?

SIMIN

Because he won't come with me.  
If he does I'll drop my case  
for a divorce..

(to Nader)

Will you come?

NADER

No, I won't. If it's important  
for her to leave, she can.

SIMIN

Your honor, ask him why he  
won't, why he doesn't want to  
come?

NADER

(to Simin)

You know why.

SIMIN

No I don't.

NADER

(to the Judge)

Let her give me one reason to  
convince me why we should move  
abroad in these circumstances.

SIMIN

You give me one reason why we  
should stay.

NADER

(to Simin)

I'll give you a thousand. The  
first one is I can't leave my  
father.

SIMIN

But you can leave your wife?

NADER

You brought me here! You filed  
for a divorce! When did I leave  
you?!

SIMIN

Didn't you just say she can  
leave if she wants to?

NADER

Yes and I'll say it again. When  
you don't want to live with me...  
I didn't get you by force and  
I'm not going to keep you by  
force... One day you came to live  
with me. Today you don't want  
to.

SIMIN

Your honor, his excuse is his  
father's illness... His father  
has Alzheimer's. He doesn't  
even know that his son is  
around.

NADER

You think he doesn't know.

SIMIN

Does he?

NADER

Yes I feel that he does.

SIMIN

It makes no difference to him,  
whether it is you that is with  
him or a stranger. He doesn't  
even know that you are his son.

NADER

But I know that he is my dad.

SIMIN

Doesn't your daughter's future  
matter to you?

JUDGE (O.S.)

(to Simin)

So all the children living in  
this country don't have a  
future?

SIMIN

As a mother I prefer that she not grow up in these circumstances. Can I have this right as a mother?

JUDGE (O.S.)  
What circumstances?

Simin falls silent.

JUDGE (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Is your child better off here with both her parents or there without a father?

SIMIN  
That's why I am insisting that he also come with us.

NADER  
I am not in a position to leave.

There's a brief silence between Nader and Simin who do not even look at each other.

SIMIN  
(to the Judge)  
What should we do now?

JUDGE (O.S.)  
Nothing. Go back to your lives.

SIMIN  
If we could, I wouldn't file for a divorce.

JUDGE (O.S.)  
You can have a divorce only if he agrees to grant you one.

SIMIN  
He just said that he agrees.  
(to Nader)  
Didn't you say you agree to a divorce?

JUDGE (O.S.)

(to Nader)  
Are you willing to grant her a  
divorce?

NADER  
If she prefers going abroad to  
live to her husband and child,  
then I have no objection to a  
divorce.

SIMIN  
(to Nader)  
What does "you prefer" mean?  
(to the Judge)  
Your honor please look at these  
documents.

Simin shows the paperwork she is holding to the judge.

SIMIN  
Your honor after 18 months of  
running around and expenses, we  
got our residency. It has been  
six months now and it will  
expire in 40 days. Why should  
we...

JUDGE (O.S.)  
Like I said, this is your  
personal problem. For a  
divorce, you need his consent.

SIMIN  
If he consents to a divorce,  
what happens to my daughter?

JUDGE (O.S.)  
You have to agree on  
everything. How old is your  
daughter?

SIMIN  
She'll be eleven in two weeks.

JUDGE (O.S.)  
She can only come with you if

(MORE)

her father gives his permission. If he doesn't then she can't leave.

SIMIN  
He won't give his permission.  
He knows I will not leave  
without my daughter.

JUDGE (O.S.)  
That's between you two. Good  
day.

Nader rises from his seat.

SIMIN  
Your honor, I have to know  
where I stand before these 40  
days are up.

JUDGE (O.S.)  
(to Nader)  
Please sign here.

Nader approaches the judge's desk to sign the documents.

SIMIN  
I'll give up everything if only  
he'll give me my daughter.

NADER  
Our daughter is attached to me.  
She doesn't even want to go  
with you.

SIMIN  
She doesn't know better.

NADER  
Why not? She is eleven years  
old.

SIMIN  
Your honor, please. Can't you  
help me?

JUDGE (O.S.)  
(to Simin)

Please sign here and don't  
waste the court's time.

SIMIN  
What do you mean waste?

JUDGE (O.S.)  
You can't come here for every  
little problem that you have.

SIMIN  
It's a little problem to you.

JUDGE (O.S.)  
Yes, I am the judge here and  
your problem is not a problem..  
ma'am sign here.

Unwillingly, Simin signs the court documents.

INT. CORRIDORS AND STAIRWAYS - DAY

Simin moves through the stairways and corridors of the  
courthouse among the throngs of men and women walking  
between the various offices or waiting for their turn.  
Nader walks behind her.

INT. NADER'S HOUSE - STAIRWAY - DAY

Two middle-aged movers are carrying an old piano down the  
stairs from the second floor. Simin is coming up the stairs  
holding a suitcase and waits on the landing for the movers  
to bring down the piano and clear the way for her to enter  
Nader's house.

MOVER #1  
(holding the  
piano)  
Lady, you said the first floor.

SIMIN  
This is the first floor..

MOVER #1  
So what's the floor beneath us?

SIMIN



That's the ground floor, this is the first...

MOVER #1

The price we gave was for one floor.

SIMIN

Isn't the buyer paying you for the move?

MOVER #1

Only for one floor...

SIMIN

I don't understand what you are saying!

The movers put the piano down on the floor.

MOVER #1

Then call the buyer. He has to tell us what to do. This is two floors.

SIMIN

(frustrated)

Fine, clear the way, I'll pay for one floor...

The workers pick the piano up to carry it downstairs.

EXT. BALCONY — DAY

Nader is in the balcony, his old father, MR. MORTEZA, is seated on a chair. Nader is using an electric shaver to shave his father's beard. They are seen from between an open door to the balcony.

INT. HALLWAY — DAY

Nader's apartment is a relatively large and old apartment. It is a little cluttered. In a corner of the hallway RAZIEH is seated on a chair waiting. Her little daughter SOMAYEH is leaning against her knee. Through the opening of the door, Somayeh watches Nader shaving his father's beard. Nader and his father are talking but because of the

(CONTINUED)

distance, their voices can't be heard. Simin enters as she shakes the dust off her suitcase. On her way to the bedroom, she passes Razieh and Somayeh, who are waiting.

INT. BEDROOM – DAY

Simin's clothing and other personal things are in a pile on the bed. She stuffs them into her suitcase.

RAZIEH (O.S.)  
Excuse me madam...

Simin leaves the suitcase and walks out of the room.

INT. HALLWAY AND TERMEH'S ROOM – DAY

Termeh pretends to be busy with her homework, even though it is clear she is not concentrating. Simin enters.

SIMIN  
Go tell your dad they want to  
leave.

TERMEH  
Why don't you tell him?

Simin shoots Termeh an angry glance.

TERMEH  
What?

SIMIN  
(quietly)  
Didn't we agree?

TERMEH  
I'm studying.

Termeh leaves the room. Simin climbs a chair to reach the shelves in the closet and get her things. Simin throws all her books, magazines and notes out of the closet. Suddenly she stops, quietly climbs down the chair and from between the window blinds looks at Nader in the hallway where he is taking his father Mr. Morteza to his room. Termeh says something to her dad.

INT. MR. MORTEZA'S ROOM, THE KITCHEN AND LIVING ROOM – DAY

Simin places her books on the dining table next to the rest of her things. Razieh is standing and speaking to Nader who is carrying the dirty laundry from his father's room to the kitchen. Nader's father is sitting on the edge of his bed and is looking out of his room and talking gibberish. Somayeh is watching him curiously. Simin pretends to be busy with her luggage but is in fact listening in on Nader and Razieh's conversation.

NADER

...You have to give him his medication on time, keep him away from the stove, from leaving the house cause he'll get lost, from going to the window.

(louder to Termeh)

Termeh get your laundry.

Nader loads the clothes into the washing machine. From the stairway, the mover calls Simin.

MOVER #1

Madam?

SIMIN

Come upstairs...

NADER

I have to be at work at 7:30. You have to be here before that so that I can leave him with you.

RAZIEH

That's too early. I'd have to leave my house at 5:30.

NADER

Can you make it by 8? He wakes up at 8:30. If you ring the upstairs neighbor's bell, they'll let you in. I 'll leave you the apartment key above the door.

Nader goes from the kitchen to the living room. He pays no  
(CONTINUED)

attention to Simin. Meanwhile Simin takes her purse and several music instruction notebooks, which are next to where the piano used to be, and walks towards the mover who has by now reached the door.

RAZIEH

Excuse me... what's the pay per month?

NADER

300,000.

SIMIN

(to the mover)

Here, give these to him. They are music instruction notebooks. They might be of use.

Simin gives the mover a 50,000 toman note.

MOVER #1

I don't have any change.

RAZIEH

(to Nader)

300,000 is a little... it's too little.

NADER

No, that's the rate. Ask around.

Simin goes to the bedroom to get some change. Termeh walks towards the kitchen with her laundry. Razieh is still thinking.

RAZIEH

The commute is far. Several bus lines.

NADER

(to Termeh)

Press the button. I already put the powder in...

(to Razieh)

It's all I can afford. So...

RAZIEH

Let me think about it and let you know.

NADER

Then let me know by this afternoon. I've interviewed someone else, if you are not interested I don't want to lose that person.

INT. BEDROOM — DAY

Simin is counting money she has taken from the vanity table drawer. She loses count, gets frustrated and starts counting again.

RAZIEH (O.S.)

Goodbye ma'am.

Simin places the rest of the cash back in the drawer where some money is kept.

INT. STAIRWAY — DAY

Razieh and her daughter go down the stairs. Simin pays the mover. The mover thanks her and leaves. Simin goes back inside the apartment.

INT. KITCHEN — DAY

Termeh and Nader are bending over the washing machine and trying to figure out the settings.

NADER

Which setting does she usually use?

TERMEH

Should I go ask her?

NADER

She hasn't left yet, and already you want to make me look bad?!... Look I say we put it on... which one do you think?

TERMEH

I say four.

NADER

Why four?

TERMEH

Cause the button has faded.  
See? She must've used it the  
most.

Nader proudly looks at Termeh and puts the setting on 4 and turns the machine on.

NADER

Four it is. From now on we'll  
set everything in this house on  
the faded settings.

TERMEH

(worried)  
She is really leaving.

NADER

She'll be back.

INT. LIVING ROOM AND MR. MORTEZA'S ROOM - DAY

Simin takes a CD from the pile next to the stereo on the shelf beneath the television. Nader walks out of the kitchen over to the living room and pretends to be interested in the channels he is switching back and forth to with the TV remote control. Simin places her suitcase by the door. Mr. Morteza realizes that she is leaving.

MR. MORTEZA

Simin where're you going?

SIMIN

I'll be right back.

MR. MORTEZA

Where're you going?

With no other choice, Simin goes into Mr. Morteza's room.

SIMIN

Just to the corner. I'll be  
right back.

With his trembling hand, Mr. Morteza holds Simin's and keeps her from leaving.

SIMIN  
I'll be right back... let me go.

MR. MORTEZA  
Where are you going?

SIMIN  
Dad I told you... I'll come back.

Mr. Morteza is staring blankly at Simin and does not let go of her hand.

SIMIN  
Termeh! Come stay with your grandfather.

Nader comes to his father's room.

NADER  
Dad get up... Get up. I want to take you to the bathroom.

Nader holds his father under his arms and tries to free Simin's hand free from his hold.

NADER  
Let go of her hand... Dad... let go.

MR. MORTEZA  
Where are you taking me?

NADER  
To the bathroom and then we'll go and buy the paper... come on...  
(to Simin)  
You can leave.

MR. MORTEZA  
Simin.

NADER  
She'll be back.

Nader separates Simin's hand from his father's and takes him to the bathroom. Simin tries to conceal her emotions and sadness from Nader.

INT. TERMEH'S ROOM – DAY

Simin takes the remaining pile of books from Termeh's desk. Termeh walks to the door.

SIMIN  
You're not coming?

Termeh does not respond. Simin realizes that Termeh is stressed.

TERMEH  
Why are you taking your books?

SIMIN  
I want them.

TERMEH  
All this for just 2 weeks?

Simin closes the door to keep their voices from being heard.

SIMIN  
You promised not to say anything to him.

TERMEH  
And you promised it would only be for 2 weeks.

Uncertain of the promise she's made, Simin looks at Termeh.

INT. TERMEH'S ROOM AND HALLWAY – DAY

Nader is standing in front of the half-open bathroom door and waiting for his father to come out.

NADER  
(to his father)  
Don't put your hand there.



Simin walks out of Termeh's room to the hallway. She is holding the CD she has found. Perhaps it is an excuse to say goodbye.

SIMIN  
(regarding the CD)  
I'm taking this Shajarian.

NADER  
Take it, take whichever you want.

SIMIN  
No just this one... goodbye.

NADER  
Goodbye.

Simin gathers her things to leave. Nader is thinking. Termeh watches her mother leave from between the shades of her room.

INT. SIMIN'S CAR — EXT. STREET — DAY

Simin is behind the wheel and turns into a main road from a side street. She has on a pair of sunglasses. Her face does not show the signs of distress until her tears flow from under her sunglasses. On the other side of the street she sees Razieh and her daughter walking on the sidewalk. She stops a little further up the street and honks her horn to catch their attention.

INT. SIMIN'S CAR — EXT. STREET — DAY

Razieh and her daughter are sitting on the back seat of Simin's car next to Simin's luggage and belongings. Simin is driving.

RAZIEH  
I thought you live here.

SIMIN  
No I've recently moved to my mom's.

RAZIEH  
This will be a little difficult for me.

SIMIN

Don't worry. He is a decent and honorable man. I trust him completely.

Razieh is a little skeptical. She doesn't know what decision to make.

SIMIN

Besides he has already left the house when you get there and you leave when he comes home. You'll bring your daughter and Termeh won't be alone. They'll keep each other company and this way I'll feel better.

Razieh thinks a little about this.

SIMIN

Tell your sister-in-law what you decide and I'll call and ask her.

RAZIEH

OKAY.

EXT. BUS TERMINAL — DAY

The terminal is crowded and full of traffic. Razieh and her daughter make their way towards the bus stop and wait with all the passengers for the bus to arrive.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE NADER'S HOUSE — DAY

It is early in the next morning and Razieh and Somayeh are quickly walking up Nader's street. They reach Nader's building. Razieh rings the doorbell. The door is buzzed open.

INT. NADER'S HOUSE — STAIRWAY — DAY

The sound of a door opening is heard and Razieh and Somayeh come up the stairs. Razieh comes up the stairs with some difficulty. Razieh reaches up and searches the ledge above the door. She finds the key and opens the door. She goes in with Somayeh.

INT. LIVING ROOM AND MR. MORTEZA'S ROOM – DAY

Razieh locks the door from the inside. She places her bag and her chador on the sofa. Curious, Somayeh stares at Mr. Morteza from the doorway. He is sleeping on the bed and has an oxygen mask covering his nose and mouth.

SOMAYEH

What's this?

RAZIEH

SHH!

SOMAYEH

(in a lower voice)

What's this?

RAZIEH

It's oxygen... move away. You'll wake him!

Curious, Somayeh is still standing in the doorway and Razieh goes into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN AND LIVING ROOM – DAY

Razieh clears the breakfast table and places the dishes in the sink. From the leftover bread and cheese on the table, she prepares a basic breakfast for her daughter. Somayeh walks into the kitchen.

SOMAYEH

(quietly and  
whispering)

Is he dead?

RAZIEH

(quietly)

No... take this over there and eat.

SOMAYEH

So why doesn't he move?

RAZIEH

Cause he's asleep.

Somayeh takes the tray and walks out of the kitchen. Razieh takes the load of dishes from the sink and places them in the washing machine. She tries to not make any noise. She doesn't want to wake Mr. Morteza. It is clear that she is not very familiar with working with a dishwasher. As she is bending over and placing a dish in the washing machine, she suddenly stops and feels something.

RAZIEH  
(quietly)  
Somayeh... come quick... run.

She motions to Somayeh to come. Somayeh places the tray on the sofa and hurries to the kitchen. Razieh is calm and stands and places her hand on the side of her belly. She feels something beneath her hand and shows her pleasure to Somayeh with a smile. Somayeh enthusiastically places her ear on her mother's belly.

RAZIEH  
This side.

Somayeh moves her ear around on her mother's protruding belly to better feel the fetus's movements. She doesn't feel anything.

SOMAYEH  
I don't hear anything!

RAZIEH  
Shhh!

SOMAYEH  
What is it doing?

RAZIEH  
It's woken up.

Somayeh now feels her mother's belly with her hand. She tries to find the baby's movements.

RAZIEH  
It's naughty.

Now Razieh notices the hallway where Mr. Morteza is walking towards the house door. She walks towards him.

RAZIEH

Hello.

INT. HALLWAY AND MR. MORTEZA'S ROOM - DAY

Razieh walks towards Mr. Morteza who has reached the house door and wants to leave the house. From the kitchen doorway Somayeh looks curiously at Mr. Morteza and is a little scared.

RAZIEH

Where do you want to go?

MR. MORTEZA

I want... to buy the paper.

RAZIEH

We have the paper. Go to your room and I'll bring you something to eat.

Razieh guides Mr. Morteza back towards his room. Out of habit, Mr. Morteza raises his hand for Razieh to take it and lead him to his room. Razieh avoids taking his hand. Mr. Morteza looks at Somayeh. A little scared, Somayeh hides behind the kitchen wall.

SOMAYEH

Mommy... mommy...

Razieh looks at Somayeh.

SOMAYEH (CONT'D)

...he's peed in his pants.

Now Razieh notices the wet stain on Mr. Morteza's pants. She is shocked and wasn't expecting this. She takes Mr. Morteza to his bed.

RAZIEH

Sit here... sit.

Mr. Morteza sits on the edge of the bed. Distressed at this situation, Razieh, careful not to step on the wet spots in the carpet, walks to the hallway. Somayeh follows her.

RAZIEH

(to Somayeh)

Where are you coming? Don't you see that it's unclean here? Go put your slippers on.

Somayeh goes to the kitchen to put on her slippers. Razieh looks at Mr. Morteza and the bad situation he is in. She is at a dilemma as to what to do.

RAZIEH  
(to Mr. Morteza)  
Can you change your own clothes?

MR. MORTEZA  
Simin...

Razieh puts on the slippers by the front door and walks to Mr. Morteza's room. She searches among the clothes on the coat rack and in the closet for a fresh pair of pants for Mr. Morteza. She finds a pair of pajamas and a shirt.

RAZIEH  
Get up... get up... I'll take you to the bathroom.

Mr. Morteza gets up. From the foul odor, Razieh realizes that he has not only peed in his pants, but he has also soiled them.

RAZIEH  
(upset)  
Ah! Can you wash yourself?

INT. CORRIDOR AND BATHROOM – DAY

Razieh enters the bathroom. She hangs Mr. Morteza's clean clothing on the peg on the wall. She turns on the water in the bathtub and brings him into the bathroom.

RAZIEH  
Take your clothes off, wash yourself, and then put these on... did you understand? Wash yourself so that you'll not be uncomfortable.

Razieh comes out of the bathroom and closes the door. She  
(CONTINUED)

waits behind the bathroom door in the corridor. She is worried about Mr. Morteza. Curious, Somayeh is standing in the corridor. Razieh has placed her ear to the bathroom door.

RAZIEH

Can you manage?

She waits a little. She pushes the door ajar. Mr. Morteza is still standing just as he was in the middle of the bathroom.

RAZIEH

Look, put these pants on...  
pants... okay?

Razieh again leaves the bathroom and closes the door. Mr. Morteza stares blankly at the closed bathroom door.

MR. MORTEZA

Simin...

INT. LANGUAGE INSTITUTE — RECEPTION AND CLASSROOMS — DAY

Simin is holding the phone and is standing in front of the secretary's desk in the language institute where she works. All around the reception area are classrooms and the students are seen through the half open doors of the classrooms.

SIMIN

He'd say when he needed to go  
to the bathroom... Look, take him  
to the bathroom... I can't come  
till 12... I have a class... no...  
did you call my husband? Give  
him a call. Do you have his  
number? Write it down. There's  
a pen on the computer desk in  
the hallway... I'll hold.

Simin waits for the other end of the line. She glances at the students who are waiting for her to come back to their class to teach. She is conflicted about what to do.

INT. NADER'S HOUSE — LIVING ROOM AND MR. MORTEZA'S ROOM —  
DAY

Razieh is holding the receiver and it is clear that she is on the line and waiting for an answer. Mr. Morteza is still in his soiled clothing and sitting on the edge of his bed. Somayeh leaves Mr. Morteza and comes to the living room. Razieh hangs up and looks at Mr. Morteza who is looking at her innocently.

SOMAYEH

Mommy, he smells.

RAZIEH

Shh! That's not nice.

Razieh takes out a small notebook from her purse. She calls a number she has written in it and waits for the other end to pick up.

RAZIEH

Hello... good day... excuse me I had a religious question. I am working at a house. There's an old man here. I am here to care for him. I just saw that he has wet his pants. They didn't tell me that he couldn't control himself. I wanted to ask you what I should do. If I clean him and change him, will it be considered a sin...

(pause)

No there is no one else here... He's 70 or 80 years old and he's senile...

(pause)

I called his son several times but he is not answering... I don't know anyone here...

(pause)

I might accidentally see...

(pause)

The urgency is that the poor guy has been sitting like this for half an hour...

(pause)

(MORE)



No I will tell his son today  
that I can't anymore...

(pause)

Yes... Yes... All right. Thank you  
very much. Sorry to have  
bothered you. Goodbye.

Razieh hangs up and goes into the kitchen and gets a pair  
of gloves.

SOMAYEH

I won't tell daddy.

RAZIEH

My little angel.

Razieh goes into Mr. Morteza's room and closes the door.  
Somayeh is curious and walks towards the door. She peeps  
through the keyhole and sees her mother who is trying to  
take off Mr. Morteza's clothing and clean him.

EXT. GAS STATION – AFTERNOON

Termeh is pumping gas into Nader's car. Nader is sitting  
behind the wheel and is watching her in the side view  
mirror. Some people are looking at Termeh and are  
astonished that she is pumping gas. Termeh fills the tank.  
Places the nozzle back and comes towards Nader's window.  
Nader gives Termeh two 2000 toman notes. Termeh pays the  
gas station attendant and quickly gets in the front  
passenger side and gives back the gas card to her father.

TERMEH

(getting in the  
car)

Everyone is looking...

NADER

That's okay sweetheart. How  
many?

TERMEH

Thirty-seven and a half...

NADER

Did you get the change?

TERMEH

He didn't give me any...

NADER

Did you ask for it?

TERMEH

It's his tip.

NADER

A tip is for when he pumps the gas... you'll go back and get it back... quickly.

Termeh gets out and walks towards the attendant. The next car in line to pump is annoyed and honks his horn. In the rearview mirror, Nader sees Termeh arguing with the attendant for the money back. Termeh eventually gets the money back. Pleased, she gets back in the car. Nader turns on the car and drives. Termeh holds the money for Nader to take.

NADER

Keep it.

INT. NADER'S HOUSE — LIVING ROOM AND MR. MORTEZA'S ROOM — AFTERNOON

Nader and Termeh rush in. Nader is holding a newspaper. MRS. GHAHRAEI is sitting behind the dining room table. She rises when Nader walks in. Razieh is in the kitchen.

NADER

(to Mrs. Ghahraei)

Hello... Sorry we're late.

TERMEH

Hello.

MRS. GHAHRAEI

Hello... How are you Termeh?

TERMEH

I'm well. I'll go get my books.

MRS. GHAHRAEI

And your test results.

Termeh goes to her room to take her bag and bring back her math books. Nader takes off his coat while walking towards his father's room to give him the newspaper he has bought him. Somayeh is sitting next to Mr. Morteza and is reading the paper for him.

NADER

(to his father)

How are you? Good?

(to Somayeh)

How are you little lady? Are you reading the paper for him or is he reading it for you?

MR. MORTEZA

Has Ali gotten married?

NADER

Who's Ali?

MR. MORTEZA

Ali.

NADER

(jokingly)

Yes dad... and now it's your turn.

Mr. Morteza laughs from the bottom of his heart. Somayeh is embarrassed and leaves the room. Razieh comes out of the kitchen and puts on her chador and gets ready to leave.

RAZIEH

(to Somayeh)

Come put your shoes on. We're leaving.

MRS. GHAHRAEI

(to Somayeh)

Don't forget your drawing.

Somayeh collects her drawing and crayons from the dining room table.

MRS. GHAHRAEI

Look after your mom okay?

SOMAYEH

Okay.

Somayeh places her drawing and crayons in her backpack.  
Nader comes out of Mr. Morteza's room.

RAZIEH

Hello.

NADER

Hello... You hadn't tightened the  
oxygen valve all the way.

RAZIEH

I did in the morning... he  
must've opened it.

NADER

From now on tighten it all the  
way so that he can't open it.

RAZIEH

Excuse me but I might not be  
able to come here tomorrow.

NADER

(surprised)

You had said you would come  
every day!

RAZIEH

The commute is too far.

NADER

I turned someone else away.  
It's 4 pm. how can I find  
someone now for tomorrow  
morning?

RAZIEH

The work is too much for me.

NADER

Please come here...

Nader goes to the kitchen.

SOMAYEH

(pointing to her shoe)  
I can't get it on my foot.

Razieh helps her get her shoe on.

MRS. GHAHRAEI  
Maybe you got tired cause it was your first day.

RAZIEH  
No ma'am...  
(pointing to Mr. Morteza's room)  
No. You were here for a few minutes. You saw... I can't with my situation.  
(to Somayeh)  
Get your bag.

MRS. GHAHRAEI  
Here's that doctor's number.

RAZIEH  
Is it a man or a woman?

MRS. GHAHRAEI  
A woman. Her secretary knows me. Tell them Ghahraei sent you. They also do sonograms.

SOMAYEH  
It was kicking in mommy's tummy.

MRS. GHAHRAEI  
Cause he wants to come out and play with you.

RAZIEH  
It moved a lot today.

MRS. GHAHRAEI  
Then it's definitely a boy.

Razieh laughs and goes to the kitchen. Termeh comes back with her books and notebooks and sits at the dining room table next to Mrs. Ghahraei.

INT. KITCHEN — AFTERNOON

Nader is pouring water in the tea maker. He presses the button to boil the water. Razieh is standing in the doorway to the kitchen. Nader is looking for tea in the kitchen cupboards to refill the tea canister.

NADER

You had to tell me yesterday.  
How can I leave him at home  
alone tomorrow?

(to Termeh)

Termeh, where does your mom  
keep the tea?

TERMEH (O.S.)

I don't know.

RAZIEH

You didn't tell me that I have  
to clean him.

NADER

Clean him?

RAZIEH

He soiled his pants today.

Nader stop looking in the cupboards and upset, looks at Razieh.

RAZIEH

It's not right for me to clean  
him. Please pay me for today so  
I can go.

Nader is deep in thought.

RAZIEH

Could you pay me...

NADER

Could you at least come  
tomorrow so that I have a  
chance to find someone else? I  
have to place an ad in the  
paper.

RAZIEH

There are companies you can call for a male helper.

NADER

I can't just let anyone into my home.

Nader takes out some money out of his pocket and pays Razieh. Razieh takes the money and leaves.

RAZIEH

Goodbye.

Nader comes to the kitchen. He hears the doorbell. He opens the door. Razieh is at the door.

NADER

Yes?

RAZIEH

Excuse me but could I give my husband your number and say I found it in the paper so that he could come for this job?

NADER

You tell him about the job and if he was willing...

RAZIEH

I don't want him to know that you know me. I didn't tell him I was coming here for work.

NADER

Tell him to call and come see me tonight...

RAZIEH

It's late for tonight. I'll come tomorrow. Tell him to start from the day after tomorrow. And for the pay...

NADER

Okay. Tell him to call me.  
We'll arrange to meet at the  
bank.

RAZIEH

Thank you.

NADER

Bye and thanks for today.

Razieh goes down the stairs. Nader goes back in and closes the door.

EXT. BUS STATION - AFTERNOON

In the commotion of one of the city's squares, Razieh and Somayeh, exhausted, are seated on the bench at the bus station.

INT. BANK - DAY

The guard opens the door. HOJJAT, Razieh's husband who is a thin thirty-seven-year-old man enters and walks towards the counter. Hojjat sits down by one of the desks and is looking inside the vault room and the stacks of cash, which Nader is busy counting. Nader signs off on the vault's end of the day count and walks towards the bank manager's desk.

NADER

Hello.

HOJJAT

(recognizes Nader)

Hello sir.

Nader places the vault paperwork on the bank manager's desk and walks towards his own desk.

HOJJAT

Sorry I'm a little late.

NADER

That's okay. Where did you say  
you worked before?

HOJJAT

I was a cobbler.



NADER

And now you are not working?

HOJJAT

Yes, I am unemployed.

NADER

And you're okay with cleaning him? Since yesterday he's been soiling himself.

HOJJAT

No that's no problem. I'll treat him like my own father..

NADER

But you'll be alone with him and you have to really watch him.

HOJJAT

Your wife won't be there?

NADER

No, I am alone for the moment.

HOJJAT

Excuse me but isn't 300,000 too little for this work?

NADER

How much did you have in mind?

HOJJAT

I've worked for 15 years as a cobbler. If it's one thing I'm not scared of it's work. I can't stand lazy people. I think you should at least pay 400,000..

NADER

I really can't pay that.

HOJJAT

I'll come for a few days. If you like my work, add something

(MORE)

to the 300,000. If not you  
don't even have to pay. I can  
even start today.

NADER

No there's someone there today.  
I'll write down the address for  
you. Start tomorrow and bring  
an ID.

HOJJAT

Okay.

Nader writes down the address.

INT. NADER'S HOUSE — KITCHEN AND LIVING ROOM — MORNING

Nader is standing next to the table. Termeh's textbook is  
on the table. He is quickly eating his breakfast and  
drinking his tea. He is also quizzing Termeh. Termeh  
responds from outside the kitchen.

NADER

Constant?

TERMEH

Continuous.

NADER

Barren?

TERMEH

Sandbar.

NADER

(correcting her)  
Desert!

TERMEH

Desert.

NADER

Insurrection?

TERMEH

Rebellion.

The doorbell rings.

NADER  
 (continues  
 quizzing tone)  
 Doorbell?

Termeh is dressed in her school uniform and is putting on her shoes. She goes towards the intercom.

TERMEH  
 (continues quiz  
 answering tone)  
 Mrs. Razieh.

NADER  
 (continues  
 quizzing tone)  
 No!

TERMEH  
 (continues quiz  
 answering tone)  
 Her husband.

Termeh buzzes Razieh and her daughter in without checking to see who it is.

NADER  
 Give the Persian version of the  
 following words: gas capsule?

TERMEH  
*Ostovanak gaaz.*

NADER  
*maquette?*

TERMEH  
*Nemunak.*

NADER  
 Compote?

TERMEH  
*Khoshaab.*

Nader comes out of the kitchen with the book in his hand. He puts on his shoes to leave. He looks at his father who is asleep in his room.

NADER  
Guarantee?

TERMEH  
*Tazmin, zemanat.*

NADER  
That's Arabic. The Persian version.

TERMEH  
That's what's written in our book.

NADER  
I thought we agreed that you would never repeat that sentence. When something is wrong, it doesn't matter where it's written. For guarantee write...

Nader thinks for a bit.

TERMEH  
She'll deduct points if I write anything else.

NADER  
That's okay let her... write *poshtvaneh*.

The doorbell rings. Termeh opens the door. Razieh and her daughter come in.

TERMEH  
Hello.

RAZIEH  
Hello.

NADER  
Hello ma'am... Your husband was supposed to come today!

Termeh leaves.

RAZIEH

He couldn't make it.

NADER

What about tomorrow? Will he come?

RAZIEH

I don't know, if he doesn't I'll come.

NADER

I hope it's not going to be like this everyday.

RAZIEH

No poor guy wanted to come. Last night one of his creditors came with a police officer and took him away.

NADER

Yes but if something comes up and he can't make it, I need to know a couple of days in advance.

RAZIEH

No he will definitely come. I'll go see the creditor and ask to have him agree to release him. His check has bounced. He hadn't come home for a week for fear of being arrested.

TERMEH (O.S.)

Dad we're late!

INT. KITCHEN — DAY

Razieh pulls out the garbage bin from the cupboard under the kitchen sink. She dumps the waste from the sink in the garbage bag and ties a knot. She carries it to the kitchen door. It is heavy. She calls Somayeh to help her.

RAZIEH  
 (quietly)  
 Somayeh!

She starts clearing the breakfast table.

INT. MR. MORTEZA'S ROOM - DAY

Somayeh is standing by Mr. Morteza's bed and is staring at the oxygen mask that is covering his mouth. She is curious. Her hand is on the oxygen tank valve and she keeps turning it to the left and then the right. At one point, she turns on the valve too high and wakes Mr. Morteza.

SOMAYEH  
 (to Mr. Morteza)  
 Hello.

RAZIEH (O.S.)  
 Somayeh!

Somayeh quickly leaves the room.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Somayeh comes out of Mr. Morteza's room. Razieh is folding up the rugs in the hallway, which were soiled two days earlier.

RAZIEH  
 Take the trash out.

Somayeh goes towards the garbage bag. Razieh is holding the rug and is dragging it to the bathroom.

RAZIEH  
 Can you manage? Just leave it  
 by the door.

Somayeh picks up the garbage bag with difficulty and takes it outside. Razieh pulls the rug into the bathroom.

INT. STAIRWAY - DAY

Somayeh drags the garbage bag down the stairs. Suddenly the bag rips open and some of the garbage and the fluid from

(CONTINUED)

the bottom of the bag pour out onto the stairs. Somayeh tries to pick up the garbage with her hands and get it back into the bag but she can't.

INT. BATHROOM – DAY

Razieh has placed the rug inside the bathtub and despite the fact that this is very difficult for her, she is trying to wash and rinse it. Somayeh comes to the bathroom door.

SOMAYEH  
Mommy, it got ripped!

RAZIEH  
(frustrated)  
Ah!... Where?

SOMAYEH  
On the stairs.

RAZIEH  
(angry)  
Why did you get it on your  
clothes? Where the hell am I  
going to get you clean clothes?  
Take it off!

Razieh is angry at the situation that has occurred. She takes off Somayeh's dress with disgust. This causes Somayeh some pain but she does not show it.

INT. STAIRWAY – DAY

Razieh is in the stairway with a dustpan and sweeper. She is cleaning up the mess from the torn garbage bag. She sweeps the garbage into a new garbage bag. Somayeh is wearing one of Termeh's clothes, which is too big for her. She comes to the doorway with a worried look on her face.

SOMAYEH  
Mommy... he's not in his room.

RAZIEH  
(worried)  
Go see if he's in the bathroom.

Somayeh goes back inside. Razieh is worried. She leaves the garbage and is waiting for Somayeh to come back. She is anxious and goes back into the house.

EXT. OUTSIDE NADER'S HOUSE - DAY

Razieh is worried and rushes out the door. She looks at both ends of the street. She doesn't know in which direction she should go. She runs towards the main intersection.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Razieh is running forth and searching all around for Mr. Morteza. She runs to the side of the street and then goes back to Nader's street. She stops to catch her breath. She doesn't know in which direction and where to look. She spots a newspaper stand at the end of the street and she sees Mr. Morteza standing next to it barefoot. He is trying to cross the busy street. Horrified, she runs towards him. She is looking at him and crossing the street when she hears the sound of screeching tires from behind.

INT. NADER'S HOUSE - TERMEH'S ROOM - DAY

Nader, Termeh, Somayeh and Mr. Morteza are playing tabletop football and making a lot of noise.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Razieh washes her tired face at the kitchen sink. She hears the sounds of screaming and joy but her mind is occupied elsewhere and her face is miserable. She dries her face. Buttons up her overcoat and comes out of the kitchen.

INT. STAIRWAY - DAY

Razieh opens the door. Tired, she walks down the stairs with her daughter.

INT. BUS - EXT. STREET - AFTERNOON

A bus is approaching the station. Razieh and her daughter are among the passengers who get on the bus in the women's section. Inside the bus is crowded and there are no empty seats. Her daughter is tired. A woman moves to the side and lets Somayeh sit next to her. Razieh stands in the aisle

(CONTINUED)



among the other women. The bus drives off. Razieh is holding the bar and is tired. She feels dizzy and almost falls. A woman behind her holds her up. Another woman stands up and gives up her seat to Razieh.

WOMAN ON THE BUS

Come and sit down.

Razieh sits down and closes her eyes out of exhaustion.

INT. NADER'S HOUSE - STAIRWAY - DAY

MRS. KALANI, the upstairs neighbor, is standing outside Nader's apartment and is talking to Mr. Morteza whose distorted silhouette can be seen from behind the glass door.

MRS. KALANI

Have you had your breakfast? Go sit down and I'll call your son. Don't go in the kitchen.

Upset, Mrs. Kalani climbs up the stairs. The sound of the main door to the building is heard. She comes back down the stairs and waits to see who is coming up the stairs. Razieh and Somayeh are climbing the stairs. Razieh is climbing the stairs with difficulty.

MRS. KALANI

My child, this poor old man has been standing by the door for half an hour. Why are you so late?

RAZIEH

My commute is far... hello.

MRS. KALANI

Hello.

Razieh gets the key from the ledge above the door.

MRS. KALANI

And take the trash out with the can. The liquids pour out of the bag all over the stairs.

RAZIEH

Yesterday I felt dizzy and  
dropped the bag. I'll mop the  
stairs today.

Razieh opens the door. Razieh and Somayeh go in and take  
Mr. Morteza with them. Mrs. Kalani mumbles something and  
climbs the stairs.

EXT. OUTSIDE TERMEH'S SCHOOL — STREET — DAY

Nader is in his car and turns from the main street into the  
street where Termeh's school is located. The school is out  
and the street is full of students and their rides. Nader  
is a little late. He slowly drives past the school, and  
looks for Termeh. Mrs. Ghahraei comes out of the school.  
Some of the students are surrounding her and walking with  
her to her car. Termeh is among them. She is showing Mrs.  
Ghahraei a model she has made for her final.

INT. NADER'S HOUSE — STAIRWAY — DAY

Nader is holding Termeh's backpack and is going up the  
stairs ahead of her. Termeh is holding the paper. They  
reach the apartment door. Nader rings the doorbell. Termeh  
is tired and bends over to sit on the steps.

NADER

Don't sit there, it's wet.

Termeh leans against the wall. Nader again rings the  
doorbell. No one answers. He tries the handle. He knocks on  
the door. He is perplexed.

NADER

Ma'am... ma'am...

(louder)

Ma'am!

He reaches up on the ledge to look for the key. He does not  
find it.

NADER

What was her daughter's name?

TERMEH

Somayeh.

NADER

Somayeh... Somayeh...

Nader is worried. He presses his ear to the door to see if he might hear something. Nader faces the stairs to the floor above.

NADER

Mrs. Kalani... Mrs. Kalani...

He climbs several steps. Termeh goes to the door.

TERMEH

Grandpa... grandpa...

The neighbor's door opens. Nader goes up a couple of steps.

NADER

Mrs. Kalani?

MRS. KALANI (O.S.)

Yes. Hello.

NADER

Hello. Did you see the woman who works for us?

MRS. KALANI (O.S.)

She was mopping the stairs.

NADER

When?

MRS. KALANI (O.S.)

Just before noon... she's not home?

NADER

No...

(to Termeh)

Stay here, I'll get my key from the car.

Nader rushes down the stairs.

INT. HALLWAY AND MR. MORTEZA'S ROOM — DAY

The sound of the key in the keyhole. The door opens and

(CONTINUED)

Nader and Termeh enter their house. No one is at home. The door to Mr. Morteza's room is locked. Nader unlocks the door and enters the room with Termeh. Mr. Morteza has fallen off his bed. One of his hands is tied tightly with a scarf to the bar at the headboard. He has soiled his pants and his false teeth have fallen out of his mouth. It is clear that he has been left this way for a long time. Nader is distraught at seeing his father in this state. He holds his father's head and looks at his face. Mr. Morteza's eyes are moving. He is alive. Termeh tries to untie her grandfather's hand from the bed. Nader helps his father sit on the edge of the bed. He is angry. Termeh is on the verge of tears.

NADER

Dad... dad...

Termeh picks up her grandfather's glasses from the floor.

NADER

Watch him...

(while leaving)

Shameless!

Nader quickly leaves the room. He is angry.

INT. MASTER BEDROOM – DAY

Nader is hurriedly looking through the bedside table and vanity drawers where valuable documents, money and some gold are kept. He looks into another drawer in which some cash is kept. He counts them. Some is missing.

NADER

Did you take money from the drawer?

TERMEH (O.S.)

No.

INT. HALLWAY – DAY

Nader comes out of his room. He is going towards the kitchen when he spots Somayeh's backpack left in a corner by the apartment door. He looks into the kitchen.

INT. MR. MORTEZA'S ROOM – DAY

NADER

Who did this to you?

Mr. Morteza stares blankly at Nader.

NADER

Stand up. Stand up.

Nader holds his father under his arms to help him stand. He lifts his arms up and back down again to make sure he is not hurt.

NADER

Move your arms... raise them.. do they hurt? Walk a little... walk... raise your leg... does it hurt anywhere?

Nader helps his father take a few steps. Termeh is worried about her grandfather. Mr. Morteza cannot walk easily.

NADER

What's wrong dad? Does your leg hurt?

Nader seats his dad at the edge of the bed. He unbuttons his shirt and undresses him. He examines his body to make sure he is not hurt. Nader tries to take his father's pants off. His father is clinging on to his pants. Termeh is standing there on the verge of tears.

NADER

I want to see if you're okay... let go...

Nader realizes Mr. Morteza is embarrassed of Termeh.

NADER

(to Termeh)  
Go stand outside.

TERMEH

Is he hurt?

NADER

No... go outside.

Termeh leaves the room. Nader takes off his father's soiled pants and holds him to take him out of the room.

NADER  
(loud to Termeh)  
Go to the kitchen and close the door.

INT. KITCHEN AND HALLWAY — DAY

Through the half open door, Termeh can see her father holding her grandfather like a child and taking him to the bathroom. She closes the door and bursts into tears.

NADER (O.S.)  
Bring me his clothes.

EXT. BALCONY — DAY

Termeh gathers her grandfather's clothes and towel from the clothesline.

INT. HALLWAY — DAY — CONT.

Razieh and Somayeh hurriedly enter the house. She is worried to see that the door is unlocked and that Nader and Termeh's shoes are by the door. She enters. She looks at Mr. Morteza's empty room. She is clearly scared. Termeh walks into the hallway from the kitchen with Mr. Morteza's clothing and towel. Happy, Somayeh runs towards her.

SOMAYEH  
Hello.

Cold and indifferent, Termeh walks towards the bathroom. From her reaction, Razieh realizes that the situation is not a good one. Somayeh wants to follow Termeh.

RAZIEH  
Come here.

Somayeh stays. Razieh walks towards the kitchen and Somayeh follows her.

SOMAYEH  
Mommy, I'm thirsty.

INT. KITCHEN AND HALLWAY — DAY

Razieh is worried about Nader and Termeh's presence in the house. She takes a glass and fills it from the tap and gives it to Somayeh to drink. Upset and angry, Nader comes to the kitchen.

RAZIEH

Hello.

NADER

Where've you been?

RAZIEH

Something came up. I had to leave for a bit.

NADER

You had no right to leave!

RAZIEH

He was asleep.

NADER

So if he was asleep you should lock him in and leave?

RAZIEH

I wasn't gone long.

NADER

(angry)

Not gone long? You're standing there, looking into my eyes and lying?

(angrier)

He was dying when I got home.

RAZIEH

I thought he would sleep like he does everyday.

NADER

So then when he sleeps, you should lock him up and leave?

Razieh is quiet and a little shocked at Nader's furious manner. Somayeh is drinking her water and is scared of Nader.

NADER  
I'm talking to you!

RAZIEH  
Has something happened to him?

NADER  
Why did you tie his hand to the bed... huh?

Somayeh holds the empty glass towards her mother.

NADER  
What is your responsibility in this house? To tie this poor man's hand to the bed, lock him up and go after your own chores?

RAZIEH  
I had to go.

NADER  
Didn't I give you money? Why've you gone to the drawer and taken money?

RAZIEH  
(shocked)  
I took money?!

NADER  
(to Razieh)  
Go on. Get out.

RAZIEH  
(to Somayeh)  
Go wait outside till I come.

Somayeh leaves the house.

RAZIEH  
When did I take money?



NADER

You didn't take money? Just get  
the hell out!

TERMEH (O.S.)

Dad... come on.

RAZIEH

On the holy martyrs I didn't...  
here, search my bag if there  
was any money..

NADER

Get out!

RAZIEH

(on the verge of  
tears)

You don't want to give me what  
I've earned?

Nader goes towards her to get her out of the house.

NADER

What you've earned is a kick  
out of here... it's because your  
child is here that I'm not  
doing it. Get out!

RAZIEH

(yelling)

Don't touch me!

NADER

Then get out on your own!

Nader forces her to get out. He follows her to the door and  
slams the door behind her.

TERMEH (O.S.)

Dad...

INT. CORRIDOR AND BATHROOM – DAY

Nader walks towards the corridor in which the bathroom is  
located.

TERMEH

He's sitting behind the door.  
He won't move back.

Nader tries to push the door open but his father is sitting behind it and won't let it open.

NADER

Go back so I can open the door...  
get up... get up and move back...  
Dad...

Nader tries to push his hand in through the door and push back his father who is sitting behind the door. He sits down to do this. Termeh is worried and standing above her dad. The sound of Razieh knocking on the door is heard. Nader pushes the door and hears his father moan.

NADER

Dad move over a little!... look  
what's that over there?

The sound of the knocking is louder and Nader is getting angrier and more frustrated.

NADER

(frustrated)  
Dad you're wearing me out. Go  
back...  
(angry)  
Aren't I telling you to get  
back?  
(loud)  
MOVE AWAY!

TERMEH

Why are you screaming? He  
doesn't understand.

NADER

(to Termeh)  
Didn't I tell you to watch him?  
(to his father)  
Get up!

TERMEH

Maybe his leg is hurt and he  
can't get up.

NADER  
(with a  
threatening tone  
at his father)  
Get back! Get back I said!

Nader is forced to push the door open. The door opens suddenly and his father is pushed to the bathroom floor. The doorbell rings.

NADER  
(to his father)  
Why do you hurt me so much?

Mr. Morteza is staring at Nader with a blank look on his face. Now the sound of Razieh knocking at the door has driven Nader insane. Angry, he comes out of the bathroom.

INT. CORRIDOR AND STAIRWAY – DAY

Razieh opens the door to the apartment and walks in.

NADER  
(angry at Razieh)  
With whose permission did you  
come in?

RAZIEH  
(worried)  
I want to know what has  
happened to him.

NADER  
That's none of your business!  
Give me that key and get out!

RAZIEH  
I didn't steal anything. If I  
had...

NADER  
I don't want you to explain.  
Just get out.

RAZIEH  
Pay me for today and I'll  
leave.

The sound of the neighbor's door opening.

NADER  
Pay you for what?

RAZIEH  
(on the verge of  
tears)  
I come here with my child from...  
(crying)  
I swear on the prophet, I  
didn't take any money.

NADER  
Get out and cry all you want.

RAZIEH  
I won't leave till I get my  
money.

Nader lunges towards her and grabs her by the shoulder to get her out.

RAZIEH  
(screaming)  
Don't touch me!

Nader pushes her out and slams the door shut and locks it. Angry, he walks towards the corridor. Termeh is standing in the corridor terrified and in disbelief. Nader goes into the bathroom. Termeh, worried, walks to the door and listens to see what has happened. Razieh's voice has silenced. Worried, Termeh cracks the door open. She sees Razieh sitting at the foot of the stairs and is in such pain that she cannot even scream. Razieh can hardly breathe. Somayeh is standing above her mother and crying. A neighbor, Mrs. Kalani is trying to help her. A couple of the neighbors are standing in the stairway. Mrs. Kalani is rubbing her shoulders.

MRS. KALANI  
What happened?

Razieh is trying to get up.

MRS. KALANI  
Sit for a bit... don't get up..

Unaware of her surroundings, Razieh gets up with difficulty. Upset, she takes her daughter's hand, gathers her chador around her and leaves. Upset, Termeh comes inside and closes the door.

INT. BATHROOM — DAY

Nader turns on the water. He holds the handheld shower over his father who is sitting on the edge of the bathtub. He takes a loofah to wash him. While scrubbing him, he notices a wound on his father's elbow. He starts to cry. He regrets and is embarrassed by the way he earlier scolded his father. He holds his father's head in his arms just like a father would his child, kisses him.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE SIMIN'S PARENTS' HOME — DUSK

Nader is behind the wheel. His father is sitting quietly in the front passenger seat. Termeh is in the back seat and has her schoolbag and an overnight bag with her. They drive up and stop outside an old apartment building. Termeh gathers her things to get out of the car.

NADER

Tell her to work with you on your English lessons.

TERMEH

Bye grandpa.

NADER

(to his dad)

Dad Termeh says bye.

Mr. Morteza does not reply. Termeh gets out and jumps over the street gutter and walks over to her grandmother's house. Nader is waiting for her to go in. Termeh rings the doorbell. She speaks on the intercom. She then comes back to the street. Nader lowers his window. Termeh wants to cross and come over to the car.

NADER

Don't cross... what is it?

TERMEH

Mom wants you to come in.

NADER

Tell her I can't, that  
grandpa's in the car.

TERMEH

She says it's important.

INT. SIMIN'S PARENTS' HOUSE - NIGHT

A simple and old apartment. GRANDMA KATTI (Simin's mother) opens the door on Nader. Simin's dad who is seventy years old is seated on a chair in a corner and because of his ailing leg, is praying in that position. A young SATELLITE TV TECHNICAN is standing in front of the television set and is organizing the channels on the satellite TV receiver. Simin puts on a headscarf to come out of her room.

NADER

Hello.

GRANDMA KATTI

Hello. You haven't yet divorced  
your wife and you're ignoring  
us.

NADER

I'm busy.

GRANDMA KATTI

People divorce their wives to  
get less busy.

Simin comes out of her room to the living room. Nader has taken a few steps inside the house. They are both in a sullen state and cold towards each other.

SIMIN

Where's Termeh?

NADER

Dad's in the car. She stayed  
with him.

GRANDMA KATTI

Then bring him in too.

NADER

No he's tired. It's time for  
his nap.

SATELLITE TV TECHNICIAN

Ma'am, these channels have too much static.

GRANDMA KATTI

Okay just set the ones you can.

SIMIN

(to Nader)

Did you fight with that woman today?

NADER

Which woman?

SIMIN

Razieh.

NADER

Did she come see you?

SIMIN

Her sister-in-law called.

NADER

Shameless!

SIMIN

What did she do?

NADER

Tied the old man to the bed and locked the door. Went after her own errands. If I'd gotten there 10 minutes later I would've lost him.

SIMIN

(worried)

Did anything happen to Dad?

NADER

He had fallen off the bed. I don't know for how long the poor thing was like that.

SIMIN

Where had she gone?

NADER  
How should I know?

SIMIN  
She said you hit her.

NADER  
I hit her? Nonsense.

SIMIN  
Then why is she in hospital?

NADER  
(shocked)  
Hospital? Why? What happened?

SIMIN  
You're asking me?

NADER  
I just pushed her out of the house.

SIMIN  
The sister-in-law was cursing me nonstop.

NADER  
Saying what?

SIMIN  
That if she dies, her blood will be on your hands. Stuff like that.

Nader is clearly worried. SIMIN'S FATHER has finished saying his prayers.

SIMIN'S FATHER  
Go to the hospital and find out what's happened... you might be in trouble... Hello.

NADER  
(to Simin's father)



Hello.

(to Simin)

She didn't say what happened?

SIMIN

I hung up. She started cursing.

Frustrated, Nader sits down on the chair next to her.

NADER

That's what you get for hiring people off the streets.

SIMIN

Don't blame me. I told Termeh to tell you that I don't know her and only know her sister-in-law.

NADER

Which hospital is she at?

INT. HOSPITAL — NIGHT

In a hospital in the south of Tehran with dated interiors, Nader walks towards the reception. Simin is behind him. A middle-aged woman is sitting at reception and is on the phone.

RECEPTIONIST

(to Nader)

Yes?

(on the phone)

Hold.

NADER

Excuse me but a patient, a woman, by the name of Razieh was brought in...

RECEPTIONIST

What's her last name?

SIMIN

We don't know her last name but she was brought in earlier this evening.

NADER

Her husband's family name is  
Samadi...

RECEPTIONIST

Why was she brought in?

Nader and Simin don't know what to say.

NADER

We don't know. We just heard  
that she is not well and that  
they've brought her here.

The receptionist looks over her papers.

RECEPTIONIST

(reading from one  
of the papers)  
Razieh... Asnaghi?

SIMIN

She is a woman in her thirties.

RECEPTIONIST

Visiting hours are over. She's  
had surgery and has been  
transferred to the ward.

NADER

What kind of surgery?

RECEPTIONIST

She had a miscarriage.

By hearing this news, Nader becomes extremely upset and  
moves to a corner and stands there.

SIMIN

Is she okay?

RECEPTIONIST

Yes, she's fine.

SIMIN

Is her family here?

RECEPTIONIST

They were here... they might be  
at the end of this corridor  
now.

Simin walks towards Nader who is upset and standing in a  
corner.

SIMIN  
What did you do to her?

NADER  
(upset at Simin)  
What did I do to her?

INT. END OF A CORRIDOR – NIGHT

Several rows of benches are placed in a square-shaped area  
at the end of the corridor. A television set is installed  
on a column and is showing the news. The next of kin of  
patients are seated on the benches in silence and some of  
them have dozed off. Among them is Hojjat, Razieh's  
husband. He is watching TV. Simin and Nader walk through the  
corridor to this waiting area. Nader spots Hojjat and  
cautiously approaches him. Nader is followed by Simin.

NADER  
Hello.

HOJJAT  
Hello... How are...  
(he recognizes  
him)  
Hello... How are you?

NADER  
Thank you very much... How is  
she?

HOJJAT  
(puzzled)  
Who?

NADER  
Your wife.

HOJJAT  
They transferred her to the  
ward... Did you know her?!

SIMIN

Yes... I knew her.

Hojjat is a little suspicious. Nader and Simin, who weren't expecting this calm reaction from him, do not know what reason to give for their presence at the hospital.

SIMIN

Can we see her?

Hojjat's sister, AZAM now arrives with some cake and fruit juice. She knows Simin.

AZAM

(to Hojjat)

They didn't have any sandwiches.

SIMIN

Hello.

Azam ignores her on purpose.

HOJJAT

(to Nader and Simin)

How do you know my wife?

SIMIN

I know her through your sister. She introduced her to me for work.

AZAM

(sarcastically to Simin)

Thanks a lot!

HOJJAT

(to Nader)

She was coming to your house for work?

NADER

Apparently you were unable to come so she came in your place.

AZAM  
(to Hojjat)  
Sit down and eat something.

HOJJAT  
(to Nader)  
She came to take care of your  
father?

NADER  
Only for a few days.

HOJJAT  
And why didn't you tell me this  
that day?

NADER  
I thought she would tell you  
herself.

HOJJAT  
Why have you come here?

SIMIN  
We thought if there is  
something we can...

AZAM  
Like what? You killed her child  
and now you want to raise her  
dead?

HOJJAT  
(to Azam)  
But she said she fell!

AZAM  
What did you want her to say?  
That I went somewhere and  
worked myself to death and  
instead of paying me they beat  
me.

Upon hearing this Hojjat lunges at Nader catching him off guard and slaps him hard. Nader holds Hojjat's hand to stop him from hitting him again. Azam tries to stop Hojjat who is no longer in control. Simin stands in front of Nader to

(CONTINUED)

stop Hojjat from hitting him. Other people surround them. One of Hojjat's blows strikes Simin's face and nose. Nader pushes Hojjat back and defends Simin. People take Hojjat to the side. Hojjat yells and curses.

AZAM

(yelling at Nader)

Why in God's name did you come here?

Worried, Simin takes Nader to another side. Nader doesn't object and sits down in a corner. His shirt is torn.

SIMIN

Don't sit here. Let's go. Get up...

Nader looks up and sees Simin bleeding from her nose.

INT. NADER'S CAR – EXT. STREET – NIGHT

Nader is behind the wheel with a disheveled look. Simin is sitting in the passenger side seat with her head tilted back. She is lightly bruised under her eyes. She is holding a napkin to her nose.

NADER

Do you want me to push back your chair?

Simin shakes her head to imply no.

NADER

I'll take you home and then I'll go get Dad and Termeh.

SIMIN

No.

NADER

What do you mean no?! You want to go to your parents' in your state?!

Simin doesn't respond.

NADER

It's over. You're coming back  
home tonight.

SIMIN

I don't want to.

Nader is shocked at her response and doesn't continue the discussion.

INT. COURTHOUSE - CORRIDORS - DAY

In the busy and crowded corridors of the courthouse, Nader is in search of the branch he has been summoned to. He is holding a piece of paper in his hand. Among the many faces seated in the corridor, he spots Somayeh, Razieh's daughter, sitting by herself. She is absorbed by the people in handcuffs or in prison uniforms. Through a partially opened door, Nader spots Hojjat who is busy speaking to the examining magistrate's assistant. A few feet behind him, is Razieh standing next to the door. Nader waits for them to finish and come out before going inside. Now Somayeh sees Nader. She doesn't know whether she should say hello or ignore him. Nader is looking at her kindly. Hojjat and Razieh come out of the room. They are not expecting to see Nader. They pass each other without any kind of exchange. Razieh still looks pale and sickly. Nader goes in. Hojjat looks at Nader hatefully. Razieh takes her daughter's hand and walk towards the door to leave but it seems like Hojjat wants to stay.

INT. EXAMINING MAGISTRATE'S ROOM - DAY

In a room with a window, which opens to the crowded courtyard of the courthouse, Hojjat and Razieh are seated on chairs opposite the examining magistrate's desk. Nader is seated two chairs over. Between them is an empty chair. The door is ajar and the people and the traffic from the room next door are heard. The secretary who is a young man is seated behind another desk and is on the phone. The EXAMINING MAGISTRATE makes notes according to their answers.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

So... Mr. Hojjat Samadi and Ms.  
Razieh...

HOJJAT

Asnaghi.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE  
Is that you ma'am?

RAZIEH  
Yes.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE  
And you are Mr. Nader Lavasani...  
(to Razieh)  
Okay so what's your complaint?

HOJJAT  
May I speak?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE  
You filed a joint complaint.  
Either of you may speak.

HOJJAT  
My wife was working in this  
man's home. Without my  
permission of course. This man  
accuses her of stealing. He  
pushes her down the stairs and  
she falls and loses my child.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE  
Do you have the medical  
examiner's report?

HOJJAT  
It's on your desk.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE  
On what date was this?

HOJJAT  
What date was Wednesday?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE  
(to Nader)  
You heard the accusation? Do  
you accept the charge? What is  
your defense?

NADER  
(upset)



I am sorry, when I heard I was very upset. I got up and went to the hospital.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Then you accept that you did this?

(pointing to the  
medical examiner's  
report and to  
Hojjat)

Did you get this on that day from the medical examiner's office?

HOJJAT

That night we went to the hospital. We took the hospital file to the medical examiner's office.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

(reading from the  
report)

Four and a half months... male..

(to Nader)

Well, explain.

NADER

I accept that I was a little too harsh with her.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

What is harsh? Did you push this lady?

NADER

I didn't push her. I tried to get her out of the house.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Look sir. Please be clear. You've been charged with manslaughter. The fetus was at four-and-a-half months and counts as a complete human adult.

Nader is completely shocked at the magistrate's words.

NADER

I didn't approach her with the intent of pushing her... I wanted her to leave so that I could close the door to my house.

RAZIEH

(shocked)

You didn't push me?!

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Ma'am, please.

NADER

If I knew she were pregnant, I wouldn't even try to get her out of the house like that. I just wanted her to leave.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Ma'am Do you agree with his explanation?

RAZIEH

He didn't push me. He grabbed me here and threw me out and I fell on the stairs.

NADER

I didn't throw her. Like I said I wanted to get her to leave my house.

HOJJAT

You jerk, who gets a pregnant woman to leave their house this way?

NADER

I didn't know she was pregnant.

HOJJAT

Why are you lying?

NADER

I found out at the hospital.

RAZIEH

Your honor, you're like an older brother to me, can't everyone tell from the appearance and body of a woman that she is pregnant...

HOJJAT

4 to 5 months pregnant.

NADER

When did I even have a chance to see you? I was already gone or leaving when you'd arrive. When I'd come back in the afternoon, you always had your chador on and were leaving. In fact whenever I'd see you, you always looked like this with the chador. How would I know you...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

(to Razieh)

He can claim that he couldn't tell from your appearance.

NADER

Besides, your honor, I would never think that a pregnant woman would apply for this kind of work.

RAZIEH

Your honor, I spoke of my pregnancy in front of him, his daughter and her private tutor who comes to their house. They all heard it.

NADER

When? I don't remember.

HOJJAT

No of course you wouldn't remember.

NADER

Anyway, the issue isn't that I knew or not.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Yes it is! If it's proven that you knew, the court can sentence you to 1 to 3 years in prison... Well?

NADER

I didn't know.

RAZIEH

His daughter's tutor can testify. Let her come in and say that he didn't hear me.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Can she come in tomorrow?

NADER

Your honor, I don't want her or the school involved. That's not good for my child.

HOJJAT

(angry)

You trash. You've killed my child. It's bad for your child?

NADER

Don't insult me.

HOJJAT

(a bit more calm)

Your child is human but ours was an animal?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

(to Hojjat)

Don't insult.

HOJJAT

Am I insulting or he who took

(MORE)

my poor pregnant wife to clean  
the shit between his father's  
legs?

NADER

Ma'am did I force you to come?  
You came for...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

(to Hojjat)

Look, if you disrupt the order  
here, I 'll put you in prison  
for three days.

RAZIEH

(to the Examining  
Magistrate)

Please he's a bit hot-tempered...

HOJJAT

(to Razieh)

Hot-tempered? I should sue you  
for secretly working for a  
strange, single man whom no one  
knows...

RAZIEH

(in tears)

I only wanted to help with the  
bills. Your honor, he hasn't  
worked for months.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

The tutor has to come in as a  
witness.

(to Nader)

Call her to come in tomorrow or  
give her number to Mr. Izadi to  
arrange it.

Razieh has not yet stopped crying.

RAZIEH

Your honor I'm here today for  
one thing... I lost my child but  
it didn't hurt as much as when  
he accused me of being a thief...

HOJJAT

If we were thieves, we wouldn't have to come to your homes for work.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

(to Nader)

Do you have proof or a witness that she stole?

NADER

I didn't say she stole? I went to my drawer, and saw that my money was short. And it was the same amount that I pay her.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Why did you fight?

HOJJAT

He accused her of stealing.

NADER

Your honor, my father is 80 years old. He is sick. He has Alzheimer's. She tied his hand to the bed and left the house. That day I came home early. I saw him on the floor with his hand tied to the bed. I thought he had died. She came back and I'm not saying I wasn't angry, I was. I told her to leave and she was being stubborn and wouldn't leave.

RAZIEH

Your honor, where should I have gone? He accused me of stealing. If I hadn't asked for the money and left, he would've thought I had stolen the money.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Was your father hurt?

NADER

Yes he was a little hurt.

Razieh gets upset at hearing this. She looks at the window and then gets up to leave the room.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Ma'am sit down. Where are you going?

RAZIEH

(pointing to the window)

My daughter is going outside!

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Come back quick. And close the door.

Razieh leave and closes the door behind her.

INT. CORRIDORS – DAY

With the excuse of checking up on her daughter, Razieh comes out of the examination branch and walks through the crowded and busy corridors towards the exit. She is preoccupied with something.

EXT. COURTYARD – DAY

She reaches the courtyard. She looks around and spots her daughter playing in a corner of the yard. She walks towards her. She spots a public telephone in the corner of the yard. Doubtful, she changes her direction and walks towards the public phone. She waits for the person who is on the phone to finish their conversation. She is a little worried. She gets a little notebook out of her bag. She uses her broken glasses to read a number out of it. Her turn to use the phone comes up. She dials the number. She is waiting for the other end to pick up. She sees Hojjat who has come to the courtyard looking for her. She hangs up before Hojjat can see her and walks towards Hojjat.

HOJJAT

Why are you taking so long?

RAZIEH

I'm not well. You go I'll come.

HOJJAT

He says you locked up his  
father and left.

RAZIEH

What should I say?

HOJJAT

Say? If he files a complaint  
you'll be arrested.

Razieh doesn't know what to do. It is clear she is in a  
difficult situation.

RAZIEH

You go on. I'll come.

Hojjat leaves. Razieh is upset and full of doubt. She goes  
back inside. Somayeh is standing in a corner and looking at  
a small kitten that in the midst of all this commotion, is  
standing by a prisoner's foot. The prisoner is in handcuffs  
and is in prison uniform. A guard is sitting next to him.  
The prisoner is throwing his leftover food from a plastic  
plate on the ground for the little kitten. The kitten is  
eating it and rubbing itself against the prisoner's leg.  
Somayeh is curious and walks towards them and stands there  
and watches the kitten.

INT. EXAMINING MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE — DAY

Now, Nader, Hojjat and Razieh are all standing in front of  
the examining magistrate's desk. They are all more  
distracted than before. The door is still open and other  
people waiting to see the magistrate are all standing in  
line by the door with their files in their hands.

RAZIEH

He was sleeping. I locked the  
door to keep him in. His son  
would lock the door and leave  
me the key in the mornings. I  
saw that he does it so I...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

He says you tied him to the  
bed.

RAZIEH



I was afraid he would wake up and do something to hurt himself. I swear on the Absent Imam that I did it out of compassion for him.

NADER

The question is why did you leave your place of work.

HOJJAT

So if she left you should hit her? Who said you could touch my wife? If honor's not important for you, it is for me.

NADER

Don't be offensive.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

(to Hojjat)

Sir, leave the room... go on.

NADER

I want to file a complaint against this woman.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Write your complaint. Take your father to the medical examiner. If he's hurt, get a report.

HOJJAT

What happens to our complaint?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

(to Hojjat)

Sign this and leave.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

(to Nader)

Call someone to post bail or bring a deed for you.

NADER

(extremely shocked)

Bail for what?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE  
You're charged with murder. I  
can't let you leave. The blood  
money is forty-million tomans.

NADER  
How am I going to post bail or  
bring a deed? I live at my  
dad's.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE  
Without bail you'll go to jail...  
come and sign here.

It is clear that Razieh is upset from the situation Nader is in. She comes forward with Hojjat and both sign the paperwork. Nader is helpless.

NADER  
(pleading)  
Your honor, my father is sick  
and he's home alone right now.  
I couldn't find anyone to watch  
him. I had to lock him in and  
come here. My daughter will be  
back from school this  
afternoon. No one will be there  
to watch them. I'll leave you  
my ID, my pay slips, whatever  
you want but if I go to jail my  
dad and my daughter... Please.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE  
Look sir, it's not in my hands.  
It's the law.

INT. EXAMINING MAGISTRATE'S MANAGER'S OFFICE — DAY

Nader is on the phone. The room is crowded and other people are all speaking to the office manager.

NADER  
(on the phone)  
What about the guys at the  
bank?

(MORE)

(pause)  
 What about Tavassoli?  
 (pause)  
 In whose name is it?  
 (pause)  
 Is your wife home now?  
 (pause)  
 Can you speak to her?  
 (pause)  
 Please Bahman, just let me know  
 ASAP. If the deed isn't here in  
 an hour, I have to go to jail...  
 uhum... if I call in ten minutes  
 will you know?  
 (pause)  
 Okay.  
 (pause)  
 No thanks.

Nader is very upset. He hangs up the receiver and again picks it up to call another number. The office manager objects.

OFFICE MANAGER  
 How many calls do you make?

NADER  
 I just want to leave a message.

OFFICE MANAGER  
 Hurry up so this place clears  
 up.

Nader takes the receiver and makes another call. He waits. While he waits, he sees through the open door that Hojjat and his wife have not left yet.

INT. NADER'S HOUSE — MR. MORTEZA'S ROOM, HALLWAY, KITCHEN — NIGHT.

Termeh comes out of the kitchen and goes to the bathroom to wash her hands. Simin has come there and walks towards the answering machine. She listens to Nader's message.

NADER  
 (recorded message)  
 Hello, Termeh... I got tied up

(MORE)

here today. They're keeping me tonight. Don't worry about anything. It's nothing. It's just that tonight you'll have to be on your own. Keep an eye on everything. Take grandpa to the bathroom regularly. Kisses. Take care. I'll call you again tomorrow.

During the message's entire playback, Simin gets up and walks toward Mr. Morteza's room. Mr. Morteza is quiet and sometimes looks at Simin. Simin is in conflict with herself. Termeh comes out of the bathroom.

TERMEH

If you hadn't left, Dad  
wouldn't be in jail right now.

SIMIN

Your dad is not in jail because  
of what I did. It's because  
he's beaten up a pregnant woman  
like a thug.

TERMEH

She came cause you left.

SIMIN

(with sarcasm)

And he was just so upset that I  
left.

TERMEH

He knew you weren't really  
leaving.

Simin falls silent for a moment. She is pensive.

SIMIN

Did you tell him?!

TERMEH

He found out.

SIMIN

Say the truth. You told him?

Termeh does not respond.

SIMIN

Get your stuff. We're leaving..

TERMEH

I won't come. I have homework to do.

SIMIN

I'll leave you and if you die of fright I....

TERMEH

Fine.

SIMIN

If you call I'm going to let you have it.

Termeh does not respond. Simin sits Mr. Morteza down on the sofa and walks into the kitchen to get some things.

INT. SIMIN'S CAR — EXT. STREET — NIGHT

Mr. Morteza is sitting quietly on the passenger side chair. He is staring ahead blankly. Simin is behind the wheel and is driving.

SIMIN

Not a word to say don't do this, don't leave or I won't divorce you... Not a word... "One day you came to live with me and now you don't want to!"... It's not as if I lived with him for 14 years.

A brief silence ensues. She is very upset.

SIMIN

If he'd say "I won't divorce you," or he'd fight with me, or make excuses, it wouldn't hurt this much...

She now begins to cry.

SIMIN

Child! Only our child? That's  
it? Whether I'm there or not it  
doesn't matter...

The entire time Simin is speaking, Mr. Morteza is staring at her. It is clear that he has not understood anything of what Simin has just said. Simin pulls over by the side of the street. She thinks a little. She is worried. She makes a U-turn on that very busy street and goes back.

EXT. COURTHOUSE – COURTYARD – DAY

Nader is walking through the courtyard towards the building. He is handcuffed to an officer. From his expression it is clear that he has spent a difficult night in jail. Termeh seems to be waiting for him. Upon seeing him, she walks towards him. Nader is shocked to see her here.

TERMEH

Dad... Hi.

NADER

What are you doing here? Who'd  
you come with?

Termeh sees her father's hand handcuffed to the young officer's. She looks like she is going to cry and cannot say anything.

NADER

Why aren't you at school?  
Didn't you have an exam today?

TERMEH

No it's tomorrow.

Nader, Termeh and the officer walk towards the building and the corridor.

NADER

Who brought you here?

TERMEH

Mom has brought Grandma's deed.

Nader is a little surprised at hearing this.

INT. CORRIDOR — EXT. COURTYARD — DAY

Nader and Termeh enter the corridor. He glances at the other end of the corridor and sees Hojjat, his wife and their daughter sitting and waiting. Somayeh's gaze is at Termeh. Nader sees Grandma Katti and along with Termeh and the officer, they walk towards her.

NADER

Hello.

GRANDMA KATTI

Shouldn't you tell us you're in trouble so we can bring a deed?

NADER

I didn't want to trouble you.

GRANDMA KATTI

Silly man.

NADER

(to Termeh)

Where's grandpa?

GRANDMA KATTI

He's safe. He's at our house. Come and sit.

OFFICER

No ma'am he can't. I have to take him to the examining magistrate.

GRANDMA KATTI

(to Nader)

What are they saying? "My child" as if their eighteen-year old son was stabbed to death on the street.

NADER

Did you speak to them?

GRANDMA KATTI

You can't even speak to the man. I told the wife you're young. You can try next year. Honestly!

Simin walks towards them with the deed and other documents in her hand. She is still cold towards Nader.

GRANDMA KATTI

What happened?

SIMIN

I have to take someone to appraise the house.

NADER

Hello.

SIMIN

Hi.

(to Grandma Katti  
and Termeh)

You stay here. I'll be back.

Simin leaves. She walks from the corridor to the courtyard. From her face, it is clear that she has had a difficult night.

INT. SECURITY DESK – DAY

The FEMALE OFFICER at security is looking through all the cell phones in her drawer to find Simin's cell phone. Simin is standing in front of the desk waiting to get her cell phone before she leaves. Mrs. Ghahraei who has just walked in, sees her.

MRS. GHAHRAEI

Hi Mrs. Lavasani.

The female officer hands Simin her cell phone.

SIMIN

Hi.

(to the female  
officer)

Thank you.

(to Mrs. Ghahraei)

How are you?



MRS. GHAHRAEI  
 It's a good thing I saw you.  
 What happened? Is it true that...

SIMIN  
 Yes unfortunately. He pushed  
 her and she fell and lost her  
 baby.

MRS. GHAHRAEI  
 (worried)  
 So what should I tell them?

SIMIN  
 I don't know what they'll ask.

MRS. GHAHRAEI  
 What if he asks something that...

FEMALE OFFICER  
 (to Mrs. Ghahraei)  
 Ma'am, your cellphone.

Simin doesn't know how to answer Mrs. Ghahraei's question.  
 Mrs. Ghahraei hands over her cellphone to the female  
 officer.

SIMIN  
 (to Mrs. Ghahraei)  
 You should tell the truth.  
 (walking towards  
 the exit)  
 Excuse me but I have to go and  
 take care of this deed.

MRS. GHAHRAEI  
 Okay.

Simin leaves.

INT. EXAMINING MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE — DAY

Sitting in front of the examining magistrate's office, are  
 Hojjat and Razieh. They are on one side of Mrs. Ghahraei  
 and Nader is on the other. Mrs. Ghahraei is answering  
 questions.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Where was he?

MRS. GHAHRAEI

Mr. Lavasani was in the  
Kitchen.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Did he have any reaction or  
contribute to your  
conversation?

MRS. GHAHRAEI

If he did, I didn't notice.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

How did you realize she was  
pregnant?

MRS. GHAHRAEI

I think she told me.

RAZIEH

Ma'am you asked me. Why would I  
tell you?

MRS. GHAHRAEI

Oh yes her daughter was drawing  
a man and a woman. She said  
this is my daddy and mommy. I  
said your mommy's not that fat.  
She said she has a baby in her  
tummy.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

So you didn't find out from her  
appearance?

MRS. GHAHRAEI

No.

HOJJAT

Why are you lying? You're a  
woman. Women can tell from the  
face of a woman if she's  
pregnant.

MRS. GHAHRAEI

Even if I could tell, what difference does it make to Mr. Lavasani?

HOJJAT

This woman is his daughter's tutor. They've fixed their stories.

NADER

Why are you insulting this lady?

HOJJAT

No one's talking to you.

NADER

When did I have the opportunity to fix my story? I was in here last night!

RAZIEH

Your honor, it is obvious. Now that I am speaking to you, even if that man...

(pointing to the secretary)

...doesn't want to, he can hear us.

(to the secretary)

Right?

NADER

I didn't hear you. My mind is in a thousand places. Why would I listen to your conversation? Do I have to swear to God?

HOJJAT

Like you even believe in God and the prophet that...

NADER

No God and the prophet are for your type only!

MRS. GHAHRAEI

(to the examining  
magistrate)

He is an honorable man. I've  
been going there for a year to  
teach his daughter. He doesn't  
come into the living room till  
I'm done teaching his daughter.  
He stays in his room.

NADER

Why when she's pregnant would  
she not tell me about it? Why  
would she hide it and come and  
take this job? If I had known,  
I wouldn't have even hired her.

HOJJAT

Why did you hire her when you  
knew she didn't have her  
husband's permission to work?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

(to Mrs. Ghahraei)

You may go.

INT. CORRIDOR — DAY

Grandma Katti has her reading glasses on. She is taking  
this opportunity to quiz Termeh from her book. Termeh is  
sitting on one side of Grandma Katti and Somayeh is sitting  
to the other side with a slight space between them. She is  
curious about Termeh's answers to her grandmother's  
questions.

TERMEH

During the rule of the  
Sassanian Dynasty, people were  
divided into two classes, the  
royalty and nobility and the  
ordinary people.

GRANDMA KATTI

(correcting her)

The common people.

Mrs. Ghahraei walks out of the examining magistrate's  
department and walks towards them.

TERMEH

Ma'am what did they ask?

MRS. GHAHRAEI

They wanted to know whether  
your dad knew Somayeh's mom was  
pregnant or not.

GRANDMA KATTI

We've caused you all this  
trouble.

MRS. GHAHRAEI

There's nothing to forgive.  
(to Somayeh)  
Sweetie, how did mommy lose her  
baby?

SOMAYEH

She got a tummy ache.

MRS. GHAHRAEI

Why?... Did daddy fight with  
her at home?

GRANDMA KATTI

(trying to get  
Somayeh to  
explain)  
Why should he fight with her?

MRS. GHAHRAEI

(to Somayeh)  
Maybe because she didn't tell  
him she was working in people's  
home? Did he hit her?

SOMAYEH

My mom and dad never fight.

MRS. GHAHRAEI

Then why were they fighting in  
your drawing that day? You  
showed me.

SOMAYEH

They didn't fight anymore.

MRS. GHAHRAEI  
You're sure?

Somayeh is quiet and does not respond.

INT. EXAMINING MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE – DAY

Nader and Hojjat are standing in front of the examining magistrate's desk and Razieh is sitting on a chair.

HOJJAT  
Yesterday he says I didn't know  
she was pregnant. Today he says  
I didn't push her.  
(to Razieh)  
Why aren't you saying anything?

RAZIEH  
(to Nader)  
You didn't push me?

NADER  
I grabbed her here and sent her  
back from the door. And that's  
because she was cussing in  
front of my daughter.

RAZIEH  
When did I cuss at you?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE  
(to Nader)  
Then how did she lose the baby?

NADER  
I'd also like to know what  
really happened.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE  
Look forget "I got her out of  
the house but I didn't push  
her." What's the distance  
between the door and the  
stairs? Two or three meters?  
What else could've happened to  
cause her miscarriage?

HOJJAT

(to Nader)

If you hadn't done anything wrong, why'd you come to the hospital to see what was wrong with her?

NADER

I came out of decency.

HOJJAT

Where was your decency when you hit her?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Was anyone there during the fight?

RAZIEH

Yes the neighbors were there.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

I'll order questionings.

HOJJAT

The neighbors are in it too just like the teacher.

NADER

Your honor, he's been insulting me from the start! I can also...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

(to Hojjat)

I'm the one who determines whether they're together or who's telling the truth and who's lying. You be quiet on this matter.

HOJJAT

Sir do you realize his ex-wife has posted his bail?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Ma'am do you have someone to vouch for you?

RAZIEH

What do you mean?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

A government employee or  
business-owner to vouch for  
you.

HOJJAT

What for?

RAZIEH

I don't have anyone. It's just  
my husband who is unemployed at  
the moment.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

You need someone to vouch for  
you. You've been accused.

RAZIEH

(worried)

What've I been accused of?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

According to the complaint he  
filed...

HOJJAT

He had no right to do that!

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

She admitted that she tied his  
father to the bed, locked him  
up and left.

RAZIEH

I explained to you why...

HOJJAT

This poor thing just lost her  
baby...

(to Nader)

Aren't you ashamed? You call  
yourself a man?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE



Sir bring your voice down!

HOJJAT

For God's sake why don't you listen to us? He's twisting everything.

(angry and screaming)

He beat my wife and killed my child. What could be clearer? Why do you want to trample on a poor soul's rights?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

If you disturb the order, I'll send you to jail for 3 days.

HOJJAT

I've lost everything. You think I fear jail? You should fear God.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

(to his secretary)

Call security to send an officer to arrest him.

The secretary picks up the phone to make the call. Worried, Razieh goes towards him and stops him from dialing the number.

RAZIEH

Sir for the sake of the Qoran, don't!

(to Hojjat)

Go out and be quiet.

HOJJAT

(distracted)

Why be quiet? So they can trample my rights?

Razieh is trying to get Hojjat out of the room.

HOJJAT

(on his way out)

I worked for ten years with a

(MORE)

cobbler. They fired me. I filed a thousand complaints, went to a thousand courthouses, after a year of going back and forth, nothing...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

(to his secretary)

Call the gate and let them know he's not to leave.

Nader is standing there politely. Hojjat can be heard from the corridor.

INT. CORRIDOR – EXT. THE COURTYARD – DAY

Distraught, Hojjat comes out of the room. Worried, Razieh is trying to clam him. All the people present are watching them and some have gathered around them.

HOJJAT

I swear on the prophet, I won't let you trample my rights this time... I'll pour gas on myself and set myself on fire at this very courthouse...

Grandma Katti has also come forth to watch. Razieh is scared. Termeh and Somayeh who are in the courtyard feeding the little kitten from the day before, are now paying attention to what's going on inside. An officer has come to take Hojjat away.

RAZIEH

(to the officer)

Forgive us. He'll calm down now.

The officer ignores her and takes Hojjat. With no other choice, Razieh goes back to the examining magistrate's office.

INT. EXAMINING MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE – DAY

Worried Razieh comes in. The examining magistrate is writing something down. Nader is still standing in front of him.

RAZIEH

(pleading)

Your honor, I beg you for the sake of the Qoran and the martyrs... he's stressed out.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

I already wrote the order.

RAZIEH

In the past month, every other day, he's been in and out of prison. His creditors have deposited his checks. I've begged them to let him come out...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

I've been patient for the past two days.

Razieh puts her hand in her bag and brings out a plastic bag full of pills.

RAZIEH

I beg you to forgive him. Sir, look at these. Every day he takes a bunch of these. Ever since he lost his job, he's been depressed. He can't help it.

NADER

Sir can I ask you to please forgive him this time?

RAZIEH

(to the examining  
magistrate)

You're like his elder...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Go tell him to find someone to vouch for you...

RAZIEH

Yes sir!

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE  
...and you don't leave the  
courthouse.

RAZIEH  
I'll wait for him to come back.

Razieh leaves the room.

EXT. COURTYARD – DAY

Termeh and Somayeh are seated next to the kitten in a corner of the crowded courtyard. They are speaking to each other.

TERMEH  
It's something the size of this  
cat's head.

SOMAYEH  
Then how does it kick?

TERMEH  
A four-month-old fetus kicks?!

SOMAYEH  
Yes. I heard it!

TERMEH  
A four-month-old-baby doesn't  
even have arms and legs, how  
can it even kick?

SOMAYEH  
Did you go into my mom's... my  
mom's belly and see what it's  
like?

TERMEH  
No but in books you can go and  
see the pictures. It's a piece  
of meat like this...

She makes a face to look like an unformed fetus. Somayeh laughs.

SOMAYEH

If it doesn't have anything,  
then how did they know it was a  
boy?

TERMEH

Was it a boy?

SOMAYEH

After my mom gave birth to it  
in the hospital, they found out  
that it was a boy...

TERMEH

Did you see it too?

Hojjat is on his way out. He speaks to Somayeh. Upon hearing Hojjat's voice, Termeh does not continue her conversation.

HOJJAT

Go sit next to your mother.  
Don't sit out in the sun.

Termeh sees Hojjat's angry glance. Along with Somayeh, they go inside. Hojjat walks towards the gate. Having gone after the appraisal of the house, Simin walks in from the opposite direction with documents in her hand. She walks past Hojjat.

INT. CORRIDOR — EXT. COURTYARD — DAY

Nader and Termeh are sitting on a bench. His hand is still handcuffed to the hand of an officer. Grandma Katti walks in from the courtyard. She is kindly holding Somayeh's hand.

TERMEH

Will you tell her?

NADER

She'll think it's cause she  
bailed me out.

TERMEH

So let her! Dad please!

NADER

(with no other  
choice)  
Okay...

TERMEH  
You promise?

Jokingly, Nader raises his hand to swear. His hand is handcuffed to the officer's hand and raises his hand also.

NADER  
(jokingly)  
Why do you promise?

The officer laughs. Grandma Katti and Somayeh walk towards Nader.

GRANDMA KATTI  
Get up! Come and take back the  
complaint you've filed against  
them. Drop the complaint and  
let them leave... poor things...

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE THE COURTHOUSE – DAY

Termeh and Nader get in their car and drive off.

TERMEH  
Dad!

NADER  
What is it?

TERMEH  
You didn't know Ms. Razieh was  
pregnant?

NADER  
No.

Another period of silence. Nader realizes that Termeh is deep in thought.

NADER  
Why do you ask?

TERMEH  
It's nothing.

NADER

Then why did you ask?

TERMEH

Last night mom said you knew.

NADER

Where was she to see if I knew?

TERMEH

She said when they told you at the hospital that Razieh's baby had died, you didn't say anything. You didn't ask if she was pregnant. You didn't get surprised. At times like this, people usually ask if she was carrying a child. It was like you knew.

Nader is shocked at Termeh's words. He stays quiet for a moment.

NADER

Your mom wants to turn you against me.

TERMEH

Don't tell her I told you this.

Nader is still quiet. It is clear he is upset.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE GRANDMA KATTI'S HOUSE - DAY

Nader's car pulls over opposite Grandma Katti's house. On the other side, Simin and her mother get out of their car and walk towards their house.

TERMEH

Will you tell her?

Nader is not sure how to respond to Termeh. He gets out and walks to the other side of the street. Termeh stays in the car. Nader walks across the street and reaches Grandma Katti's house. He rings the doorbell and enters. Termeh's anticipating gaze is at the door to Grandma Katti's house.

(CONTINUED)

Her expression is that of worry. A few moments later, Nader, walks out of the house holding his father's arm. Grandma Katti walks them to the door. Nader walks his father across the street. He opens the rear passenger door and helps his father into the back seat. Termeh's hopeful gaze is still at Grandma Katti's house. Nader gets in and when he turns the engine on and puts the car into gear, all of Termeh's hopes dissipate and upset, she turns her gaze out of the window on her side. Nader realizes she is upset.

NADER

I can't sweetie.

TERMEH

Didn't you promise?

NADER

I'm sorry.

Nader drives off. A heavy silence falls between them in the car.

INT. NADER'S HOUSE — STAIRWAY — DAY

Nader is holding his father's arm and is climbing the stairs. Termeh who is still clearly upset, is climbing ahead of them and has reached the door and is waiting for her grandfather to reach her.

NADER

Which step had she fallen on?

TERMEH

That one down there.

Nader turns the key in the lock and opens the door. His gaze is on the stairs and he is deep in thought.

NADER

Take him inside, I'll be right in.

Termeh takes her grandfather's hand and takes him in. Nader looks at the stairs.

INT. HALLWAY AND MR. MORTEZA'S ROOM — DAY



Termeh seats her grandfather on the edge of the bed. He is quiet and helpless like a child. She goes back to the hallway. Something is keeping her preoccupied. She sees Somayeh's backpack which has been left behind the apartment door. She opens it and from it, she takes out a drawing and looks at it. A childish drawing of a man and a woman. The woman has a protruding belly. From the drawing it can be perceived that the man and woman are fighting. Nader opens the door and comes inside. He sees Termeh looking at the drawing. Termeh takes the drawing to her room. Nader, tired of the events of the past two days, takes off his jacket and sinks into the sofa. His gaze is upon his father who is clearly less energetic than the week before.

NADER  
 (to Termeh)  
 Sweetie will you put the kettle  
 on?

Without answering, Termeh walks into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Frustrated with the stove's broken lighter, Termeh lights it with matches. Nader is standing in the kitchen doorway and is looking at her.

NADER  
 What would you like for lunch?  
 I'll order in.

TERMEH  
 I'm not hungry.

Nader walks into the kitchen.

NADER  
 Are you mad at me?

TERMEH  
 What did you go and say to Mrs.  
 Kalani?

NADER  
 What do you mean what did I  
 say?

TERMEH

Why did you go to their house?

NADER

I told her that they are coming to investigate. To be aware. Is that not okay?

TERMEH

If she is to tell the truth then why should she be aware?

Nader is shocked at Termeh's response. He realizes what she means.

NADER

Come here. I want to show you something.

TERMEH

I have homework to do.

NADER

Leave it. I'm telling you to come.

Nader leaves the kitchen. With no other choice, Termeh follows him.

INT. STAIRWAY — DAY

Nader opens the door to the apartment and walks towards the stairs that lead downstairs. Termeh is perplexed and standing in the doorway.

NADER

You said she had fallen down here right?

Termeh is worried that the neighbors might hear them.

TERMEH

Okay come inside and explain.

NADER

I don't want to say anything bad. Okay... pretend that I am that woman... I get thrown from the door in this direction right?

Nader moves from the door towards the step on which Razieh had fallen. To reach that step, he has to change his direction.

NADER

Come. Look. When someone is thrown, they travel straight ahead till they hit something. They don't turn one way and then turn another way and then come and fall here. Right? If I had thrown her, she should have fallen straight ahead on those stairs up there or ultimately on this first step. Okay imagine that you've been pushed, move in this direction...

Termeh is deep in thought.

TERMEH

Then how did she fall down there?

NADER

I don't know but she wasn't thrown on that step. Either she fell on her own or something happened to her afterwards.

Termeh is staring at the stairs. Nader goes towards the apartment door.

NADER

You go and stand where I was standing. Look from that spot. Go and stand there.

Termeh goes and stands on the stairs leading downstairs where Razieh had fallen.

TERMEH

(going down the stairs)

Why don't you tell them these things?

NADER  
(going inside the  
house)  
Forget them. I want you to  
know. Look for yourself.

Nader goes inside and closes the door. Termeh is standing in the stairway deep in thought.

INT. BEHIND THE APARTMENT DOOR AND HALLWAY — DAY

Nader is standing inside behind the apartment door. He too is preoccupied. Before going out of the door, he sees his father who is standing in the hallway and staring at him. The two look at each other. Nader pushes down on the door handle to open the door.

INT. STAIRWAY — DAY

The door to Nader's house suddenly opens and Nader pushes a young officer who is trying to keep from being pushed, out towards the stairway. The young officer stops at the top of the stairs.

NADER  
(to the young  
officer)  
Sorry.

In the stairway, a police officer holding a piece of paper witnesses this scene. The neighbors including Mrs. Kalani are also standing in the stairway leading to the floor above. Hojjat and Somayeh are standing in the landing of the floor below and Razieh is standing in the middle of the stairway.

POLICE OFFICER  
(to Razieh)  
Is that the direction he threw  
you in?

RAZIEH  
No, towards the lower floor.

NADER

Officer, this door doesn't allow anyone to be pushed towards the lower floor.

POLICE OFFICER  
Where did you fall down?

RAZIEH  
On these stairs.

POLICE OFFICER  
Which step?

Razieh doubtfully points out the second step down from Nader's floor. Hojjat is paying complete attention to everything that is being said.

RAZIEH  
I think it was this one.

POLICE OFFICER  
You think or you're sure?

RAZIEH  
No I'm not sure.

POLICE OFFICER  
(to Mrs. Kalani)  
Is this where you found her?

MRS. KALANI  
I didn't see her fall but when I arrived, she was sitting on that step down there.

HOJJAT  
(to Razieh)  
Why aren't you saying anything?!... Go show them how he pushed you.

RAZIEH  
I was so upset that I didn't realize what was happening.

NADER  
(to Hojjat)

Look, I'll stand in her place  
in he doorway.

(to the young  
officer)

You push me out with all the  
force you want to use. See if I  
fall where this lady is saying  
she fell.

HOJJAT

Of course you won't fall. She  
was a pregnant woman. She falls  
with a touch.

NADER

Then you come and stand in your  
wife's place. You chose who  
pushes you. See if you fall on  
that step.

HOJJAT

What step?! She says she fell  
on that step up there.

NADER

They all say they saw her on  
that one down there.

POLICE OFFICER

(to the female  
neighbor)

Ma'am did you see her get  
thrown?

FEMALE NEIGHBOR

From up there I couldn't see  
the door but I saw the stairs  
when she fell.

POLICE OFFICER

Can you show me from where you  
saw?

The female neighbor, who is holding a child, goes up the  
stairs. The police officer follows her.

NADER

Maybe she got dizzy and fell.

HOJJAT

(to Razieh)

How many times did you use these stairs? Why hadn't she gotten dizzy before?

MRS. KALANI

Excuse me. That morning when I saw her here I asked her why there was garbage on the steps. She said she had gotten dizzy and dropped the bag.

(to Razieh)

Right?

RAZIEH

My daughter had taken the garbage down.

MRS. KALANI

You told me you got dizzy...

NADER

Mrs. Kalani, hadn't she mopped the stairs that day? The stairs were wet. Maybe she slipped and fell.

HOJJAT

(angry)

Jerk! You pushed her and she slipped.

NADER

Be respectful! I'm only not saying anything to you in front of your wife and kid.

HOJJAT

(angry)

You'll eat shit before you say anything!

POLICE OFFICER

(to Hojjat)

Don't cuss. Take him outside.

HOJJAT

(to the police  
officer)

They have to live with him.  
Would they say anything against  
him?

POLICE OFFICER

If you have evidence that  
they're lying then file a  
complaint.

HOJJAT

So now they're telling the  
truth?

POLICE OFFICER

Take that up with your  
examining magistrate.

The young officer guides Hojjat towards the stairs. Razieh is helpless and she is standing halfway up the stairs and looking at her husband who is being forced down the stairs by the young officer. The sound of the neighbors going up the stairs and explaining to the police officer and the shouting and screaming by Hojjat exiting the building can all be heard. Upset, Somayeh is looking at her mother.

INT. HALLWAY AND MR. MORTEZA'S ROOM – DAY

Somayeh is holding her backpack and is standing in the doorway to the house. She is looking at Mr. Morteza who is coming out of his room. Nader brings Somayeh her drawing book.

NADER

Come here... don't you want you  
drawing book? Honey don't get  
upset at you parents' and I  
fighting okay? Here... come here  
let me put this in your  
backpack.

SOMAYEH

My mom didn't take any money.

NADER



I know... that's not why we fought.

SOMAYEH

Then why did you fight?

NADER

Cause I got upset that she left my dad.

SOMAYEH

She had gone to the doctor.

Nader is surprised at Somayeh's words and thinks.

NADER

Ok honey. Go on... be careful going down the stairs.

INT. MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE - EXAMINATION ROOM - DAY

Mr. Morteza is sitting on the examination chair and a middle-aged doctor is reading the piece of paper that Nader has brought from the courthouse. Nader is standing opposite his desk.

MEDICAL EXAMINER

Based on the court's request, we'll examine him and write our observations.

NADER

But you are seeing that he can't talk.

MEDICAL EXAMINER

Didn't you say he has Alzheimer's?

NADER

Yes but he used to say some things.

MEDICAL EXAMINER

This is not a courthouse. These things you have to prove over there.

Nader is upset at hearing the examiner's response.

MEDICAL EXAMINER  
Has he sustained any physical  
harm?

NADER  
Yes he has bruises..

MEDICAL EXAMINER  
Lay him down on the bed, take  
off his clothes.

Nader walks his father towards the bed and lays him down. He unbuttons his shirt. He untucks his shirt, he thinks for a moment, he changes his mind, puts his father's shirt back on and buttons it up. The doctor walks towards them.

MEDICAL EXAMINER  
What happened?

NADER  
I'm not sure his bruises are  
from when he fell off the bed.

EXT. OUTSIDE TERMEH'S SCHOOL - DAY

Simin is behind the wheel and is waiting for Termeh to come out of her school. The students are all happy and noisy. They've just given their exams and leaving the school and walking towards their parents or their rides home. Termeh comes out of her school. She is looking for her father's car in the street. Simin sees her and honks. Termeh sees her and quickly rushes towards her mother's car.

SIMIN  
Don't run... slow down.

Termeh is worried and from the window speaks to her mother.

TERMEH  
Mom there's a fight.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

The sounds of an argument and fight are heard from the headmistress's office. Simin and Termeh quickly walk

towards the headmistress's office. Several of the school children are curious to see what's going on and are standing in the corridor. Termeh, embarrassed by this situation, waits outside the office and Simin enters.

INT. HEDMISTRESS'S OFFICE - DAY

A large office with windows facing the courtyard. Mrs. Ghahraei is very scared and is pale. She is standing in a corner. The HEADMISTRESS, VICE-PRINCIPAL and one or two of the staff are also there. Hojjat, upset and distraught, is sitting on a chair. He is holding a Qoran in his hand. The school JANITOR is standing next to him. It is clear that prior to Simin's arrival, a huge argument has taken place.

VICE-PRINCIPAL

(to Hojjat)

You have a fight, take it to the police.

HOJJAT

I don't want to fight with anyone. I just want to speak to this lady.

MRS. GHAHRAEI

(trembling)

What do I have to say to you? I don't know you nor this woman's husband.

HOJJAT

If you don't know him, then why did you come to the courthouse and lie?

SIMIN

What lie did she tell?

HOJJAT

She knows what she said.

HEADMISTRESS

Ms. Safaei, call the police.

HOJJAT

Ma'am, don't scare me with the police.

JANITOR

This isn't right sir... please  
get up and leave.

SIMIN

Your fight is with someone  
else, not with her...

HOJJAT

If it's not with her, then why  
does she try to get my daughter  
to speak?

MRS. GHAHRAEI

I did no such thing.

HOJJAT

Why did you tell her I hit her  
mom and she lost the baby?

MRS. GHAHRAEI

When did I say such a thing?!

HOJJAT

You are a teacher for god's  
sake. Aren't you ashamed? You  
pick on a 4-year-old's drawing  
and tell her her dad hit her  
mom and she lost the baby? Is  
that the reason?

MRS. GHAHRAEI

I didn't say it like that.

HOJJAT

Why is it that you think my  
kind beats our wives and  
children like animals. I swear  
on this Qoran, we're humans  
just like you.

Hojjat's hands are shaking with anger. There's a moment of  
silence and everyone is upset about his situation.

JANITOR

Let's go outside and get some  
fresh air. Come on.

Hojjat gets up to leave. On his way out he gives Simin an ultimatum.

HOJJAT

I have nothing else left to lose. Not even my life.

He pushes his collar aside and shows them his neck.

PRINCIPAL

Okay sir, leave.

HOJJAT

(to Mrs. Ghahraei)

Ma'am, I'm not going to let you go. I'm unemployed. I'll stand out there all day. Eventually you'll come out. Come to court and say you lied or I'll get to the bottom of what's between you and her husband...

MRS. GHAHRAEI

(yelling)

Shame on you! What do you mean between you?! I keep quiet and you...

HOJJAT

If there's nothing why do you help him?

MRS. GHAHRAEI

It was YOU who called and said come to court they have a question for you. I came there and whatever they asked, I told them the truth.

HOJJAT

If you say you said the truth then place your hand on this and swear.

SIMIN

Sir...

MRS. GHAHRAEI

(yelling)

Fine give me that Qoran! I'm not scared.

HOJJAT

You said her husband didn't know my wife was pregnant. Say that!

Mrs. Ghahraei comes forward and places her hand on the Qoran that Hojjat has brought with him.

MRS. GHAHRAEI

(yelling)

I swear on this Qoran that day at their house, her husband didn't hear what your wife and I said. He was in the kitchen and didn't find out that your wife was pregnant from our conversation... Okay? Anything else I should say?

Hojjat leaves. Simin is upset and is standing in a corner. The vice-principal seats Mrs. Ghahraei, who is still shaking from fear, down on a chair.

HEADMISTRESS

He's crazy...

(to Mrs. Ghahraei)

Don't leave on your own. Call your husband to come here.

MRS. GHAHRAEI

No... no... I don't want him to find out.

SIMIN

I'm sorry Mrs. Ghahraei.

MRS. GHAHRAEI

I only went to court out of respect for your husband... If I'd know it would come to this, I wouldn't have even answered my phone.

Mrs. Ghahraei gets up to leave.

VICE-PRINCIPAL

Where to? He hasn't left yet!

MRS. GHAHRAEI

I'm going to wash my face.

Mrs. Ghahraei leaves the office.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY (CONT.)

Termeh is behind the office door and it is clear that she has heard everything. Mrs. Ghahraei comes out of the office and Termeh sees her angry and upset glare. She is ashamed. Mrs. Ghahraei leaves. Upset, Termeh walks towards the exit.

INT. NADER'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Nader has the receiver to his ear and is waiting for the other end to pick up. He walks through the hallway to the door and opens it for Simin and Termeh and then walks back to the living room.

NADER

Hello? Hello Mrs. Ghahraei. I left you a message earlier. Can you please pick up?

(pause)

The lady that took care of my dad, apparently that day you gave her the number for a gynecologist. I wanted to ask you for that number to call and see if she went to see the doctor that week and what her problem was. I would appreciate you calling me back. Thank you.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Nader places the tray and dishes in the kitchen sink. He does not pay any attention to Simin. Worried, Termeh comes to the kitchen door.

SIMIN

What do you want to do?

NADER

With what?

SIMIN

With them.

NADER

What do you mean?

SIMIN

You want to have fights and arguments everyday?

NADER

Why what's happened?

SIMIN

He's gone to her school today and embarrassed her in front of everyone.

NADER

(to Termeh)

What did he say?

TERMEH

He screamed, "Her dad killed my child."

SIMIN

How can she go back to that school?

Nader is upset at hearing this.

SIMIN

Do you know what you are doing?

NADER

What I'm doing?

SIMIN

He's making threats.

NADER

He wouldn't dare!



SIMIN

Termeh honey go to your room  
and close the door.

Reluctantly, Termeh leaves the kitchen and closes the door.

SIMIN

What if he kills your child on  
her way to school?

NADER

What would you have me do? Run  
off abroad with you?

SIMIN

To hell with abroad! I'm  
talking to you about my child.  
What is this situation you've  
created for her?

NADER

I created? You have some nerve  
accusing me? Who left home? Who  
filed for a divorce in the  
middle of her exams?

SIMIN

Didn't you say leave whenever  
you want?!

NADER

Yes. Why did you come back?  
Leave!

SIMIN

I will! But first I'm going to  
see about her situation.

NADER

Her situation's fine.

SIMIN

You have two choices...

NADER

Don't give me an ultimatum.

SIMIN

It's not an ultimatum. Either you clear up the situation with them..

NADER

No I know what to do with them.

SIMIN

Didn't you hit her? Didn't you throw her on the stairs? Didn't she lose her baby?

NADER

(sarcastically)

Yes! Yes! I killed her child!

SIMIN

So then why are you being stubborn? Pay the blood money and end it.

NADER

I won't be forced into paying.

SIMIN

Why forced? Put yourself in their place.

NADER

I'm not responsible for their troubles.

SIMIN

(yelling)

Their child died!

NADER

(yelling)

And my dad has been hurt! He doesn't even speak anymore!

SIMIN

He didn't speak much before.

NADER

I was happy with the few words he spoke.

SIMIN

You're comparing this with you causing her miscarriage?

NADER

Where were you to see I caused it?

SIMIN

Then how did she lose it?

NADER

(losing his temper)

I don't know. There might be a chance that her husband did something and now she wants to blame me. Her child said that she had gone to the doctor that day. What had happened that she couldn't wait 2 hours to go to the doctor? Why did she tie the old man to his bed and leave?

SIMIN

The medical examiner said her child died due to a blow!

NADER

The medical examiner is not God! I won't accept that I did it till it's been proven to me.

SIMIN

Fine let me take Termeh.

NADER

Shame on you for trying to put pressure on me in this situation.

SIMIN

I'm worried about my child.

NADER

Your child wants to live here  
in this society. She has to  
stay here and learn.

SIMIN

Learn what? Fighting and  
stubbornness?

NADER

I don't want her to learn from  
you and be a coward and afraid  
every time someone screams. He  
knows where to come to scream.  
Why doesn't he come and  
threaten me?

SIMIN

Yes I'm a coward.

NADER

Your whole life, instead of  
solving problems, you've either  
run away or held your hands up  
and given in. Just say why you  
want to leave this country.  
You're afraid to stay.

SIMIN

Oh and you're staying to fix  
the country? You couldn't even  
manage this house for one week  
without me.

NADER

I couldn't manage it and I'm  
responsible.

SIMIN

Fine, let me take Termeh and  
you do what you want.

NADER

I haven't stopped her from  
leaving.

Nader walks towards the door. He opens it and speaks to  
Termeh in the living room.

NADER

Termeh sweetie, don't feel like  
you have to stay. Go wherever  
you like.

Upset, Simin leaves the kitchen.

INT. LIVING ROOM AND THE CORRIDOR – DAY (CONT.)

Termeh is seated on a sofa and is thinking about all the  
things she's just heard. Simin comes out of the kitchen and  
walks into the living room. She takes her purse from the  
sofa.

SIMIN

You still don't want to come?!

Termeh does not respond. She does not even raise her head.  
Simin walks towards the door and leaves the house.

INT. TERMEH'S ROOM – DAY

Nader is busy working with Termeh on her math homework.

NADER

He sells it for 200 tomans a  
kilo. If he uses 270 kilograms  
of flour a day... write down 270...  
how much is his daily income?  
Meaning how much profit does he  
earn a day? So how do we  
calculate this?

TERMEH

Did you lie?

Nader is shocked at hearing Termeh say this.

NADER

What?

TERMEH

You lied.

NADER

About what?

TERMEH

That you said you didn't know  
Ms. Razieh was pregnant.

NADER  
Why do you ask?

TERMEH  
You said you didn't hear Razieh  
speak to Mrs. Ghahraei that  
day.

NADER  
That's right.

TERMEH  
Then how did you know that Mrs.  
Ghahraei gave her the number  
for the gynecologist? Isn't  
that when she gave it to her?

Nader is shocked at Termeh's question and wasn't expecting it. He doesn't know what to say. He doesn't know what answer to give Termeh.

NADER  
All right... if we want to  
calculate the profit...

Nader falls silent for a moment.

NADER  
Your mom was telling the truth...  
I knew she was pregnant.

Termeh raises her head. She is shocked at what her father has just said.

NADER  
When they were talking in the  
living room, I heard everything  
from the kitchen.

TERMEH  
Then why did you say you  
didn't?

NADER

Do you know what would happen if I'd said I knew? One to three years in prison. I only thought of what would happen to you. Who would you stay with...

Termeh doesn't know what to do.

TERMEH

If you knew, why did you hit her?

NADER

I knew she was pregnant but at that moment I didn't. I had forgotten it. I wasn't paying attention. I don't know what it was.

TERMEH

So explain this to them.

NADER

The law doesn't care about this. Either I knew or I didn't...

Termeh thinks about what her father has just said.

NADER

If you want me to I'll go and tell them...

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE TERMEH'S SCHOOL - NADER'S CAR - DAY

Nader is sitting behind the wheel of his car and his father is in the front side passenger seat. His car reaches the street on which Termeh's school is. As he turns into the street, he sees Hojjat who is standing by his motorcycle. Worried, Nader stops in front of the school. As he is watching Hojjat in his rearview mirror, the students are leaving the school. Nader notices that several of the students are looking at him. He understands the meaning of their look. Termeh walks through the school gate. Nader's gaze follows her to his car and in the rearview mirror he is watching to make sure that Hojjat will not do anything. Termeh opens the rear passenger door.

TERMEH

Hi.

NADER

Hi sweetie.

TERMEH

Didn't I ask you to not come to  
the front?

Nader is hurt by what Termeh has just said. He has no response to her comment. He backs up to make a U-turn. He spots Mrs. Ghahraei's car passing them on the street. He honks for her to stop. Mrs. Ghahraei keeps driving. Nader gets out.

NADER

Mrs. Ghahraei... Mrs. Ghahraei!

Mrs. Ghahraei's car speeds away. Nader gets in and quickly changes his direction and follows her.

TERMEH

What do you want with her?

Nader does not answer and speeds up.

INT. COURTHOUSE - EXAMINING MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE - DAY

Nader is standing opposite the examining magistrate's desk. He is writing down his complaint. Standing in the doorway are several plaintiffs and accused who are all waiting to see the examining magistrate.

NADER

Who's responsible for my  
child's safety now?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Without a witness there's no  
case.

NADER

So without a witness I should  
wait for him to kill her and  
then come to you?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE



How should I know you are  
telling the truth?

NADER

Why should I lie? Bring my  
daughter and father here just  
to lie?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Is she here now?

NADER

Yes outside. Ask her yourself.  
I'm afraid to leave her at  
school. I'm afraid to leave my  
dad at home. I can't go to  
work. My life is a mess. I  
can't go to work...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

You didn't know his wife was  
pregnant?

NADER

No I didn't.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

When she was speaking to your  
daughter's teacher you didn't  
hear them?

NADER

No I didn't.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

You didn't huh?

NADER

No.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

You daughter's teacher came  
here and revoked her testimony.  
She says you knew.

NADER

She came here and said I knew?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Yes she came yesterday.

NADER

Cause he went to the school and threatened her.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Answer me. Did you hear her or not?

NADER

No I didn't hear them.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Then how did you know she gave her the doctor's number?

NADER

My daughter told me.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

What did your daughter say?

NADER

She said that this woman got the number for a gynecologist from her teacher.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Go tell your daughter to come in... and wait outside.

With no other choice, Nader goes out of the room. Other plaintiffs and the accused come in with their files as soon as Nader leaves.

INT. EXAMINING MAGISTRATE'S OFFICE AND CORRIDOR – DAY

Nader's mind is preoccupied. He passes through the manager's office and enters the corridor. He walks towards Mr. Morteza and Termeh who are seated next to each other on a bench in the middle of the busy waiting area. Termeh is in her school uniform and has her schoolbag with her. She has a book in her hand though she is not reading it and is looking at a cat wandering through the corridor. Nader walks towards her.

NADER

Termeh... honey get up and come.

Termeh leaves her bag and book and walks towards Nader.

NADER

Go in. He wants to ask you some questions.

TERMEH

What questions?

Nader doesn't know how to answer Termeh's question.

TERMEH

What does he want to ask?

NADER

I don't know.

Nader walks towards the examining magistrate's manager's office. Termeh follows him. They are both worried. Mr. Morteza is left sitting by himself. Termeh goes into the room and Nader goes back and sits next to his father. He is worried and waiting for Termeh to come back.

INT. EXAMINING MAGISTRATE'S ROOM – DAY

It is clear that Termeh has walked in while another file is being handled. The accused are handcuffed and seated. Termeh is standing next to the examining magistrate's desk.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

So what do you have to say?

TERMEH

You haven't asked me anything yet?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Didn't your dad tell you what I want to ask you?

TERMEH

No.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

What grade are you in school?

TERMEH

Sixth.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

And that day when your teacher came to your house and asked your housekeeper about her pregnancy where you there?

TERMEH

Not then, I had gone to get my books.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Then how did you know she got the doctor's number from your teacher?

TERMEH

Cause she gave her the number afterwards, when she was leaving.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

She gave it to her in front of you?

TERMEH

Yes.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Why didn't you tell your dad sooner?

TERMEH

What?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

That she got the doctor's number from your teacher.

TERMEH

I didn't think it was important for my dad to know.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

And did you tell your dad or  
did he hear it?

TERMEH

When she gave the number... I  
told him.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

You told him?

TERMEH

Yes.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE

Okay.

EXT. AND INT. NADER'S CAR — STREET — DAY

Nader is behind the wheel and is driving. His father is in the front passenger side seat and Termeh is sitting in the back. Termeh is upset and looking out of the window. Nader notices that she is upset. Termeh is quiet. Nader pulls over. All three are sitting quietly in the car and Nader is upset about the turn of events.

EXT. TEHRAN BAZAAR — INT. COBBLER'S BLOCK — DAY

Simin and Azam, Razieh's sister-in-law, are walking in the cobbler's block at the Tehran Bazaar. The bazaar is busy and they turn into one of its many arcades.

INT. COBBLER'S WORKSHOP — DAY

Azam, Simin and Hojjat are sitting on stools in the middle of a cobbler's workshop, which seems to have been closed for a long time. All the necessary tools and materials are there but no one is at work. Mr. Ali, an old man who seems to be the owner is sitting behind an old and faded desk next to a noisy window. His head is resting on the desk and he has fallen asleep.

SIMIN

(to Hojjat)

I'm afraid of something worse  
happening because of all these  
arguments.

AZAM

Ma'am it's your husband who is hurting this poor soul.

SIMIN

They're both being stubborn.

HOJJAT

How've I been unfair? What crime have I committed? Was it anything other than the fact that my wife was beaten and my child died?

SIMIN

You're right.

HOJJAT

Your husband is not taking responsibility.

SIMIN

I admit that he's to blame but what'll all this lead to? One or two years in court for a payment plan for the blood money.

HOJJAT

That's what upsets me. Ma'am, why do you think it's for the money that I am going to court?

SIMIN

When did I say such a thing?

HOJJAT

I know you think this guy is a poor bum who is a con and now that his kid has died he wants to...

SIMIN

Why do you have to say such...

HOJJAT

I know it! We're a bunch of people with no honor...

AZAM

Let's hear what she has to say.

Mr. Ali, who had fallen asleep behind the desk, wakes up by the noise and gets up to get some water from the cooler.

SIMIN

There's no other way. Your child won't come back to life and my husband won't get hanged for this.

AZAM

She's right. And besides it's not like her husband did this on purpose.

Upset, Hojjat stands up to leave. Mr. Ali follows him.

MR. ALI

They're good people for giving you a solution. Take the money and settle it. You can use it in your situation. End this ordeal.

SIMIN

We'll decide on an amount right now and I'll get my husband's approval.

Hojjat walks towards the door.

HOJJAT

Now we have to get his approval?

MR. ALI

You act like you don't need the money. Take a look at yourself.

Hojjat gets upset and goes out of the workshop.

AZAM

Mr. Ali, don't let him leave.

Mr. Ali follows Hojjat out of the shop.

MR. ALI  
 (on his way out)  
 So stubborn!

Simin is looking at them. Mr. Ali, who has followed Hojjat, reaches him, stops him and begins talking to him.

INT. NADER'S HOUSE — TERMEH'S ROOM — AFTERNOON

Simin is sitting on the edge of the bed. She is alone in the house. She is staring at the balcony and the clothing, which are on the clothes drier and gently moving in the breeze. She hears the sound of the key being turned in the lock and Nader, Termeh and Mr. Morteza all enter. Simin stands up. She sees her own reflection in the mirror and tries to conceal the sorrow she feels. She is not sure whether to leave the room or wait for Nader and Termeh to come in. Termeh realizes Simin is there and comes to the doorway. Without saying anything, Simin hugs her.

TERMEH  
 Will you stay?

Simin doesn't know what to say.

TERMEH  
 Mom!

SIMIN  
 Let me speak to him.

INT. KITCHEN — AFTERNOON

Nader is busy placing the dirty dishes in the dishwasher. He is frustrated by how all the dishes won't fit. Simin comes into the kitchen and stands next to the balcony. Nader does not acknowledge her presence. Simin doesn't know where to start.

SIMIN  
 Come and sit. I want to talk to you.

NADER  
 I can hear you.

SIMIN



I went and spoke to her husband today.

Nader is still busy with the dishes.

SIMIN

Leave those for a minute.

Nader closes the dishwasher door and faces Simin.

SIMIN

It was difficult but I managed to get him to agree to take fifteen-million instead of forty. Three five-million toman checks in exchange for his consent.

NADER

(shocked)

With whose permission did you promise him money?!

SIMIN

I can't handle the stress of my child's safety. Just now when you were late, I was dying with worry.

NADER

You didn't get what I just said. I'm saying why are you interfering?

SIMIN

I didn't come here to fight.

NADER

(frustrated)

Oh God why can't I make her understand?

SIMIN

Didn't you say it was my fault, that I introduced her for the job, that if I hadn't left none of this would've happened? So let me fix it.

NADER

If I pay them, it means I have accepted that it was my fault. He'll never leave us alone.

SIMIN

Do you think he will if you don't pay?

NADER

Why should I bribe someone who...

SIMIN

Pretend it's my dower that you're paying.

NADER

I would beg and borrow to pay you your dower but extortion, I neither have the money for nor will I pay it.

SIMIN

Our child is going through adolescence. She is suffering.

NADER

If she were suffering she wouldn't have stayed.

SIMIN

Why do you think she has stayed? Chosen you? To keep us from separating. She knows I won't go anywhere without her. She is suffering but she will not show it.

NADER

You'll call them right now and say that my husband says I won't pay until it's been proven to me that I am responsible.

SIMIN

I'll sell my car.

NADER

I don't want you to sell your car for my sake.

SIMIN

When your child is not important enough for you to pay fifteen million...

NADER

Why are you talking nonsense? Money's not the issue. I won't give in till it's been proven to me that it was my fault.

SIMIN

As long as my child's safety is not guaranteed, I won't...

NADER

You don't have the right to do anything...

SIMIN

If I hadn't done anything you'd still be in jail.

NADER

I don't want to be out because of your mom's deed. Come to court on Monday and get it back.

Nader tries to control himself and to not lose his temper. Simin leaves the kitchen and is angry.

INT. LIVING ROOM AND CORRIDOR – AFTERNOON (CONT'D)

Termeh is sitting on a sofa close to the kitchen. Mr. Morteza has sensed the fighting and has come out of his room and walks towards the kitchen. Simin walks from the kitchen to Termeh's room. Mr. Morteza follows her.

SIMIN

(walking and speaking loudly,

(MORE)

to Nader)  
 Just say my child isn't worth  
 fifteen million for me and cut  
 it out with the excuses.

Nader comes out of the kitchen. He takes his father's hand  
 and walks him towards the bathroom.

SIMIN  
 (walking towards  
 Termeh)  
 Get up! I won't let you stay  
 here anymore. It is dangerous.

Nader takes his father into the bathroom. He stands in the  
 doorway to the bathroom and looks at Termeh. Termeh doesn't  
 know what to do. Simin comes out of Termeh's room with her  
 things. Termeh stands up. Nader is watching her.

TERMEH  
 You said you'd stay.

SIMIN  
 (screaming)  
 I was stupid... get up!

TERMEH  
 Fine... you go downstairs and  
 I'll come too.

Simin takes her keys and leaves the house. She is angry.  
 Termeh is sad and walks towards her room. She passes Nader  
 on her way.

NADER  
 Don't worry daddy. Go there for  
 a few days till your exams are  
 over. You'll be with grandma.  
 You'll have more fun.

TERMEH  
 Didn't you say it's not  
 serious?

NADER  
 It got serious.

Termeh, who is not expecting to hear this, is suddenly overwhelmed and starts to cry. She walks towards her room. Nader leaves his father and follows her.

NADER

Termeh... Termeh... sweetheart!

Termeh pays no attention to him and walks towards her room.

NADER

If you cry, I'll cry too.

TERMEH

Why won't you pay them so that mom will come back?

NADER

Mom's coming back has nothing to do with this.

TERMEH

It does. She had come to stay. Her stuff was in the car. I saw them.

Termeh goes inside her room and closes the door. The constant sound of the intercom can be heard. Nader comes back to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN, HALLWAY – EXT. OUTSIDE THE HOUSE – AFTERNOON

Nader is upset and conflicted. He is in the kitchen next to the balcony and is looking downstairs in the street. He sees Simin's car parked across the street. The apartment door opens. He looks towards the door. Termeh has opened the door to leave. Mr. Morteza has walked to the door with her as if to stop her. Termeh leaves her things outside the door and brings Mr. Morteza back inside. Nader is still conflicted and walks to the kitchen door. Termeh again walks to the apartment door and picks up her things.

NADER

Termeh...

Termeh stops to listen to what Nader has to say.

NADER (CONT'D)

...if you think I am guilty go  
 tell your mom to come back  
 upstairs. We'll call them to  
 arrange a meeting to pay them.

The intercom rings again. Termeh leaves. Nader goes back to the balcony. He looks down at the street and sees Simin who walks back to her car and gets in. He waits to see if Termeh leaves with her mother or stays. Moments later, Termeh gets into her mother's car and they drive away. Nader seems to be happy that Termeh has not asked her mother to come back upstairs. He leaves the kitchen.

INT. LANGUAGE INSTITUTE, STAIRWAY AND CORRIDOR – DAY

Razieh and her daughter come up the stairs of a language institute. They enter the institute. All around the reception are classrooms filled with young men and women learning English. The doors to some of the classes are open. Razieh walks in and walks towards the receptionist's desk.

RAZIEH

Hello... excuse me is Ms. Rafiee here?

RECEPTIONIST

She's teaching.

RAZIEH

She told me to come at ten.

RECEPTIONIST

Please take a seat.

Razieh and her little girl sit and wait.

INT. CLASSROOM – DAY

Razieh and Simin are seated on two chairs and are facing each other. They are surrounded by empty chairs. A few away, Somayeh is drawing on the blackboard. Razieh is struggling with what she wants to say.

RAZIEH

I have doubts.

SIMIN

(shocked)  
Didn't he throw you?

RAZIEH  
Yes...

Razieh falls silent.

SIMIN  
Did something happen afterwards  
at home?

RAZIEH  
No. Even before that my child  
wasn't moving.

SIMIN  
Before when?

RAZIEH  
Before he pushed me.

SIMIN  
You mean your child had already  
died?

RAZIEH  
I don't know. Maybe.

Simin is shocked and is quiet. Razieh is worried and looks  
at Somayeh.

SIMIN  
Had something happened before  
it?

RAZIEH  
I'm not sure but the night  
before I had pain.

SIMIN  
Why?

RAZIEH  
I was hit by a car.

Simin is extremely shocked at what she has just heard. They  
are both silent.

RAZIEH

You father-in-law had wandered into the street. I went after him. He was crossing the street to come back. I ran to stop him from getting hit by a car but I got hit instead. The pain started that night.

SIMIN

Does your husband know this?

Razieh is quiet.

SIMIN

Why don't you come say this in court?

RAZIEH

Since yesterday when you told him about this money, he's promised it to his creditors.

SIMIN

What's that got to do with my husband? Come see what's happened to our life!

RAZIEH

It's my fault. Yesterday when he said you've promised him this money, I got really scared. I called a few people. They all say if I have doubts then it's a sin to take it.

SIMIN

If we don't want to pay this money we have to prove that my husband is innocent.

RAZIEH

No please! I made you swear that none of this would leave this room.

SIMIN



But your husband won't leave us  
alone. I fear for my child.

RAZIEH

I'm afraid of dirty money  
coming into my life and  
something bad happening to my  
child.

SIMIN

What do you suggest we do?

RAZIEH

Don't pay this money.

SIMIN

Your husband won't leave us  
alone.

Razieh has no response to this. Simin feels sorry for her helplessness. They are both quiet and Somayeh is busy drawing on the blackboard.

INT. HOJJAT'S HOUSE, KITCHEN AND HALLWAY – NIGHT

Hojjat's house is small but clean with white walls. Razieh is busy in the tiny kitchen. She is pouring tea in glasses set on a tray. She is anxious and is trying to conceal her worry. Through the door she can see her small hallway where Somayeh and Termeh are seated next to each other. Somayeh shows her drawing to Termeh. She is happy that Termeh has come to their house. Razieh takes the tray and walks to the hallway. In the hallway, she comes face-to-face with Azam her sister-in-law who has come out of the living room.

AZAM

Give me that. Bring some  
plates.

Razieh gives her the tea tray. Azam sees that Razieh is worried.

AZAM

Don't be afraid. Nothing will  
happen.

Razieh goes back into the kitchen.

## INT. LIVING ROOM – NIGHT

The living room of this small house consists of two interconnected rooms. Blankets have been spread all around the edge of the room for guests to sit on. Nader and Simin are seated on one side of the room and Hojjat is seated on the opposite side. A few middle-aged men who are Hojjat's creditors and acquaintances are also in the room. Azam offers tea to everyone and then sits in a corner.

SIMIN

(to Hojjat)

Tomorrow or the day after...  
whenever you revoke your  
complaint, we'll give you three  
checks.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN #1

God bless you.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN #2

Hojjat get a pen and paper so  
we can write everything down  
and sign it so that...

NADER

Before we do, I just want to  
say something...

MIDDLE-AGED MAN #3

Say a prayer. Whatever it was,  
it's finished now.

NADER

No I have already agreed and  
will honor my word. I just want  
his wife and my daughter to be  
here when I speak.

HOJJAT

(to Azam)

Why doesn't she come?

AZAM

(facing the  
hallway and  
calling Razieh)

Sister...

NADER

Would you please also call my daughter?

AZAM

Young lady... your father wants you.

Everyone is quiet and curious to know what Nader wants to say. Termeh comes in. Nader moves over a little so that she can sit next to him. Razieh and her daughter also come in and sit by the door.

RAZIEH

(to everyone)

Excuse me.

NADER

Look, before I write the checks, I have a favor to ask of you. Ma'am you are a devout person. Please bring a Qoran and place your hand on it and swear that I caused your miscarriage.

Razieh is shocked at hearing Nader say this. Simin who was not expecting such a request is worried.

MIDDLE-AGED MAN

Go bring a Qoran.

HOJJAT

(to Azam)

Go get it.

Before Azam can get up, Razieh stands up and leaves the room.

INT. KITCHEN — NIGHT

Razieh is frustrated and is standing in their small kitchen and is deeply conflicted. She doesn't know what to do. Worried, Azam comes to the doorway holding a Qoran.

AZAM

Come back quick or they'll  
suspect something.

Razieh is stressed and is looking at her.

AZAM

His creditors are here for the  
money. For the martyrs' sake,  
don't ruin our reputation.

RAZIEH

I won't swear.

Azam is wondering how to convince her to go back. Hojjat  
walks in not knowing what's happening.

HOJJAT

Why aren't you coming?

Razieh is afraid to answer.

AZAM

She's afraid to swear.

Hojjat looks at Razieh in disbelief.

RAZIEH

I have doubts.

Upon hearing this, Hojjat panics. He closes the kitchen  
door so that they are not heard. Azam stays out of the  
kitchen.

HOJJAT

(panicking)

Why are you saying this now?!

RAZIEH

I had told Azam.

HOJJAT

(frustrated)

Why don't you tell me exactly  
what happened?!

RAZIEH

The day before it, a car hit me  
and that night I had a lot of  
pain.

Hojjat is thinking of what to do.

HOJJAT  
It'll be my sin.

RAZIEH  
No. It's a sin. I asked.

HOJJAT  
They've consented to pay it.

RAZIEH  
I am scared that we'll be  
punished.

HOJJAT  
(tense)  
More punished than this?  
(pleading)  
Take a look at my situation.  
Have mercy on me.

RAZIEH  
I'm afraid of something bad  
happening to our child.

HOJJAT  
But you're the one being cruel  
to her now.

Hojjat approaches Razieh pleadingly to take her out of the kitchen. His behavior is not normal.

RAZIEH  
I swear to God I can't!

Suddenly Hojjat starts to quietly beat himself like a madman. Razieh tries to hold his hands. Hojjat has lost all control. He is angry and leaves the kitchen. Worried, Razieh leaves the kitchen after him.

INT. HALLWAY AND LIVING ROOM — NIGHT

Hojjat leaves. Upset, Razieh passes through the hallway and walks to the living room where Nader, Simin, Termeh and the rest of the guests are sitting. In the doorway she faces Simin and speaks.

## RAZIEH

Ma'am why did you come here  
 tonight? Didn't I tell you not  
 to come? Didn't I tell you this  
 money is dirty I don't want it?  
 Why did you do this to me? How  
 will I live in this house? I  
 swear to God, I will never  
 forgive you!

In tears, Razieh leaves the room. Nader looks at Simin in disbelief. Somayeh and Termeh are quietly staring at each other.

## EXT. OUTSIDE HOJJAT'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Nader's car is parked in an open area close to the street where Hojjat's house is located. All the car windows are broken or shattered. Nader, Simin and Termeh have reached their car and are shocked at seeing this scene. Upset, Nader opens the car door and removes the shattered glass from the seats. A piece of glass cuts his hand. He wraps a tissue around his bleeding hand and gets in.

## INT. NADER'S CAR, EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Nader's car moves through the streets of the southern part of the city. Through the glassless windows, the wind blows through the car. They keep driving and Termeh is deep in thought.

## INT. FAMILY COURT, COURTROOM - DAY

It is the following season. From the view outside the window it is clear that the weather is cloudy and it is raining. Nader and Simin are seated on two chairs facing the judge. They are dressed head to toe in black winter clothing. It is clear from the length of Nader's beard that he has not shaved it for a few months. They are both quiet and the judge is reading their petition. A few moments of peace and quiet ensue.

## INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Termeh is sitting alone in the busy corridor. She is wearing a black cardigan over her school uniform for the

(CONTINUED)

new school term. She is deep in thought. Nader comes and takes her into the judge's room. Termeh stands in front of the judge. Her parents are on either side. Nader is standing and Simin is still sitting.

TERMEH

Hello.

JUDGE

Hello. So young lady, your parents have left it up to you to decide whom you want to live with.

Termeh is struggling to answer.

JUDGE

Have you decided?

Nader and Simin are trying to pretend to be calm but are both worried about her answer.

JUDGE

So what is it?

TERMEH

Do I have to say it now?

JUDGE

If you haven't decided...

TERMEH

Yes I have.

JUDGE

And?

Termeh is uncomfortable by her parents' presence.

JUDGE

Do you want them to wait outside if it's difficult for you?

TERMEH

Can they?

JUDGE  
(to Nader and  
Simin)  
Please wait outside.

Simin and Nader, who are both upset about their daughter being placed in such a position, leave the room. They pass the secretary's room and come to the corridor. They each stand in a corner and lean against the wall. They are both concerned about the answer that Termeh will give and they are worried.

The End  
July 2010