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FRESH BLOOD EDITION



# **LITTLE INDIA**

Written by

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**FADE IN:**

**EXT. SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR (CHINO HILLS, CA) - DAY**

A sprawling Hindu temple complex, impeccably landscaped and bathed in Southern California sunlight. A grand staircase rises to the entrance of its colossal main temple, lavishly designed in pink Indian sandstone.

**INT. SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR - MAIN TEMPLE - DAY**

Beneath vaulted ceilings and intricately carved domes are the marble relief carvings of myriad Hindu deities: Brahama, Vishnu, Ganesh, etc.

But standing out ferociously among them is the god that all good Hindus fear more than any other: the Lord of the Universe, Shiva.

His skin is ocean blue. A serpent adorns his neck. The holy Ganges flows angrily from his matted hair. A sharp trident (three-prong spear) is gripped in his fist. The two eyes in his sockets emit a propensity for untold rage. A third eye, on his forehead, is shut with three lids.

And as an overwhelming feeling of dread permeates as ominous, Indian classical *Carnatic* music SWELLS --

**INT. NISSAN SENTRA (MOVING) - DAY**

Driving down Pioneer Boulevard in Artesia, in this circa 2007 beater, past the exotic jewelry stores, *sari* boutiques and eateries of "Little India" is:

JANAK (said *Jah-knock*) SRINATH (33, South Indian)

A kind-faced and mannered gentlemen with groomed hair and stache. His Ross Dress for Less button down and slacks only serve to affirm his Eastern humility and frugality. Though he lacks any pretense, there's a longing in his eyes for something more in life.

He listens intently to a *Can I Afford It?* podcast featuring no-nonsense financial guru SUZE ORMAN (68). She's on with caller RICK (38).

SUZE ORMAN (O.S.)

You want my permission to spend  
three hundred and thirty five  
thousand dollars on a boat?  
Seriously, Rick?

RICK (O.S.)

It's my lifelong dream.

SUZE ORMAN (O.S.)  
Do me a favor and paint me a  
picture of this floating financial  
black hole.

Rick LAUGHS nervously. Then, as he lays out the details of  
the boat, Janak pulls up an image of it on his phone.

RICK (O.S.)  
It's a catamaran, Suze. A Perry 43  
Passagemaker. It's gleaming white  
with a blue sail. It's got two  
seventy-five horsepower engines, a  
custom kitchen and a bathroom with  
a Japanese bidet. It's absolutely  
gorgeous. I want to sail my family  
down the California coast on it.

Janak is tantalized by the boat's visual magnificence.

SUZE ORMAN (O.S.)  
It sounds exceedingly lavish, but  
alrighty, Rick.  
(and then)  
Show me the money.

RICK (O.S.)  
I make 175K a year as an engineer.  
I've got 35K in savings. I owe 450K  
on a 500K 30-year fixed rate  
mortgage loan. I've got 350K in  
credit card debt with 24 percent  
APR. And 200K in student loan debt.  
I plan to take out a 300K loan and  
use the 35K from savings to pay for  
the boat.

A pregnant pause. Just then, the Sentra's engine starts to  
VIOLENTLY SPUTTER, unnerving Janak. Finally, it subsides.

SUZE ORMAN (O.S.)  
Rick?

RICK (O.S.)  
Yeah?

SUZE ORMAN (O.S.)  
Are you listening to me?

RICK (O.S.)  
Yeah.

SUZE ORMAN (O.S.)

(irate)

You are the single most financially reprehensible caller I've ever talked to in my life! You have the nerve to paint such a downright frightening monetary picture and then ask me if you can buy a boat?

RICK (O.S.)

(ashamed)

I... I'm sorry.

Orman's level of incense now goes off the charts.

SUZE ORMAN (O.S.)

Oh no, don't you dare apologize to me! You apologize to your poor wife and kids. The ones who rely on you to make sound decisions on their behalf even though you're clearly incapable.

(and then)

You are DENIED! DENIED! DENIED!

And as Orman's humiliation of Rick causes Janak to cringe --

#### **EXT. JANAK THE JEWELER - DAY**

A humble storefront on Pioneer Boulevard announced by a namesake sign done in *Tamil*-style calligraphy. The windows are decorated in posters of stunning *desi* (a person of Indian descent) women adorned in Indian jewelry.

#### **INT. JANAK THE JEWELER - DAY**

Exquisite rings, necklaces and bangles crafted from gold, silver and precious stones, fill several glass cases in this boutique space.

An attractive female CUSTOMER (28, Caucasian) peers into one, as Janak approaches her.

*GLOBAL NOTE: JANAK AND ALL OTHER INDIAN CHARACTERS SPEAK FLUENT LEVEL ENGLISH WITH A TAMIL ACCENT (EXCEPT WHEN NOTED)*

JANAK

See something you like?

She gestures to the silver and gem-studded pieces that have her attention.

CUSTOMER

Those bangles. They're beautiful.

As Janak removes them from the case and sets them atop --

JANAK

They're forged from Zawar silver. I  
came upon them on my last trip to  
*Mysore*.

CUSTOMER

The City of Palaces.

He's pleasantly surprised she knows.

JANAK

You have been?

CUSTOMER

I've seen the photos.

JANAK

Ahh, but *Mysore* is a city you have  
to inhale. It is like a swift  
sucker punch to the face. In the  
best way possible.

He pulls three bangles off their holder.

JANAK (CONT'D)

These are crafted by an artisan  
from a smelting family that dates  
back four centuries.

(and then)

Try them on for size?

Intrigued, she nods. Janak takes her hand and slides the  
bangles onto her wrist. They instantly ignite her sense of  
beauty.

CUSTOMER

I feel like Aishwarya Rai in  
*Devdas*.

JANAK

Bangles are my favorite jewelry on  
a woman.

He says it in a way that's both unflirtatious and endearing.

CUSTOMER

Why is that?

JANAK

They take me back. To my boyhood in  
*Trivandrum*.

(MORE)

JANAK (CONT'D)  
Watching my sisters as they  
prepared to present themselves to  
the world, meticulously adorning  
each other in silks, aromatic  
fragrances and precious metals.

CUSTOMER  
Those are priceless memories.

JANAK  
Even more enduring than the  
memories is the sound.

He gently reaches for her wrist.

JANAK (CONT'D)  
I close me eyes...

Janak shuts his lids.

JANAK (CONT'D)  
...and listen to the pieces clink  
against one another.

He shifts her arm upright and the bangles CRASH down into  
each other. He opens his eyes.

JANAK (CONT'D)  
It's intoxicating.

His look suggests the sound brings him true joy.

JANAK (CONT'D)  
It's silly, I know.

CUSTOMER  
No, it's refreshing. You're a man  
of simple pleasures.

JANAK  
Sometimes, yes.  
(and then)  
May I wrap them for you?

She thinks on it. But then, as polite as can be --

CUSTOMER  
I'm sorry, not today.

She removes the bangles and hands them back to him.

CUSTOMER (CONT'D)  
I appreciate your time though.

JANAK

Of course. Come back anytime.

As she walks out, in storms --

RAVI (said *Rev-ee*) IYER (29, South Indian)

A wiry misfit with upbeat energy to spare. In ripped skinny jeans and a Soundgarden t-shirt, he sports flowing black hair and a full arm-length tattoo of a hash pipe.

RAVI

Yo, J! I'm so hungry I could eat elephant shit wrapped in a *naan*.

JANAK

A bit pungent for my taste, Ravi.  
But I share your sentiment.

RAVI

Then let's roll already, dude!

**INT. SURATI FARSAN - DAY**

A fast-casual Indian eatery of which Janak and Ravi are frequent patrons. The cute female CASHIER (21, South Indian) runs Janak's credit card, as Ravi flirts with her.

RAVI

Go on girl, tell me which celeb I look like.

CASHIER

(annoyed)

Uh, none.

As she hands Janak back his credit card --

CASHIER (CONT'D)

Sorry, Janak, your card has been declined. No worries, I can comp you guys.

JANAK

Oh, no. Thank you, but I will pay cash.

As Janak pays her, Ravi rests his hand on top of her's --

RAVI

Think about it. When it comes to you it will hit you like a *High School Musical*.

Off her befuddled look --

LATER

As Janak and Ravi chow down on *thalis* (assorted food platters) at a table --

JANAK

Truth is, the credit card is just the tip of the Taj, Ravi.

RAVI

What are you talking about?

JANAK

I can barely make a sale anymore. My store revenues have been rapidly diminishing. I am three payments behind on the rent. And two missed payments away from my house going into foreclosure.

He grabs some *dal* (lentils) with his *chapati* (flatbread).

JANAK (CONT'D)

On top of that, my car's engine sounds like my grandmother's dairy cow right before it tipped over and died. I am not sure what I am going to do. About any of it.

Ravi rips into a *vada* (fried lentil donut).

RAVI

Dude, relax. You will stretch your *rupees* until things get better. After all, you are Indian.

JANAK

What does that have to do with anything?

RAVI

Excessive frugality is in your DNA. You could make a single roll of toilet paper last six months.

JANAK

Ravi, you are not hearing me. I am on the verge of financial ruin.

(and then)

I want Pappu to have the best education. I would like to buy Chitra a vacation home in *Kovalam*.

(MORE)

JANAK (CONT'D)  
And ever since this morning, I  
really want a catamaran.

RAVI  
What the hell is a catamaran?

Janak doesn't have the wherewithal to explain.

JANAK  
Never mind.

RAVI  
You worry too much, J. It is only  
money, man.

JANAK  
Money, unfortunately, is  
everything.

As Ravi eyes Janak disapprovingly --

RAVI  
That is a really fucked up thing to  
say.

**EXT. PIONEER BLVD. - SIDEWALK - DAY**

Janak and Ravi now walk and talk.

JANAK  
How do you do it?

RAVI  
Do what?

JANAK  
Manage to be so blindly happy *all*  
the time.

RAVI  
How can I not be happy? I live in  
Southern California. Half the girls  
here look like they are from  
PornHub. I can buy THC bath bombs  
and hash pipes shaped like machetes  
on nearly every corner. Plus, I  
have got my looks.

Janak eyes him curiously.

RAVI (CONT'D)  
They say I am like the Indian Zac  
Efron, you know.

JANAK

I was not aware of this.

RAVI

What I am trying to say is, most days it feels as if the sun shines just for me. So I work in a cash and carry and the gods did not bless me with sublime wealth. Who gives a shit?

JANAK

Ah yes, the gods. I forgot their omnipotent power in your world.

Ravi doesn't appreciate Janak's blasphemous tone one bit.

RAVI

Be careful, Janak. It is not just my world. It is your's, too. Do not mock our deities. They control everything.

Janak rolls his eyes.

RAVI (CONT'D)

I am serious. You are my best friend and I hate to see you hurting. Go home tonight and pray to them. Thank them for what you have. And ask them for what you want. It is the only way you are going to get it.

JANAK

I would sooner eat elephant shit wrapped in a *naan* than pray.

RAVI

Suit yourself, my brown brotha from anotha mutha.

Just then, the cashier from the restaurant walks by. Ravi gets her attention --

RAVI (CONT'D)

You twisted my arm, I will tell you...

She stops.

CASHIER

Tell me what?

RAVI  
Zac Efron!

CASHIER  
What about him?

RAVI  
That is who I look like.

And as she LAUGHS her ass off at his delusion --

**INT. SUBARU OUTBACK - DAY**

Parked curbside in front of a quaint yoga studio in this dated wagon is Janak's wife --

CHITRA SRINATH (32, South Indian)

A raven-haired beauty who often takes excessive pride in her heritage. She's adorned in jewelry from her husband, including a multitude of bangles that line her wrists.

Arriving at the passenger side door and entering is her son --

PAPPU (said *Pop-ooo*) SRINATH (10, South Indian)

A skinny, handsome and bright boy who longs to find outlets for his mischievous tendencies and growing inner turmoil.

CHITRA  
How was it Pappu?

*NOTE: PAPPU SPEAKS NATIVE LEVEL ENGLISH (NO ACCENT)*

PAPPU  
It's yoga. It's boring.

CHITRA  
Why would you say such a thing?

Chitra begins to drive.

PAPPU  
Because it's true. The class is slow and the teacher tells us to do dumb stuff.

CHITRA  
Dumb how?

PAPPU  
Like, "Connect with your breath."

CHITRA

What is so dumb about that?

PAPPU

I'm *always* connected to my breath.  
If I wasn't, I'd be dead.

Chitra rolls her eyes. Then, firmly --

CHITRA

You listen to your teacher and do as she says. When yoga is done properly, it is a divine practice. That is why I found you an Indian teacher who carries on the ancient tradition with authenticity. Do you know how hard it is to find a *desi* yoga teacher in Los Angeles?

PAPPU

No.

CHITRA

Believe me, it is like trying to find Gandhi in a butcher shop. You are lucky I did not put you in an American-style yoga class.

PAPPU

What's the difference?

Getting progressively worked up, as she explains --

CHITRA

American classes have names like *Yoga Booty Blowout* that are filled with a sea of skinny, white, affluent women carrying Starbucks mugs and dressed like porn stars who do endless sun salutations and chant mantras they don't know the meaning of in a language they don't understand while Lady Gaga pumps full-throttle through the sound system to the point that when you witness the horror of it all you want to ingest an entire bottle of Lunesta and kill yourself!

PAPPU

Mom! Get a grip!

A moment, as Chitra gathers her composure. Then --

CHITRA  
What I am trying to say is,  
American yoga is fake yoga.

Another moment. Then --

CHITRA (CONT'D)  
*Masala dosa* for dinner?

The pan-fried delicacy stokes Pappu's excitement.

PAPPU  
With *sambar* and *chutney*?

CHITRA  
Would I make it any other way for  
you my love?

**EXT. SRINATH HOUSE - NIGHT**

A two story tract house nestled on the outskirts of Artesia.  
Janak pulls up on the driveway, engine once again SPUTTERING.

**INT. SRINATH HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT**

Chitra's got all four burners going, as Janak approaches and  
kisses her on the cheek. Eyeing a pot --

JANAK  
I have been craving your *sambar*.

CHITRA  
I do not know how good it will be.  
I made it with scraps from the  
fridge. My credit card got declined  
at the grocery store today.

JANAK  
I am sorry.

CHITRA  
It is okay.

She kisses him on the lips. Then --

CHITRA (CONT'D)  
How bad is it, really?

JANAK  
Not so bad that I cannot fix it. I  
had an idea on my way home.  
Tomorrow, I am going to have a big,  
blowout sale at the store. By day's  
end, we will be flush with cash.

CHITRA  
That is a great idea!

Janak appreciates her enthusiasm. Then --

CHITRA (CONT'D)  
Dinner is almost ready. Bring Pappu  
down, will you?

**INT. SRINATH HOUSE - UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Janak, walking down the hall, hears repetitive THUDS up ahead. He arrives at the doorway of Pappu's bedroom to find him inside, punching a pillow. His striking form is terrible.

JANAK  
Pappu? What are you doing?

PAPPU  
I'm teaching myself how to box.

JANAK  
Why?

PAPPU  
Because I need to be tough.

Janak finds this curious. As Pappu continues to punch the pillow --

JANAK  
(gently)  
Pappu, come here.

Pappu pauses and approaches.

JANAK (CONT'D)  
Why do you need to be tough?

PAPPU  
Because life is dangerous.

And as Pappu walks out the door, leaving Janak unsettled by his words --

**INT. SRINATH HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT**

Janak, Chitra and Pappu eat at the dining table.

JANAK  
Pappu, do you know what a catamaran  
is?

PAPPU

No.

JANAK

It is a very special type of boat.

Janak finds his phone and shows him the picture.

JANAK (CONT'D)

See, it has two hulls, as opposed to one. It is built for speed so you can sail fast across the ocean.

PAPPU

How fast?

JANAK

Lightening fast!

(and then)

Someday we will get one and all three of us will sail down the Southern California coast.

Chitra blurts out a LAUGH.

PAPPU

What's so funny mom?

CHITRA

Your father is joking.

Janak is mildly irritated.

JANAK

No, I am not.

Chitra now turns serious.

CHITRA

A boat? We are not getting a boat.

PAPPU

Why not?

CHITRA

Boats are dangerous. And expensive. They are for the wealthy and frivolous, not us.

PAPPU

Are we poor?

JANAK

No, of course not.

PAPPU  
Then why are there hardly any  
vegetables in this *sambar*?

And as Janak and Chitra eye each other, knowing they're  
busted --

**EXT. JANAK THE JEWELER - DAY**

Janak arrives with half-a-dozen bright and eye-catching  
"sale" signs under his arm, and an extra pep in his step. As  
he unlocks the front door, he's approached by VIKRAM (55,  
South Indian), the building's draconian landlord.

VIKRAM  
Janak, just the fellow I was  
looking for.

JANAK  
Vikram. *Namaskar*. What brings you  
by?

VIKRAM  
Unpleasant news, I am afraid.

He hands Janak a slip. Janak reviews. Then, overcome --

JANAK  
This cannot be.  
(and then)  
You are evicting me?

VIKRAM  
Surely you knew this was coming.  
You have been failing. In every  
way.

JANAK  
I cannot lose this store. Not now.  
My family...

Vikram thinks on it for a moment. Then --

VIKRAM  
I have a most terrific idea.

JANAK  
(excited)  
Yes?

VIKRAM  
You will join the U.S. Postal  
Service.

JANAK

Huh?

VIKRAM

As a Mail Carrier.

As Janak eyes him, perplexed --

JANAK

I am a career jeweler. Why would I do that?

VIKRAM

Because it is a wise and sensible opportunity for someone in your fruitless situation. They offer a crisp uniform, robust benefits package, on-the-job cardiovascular exercise and the enormous pride that comes with working for the United States government.

JANAK

Vikram, please...

VIKRAM

My mind is made up, Janak. You have two days to move out.

Gesturing to the "sale" signs --

VIKRAM (CONT'D)

No sale. Start packing.

He departs, just as the "sale" signs slip out from under Janak's arm and blanket the sidewalk.

**EXT. PATEL CASH & CARRY - DAY**

A shabby, Indian, micro-grocery in the heart of Little India.

**INT. PATEL CASH & CARRY - DAY**

Janak, devastated, breaks down his misfortunes, as Ravi, in a grocery smock, stocks ten pound rice bags on the shelves.

JANAK

I came here from India with just four-hundred dollars. I delivered newspapers from my Sentra and slept fetal in the back seat. And I bled from my eyes to eventually build that store. But, at least I was only broke, not in crippling debt.

(MORE)

JANAK (CONT'D)  
From the hole I stand in now, I  
will never be able to start over.

RAVI  
Sucks, dude. But, as long as I work  
here...

Ravi PLUNKS two bags of rice in Janak's arms.

RAVI (CONT'D)  
...at least you will not starve to  
death.  
(and then)  
Besides, I have an idea.

JANAK  
Please do not tell me I should  
become a Mail Carrier.

RAVI  
Why the fuck would I do that?

JANAK  
Because it comes with the enormous  
pride of working for the United  
States government?

Ravi eyes him, as if he's lost his mind. Then --

JANAK (CONT'D)  
I already know what your idea is.  
You want me to go home and pray.

RAVI  
No, it is too late for that shit.  
You had your chance, you blew it.

As Ravi heads for the back door and Janak follows --

JANAK  
Okay, what is your idea then?

**EXT. PATEL CASH & CARRY - BACK ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER**

Janak sits on his rice bags, as Ravi fires up a skeleton  
lighter and tokes a machete-shaped hash pipe.

RAVI  
You need to go see my *pujari*, dude.

JANAK  
Oh no. No priests. No way.

RAVI  
Wake the fuck up, J. The universe  
has spoken. Your luck has run out.

Janak can't argue with that.

RAVI (CONT'D)  
You have no other choice. Unless  
you, Pop and Chit want to crash on  
my apartment floor, covered in  
extra-large used condoms, for the  
rest of your lives, you need to go  
see Krishna Bhatta. Today.

A moment, as Janak grapples with the idea. Then --

JANAK  
Fine. I will see him. But I am not  
going to a temple. Those places  
give me the heebie jeebies.

RAVI  
No worries, he works out of his  
house. I will tell him you are  
coming. You will not regret this.

A moment. Then --

JANAK  
Extra-large, huh?

**EXT. KRISHNA BHATTA'S HOUSE - STREET - DAY**

Janak pulls up in his car, engine again SPUTTERING. He takes  
the steps up onto the porch of this modest dwelling. The  
front door is open.

JANAK  
Hello?  
(and then)  
Krishna Bhatta?

No answer. Janak enters.

**INT. KRISHNA BHATTA'S HOUSE - DAY**

Janak moves slowly through the --

**LIVING ROOM**

Densely decorated in humble Kerala-style furnishings and  
artwork. Thick incense smoke wafts through the air.

JANAK

Hello?

(and then)

It is Janak. Ravi's friend.

Still no answer. Ahead is a doorway draped in beads. Janak moves through it into the --

POOJA ROOM

A space dedicated to Hindu spiritual worship. One end of the room has a raised altar adorned with idols of iconic deities: Brahma, Saraswati, Lakshmi, Vishnu and Durga.

KRISHNA BHATTA (O.S.)

Do you make a habit of breaking entries?

Startled, Janak turns to find in a corner, seated in lotus --

KRISHNA BHATTA (65, South Indian)

A Hindu holy man, bearded, shirtless and wearing a *dhoti* (loose pant) and *upavita* (sacred torso thread). Though his eyes are bestowed with the wisdom of the ages, he has a decidedly sassy and flippant style.

JANAK

I am sorry. The door was --

KRISHNA BHATTA

Shhh!

He rises and inches toward Janak. Standing within a few feet of him, he observes the perimeter of his body.

P.O.V. KRISHNA BHATTA

He sees Janak's aura, a glowing orange-yellow sunburst.

BACK TO SCENE

Finally, Krishna Bhatta relents --

KRISHNA BHATTA (CONT'D)

Forgive me, but I prefer to observe a man's aura before he interrupts his own delicate frequency by saying something utterly moronic.

(and then)

Please...

He gestures to several floor pillows. They both sit.

KRISHNA BHATTA (CONT'D)  
So, you know Ravi?

JANAK  
He is my good friend.

KRISHNA BHATTA  
Odd. You do not seem nearly  
perverted or depraved enough to be  
his friend.

JANAK  
I can try harder.

Janak's attempt at a joke falls flat with the priest.

KRISHNA BHATTA  
You do not seem spiritual enough,  
either.

Janak shrugs. He's got him on that.

KRISHNA BHATTA (CONT'D)  
What is it you want, Janak?

Janak thinks on it for a moment. Then --

JANAK  
I want to excel in my chosen  
profession. Reap all of the rewards  
that come with it. Take financial  
care of my family.  
(and then)  
And I want it all effective  
immediately.

A moment. Then --

KRISHNA BHATTA  
Is that all?

JANAK  
Yes, that is all.

KRISHNA BHATTA  
(relieved)  
That is nothing!  
(and then)  
When I checked your aura, I somehow  
got the feeling you were going to  
ask me for a yacht or submarine or  
something.

JANAK

No, of course not, that would be ridiculous.

A moment. Then --

KRISHNA BHATTA

We will do a special Shiva *pooja*, bestow you with his blessings, and send you on your way.

JANAK

Sounds good. I guess.

A SHORT WHILE LATER

The *pooja* altar is now cleared of all previous idols, with a three foot, gold, Shiva idol in their place. It's studded with gems and rubies, and wrapped in a lotus garland.

Janak, now shirtless and in a *dhoti*, is seated in lotus in front of it. *Vibhuti* (sacred ash) is smeared across his forehead in horizontal lines to honor Shiva. His torso is slathered in oils and herbs.

Krishna Bhatta is seated in lotus next to Janak.

KRISHNA BHATTA

Close your eyes. Bow your head to the Lord Shiva.

Janak complies.

KRISHNA BHATTA (CONT'D)

Now repeat...

Krishna Bhatta OFFERS a prayer to Shiva as Janak RECITES it --

KRISHNA BHATTA (CONT'D)

*I bow before Shiva, destroyer of the cycle of births and deaths...*

JANAK

*I bow before Shiva, destroyer of the cycle of births and deaths...*

KRISHNA BHATTA

*I bow before Shiva, who has the power to eradicate poverty, misery and all accumulated sins...*

JANAK

*I bow before Shiva, who has the  
power to eradicate poverty, misery  
and all accumulated sins...*

KRISHNA BHATTA

*I bow before Shiva, who alone can  
bestow me with health, wealth and  
someday, possibly even a  
catamaran...*

Janak lifts his head and eyes Krishna Bhatta, who eyes him back knowingly.

KRISHNA BHATTA (CONT'D)

Now is not the time for restraint.  
Ask for it!

Janak closes his eyes and bows again.

JANAK

*I bow before Shiva, who alone can  
bestow my family with health,  
wealth and someday, possibly even a  
catamaran...*

KRISHNA BHATTA

Now shut up and let me do the  
praying.

Krishna Bhatta lights incense rods and rotates them thrice clockwise around Janak, as he PRAYS solo --

KRISHNA BHATTA (CONT'D)

*Lord Shiva, oh auspicious one, as  
the vessel between the physical  
world and the heavenly one, I have  
confirmed Janak Srinath's devotion  
to you. Shower him with your divine  
energies and allow him to fulfill  
his karma with radiant success...*

Krishna Bhatta nudges Janak and they begin to CHANT --

JANAK/KRISHNA BHATTA

(repeat 10x)

*Om Namah Shivaya (I Bow to Lord  
Shiva).*

And when their rhythmic delivery hits a fever pitch --

**INT. SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR - MAIN TEMPLE - DAY**

The third eye on the Shiva statue SNAPS open. It emits a fierce, blue, beam of light. For better or worse, Janak and Krishna Bhatta have successfully summoned the Lord of the Universe.

**INT. KRISHNA BHATTA'S HOUSE - POOJA ROOM - DAY**

And as Janak and Krishna Bhatta utter their final --

JANAK/KRISHNA BHATTA  
*Om Namah Shivaya.*

In an instant, the *pooja* comes to an end. Janak lifts his head and opens his eyes. For a moment, he appears dazed. When he gets his bearings, he turns to Krishna Bhatta.

JANAK  
Is that it?

KRISHNA BHATTA  
Were you expecting more?

JANAK  
Yes. No. I do not know.

Krishna Bhatta rises to his feet and Janak follows.

KRISHNA BHATTA  
You do not believe that anything we have done today is going to work, do you?

A moment, before Janak shakes his head, no.

KRISHNA BHATTA (CONT'D)  
Then it will not.  
(and then)  
Which is not good for you because I do not offer refunds.

Krishna Bhatta shoots Janak a dead serious look. Then, he LAUGHS.

KRISHNA BHATTA (CONT'D)  
I am only kidding! It will work!  
(and then serious)  
But I am not kidding about the refund.

**EXT. KRISHNA BHATTA'S HOUSE - DAY**

Janak exits the house and approaches his car. As he opens the door, for one quick, but spine-chilling moment, he sees Lord Shiva, in all his ferocity, behind him in the reflection of the window.

Startled, Janak rapidly turns to find that nobody is there. A moment, before he shakes it off and quickly gets in his car.

**EXT. HIGHWAY 91 (ARTESIA) - DAY**

A late model Land Rover accelerates through traffic in the left lane. Whoever's driving knows where they're going and doesn't care to waste time.

**INT. LAND ROVER - DAY**

At the wheel, as she fields a Bluetooth phone call from a COLLEAGUE (28, female) and intermittently attends to her lashes in the rearview, is --

RUBY TAYLOR (29, Caucasian)

An ambitious and fetching Brit redhead whose impeccably composed biz-cas outfits are as impressive as her refined enunciation.

*NOTE: RUBY SPEAKS WITH AN OXFORD ENGLISH ACCENT*

RUBY (ON PHONE)

Listen love, if I weren't on my merry way to the exotic paradise of Anaheim to meet a gobby Ukrainian mobster-turned-diamond dealer, squeezing me in for a three minute sales pitch while on his family vacation to Disney's California Adventure, who's most certainly going treat me as if I were the dog excrement painting the bottom of his thirty-eight thousand dollar Testonis, I'd fill you in on the finer points of how jewelry is going to be a five hundred billion dollar industry by the year --

Just then, Ruby eyes the rearview and sees the same frightening reflection of Lord Shiva that Janak did. At once, she SCREAMS and reflexively cranks the steering wheel.

**EXT. HIGHWAY 91 - DAY**

The Rover swerves across three lanes of traffic, as cars violently zig and zag to avoid plowing into it. Finally, it comes to a SCREECHING halt on the shoulder.

**INT. LAND ROVER - DAY**

Shaken, winded and face flush red, Ruby SIGHS.

COLLEAGUE (O.S. ON PHONE)

Ruby?

Finally, she dares to check the rearview again. Shiva is gone. She checks her back seat. All clear.

COLLEAGUE (O.S. ON PHONE) (CONT'D)

Ruby, are you okay?

RUBY (ON PHONE)

Uh, blood sugar meltdown. Gotta eat something. Call you back.

She DISCONNECTS before taking a moment to compose herself. Then, up ahead, she sees an exit for Pioneer Blvd.

**INT. LAND ROVER (MOVING) - DAY**

As Ruby drives through Little India, she spots Surati Farsan.

**INT. SURATI FARSAN - DAY**

Ruby voraciously chows down on a *thali* and SLURPS mango *lassi* (shake) through a straw.

Just then --

P.O.V. RUBY

A ray of light infiltrates her eye. It's so blinding that --

BACK TO SCENE

She has to divert her gaze to avoid it.

Finally, when she recovers, she notices a sun ray beaming in through the window next to her. It bounces off her knife and, in turn, reflects off of the trio of bangles on the wrist of an exotic YOUNG WOMAN (22, South Indian) dining at the table adjacent.

Ruby longingly eyes the fine silver and gem-studded jewelry pieces. Then --

RUBY  
Excuse me, love.

The woman turns to her.

RUBY (CONT'D)  
Some blindingly sexy bangles you've got there.

YOUNG WOMAN  
(charmingly)  
My prized possessions. My friend asked to borrow them and I told her she'd have to cut my hand off.

RUBY  
I hope she doesn't take you literally.  
(and then)  
Can I ask where you got them?

**INT. LAND ROVER (MOVING) - DAY**

As Ruby drives along Pioneer Boulevard, she spots the Janak the Jeweler shop.

**EXT. JANAK THE JEWELER - DAY**

Ruby approaches on foot. The front door is propped open. A moving van is parked on the curb. She goes in.

**INT. JANAK THE JEWELER - DAY**

Ruby enters to find moving boxes scattered about. Browsing, she comes upon the case filled with bangles and spots the ones she saw on the young woman's wrist. Just then, Janak enters from the back room, surprised to find her.

JANAK  
Oh, I'm sorry. I wasn't expecting any customers.

RUBY  
Depressing. That is, assuming you want customers.

JANAK  
It is. And I do. Or, at least I did.

RUBY  
(re: the boxes)  
Going somewhere?

JANAK  
Closing shop.

RUBY  
Permanently?

JANAK  
I'm afraid so.

RUBY  
Shame.

She turns her attention back to the display case.

RUBY (CONT'D)  
Gaudy Goa beach shop jewelry this  
is not. No, this place is  
different. It's curated. It's  
ambitious.

JANAK  
You know your way around Indian  
jewelry?

As she turns back to him --

RUBY  
Like a turban knows its way around  
a Sikh's head.  
(and then)  
How in the world did you put  
together such a singular  
collection?

JANAK  
Oh, you know. I keep my eyes open  
for interesting pieces. Pick things  
up here and there.

Her look says she knows there's far more to it than that.

RUBY  
No. For real. How?

A moment, before Janak takes her request to know seriously  
and approaches.

JANAK  
There are only two ways to acquire  
a collection like this. One, you  
inherit it.

RUBY  
And two?

As a look of intrigue emerges in his eyes --

JANAK

Your irrational appetite for  
finding the most exquisite pieces  
the Indian subcontinent has to  
offer leads you on a deeply complex  
and at times painful odyssey from  
Delhi to Chennai...

*FLASHCUT TO: A map of India that marks a detailed and epic  
journey from north to south.*

JANAK (CONT'D)

...and dozens of cities, towns and  
villages in between. You ride atop  
jam packed trains and buses...

*FLASHCUT TO: Janak, on the rooftop of the Rajdhani Express  
Rail, getting his pocket picked by a TOOTHLESS SCOUNDREL.*

JANAK (CONT'D)

...with beggars and thieves. You  
breathe in thick...

*FLASHCUT TO: Janak, head wallowing in a waft of black smoke.*

JANAK (CONT'D)

...diesel fumes. You ask around,  
opening yourself up to being taken  
by cons and cheats. You get  
ridiculed...

*FLASHCUT TO: Janak, in a Mumbai bazaar, getting laughed at by  
a GANG OF MISCREANTS who just swindled him out of his money.*

JANAK (CONT'D)

...and ripped off. Ultimately, you  
operate at the mercy of a thousand  
waiters, street vendors and...

*FLASHCUT TO: Janak, passenger in the backseat of an auto  
rickshaw, conversing with the DRIVER.*

JANAK (CONT'D)

....rickshaw drivers you chat up  
along the way on the very off  
chance that someone might point you  
in the direction of what you are  
looking for: a truly authentic  
local artisan,...

*FLASHCUT TO: An avant-garde BANGLE MAKER, drenched in sweat,  
heating a metal ring in a furnace until it glows white hot.*

JANAK (CONT'D)

...a master of their craft who will do nothing else in their lifetime except make jewelry. Someone who would never stoop to selling their wares in a public market or bazaar and who you would otherwise never find on your own even if you searched for a millennia. And when you do finally find one...

*FLASHCUT TO: Janak, handing the bangle maker a fat envelope of rupees and thanking him with pranamasana prayer palms.*

JANAK (CONT'D)

....you praise them and pay them well, with the idea that you will help them continue their work, feed their family and, if you are lucky, have the privilege of doing business with them once again.

Janak completes his soliloquy and Ruby is clearly impressed.

RUBY

Wow. Thank you. For sharing that.

Janak's look suggests she's very welcome.

RUBY (CONT'D)

I didn't introduce myself. Ruby Taylor.

She extends her hand and Janak accepts.

JANAK

Janak Srinath.

RUBY

Janak, are you familiar with The Maharaja Collection?

JANAK

(good-naturedly)

You mean the collection of jewels and artifacts your people stole from mine during the British Raj?

RUBY

That would be the one.

JANAK

I am.

RUBY

I'm the VP of Sales for a jewelry dealer. We just purchased the entire collection at auction.

JANAK

That is a very special acquisition.

RUBY

Would you like to see it?

Janak is taken aback by the invite. Then --

JANAK

I would, very much.

As she reaches into her handbag and hands him her card --

RUBY

The address. Tomorrow. 11am.

Eyeing his frumpish threads --

RUBY (CONT'D)

Maybe throw on a sport coat?

**EXT. RODEO DRIVE (BEVERLY HILLS) - DAY**

The sun shines bright over the pristine shops of the world's finest luxury goods retailers. Janak pulls up to a parking meter in his SPUTTERING sedan.

**EXT. KING JEWELERS - DAY**

Janak, in an ill-fitting, off-the-rack blazer, carries a small jewelry case, as he approaches the grand storefront. He checks himself in a window. He knows he looks like shit.

**INT. KING JEWELERS - MAIN SHOWROOM - DAY**

Catering to the ultra-refined tastes of the jet-set crowd. Vaulted ceilings, opulent jewelry cases filled with million-dollar pieces and walls lined with abstract modern art define the space. Several WELL-HEELED CUSTOMERS browse.

Janak enters and takes it all in, at once captivated and wondering what the hell he's doing here. Just then, Ruby emerges and approaches him with a smile.

RUBY

Janak, love, you made it!

She gives him a hug. Then --

JANAK  
(re: the store)  
I am impressed.

RUBY  
If you weren't, I'd have to kill  
you.

JANAK  
If you killed me, you would have to  
dispose of my body.

Eyeing the case in his hand --

RUBY  
Is that for me?

JANAK  
It is.

He hands it to her and she opens it to find three of the  
bangles from his store that caught her attention.

RUBY  
Get the fuck out of here.

JANAK  
You invited me.

RUBY  
I'll pay you for these, of course.

JANAK  
Only if you wish to insult me to my  
core.  
(and then)  
They are a gift.

She hesitates, but accepts.

RUBY  
Thank you.  
(and then)  
Come on.

As she leads him to the --

**INT. KING JEWELERS - VAULT ROOM - DAY**

Janak and Ruby come upon a large vault door. She uses a  
biometric hand scanner to unlock it.

**INT. KING JEWELERS - VAULT - DAY**

Ruby leads Janak into the vault and to a display case that houses The Maharaja Collection. Janak peers in intently at the diamonds, jeweled rings, a ruby and jade handled dagger, and a dozen more pieces.

RUBY

So, what do you think?

JANAK

I think... I am enraptured.

As he exuberantly talks her through a few pieces --

JANAK (CONT'D)

That's the Rah-i-Noor diamond, one of the rarest Golcanda diamonds in the world. Hundreds of men have died trying to get their hands on it.

(and then)

And that's Shah Jahan's Dagger, with Mughal jade handles. Did it ever leave his side? And if so, how many lives did it take?

(and then)

That ring is 600 years old. It has the finest Rajasthani emeralds ever mined. It could not be recreated in a million years.

He eyes her.

JANAK (CONT'D)

There are pieces here that are thought to have been lost forever. The collection is even more extraordinary than I was aware. It captures the essence of my homeland to perfection. And it is a rare gift to be in its presence.

RUBY

You're welcome.

(and then)

Our appraisers have valued the collection just north of seventy five million. We plan to break it up and sell it for ninety.

JANAK

The amount is more than my simple mind can comprehend.

RUBY

See if you can comprehend this:  
we're paying the sales team that  
moves it a three percent  
commission. That's two-point-seven  
million dollars.

Janak is quietly staggered by the number.

RUBY (CONT'D)

But now I'm thinking...

JANAK

About?

RUBY

Do I really need a whole sales  
team? Or just one stone cold killer  
disguised as an affable Indian  
bloke to come in, hock the whole  
collection himself and pocket the  
entire comish?

Janak is momentarily staggered by the suggestion. But then,  
he wraps his head around this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.  
As he offers her an awkward, affable grin --

JANAK

How's that?

RUBY

How's what?

JANAK

My affable Indian bloke face.

And as Ruby observes him momentarily, before LAUGHING her ass  
off --

RUBY

I can't wait to tell my boss about  
you.

**INT. LAX AIRPORT - BAGGAGE CLAIM - DAY**

A pair of high-end, leather suitcases arrive on the baggage  
carousel. They belong to --

PETER KING (44, Caucasian)

The Brit-born Founder & CEO of King Jewelers, he's fiendishly  
handsome in looks, savage in personality and dressed to the  
nines in Franco-Italiano menswear.

As his DRIVER (35, male) grabs one of the bags and THUNKS it onto a wheel cart --

*NOTE: PETER SPEAKS WITH AN OXFORD ENGLISH ACCENT*

PETER  
(sternly)  
Be careful with those.

DRIVER  
Yes, Mr. King.

As he grabs the second and PLUNKS it on top of the first --

PETER  
Hey! I just said be careful you doltish sod. Those are Brunello Cucinelli leather cabin cases. They're worth more than your children.

DRIVER  
I don't have any children.

PETER  
Of course you don't. Who would procreate with your genetically irrelevant seed?  
(and then)  
Now unstack the bags and give the fabric the breathing room it needs to thrive.

DRIVER  
Right away, sir.

**INT. ESCALADE (MOVING)- DAY**

As the driver rolls up Robertson in Beverly Hills, Peter, in back, rolls down his window to get some air.

It doesn't take long before they arrive at a stoplight and Peter's confronted with a WILY HOMELESS MAN (55) on the sidewalk.

With his penis out and about to urinate into the street, Peter, infuriated, YELLS at him --

PETER  
Put that pisser back in your trousers you dirty dosser! You disgust me!

But Peter only serves to fuel the man's fire, as he steps forward, showers the vehicle and YELLS back --

HOMELESS MAN  
Drink my homemade lemonade you  
dickbiscuit!

This sends Peter into a RAGE. Leaning out the window --

PETER  
Me, a dickbiscuit?! Look at you!!  
You're the dickbiscuit, you  
penniless cockwomble fuck!!!

And as the driver, alarmed, eyes Peter in the rearview, as he speeds off --

**EXT. ELLIOT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (CERRITOS, CA) - DAY**

School's out and DOZENS OF STUDENTS stream out the doors.

BLACKTOP

Pappu, strapped with a backpack, exits and walks.

BASEBALL FIELD

In the outfield, practicing crude, but punishing jiu jitsu on each other are --

ROB (12, Caucasian)

A corn-fed American brute who could pass for 16.

CHRIS (11, Caucasian)

A feisty future wife-beater with bad skin.

TITO (11, Latino)

A scrappy brawler who'll have MS-13 recruiters knocking on his door any day now.

Rob's got Chris in a painful arm bar, as Tito watches. Finally, Chris taps out. As he recovers, Pappu, out in the distance, catches his eye.

CHRIS  
Hey Tito, there's your best friend.

Chris and Rob LAUGH at Tito.

TITO  
Pappu ain't my friend.

As he gesticulates a blowjob --

TITO (CONT'D)  
He's Rob's bitch-ass boyfriend.

Now Tito and Chris LAUGH.

But Rob doesn't take lightly to the slight. In an instant, he uses a single leg takedown to put Tito on his back with a THUD. Chris, impressed --

CHRIS  
Ohhh, damn!

Now, Rob eyes Pappu like a game hunter locked in on a zebra.

ROB  
If he's my boyfriend, then I guess  
I better go show him some love.

BLACKTOP - MOMENTS LATER

As Pappu walks, he takes a hard KICK to the back and lands face first on the asphalt. When he finally looks up with his road rash cheek, he's got Rob, flanked by Chris and Tito, hovering over him.

ROB (CONT'D)  
You done humping the ground  
shitskin?

CHRIS  
Dude, where the fuck are you from  
anyway?

TITO  
I think he's from Persia.

Pappu peels himself off the ground and rises to his feet.

ROB  
Nah, Pappu here is Indian. Know how  
I know? Because he does pussy yoga  
and looks like all of those other  
yoga tard shitskins on Pioneer  
Boulevard.

Chris and Tito LAUGH. Then, Chris eyes Tito --

CHRIS  
What are you laughing at, *El Chapo*?  
You're a shitskin, too.

TITO  
No, bro, this Oaxcan bronze.

As Rob continues --

ROB  
My stepdad hates Little India. He said he wants to roll down there with his Taurus nine for target practice.

Rob now eyes Pappu, inching up on him, as his inner rage intensifies.

ROB (CONT'D)  
Dude, I can smell you when I sit behind you in social. You stink like rice balls cooked in piss.

Chris and Tito CRACK UP. But as they do, Pappu gets a fierce look in his eye.

PAPPU  
You mean rice *biryani*.

ROB  
What the fuck is that?

PAPPU  
It's basmati rice cooked with fragrant spices like cardamom and cloves. It's what my mom makes.  
(firmly)  
She doesn't make rice balls.

Pappu's back-talk sends Rob over the edge. And as he hauls back and violently CRACKS Pappu in face --

# **INT. SOMNI (BEVERLY HILLS) - DAY**

A restaurant so stark, whimsical and exclusive that it seats just ten guests at its Carrera marble bar. As Ruby and Peter lunch on panellets of pine nut cream and Catalan wine --

PETER  
I swear, the lifestyle adjustment of hopping from London to Los Angeles is the equivalent of trading in a Bentley for a Ford Focus.

(MORE)

PETER (CONT'D)

Plus, if I see one more gutter-pissing homeless degenerate in Beverly Hills, I'm gonna shove a star map so far up his ass he won't be able to find Ellen DeGeneres's house with a twelve inch rectoscope.

As off-put by him as Ruby is, she goes along with it for the sake of her career.

RUBY

Well, here's to you arriving in LA safe and sound.

They CLINK glasses.

PETER

I hardly think safe is the right word. If there wasn't enough random fuckery to deal with already, I've now got the U.S. State Department so far up my ass that I'm singing the Star Spangled Banner every time I take a shit. And you know how I feel about singing.

RUBY

The State Department? What do they want?

PETER

The Ministry of India got word about our acquisition of The Maharaja Collection. They're pressuring the feds to force us to give it back to them.

As Peter pops a panellet and talks with his mouth full --

PETER (CONT'D)

Can you believe the Indians have the fucking cobblers to say the British stole the collection from them?

RUBY

Umm, we did.

Outraged, Peter SPITS his food out onto his plate.

PETER

Bull-fucking-bullocks we did!  
(and then)  
(MORE)

PETER (CONT'D)

The British Raj was the best thing that ever happened to that open sewage of a country. We gave them roadways, railways, suits, neckties. We even gave them cricket for chrissake. They'd be nothing if it weren't for us. As far as I'm concerned, they should consider The Maharaja Collection in our possession as a minuscule token of their appreciation.

He points his fork at her --

PETER (CONT'D)

And if you say we stole it from them again, this ludicrously-priced Michelin-starred feast is coming out of your next paycheck.

She gives him a look, as he drains his wine. Then --

RUBY

As long as we're on the subject of The Maharaja Collection, you should know, I hired a new sales rep to move it.

Pleasantly surprised --

PETER

No shit?

RUBY

He knows the collection inside out. And, he's passionate. I think he'll do well for us.

PETER

Well, tell him to hurry up and unload it so I can tell the State Department to bob my knob and piss off.

**INT. KING JEWELERS - JANAK'S OFFICE - DAY**

A small and pleasant workspace with a handsome desk and modern tech conveniences. Highly focused, Janak has been pouring through a multi-page document. *Something* in it gets his attention.

**INT. KING JEWELERS - OFFICE HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER**

Janak, walking with document in hand, passes a palatial, glass-walled office on his left.

Inside is an oversized and garish wall photo of Peter brandishing a rifle and boastfully posing with his trophy: a slain Indian elephant.

Janak is disturbed by the haunting image, but continuing on, he comes upon the glass wall of Ruby's bespoke office where she sits at her desk. He subtly gets her attention and she waves him in.

**INT. RUBY'S OFFICE - DAY**

Ruby eyes the document in Janak's hand, as he enters.

RUBY

Look who's having a gander at the  
Lead List their first hour on the  
job. Anything interesting?

JANAK

There is one name that caught my  
attention.

RUBY

Do tell.

JANAK

M. Night Shyamalan.

RUBY

Ugh, I love him. If I could watch  
*Lady in the Water* three nights a  
week 'til the day I die, I'd want  
to live forever. Know what I mean?

JANAK

Replace *Lady in the Water* with  
*Unbreakable* and I am right there  
with you, sister.

(and then)

He's really an interested buyer?

RUBY

So we've been told.

JANAK

His phone number is listed here.

RUBY

Yeah.

JANAK  
So I can call him directly?

RUBY  
Yeah.

JANAK  
And talk to him.

RUBY  
Uh, yeah.

JANAK  
For real?

RUBY  
Just pick up the phone and dial.

Janak is surprised by his access to the celebrated director.

JANAK  
Sounds good.

As Janak begins to depart --

RUBY  
Janak.

JANAK  
Yes?

RUBY  
There's another famous Indian on  
that list, you know?

JANAK  
Really? Who?

RUBY  
Bikram.

Janak cringes at the mention of the disgraced yogi. Then --

JANAK  
I will stick with Night.

**INT. SRINATH HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Janak pours a beverage, as Chitra makes dinner.

CHITRA  
How did your first day go?

JANAK

Excellent. You will never guess  
which famous Indian I talked to on  
the phone.

CHITRA

(excitedly)

Bikram?

Just then, Pappu enters through the back door with a badly  
scraped face and a black eye.

CHITRA (CONT'D)

Oh my god, Pappu! What happened?

Chitra rushes to his side. He's in a foul mood.

PAPPU

Duh! I got my ass kicked.

CHITRA

By who?

PAPPU

A kid at school. He kicked me to  
the ground, told me I smelled like  
rice balls cooked in piss, then  
punched me in the face.

CHITRA

Rice balls? How could he say that?  
Did you tell him I make rice  
*biryani*?

PAPPU

Yeah, I told him.

CHITRA

Are you sure?

PAPPU

Yeah, I'm sure mom!

Janak steps in, crouches down and calmly checks his injuries.

JANAK

You got scraped up pretty good.  
(and then)  
But you will be okay.

CHITRA

I'm so sorry this happened to you,  
Pappu.

Pappu eyes her angrily --

PAPPU  
You should be sorry. This is your fault.

CHITRA  
My fault? How could you say that?

PAPPU  
I told you a million times I wanted to do MMA. All the boys at school do it. Instead you sent me to yoga with the girls. Now they call me yoga tard. Yoga is stupid.

CHITRA  
Yoga is not stupid! It is a gift to do yoga!

PAPPU  
You can't kick anyone's ass with yoga, mom!

Pappu runs off to his bedroom. And as Chitra breaks down CRYING, as Janak consoles her --

**INT. ELLIOT ELEMENTARY - ADMIN WING - DAY**

A placard on a closed door reads: Office of the Principal.

**INT. ELLIOT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - OFFICE OF THE PRINCIPAL - DAY**

Janak and Chitra sit across from --

PRINCIPAL LIU (56, Chinese-American)

A calloused veteran of the public school system who's dressed like he's got a golf game he's missing to be here.

CHITRA  
I do not care what you have to do. Nothing like this can ever happen to my Pappu again.

Principal Liu takes a deep breath. Then --

*NOTE: PRINCIPAL LIU SPEAKS NATIVE LEVEL ENGLISH (NO ACCENT)*

PRINCIPAL LIU  
Look, what I'm about to say is off the record. If you repeat it and it comes back to bite me in the ass, I'll deny it. Alright?

Janak and Chitra eye each. Then, Janak nods in agreement to the principal.

PRINCIPAL LIU (CONT'D)

You need to teach your boy how to scrap.

JANAK

Scrap?

CHITRA

What does this mean?

PRINCIPAL LIU

Fight.

Chitra's appalled.

CHITRA

What?! That is not a reasonable solution to this. You need to have a firm talk with the parents of those bullies.

PRINCIPAL LIU

Uh, not a good idea. Rob's stepdad is like an unholy cross between Steve Bannon and the Las Vegas gunman. In fact, all three of the boys' parents have monster kids for a reason, if you know what I mean.  
(and then)

Pappu on the other hand is a decent kid. He gets good grades. His teachers like him. But...

JANAK

But what?

PRINCIPAL LIU

He's swarthy.

CHITRA

I do not know what that means, either.

PRINCIPAL LIU

He's brown. Dark brown. And he's got cultural baggage. Trust me, most kids from Cerritos don't understand people who worship gods with elephant heads. Nor do they care to.

(and then)

(MORE)

PRINCIPAL LIU (CONT'D)  
And on top of all that, Pappu's  
kind of a pussy.

CHITRA  
This is outrageous! You cannot talk  
about him like that.

PRINCIPAL LIU  
Sure I can. Know why? Because at  
his age, I was a pussy with  
cultural baggage, too.

He LAUGHS. Then --

PRINCIPAL LIU (CONT'D)  
Listen. I'm trying to help you. Do  
your boy a favor. Learn to cook  
some classic American staples in  
your house so when he comes to  
school he smells like meatloaf  
instead of *masala*. Then, get him  
into a judo class or something.

He throws a *tsukkake* judo air punch.

PRINCIPAL LIU (CONT'D)  
I don't expect him to be the next  
Khabib Nurmagomedov-whatever his name  
is. But at the least it'll give him  
some assertiveness. Some  
confidence. And then, just maybe,  
the other kids will stop messing  
with him.

As Chitra and Janak now eye him despondently --

PRINCIPAL LIU (CONT'D)  
Like I said, off the record.

# **INT. KING JEWELERS - SHOWROOM - DAY**

Janak approaches and opens a black briefcase that holds --

JANAK  
Shah Jahan's Dagger, sir.

He's speaking to M. NIGHT SHYAMALAN, in the flesh. Night is  
captivated by the piece.

M. NIGHT SHYAMALAN  
If only it could talk, right?

JANAK  
If only.

Night gestures for his brute SECURITY GUARD (35) to step forward. He relieves Janak of the case and handcuffs it to his wrist before stepping aside.

M. NIGHT SHYAMALAN

As we discussed earlier, like you,  
I want the people of India to enjoy  
the dagger. I've arranged to have  
it displayed, in all of its  
stunning glory, in a museum in  
Pondicherry.

JANAK

Music to my ears.

M. NIGHT SHYAMALAN

Its ownership will automatically  
transfer to the Tamil Nadu  
Government, upon my death.

JANAK

Hopefully, a very long time from  
now.

M. NIGHT SHYAMALAN

Uh, yeah.

JANAK

Congratulations again on your  
purchase.

M. NIGHT SHYAMALAN

Best of luck to you on finding a  
home for the remainder of the  
collection.

Night extends his hand and Janak accepts.

M. NIGHT SHYAMALAN (CONT'D)

And above all...

Night now draws Janak closer to tell him *something* --

M. NIGHT SHYAMALAN (CONT'D)

...watch out for *Kuttichathan*.

Night pulls back and eyes Janak with a knowing look. Janak is perplexed. What the hell is *Kuttichathan*? And why is Night, of all people, warning him about this?

Janak looks on, as Night and his security guard head for the door and depart.

Just then, POP! Janak is startled by the sound. He spins around to find Ruby with an erupting champagne bottle and two glasses in hand. She's over the moon --

RUBY  
 Janak you crafty *Tamil* bastard!  
 (and then)  
 How does it feel to make a three  
 million dollar sale and bag a 90K  
 commission your second day on the  
 job?

A moment, as Janak reels from the realization. Then --

JANAK  
 Surreal.

She fills the two glasses and hands him one.

RUBY  
 We'll save the congratulatory toast  
 for tonight. Drink up.

Janak sips, as she downs her glass. Then --

JANAK  
 Wait. What is tonight?

RUBY  
 Call your wife, we're going out to  
 celebrate.

JANAK  
 Where?

RUBY  
 It's Bollywood Night at Avalon!

JANAK  
 Bollywood Night?

Janak hesitates. But then, being polite --

JANAK (CONT'D)  
 Sounds like fun.  
 (and then)  
 Can I bring my friend Ravi, too?

And as a rollicking BHANGRA DANCE BEAT kicks in --

**INT. AVALON - NIGHT**

Hollywood's preeminent and cavernous dance and supper club. Tonight it's adorned in *Mughal*-style decor and PULSING with sound and energy. At the --

DANCE FLOOR BAR

Ruby orders drinks from the eye-candy BARTENDER (21, female) for Janak, Chitra, Ravi and herself.

RUBY  
Four double shots of Casamigos.

JANAK  
I was thinking more like an ultra-light beer.

CHITRA  
And I was thinking a Chardonnay spritzer.

RUBY  
As your host tonight, I think you should let me do the thinking.

The bartender slides the shots over and Ruby passes them around. She raises her glass --

RUBY (CONT'D)  
To Janak, a rare breed of jeweler with an otherworldly ability to close a deal.

Janak eyes her curiously. Then --

RUBY (CONT'D)  
Congratulations on your first sale with King Jewelers!

They HOOT AND HOLLAR and down their shots. Then --

RAVI  
Hey Ruby, I know what you were thinking when you first met me.

RUBY  
What's that?

RAVI  
That I look like someone famous.

RUBY  
No, I wasn't thinking that.

RAVI  
Oh, I think you were.

RUBY  
I think we should all go dance.

Atop an --

#### ELEVATED STAGE

Set against a celestial-themed motion-drape backdrop, is Udyan Sagar a.k.a. DJ NUCLEYA, the "Czar of Indian EDM". He detonates the musical bomb track that is *Chennai Bass*.

DJ NUCLEYA  
*I'm from Calicut, Cut, Cut/Calicut,  
Cut, Cut/Calicut, Cut, Cut...*

He's flanked on both sides by six SMOKIN' HOT INDIAN GO-GO DANCERS in tube tops and tights. They're bathed in a pulsing light show and working their asses off to tantalize a revved-up audience of 500+ PARTYERS on the --

#### DANCE FLOOR

Movin', groovin' and sweatin' among them are Janak, Chitra, Ruby and Ravi.

No surprise, Janak is a laughably stiff and choppy dancer, though his heart is into it and he gives it his all.

Chitra on the other hand has some serious moves, including a fluid, hip-shaking *thumpka*.

Ruby draws from a deep arsenal of slick dance moves she picked up during her days in the London club scene.

But the star of the night is Ravi. With his lean and nimble frame and explosive firecracker style, he's the master of a thousand moves. He busts out a deft amalgamation of east-meets-west steps that include the bow and arrow, Billie Jean legs and the heel-toe toprock, to name just a few.

Ruby is colored impressed by him and they rock out together on the floor.

As Janak continues to dance with Chitra, *something* catches his eye. On the DJ's motion backdrop, Shiva suddenly appears. He begins to hurl searing 3D balls of fire that look like mini suns at Janak.

Janak is convinced that they're going to eviscerate him, but they ultimately evaporate into the ether.

As Shiva stares down at Janak, the fierce look in his eyes can only be described as apocalyptic. Is all of this part of the show? Is Janak the only one who can see it? The moment instills a deep fear in him, as the music hits a FEVER PITCH.

Soon Chitra notices the change in Janak's demeanor. Leaning into his ear, concerned --

CHITRA  
What is wrong?

He doesn't answer.

CHITRA (CONT'D)  
You look like you saw a spirit.

Finally, he responds --

JANAK  
It is nothing. I am fine.

And as Janak shakes it off and they carry on dancing --

SUBTERRANEAN BAR - LATER

Janak, Chitra, Ruby and Ravi congregate at the bar, sweaty and spent. They've been drinking continuously since they got off the dance floor and lack command of their full faculties. Janak asks Ravi discreetly --

JANAK (CONT'D)  
Question. Did you see Shiva hurling searing balls of fire at me on the dance floor?

Ravi eyes him curiously. Then, realizing --

RAVI  
Dude, you scored a molly and you did not get one for me? What kind of a friend are you?

Just then, Ruby throws her arm around Ravi --

RUBY  
Where in the hell did you learn to move like that on the dance floor?

RAVI  
*High School Musical*, starring...

He waits for her to finish his sentence. But --

RUBY

You actually think I watched that  
shit?

Chitra, tipsy, now addresses all of them --

CHITRA

I think there is a chance I am  
going to be hungover tomorrow and  
want to kill myself with a bottle  
of Lunesta. But right now I feel so  
good and just want to keep drinking  
Cindy Crawford's husband's tequila  
all night long.

Just then --

RUBY

Oh my god, I can't believe you made  
it.

She's talking to Peter, who has just arrived in his finest  
D&G sport coat. She hugs him. He WHISPERS in her ear --

PETER

You smell like a damp Mexico City  
cantina on a sweltering night. And  
no, not in a good way.

As she shrugs --

RUBY

Must be the Casamigos.  
(and then)  
You have to meet everyone. This is  
Ravi.

Peter responds to the following with holier-than-thou looks  
and nods --

RAVI

Yo.

RUBY

Chitra.

CHITRA

It's a pleasure.

RUBY

And of course, our new star  
salesman and man of the hour,  
Janak.

Peter gives Janak the once over, before rolling his eyes.

SUNKEN LOUNGE - LATER

Peter, whiskey in hand, BOASTS to Janak, as they sit in a private corner.

PETER

I bought a severely distressed South African gold mine at the bottom of the financial crisis, flipped it at the top of its bull run and made a killing. I used the proceeds to launch King Jewelers, among a handful of other highly lucrative luxury goods enterprises.

JANAK

I am impressed.

PETER

That's because it's impressive.  
(and then)  
But enough about me. I understand you ran an Artesia jewelry shop dead into the ground?

JANAK

That is one way of putting it.

PETER

It's the *only* way to put it. I'm a straight-shooter, Janak. There's no jiggery-pokery with me. I despise subtext and loathe having to read between the lines. I tell it like it is. I expect the same of all of my employees.

JANAK

I can appreciate that.

PETER

Then tell me something. Ruby gave you a Lead List of at least fifty premium buyers. You chose to make your first sale, congratulations by the fucking way, to a *desi*.  
(and then)  
What are you? Some kind of an Indian Nationalist?

JANAK

No, I do not think so.

PETER

Are you a spy for the Indian Government? Did they hire you to infiltrate my company?

JANAK

Uh, no sir.

PETER

You see, the thing about a scally like you is that until you joined my company, you had nothing to lose. I on the other hand have everything to lose.

Peter drains his whiskey and gets up.

PETER (CONT'D)

But I never lose.

And on that, he tosses his glass on the floor and splits.

**INT. RUBY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY**

A vaulted WeHo stunner with windows that open up to Doheny. As Ruby, puffy and hungover, does her face in a vanity --

RAVI (O.S.)

Zac Efron.

She turns. Ravi, with only a bit of sheet covering his bits, is otherwise naked in her bed.

RUBY

Yeah, I can see the resemblance.

RAVI

Really?

RUBY

No.

(and then)

Now please put your underwear on.

Gyrating his pelvis --

RAVI

That is not what you said last night, Ruby my precious gem.

Just then, she gets a TEXT. Checking --

RUBY

Shit. It's Peter. I gotta go.

As she accelerates her pace --

RAVI  
Uh, so, we'll do this again?

Ignoring his question --

RUBY  
The kitchen's stocked. Help  
yourself to a mimosa and a Pop  
Tart. And do lock the door on your  
way out, love.

And as she exits the bedroom --

RAVI  
(to himself)  
That is a "yes", right?

**INT. SRINATH HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - DAY**

Janak and Chitra lay in bed, hungover and miserable. Chitra  
GROANS.

CHITRA  
Damn you, Cindy Crawford.

JANAK  
She seems like a pleasant woman,  
but I am a bit upset with her  
myself.

As Chitra drags herself out of bed and sips water --

CHITRA  
What is happening to us?

JANAK  
What do you mean?

CHITRA  
I am hungover, you are hungover. We  
are not drinkers. This is not like  
us.

JANAK  
It was just one night. It is okay.

CHITRA  
No, Janak. Everything has changed  
so fast. You were your own boss for  
a decade. Then, in an instant, you  
lost your store.  
(MORE)

CHITRA (CONT'D)  
Immediately you got a fancy new  
Beverly Hills job that pays as much  
money in one day as you used to  
make in one year.

She sits on the edge of the bed, eyeing him with worry.

CHITRA (CONT'D)  
Something is not right.

Janak hesitates. Then --

JANAK  
Chitra, there is something I have  
not told you.

CHITRA  
What?

JANAK  
The other day, I went and saw  
Krishna Bhatta.

CHITRA  
The priest?

Janak nods.

CHITRA (CONT'D)  
Why?

JANAK  
To ask him for help. With business.  
With money.  
(and then)  
He did a *pooja*.

Chitra doesn't like the sound of this.

CHITRA  
Janak...

JANAK  
Ever since, strange things have  
been happening.

CHITRA  
Strange how?

JANAK  
I see things. I have had direct  
personal encounters with the  
divine. The Lord Shiva... he  
looks... angry.

Now Chitra is deeply concerned. And upset.

CHITRA

I do not understand this. Before, I could not have dragged you to a priest even if I told you he was handing out *Kashmiri* sapphires. What in the world possessed you to go to him?

A long moment. And then --

JANAK

Ravi.

CHITRA

*Katavule* (Oh my god)!

She slaps her forehead.

CHITRA (CONT'D)

You listened to that wake-and-bake buffoon? What is wrong with you? You do not invoke a higher power for worldly gains. Nothing good can come of that.

JANAK

I did not have a choice, Chitra.

CHITRA

Yes, you did. You need to go back to Krishna Bhatta and have him reverse this.

JANAK

What? And go back to being on the verge of financial collapse? No way.

Janak, now upset himself, gets out of bed and into his pants.

JANAK (CONT'D)

I am sorry I told you. Forget about all of this. Everything will be fine.

Chitra, now infuriated, heads for the door.

CHITRA

Fine! Have fun getting terrorized by the Lord of the Universe!

And as she SLAMS the door shut on her way out --

**EXT. URTH CAFE - PATIO - DAY**

Ruby and Peter, the latter in an excessively vile mood, drink lattes at a table.

PETER

How could you disappoint me like this, Ruby? After all I've done for your career.

RUBY

I don't understand what you're so upset about.

PETER

Did you see his hair? His pants? Janak Srinath is not King Jewelers material. He's barely fit to drive an Uber.

RUBY

Janak made a three million dollar sale for us.

PETER

Yeah, to M. Night Shyamalan, a second-rate Indian movie director. *Midsommar* was unwatchable trash.

RUBY

He didn't direct that.

PETER

That's not the fucking point!  
(and then)  
The point is, I didn't break my back acquiring The Maharaja Collection, simply to turn around and repatriate it to *those* people.

RUBY

You know, I've only recently started to see this side of you.

PETER

What side?

She hesitates. Then --

RUBY

Racially incorrect.

PETER

You're calling me a racist? Ha!  
Nothing could be further from the  
truth. But I will say if you were  
going to hire an Indian, the least  
you could've done is gotten us an  
evolved one. A Dartmouth, silver  
spoon, Silicon Valley-type.

He grabs the bangles on her wrist --

PETER (CONT'D)

Not some third-rate, slumdog,  
costume jewelry peddler from  
Artesia.

She pulls her hand back.

PETER (CONT'D)

Have you ever been to Artesia? It's  
a grotty brown stain on the  
jockstrap that is southeast Los  
Angeles county. If Panorama City is  
LA's armpit, Artesia is most  
certainly its taint.

Ruby eyes him with severe disconcert.

PETER (CONT'D)

Oh, please, save your appalled look  
for something more appalling,  
alright? The fact is, India and its  
people lack class, gravitas or even  
a basic sense of decorum. And  
they're weak. They let another  
country stroll on in and occupy  
them, for chrissake. What could be  
more ball-less than that? Plus,  
Indians are ugly, breed like  
rabbits and pray to animals.  
Churchill said it best: "They're a  
beastly people with a beastly  
religion."

Ruby is now entirely despondent.

PETER (CONT'D)

Now, about how you'll handle  
Janak...

**EXT. KING JEWELERS - DAY**

Janak arrives for work, but before he can go in, Ruby steps  
out to greet him.

RUBY  
Morning, Janak.

JANAK  
Good morning. How are you feeling today?

RUBY  
Fucking Cindy Crawford...  
(and then)  
Come on, let's take a walk.

**EXT. RODEO DRIVE - SIDEWALK - MOMENTS LATER**

As Janak and Ruby walk and talk --

RUBY  
There's no easy way to tell you this.

JANAK  
Tell me what?

RUBY  
We're letting you go.

Janak, taken aback, stops.

JANAK  
Why?

RUBY  
We've decided to go in a different direction with the sales role.

JANAK  
But I thought you were pleased with my first sale.

Ruby takes a breath. Then --

RUBY  
Peter has decided that he wants somebody else.

Janak lets this sink in. Then --

JANAK  
I did get a not-so-warm feeling from him last night. But still, I should talk to him.

RUBY  
That's not a good idea.

JANAK

Why not?

RUBY

Because he won't be receptive to anything you have to say.

JANAK

How do you know?

She gets agitated --

RUBY

Because I know. Because he's shown me his true colors.

JANAK

What do you mean?

RUBY

He's a bloody racist. He makes Mel Gibson look like Tom Hanks. He personally despises you. And if you push back, he'll fuck you. He'll fuck you in places you don't want to be fucked.

Janak is taken aback by her choice of words. Then --

RUBY (CONT'D)

You're great at what you do, Janak. Just, go do it somewhere else.

A long moment. Then --

JANAK

Can I ask, what led you to my shop in the first place?

RUBY

You wouldn't believe me if I told you.

Janak's look says he probably would. And then, resigning himself to the circumstances --

JANAK

About my commission check...

The topic makes Ruby's stomach sink.

RUBY

Peter rescinded your commission. He said it was disproportionate to your effort.

She pulls out an envelope and hands it to him.

RUBY (CONT'D)

That's four hundred dollars for your two days of work. I'm sorry.

And as the insult to injury eviscerates his last shred of dignity --

**EXT. VENICE BEACH - BOARDWALK - DAY**

Janak, looking lost and humiliated, walks aimlessly past a long row of ARTIST VENDORS. He comes upon a display featuring vivid and psychedelic paintings of Lord Shiva.

One of them grabs Janak's attention, as Shiva's angry eyes come to life and follow him. Terrified, Janak runs away.

**INT. NISSAN SENTRA (MOVING) - DAY**

Driving down Pioneer Boulevard, Janak watches as CONSTRUCTION WORKERS violently tear down the "Janak the Jeweler" sign on his old store and send it CRASHING to the sidewalk. A tear falls from his eye.

**EXT. ARTESIA PARK - DAY**

Janak and Ravi sit in the grass, as the latter rolls a joint.

JANAK

And then, she canned me, like hearts of palm in a malodorous brine.

This pisses Ravi off to no end.

RAVI

That callous little Land Rover-driving gingercrotch! I should have known, the moment I slid into her bamboo sheet-lined Simmons Beautyrest and slipped her my inverted Jesus.

As he lights up --

RAVI (CONT'D)

I swear, I will never call Ruby.  
And not just because she failed to  
give me her phone number, either.

JANAK

It is okay, Ravi. It is not her  
fault. She answers to Peter. And he  
is the aggressor in all of this.

RAVI

In that case, can you text me her  
digits when you get a chance? I  
have developed an affection for her  
lilting cockney accent. Plus, this  
warm spring climate has really been  
arousing my passions.

As Janak gets up --

JANAK

Of course, Ravi.

RAVI

By the way, how did Chitra react to  
you getting shit-canned?

JANAK

I am on my way to tell her now.

**EXT. SRINATH HOUSE - DAY**

Janak steps out of his car and walks toward the house with  
the crushing weight of the bad news he has to deliver.

**INT. SRINATH HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Janak enters to find Chitra holding an ice pack to Pappu's  
face. She removes it, revealing a ghastly new bruise and  
swollen eye.

As her tears flow, Janak approaches Pappu. He lifts his chin  
to examine the damage. It's too much for him to bear. His  
eyes begin to well up, too.

CHITRA

What good are we if we cannot  
protect our own child?

A moment, as Janak contemplates the answer. And then, as his  
gaze turns dark and vengeful --

**INT. NISSAN SENTRA (MOVING) - NIGHT**

Janak drives through the blight and decay of downtown LA, hellfire in his eyes. Pappu rides in the passenger seat, his eyes now emitting their own strain of excessive darkness.

**EXT. MONK'S MMA - NIGHT**

Janak and Pappu enter a warehouse announced by namesake signage.

**INT. MONK'S MMA - NIGHT**

Janak, all business, has Pappu at his side, as he has a word with MONK (39, African-American), a stealthy combat instructor in a sharp black *gi*.

JANAK

No group lessons. You will give  
Pappu private lessons.

MONK

Privates are pricey.

JANAK

How pricey?

MONK

Hundred an hour.

JANAK

Excellent.

Janak pulls out his \$400 paycheck from King Jewelers, endorses it and hands it to him.

JANAK (CONT'D)

You will instruct him for four  
rigorous and demanding hours over  
the course of the next two days.  
You will teach him striking skills,  
ground attack and mental toughness.  
Each day when I pick him up, you  
will have him demonstrate for me a  
minimum of three new techniques he  
has learned to annihilate an  
attacker.

Janak caresses Pappu's head.

JANAK (CONT'D)

Satisfactorily prepare my boy for combat and I will not only pay you a generous bonus at a future date, but also write you a Yelp review that will bring jealousy and resentment to the hearts of your business competitors.

Monk, agitated by Janak's ignorance, but still cordial --

MONK

While I can appreciate your enthusiasm, and urgency, for wanting your boy to learn how to defend himself, the fact is it takes time to attain even basic martial arts skills. And a ground game? Mental strength?

He gestures to some SEASONED FIGHTERS rolling through their jiu jitsu practice in the background.

MONK (CONT'D)

Those can take years.

JANAK

Fine. Give me my check back.

Monk hesitates. Then --

MONK

You didn't let me finish.

(and then)

Give me two sessions with young Pappu here. And I promise you there won't be a boy at his school who won't feel his wrath, should one of those little bitch-asses decide to get up in his grill.

JANAK

Very good.

**EXT. KRISHNA BHATTA'S HOUSE - DAY**

Janak pulls up in his SPUTTERING car.

**INT. KRISHNA BHATTA'S HOUSE - POOJA ROOM - DAY**

Janak and Krishna Bhatta sit on the floor.

JANAK

I need another *pooja*. A more powerful one.

KRISHNA BHATTA

For what reason?

JANAK

The last one failed.

A moment. And then --

KRISHNA BHATTA

I can not help you.

JANAK

Why not?

KRISHNA BHATTA

I checked your aura when you came in. It has gone dark. I want no part of that. I advise you to go back to your old life. To accept your reality. And work within it.

JANAK

My reality is that I have lost my business, I am going to lose my house, my son is a human punching bag and I am two bags of *basmati* rice away from not being able to feed my family.

Krishna Bhatta, unfazed by Janak's predicament, lights some incense.

KRISHNA BHATTA

I called upon Shiva to help you. Clearly, he is not in the mood for you.

(intense)

Do not test him.

JANAK

I am in a worse place now than I was before I met you. You have to help me. You owe me.

(and then)

Now, please, do another *pooja*.

Krishna Bhatta takes a long, deep breath. Finally --

KRISHNA BHATTA  
If you insist on another *pooja*,  
then you must go to *Shri*  
*Swaminarayan Mandir*.

JANAK  
No temples.

KRISHNA BHATTA  
No temples? What kind of a Hindu  
are you?

JANAK  
The kind that does not go to  
temples.

KRISHNA BHATTA  
(firmly)  
If you want to proceed, it is your  
only choice.

He finds a tiny, blue, cobalt bottle filled with essential  
oil and hands it to Janak.

KRISHNA BHATTA (CONT'D)  
When you get there, find the statue  
of Shiva. And offer him that.  
(and then)  
Just remember, I warned you.

And as incense smoke wafts into Janak's face and he COUGHS --

**EXT. SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR - DAY**

Janak, brimming with apprehension, walks across the eerily  
still grounds. He arrives at the grand staircase to the main  
temple and takes it up.

**INT. SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR - WORSHIP ROOM - DAY**

Janak enters the vast space to find that he's here all alone.  
He eyes the statues of the various gods with trepidation.  
Finally, his eyes land on Shiva.

He cautiously approaches Shiva and looks up. The Lord of the  
Universe, third eye now shut, towers over him and unnerves  
him to his core. Janak finds the cobalt bottle in his pocket  
and places it at the statue's base.

He waits. For a long moment. Nothing happens. Then, finally,  
Shiva's third eye SNAPS opens and emits a fierce, blue, beam  
of light. Terror washes over Janak. But then, in an instant,  
the beam is gone and the eye shuts.

Seconds later, steps away from Janak, a seamless 3'x3' panel in the floor RUMBLES open, startling him. With apprehension, he approaches it. He looks down. There's a faint, flickering light radiating up. A stone staircase leads down.

JANAK

(to himself)

You said no temples. Now you are in a temple. Do you really want to descend a dark flight of stairs that leads to oblivion? No thank you.

He starts to walk away. But then, he stops himself. Realizing that he must face whatever is at the bottom of the stairs, he works up the courage to make the descent.

**INT. SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR - SUBTERRANEAN TUNNEL - DAY**

Janak cautiously takes the long flight of steps down until he reaches the bottom and arrives in a narrow tunnel. It's eerily dark, but up ahead, through a six foot archway, he sees a light emanating. He moves toward it.

Finally, he arrives at the archway, now blindingly bright. A moment, before he gathers the nerve to step through into --

**INT. SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR - SUBTERRANEAN GROTTO - DAY**

Where Janak's vision slowly adjusts to the light and his eyes lay feast on *something* for which his mind never prepared him.

In a spacious stone lair akin to a Himalayan cave, lit by glowing torch fire, are five NAGA SADHUS (said *Nah-gah Sod-oos*), a rare Hindu sect of holy, warrior-class "Godmen" that directly worship Shiva.

Bearded and fierce in appearance, and wearing little else but saffron loin cloths, they are highly exotic and vibrant men in various degrees of a trance state.

Their magnificently lean and sculpted frames reflect their mastery of the extreme form of yoga they practice, which lends them supreme control over their bodies.

Their uncommon mental and physical attributes provide these men, seemingly touched by the hand of god, with abilities that defy the limitations of life on earth.

LADU (37)

A sage-like leader figure, stunning in long, rich, coiled hair, hovers off the ground in lotus, propped up by the strength of just his index finger on his left hand.

NARAYAN (25)

Adorned in *rudrashka* (prayer beads), maintains an endless handstand and grooms his beard with a brush held by his toes.

JAGDISH (43)

Lives with his limbs perpetually on fire, uninjured and unbothered by the flames.

MUKTA (57)

Decorated in *fulmala* (flowers around the neck), smokes hashish out of a *chillum* pipe and blows the smoke out of his nostrils, ears and eyes.

RAMA (71)

Holds a trident above his head and has been doing so for the last decade, resulting in an arm that's petrified like stone.

Ladu rises from lotus, finds a ceramic cup and approaches Janak. He eyes him for a long moment. Finally, with apprehension --

JANAK

Who are you?

LADU

Ladu.

JANAK

You are... *Naga Sadhus*?

He nods.

JANAK (CONT'D)

You live under the temple?

LADU

When it suits us.

JANAK

I am --

LADU

We know who you are.

JANAK

I am here to --

LADU

We know why you are here.

He hands Janak the cup.

LADU (CONT'D)  
Drink.

JANAK  
What is it?

LADU  
*Bhang lassi.*

JANAK  
Hashish? Oh, no. That is not a good idea.

Janak tries to hand it back, but Ladu won't accept it.

LADU  
For what you are about to experience, sobriety is not recommended.

Ladu LAUGHS. The other *Naga Sadhus* stop what they're doing and LAUGH, too. The LAUGHTER soon turns maniacal. Finally, they stop.

JANAK  
(deeply concerned)  
What are you going to do to me?

LADU  
*Chathan Seva.*

JANAK  
What is that?

LADU  
Do you want our help?

A moment, before Janak nods.

LADU (CONT'D)  
(firmly)  
Then no more questions.

Ladu gestures to the cup. Janak hesitates, but finally he drinks the concoction. Then, Ladu gestures for Janak to follow him.

He leads him toward the other *Naga Sadhus*, who gather around him in a *pooja* circle. Ladu and Janak take a seat.

LADU (CONT'D)  
Close your eyes.

Janak complies. Ladu smears his head with lines of human ash. He lights a thick wand of incense and draws circles with it around Janak. The *Naga Sadhus* begin to CHANT the universal Shiva mantra --

NAGA SADHUS  
(repeat)  
*Om Namah Shivaya.*

Over their CHANT, Ladu calls upon Shiva in a RHYTHMIC AND SPECTRAL TONE --

LADU  
*On behalf of Janak Srinath/Who  
seeks refuge in the Lord Shiva/Who  
seeks reprisal with the Lord  
Shiva's blessing/Lord Shiva who has  
the moon/Who is the doctor who  
cures sorrowful life/Who destroys  
all dangers/Who destroyed the fire  
sacrifice of Daksha...*

Janak's evolving demeanor suggests the transcendent effect of the mantra, coupled with the psychedelic effect of the *bharg lassi*, is moving him towards a state of altered consciousness.

LADU (CONT'D)  
*...Who is the personification of  
three qualities/Who has three  
different eyes/Who bestows devotion  
and salvation/And who destroys all  
sins/And so Lord Shiva, the God of  
death, will you allocate your  
potent powers to Janak Srinath as  
you see fit?*

And then, in an instant, Janak is miraculously teleported to the otherworldly homeland of Lord Shiva atop --

#### MOUNT KAILASH

*A harsh and foreboding 22,000 foot Tibetan mountain peak covered in ice and snow with winds BLOWING 50+ mph. Janak, a stranger in a strange land, ventures cautiously on foot through this vivid sensory experience.*

*But he doesn't get far before a section of mountain breaks out from under him and he slides belly-first down a perilously steep limestone shelf. The shelf's about to come to an end and Janak's about to drop 20,000+ feet down, but somehow he grabs onto a rock jutting out and stops his fall.*

*With his life in the balance, he hangs on for a long moment, before finally pulling himself onto a small ledge. He catches his HEAVING BREATH and stands upright. He's now stuck on the ledge, on the side of the mountain, certain death in every direction if he chooses to venture off.*

*But if that wasn't bad enough, he now looks out into the sky ahead and sees something flying fast toward him in the distance. As it gets closer, he sees that it's the figure of a man... no, make that a god.*

*A dark and furious rendering of the Lord Shiva. His strong body appears as if it's chiseled out of moonstone. His long, flowing hair is like an ocean in the sky. His eyes are so piercing and sharp that they could cut through a man with just one look.*

*And as he gets ever closer, and brandishes the sharp end of his trident, it becomes apparent that not only is he not going to stop, but he is going to stake Janak. And just as he's about to get impaled --*

BACK TO SCENE

Janak's eyes violently snap open and he's brought back to the sobering reality of the pooja circle. Drenched in sweat, he's overwhelmed by the astonishing and frightening experience he's just endured.

And as a repetitive and thundering SMACKING sound begins to infiltrate the air --

**INT. MONK'S MMA - DAY**

Pappu, anger boiling to the surface, goes hardcore with his newly acquired left/right jab skills on a pair of focus mitts attached to Monk's hands. SMACK! SMACK! SMACK!

MONK

That's right, bust him up! Bust that mutha up!

**INT. KING JEWELERS - PETER'S OFFICE - DAY**

As Peter reclines in his desk chair, his dead elephant wall art looming behind him, and places a phone order detailing his discerning preferences --

PETER (ON PHONE)

On second thought, send me two dollymops. One should be pleasant, refined, demure.

(MORE)

PETER (ON PHONE) (CONT'D)  
 When I request something of her,  
 her only answer should be "But of  
 course, Mr. King." The other should  
 be wild like a hyena. She may  
 saucily object to my requests once,  
 but never twice.  
 (and then)  
 Have I made myself clear?

**INT. RUBY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY**

Ravi rolls off Ruby. They lay post-coitus in silence. Then --

RUBY  
 I think it looks more like an  
 upright Jesus.

RAVI  
 It's upright from your angle.  
 Inverted from mine.

A moment. Then --

RUBY  
 What if you just called it a  
 capsized Buddha?

RAVI  
 That doesn't sound very virile.

She rolls onto her side and puts her arm around him.

RUBY  
 We both no you've got no problems  
 in that department.

Ravi cherishes the ego stroke. They eye each other longingly.  
 Then, as Ruby's look turns somber --

RUBY (CONT'D)  
 You have to know, Ravi, I didn't  
 want to do it. I didn't want to  
 fire Janak. I adore him. I feel so  
 horrible.

RAVI  
 Don't worry about J. He is a rare  
 breed. He may come off as  
 sensitive, skittish, physically  
 weak, stylishly-challenged and  
 hopelessly uncool, but the truth is  
 he has Bengal tiger blood in his  
 veins.

RUBY  
You're really not worried about him  
at all?

RAVI  
Absolutely not.

**EXT. PATEL CASH & CARRY - BACK ALLEY - DAY**

Ravi hits the hash pipe, as he eyes Janak, dazed and disheveled after his mind blowing *pooja*.

RAVI  
Dude, I am worried about you.  
(and then)  
You look like Deepak Chopra if  
someone told him he wasn't allowed  
to monetize spirituality anymore.

JANAK  
I went back to Krishna Bhatta. He  
sent me to the temple.

RAVI  
You went to the temple? Why?

JANAK  
To see the *Naga Sadhus*.

RAVI  
Wait, what *Naga Sadhus*?

JANAK  
The ones that live beneath it.

This peaks Ravi's interest.

RAVI  
Are you telling me that members of  
the rarest sect of Hindu holy men  
on earth are living underneath *Shri*  
*Swaminarayan Mandir*?

JANAK  
Five of them.

RAVI  
Holy shit.  
(and then)  
Well, what happened?

JANAK

They plied me with *bharg lassi*. It was quite intoxicating. Then, they did a very special *pooja*.

This raises Ravi's concern.

RAVI

Whoa, wait a minute. What kind of *pooja*?

Ravi takes a *toke*.

JANAK

The kind that sent me on a whirlwind sensory experience to Mount Kailash to see Shiva himself, who by the way, is a rather unpleasant fellow.

(and then)

I think it was called a *Chathan Seva*.

And on that, Ravi CHOKES out the smoke.

RAVI

A *Chathan Seva*?!!! Are you fucken shitting me?

JANAK

What is wrong?

RAVI

What is wrong? What is wrong? Do you have any idea what a *Chathan Seva* is?

JANAK

All things relative, it is just another routine prayer to Shiva.

RAVI

Uh, no dude.

(and then)

A *Chathan Seva* taps into the dark energy of Shiva. It summons *Kuttichathan*.

JANAK

*Kuttichathan*? I know that name...

RAVI  
 Shiva's negative spirit.  
 (and then)  
 A demon boy.

Janak is gobsmacked.

JANAK  
 A demon boy is coming here? What is  
 he going to do?

RAVI  
 (ominous)  
 I have no idea. But I can tell you  
 this much: shit is about to get  
 real.

**EXT. RODEO DRIVE - SIDEWALK - DAY**

Across the street from King Jewelers, THREE DELINQUENT TEEN SKATER BOYS fistng beers shred the shit out of some high-end Beverly Hills infrastructure.

Little do they know they're being surveilled from the near distance by the frightening youth who has just arrived on the scene --

KUTTICHATHAN (said *Coo-tee-chuth-on*) (12)

A 4'7" walking embodiment of Hindu black magic. A demonic and sadistic force in the body of a rascally and fiendishly agile boy with swarthy skin, keratin and bone forehead horns, and a thick swath of forelock running between them. He has both a wicked-looking trident and a satchel slung across his back.

As Kutti, dazzled by the skaters' street tricks, steps into their path, BLONDE SKATER (13) heel-slides to a stop in front of him. Eyeing Kutti with loathing curiosity --

BLONDE SKATER  
 What the fuck are you?

*NOTE: KUTTI ALWAYS SPEAKS IN A PRETERNATURAL AND FIENDISH VOICE*

KUTTI  
 I am Kutti.

BLONDE SKATER  
 No, I asked "what" the fuck are  
 you, not "who" the fuck are you.

KUTTI  
 I am Kutti.

CALLING OUT to his buds --

BLONDE SKATER

Hey guys, come check out this  
horned freak.

REDHEAD SKATER (12) and BRUNETTE SKATER (11) roll on over and  
eye him, blown away.

BLONDE SKATER (CONT'D)

What do you think he is?

REDHEAD SKATER

He looks like a demon. From India.

BRUNETTE SKATER

He looks like he needs a cold beer.

Brunette skater proceeds to pour his beer on Kutti's head.  
The boys all CRACK UP. This turns out to be an excessively  
bad idea for them, as they anger him to his core.

Kutti kicks Brunette Skater's board so hard, rolling it out  
from under him with such velocity, that he SMACKS the  
pavement, SHATTERS his teeth and literally gets his face  
flattened.

Then, Kutti STOMPS down on the tail of Redhead's board. It  
flips him into the air, sending him flying fifty feet and  
CRASH LANDING onto the roof of a parked car. Its windows  
instantly SHATTER, as its alarm begins to SCREECH.

Blonde Skater makes the wise decision to take off on his  
board. Kutti is about to go after him, but --

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Freeze, little man!

Kutti turns to find himself in the crosshairs of a gun  
belonging to a uniformed BEVERLY HILLS COP (40) twenty feet  
away.

BEVERLY HILLS COP

Or I'll bury a hollow point right  
between those filthy horns!

Kutti doesn't move, but he does train his eyes on the gun  
with hellish intention.

Summoning his telekinetic will, he causes the gun to heat to  
an extreme temperature. It instantly melts in the cop's fist,  
dissolving his hand off completely in the process.

As the cop SCREAMS in agony and terror from the shocking amputation, Kutti's attention turns to Peter, exiting King Jewelers across the street.

As Peter moves for his Ferrari California T parked in front, Kutti grabs a stray bottle of beer and a skateboard, and rides over to the vehicle, as he enjoys a swill.

As Peter hops in the car and FIRES UP the engine, Kutti crouches down and grabs the bumper. Unbeknownst to Peter, as he TEARS away, Kutti car surfs the Ferrari.

**INT. FERRARI CALIFORNIA T (MOVING) - DAY**

Peter grooves hard to an unlistenable TRACK from an excessively shitty band (think: *Maroon 5*), as he RIPS down Santa Monica Blvd. He curiously checks his rearview, but sees nothing that would give him pause.

**EXT. SANTA MONICA BLVD. - DAY**

Kutti continues to surf low on the bumper, as they ZOOM past moving vehicles. Then, they come upon Blonde Skater pumping along the side of the road.

As they pass him, Kutti jabs his board with his trident, diverting him into an oncoming HIGH-SPEED CYCLIST.

The cyclist epicly COLLIDES with the teen's crotch at thirty miles an hour, ensuring that he'll go through life never knowing the pleasure of making sweet love.

**EXT. PETER'S BUNGALOW - DAY**

Peter pulls up on the driveway of his bespoke Bel Air abode with Kutti still riding low and in tow. He steps out to greet the two bawdy prostitutes he ordered earlier: KIT KAT (23, Caucasian) and ALMOND JOY (24, African American).

PETER

Ladies.

KIT KAT

But of course, Mr. King.

Peter eyes here quizzically.

PETER

I didn't request anything of you yet.

KIT KAT

True.  
(and then)  
I'm Kit Kat!

ALMOND JOY

And I'm Almond Joy, honey.

Almond Joy lets out a WILD CACKLE. Taken aback --

PETER

What the fuck was that?

ALMOND JOY

They told me yo' ass wanted a  
hyena. So I gave you one.

Peter's already aggravated by these two. Then --

PETER

Look, I changed my mind. Just  
forget all of my requests, alright?

ALMOND JOY

I ain't forgettin' nothin'.

PETER

(forcefully)

What did you just say to me?

ALMOND JOY

I was just saucily objectin' to  
you.

Peter's now exasperated.

PETER

I'm dead serious. Just act normal.  
I'm paying you two slags by the  
hour. So let's get upstairs and get  
this over with.

KIT KAT

But of course, Mr. King.  
(and then)  
I did it right that time, didn't I?

Peter SIGHS.

ALMOND JOY

You gotta give the girl credit.

As they move toward the house, Kutti steps out from behind  
the car and trails them.

**INT. PETER'S BUNGALOW - MASTER BEDROOM - LATER**

A lecherous bachelor's lair with a round bed and ceiling mirror above. Vibrators, tethers and plugs are scattered about. Kit Kat and Almond Joy are half-naked in the bed, as Peter cuts a long line of coke across their bodies.

KIT KAT

Hey, be careful.

PETER

What?

KIT KAT

You're getting blow in my belly button.

ALMOND JOY

I don't know about y'all, but I heard cocaine's bad for you.

KIT KAT

Really? Is it calorie-dense?

Peter, now feeling deeply alienated by them --

PETER

I'm starting to believe you two are in the wrong line of work.

Just then, SHATTERING GLASS downstairs startles them.

KIT KAT

What was that?

ALMOND JOY

You got a tabby cat or somethin'?

PETER

No, I don't have a goddamn tabby cat!

Peter leaps off the bed and grabs a Louisville Slugger from beneath it.

PETER (CONT'D)

I'll be back. Don't touch my coke.

And as he exits and they INHALE all his blow --

**INT. PETER'S BUNGALOW - STAIRCASE - DAY**

Peter moves defensively with his bat down the stairs, as he continues to hear GLASS SHATTERING below. He arrives in the --

**INT. PETER'S BUNGALOW - DEN - DAY**

And moves toward the source of the sound. He comes upon an open door and cautiously peers in to find --

**INT. PETER'S BUNGALOW - WINE CELLAR - DAY**

Kutti, GUZZLING his way through a prized, 250 bottle wine collection. As he breaks a bottle top off with his hand, downs its entire contents in a matter of seconds and SLAMS it to the ground, Peter eyes him, infuriated --

PETER

Hey, you ugly little bugger. That's my wine!

Kutti lifts his head. His demon eyes light up fluorescent blue, sending a chill down Peter's spine. Peter bolts!

**INT. PETER'S BUNGALOW - MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Peter barrels into the room and SLAMS the door shut. His breath HEAVES. His face is flush.

KIT KAT

Who's down there?

PETER

A noxious rogue beast child.

ALMOND JOY

Did you kill his ass?

PETER

The opportunity failed to present itself.

KIT KAT

What should we do?

ALMOND JOY

You got a panic room?

KIT KAT

Oh, I love that movie.

ALMOND JOY

Girl, if I could fuck Kristen Stewart, marry Forest Whitaker and kill Jared Leto, I'd be in heaven.

PETER

Pardon the interruption, but you  
two should know there's a very  
decent chance we're all about to --

Just then, the door RIPS off the hinges and SLAMS to the  
floor. Kit Kat and Almond Joy SCREAM at the sight of Kutti  
who stands in the doorway.

As he threateningly inches toward Peter --

PETER (CONT'D)

Listen, we can work this out. You  
like vino? How about an all expense  
paid wine escape to Temecula?

Kutti GROWLS.

PETER (CONT'D)

Fine, Napa! I'll spring for Napa!

Kutti's not having it. He backs Peter onto the bed with the  
ladies. Eyeing him villainously --

KUTTI

Sharp.

PETER

What's sharp?

Kutti eyes the mattress and summoning his telekinetic will,  
instantly transforms it into a razor sharp bed of one  
thousand two-foot long nails.

The weight of Peter, Kit Kat and Almond Joy's bodies cause  
them to sink into the nails and pierce their flesh. They  
SHRIEK in agony and terror from the torture.

Kutti now eyes the ceiling mirror. He causes it to detach  
from the ceiling and CRASH down on them. The weight of which  
puts the finishing touch on their demise, driving them fully  
through the nails and killing them instantly.

**INT. PETER'S BUNGALOW - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER**

Kutti helps himself to two beers from the fridge and a bottle  
of Casamigos from the counter. He slides them into his  
satchel and slips out the back door.

**EXT. ELLIOT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - BLACKTOP - DAY**

Pappu's on his way home when a high-speed, airborne, geometry  
textbook nails him in the head and once again sends him face  
first to the asphalt.

The ambient noise of the environment is instantly drowned out by RINGING IN HIS EARS.

When the RINGING finally dissipates, he's greeted with MOCKING LAUGHTER. He lifts his head to find Rob flanked by Chris and Tito.

ROB

What's wrong, shitskin? I thought  
Indians were good at math.

Chris and Tito CRACK UP some more. Pappu rises, a vile demeanor taking shape.

PAPPU

I am good at math. Want to know  
what else I'm good at?

ROB

What's that?

PAPPU

Punching ugly faces through the  
back of skulls.

With his newfound martial art skills, Pappu hauls back and CRACKS Rob in the face, sending him hard to the ground. He wastes no time, jumping on top of him.

Chris and Tito stare in awe as Pappu continues to unleash a flurry of JABS on Rob's head. As his nose splits open and gushes blood, Pappu's look turns wicked, suggesting he takes sadistic pleasure in this violent act.

As a CROWD gathers to take in the spectacle --

RANDOM SPECTATOR

Pappu's gone Ronda Rousey on his  
ass! Somebody stop him before he  
kills him!

Finally, Chris and Tito jump in to help their friend. Together, they overpower and mercilessly whale on Pappu.

That is until a foot connects with Chris's rib and kicks him thirty feet, road-rashing him so hard and fast across the pavement that his flesh peels off and reveals bone.

As copious blood leaks from his body, the crowd SCREAMS at the sight of the perpetrator: Kutti.

Now Kutti grabs Tito, pulls the bottle of tequila from his satchel, breaks off the top and shoves its head down his throat. The full contents of the bottle drain into his stomach before Kutti KNOCKS him to the ground.

Then, Kutti readies his trident and approaches Rob, as he lays on the ground. He JABS the trident through his stomach, attaching him to its end. Then, he lifts him up with it and stakes its opposing end into the ground, so his body is suspended in the air.

As Rob's body quickly drains of life, Tito begins to go into raging CONVULSIONS from the extreme alcohol poisoning and Chris fully bleeds out.

All three boys die on the spot.

Pappu is astonished and intrigued by the spectacle Kutti has put on. Approaching him --

PAPPU

Hi.

Kutti emits a friendly GROWL.

PAPPU (CONT'D)

I'm Pappu.

KUTTI

Kutti.

PAPPU

You are pretty cool.

Kutti reaches into his sling bag, pulls out the two beers, pops off the tops and hands one to Pappu. Kutti takes a drink. Pappu follows his lead and takes one, too.

KUTTI

Pappu. Kutti. Friends.

And as Pappu grins --

#### **EXT. ELLIOT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - STREET - LATER**

Kutti long gone, Janak and Chitra arrive to find the school grounds cordoned off as a crime scene. They run to an ambulance where Pappu is being treated for his injuries and embrace him.

Soon, the covered bodies of Rob, Chris and Tito are wheeled past them. Chitra WEEPS. Janak looks like he's going to be sick.

**INT. SRINATH HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Janak and Chitra, crippled by guilt and sorrow, sit on the couch and watch an irreverent REPORTER (25, female) deliver breaking news.

REPORTER (ON TV)

Beverly Hills homicide detectives are investigating the gruesome slayings of five individuals, including a vainglorious British jewelry executive, two morally questionable prostitutes and three degenerate high school students. The detectives are on the lookout for a suspect described as an agile and unpredictable South Indian man of short stature dressed in demon attire.

Chitra POWERS OFF the TV.

CHITRA

We are horrible Hindus. Horrible people.

Janak eyes here.

CHITRA (CONT'D)

We have mismanaged our lives on every level. We have succumbed to the ways of the Western world. We envy others, crave things and lust after money. We were supposed to be different.

JANAK

You go too far. We just... needed some help.

CHITRA

No. All these years we never went to one temple service. We lost our connection with god. Then, we summoned him only when we needed something. And now people are dead.

A long moment, as Janak considers her words. Then --

JANAK

I summoned Shiva. I should have listened to you before and had the priest reverse course.

(MORE)

JANAK (CONT'D)  
 Instead, I foolishly doubled down.  
 All of this is my fault. Nobody  
 else's.

Janak rises.

CHITRA  
 Where are you going?

JANAK  
 To see if there is any turning  
 back.

**EXT. KRISHNA BHATTA'S HOUSE - DAY**

Janak approaches the house. Krishna Bhatta is already on the porch awaiting him.

KRISHNA BHATTA  
 I figured you would take your  
 chances with me before going back  
 to those mischievous Sadhus again.

JANAK  
 It was like choosing between a root  
 canal and a digital rectal exam.

A moment. Then --

KRISHNA BHATTA  
 I saw the news. You invite disaster  
 like a crotch invites sweat.

JANAK  
 I do seem to have a way about me.

Now Janak inches closer, his demeanor dead serious.

JANAK (CONT'D)  
 All of the madness. Make it stop.

Krishna Bhatta LAUGHS.

KRISHNA BHATTA  
 First you want me to turn it on,  
 then you want me to crank it up,  
 now you want me to turn it off.  
 What do you think this is? I wave  
 my magic incense stick and  
*Kuttichathan* simply disappears? I  
 am afraid not.

JANAK  
 Then what now?

Krishna Bhatta's look turns grave.

KRISHNA BHATTA

Legend says Lord Shiva was deceived into an unholy relationship with a tribal woman. The result was the birth of his son, *Kuttichathan*, who took on Shiva's negative powers due to his illegitimacy. As you have seen, Kutti is a wildly unstable and powerful force.

JANAK

And?

KRISHNA BHATTA

Whether his methods and the results he has delivered are to your satisfaction or not, he has served you. And like a boomerang, now he is going to circle back at you.

A fear washes over Janak.

JANAK

What does he want with me?

KRISHNA BHATTA

Your unconditional devotion. And more than likely, a significant gesture to prove it.

Janak is overwhelmed by the thought of it. Krishna Bhatta finds a knapsack and pulls out three items: a small satchel of sandalwood powder, a black matchstick and a lotus petal. He hands them to Janak.

JANAK

What am I supposed to do with these?

KRISHNA BHATTA

I have no idea!

He LAUGHS.

KRISHNA BHATTA (CONT'D)

But take them anyway.

(and then)

May the blessings of Lord Shiva be with you.

**INT. NISSAN SENTRA (MOVING) - DAY**

As Janak drives, the engine begins to SPUTTER once again. This time, more violently than ever before. Finally, it DIES.

With just enough momentum to roll off onto the shoulder, he brings the vehicle to a stop. He tries to KICK THE ENGINE OVER. Nothing. Again. No luck.

A long, contemplative moment, before he looks out the passenger window, down a hill, at Heritage Park, which features a manmade lake.

And as he shifts the vehicle into neutral --

**EXT. BLOOMFIELD AVE. - DAY**

Janak, a hint of melancholy in his eye, nudges the Sentra's rear bumper with his foot. And as it sets off down the hill, toward the lake, to its final resting place --

**INT. SRINATH HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Janak stands at the doorway of Pappu's bedroom and looks in on Chitra and Pappu.

PAPPU

Dad, are you going to see Kutti?

JANAK

I am.

PAPPU

He's my friend.

Janak and Chitra eye him curiously.

PAPPU (CONT'D)

We drank beers together. India Pale Ale, brewed with citra hops.

Now they eye him disapprovingly.

PAPPU (CONT'D)

What? It was refreshing.

A moment. And then --

JANAK

I want you two to lock the door and stay in here until I come back. Okay?

PAPPU  
 (skeptical)  
 Are we really safer in here than  
 anywhere else in the house?

CHITRA  
 Probably not. But let's stay here  
 together anyway.  
 (and then)  
 Now give your father a hug before  
 he goes.

Pappu hugs Janak. Then, Chitra hugs him, too. As she releases him, Janak takes her forearm, closes his eyes and tilts it upright.

The bangles on her wrist CRASH down on each other, bringing him a touch of momentary pleasure. Finally he opens his eyes.

JANAK  
 I will put an end to this. All of  
 it. Once and for all.

**INT. SRINATH HOUSE - GARAGE - NIGHT**

Janak clears some boxes away and finds an old lawn chair.

**EXT. PIONEER BLVD. - NIGHT**

At an indecent hour of the night without another human in sight, Janak walks under the moonlight with his lawn chair.

Finally, he comes to a stop in front of what was once his jewelry store. The sight of it irks him. He unfolds the chair and parks himself in it. Time, and the night sky, elapse as he waits.

LATER

Janak looks up at the moon. Soon, the giant and imposing face of Shiva appears on its surface. As he looks down at Janak with fierce eyes, Janak eyes him back equally intense, gesturing to his old store --

JANAK  
 I worked more tirelessly and with  
 more dedication than anyone. How  
 could you let me lose my business?

Shiva replies to Janak in a DEEP, DEFIANT VOICE --

SHIVA  
 One cannot lose something that was  
 never theirs to begin with.

Janak's look suggests he doesn't care for the answer. Then --

JANAK

Why did you give me and my family  
so many enemies to contend with?

SHIVA

One will have no enemies on the  
outside if there are no enemies  
within.

Janak is now even more frustrated. Then --

JANAK

How do I undo all of this?

SHIVA

One cannot undo what has already  
been done.

Janak is now exhausted by him.

JANAK

So that is it?

SHIVA

The march of time offers the wise  
opportunities for redemption.  
(and then)  
You? We will see what happens.

And as quickly as Shiva appeared, he now disappears.

JANAK

Thank you for nothing.

Janak stews in his chair for a long moment. Then, in the distance, in the middle of empty Pioneer Boulevard, he sees a figure approaching in the dark.

Janak rises and apprehensively walks into the street. Soon, the figure is revealed by the moonlight to be Kutti. Finally, he arrives before Janak. They eye each other. Then --

KUTTI

Come.

Kutti turns and walks in the direction from which he came. Janak hesitates, before following him into the dark.

#### **EXT. RESIDENTIAL STREET - NIGHT**

Kutti leads Janak through this familiar neighborhood where they come to a stop in front of --

**EXT. KRISHNA BHATTA'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Raising Janak's concern --

JANAK

What are we doing here?

Kutti doesn't answer, but instead reaches into his satchel and pulls out a familiar sharp object. He hands it to Janak. Taken aback --

JANAK (CONT'D)

Shah Jahan's Dagger. Where did you get this?

KUTTI

M. Night.

Janak is perplexed.

JANAK

What am I supposed to do with it?

KUTTI

Kill.

Janak is now terror-stricken.

JANAK

Kill who?

KUTTI

Krishna Bhatta.

Janak is appalled by the idea.

JANAK

I will not!

Now Kutti inches up on Janak, threatening --

KUTTI

Prove your devotion. Kill or be killed!

JANAK

No!

And on that, Janak takes off running down the street. Not surprisingly, he is a slow runner with a decidedly non-athletic and limb-flailing style.

Kutti stalks him. Finally, he eyes the blacktop beneath Janak's feet and uses his telekinetic will to instantly melt it into molten tar.

Janak slips, falls and gets coated in the black sauce. He looks back and sees Kutti moving towards him. He gets up in a sticky mess and continues to run.

Now, Kutti finds his trident and grasping it like a throwing spear, hurls it through the air and impales Janak's thigh.

Janak CRIES OUT in agony, as he falls to the ground. Then, he eyes the trident, mortified by the sight of it jutting out of his leg. And once again, he sees Kutti moving towards him.

Summoning all of his ability to withstand pain, he grabs onto the trident handle. Kutti eyes it, as Janak is about to yank it out.

As Janak pulls on the handle, Kutti uses his telekinetic will to drive it back in. Janak tries again to pull it out, but Kutti drives it in again.

Finally, Janak gives up. He watches in fear as Kutti nears him. Then, he remembers *something*. He pulls out the satchel of sandalwood powder Krishna Bhatta gave him and opens it.

And when Kutti finally arrives, he blows its contents onto him. Kutti stands there, momentarily dazed, as the powder disperses in the air and washes over him. Finally, it dissipates.

Neither Kutti or Janak are quite sure what, if anything, has changed. But Janak grabs the trident handle again. Kutti eyes it. And this time, when Janak yanks it, Kutti's attempt to telekinetically stop him fails.

As the trident comes out of Janak's thigh, he BELLOWS in agony. And realizing he has quelled Kutti's powers, at least for the moment, drops the trident, gets up and runs with a limp as fast as he can.

Kutti eyes the blacktop beneath Janak and tries to telekinetically melt it, but again, he fails. So he grabs the trident and runs after him.

Janak looks back, as Kutti gains on him. But just then, from out of nowhere, Ravi jumps in front of Kutti with two bottles of Casamigos. He's rambunctious and unhinged, as he attempts to hijack Kutti's attention with the tequila --

RAVI

Hey, Kutti, you *desi* demon hooch monkey!

(MORE)

RAVI (CONT'D)  
 How about a little Mexican holy  
 water? A little sucky sucky bang  
 bang?

Ravi takes a swig from one of the bottles, enticing Kutti.

RAVI (CONT'D)  
 You want to get shamboozled, huh?  
 You want to get Jessica Simpson-ed?  
 Come and get it you little  
 boozethusiast!

Kutti SNARLS, scaring the hell out of Ravi. As Janak runs away in one direction, Ravi takes off in another. This time, Kutti goes after Ravi.

**EXT. PIONEER BLVD. - NIGHT**

Ravi runs down the middle of the road with his tequila bottles. He RAPS ALONG to Kendrick Lamar's seminal drinking track *Swimming Pools (Drank)* --

RAVI/KENDRICK LAMAR  
*Pour up, drank, head shot, drank*  
*Sit down, drank, stand up, drank*  
*Pass out, drank, wake up, drank*  
*Faded, drank, faded, drank...*

He looks back and sees he's put a bit of distance on Kutti. Up ahead, he spots a gas station. And taking a swig of tequila, as he runs toward it --

**EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT**

Ravi arrives at pump five. Out of breath, he quickly inserts his credit card and punches in his zip. But it won't accept it. The display reads: *See Cashier*.

RAVI  
 See cashier? Now? Seriously?  
 (and then)  
 She better be smokin' hot.

And as he books it for the --

**INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT**

Ravi enters and runs to the CASHIER (45). To his chagrin, he's an impassive Indian immigrant man who is decidedly not smokin' hot. Handing him his credit card --

RAVI  
Quick, I need twenty on pump five.  
(and then)  
And a pack of extra large condoms.

The cashier eyes him warily, then eyes pump five through the window, then eyes him again.

CASHIER  
Sir, firstly, you do not need extra large condoms.

Ravi's look says he can't argue with that.

CASHIER (CONT'D)  
Secondly, there is no car at pump five.

RAVI  
So what?

CASHIER  
No car. No gas.

Ravi thinks for a split second. Then --

RAVI  
It is for my lawnmower. I am going to pump the gas into this.

Ravi CHUGS the remainder of a Casamigos bottle and SLAMS it on the counter.

CASHIER  
Sir, it is against store policy to dispense gasoline into a tequila bottle.

Ravi, now incensed, gestures out the window to Kutti approaching in the distance.

RAVI  
Listen you fill station fascist, you see that little terrorist with the pitchfork?

CASHIER  
I do.

RAVI  
That's the demon offspring of Lord Shiva. You want me to go deal with that shit, or you got this one?

A moment, before he wises up and RINGS it up.

CASHIER

Twenty on pump five it is.

And as he slides Ravi a pack of extra large condoms, on the house, along with a sly grin --

**EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT**

Ravi bolts back to pump five. He grasps the nozzle and about to hit Regular Grade, says --

RAVI

Fuck it.

And hits Premium Grade instead. Just then, Kutti arrives brandishing his trident and unleashes a SNARL.

RAVI (CONT'D)

You angry, bad boy? You ready for a taste of the dinosaur whiskey? The Saudi sand slick? The Tallahassee torch water?

Kutti SNARLS louder, this time scaring the hell out of Ravi. So Ravi wastes no more time and SPRAYS Kutti down with gasoline. When he's done, he finds his skeleton lighter.

RAVI (CONT'D)

*Tandoori* barbecue anyone?

Then, he STRIKES his lighter. But it won't light. He STRIKES it again. Still no flame.

RAVI (CONT'D)

Oh, shit.

He eyes Kutti --

RAVI (CONT'D)

This is the part where you kill me and I get reincarnated as a TikTok influencer, right?

JANAK (O.S.)

Social media stardom is not in the cards for you, my friend.

Just then, Janak emerges from the dark with the black matchstick Krishna Bhatta gave him held in his fingers.

JANAK (CONT'D)  
 Besides, I once checked your  
 horoscope for kicks. When you do  
 die, you will come back as an  
 Instacart Shopper.

Ravi, gravely disappointed to hear this --

RAVI  
 Oh, for the love of the gig  
 economy!

Just then, Janak STRIKES the matchstick on the ground and  
 flicks it at Kutti, setting him violently ablaze. They stare  
 in awe, as Kutti SHRIEKS, thrashes and burns.

# **INT. GAS STATION - NIGHT**

The cashier eyes the spectacle outside, as he calmly informs  
 a 911 OPERATOR (45, male) --

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)  
 911. What's your emergency?

CASHIER (INTO PHONE)  
 The demonic bastard son of Lord  
 Shiva is on fire at my place of  
 business. Perhaps you can send  
 someone?

911 OPERATOR (O.S.)  
 Hey, pal, I've got Jesus's bipolar  
 sister and Muhammad's methhead  
 second cousin on the line ahead of  
 you. Wanna see how your sitch plays  
 out and call us back?

CASHIER (INTO PHONE)  
 That is fine. Thank you.

# **EXT. GAS STATION - NIGHT**

As Ravi warns Janak --

RAVI  
 Dude, let's get the fuck out of  
 here!

JANAK  
 You go. This is not over yet. I  
 have to finish it.

RAVI  
 Are you out of your mind?

JANAK

Doubtfully, but I would feel no shame having a routine psychiatric evaluation at a future date.

A moment. Then --

RAVI

Fine. I will stay with you.

JANAK

No. My *karma* is to deal with this mess. Your *karma* is to get high and watch PornHub. Let us not infringe on each other's karmas.

Ravi's only half buying his assertion.

JANAK (CONT'D)

You are a true friend, Ravi. You suffer my sorrows, as if they are your own. But, if anything happens to me, you need to make sure Chitra and Pappu are okay.

Ravi knows he's now got a stronger argument, but is still hesitant.

JANAK (CONT'D)

Go!

Finally, he nods in agreement and takes off running, just as Kutti, now rolling on the ground, puts out his flames.

A charred out shell of what he once was, he still has his faculties. And he's angrier than ever. He let's out an epic SNARL.

And on that, Janak takes off running, as Kutti scoops his trident up off the ground and goes after him.

#### **EXT. FAIRFIELD RANCH ROAD - NIGHT**

Janak continues to run down this long road eerily lit by the moon. He looks back. Kutti is in the distance on his tail. Up ahead, he spots the temple and moves for it.

#### **EXT. SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR - GRAND STAIRCASE - NIGHT**

Janak bounds up the stairs and heads inside.

**INT. SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR - WORSHIP ROOM - NIGHT**

Janak finds the lotus petal in his pocket, as he beelines for the Shiva statue. Arriving, he looks up pleadingly at Shiva's eyes. Then, he places the petal at the statue's base, gets down on his knees and begins to pray.

JANAK  
(repeat 5x)  
*Om Namah Shivaya*

Then, Janak pauses and eyes the door fearfully, knowing Kutti will arrive any second. He turns back to Shiva --

JANAK (CONT'D)  
Open the door in the floor *Shivaya*.  
Immediately, please.

A moment passes. The door in the floor fails to open. Kutti comes running through the entrance. Janak stands to face him. As Kutti threateningly inches closer aiming his trident --

KUTTI  
I killed. For you.

JANAK  
I did not ask you to kill anyone.  
You took that upon yourself.  
Granted, you did kill some  
admittedly unsavory individuals who  
I will not miss terribly.

KUTTI  
You did not kill for me.

JANAK  
And I never will. Killing in  
general is frowned upon. You are a  
very bad boy. If you were my son, I  
would make you write "I will not  
kill anyone ever again" at least  
twenty-five times until your wrist  
was in mild discomfort.

KUTTI  
You must die!

And on that, Kutti charges Janak with his trident. With nowhere left to run, Janak accepts his fate and eyes Shiva --

JANAK  
Please make this quick.

But just then, the door in the floor RUMBLES open. Kutti's curiosity at the sight of it stops him in his tracks. Soon, Ladu, followed by the other four *Naga Sadhus*, emerge from the subterranean grotto.

True to their customs, they are now all naked, powder-coated head-to-toe in grey human ash and armed with tridents. Their faces are marked with stark red symbols of devotion to Shiva.

Notably, they have each retained their unique characteristics (Narayan is still in a handstand with his trident held by his feet, Rama still holds his trident above his head, Jagdish's limbs are still on fire, etc.).

The godmen are ready to go to war.

Narayan, Jagdish, Mukta and Rama surround Kutti. They train their tridents on him, as a supernatural ELECTRICAL FORCE emanates from them and imprisons him in place. Ladu approaches Janak --

LADU

You might not see it as so, but you are a lucky man. Not everyone gets to play in the Lord's sandbox.

JANAK

Why did you send me this monster?

LADU

You wanted Shiva's help. We knew this was the only way he was willing to help you.

JANAK

Why? What did I do to deserve this?

LADU

That is between you and Shiva.

Ladu puts his hand on Janak's shoulder.

LADU (CONT'D)

But for now, focus on the positive.

JANAK

What positive?

LADU

You are Hindu. Immortality is your birthright. If you die today, you only die in body, not in spirit.

Janak takes zero comfort in his words, as Ladu turns to the Shiva statue --

LADU (CONT'D)  
(powerfully)  
*Om Namah Shivaya!*

The other Sadhus do the same, as they continue to imprison Kutti --

SADHUS  
(powerfully)  
*Om Namah Shivaya!*

But now Kutti writhes and contorts, as a deep, angsty energy in him boils to the surface. Whatever mitigating effects the sandalwood powder had are now long gone.

Ladu warns Janak --

LADU  
You would be wise to take cover.

Janak heeds the warning, stepping behind the Shiva statue.

Ladu joins the other Sadhus and similarly trains his electricity-emanating trident on Kutti. But Kutti has been summoning and gathering his telekinetic will, and growing stronger. To the point that they now struggle to contain him.

Finally, Kutti unleashes a SONIC FORCE upon them, knocking them back in five different directions, as they slide high-speed across the worship room's floor.

Ladu CRASHES into the pedestal of the Shiva statue and ends up at Janak's feet.

JANAK  
And how is playing in the Lord's  
sandbox working out for you?

Ladu shoots him a sour look, before peeling himself off the ground and joining the other Sadhus to fight Kutti.

Narayan runs on his hands, charging Kutti, and with gymnastic precision does an aerial flip and jabs him with his trident.

Kutti, in retaliation, charges Narayan and contorts himself into a high-speed ball, knocking him through the air like a bowling pin, as he SLAMS into a fountain.

As Janak winces at the painful spectacle --

JANAK (CONT'D)

That looked very uncomfortable.

When Kutti turns to identify his next victim, Mukta toking massively on his *chillum* pipe, blows a thick and relentless cloud of hashish smoke on him.

As Kutti emerges tipsy from the thorough baking, Jagdish circles him with his flaming limbs and draws a ring of fire around him, trapping him.

Now, all of the Sadhus once again surround Kutti with their tridents trained on him. They unleash the electrical force of their weapons and try to contain him again.

As Ladu eyes the Shiva statue --

LADU

*Om Namah Shivaya!*

ALL OF THE SADHUS

*Om Namah Shivaya!*

LADU

*Kuttichathan* has served his purpose here. With great reverence, we return your son to you. *Om Namah Shivaya!*

ALL OF THE SADHUS

*Om Namah Shivaya!*

And then, the roof of the temple parts open to the night sky. The face of Shiva once again appears in the moon. As he looks down on them with furious eyes, nobody is certain what is going to happen next.

As Janak rapidly comes to terms with his mortality --

JANAK

(to himself)

Your death is imminent. You will be remembered as a failure. And your wife and child will be looked after... by Ravi.

(and then)

Oh, god.

Shiva now shoots a powerful beam of light at them. They all think they're about to die. But the light lands squarely on Kutti.

Rambunctious and reluctant to go, nonetheless, he is powerfully sucked out through the roof of the temple and transported into the heavens.

Simultaneously, the divine extraction creates a powerful flash of light and a massive force that JOLTS the temple. It sends Janak and the Sadhus sailing through the air, SLAMMING into the walls and CRASHING to the floor. And then, just like that, the roof SLAMS shut.

And it's all over.

Janak and the Sadhus, banged up and bruised, but all still alive, slowly gather their bearings and rise to their feet. A long moment. Then --

LADU

Who needs a *bhang lassi*?

One by one, each of the Sadhus begins to raise their hands. Last but not least, Janak raises his hand, too.

**EXT. SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR - GRAND STAIRCASE - LATER**

Janak stands atop the stairs, sipping his *lassi*. He's joined by Krishna Bhatta.

KRISHNA BHATTA

What can I say? If I would have known from the start...

JANAK

It is okay. You did only what I asked. Thank you.

KRISHNA BHATTA

No, thank you.

JANAK

For what?

KRISHNA BHATTA

For not burying Shah Jahan's dagger in my heart.

Janak eyes him, surprised he knew. Then --

JANAK

Not killing you is the least I could do.

Krishna Bhatta grins. Then --

KRISHNA BHATTA  
I spoke to Ladu. He is quite  
impressed with your fortitude and  
bravery.

JANAK  
That I doubt.

KRISHNA BHATTA  
No, really. He said if you were  
younger and less entrenched in this  
world, he might have trained you to  
be a *Naga Sadhu* yourself.

Janak LAUGHS at the thought.

JANAK  
That would be a sight to see.

KRISHNA BHATTA  
He does however know you have a  
son. He extends the offer to take  
Pappu under his wing.

Janak is surprised by this gesture.

JANAK  
Pappu? A *Naga Sadhu*?

KRISHNA BHATTA  
For too long now, immigrants like  
yourself have been leaving Mother  
India to pursue the toxic dream of  
acquiring wealth. The same path  
Pappu is inevitably on. The Sadhus  
are offering your son a chance to  
switch course and achieve *moksha*.

JANAK  
*Moksha*?

KRISHNA BHATTA  
Spiritual liberation. Life's  
ultimate goal.  
(and then)  
Pappu would have to leave you, of  
course. And go train with them.

Janak's look suggests that is unthinkable.

JANAK  
The offer is appreciated. But Pappu  
is my son. He stays with me.

Krishna Bhatta nods, respecting Janak's decision.

**INT. SRINATH HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT**

The door to Pappu's bedroom opens. Janak is as excited to see Chitra and Pappu as they are him. They all embrace.

**INT. SRINATH HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY**

Janak, Chitra and Pappu eat breakfast. The doorbell RINGS.

**INT. SRINATH HOUSE - FOYER - DAY**

Janak opens the door, surprised to find Ruby.

RUBY

I bet you weren't expecting me.

JANAK

No, I was not.

RUBY

How are things with you?

Janak ponders the question a moment. Then --

JANAK

Bizarre.

(and then)

And with you?

RUBY

About the same.

(and then)

I spoke with the partners at King Jewelers. With Peter out of the picture, we all agreed we really want you back. If that's something you're open to.

Janak's look suggests he's willing to think about it.

RUBY (CONT'D)

We also unanimously agreed that you should have this...

Ruby hands him an envelope.

JANAK

What is it?

RUBY

The commission we owe you. Ninety thousand dollars. In full.

Janak is taken aback.

**EXT. CATAMARAN (AT SEA) - SUN DECK - DAY**

Off the coast of Santa Monica on this Perry 43 Passagemaker, Janak in a yacht cap, kicks back in a chaise and peers out at the ocean blue. Chitra, in a bikini, lays next to him.

CHITRA

I am sorry I laughed at your boat idea. Let's do this every weekend.

JANAK

Every weekend it is.

Ravi and Ruby cuddle in a chaise nearby. He KNOCKS his cocktail over on the deck.

RAVI

Ah, shit.

(and then)

Yo, J, I just spilled strawberry margarita on your sexy ass deck. Sorry, dude.

JANAK

No worries. As they say, "It is a rental, do not be gentle."

A moment. Then --

CHITRA

Pappu, get off of that rail or you are going to get it.

Pappu, in a life vest, stands high on the guard rail and feeds bread to a hungry school of yellowtail in the water.

PAPPU

I think somebody forgot to feed these fish. They're starving!

Everyone LAUGHS.

**INT. SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR - SUBTERRANEAN GROTTTO - DAY**

Krishna Bhatta stands with Ladu, who is flanked by the rest of the *Naga Sadhus*. The tone is dire.

LADU

We have received yet another transmission from the Lord Shiva.

KRISHNA BHATTA

And?

LADU

As you already know, Pappu possesses his dark energy. The boy is of great interest to him. We will need him in our possession.

KRISHNA BHATTA

And as you already know, I spoke to his father. His desire is for Pappu to stay with him.

LADU

His desire is immaterial.  
(and then)  
You know what this means.

A moment. And then gravely --

KRISHNA BHATTA

Yes, I am afraid I do...

**EXT. CATAMARAN (AT SEA) - SUN DECK - DAY**

Pappu continues to feed fish. But then, all of a sudden, a powerful current forces them to swim away. A reflection of Shiva emerges from the deep onto the water's surface.

He eyes Pappu with a mischievous look. And as Pappu reciprocates with a devious grin, and eyes that now shockingly light up fluorescent blue --

**INT. SHRI SWAMINARAYAN MANDIR - SUBTERRANEAN GROTTO - DAY**

Krishna Bhatta eyes Ladu with sober intensity --

KRISHNA BHATTA

...what the Lord Shiva wants, the Lord Shiva gets.

**SMASH TO BLACK.**

**THE END**