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UNT. PENN & MURRAY PROJECT

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COLD OPEN

EXT. FLUSHING STREETS - 2004 - DAY (ON VIDEO)

GARRETT SHAH (mid 20s, charismatic, Beto O'Rourke) walks toward camera, flanked by young people of various races wearing "SHAH 2004" t-shirts. The screen has the slight pixelation of early 2000s web videos.

GARRETT

I'm Garrett Shah and I'm running to be your next city councilor. My parents moved here in 1975 with one dream. To raise their kids in the greatest country on Earth in the greatest city on Earth.

We continue to hear Garrett's voice as the camera pops to photos on a shelf in PRESENT DAY:

A young Garrett with his parents on the Roosevelt Island Tramway. A framed newspaper clipping featuring Garrett (17) pitching for his high school baseball team with headline "SHAH LEADS FLUSHING HIGH TO PSAL CHAMPIONSHIP." Garrett (22) receiving his diploma from Fordham University. Garrett (26) speaking at a podium with a "SHAH FOR CITY COUNCIL 2004" sign, flanked by a Hasidic guy, a Nigerian woman, an old Chinese woman, and a Latino teen.

GARRETT (V.O.)

It wasn't easy, but the people of this community supported them, and made sure that they would succeed. Now I want to return the favor. As your next city councilor, I promise one thing: to work as hard for you and your family as you did for me and mine.

Garrett is now flanked by even more people.

GARRETT

I'm asking for your vote because we all came from somewhere, but we all chose to be here. So let's get to work.

The video ends.

Back in the office. We pan across some photos: Garrett celebrating at his election victory party with newspaper headline "SHAH ELECTED IN UPSET, WILL BECOME YOUNGEST NEW YORK CITY COUNCILOR." Then Garrett posing with Michael Bloomberg and Bill Clinton.

We hear SNORING.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Pan across more framed photos, which become more tabloid-y: Garrett drunk at a party, dancing with Corey Booker and Bono. A very messy Garrett at the Met Gala with Robert DeNiro and Naomi Campbell. Garrett looking completely wasted, at a nightclub pajama party with T-Pain and several women dressed as Playboy bunnies. We also see some junk on the shelf next to the photos -- some empty Chinese takeout containers, a slice of half-eaten pizza, WAY too many Skittles wrappers.

And then we see GARRETT HIMSELF: asleep in his DESK CHAIR. Looks terrible.

A desk nameplate reads: Councilman Garrett Shah, District 20. Or we think it does -- there's a dirty sock covering some of it. The desk is covered with dirty clothes, food containers, and used towels.

A KNOCK rouses him from hungover sleep and he shuffles over to the door, opening it to reveal DIANA ORTIZ (30, sharp, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez).

GARRETT (CONT'D)

Oh hey, Diana! What's up?

DIANA

"What's up?" What are you still doing here? It's been a week. This is my office now.

GARRETT

(Clintonian)

Diana. I appreciate your passion. And I congratulate you on a hard fought race to replace me. You should be proud of what you accomplished. But this... "thing"--
(waving it all away)
it's gonna blow over.

DIANA

I don't think it's going to blow over. The council voted to remove you. Unanimously.

GARRETT

"Unanimously?" What does that even mean?

DIANA

I've asked you several times to pack up. And now somehow, you have more stuff here...

(it dawns on her)

Garrett, are you living here?

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT

No.

DIANA

Is this your shower caddy I found in the bathroom?

She holds up a SHOWER CADDY.

GARRETT

Yes! Thank you! I was looking for that!

DIANA

There's not even a shower in there!

GARRETT

With the right attitude, any place with running water is a shower.

(then)

Okay, fine, I am living here, temporarily, because my girlfriend kicked me out of our apartment because of the... thing. But that's going to blow over too, once she unblocks my number and her brothers stop threatening me.

DIANA

Get out of my office.

GARRETT

You can't do this to me. I'm a star. I was the youngest person ever elected to the New York City Council.

DIANA

Fifteen years ago. And what have you accomplished?

GARRETT

(beat, then)

I won a high-school baseball championship.

DIANA

And there's nothing cooler than a guy in his forties talking about his high school sports achievements.

GARRETT

Pfft. I'm not "in my forties." I'm forty. That's practically thirty.

(CONTINUED)

DIANA

Can I tell you something? When you got elected I was so excited. It really seemed like you were going to make a difference. Then you spent most of your time promoting yourself and partying instead of, you know, doing your job.

She walks him to the door and hands him his box of stuff.

GARRETT

I did stuff! I once brought Elon Musk to Flushing and he almost agreed to dig one of those tunnels no one wants here!

Diana slams the door in his face, leaving him in the hallway.

END OF COLD OPEN

ACT ONE

EXT. QUEENS ROW HOUSE - DAY

A disheveled Garrett struggles to carry various garbage bags and boxes containing all of his belongings up the stairs of a typical Flushing, Queens row house. The door opens, revealing his sister, MALLORY (30s, sarcastic), in medical scrubs. She smirks.

MALLORY
Councilman.

GARRETT
Hey, sis! Little help?

MALLORY
(thinks, then)
Nah.

She walks back inside. He lugs the bags up the rest of the stairs.

INT. MALLORY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Garrett drags his stuff through Mallory's living room.

MALLORY
So, the new councilwoman kicked you out of the office, and then your girlfriend kicked you out of the apartment? Double kick-out?

GARRETT
Yes, but the girlfriend one was mutual.

MALLORY
Really?

GARRETT
Yes, we mutually agreed that I would get the eff out of our place or she would beat the crap out of me. But she'll come around. I just need to talk to her.

MALLORY
I can see why you think that.

GARRETT
What's that supposed to mean?

MALLORY
Talking is the only thing you're truly great at.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MALLORY (CONT'D)

You talked your way into office, and college. When you were 8 you convinced me to give you the top bunk. What was I thinking? I'm older than you! Bottom bunk sucks!

GARRETT

Bottom bunk is much safer during an earthquake.

MALLORY

In Queens?!

INT. GUEST ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They walk into a small guest room...

GARRETT

Hey, I didn't just get into politics because I'm a good talker. I tried to be a good city councilman. I worked my butt off for two solid months.

MALLORY

Yeah. Then as soon as it got the slightest bit difficult, you bailed on work and used your office to score Knicks tickets.

GARRETT

Well. Politics is hard. And those Knicks tickets were insane. Once I was so close I could hear Michael Rappaport not getting recognized by Jerry Seinfeld!

MALLORY

What are you even doing here, man? Why can't you stay with mom and dad?

GARRETT

Because a guy my age living with his parents is pathetic. But a guy my age living with his sister: slightly less pathetic.

(then)

Besides it's only temporary.

MALLORY

How are you going to afford a place? You don't have a job.

GARRETT

I'll have one soon. Elections are in eighteen months.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GARRETT (CONT'D)

People will have forgotten... the thing.
And if they haven't, America loves a good
political comeback story.

MALLORY

Counterpoint: Richard Nixon. Elliot
Spitzer. Anthony Weiner. Anthony Weiner
again.

GARRETT

(remembering)

Man, he really did do it again! That guy
cannot help himself!

MALLORY

It's bonkers.

GARRETT

Don't send pictures of your wiener to
people. Especially if your name is
Weiner! It's too much!

MALLORY

Insane.

Garrett smiles for a beat. He turns on his political charm.

GARRETT

Isn't this great? You and me living
together. Brother and sister. I regret
how we lost touch over the years: me in
the high-flying world of city politics,
you doing your heart surgery--

MALLORY

Hand surgery.

GARRETT

And what are the hands but hearts that
live outside and have fingers? Hey! I
just had a thought: Why am I here
temporarily? We should just live
together! Roomies!

MALLORY

(sees right through him)

You don't have any money.

GARRETT

Completely broke, yes.

MALLORY

How is that possible?

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT

Because all my savings are tied up in my investments.

MALLORY

Jet skis are not investments--

GARRETT

I can't even tell you how stupid you sound right now.

MALLORY

Don't all you ex-politicians get jobs working for giant evil corporations, polluting rivers with assault rifles or something? Call in a favor with one of your old friends in the council.

GARRETT

They're not really taking my calls right now. Well, they do sometimes. To swear at me.

MALLORY

Then go on LinkedIn or something.

GARRETT

That's what LinkedIn is for? I thought it was a service that sends me emails every week from people I've met once.

MALLORY

Welcome to the real world, bro.

She leaves.

INT. GARRETT'S BEDROOM - LATER

Garrett opens his laptop and pulls up LinkedIn. On his page, we see headline after headline with some variant of the following: DISGRACE! HARD PARTYING COUNCILMAN SHAH ARRESTED ON BQE. He clicks on the article, which has an embedded video link, which he clicks.

EXT. BROOKLYN QUEENS EXPRESSWAY - NIGHT (ON SCREEN)

Police dashcam footage: a cruiser approaches a clearly drunk Garrett, who is walking in the middle of the rightmost lane of the BQE. The siren flashes and we hear an OFFICER:

OFFICER (OVER SPEAKER)

Please step to the shoulder.

Garrett turns around, wobbly.

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT (ON SCREEN)

What seems to be the problem, police officer?

OFFICER (ON SCREEN)

Can I see some ID?

GARRETT (ON SCREEN)

Pfft. Bro. You don't know who I am? You really don't know who I am?

OFFICER (ON SCREEN)

I know who you are. You're that city councilman.

GARRETT (ON SCREEN)

More like I am the city council, dude. It's me and a bunch of duuuuuuds. Zeroes. Just total wastes of crap. Couple of full on sex-creeps in there too, if I'm being honest. Real weirdos.

As Garrett monologues, he walks toward the cruiser and begins unzipping his pants, then urinating.

OFFICER (ON SCREEN)

Sir--

GARRETT (ON SCREEN)

Jeez, I can't wait to get out of that dump. Couple more years with those idiots, then I run for congress. Win. Then governor. Win. Then, guess what? I'm gonna be President, babayyyyyyy--- EUGHGGH!!

Garrett barfs everywhere, including on the police officer. Three trashy WOMEN in minidresses stumble into frame.

WOMAN (ON SCREEN)

Can you hurry up? We're almost out of cocaine.

OFFICER (ON SCREEN)

Ma'am, I would maybe not admit to cocaine possession in front of a police officer.

WOMAN (ON SCREEN)

No, it's fine. He's like the mayor or something.

OFFICER (ON SCREEN)

Okay, I'm going to put... I guess, all of you under arrest.

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT (ON SCREEN)
Waitwaitwaitwait. Wait.
(then, serious)
Officer. If you let me go... I'll give
you ten thousand dollars.

OFFICER (ON SCREEN)
Sir, you don't want to do this.

GARRETT (ON SCREEN)
Hundred thousand.

OFFICER (ON SCREEN)
Sir, bribing an officer is a felony--

GARRETT (ON SCREEN)
You drive a hard bargain and I respect
the hell out of that. Million bucks.

OFFICER (ON SCREEN)
Sir--

GARRETT (ON SCREEN)
Ten million.

OFFICER (ON SCREEN)
Sir--

GARRETT (ON SCREEN)
Okay. Okay. Okay.
(beat, dead serious)
One billion dollars.

Garrett shuts his laptop. Mallory has sidled up next to him.

MALLORY
I still can't believe he didn't take you
up on that.

GARRETT
Shut up--

MALLORY
A billion dollars is a lot of money--

GARRETT
Get out--

MALLORY
Um, this is my house, so... no. Hey, I
just changed my mind. Being roomies is
going to be fun!

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT

Forget it. I'm finding an Air BnB.

MALLORY

Oh, honey. You can't afford an Air BnB in New York City.

Garrett opens his laptop again and begins typing.

GARRETT

Sure I can. Just have to... lower my standards a bit. A ha! Here's one. I get my own room. I only have to share a bathroom with five roommates. 2100 bucks.
(immediately)

A night?!

(then)

Okay, sort by...low price. Here we go. For 200 a night, I can live... in an empty refrigerator someone left by the side of the road. Utilities are extra. Which I guess means: the refrigerator is plugged in?

MALLORY

(checks screen)

Looks like someone just booked it.

GARRETT

Dammit!

MALLORY

If you're going to stay here, you're going to have to pay rent. Which means, get a job.

Mallory leaves. Garrett sees a tab for Air BnB Experiences, where people offer their time and expertise for money. Museum tours, bar crawls, photo shoots, etc.

Garrett gets an idea. He begins typing. "SPEND THE DAY WITH NOTORIOUS EX-POLITICIAN GARRETT SHAH. ASK ME ANYTHING!" He thinks for a beat, then adds "THE BQE PUKER" after his name. He clicks submit, and a MONTAGE begins...

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - DAY

Garrett smiles as a group of tourists take a selfie with him.

EXT. PARK - ANOTHER DAY

Garrett, less enthused, with some FINANCE BROS.

(CONTINUED)

FINANCE BRO

Sick, dude! Here. Pretend to pee on me!

Garrett reluctantly does, the Finance Bros all crack up.

FINANCE BRO (CONT'D)

Classic!

EXT. BQE - DAY

Garrett halfheartedly reenacts his arrest for a group of old people, who film with their phones. He is humiliated.

INT. BAR - WEEKS LATER

Garrett walks into a bar. A college age guy, BRADY, waves him over to a table full of people. Garrett is all business, having done this several times now.

GARRETT

Okay, fifty bucks an hour -- each -- up front. I will not actually puke or pee on you. No nudity of any kind. Pictures are 20, t-shirts are 30 --

BRADY

Nah, dude, we don't want any of that. We need your help. We're trying to become citizens.

GARRETT

...Citizens? You seem pretty American to me.

BRADY

Yeah, no crap, 'cuz I am American. Well, I thought I was. Then I went to get my driver's license and I find out my friggin' mom brought me over when I was two and overstayed her visa and never told me. Now I have to take some dumb history test just so I don't get sent back to Moldova.

GARRETT

Where even is Moldova?

BRADY

I don't know man! What do I look like, a book? This is our little study group. That's Griselda, she's from El Salvador and she's old. Abdur Rahim, he's a nerd from Somalia. Mei Lin and Jin Hao, they're from China and hella rich.

(CONTINUED)

JIN HAO, (20s, Chinese, incredibly wealthy, dumb) gets off his phone.

JIN HAO
Technically, our dad now lives in international waters.

Jin Hao's sister, MEI LIN (20s, spoiled) nudges him.

MEI LIN
He means we have no knowledge of his last whereabouts.

GRISELDA (60s, Latina, FedEx Uniform) pulls up a chair for Garrett.

GRISELDA
For the last few weeks we were all taking a class that was helping us with the paperwork and the citizenship test, but it shut down when someone bought the building.

MEI LIN
It's getting turned into one of those shared work spaces. It's like ew.

GARRETT
Yeah, it seems like every building is getting turned into one of those.

MEI LIN
No, I mean, like "Ew. Work." And "share."

BRADY
Point is, it's like, impossible to get into a new class. They're all booked up, and the wait lists are super long. We need your political connections.

Loud Euro house music plays.

BRADY (CONT'D)
Dammit, Drazen! Not now!

DRAZEN (50s, Eastern European) has a small DJ set up near the bar.

DRAZEN
(can't hear)
Yes, it's good, eh?

BRADY
That music sucks!

(CONTINUED)

DRAZEN

It's Adrian Copilul Minune! Number one in Romania!

BRADY

No one knows who the hell that is!

Drazen presses pause and walks over.

DRAZEN

Is this the man who will help? The man with the vomit and the pee pee? He will save us!

(to Brady)

This was a great idea, brother!

He hugs Brady, who squirms.

BRADY

We are not brothers, dude!

DRAZEN

We are Moldovan! We are countrymen! You and me are the same!

BRADY

No we're not. I'm awesome, and you use the word "disco" as a verb.

DRAZEN

What are you saying? You want to disco? Let's go! We disco right now!

GARRETT

Look guys, I don't know if you heard, but I'm temporarily...out of office.

GRIDELDA

We know, and it's not temporary. You're done.

GARRETT

(small)

...Matter of opinion.

ABDUR RAHIM (30s, Somali, dorky) leans over.

ABDUR RAHIM

We were just hoping you could call some of your old colleagues at the city council to help us find a new class.

MEI LIN

Or just like, make us citizens.

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT

A city councilor can't just make someone
a citizen.

MEI LIN

Uch, whatever, just do it.

GRISELDA

Please. We're asking you to make one
phone call. I saw you give that speech at
the opening of the Wahlburgers on
Northern Boulevard. You can convince
anyone to do anything.

Garrett melts a little.

GARRETT

(what the hell)

...Sure. I'll give it a try.

INT. BAR - ELSEWHERE - SECONDS LATER

Garrett, standing apart from the group, dials his phone.

GARRETT

Hi, I'm looking to speak with Councilman
Webber? This is Garrett Shah.

(beat)

Sorry, go what myself?

(beat)

That's what I thought.

(to group, covering)

Bad connection. I'll try someone else.

He dials again. A RECEPTIONIST in Diana's office picks up.

INTERCUT.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

Hi, Garrett Shah for Councilwoman Gomez?

RECEPTIONIST

(to Diana)

Garrett Shah.

DIANA

Tell him to go get hit by a truck then
hang up on him.

RECEPTIONIST

The councilwoman invites you to get hit
by a truck. Have a nice day. Bye-bye.

She hangs up. The group looks at him expectantly.

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT

She was out of the office.

GRISELDA

No problem. Call someone else.

GARRETT

Yeah. No. Yeah, definitely.

He thinks for a beat, then dials. Mallory picks up.

MALLORY

What do you want?

GARRETT

Councilman! How are you?

MALLORY

What the hell are you talking about,
Garrett? I'm at work.

GARRETT

Look, I've got this great group of folks
here who need some help with their
citizenship applications. You will?
That's fantastic! Great. Talk soon.
(hangs up, then)
He'll be in touch!

The group looks happy. Garrett forces a smile.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. BAR - LATER

The group has turned the bar into an ad hoc study area. Textbooks and papers are strewn all over their tables as they work on practice tests and fill out various forms.

GRISELDA

What is the difference between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of the Interior?

GARRETT

Great question, and I thank you for it. And... the answer to that... is... that Interior... is responsible for the management and conservation of most federal lands and natural resources.

GRISELDA

Did you just look that up on wikipedia right now?

GARRETT

I did, but only to check that my initial answer, the one I gave, was right. Which it was, almost verbatim. Listen -- as much fun as it is to do homework as grown adults, when I said "Ask Me Anything" I meant things like "who is the coolest celebrity you ever made out with?" Not "how many amendments does the Constitution have."

ABDUR RAHIM

Too bad. We have to take a test on the Constitution to become citizens, so while we wait for your councilman friend to call back, this is what we're paying you for.

GARRETT

(beat, then)

It's Rihanna's cousin, if you're wondering. I made out with Rihanna's cousin. It was awesome.

Mei Lin and Jin Hao approach Garrett.

JIN HAO

We have a proposition for you.

(CONTINUED)

MEI LIN

We pay you to take this test for us.

GARRETT

...First of all, that's definitely illegal. Second of all, how would that even work? I look nothing like either of you.

MEI LIN

Oh, our dad has a guy. He can make anyone look like anyone.

JIN HAO

He's like Picasso with a scalpel.

GARRETT

Okay, well, no one wants to look like a Picasso, so that's a no from me.

The bar's MANAGER leans over.

MANAGER

Griselda! You're up.

Griselda pulls a t-shirt with the bar's logo over her FedEx shirt.

GARRETT

Oh, I thought you worked at FedEx.

GRISELDA

I do. In the afternoons. I work here at night.

GARRETT

Wow, two jobs.

GRISELDA

Kind of. In the mornings I deliver newspapers.

GARRETT

Oh--

GRISELDA

Then I teach a Zumba class at 7 before work.

GARRETT

At FedEx?

(CONTINUED)

GRISELDA

No, at my paralegal job. Then I head over to the Genius Bar, fix a few iphones for a couple hours. Then FedEx. Let me get you a refill.

She takes his empty glass to the bar. Garrett flips through a textbook.

GARRETT

Man, this is a lot of stuff to learn.

BRADY

Dude, this is the easy part. You know how much crap we've had to deal with just to get to this point? First, you got to get a green card, which... good luck. They're not exactly handing those out at the airport.

ABDUR RAHIM

You have to maintain residence for 5 years. Assuming you can find a job and a place to live.

JIN HAO

You have to maintain a clean record.

MEI LIN

Or get your dad to get certain "incidents" or certain "people" to "go away."

GARRETT

(small, scared)
...Did your dad have someone killed--

BRADY

Gonna move? Gotta fill out an AR-11. Traveling? That's an I-131. And who knows? Maybe while you're visiting your sick grandma they might just decide no one from your country is allowed in anymore.

Loud Euro house music begins to play.

BRADY (CONT'D)

Dammit Drazen not now!

ABDUR RAHIM

That's why we need your help connecting with someone powerful.

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT

Yeah, well, your hour's almost up and they haven't called back. And to be honest, I don't think they're going to. You want a civics lesson? Politicians don't spend their days thinking about how to help people like you. I should know. I was one of them.

JIN HAO

Aw man. We were going to hire you for the week. Now we gotta start over?

Garrett stops in his tracks.

GARRETT

Sorry, did you say for the week? That's like 15 thousand bucks.

(beat)

What I meant was I was one of them. Since I'm no longer a politician, I am no longer one of them. I'll stick around for a week.

(immediately)

Will I be paid by check? I also have Venmo.

Mei Lin pulls out an insane amount of money from her purse.

MEI LIN

Here. Take whatever this is. It smells weird.

INT. MALLORY'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Garrett bursts into Mallory's house.

GARRETT

Guess what, Mal? Got a job! And this one doesn't involve humiliating myself.

MALLORY

What's the job?

GARRETT

This group of people wants me to help them become citizens.

MALLORY

Do you know anything about how to become a citizen?

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT

I do not. But I can do this. I'll be like, a "cool teacher." Remember Mr. Legler? How he wore a leather jacket and instead of making us read some long boring biology book, he would take us to the zoo for the day?

MALLORY

He was using you as a diversion. Mr. Legler got busted for selling stolen monitor lizards out of his van.

GARRETT

Yeah, but remember that cool leather jacket?
(then)
Plus, I'm getting paid!

He brandishes the cash.

MALLORY

Great, you can pay me rent.

He quickly pockets the cash.

GARRETT

And I will do that, Mal, just as soon as I take care of some very pressing financial obligations, lawyer's fees, et cetera. Once I'm solvent again, I promise: anything I have is yours.

MALLORY

(noticing)
Are those new Jordans?

GARRETT

Thanks! You're the best bye!

He disappears into his room.

INT. BAR - THE NEXT DAY

The group studies intensely. They all seem a little stressed. Drazen hands a paper to Garrett.

DRAZEN

N-336 form finished.

GARRETT

And I definitely know what that is.

(CONTINUED)

BRADY

Dude, you haven't even done your N-400.

DRAZEN

But 336 is before 400. Why does 400 go first?

BRADY

I don't know, man! I shouldn't have to know any of this stuff! I'm American!

DRAZEN

No, you are Moldovan. Like me!

BRADY

Stop saying that!

MEI LIN

Uch. Why can't this be like high school? When we had trouble, our dad would have one little "conversation" with our teacher, and we'd get all A's.

ABDUR RAHIM

He bribed them?

JIN HAO

I wouldn't call getting your family back a "bribe."

BRADY

Yo guys, it's becoming clear that your dad is a legit supervillain.

JIN HAO

I plead the third to that.

GRISELDA

The third amendment prohibits the quartering of soldiers in private homes.
(proud)
I studied today while I waited tables at the Olive Garden.

JIN HAO

Well, I plead whichever amendment is the "no snitching" one.

Garrett stands up to calm the situation.

GARRETT

Guys, guys. I can sense you're all getting a little stressed out.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

GARRETT (CONT'D)

I think you're too focused on what you have to know. Being American is as much about how it feels. Grab your stuff. We're taking a field trip.

EXT. RICHMOND COUNTY BANK BALL PARK - EVENING

The group is now sitting in a baseball stadium, home of the Staten Island Yankees. The park is right on the water, with a majestic view of the downtown New York City skyline. Drazen returns from the concession stand with two hotdogs piled with several pounds of onions and relish.

BRADY

Dude, what the hell? You can't take that much!

DRAZEN

(shrugs)

It's free. They don't want me to take it, they should make it cost money.

GARRETT

(to Mei Lin and Jin Hao)

These seats are great. How'd you get them so quickly?

MEI LIN

Oh, our dad supplied all the steel that was used to build this stadium.

GARRETT

That's cool.

JIN HAO

Not really. I wouldn't walk under the right field bleachers.

GRISELDA

So, why did you bring us here? What does this place have to do with us?

GARRETT

Are you kidding? Look at those guys out there.

(pointing)

Venezuela. Dominican Republic. South Korea. Mexico. Panama. Cuba. Taiwan. Puerto Rico.

ABDUR RAHIM

Puerto Rico's in the U.S.

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT

(lying)

I knew that.

(then)

Look, everyone knows baseball is the national pastime, but part of what makes it so cool is that it's always been an immigrant's sport. Years ago, some of the best players were either the children of immigrants or immigrants themselves. Roberto Clemente, Lou Gehrig, Hank Greenberg, Joe DiMaggio. And now, 30 percent of all major leaguers came here from somewhere else. Guys like Jose Altuve, Ichiro Suzuki, Miguel Cabrera, Albert Pujols. How much worse would the game be without those guys? How much worse would America be without all the people who came here from all over the world and brought their culture and history with them? We like to say that this country is a melting pot. I say: nowhere is that more clear than out there, on that green grass, on this warm summer night.

The group smiles, a little impressed.

BRADY

(beat, then)

Was that actually the reason you took us here, or did you just want to go see a baseball game, then we called you on it, and you just pulled all that out of your ass just now?

GARRETT

All that studying in the bar was giving me a headache, but you have to admit I did make some good points.

GRISELDA

You did. Thank you for the field trip.

Griselda puts on a Yankees cap and straps on a soda tray.

GRISELDA (CONT'D)

Welp, back to work!

(then, yelling)

Soda! Soda here!

INT. ABDUR RAHIM'S TAXI - THAT NIGHT

Abdur Rahim drives Garrett home in his taxi.

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT

Thanks for the ride, man.

ABDUR RAHIM

No problem.

GARRETT

So, must be quite a change, Somalia to New York City.

ABDUR RAHIM

I guess so. I'm not making as much money as I used to, but that's okay.

GARRETT

Wait, what? What did you do in Somalia?

ABDUR RAHIM

I was a maxillofacial surgeon. Had a pretty sweet condo in Mogadishu, beach house in Berbera. But, I won a green card lottery and this was my chance to come to America. I had to take it.

GARRETT

If you're a doctor, why are you driving a cab?

ABDUR RAHIM

Can't get certified yet. Citizenship should help, but it will still take a few years. Then, I will be able to bring my family over. I am going to bring everyone, my brothers and sisters. nieces, nephews. I have an 85 year plan.

GARRETT

You'll be like 125 years old.

ABDUR RAHIM

I have a plan for that, too. I'm a very good doctor.

GARRETT

I gotta say... all the bureaucracy, the background checks, the test... it all seems like a lot of work. You gave up a nice life in Somalia. Why not stay?

ABDUR RAHIM

Because America is the best! Here, anything is possible. So I have to fill out some papers, drive a cab, leave my jet ski back home--

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT

You have a jet ski?! I have a jet ski!
Aw, that sucks you had to give it up.

ABDUR RAHIM

It's worth it. I want to be here because
I love America and I want to be a part of
it. We all do.

They pull up to Mallory's house. Garrett hops out.

GARRETT

That's... really awesome, man. Thanks for
the ride.

ABDUR RAHIM

Hey, uh, America is great and anything is
possible, but only if you pay people for
their work. You owe me 27.50.

GARRETT

Oh. Right! Yup.

INT. BAR - THE NEXT DAY

Garrett enters with a coffee, a little bounce in his step.

GARRETT

What's up, y'all? Who's ready to learn?
I stayed up late last night, watched a
couple youtube videos about American
History, somehow went down a rabbit hole
and ended up watching three hours of
people unboxing Legos, which is weird
because I don't even like Legos, but...
then I went back to the history stuff--

He stops, noticing that the group all looks shaken. Griselda
wipes away a tear.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

What's up?

GRISELDA

They took Drazen.

GARRETT

What? Who did?

BRADY

Immigration.

GARRETT

Where'd they take him?

(CONTINUED)

BRADY

We don't know. Just got off the phone with his wife and she doesn't know either.

GARRETT

...But he had a green card.

BRADY

I guess he filled something out wrong. That's enough sometimes. Gah! That guy was so bad at that crap! This blows!

GARRETT

I didn't think you even liked Drazen.

BRADY

I mean, yeah, he sucked, but nobody deserves this.

MEI LIN

And if ICE can take him for something that small, they can take any of us.

ABDUR RAHIM

Can you call one of your City Council people and at least figure out where they're keeping him?

GARRETT

I doubt it. No one will return my calls. They haven't spoken to me in months.

The group stares at Garrett, shocked. He realizes what he has done.

GRISELDA

You said someone was going to help us.

GARRETT

I did say that, and that was a lie, but in my defense I only lied because I didn't think I was going to see you again and I really wanted the money. But Abdur Rahim and I had a great talk last night! I'm ready to teach! I want to help you.

BRADY

Yeah, well I don't think we need your help anymore.

The group disperses, shooting disappointed looks at Garrett.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. MALLORY'S HOUSE - OFFICE

Garrett, depressed, watches the end of his arrest video.

GARRETT (ON VIDEO)
One billion dollars.

He hits replay and it starts over from the beginning. It's clear he's been watching it over and over. Mallory pokes her head in the doorway.

MALLORY
If you watch it too much, it gets less funny. But if you keep watching it, it comes all the way around the other side and gets really funny again.

GARRETT
Remember those people I was helping? One of them got taken by ICE last night. Can you believe that?

MALLORY
I mean, that's awful, but yeah, I can believe it.

GARRETT
Drazen was doing everything right! He had a green card.

MALLORY
Dude, where have you been the last few years? This stuff happens all the time! You know how many patients I have that have had family members deported?

GARRETT
Yeah, well, it's messed up.

MALLORY
Yeah, it is. And it was happening the whole time you were in office and maybe could have done something about it, instead of partying on Alec Baldwin's yacht.

GARRETT
It was Daniel Baldwin's catamaran. I wish it was Alec's yacht.

MALLORY
Gross.

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT

No, you're right, maybe I should have become a doctor like you, and mom, and dad, and Uncle Praveen, and Uncle Vikra and Nana Sunita, and--

MALLORY

I'd rather be a cliché than someone pretending to be Mr. All American. "Oooh, I'm a politician, I played baseball."

GARRETT

(laying it on thick)
You know why I played baseball? Because I was good at it. And when kids saw I was good, nobody wanted to bully me anymore. They didn't see me as different. They accepted me.

MALLORY

(beat, then, in Hindi)
Oh, get over yourself.

GARRETT

(in Hindi)
Hey! We were arguing in English! That's not fair!

MALLORY

Look man, you can talk and talk, and try to spin this however you want. But the fact is that Drazen is sitting in a cell somewhere, and he may never go home.

She leaves. Garrett looks at his computer screen, sees a link to his old campaign ad from the cold open. He clicks it.

EXT. FLUSHING, QUEENS STREETS - DAY (ON SCREEN)

The same video from before. Garrett meets people from varying ethnicities. He's young, idealistic, and earnest.

GARRETT (ON SCREEN)

I'm Garrett Shah and I'm running to be your next city councilor. My parents moved here in 1975 with one dream. To raise their children in the greatest country on Earth in the greatest city on Earth. It wasn't easy, but the people of this community supported them, and made sure that they would succeed. That's why I want to return the favor.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT (ON SCREEN) (CONT'D)
I'm asking for your vote because we all
came from somewhere, but we all chose to
be here. So let's get to work.

INT. MALLORY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Garrett clicks pause. He now has a look of determination on his face. He gets up and runs out of the room.

INT. ABDUR RAHIM'S TAXI - LATER

Garrett jumps into the backseat of Abdur Rahim's taxi.

GARRETT
A ha! Found you! Look, before you say
anything, I'm sorry. I messed up. I'm
sorry for lying to you, I'm sorry for
being a dick. But, in a weird way, lying
about your credentials and putting your
own happiness above others is one of the
most American things you can do, so I
guess that's another lesson I taught you
and you're welcome? Point is, I want to
make it up to you.

ABDUR RAHIM
(beat, then)
How many taxi cabs did you jump into
before you found me?

GARRETT
A lot. There are a lot of very angry cab
drivers out there. What do you say? Want
to help me get everyone else on board?

Abdur Rahim puts the car in drive.

ABDUR RAHIM
Let's go.

INT. INSANE TRIBECA LOFT - LATER

We're in the largest apartment anyone has ever seen. Somehow, three Ferraris are parked inside the loft. A bored Mei Lin and Jin Hao stare at KARL ROVE, who stands at a white board.

KARL ROVE
...And we call that the Electoral
College. But this is one college that
doesn't have a football team!

He waits for a laugh that doesn't come.

(CONTINUED)

MEI LIN

Ugh, what are you even talking about?

A butler leads Garrett and Abdur Rahim in.

GARRETT

Guys, I know you're probably pissed at me, but I think I can really help you. And Drazen. Will you come with me?

JIN HAO

Oh thank god, yes. This guy suuuuucks.

MEI LIN

So boring.

GARRETT

Come on. Let's go!

They all leave together.

KARL ROVE

So, is that it? Do I still get paid?

EXT./INT. LIBRARY - LATER

Garrett, Abdur Rahim, Mei Lin, and Jin Hao enter a typically beautiful New York City Public Library. They see Brady across the room, studying intently, wearing glasses.

GARRETT

Brady. Come with us. We're getting the gang back together.

BRADY

(relieved)

Sweet.

(then, threatening)

If you tell anyone you saw me in a library, I will mess you up, understand?

GARRETT

Sure, no problem. Now we just need to find Griselda.

GRISELDA (O.S.)

I'm right here!

Reveal Griselda, pushing a cart, restocking the shelves.

GRISELDA (CONT'D)

It's almost my lunch break anyway. Where are we going?

INT. CITY COUNCIL OFFICE - LATER

The group bursts into Diana's office.

DIANA

Oh, come on.

GARRETT

Wait! I want to apologize. I got to sit at that desk, basically because I was good at talking. I could talk anyone into anything, and I talked this city into electing me, and then I never did anything. You're not going to make that mistake. And you're going to be a better city councilor than I ever was.

Diana looks impressed.

DIANA

I mean, that's a pretty low bar.

GARRETT

Harsh, but fair. What I'm trying to say is: I'm sick of talking -- I want to start doing. Their friend Drazen got taken by ICE last night. Can you help us find him?

DIANA

I can try, but they don't let anyone into those facilities, not even US Senators. But I'll see what I can do.

BRADY

Also, we need to get into a citizenship class, and they're all booked up.

DIANA

I can poke around. But your problem is gonna be finding a teacher. There's no money to pay them, so no one wants to do it.

GARRETT

(smiles)

Actually, that part I have covered.

Garrett turns to the group.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

When you're born in America, you never really have to learn how lucky you are.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT (CONT'D)

You guys are already working way harder than I ever did, just to get what I was randomly given at birth because my parents happened to live here. I don't want to take that for granted anymore. If you'll have me as a teacher, I'll learn whatever I have to. I'll help you get your paperwork in order. I'll help you study. I'll know the Constitution better than... the guy who wrote the Const--

GRISELDA

James Madison.

GARRETT (CONT'D)

James Madison!

GARRETT (CONT'D)

I promise that I'm going to be right next to you, and we're going to figure out how to get through this together.

(to Diana)

Is it okay if we come to you if we ever need help navigating this process?

DIANA

How often are we talking?

GARRETT

Oh, probably a lot.

DIANA

Fine. But I'm only helping them. Also, for your information there were a lot of drugs left in your desk...

GARRETT

(proud)

Those days are behind me. You keep them.

DIANA

I threw them away, you maniac.

INT. MALLORY'S HOUSE - THAT NIGHT

The gang studies in Mallory's living room. Garrett flips to a page featuring Benjamin Franklin.

GARRETT

Okay, can anyone tell me who Benjamin Franklin is?

JIN HAO

He's the guy on the hundred. Total baller.

(CONTINUED)

GARRETT
Okay yes, but what did he do?

GRISELDA
He flew a kite in a storm and that was
smart for some reason?

GARRETT
Not really what I'm looking for--

BRADY
Is he Hamilton from "Hamilton?"

GARRETT
...That's Hamilton.

Mallory enters, bedraggled from a long shift.

GARRETT (CONT'D)
Great news, Mal! I got a job! I'm
teaching a citizenship class!

MALLORY
...Dude, you can't just bring a bunch of
strangers into my house.

JIN HAO
Actually, it would only be illegal if we
were soldiers and the government was
telling you to let us in. Third
amendment.

GARRETT
Jin Hao! You learned something!

The gang congratulates Jin Hao.

JIN HAO
Oh my god I did! I'm amazing!

They all HIGH-FIVE and celebrate...

END OF ACT THREE