

I Am Somebody

By

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FADE IN

EXT. RURAL INDIA - DAY

A car drives towards a village, stopping under a tree in the outskirts. ANYA (19) and JULIE KIRKLAND, her Manager, get out. Anya gazes over her girlhood home, tears spill over her eyes.

ANYA

I'm home.

A short distance away, a YOUNG BOY, SAAD (8), sees them and runs away. Anya follows.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

SUPER - FOUR YEARS EARLIER

A young Anya (15) is sitting under a tree, a SMALL GROUP OF CHILDREN crowded around here. A mound of small rocks sits beside her. As she teaches, she illustrates with the rocks.

ANYA

If I had six goats and two goats
ran away how many would I have?

CHILD #1

I would still have six because I
would find the other two.

ANYA

That is a wise answer, but it does
not solve the counting question.

CHILD #2

You would have four.

ANYA

Correct. What if you purchased six
more?

CHILD #1

You would be rich and smell like
goats.

ANYA

If you are not going to try, then
say nothing.

(CONTINUED)

CHILD #3
That would make twelve.

ANYA
Very good. You are getting better.

Anya's MOTHER, AMBI, comes around a building.

AMBI
Anya, come. It's time to get ready
for the Sangeet ceremony.

ANYA
I'm coming.
(To the children)
I have to go.

CHILD #3
Anya, when you get married, will
you go away?

ANYA
I have to live with my husband.

CHILD #4
Have you seen him yet?

ANYA
Yes, once. His parents brought him
over so that we could meet. He's
very good looking.

CHILD #3
I don't want you to leave.

ANYA
I'm sorry, but it is the way it is.

AMBI
Come, Bul Bul. Stop playing in the
dirt. You must be bathed and
ready.

Anya stand up to leave.

CHILD #3
Sing to us Bul Bul.

ANYA
Not now. I will later. I still
have a week before I'm
married. I'll see you later.

Anya follows her mother.

INT. LARGE ROOM - DAY

The Sangeet Ceremony is a women only occasion of joyous singing and dancing. WOMEN sit on the floor talking, others dance to the DHOLAK and SPOONS.

GAURI

I remember when Anya was only five. She fell into the stream. When everyone was laughing, instead of crying she stood up, defiant, her fists at her side and cried, "I wanted to get wet."

VEDI

Oh, yes. Even then she was so sure of herself.

AMBI

But she has grown into a good, strong woman.

DRISTI

In a land where many woman are like cattle, I'm not sure if it is a blessing or a curse.

AMBI

I consider it a blessing. She will run her household well and be a helper to her husband.

VEDI

What does her husband do?

AMBI

His father owns a textile business. Kedar is learning to run the business and will take it over some day.

GAURI

That is good. She will be well off. If he prospers she may even become rich.

ANYA

I would rather have a good marriage with many children. Being rich with a bad husband will still mean misery.

(CONTINUED)

VEDI

Well said. You are wise, Anya. I speak a blessing into your marriage. May you be blessed with the happiness and children you desire.

ANYA

Thank you.

(To Ambi)

But, what if he will not allow me to follow my dreams? What if I am just another possession for him to have?

AMBI

Always remember, my darling, as long as you hold onto yourself, your dreams will never die. Even if you have to wait for them or fight for them, they are forever yours.

DRISTI

Sing for us Bul Bul.

VEDI

Yes, please. I love hearing you sing.

ANYA

If you desire it.

Anya gets up and talks to the musicians. They accompany her as she dances and sings.

DRISTI

That was beautiful. There is no singer like Bul Bul:our nightingale.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Two cars drive into the village. They park away from the buildings. THREE BOYS see them. Two run away, but SAAD stays and watches from hiding.

KEDAR, Anya's betrothed gets out of the first car. TWO MEN, VIKESH and TARIK climb out of the second.

(CONTINUED)

VIKESH

Where is she?

KEDAR

I don't know. Maybe in her house.

VIKESH

How do you plan to get her out?

KEDAR

I'll think of something.

VIKESH

If we stay here long, people will see us. She had better be worth what you owe.

KEDAR

She is. I saw her only last month. She's very beautiful. You'll get a good price for her.

TARIK

And what will you do without a bride?

KEDAR

I can get a woman anywhere. I will tell my parents she ran away with another man. They will find me someone else.

In the distance, they see Anya walking. She sings softly to herself.

KEDAR

There she is. I'll call her over between the buildings then you can take her.

Kedar runs to intercept Anya.

Anya spies a movement and stops. Kedar steps out and motions for her to come. She's hesitant. She looks around for another person, but there is no one. She walks towards Kedar.

ANYA

Kedar, what are you doing? I cannot see you alone.

(CONTINUED)

KEDAR

Anya, I need help. Please, come and let me talk to you.

ANYA

You know I can't. I'll go and get one of the men to help you.

KEDAR

No. You don't understand. This is about our marriage. It's you I must talk to.

Anya walks reluctantly towards Kedar. She stops a few feet away.

ANYA

Okay, what is it?

Kedar walks up to her.

KEDAR

I'm sorry, Anya, but I cannot marry you.

ANYA

What?

Unthinking, she steps closer.

ANYA

What are you saying? Why?

When she gets close, Kedar grabs her arm and drags her between the buildings where Vikesh and Tarik are waiting.

ANYA

Kedar, what are you doing? Who are these men.

KEDAR

Men I owe money to.

Anya struggles.

ANYA

Stop, leave me alone.

She begins to scream, but a blanket is thrown over her head. She is dragged to their car and shoved into the back seat with Tarik.

(CONTINUED)

VIKESH

Okay, this evens things up, but next time, I won't go to this much trouble to get my money.

KEDAR

There won't be a next time.

Vikesh gets into his car and drives away. As Kedar climbs into his car, Saad runs across the village until he comes to a house. He pounds on the door.

SAAD

Fahad, Fahad, open the door.

The door opens and Anya's father, FAHAD walks out.

FAHAD

Saad, why are you pounding on the door like that?

SAAD

They've taken her. They've taken Anya.

FAHAD

Who's taken Anya?

SAAD

I saw them. It was Kedar. He brought two men with him. He told Anya he wanted to talk to her, but then grabbed her and gave her to the two men. They've taken her away.

FAHAD

No. Not Kedar. He's a good man. You must be wrong.

SAAD

No, I saw him. It was Kedar. You must hurry before they get away.

Ambi comes up beside Fahad.

AMBI

What is wrong?

FAHAD

Saad says that two men have taken Anya.

AMBI

What? How can that be?

FAHAD

He says that Kedar tricked her then he gave her to them and they've taken her away.

Ambi doubles over.

AMBI

No. Anya.

Fahad holds her.

FAHAD

Come, we have to talk to his parents. Get ready while I get the car.

EXT. KALKATA, INDIA - DAY

Vikesh drives through Kalkata (Calcutta).

Scenes of beautiful architecture, tourists and shops.

The car drives into the "red light" district. It stops before a tall building. Along the front are caged-in verandas with woman sitting inside. Anya is pulled out of the car and taken inside.

INT. BROTHEL - DAY

The main room is shabby with several dirty couches. They are met by a LARGE WOMAN. She is Dayita, the Madam of the building.

VIKESH

I have a girl for Kuval.

ANYA

What am I doing here? Please help me, I need to go home.

DAYITA

You have no more home, girl.

(To Vikesh)

This way.

She leads them up stairs and down a hallway. At many doors are cement slabs with WOMEN cooking on them. CHILDREN watch them walk by. Dayita leads them to a door and opens it.

(CONTINUED)

DAYITA

Place her in here. I will send
word to Kupal.

BEDROOM - DAY

They shove Anya into the room. The door is closed behind her and locked. The room is bare and filthy. Only a double bed for furniture. Anya grabs the door handle and tries desperately to open it. Pounding on it, she screams

ANYA

Help me. Please, someone help me.

She looks around, hugging herself. Fear overpowers her. She leans against the wall, sinks down and cries.

LATER

The door opens. Anya is huddled in a corner. Vikesh walks in with KUPAL. Kupal, 30's, wears a diamond stud in one ear and several lengths of gold chain around his neck. He is ruthless and unfeeling, making his money from the suffering of others. He studies her a moment.

KUPAL

Make her stand up.

Vikesh grabs Anya's arm and pulls her to her feet.

ANYA

Please, let me go home.

KUPAL

Shut up. How old are you?

VIKESH

Fifteen.

KUPAL

She's older than I like, but she's pretty enough.

VIKESH

I'm told she sings well.

KUPAL

I don't care. She won't have much to sing about here. Very well, I'll give you one hundred rupies for her.

(CONTINUED)

VIKESH

One hundred? She's worth twice that.

ANYA

What are you talking about? You can't buy me like a dog.

Kuval slaps her.

KUVAL

I said shut up. You are no one and nothing. I will buy you if I want, and you can do nothing about it.

(To Vikesh)

Come. We'll go downstairs and discuss the details over some drinks.

Both men leave.

BEDROOM - NIGHT

On the bed, Anya is awakened by the door opening. The room is dark. A black figure is silhouetted in the door. His speech is slurred as he talks.

KUVAL

You are mine now, Anya.

He walks in and closes the door. Darkness. Anya screams.

BEDROOM - DAY

Anya sits against the wall on the bed. She hugs her legs in a tight ball, trembling and in shock. The door opens. Dayita stands at the door.

DAYITA

Come. I'll take you to the bathroom.

Anya doesn't move.

DAYITA

You can stay here or you can come, I don't care. I have other things to do. If you don't come now, you won't be allowed to go again until this evening.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

Why? Why do you do this? Let me go, please.

DAYITA

It is the way it is. We are women. That is enough.

ANYA

No. It's not right. You should not let them do this.

Dayita laughs

DAYITA

As if I could change anything. Now come with me or I shut the door.

Slowly, Anya crawls off the bed.

DAYITA

And don't think about running. Kuval has men to watch over his girls.

Anya follows her out the door.

HALLWAY

They wind through the PEOPLE in the hallway. Anya hears footsteps behind her. She turns and sees NADIR (20's) following them. He's a young man needing to prove how tough he is. Dayita opens the door to the large communal bathroom. She nods towards Nadir.

DAYITA

He will be here when you get out and will take you back to your room. There's no use trying to escape.

Anya walks in and closes the door.

BATHROOM

As she looks around, a WOMAN walks up to her.

WOMAN

You are new?

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

Yes. They brought me last night.

WOMAN

I am sorry. It is always hardest at first. Take my advise - don't fight. Do what they want. It will save you a lot of pain.

ANYA

How can I? I was taken by force from my family. I need to get away from here. I need to go home.

WOMAN

Because they will beat you if you don't.

ANYA

This isn't right.

WOMAN

What has that to do with anything? You are a woman. They are men. It is the way things are. You cannot go against it, and you are foolish if you think you can.

The woman walks past and leaves. Anya stands a minute, thinking. Her distress turns into anger.

HALLWAY

Anya comes out of the bathroom almost slamming the door. She walks head up, shoulders straight back to her room. Several women watch her walk by, then go back to what they are doing while shaking their heads.

EXT. LARGE TOWN - TEXTILE MILL - DAY

An older model car pulls in front of the building. Fahad and Ambi get out and walk inside.

INT. TEXTILE MILL - DAY

Fahad walks to the front desk where a YOUNG MAN waits.

(CONTINUED)

FAHAD

I need to see Mr. Rashdi
immediately.

YOUNG MAN

Does he know you are coming.

FAHAD

No. We are the parents of the
woman his son is to marry in a
week.

YOUNG MAN

Hold on a moment. I'll tell him
you are here.

As they wait, Ambi starts crying.

AMBI

What if he doesn't help us? Where
would they have taken her?

FAHAD

We'll take it one step at a
time. We'll find her.

A side door opens and FARHAT RASHDI (50's) walks out.

FARHAT

Fahad, Ambi, what are you doing
here? You say it is an emergency.

FAHAD

May we talk in your office?

FARHAT

Of course. Follow me.

FARHAT'S OFFICE

It is the office of a man who wants to show he has more
money than what he has.

FARHAT

Have a seat. Now, what is wrong?

FAHAD

Anya has been taken.

FARHAT

Taken? By whom?

(CONTINUED)

FAHAD

Kedar. One of the boys at the village saw him and two other men take Anya by force.

FARHAT

Kedar? Why would he do that? They're to be married in a few days.

FAHAD

We don't know. Is he here? Can you call him in so we can ask him?

FARHAT

Let me find out.

Farhet picks up the phone and pushes a button.

FARHAT

Is Kedar there? Good, send him to my office.

(To Fahad)

He's here. We'll find out what's happening in a few minutes.

AMBI

I hope she is all right.

Fahad reaches over and holds her hand.

The door opens and Kedar walks in.

KEDAR

Yes, fath..

He sees Fahad and Ambi. Fahad stands up.

FAHAD

Where is Anya?

KEDAR

I don't know.

FAHAD

But you were seen taking her. What have you done with her?

FARHAT

Fahad, wait. Let me talk to him.

Fahad sits back down.

(CONTINUED)

FARHAT

Kedar, do you know anything of Anya's disappearance? Were you at the village?

KEDAR

Yes, I was there. But it's not what you heard. I received a phone call from a friend who said he and Anya had been talking and had fallen in love. He was going to the village to pick her up so that they can be married.

AMBI

No, Anya would never have done a thing like that.

KEDAR

I drove there to try and talk her out of it, but she wouldn't listen. She got into the car with him and they drove away.

FAHAD

And why didn't you tell me?

KEDAR

I was ashamed. She chose another man over me.

FAHAD

Saad said he saw you grab her and give her to the other men.

KEDAR

No, I was trying to stop her. She went because she was determined. You know how stubborn she can be.

AMBI

No, he is lying. That is not the truth.

FARHAT

Who am I to believe? My own son or the parents of a willful girl? There were many times I was worried if we were making the right match or not. Now I know. The marriage is annulled. Now, please leave my office.

(CONTINUED)

Fahad takes a crying Ambi into his arms as they walk out.

FAHAD
We will find her. And we will
learn the truth.

INT. BROTHEL - ANYA'S ROOM - DAY

The door opens and Kuval walks in.

KUVAL
Anya, If you do what I ask, I won't
have to hurt you.

ANYA
If I do what you ask, I will die.

KUVAL
You are already dead: dead to your
old life, dead to your family, dead
to everything you ever knew.

ANYA
I am not dead. I have a
family. They love me and are
probably looking for me.

KUVAL
You are a woman. No one cares
about you. Your parents will look
for you, then they'll go home and
have another child. You're alone,
Anya. This is your life
now. Accept it, and it will be
easier on you.

ANYA
No, I can not. I have a family. I
have dreams. You have no right to
do this.

KUVAL
Stupid woman, you are what I say
you are and nothing more.

ANYA
I was told that as long as I hold
onto myself, my dreams will never
die.

(CONTINUED)

KUVAL

I don't care about your stupid dreams. I care about the money you will bring me, and I promise, you will make me lots of money.

ANYA

Then you are the one who is dead.

Kuval slaps Anya with enough force to throw her to the floor.

HALLWAY

A YOUNG CHILD listens as Anya is beaten. His MOTHER sees him.

MOTHER

Child, come here.

The child turns and runs.

The door opens and Kuval walks out slamming the door. He stands a moment, breathing hard. He turns and sees the child staring at him. Anger turns to resolve as he walks away.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Fahad and Ambi walk to their house. Dristi runs up.

DRISTI

Did you find Anya?

FAHAD

No. We went to Kedar's father, but Kedar said Anya had run away with another man.

DRISTI

That's a lie.

AMBI

We know, but Farhat believed his son instead of us.

FAHAD

We went to the authorities, but they couldn't help us. They said that girls run away all the time. And, if she was taken, then she could be anywhere.

(CONTINUED)

AMBI

Anya's gone from us. We'll never see her again.

DRISTI

So, they don't know why?

FAHAD

He said it was most likely she was taken to the brothels.

DRISTI

My cousin told me of a girl she knew. Her parents sold her for a debt they owed. She was taken to Kalkata.

AMBI

Kalkata?

DRISTI

Yes, that is the closest place where they can get the best price. Maybe if you go there, you will find someone who will admit to seeing her.

FAHAD

But where in Kalkata? It is a great city.

DRISTI

But not so many brothel areas.

AMBI

Then that is where we will go. Thank you.

DRISTI

I hope you find her. You know, even when you find her it will be too late.

FAHAD

We love our daughter. That does not matter.

DRISTI

You are good parents. I wish you well.

INT. BROTHEL - ANYA'S ROOM - DAY

Anya is despondent. She is covered in bruises. Her arms and legs have lacerations and cigarette burns. She tries to sit up, but is unable. Staring at the ceiling, tears flow down her cheeks. She begins singing an old lullaby.

ANYA'S ROOM - NIGHT

The door opens. Kuval turns on the light.

KUVAL

Anya, I have someone here for you to meet. He doesn't mind if you fight, in fact, he rather enjoys it.

Another MAN walks into the room. Kuval turns off the light and shuts the door.

INT. BROTHEL - NIGHT

The man comes down the stairs. Kuval waits in the lobby.

KUVAL

Did you enjoy her?

MAN

Ha. She laid there like a dead fish.

The man walks out. Kuval snickers, and then laughs out loud.

INT. ANYA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Kuval walks in and turns on the light.

KUVAL

I have someone else for you to meet.

Nadir steps in with a large burlap bag. He drops in on the floor and runs out. The bag wiggles. At the opening, a snake's head emerges. A 6' king cobra slithers out. Anya backs up against the wall. At the movement, the cobra rears up, hood extended.

(CONTINUED)

KUVAL

I'll leave you two to get acquainted.

Kuval turns out the light and closes the door.

HALLWAY

Screams proceeds him down the hall.

ANYA'S ROOM - DAY

Dayita opens the door.

DAYITA

Come, girl. I'll take you to the bathroom.

Anya is still in shock. She looks around.

DAYITA

No, it is gone. Remember, they took it away? Now, come.

Anya crawls off the bed. She staggers and falls. Dayita pulls her up by the arm and helps her out the door.

INT. BROTHEL - DAY

Dayita sits on a couch when Kuval comes in.

KUVAL

How is she?

DAYITA

You have done what you wanted.

KUVAL

She is ready?

DAYITA

She will not fight you.

KUVAL

Her spirit is broken?

DAYITA

I did not say that. I said she will not fight you.

(CONTINUED)

KUVAL

Good enough. Is there a room at the street I can use?

DAYITA

It's already waiting.

KUVAL

Good. Now I can make my money.

HALLWAY

Kuval opens Anya's door.

KUVAL

Come out, Anya. We're going to a different room.

Anya obediently steps out and follows him down the hall. He opens another door and Anya walks in.

INT. ANYA'S ROOM - DAY

KUVAL

Get settled in and rested. Tonight, you go to work.

Anya walks out onto a veranda where metal bars crisscross over the opening.

EXT. BROTHEL - DAY

Anya looks out from behind a cage. She is like an animal on the auction block.

EXT. KALKATA, RED LIGHT DISTRICT - DAY

DAVID LONGLY and GREG HINSLEY, American missionaries walk through the district with their guide/translator, PATRICK.

DAVID

Oh, my Lord, I never imagined it was like this. We're only a little ways from the tourist area.

PATRICK

Most major Indian cities have districts like this. Calcutta is one of the worst.

(CONTINUED)

GREG

I've heard this is just the tip of the iceberg.

PATRICK

That's true. The use of women is prevalent throughout our culture.

DAVID

Throughout the world.

PATRICK

With the building we are purchasing, we'll be able to house the ones we rescue, educate them and teach them a trade. It will also give them a base to find a job and get out on their own.

GREG

I salute you, but how do you stay focused and not get overwhelmed?

PATRICK

We remember that the difference we make in one life, is a precious stone in Jesus' crown.

DAVID

Are those cages?

PATRICK

Yes. These are the ones who are new and a flight risk.

DAVID

They're caged like animals.

PATRICK

And sold like cattle. We try to talk to them sometimes, but it is dangerous because these are guarded. You risk a beating if you try to convert or encourage them.

They stop below Anya's cage. She wears new clothes, jewelry and make-up.

GREG

She's beautiful. She looks only fourteen or fifteen.

(CONTINUED)

PATRICK

I have not seen her before.

DAVID

Such despair in her eyes.

PATRICK

Often, these girls are kidnapped from their homes or sold by their families. She's lost everything.

Greg walks up to Anya's cage.

GREG

Hello. What's your name?

Anya looks around in fear. Greg also looks around.

GREG

It's all right, there is no one around. What's your name?

ANYA

Anya.

GREG

How old are you, Anya?

ANYA

I am twenty-one.

GREG

I don't believe that.

Anya doesn't answer.

A YOUNG MAN coming down the street sees them talking. He watches a moment, turns and runs back.

GREG

Where do you come from?

ANYA

What does it matter? I am here now and cannot leave. I am no one, just a woman.

GREG

That is not true. You are Anya, and you are someone.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

No, I used to be someone, but that has been taken away. Look at where I am. Does this look like a place I would chose to live?

GREG

Anya, there is a God who loves you very much and He wants you to know that, to Him, you are someone and you are precious.

Kuval walks rapidly towards them, TWO MEN follow.

PATRICK

We have to leave.

GREG

Anya, I will pray for you.

ANYA

You'd better pray quickly because Kuval is coming. He will beat both of us.

Patrick pulls Greg away.

PATRICK

Let's go.

GREG

(To Anya)

Remember, you are somebody.

Anya watches them leave. Kuval stops under Anya's cage.

KUVAL

What did they say to you?

ANYA

They wanted to know how old I was.

KUVAL

And what did you tell them?

ANYA

I'm twenty-one.

KUVAL

That is all?

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

Yes.

Kuval starts to walk away. When he hears her singing softly, he stands and stares.

RED LIGHT DISTRICT - NIGHT

Kuval stands in front of the brothel. Everything is in full swing. MEN are partying, drinking and taking drugs. Kuval does a brisk business. An OFFICER walks up to him.

OFFICER

Kuval, you have a new girl.

KUVAL

Yes, what about it?

OFFICER

How old is she?

KUVAL

Twenty-one.

OFFICER

Of course.

KUVAL

Why do you ask?

OFFICER

I had a couple come into my office this afternoon. They're looking for their fifteen-year-old daughter named Anya.

KUVAL

Never heard of her.

OFFICER

Same thing I told them. But I think they'll be looking around for a few days, asking questions.

KUVAL

Thanks for the information.

Kuval pulls out some bills.

KUVAL

Here. I know they don't pay you as they should. This should help.

(CONTINUED)

The officer takes the bills. He gives a little salute then leaves.

Kuval gestures to Nadir. He walks over.

KUVAL

Anya's parents are looking for her. We move her first thing in the morning.

Nadir nods and leaves.

EXT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - DAY

A car drives to the front of the house. Fahad and Ambi get out and knock on the door. Patrick opens it.

FAHAD

Sir, we were told that you work with the women in the brothels.

PATRICK

Yes, I do. Will you come in?

INT. PATRICK'S HOUSE - DAY

Patrick lets them in. His house is modest but clean. His WIFE walks in the room.

PATRICK

This is Sabeena, my wife. Please have a seat. Would you like something to drink?

FAHAD

No, thank you. I am Fahad and this is my wife, Ambi. We've come to Kalkata to find our daughter.

AMBI

She was taken from our village.

PATRICK

And you think she may be here?

FAHAD

We don't know. We've been searching for several days and no one will tell us if they've seen her.

(CONTINUED)

PATRICK
What is her name?

FAHAD
Anya.

PATRICK
Anya?

FAHAD
You've seen her?

PATRICK
Just yesterday. A friend of mine
talked to her. She looks about
fifteen?

AMBI
That's her. That's our daughter.

Patrick jumps up.

PATRICK
Come, I'll take you to where we saw
her.

FAHAD
Thank you, thank you.

INT. ANYA'S ROOM - DAY

Kuval walks in the door. He pulls the covers off a sleeping
Anya.

KUVAL
Get up, we have to leave.

ANYA
What?

Kuval grabs her arm and drags her upright.

KUVAL
I said, get up. We're leaving.

ANYA
Let me go to the bathroom.

KUVAL
Fine, but do so quickly or I'll
come in after you.

Anya leaves. Kuval goes to the veranda and looks out, watching the street.

EXT. BROTHEL - DAY

Patrick and Anya's parents pull up in front. They get out and run inside.

INT. BROTHEL - DAY

Patrick leads them past wide-eyes children and women to the stairs. Dayita comes down the stairs.

DAYITA

What do you want here?

PATRICK

We're looking for the girl, Anya.

DAYITA

We have no Anya here.

PATRICK

You are lying. I saw her here yesterday.

DAYITA

Then you were mistaken. There is no Anya here.

Fahad steps forward.

FAHAD

Anya is my daughter taken from our village. Tell me where she is.

DAYITA

I'm sorry you lost your daughter, but she is not here.

FAHAD

We'll see.

PATRICK

This way, she was on the second floor.

They run up the stairs and down the hallway. Bursting through a closed door they discover - an empty room. Anya is gone.

(CONTINUED)

PATRICK

I am sorry. She was here. Someone must have told him you were searching and he moved her.

Ambi bursts into tears. Fahad holds her.

FAHAD

Where would they take her?

PATRICK

Anywhere.

INT. CAR - DAY

Anya sits in the back seat with SABRI (20). They talk quietly.

ANYA

My name is Anya.

SABRI

I am Sabri.

ANYA

Did Kuval purchase you, too?

SABRI

Over a year ago.

ANYA

Such a long time.

SABRI

Child, there are women who were born in that brothel. They know no other life. A year is just a speck.

ANYA

I am sorry. I has only been a week for me.

SABRI

Yes, you are still pretty. That will change.

KUVAL

Shut up.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

Where are we going?

KUVAL

You will know when we get there.

EXT. DAULATDIA, BANGLADESH - DAY

Overhead view of Daulatdia, one of the largest brothel cities in the world.

SUPER - DAULATDIA, BANGLADESH

Below the streets are teeming. WOMEN mill around, CHILDREN play and MEN who own stalls sell goods and food. It's filthy. Some streets having open gutters filled with trash, waste water and urine.

Kuval and Nadir pull Anya down a street. They enter a small courtyard where the local madam, RAMITA (50's) resides.

EXT. RAMITA'S COURTYARD - DAY

KUVAL

Ramita, I have two girls for you.

Ramita looks over Anya.

RAMITA

She's pretty but too skinny.

KUVAL

She will bring you many customers and make a lot of money.

RAMITA

That depends on how well she works.

KUVAL

She will do whatever you tell her.

While they are talking, Anya looks around. She notices that Kuval is distracted and Nadir watches a young girl who is smiling at him. She steps away. When they don't notice, she turns and runs. Sabri watches with a smirk.

RAMITA

If she is so well trained, then why is she running away?

Kuval turns around. He strides over to Nadir and slaps him.

(CONTINUED)

KUAL

Nadir, you fool. After her.

Nadir gives Kual a look of pure hatred then runs after Anya.

STREETS OF DAULATDIA

Anya runs through the streets with no idea where of she is going. People stop, watching. Behind her, Nadir catches up. Anya turns a corner which opens up to the train tracks. She's forced to stop for a train passing by. Nadir catches her by the arm, turns her around and slaps her. She would fall, but his hold on her is too tight.

NADIR

You made me look like a fool.

Nadir jerks her around and they head back.

RAMITA'S COURTYARD

Ramita and Kual wait for their return.

RAMITA

I will purchase the older one, but I won't purchase a girl that will run away. She'll be too much trouble.

KUAL

I'll make sure she doesn't run again.

RAMITA

I said no. I don't want to lose my money. I'd have to watch her every moment of the day.

KUAL

Then I'll sell her to one of the others.

RAMITA

They won't buy her either. By now, the whole place knows she was trying to run away. I'll tell you what I'll do. I have a room. I'll let you have it for a percentage of what she takes in. If she works out, then I'll buy her later.

(CONTINUED)

KUVAL

Three percent.

RAMITA

Ten.

KUVAL

I will keep both girls and I will rent two rooms for five each.

RAMITA

Done. But they are your responsibility. When you are settled, bring the young one back and I will teach her to use cosmetics and give her something to put more weight on her, but that is all I will do.

Ramita calls out:

RAMITA

Jashan.

A YOUNG BOY (10) pops out of the house.

RAMITA

Take them to Lasha's old room and the one next to it.

The boy runs to the courtyard entrance. He turns around and calls them.

JASHAN

Come. Come.

Nadir keeps a bruising grip on Anya as they follow the boy through the streets. Around the corner, Jashan indicates two rooms.

JASHAN

Here.

He runs away.

They throw Anya in and close the door.

KUVAL

You stay here while I find us a place to stay and some food.

(CONTINUED)

NADIR

Why do we have to stay in this cess-pit? There are plenty of places where we can sell her.

KUVAL

Because no one will give what she's worth. She can bring in as many as ten customers a night. Everyone loves the new girls because there's no risk of disease.

NADIR

So, how long do we have to stay here.

KUVAL

As long as I say. Now shut up and don't leave.

Kuval strides away while Nadir pulls out a cigarette to smoke away his anger. From inside the room, there is the low sound of singing. Nadir slams his fist on the door.

NADIR

Shut up. Just shut up.

EXT. BROTHEL - EARLY EVENING

The train arrives. MEN come from everywhere to party at the brothel. Liquor and drugs flow like water as they party far into the night with the girls. Outside Anya's and Sabri's rooms, Kuval does business.

MORNING

Anya opens her door and steps into the street. Nadir stands a few feet away.

ANYA

I am hungry.

NADIR

So. What am I to do about it?

Anya begins to walk away.

NADIR

Hey, where are you going?

(CONTINUED)

ANYA
To find something to eat.

NADIR
Kual said you were to wait here.

ANYA
Kual isn't here and I'm hungry.

Nadir starts after her. Anya grabs a strong stick from the ground and turns on Nadir.

ANYA
Don't you touch me.

Nadir hesitates.

A hand grips Anya's wrist from behind, pulling it upwards. A quick yank and the stick is gone. Kual whispers in her ear.

KUVAL
Now, now, Anya you really don't want punished, do you?

Anya jerks away. She looks him in the eye.

ANYA
I want something to eat.

KUVAL
Of course. You've worked all night. We don't want you getting skinny and ugly.

Kual takes out a wad of bills. He hands one to Nadir.

KUVAL
Here, get us all some food.

Nadir grabs the money and stalks away.

KUVAL
Anya, don't try to run anymore. There's no place for you to go. You're not even in India. And I really don't want to hurt you.

ANYA
I would rather die than give in to this life.

KUVAL

Yes, I suppose you would.

He reaches out and brushes some hair from her eyes.

KUVAL

You're stronger than the other women. I will do what I have to.

ANYA

And so will I.

LATER

Anya sits inside her room. Jashan stands in the doorway.

JASHAN

Mother says come.

Anya gets up and follows Jashan.

RAMITA'S COURTYARD

RAMITA

Come, sit down.

Anya sits on a low stone wall. Ramita brings over a satchel. She rummages in it pulling out bottles.

RAMITA

Cosmetics are very important to look good for your customers.

ANYA

I don't want any.

RAMITA

What you want is not important. It is what you will do.

Ramita hands her a hair brush.

RAMITA

Here, this is yours. I also have some scented oil for your hair. Your skin is lovely, but a little make-up around the eyes and on the mouth and you will be very beautiful.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

Mother always said beauty is what you are on the inside.

RAMITA

That kind of beauty doesn't bring in the money. Listen, the sooner you realize your old life is gone, the easier it will be for you. Your family no longer exists. Even if you were to go back, they would be so ashamed of you, they would never accept you.

ANYA

That is not true.

RAMITA

Stupid woman. Your stubbornness will only bring you misery. Kuval will beat it out of you in time.

ANYA

Wasn't there ever a time when you had dreams of another life? A family?

RAMITA

What dreams I had are none of your business. They died a long time ago.

ANYA

And yet, you're willing to help destroy others'. How can you?

Ramita slaps her.

RAMITA

Do not talk to me like this. You know nothing. I have been here longer than you have been alive. We are brought here and we do what we have to to survive. This is the place where dreams come to die.

ANYA

Then I will die with my dreams.

RAMITA

That is very possible. But for now, I will show you how to use the make-up.

EXT. STREETS OF DAULATDIA - DAY

Anya sits outside her room. RANI (16) plops down beside her. Rani is a fun spirit that uses an adventurous nature to hide her fears.

RANI
Hi. My name is Rani.

ANYA
I'm Anya.

RANI
You're new.

ANYA
I've only been here a few days.

RANI
I've been here since I was eight.

ANYA
I don't want to think about being here that long.

RANI
You get used to it. Want to walk around?

ANYA
Sure, I'm not doing anything else.

Rani leads Anya down the street introducing her to the WOMEN as they walk by.

RANI
Who is that man following you?

ANYA
That's Nadir. He works for the man who brought me here.

RANI
He guards you so you won't run again?

ANYA
You heard about that?

RANI
Not much happens here that everyone doesn't hear about.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

I'll do anything to get away from here.

RANI

I've been trying to leave since I got here. Hey, why don't we hide from him? Then you won't have a dog behind you.

Rani turns around to Nadir.

RANI

Woof. Woof.

ANYA

No, you'll get me in trouble. They'll beat me.

RANI

Not if we go back to your room before he does. Come on.

Rani grabs Anya's hand. They run, dodging PEOPLE and ducking around corners.

Nadir runs after them.

The girls duck into a dress stall and hide.

INT. DRESS SHOP - DAY

The girls watch Nadir run past. Giggling, they slip out.

EXT. STREETS OF DAULATDIA - DAY

They run down a few more streets in the opposite direction.

RANI

Come. There's a jewelry stall up ahead.

They stop to admire and try on the jewelry.

RANI

All the women love this stall. I'm sure most of the jewels are fake, but they are beautiful.

The SHOP OWNER comes out.

(CONTINUED)

OWNER

Can I help you?

RANI

Not right now. She's new and I wanted to show her what she could get when she earns enough money.

OWNER

I have many fine pieces guaranteed to attract any man.

ANYA

I don't want to attract anyone.

The owner takes away the jewelry Anya is holding.

OWNER

Then you won't be able to afford this, will you?

RANI

Come, Anya, let's go down the street and I'll buy you jalebi.

Rani buys two breads at a stall. The girls walk while eating.

They see a WOMAN wearing a dirty wedding dress. She watches the street, searching for someone.

ANYA

Who is that? She's the most beautiful woman I've ever seen.

RANI

That is Mahati.

ANYA

But why is she dressed like that? Is she going to be married?

RANI

No, but she thinks she is.

Rani is reluctant to talk. They walk by Mahati who doesn't notice them.

ANYA

Please, tell me.

(CONTINUED)

RANI

She used to be my friend. She came about a year ago. She was not strong in her heart or her head, not like you are. One night, a group of men got drunk and decided to have fun. One convinced her that he loved her and was going to come back and marry her.

ANYA

That's even crueler than what they do to us.

RANI

Yes. She was so excited, it was all she talked about. She took her entire savings and purchased that dress. I wanted to say something, but how could I destroy the only happiness she had?

ANYA

So what happened?

RANI

Nothing. She's been waiting ever since. I think she knows inside and it's broken her mind.

ANYA

How can they be so cruel? How do you keep from hating men?

RANI

I don't. Come, let's get you back before Nadir finds you.

INT. ANYA'S ROOM - DAY

Anya sits on her bed. The room darkens. Koval and Nadir stand at the entrance.

KUVAL

I hear you ran away from Nadir today.

ANYA

I ran away to keep your dog from following me.

Nadir starts towards her, but Koval puts a hand on his chest.

(CONTINUED)

KUVAL

I should beat you for this.

ANYA

If you beat me, I won't be able to work tonight. Anyway, I came back, didn't I?

NADIR

You run from me again and I'll be the one doing the beating.

ANYA

Woof.

Nadir gets only one step towards Anya before Kuval has him by the throat. He pushes him up against a wall.

KUVAL

You touch her, and I'll make sure you don't get out of bed for days.

NADIR

But, she..

KUVAL

Is far more valuable than you are. Now get out and if you lose her again, I'll make sure you never do it again.

Nadir glares daggers at Anya before he leaves.

KUVAL

Anya, it is not wise to get Nadir angry. He may be young, but he is unpredictable. He's like a cobra, silent until he strikes.

ANYA

Yet, you allow him to guard me.

KUVAL

I did not think you were stupid enough to intimidate him.

ANYA

He is your lap dog. Keep him under control.

KUVAL

One day you will go too far. You may have courage, but it is your courage that will get you hurt.

(CONTINUED)

Kuval watches her a moment before he leaves. Sabri comes in.

SABRI

I heard you ran away from Nadir today. That was a foolish thing to do.

ANYA

I get tired of having a dog following on my heels.

SABRI

A man like Nadir is more dangerous than you imagine. He will wait and strike when you are not looking.

ANYA

That is what Kuval said.

SABRI

Just do what he says. He's not so bad when he's not angry.

ANYA

It seems I don't have a choice.

SABRI

You always have a choice. You just won't like the consequences.

STREETS OF DAULATDIA - DAY

Anya walks down a street. Nadir follows. TWO BOYS run past almost colliding with her. She watches them as they disappear around a corner. She asks a passing WOMAN.

ANYA

Where are they running to?

WOMAN

They're going to school.

ANYA

They have a school here?

WOMAN

Yes, but it is for children only.

ANYA

Thank you.

(CONTINUED)

Anya follows the boys. She comes upon a building in the outskirts of the brothel. Inside, she hears children laughing. TWO WOMEN are talking in the courtyard. One is SHARON MAJORS (40's), caucasian and well dressed. Anya walks up to them.

ANYA

Is this a school?

SHARON

Yes, it is. My name is Sharon. I'm the director.

ANYA

I am Anya. I just arrived a few days ago. I'm so happy to see a school. I always wanted to be a teacher.

SHARON

You went to school?

ANYA

Yes, our village had a Christian pastor. His wife started a school for anyone who wanted to come.

SHARON

That is wonderful. What we are trying to do is give the children an education so that they can leave and find jobs when they grow up.

ANYA

Can I stay and watch?

Sharon looks behind her to Nadir.

SHARON

Will they let you?

ANYA

I think so. As long as I'm here with you, I'm not trying to run away.

SHARON

Oh, I think I like you. Come on in.

Sharon takes Anya inside.

About THIRTY CHILDREN are sitting on the floor. Up front she recognizes Jashan who gives her an angry glare. JACOB (20's), the teacher, is showing them a map of Asia and teaching them the countries.

SHARON

That is Jacob. We're blessed to have him.

Anya is enraptured.

SHARON

If you want, you can have a seat in the back and watch.

ANYA

Thank you.

Anya sits and watches. Jacob looks up and smiles at her.

ANYA'S ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Anya sits on her bed, brushing her hair and humming softly. A shadow darkens the doorway. She looks up to see Kupal.

KUVAL

I hear you went to a school.

ANYA

Yes.

KUVAL

I don't want you going.

ANYA

Why not.

KUVAL

Because I said so. I don't want you getting ideas.

ANYA

Would you rather I spent my day trying to find ways of running away?

Kupal stalks in and grabs her jaw.

KUVAL

You're not going anywhere. You're my property until I say otherwise.

(CONTINUED)

He jerks his hand away. Anya rubs the sore area.

ANYA
Not if I'm dead.

KUVAL
What do you mean?

ANYA
Let me go to the school and I will not try to run away. It will give me something to do and I'll be happier here. I'll make sure I'm back in time to start work.

Kuval hesitates. She takes courage.

ANYA
Please. All my life I've wanted to teach. If you let me do this, I promise I will work hard for you.

KUVAL
Break your promise and I'll lock your door.

ANYA
I understand.

KUVAL
I will be leaving tomorrow for a few days. I suggest you don't make Nadir angry while I am gone. You won't have me here to protect you.

Kuval leaves. Anya continues brushing her hair, singing softly.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Anya walks into the classroom before the children arrive. Jacob checks papers at his desk.

ANYA
Good morning.

JACOB
Good morning. I'm Jacob

ANYA
I'm Anya. I was told I could stay and watch the class.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

Why do you want to watch?

ANYA

I always wanted to be a teacher.

JACOB

Really?

ANYA

We had a school at my village where I would help the teacher. It made me feel - happy inside.

JACOB

Then it sounds like you were meant to teach.

ANYA

You feel the same way?

JACOB

Everytime I'm in a classroom. How old are you?

ANYA

Fifteen.

JACOB

If you don't mind my asking, how did you end up here?

ANYA

I was betrayed by the one I was to marry and sold to a man who brought me here.

JACOB

I will never understand how men can treat women this way.

ANYA

It is the way it is.

JACOB

But that doesn't mean it's right.

The children come in. Anya sits in the back to watch. Jashan walks up to her.

JASHAN

You don't belong here. You need to leave.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

That is not for you to say.

JASHAN

I'll talk to my mother. She'll make you leave.

ANYA

Your mother is not in charge of me.

JASHAN

We shall see.

Jashan joins the class.

LATER

The children leave for the day. Jacob sits beside Anya.

JACOB

How much was new for you?

ANYA

I knew most of the material. There were only a few mathematical problems I had difficulty with. The ones I assume were for your more advanced students.

JACOB

That's the problem when you have children of all age groups in one classroom. It's hard to give the individual attention they need.

ANYA

My village was small so we had few children. It was much easier learning that way.

JACOB

I usually have another teacher helping, but she is having to take time off. She is expecting and is having difficulty.

ANYA

I'm sorry to hear that.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

She may have to return to her home
in India.

ANYA

I wish I could join her.

JACOB

Anya..

ANYA

No, I shouldn't have said
that. You are being kind by
allowing me to be here. I don't
want to make trouble.

JACOB

Anya, you could never be trouble.

ANYA

Which goes to show you don't know
me very well.

JACOB

I have an idea. I have extra work
papers. Why don't you take some
back with you and fill them
out? Then I can see how much you
know and where you need extra help.

Jacob walks to his desk and takes out several pieces of
paper and a pencil. He hands them to Anya.

ANYA

You would do that for me?

JACOB

Of course.

ANYA

But...

JACOB

But what? I'm a man? Not every
man is like the ones out there, you
know.

ANYA

No, I don't know. But I want to
believe.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

You can believe in me.

Anya hugs the papers and walks away.

As Anya leaves, Sharon walks in.

SHARON

Forgive me for listening, but I need to remind you to be cautious when dealing with the brothel women, especially this one.

JACOB

What do you mean?

SHARON

I've talked to a few women. The man who owns her is named Kuval. He is vicious and deadly. He will think nothing of killing you if he feels you are threatening his hold over Anya. In fact, I'm considering asking Anya not to come back.

JACOB

Please, don't do that. It's not her fault.

SHARON

I know that, but I have to consider the safety of everyone here.

JACOB

She has a heart to teach.

SHARON

That's well and good, but I can't take the risk.

(pause)

Okay, tomorrow, I'll talk to her. Either way, be careful. I don't want to see you hurt.

Sharon's tone indicates she's not just talking about his physical health.

JACOB

I understand. I will.

ANYA'S ROOM - DAY

Anya sits on her bed, working on the papers.

RANI (O.C.)
What are you doing?

Anya looks up and sees Rani at the door.

ANYA
I'm working on some school papers
so that Jacob can see how much I
know.

RANI
You went to the school? Why? And
who is Jacob?

Rani comes in and sits down. She picks up a paper and
stares at it.

ANYA
I went because I have always
wanted to teach children. Jacob is
their teacher.

RANI
You know how to read? Can I learn?

ANYA
The school is only for the
children, but I can teach you.

RANI
If I learn to read, I can get a job
and leave here.

ANYA
The school gets out at
mid-day. Come over then. I'll ask
Jacob if I can borrow something you
can start with.

RANI
So, is Jacob handsome?

ANYA
As a matter of fact, yes. He's
also kind and friendly.

RANI
When do I get to meet him?

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

I have no idea. I've just met him myself.

RANI

What does Kuval think of this?

ANYA

I gave him my word I wouldn't run away if he let me go. He doesn't like it, but he doesn't have to worry about me so much.

RANI

And Nadir?

ANYA

Who cares what Nadir thinks? He's just a dog licking his master's feet.

OUTSIDE ANYA'S BEDROOM DOOR - SIMULTANEOUS

Nadir listens, leaning against the wall and flipping his knife between his fingers. Suddenly, he slams the point into the wall.

EXT. BROTHEL - EARLY EVENING

MEN walk the streets while the WOMEN invite them in. Ramita is outside her courtyard, holding a YOUNG GIRL and shaking her.

RAMITA

You will do what you are told. If not, I'll have you beaten or thrown out to starve. Then what will you do?

She lets the sobbing girl go to run staggering down the street.

Anya stands and watches. A man walks up to her and they enter her room.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Sharon talks with Jacob when Anya walks in. Sharon looks up and smiles a welcome.

SHARON

Anya, good morning. Do you mind if we talk to you a moment?

ANYA

Is something wrong?

SHARON

We're not sure. We need to ask you a question. Is the person who has charge of you a man named Kuval?

ANYA

Yes.

SHARON

Does Kuval know you're coming to the school?

ANYA

Yes. At first he told me I couldn't come, but I said that if he let me come, I would not try to run away and will work hard for him. He then said yes.

JACOB

It means that much for you to come here?

ANYA

It means everything. I know I will probably never leave here again, but if I could teach, then I can endure it. I will be somebody. Please, let me have this one thing.

SHARON

Jacob, I think you have a new teacher to help you.

Anya screams and embraces Sharon.

ANYA

Thank you. I will work hard, you'll see.

(CONTINUED)

SHARON

I know you will.

JACOB

Are those the papers I gave you?

ANYA

Yes, I was able to do most of the work. There were only a few things I had difficulty with.

JACOB

I'll check them after school. Why don't you watch for one more day to see how I teach, then tomorrow I'll see where I can use you?

INT. ANYA'S ROOM - DAY

Anya is reading when Rani walks in followed by Mahati.

RANI

Are we late?

ANYA

I didn't know I had any other plans. Of course you're not late. And you've brought Mahati. Welcome.

Mahati is shy and scared.

RANI

I told her you were going to teach me to read and she wanted to come.

ANYA

Would you like to read Mahati?

Mahati nods.

ANYA

Wonderful. You can learn together.

Anya hands Rani the book.

ANYA

Here. Jacob gave this to me. I'm going to use it to help you read.

Rani caresses the book.

(CONTINUED)

RANI

I always dreamed of reading.

Rani hands it to Mahati. She holds it in her lap. A tear hits it. Anya reaches out and covers her hand.

ANYA

It's okay. All of us have had dreams taken away. Remember, you are Mahati and you are somebody. Hold your dreams tight.

Mahati nods and hands the book back to her.

ANYA

You know, I've never taught adults before. I hope you can put up with me.

Mahati smiles.

ANYA

Jacob also gave me some paper and pencils. We'll start by learning our letters.

EXT. ANYA'S ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Nadir pushes off from the wall beside Anya's door, a smirk on his face.

INT. ANYA'S ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Anya prepares her make-up. Kuval walks in.

ANYA

You are back.

KUAL

There's going to be a kitty party down the street. One of the men has specifically ask for you to dance.

ANYA

Very well, but I will not drink or take the drugs.

KUAL

That's fine with me as long as you dance well.

(CONTINUED)

(pause)
I've heard you're teaching the
women in your room now.

ANYA
Nadir has been a busy man.

KUVAL
You cannot change the way things
are here. Maybe I made a mistake
letting you go to the school.

ANYA
Even if you had not let me go, I
would still teach the women. Hope
is not like a dog you can hit with
a rock and make it go away. You
take away what little happiness a
person has and they die; first on
the inside then the outside.

KUVAL
But false hope leads to tragic
reality. Don't give them something
they can never have or you will end
up killing them yourself.

ANYA
Who took away your dream,
Kupal? How did your hope die?

Kupal stands stunned. He turns and leaves.

INT. PARTY ROOM - EVENING

The kitty party is in full swing. MEN sit around drinking
and holding GIRLS while Anya sings and dances. At the door,
Kupal stands watching with another MAN. He can't take his
eyes off of her.

MAN
She is special. If she were mine,
I'd keep her for myself and forget
the money.

Kupal just stands and stares.

EXT. RAMITA'S COURTYARD - DAY

Anya walks to Ramita's door which is open. She knocks but there is no answer. She looks in.

INT. RAMITA'S HOUSE

Jashan walks into the room. Along with a small loin cloth, there is a tight band of cloth around her chest. Horror covers her face when she sees Anya.

JASHAN

What are you doing here? Get out. Mother!

Jashan grabs a pillow from the couch and throws it at Anya.

JASHAN

I said, get out.

Ramita rushes in. She sizes up the situation. Standing between Anya and Jashan she pushes him/her into the next room.

RAMITA

Get dressed, quickly.

Turning, she confronts Anya.

RAMITA

What are you doing here?

ANYA

One of the girls at the party last night was terribly sick. I came for her to see if you had something to make her feel better.

Ramita glances behind her.

RAMITA

You saw?

ANYA

Yes.

RAMITA

Come in. Have a seat.

Anya complies.

(CONTINUED)

RAMITA

It seems my daughter and I are at your mercy.

ANYA

You are trying to protect her.

RAMITA

Yes. Since the day she was born, I have told everyone she's a boy. For ten years I have saved every coin I can so that we can leave when she became too old to hide anymore.

ANYA

And yet you think nothing of selling other children.

RAMITA

I will do whatever it takes to protect my daughter and leave here.

ANYA

Even if it means sacrificing others.

RAMITA

If I must.

ANYA

I will keep your secret, but only because I wouldn't want to see anyone end up here. But one would think, considering the secret you are hiding, you would have more compassion.

RAMITA

I have forgotten what compassion is.

ANYA

It's remembering what it's like to be like them.

EXT. BROTHEL - DAY

Anya walks to school. Sabri walks towards her and passes her without saying a word. Anya walks by a street where she sees Nadir talking and laughing with some men. He looks up and gives her an evil grin.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Jacob sits at the desk when Anya walks in.

JACOB

Anya. It's always a blessing to see you.

Anya heads for her chair in the back.

JACOB

Actually, I was hoping you could help today.

ANYA

Help?

JACOB

I want to divide the class by their reading abilities. I was hoping you would take the younger children and work with them.

ANYA

Of course. I would love to.

JACOB

Perfect. You will have about ten students. Most are just learning. Start at the beginning and you will do fine.

EXT. STREETS OF DAULATDIA - DAY

Mahati walks like someone in a trance. Tears stream down her face. She turns a corner and walks slowly and deliberately towards the train tracks. A train is coming. Without pause, she walks onto the tracks and stops. PEOPLE are shouting at her, but she ignores them. The TRAIN ENGINEER screams at her and tries to apply the brake, but it is going too fast. She is struck.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Anya teaches at the table. Rani runs in.

RANI

Anya, come quickly. Mahati is hurt.

Anya looks up at Jacob who waves his hand at her.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

Go.

Anya runs out with Rani.

EXT. BROTHEL - DAY

A CROWD has gathered at the train stop when Anya and Rani arrive. They work their way through to find Mahati laying by the tracks, dead. Rani begins wailing while Anya holds her. Her own tears flowing.

TWO MEN pick up Mahati and begin to drag her away.

ANYA

Where are you taking her?

MAN

To the river.

Anya stands in his way.

ANYA

No, she deserves more.

MAN

What do you want, a funeral pyre? She is Dalit, untouchable. She deserves no more.

ANYA

She is a person. Please, don't just throw her away.

He pushes her to the ground.

MAN

Woman, go back to where you belong and leave us alone.

Anya gets up and walks back to Rani. As they leave, they pass the same group of men Anya had seen earlier. Nadir is still with them. He smiles as they pass.

They walk away from the crowd and find a private spot. Rani sits on the ground.

RANI

Anya, I am Dalit. Is this what will happen to me? Will they use me until I die and then throw me into the river?

(CONTINUED)

Anya sits beside her.

ANYA

Rani, I don't know, but we have to hope.

RANI

What hope? Every woman here had a hope, but I've never heard of anyone leaving.

ANYA

I don't have an answer. I just know that, if I give up my hope, then I'm already dead.

RANI

Maybe we would be better off if we were.

ANYA

I don't believe that. Something will come. We must promise each other, we will stay alive and we will survive. And when the chance comes to leave, we will grab it and bring the other with us.

RANI

You really think that chance will come?

ANYA

I have to, and so must you. Promise me.

RANI

Okay, I promise.

They hold each other close.

RANI

Thank you.

Anya gets up and pulls Rani up. They walk back.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Anya walks into the school. Jacob looks up.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

Okay, everyone that's enough for today. School's dismissed.

The children leave. Anya walks slowly forward. Tears stream down her face. Jacob rushes forward and embraces her. She holds him close and cries.

INT. ANYA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Anya awakens when her door opens. Through the filtered light, she sees the form of Kuval. He has a bottle in his hand and is weaving. His voice slurred.

KUVAL

I thought it was you.

ANYA

What?

KUVAL

When I heard a woman had killed herself. I thought it was you.

ANYA

I told you, as long as you let me work at the school, I won't do anything.

KUVAL

You're stronger than they are.

Anya is silent.

KUVAL

I am not weak.

ANYA

No, Kuval, you're not weak.

KUVAL

Remember that. My father was weak. He couldn't even keep my mother. When she left, he fell apart. We lost everything. I told myself I would never be like that - ever.

ANYA

I'm sorry...

(CONTINUED)

KUVAL

I don't want your pity. You...
(whispers to himself)
Why can't I get you out of my head?

Kuval leaves. In the darkness, Anya stares at the ceiling and sings softly.

EXT. ANYA'S ROOM - SILUMTANEOUS

Kuval stands and listens. He curses and slings the bottle as he walks away.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

SUPER: THREE YEARS LATER

Jacob and Anya teach at separate tables. Jacob claps his hands for attention.

JACOB

Who wants to hear Anya sing?

CHILDREN

Yeaaaa.

JACOB

I've also heard she knows how to dance.

ANYA

Oh, no.

CHILDREN

Yeaaaa.

JACOB

It sounds like you've been elected.

ANYA

But what about music?

JACOB

I brought my player with me. And, what do you know, it has music you can dance to on it.

ANYA

You planned this.

(CONTINUED)

CHILDREN

Anya, sing. Anya, sing.

ANYA

Okay.

As Jacob plays the music, she sings and dances. Taking a girl's hand, she pulls her into the dance. Soon, all the children are up and dancing around the room.

EXT. STREETS OF DAULATDIA - DAY

Kuval hears the music and recognizes Anya's voice. He follows it. He stops at the entrance of the school and watches Anya dancing with the children. There is longing in his eyes. A movement catches his eye. He sees Jacob in the corner. His look becomes hatred.

INT. SCHOOL - DAY

Anya and Jacob are eating lunch.

ANYA

I'll need to leave soon. It's almost time for me to teach the women.

JACOB

I've heard you have quite a few now.

ANYA

It was just Rani for a long time, but as the women got to know me, the class grew. I have ten now.

JACOB

They were drawn to your great wit and charm.

ANYA

Ha. If I had great wit I wouldn't be here in the first place.

JACOB

Have you thought about what you would do if you left here?

ANYA

What? Even if I left, where would I go? After three years, would my parents take me back again?

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

If they were anything like you,
they would.

ANYA

I miss my family so much my heart
hurts to think about them. But
now, even if they did take me back,
what would I do? No one would
allow me to teach their children,
and a husband is out of the
question. I am soiled.

JACOB

You are Anya. You are somebody.

ANYA

Don't throw my own words back at
me.

JACOB

But it's true. I have never met
anyone like you.

ANYA

Jacob, sometimes the outside
strength is there to hide the
inside fears. I used to be so
sure. Now, I use it as a mask to
hide who I've become.

Jacob takes her hands.

JACOB

And who is that, Anya?

ANYA

I'm not sure I know anymore. As
much as I hate the nights, I have
found meaning in my teaching.

JACOB

You may not know who you are, but I
do. These past years have been the
happiest of my life, and it's
because of you.

ANYA

Don't say that.

JACOB

Why not?

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

Because it could never happen. If Kuval thought for a moment you cared, he would kill you.

JACOB

Then we would leave.

ANYA

Your whole life is here teaching the children. You would leave it for me?

JACOB

Gladly.

ANYA

Then I would be the most selfish person alive.

Jacob laughs.

ANYA

What's so funny.

JACOB

Any other woman would have jumped at the chance to leave this place. You, however, think of nothing except my happiness. That's why I love you.

ANYA

Jacob, please, I could not stand to see you hurt. I have found some happiness here, it must be enough.

JACOB

Then you've given up hope of leaving here?

ANYA

(Hesitant)

No.. I don't think I could ever give that up. The beauty of hope is that it may be only a day away. I keep thinking, if I can just hold on, maybe something will come.

JACOB

Any, let me be that something. Let me take you

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JACOB (cont'd)
away. I love you, and even if you
don't love me, I want to help you.

ANYA
But, Kuval...

JACOB
We'll find a way. It will be
okay. Once we are gone, you'll be
free.

ANYA
Free to see my family again.

JACOB
Yes, and anything else you want to
do. There are plenty of
organizations that don't care what
your past is, they'll just be glad
for your help.

ANYA
You make it sound so easy.

JACOB
It is. Just say, yes.

ANYA
Then, yes. But I've made a vow
with Rani that, if I was ever able
to leave, I'd take her with me.

JACOB
Let me get you away from Kuval
first, then I'll come back for
her.

ANYA
You promise?

JACOB
I give you my word.

Anya hugs him.

ANYA
Thank you. And, yes, I do care
about you.

Jacob kisses her gently.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

Give me time to make arrangements.

ANYA

Okay. I need to go now, the women will be coming soon.

JACOB

Not a word to anyone.

Anya nods and leaves.

INT. ANYA'S ROOM - DAY

The class is over and the last of the WOMEN are leaving.

ANYA

Rani, I need to talk to you a minute.

Rani sits on the bed with Anya. Anya talks low.

ANYA

I want to tell you something, but you must never tell anyone.

RANI

I won't.

ANYA

Jacob told me he loves me.

RANI

That's wonderful.

ANYA

Shhh. No so loud. If Kuval finds out, he'll kill him.

RANI

What are you going to do?

ANYA

He's taking me away. I told him I made a promise to take you with me.

RANI

And?

ANYA

He has given me his word that, once I am safely away from Kuval, then he'll come back for you.

(CONTINUED)

RANI
Will he keep his word?

ANYA
Yes.

RANI
Then, I'll wait. Oh, Anya, I'm so excited. To finally leave here. It's all I ever dreamed of.

ANYA
He also said there are organizations that don't care about your past. They'll help you.

RANI
We must make another promise. We'll never forget each other no matter where we go.

Anya hugs her.

ANYA
Thank you. I can never forget you.

RANI
You had better not.

EXT. STREETS OF DAULATDIA - DAY

Anya slowly walks, her head down in thought. Kuval stands in front of her.

KUVAL
I heard the teacher at the school says he has feelings for you. He wants to take you away.

ANYA
Kuval, please don't hurt him.

Kuval grabs her by the shoulders and slams her into the side of a building.

KUVAL
If I find him anywhere near you, I will kill him. I own you, and I will never let you go - never.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

I will do whatever you say, just don't hurt him.

KUVAL

You will not go back to the school. You have the women, be content with that.

Anya nods. Kuval releases her and walks away. Anya sinks down to the ground, sobbing.

LATER

Rani looks at a necklace at the jewelry stall. Anya walks up and grabs her by the arm, pulling her away. Rani barely has time to give the necklace back to the stall manager.

RANI

Anya, wait, what's wrong?

ANYA

He knows.

RANI

Kuval?

ANYA

Yes.

RANI

But, how?

ANYA

I don't know. You're the only one I told.

RANI

Anya, I swear to you, I told no one.

ANYA

Then, how did he find out?

RANI

I don't know. The walls are thin, maybe someone outside heard.

ANYA

Nadir.

(CONTINUED)

RANI

That's possible. But when I left, I didn't see him. In fact, I remember seeing him down the street as I was leaving.

ANYA

Please, will you do me this favor? Go to the school and warn Jacob. Tell him I can no longer come to the school and he must never try to see me again. If Koval sees him near me, he will kill him.

RANI

Of course. I'll go now.

Anya watches Rani run down the street.

INT. ANYA'S ROOM - EARLY EVENING

Anya is curled up in the corner of her bed. Koval comes to the door.

KUVAL

It's time to get ready for work.

ANYA

Let them come.

KUVAL

You need to care for yourself and put some make-up on.

ANYA

If they don't like the way I am, they can leave me alone.

KUVAL

If I lose any money tonight, I'll beat it out of you.

ANYA

I don't care. I've never hated anyone as much as I hate you. Beat me if you want. I Don't Care.

Koval clenches his jaw. Anya turns her back to him. Koval slams the door as he leaves.

INT. SCHOOL DINING HALL - EVENING

Jacob sits at a table, a plate of food in front of him. He's deep in thought, pushing his food around instead of eating it. Sharon sits down across from him.

SHARON

So, what are you going to do about it?

JACOB

What?

SHARON

I asked, what are you going to do about Anya?

JACOB

What can I do? If I go near her, Kuval will kill me.

He plays with his food a minute.

JACOB

You warned me. You told me to be careful, but I couldn't help it. I love her. I was planning on taking her away, but now that Kuval knows, he'll be guarding her all the more.

SHARON

Is she worth it?

Jacob nods.

SHARON

If you do not help her, then no one will. She will remain in this hell-hole until she dies.

JACOB

Are you so eager to get rid of me.

SHARON

Truth is, I want to kick your back end for getting yourself in a situation where I'll be losing the best teacher I've ever had.

JACOB

So, how do I get her away from Kuval?

(CONTINUED)

SHARON

I have a few friends around here. I'll see what I can arrange.

EXT. STREETS OF DAULATDIA - DAY

A YOUNG BOY runs through the streets, dodging people. He runs up to a GROUP OF MEN sitting and talking with Kupal.

BOY

Kupal, come quickly. A man is at the train stop. He has a young, pretty girl he wants to sell you.

KUVAL

Tell him to come here.

BOY

No, no. He has to leave on the train. He says if you want the girl, you have to come quickly. She's very pretty.

Kupal gets up to leave. The boy runs away.

SIMULTANEOUS

Another BOY runs up to Nadir who is playing dice with some MEN outside Anya's room.

BOY

Nadir, Kupal says to come quickly.

NADIR

Why?

The boy shrugs.

BOY

He doesn't tell me. He just said quickly. He's at the train stop.

Nadir gathers up his money.

NADIR

I'll be right back.

He gets up and leaves. Sabri steps out of her room to watch. Just as Sabri turns to re-enter her room, Jacob runs to Anya's door. He knocks, opens it and enters.

INT. ANYA'S ROOM - DAY

Anya sits on her bed, looking at a book.

JACOB

Anya, come with me. A way has been made for you to leave, but you must go now.

Anya gets up.

ANYA

Jacob, what have you done?

JACOB

Actually, it was Miss Sharon. She is helping us. Come.

Jacob grabs a confused Anya's hand and pulls her out the door.

EXT. STREETS OF DAULATDIA - DAY

Jacob looks both directions then pulls Anya down the street towards the school. After they leave, Sambri leaves her room and runs after Nadir.

SIMULTANEOUS

Jacob and Anya are running through the streets.

JACOB

There's a car waiting for us. We just have to get there before Kuval and Nadir discover you've gone and come after us.

ANYA

This is crazy.

JACOB

I know. Isn't it great?

SIMULTANEOUS

Nadir meets Kuval returning from the train station.

KUVAL

What are you doing here? You're supposed to be watching Anya.

(CONTINUED)

NADIR

I was told you wanted me.

KUVAL

You idiot, I never said anything.

NADIR

A boy said I was to come quickly because you needed me.

KUVAL

And a boy just told me there was a man at the train stop waiting for me when there wasn't.

Sabri runs up.

SABRI

Anya and Jacob are running away.

Kuval yells, pushing Nadir backwards onto the ground.

KUVAL

You fool. We have to stop her.

Kuval takes off running. Nadir and Sabri follow. When Kuval gets to Anya's room, he talks to TWO MEN sitting nearby. They point towards the school. Kuval takes out his gun and follows.

SIMULTANEOUS

Anya and Jacob come to the edge of the city. There is no car.

JACOB

I don't understand. It's supposed to be here. Maybe I got turned around

He points to the left.

JACOB

Let's try that direction.

SIMULTANEOUS

Kuval runs hard. He stops at a crossroad and asks another MAN who points him in the right direction.

At the end of the city, he looks around. In the distance to the left are two running figures. He chases after them.

SIMULTANEOUS

Anya looks back.

ANYA
Kuval is behind us.

JACOB
Look, there.

A car drives up ahead of them. A MAN gets out and waves. They are only thirty feet away when they hear a shot. Jacob stumbles and falls. Blood seeps from a wound in his back.

ANYA
Jacob!

JACOB
Go, Anya. Get away.

ANYA
No, I won't.

Anya looks at the man beside the car.

ANYA
Help him.

The man points behind them.

MAN
He's got a gun.

Anya looks. Kuval is closing in. In the distance, Nadir runs to catch up. Anya looks at the car, her only way out. Shoring up her courage, she faces the man.

ANYA
Please, get him to safety. I'll stop Kuval.

Anya carresses Jacob. She turns and runs towards Kuval. As Anya races back, the man picks up Jacob and pulls him

(CONTINUED)

towards the car. Kuval stops to fire another shot, but Anya spreads out her hands to create a human shield. Dashing forward, Kuval throws Anya to the side. He raises his gun again just as the car speeds away. A scream of hatred and frustration bursts from Kuval's throat.

As Anya picks herself up, Kuval grabs her by the hair and pulls her up.

KUVAL

You're going to wish you'd never
been born.

Anya is silent as he drags her back.

INT. ANYA'S ROOM - DAY

The door opens allowing a beam of sunlight to invade the darkness and revealing a bruised and beaten Anya. Sabri walks in and places a plate of food on her bed.

SABRI

This is all your fault, you
know. If you'd done what you were
supposed to, this wouldn't have
happened.

Anya remains silent.

SABRI

I can't believe Kuval treated you
like a pet for so long, allowing
you to go to that school.

When her baiting receives no response, Sabri allows her hate to show.

SABRI

You know, I heard he's dead.

Anya looks up sharply.

SABRI

Oh, yea. Just like that stupid,
mindless girl that killed herself.

Anya begins to understand.

ANYA

What have you done?

(CONTINUED)

SABRI

What Nadir asks me to do. Keep an eye on you, and tell him everything I heard you say. You know, these walls are really thin.

ANYA

You told Nadir about Mahati?

SABRI

Of course. He found the man who had proposed to her. He had him go back and tell her how stupid she was. He was never going to marry her. She was Untouchable after all. How dare she believe that anyone would want her.

ANYA

How could you be so hateful?

SABRI

Grow up, child. Nadir is my way out of here. You do what you have to to survive.

ANYA

No, that has nothing to do with surviving. That is pure evil.

SABRI

If it gets me out of here, I don't care. I'm not the one locked in her room. By the way, you get to rest tonight. You're too ugly right now to work. Enjoy the rest.

Sabri walks out, closing the door behind her. In the darkness, crying is heard.

EARLY EVENING

Kuval opens the door.

KUVAL

Come, Anya, I've given you three days to rest. You need to clean up and get ready to work.

She doesn't move.

(CONTINUED)

KUVAL

You have no choice. The men will come whether you are ready or not.

ANYA

I don't care.

KUVAL

Do you want me to beat you again? Is that what you want? Maybe you need to go a few days without food.

ANYA

What you do to me is nothing compared to what you've already done. I have nothing more to live for.

Kuval stamps down his frustration.

KUVAL

You have one hour.

He slams the door shut.

EXT. ANYA'S ROOM - EVENING

Kuval is outside Anya's door. A CUSTOMER comes up. They talk, the man hands him money and Kuval opens the door. A few minutes later, the man returns, shaking his head and they begin arguing. The man puts out his hand, but Kuval shoves him backwards. The man is angry and wants his money back. Kuval pulls his gun and points it at him. Holding up his hands, the man backs away, turns and runs. Kuval turns and kicks Anya's door.

EXT. STREETS OF DAULATDIA - DAY

A NEWS CREW walk through the streets. CHARLOTTE JENKINS, the newscaster, talks to the camera as she navigates the streets.

CAMERA POV

CHARLOTTE

We are currently on our way to visit one of the madams. She's said to be very powerful and controls numerous women. Our guide

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHARLOTTE (cont'd)
was able to talk her into giving us
an interview.

They walk into Ramita's courtyard where Ramita is waiting
for them. The crew's GUIDE talks to her a moment, then
signals for Charlotte to come forward.

GUIDE
This is Ramita.

CHARLOTTE
Thank you, Ramita, for allowing us
to come and talk to you.

Ramita nods.

CHARLOTTE
How many girls do you have working
for you?

Ramita watches the camera, a calculating look in her eyes.

RAMITA
I have many. I take care of them
and make sure they work. Who will
see this?

CHARLOTTE
What?

RAMITA
Why are you doing this? Who will
see it?

CHARLOTTE
People all over the world. Many do
not know places like this exist.

RAMITA
Come, there is someone you need to
see.

Ramita leads them out of the courtyard and down the
street. At a door, she pulls out a key and opens it.

RAMITA
Anya, you must get up.

OVER THE SHOULDER

The camera light shines into the darkness to a still form laying on a bed. Ramita turns on the light. Anya is a mess. She is still a mass of bruises. Her hair is mussed and her clothing soiled and wrinkled. She sits up.

CHARLOTTE

Oh, my God.

RAMITA

Anya, up girl. There is someone here to talk to you.

RESUME

CHARLOTTE

What happened to her?

RAMITA

She disobeyed the man who owns her and tried to run away.

Ramita turns to Charlotte.

RAMITA

You said many will be watching this. Can you help her?

CHARLOTTE

I don't know.

RAMITA

She should not be here. If she stays, Kuval, the one who owns her, will kill her. Can you help her? Please, she has a good heart.

CHARLOTTE

I don't know how...

Desperate, Ramita turns back to Anya.

RAMITA

Anya, sing.

ANYA

I have nothing to sing for.

(CONTINUED)

RAMITA

Yes, you do. Many will see this. Sing for your freedom. Sing for the women who are forced to live here. Sing for the children who have to stay, and the girls born here.

A look of understanding passes between them. Anya smiles. The song is low at first, but gains strength as her throat remembers how to sing. As the song emerges...

An astonished Charlotte looks over her shoulder to the camera. She mouths the words, "Are you getting this?"

The song continues, covering the street then the whole city of Daulatdia. It pans out onto computers everywhere through Youtube and Facebook. PEOPLE are watching the video and listening through the radio.

INT. EXECUTIVE OFFICE, MEDIA PRODUCER - DAY

Julie Kirkland walks into CLAYTON DENNISON'S office with a tablet in her hand.

JULIE

Clay, you've got to see this.

She places the tablet in front of him, the sounds of Anya singing fills the office.

JULIE

It's all over the net.

CLAYTON

Who is she?

JULIE

You're not going to believe this. She's a prostitute living in a brothel city in Bangladesh. The place is right over the border from India.

CLAYTON

I don't know, Julie.

JULIE

Someone is going to pick her up. It's only a matter of who gets to her first. She already has a following. Listen to her,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JULIE (cont'd)
Clay. She's fabulous. Even ol'
Simon wouldn't find anything wrong
with her.

CLAYTON
She looks horrible.

JULIE
So would you if you'd just been
beaten and starved for a week,
forced to submit. The girl has
spirit, and her owner is trying to
break her.

CLAYTON
Who have you been talking to?

JULIE
Charlotte Jenkins, the woman in
front of the camera. The girl's
name is Anya, and she's only
eighteen. She was kidnapped and
sold when she was fifteen. With
the right publicity, we could have
the whole world behind her. I'm
thinking world tour, movie deal...

CLAYTON
Whoa, we have to get her to the
states first. She probably has no
ID let alone a passport.

JULIE
Then, I can go after her?

CLAYTON
I think you've got something
here. Let me make some phone
calls. I do have a few friends in
high and low places. With the
right amount of money in the right
hands, it's amazing what you can
accomplish.

JULIE
I'll pack my bags. I'll need a
couple of strong arm men to come
along. I hear her owner is a real
bad guy who doesn't mind shooting
first.

CLAYTON

Take who you need. You'll need to get her over the border to India. I'll see about getting her some identification and a passport.

JULIE

I'll see you when I get back.

Julie leaves.

EXT. STREETS OF DAULATDIA - DAY

Jashan leads Julie and TWO MEN, KENNY and LEX through the streets. She stops and points at a door a few feet away. Nadir sits in front, gambling with some MEN. He sees them and stands.

NADIR

What do you want?

JULIE

We've come for Anya.

NADIR

What do you mean? She belongs to Kuval.

JULIE

First of all, it's illegal to have a girl under twenty-one. Second, she was kidnapped and third, we're taking her.

NADIR

I can't let you do that.

Lex steps forward.

LEX

Just get out of the way.

Nadir tries to pull his knife, but is easily subdued. He ends up laying in the street. He staggers up and runs away. Kenny kicks in the door. Inside, is a short scream. Julie enters.

INT. ANYA'S ROOM - DAY

Anya sits up in bed, frightened.

JULIE

Anya, it's okay. My name is Julie and I've come to take you away from here.

ANYA

You can't. Kuval will kill you. He killed Jacob when we tried to escape.

JULIE

See those two big men there? They're badder than Kuval and they're here to help you.

ANYA

Where are you taking me?

JULIE

If you will let me, I'd like to take you to America.

ANYA

That's so far away. Why?

JULIE

Not so far anymore. On a plane we could be there in less than a day. Remember when you sang for the woman with the camera?

Anya nods.

JULIE

People all around the world heard you singing, and they loved it. If you will come to America and sing, not only will you be free, but you will have enough money that you can do anything you want to.

ANYA

I want to see my family.

JULIE

You can do that. Whatever your heart desires.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

Then, I'll come. But we have to take Rani, too.

JULIE

Who's Rani?

ANYA

My friend. We promised each other.

JULIE

Fine, we'll see if we can find her. Can you walk?

ANYA

I don't think so. I've not been given any food. I'm very weak.

JULIE

Kenny.

He comes in and picks Anya up.

KENNY

Why, you weigh no more than a puppy.

Anya gives him a shy smile.

JULIE

Is there anything you want to take?

ANYA

No, I don't have anything.

EXT. STREETS OF DAULATDIA - DAY

Kenny carries Anya outside. As they walk by, Jashan reaches out and takes Anya's hand.

JASHAN

Thank you.

ANYA

Say good-bye to your mother. I won't forget how she helped me.

As they begin to walk away, they see Kunal walking towards them. He reaches back and pulls out a gun.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

Kual.

KUAL

She's mine. She's not going
anywhere.

Lex pulls out a throwing knife and launches it, impaling
Kual in his right arm. Kual screams, dropping the gun. A
few punches and Kual is unconscious.

JULIE

That's what it means to have the
right friends.

Rani runs up. She sees Kual, her eyes widen. She looks at
Anya. Anya smiles and nods. Rani smiles.

RANI

I'll be right back. I have to get
some things from my room.

She runs down the street. Anya turns to Kenny.

ANYA

I'm truly free, then.

KENNY

Yes, you're free.

Any puts her head against his shoulder and begins
crying. They walk through the brothel towards freedom.

INT. AIRPLANE, FIRST CLASS - NIGHT

Julie gets out of her seat and walks to the restrooms. She
stops when she sees Kenny and Anya sitting together. Anya
is asleep with her head on his shoulder. Julie raises her
eyebrows.

KENNY

I have a daughter her age. I
couldn't imagine.

JULIE

She's one of the strongest people I
know.

KENNY

Makes me wish I had another chance
at those two guys.

(CONTINUED)

JULIE

If you do, it will be off company time.

Kenny smiles.

EXT. MAJOR EASTERN CITY - DAY

They walk out of the terminal to a waiting limo and get inside. Rani turns in circles trying to take everything in.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

Exterior shot of luxury hotel.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY

As they walk in, Anya looks around in amazement. Rani squeals and runs to the large windows.

ANYA

Who lives here?

JULIE

You do.

ANYA

Why so big? I don't need all this room.

JULIE

It's called luxury and believe me, you'll get used to it.

NAOMI CRAWFORD (50's) walks in.

NAOMI

Good morning. Hope I'm not late.

JULIE

Just in time.

(To Anya)

Anya, Rani, this is Naomi Crawford. She will be staying with you to help you adjust to your new life.

ANYA

Good morning.

(CONTINUED)

NAOMI

Good morning. Please, call me Naomi. As of now, I work for you.

ANYA

I don't understand.

JULIE

You actually have four people working for you. Kenny and Lex will be your body guards. Wherever you go, one of them will be with you to protect you. There is one more who will be their relief. You'll meet him later.

RANI

Is he cute?

ANYA

Rani!

Kenny snorts a laugh.

KENNY

As a matter of fact, he is.

NAOMI

And I'm here to take care of all your needs. Whatever you want, you just ask and I do it.

ANYA

But I don't need anyone...

JULIE

Oh, yes you will. You are in a new country with different ways of doing things. Naomi will be your guide through all the strangeness. I need to go and check in at the office. Would you like to have dinner with me this evening?

ANYA

Yes, of course.

JULIE

Good. I'll be back around six. Tomorrow we go shopping.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA
When can I find out about my
family?

JULIE
Let me talk to my boss. I'll talk
to you later.

After Julie leaves, Anya gives Naomi a look of being totally
lost. Rani is exploring the fridge.

RANI
Anya, look. It's filled with all
the food we could eat. And it's
cold.

NAOMI
What would you like to do first,
eat or sleep?

Anya gives Rani a suffering look.

ANYA
We ate on the plane.

NAOMI
Then why don't I help you get a
warm bath and then tuck you in bed?

ANYA
Thank you.

NAOMI
Do you have any pajamas?

ANYA
I don't know what those are?

NAOMI
Something to sleep in?

ANYA
I usually don't wear anything when
I sleep.

RANI
There is usually no need for us to
wear anything.

ANYA
Rani!

NAOMI

Do you have any other clothes at all?

ANYA

No.

Naomi pulls out a credit card and hands it to Kenny.

NAOMI

I know this isn't your territory, but would you mind just this once?

Kenny tries to look mean, but fails.

KENNY

Just this once, but I'm not a gopher.

Naomi smiles despite his tough-boy look.

NAOMI

You're a love. I'd say..

KENNY

Size four and six.

Naomi raises her eyebrows.

NAOMI

Exactly. You've done this before.

Lex snickers. Kenny gives him a hard look.

KENNY

I have a daughter.

LEX

Of course.

Kenny leaves.

NAOMI

Rani, as soon as I have Anya in the tub, I'll help you in the second bathroom.

Rani is in the second bedroom, bounding on the bed.

RANI

No hurry.

Naomi takes Anya into the master bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Anya gazes in awe at the luxury around her. As Naomi turns on the water in the tub, she fingers the furniture.

ANYA

Do you know when I can find out about my parents? I want them to know I'm safe, now.

Naomi walks into the room.

NAOMI

Do they have a phone?

ANYA

Yes.

NAOMI

Then, how about now?

ANYA

Really?

NAOMI

The beauty of modern technology.

Naomi pulls out her cell phone and hands it to Anya. Her hands are shaking as she takes it and punches in the phone number. She sits on the bed.

ANYA

It's ringing. Hello? Daddy? It's Anya. Really, it's me. I'm okay.

(To Naomi)

He's crying.

(On phone)

Daddy, I love you so much. Yes, get mother.

(pause)

Hi, mom. I'm in America. These people came and rescued me.

As Anya talks, Naomi walks into the bathroom and turns off the water. She quietly leaves the room.

LATER

Julie walks in. Rani is eating popcorn and watching television with Lex.

(CONTINUED)

JULIE

Hey. Is Anya ready?

NAOMI

Sorry, but I'm afraid not.

JULIE

What do you mean? I told you I'd be here at six.

NAOMI

After talking with her parents, she was so tired, she fell asleep in the bathtub. I practically had to carry her to bed. She's been asleep ever since and I haven't the heart to wake her.

JULIE

Then I'll get her.

NAOMI

Please don't. I saw the bruises on her body. It's a wonder that nothing is broken. She needs sleep more than food.

JULIE

Very well. I hope this doesn't complicate our schedule.

NAOMI

No, she'll probably be sore tomorrow, but she'll be okay.

JULIE

I'll come back in the morning around ten. Please make sure she's ready.

NAOMI

She will appreciate it.

Julie leaves. Lex looks over to Rani.

LEX

Ever have pizza?

RANI

No. What is it?

(CONTINUED)

LEX
Heaven in a box. I'll order some.

Rani snuggles deeper into the sofa.

RANI
I can so love this.

MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

Lex is at the table, working on his laptop. At his hand is a can of soft drink. A scream pierces through Anya's door.

ANYA (O.C.)
Jacob!

Lex vaults from the chair and runs to the door. Throwing it open, he flips on the light.

INT. ANYA'S ROOM - NIGHT

Anya is sitting up in bed, a look of stark terror on her face. The sight of Lex sends her into panicked screams again. Naomi squeezes in by Lex. Rani joins them by the door. Naomi takes one look at Anya and turns to Lex and Rani.

NAOMI
She's having a nightmare. I've got this.

Lex hesitates, looking around the room, but Naomi pushes him out the door and closes it in his face.

Naomi crosses the room to sit on the bed. She pulls Anya into her arms and soothes her like a child.

NAOMI
Hush, child. It's okay. You're safe now. You're safe.

Slowly, Anya recovers, her cries of fear turning into tears as she sobs against Naomi.

INT. LIVING ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

RANI
Jacob loved her and was going to take her away. Kuval shot him.

She goes back to bed.

Sitting at the table again, Lex hears the sobbing. On the computer screen is a satellite photo of Kuval. He picks up the empty can and crushes it with one hand.

MORNING

The door opens and Julie sails in. She slows down when she sees Naomi and Lex. Kenny is to the side, looking concerned.

JULIE
What's wrong?

NAOMI
Anya had a bad dream last night.

JULIE
She's okay to go shopping, isn't she? I've got a high-end magazine that will be following us. We want to start her publicity campaign as soon as possible.

Naomi gives a suffering sigh as Lex snorts.

RANI
Actually, getting out and doing something might be good for her. It's what we used to do at the brothel.

JULIE
Okay, then. Is she ready?

NAOMI
I'll check.

Naomi returns with Anya. She's still a little shaken.

ANYA
What are we doing?

Julie takes her by the arm and leads her towards the door.

JULIE
First, we're going to pamper you and make you beautiful. Then, we're going to dress you up in style followed by lunch.

They exit the door. Rani looks at Naomi, confused. Naomi gives a pushing motion with her arms. Rani runs after them followed by Kenny.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE OF HOTEL - DAY

Outside the building, they are met by OLIVIA NORMAN with BATES, her photographer.

OLIVIA

Ms. Kirkland, I'm Olivia Norman with Today's Music Magazine. My photo expert is Bates.

JULIE

Hello. This is Anya, I believe you saw her on the internet about a month ago.

OLIVIA

The whole world saw her on the internet. She was sensational. Anya, I'm so happy you were able to come to America to be with us.

ANYA

Thank you. It's been a bit overwhelming.

OLIVIA

I can imagine. Well, we're just going to follow you around today, take pictures and I'll ask you a question once in a while. We'll try not to totally ruin your day's enjoyment.

Anya looks at Julie, completely lost.

JULIE

That will be fine. Please remember she's been through a very traumatic experience. Please don't crowd her.

OLIVIA

No problem at all. Would it be okay if I travel with you while Bates follows?

JULIE

That would be acceptable.

PHOTO MONTAGUE

Anya and Rani at the beauty salon getting facials, hair cuts and nails done.

Rani in a punk cut with pink highlights.

Rani and Anya going ga-ga over the sights.

At the high-end clothing stores as they try on different dresses and suits.

Rani in the store window looking at the clothes on a mannequin.

In a restaurant eating lunch.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

The four ladies eat while Bates stands back occasionally taking pictures. Kenny stands to the side, watching and listening.

OLIVIA

Anya, how long were you at - what's it called?

ANYA

Daulatdia. I was there three years.

RANI

I was there since I was eight.

OLIVIA

Eight? That young? That's a long time.

ANYA

Some of those women were born there.

OLIVIA

I can't imagine going through something like that. How did you survive?

ANYA

First, because you have no choice. You learn to take one day at a time and accept what happens. But I was lucky. There

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANYA (cont'd)
was a school there for the
children. I helped Jacob teach
there.

OLIVIA
Jacob?

ANYA
He was the teacher. We grew very
close. In fact, he was in love with
me. He tried to rescue me and
Kual shot him.

Kenny perks up.

OLIVIA
Oh, no. Is he okay?

ANYA
I don't know. There was a man
there with a car. He helped get
Jacob inside while I stood in front
of Kual to keep him from shooting
him again.

OLIVIA
That was very brave of you.

ANYA
I was told that Jacob died, but I
don't know. The woman who told me
this hated me. They did their best
to destroy everything I cared
about.

Anya is trying hard to hold back the tears.

RANI
We had a friend named Mahati. The
men tormented her so much she
killed herself.

ANYA
Actually, I found out it was Nadir,
Kual's servant who made it happen.

RANI
I always hated him.

JULIE
It's over now, Anya. You can start
a new life and no one will hurt you
any more.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

How can I start a new life when I don't know if Jacob is alive or dead.

JULIE

I cannot say I understand. I've never been through what you have, but I can promise you, we will help you as much as we can.

Julie looks up to Kenny who nods.

JULIE

If you will just help us by concentrating for the next few weeks, we'll try to help you find your answers.

Anya nods.

OLIVIA

And you, Rani. What do you want?

RANI

I want a rich husband who loves me and will take care of me.

Olivia laughs.

ANYA

What I think Rani is trying to say is that she wants the security of knowing she's being taken care of without having to do that kind of work again.

JULIE

Thank you. Ms. Norman, do you have everything you needs?

OLIVIA

Yes. The ladies have been wonderful.

Olivia gets up. She shakes hands with Julie than holds Anya's hand when it is offered.

OLIVIA

Anya, you are a special person. You are somebody that I have come to respect. I hope I can do you justice.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

Thank you.

OLIVIA

And Rani, I hope you find the love
and security you desire.

RANI

Thank you.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

A music practice room with multiple musical
instruments. Four MEN, DANNY, ERIC, ANDREW AND JOSH watch
as Julie, Anya and TERRY, a new bodyguard walk in.

JULIE

Anya, I want you to meet your
band. We have Danny, drums, Eric
on lead guitar, Andrew is keyboard
and Josh is bass guitar, but he
also knows the dholak.

JOSH

My mother is from India. I wanted
to learn some of the traditional
instruments.

ANYA

That is a good thing because it is
the only instrument I've ever sang
with.

JULIE

They'll teach you how to sing to
the others, too. I hand-picked
them myself. They're very good.

DANNY

We saw you on the internet. We
can't wait to hear you when we
record.

Anya gives Julie a confused look, but she ignores it.

JULIE

I have to talk with my boss so I'll
be gone for a while. Gentlemen, I
leave her in your hands.

When Julie leaves, Anya gazes around. Josh indicates a
chair.

(CONTINUED)

JOSH
Have a seat, Ms. Anya.

When she complies, he picks up a dholak and sits next to her.

JOSH
Okay, you start singing and I'll follow.

Anya swallows, hard.

JOSH
Eric, be a gentleman and get the lady a bottle of water.

ERIC
Sure.

He leaves and returns in a moment with a cold bottled water which he hands to Anya. She looks at it. Josh takes it from her hand, twists the lid off and hands it back to her. She drinks.

ANYA
This is wonderful.

JOSH
Good. Can you sing now?

ANYA
I'll try.

Josh plucks a few strings and Anya begins to sing. In a few seconds, Eric joins in on the guitar followed by Andrew and Danny.

JOSH
See, you're a natural.

ANYA
That was fun.

ANDREW
That's why we play for a living. We never have to work.

JOSH
Let's try another song.

LATER

They are in the midst of a song when Julie walks in the door. She stands and listens, a smile on her face.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

Julie and Anya are walking through the halls of the recording studio.

JULIE

Today, I'm going to have you practice recording. It won't be for real so you don't have to be nervous.

ANYA

I think I'll be nervous anyway.

JULIE

That's okay. You can practice as much as you want until you are comfortable. You've been working on this song for a week, you know it. Only the room will be different.

Julie opens the door into the recording room.

INT. RECORDING ROOM - DAY

Anya is amazed at the equipment and technology. Behind a glass wall, Josh waves at her. She waves back.

JULIE

Anya, this is Steven. He's our recording tech guru.

STEVEN holds out his hand for Anya to shake.

JULIE

He'll be talking you through the process.

Julie takes Anya through the door to the recording room.

INSIDE

JOSH

Good morning, beautiful.

JULIE

Josh, it's too early to make her blush. She's nervous as it is.

JOSH

Yes, right.

Josh leans over to Anya.

JOSH

She's just jealous.

Anya giggles.

JULIE

Josh, honey, make yourself useful and show her how to use the equipment unless you would prefer to practice writing your resume.

DANNY

He doesn't have a resume. That would mean he actually knows what he's doing.

JOSH

At least my instrument requires a little more skill than beating on a tom-tom.

Danny hits a fancy beat.

DANNY

Pure skill. It's all in the wrist.

JULIE

Okay, boys, enough posturing. Let's concentrate on getting Anya good at this.

JOSH

No problem. Anya, would you mind stepping over to the mic?

Anya walks to Josh's side.

(CONTINUED)

JOSH

Here's how it all works.

Julie looks out through the glass to see Terry beckoning to her. She walks out.

RECORDING ROOM

TERRY

Kenny's back. He's in the lobby.

Julie leaves quickly.

LATER

Julie returns. Anya is in the middle of the song. She walks over to Steven.

JULIE

How's she doing?

STEVEN

This girl is pure magic. She's a natural.

JULIE

Good enough to record now?

Steven turns around, surprised.

JULIE

If she doesn't know it's for real, she won't be as nervous.

STEVEN

When she's done I'll ask her to do it one more time.

The song finishes.

STEVEN

That was fabulous, Anya. Do you feel up to doing it one more time? I need to get the sound just right for tomorrow.

Anya nods. She takes a drink of water and they begin again. Julie is stunned.

(CONTINUED)

JULIE

Wow. This girl is going to make us
a bundle.

The song ends.

STEVEN

Thats a wrap.

Anya takes the headphones off and comes through the door.

ANYA

That wasn't so hard. But I think
I'll be more nervous tomorrow.

JULIE

No you won't, that last take was
the recording.

ANYA

You mean, we're done?

JULIE

Yep. Sorry about the deception,
but the song was already perfect.

Josh walks up.

JOSH

Congratulations, you've done your
first recording.

JULIE

When this hits the radio and
internet, you'll be a star.

ANYA

What does that mean?

JOSH

It means everyone will want to hear
you sing.

Julie links her arm with Anya's.

JULIE

Now, I have another surprise for
you.

HALLWAY

Julie leads Anya to a door.

JULIE

Remember I promised that, if you would help us, we'd try to answer some of your questions?

ANYA

Yes.

JULIE

Well, Kenny went back to find some answers. One of them is behind this door.

Julie opens the door for Anya to enter.

MEETING ROOM

The room is elegantly furnished for leisurely conversation. As Anya comes through the door, Jacob stands up. Anya squeals and runs to him.

LATER

Julie has joined them.

JACOB

I don't remember much after Kuval shot me. Manish dragged me to his car then I blacked out. I awoke in the hospital. The bullet had grazed my stomach, but no major organs were hurt.

(To Anya)

What happened to you?

ANYA

Kuval locked me in my room and beat me. He took away everything, but I was so worried about you, I didn't care. I stopped working and he tried to starve and force me into submission.

JACOB

I am so sorry, Anya. If I had known, I never would have tried. I just wanted us to be together and free from Kuval.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

I don't blame you, Jacob. You were trying to help me. It's Kuval who is to blame.

JULIE

Well, you are both safe now.
(To Jacob)
Anya just recorded her first song.

JACOB

That is wonderful. You will be famous in no time.

JULIE

She already is. With this recording and the article in Today's Music Magazine coming out at the same time, Anya is going to become very much in demand and possibly quite wealthy. I'm hoping we can produce a full album and a video within the year.

JACOB

I am indebted to you for helping Anya. I don't know anyone who deserves this more.

ANYA

But what of Jacob? He can stay can't he?

JULIE

Of course. He's a part of your story and American's love a romance.

ANYA

Romance?

JULIE

A love story. You and Jacob - together.

JACOB

You may have to give us a little time, Ms. Kirkland

JULIE

Julie, please.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

Thank you. You must understand, at the brothel, we always had to be careful because of Kuval. If the children saw too much, well, you know children, they love to talk. We've had to keep our feelings well guarded.

ANYA

I know Jacob cares about me, and I do have feelings for him. I just need...

JULIE

More time for a romance. That's perfect. We'll send you to all the romantic places. Your fans will love it.

Anya gives Jacob a panicked look. He smiles and covers her hand.

INT. ANYA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Anya and Jacob are on the internet looking at different teaching textbooks. They are deep in discussion with Naomi.

NAOMI

America does have some excellent schools and curriculum, but we're far from the best in the world.

ANYA

But why is that? America is so rich.

NAOMI

There are many factors. You can't put your finger on one thing and say that is it.

JACOB

The children in our country are eager to learn. An education can mean the difference between poverty and having an income.

ANYA

Your country has such excellent books. I wish I could take them to our children.

(CONTINUED)

NAOMI

There's no reason you can't.

There are interrupted when Julie sails in the door.

JULIE

You've done it, Anya.

ANYA

Done what?

JULIE

Your song has just reached number one on the charts.

ANYA

What does that mean?

JULIE

It means, you're famous. I've got people begging to know if you have any more songs.

NAOMI

It also means your real work is just beginning.

JULIE

She's right. We need to put out another song right away followed by an album and a video. We'll also need to book some live shows close by.

ANYA

Live shows? You mean in front of people?

JULIE

Of course. And we'll probably have you do a few talk shows.

ANYA

I didn't realize singing could be so complicated.

NAOMI

Girl, you have no idea. Don't panic, I'm sure they won't push you too fast. Just take it one step at a time.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

I've never sang in front of a large crowd of people.

JULIE

You'll love it. They'll be thousands of people clapping and cheering all for you.

INT. ANYA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Anya and Naomi are in the kitchen baking cookies. In the living room, Rani, Jacob and Lex play a game of cards. Naomi's phone chimes.

NAOMI

Hello, Julie. Sure, I'll ask them.
(out loud)
Julie wants to take everyone to a carnival that's in town tonight.

RANI

What's a carnival?

NAOMI

It's a place where people play games, go on rides and have fun. Interested?

RANI

It sounds fun. I'll go.

ANYA

Okay.

LEX

No fair. I'll be off duty.

RANI

Lex can go, can't he?

NAOMI

Lex, you want to go?

Lex looks at Rani.

LEX

Oh, yea.

NAOMI

(on phone)
Everyone says okay. Six o'clock, we'll be ready.

EXT. CARAVAL - EVENING

It's dark as they walk into the carnival. Anya and Rani are mesmerized by the sights. Rani and Lex hold hands. Lex notices Kenny looking.

LEX

In a place like this, she's going to need a bodyguard all by herself.

Kenny gives him a "yea, right" look.

Rani squeals and points to the ferris wheel.

RANI

Look, can we do that?

JULIE

Lex, do you mind?

Lex smiles and pulls her away. As they leave, a photographer walks up.

PHOTOGRAPHER

I'm ready. Who am I shooting?

JULIE

This is Anya and Jacob, you'll be following them tonight.

PHOTOGRAPHER

No problem.

Naomi pulls Anya aside.

NAOMI

I am so sorry, I had no idea she was going to make this into a photo-op.

ANYA

It's okay.

NAOMI

Well, just try to ignore him and have fun.

JULIE

What do you want to do first?

ANYA

I don't know.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

Let's try look around a bit.

Jacob and Anya hold hands. They stop and watch a fire-eater. Jacob points out the Alpine cars.

JACOB

Let's try that. They look easy.

Just as they climb into the car, they hear..

RANI (O.C.)

Wait.

Rani and Lex get into the car behind them. As the cars move and accelerate, Jacob puts his arm around Anya. Lex follows his move. At high speed, the girls start screaming.

The ride ends.

RANI

That was So Much Fun. Let's do something else.

Julie looks at Lex.

LEX

Let's go over here. You'll love this ride.

They leave.

JULIE

Have you ever heard of cotton candy?

ANYA

No, what is it?

JULIE

An American tradition at carnivals.

They walk eating cotton candy.

ANYA

This is wonderful. I never dreamed of anything like this.

The photographer is snapping pictures. People are watching, wondering. They come to a shooting gallery. Anya sees a giant stuffed animal.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

Look. It's beautiful.

BOOTH MANAGER

Win it for your young lady? Hit three targets and you it's yours.

Anya backs up.

ANYA

No, not guns.

JACOB

I'll do it.

ANYA

No, please.

Kenny steps forward. He puts down his money and picks up a gun. He hits the targets easily. The manager takes down the toy.

BOOTH MANAGER

Here you go.

(Quietly to Kenny)

Normally, I wouldn't be so generous to a professional, but I'm a big fan of Anya's.

Kenny smiles and gives the animal to Anya. She hugs it close.

ANYA

I love it. Thank you.

Jacob turns and walks away. Anya watches him with concern. Naomi walks up and takes the stuffed animal.

NAOMI

Go talk to him.

Anya smiles her gratitude. She runs and catches up with Jacob.

ANYA

Jacob, I'm sorry..

JACOB

No, it's all right. I understand.

ANYA

Do you? Everytime I see a gun, I see Kunal. I see you on the ground

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANYA (cont'd)
not knowing if you are alive or
dead.

She stops, wrapping her arms around him.

ANYA
I do care about you. So much it
scares me.

JACOB
And I, you.

Their kiss is interrupted by the flash of a camera.

PHOTOGRAPHER
Sorry, but it was too good to miss.

INT. ANYA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Naomi turns on the television and sits down. Jacob is in
another chair. On the TV is a famous talk show.

TV HOST
Our next guest hardly needs an
introduction. She's been the talk
of the internet since she exploded
on the scene several months ago
from total obscurity. She's put
out only two songs both of which
have flown to the top of the
charts. Please join me in
welcoming Anya.

Anya walks slowly onto the screen. The host guides her to
her seat.

TV HOST
Anya, you have accomplished an
amazing feat in a short amount of
time. How long have you been
singing?

ANYA
I've sang since I was a child. In
my village they called me Bul-Bul
or nightingale.

TV HOST
You come from India I believe.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

Yes, not far from Calcutta.

TV HOST

I understand you had a very tragic last three years. Want to talk about it?

ANYA

I'll try, but it is still difficult for me.

TV HOST

Take your time. We won't pressure you.

ANYA

I was kidnapped from my home when I was fifteen, betrayed by the man I was supposed to marry.

TV HOST

What did he do?

ANYA

He sold me to a man named Kuval who took me first to Calcutta and had me work for him.

TV HOST

Doing what?

ANYA

Taking care of men.

TV HOST

Prostitution.

ANYA

Yes. After Calcutta, he took me and another woman to Daulatdia in Bangladesh. I was there three years.

In the apartment.

JACOB

My hope is that, however sees this, will learn to have the courage she has.

(CONTINUED)

NAOMI

She's one in a million.

JACOB

No, she's not. That's the point. She's a regular girl. It's how she handled it that makes her special.

NAOMI

What do you mean?

JACOB

She never let her hope die.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

Anya and the guys are practicing when Julie walks in.

JULIE

Good morning.

They all return her greeting.

JULIE

Anya, great news. I've just received a phone call for a top recording artist. She's performing here in town next week and would like you to come on stage with her.

ANYA

You mean, sing in front of people?

JULIE

Yes. We talked about this, remember? This way you don't have to be alone during your first performance. She'll be the one carrying the performance and you'll just have to follow with her on a song. It's perfect.

ANYA

Okay. But I want to ask a favor.

JULIE

What's that?

ANYA

I'd like to go home and see my parents. I want them to meet Jacob.

(CONTINUED)

JULIE
(Hesitant)
Okay. I think we can schedule in a quick visit. Let me work on that.

ANYA
Thank you.

Julie trots out. Anya looks dazed.

JOSH
Earth to Anya.

ANYA
She looked like she didn't want me to go. Why not?

JOSH
That's just the way she is:
business first, world
second. Okay, so do you think
you'll be ready for the live crowd?

ANYA
What if I get so scared I can't
sing?

ERIC
Then you fake it.

JOSH
It's not going to happen. I know
this singer and she is a very
gracious person. She won't let you
be embarrassed.

ANYA
If you say so.

INT. BACKSTAGE - CONCERT CENTER - NIGHT

Looking onto the stage from backstage, Anya is
pacing. Jacob walks up and takes her hand.

JACOB
Courage, Anya. You've faced down
men, snakes and guns, you can
handle this.

ANYA
That seems like a different
person. And it turned out the
snake was old and toothless.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB

You are the strongest person I know. Keep your eyes on her and don't look at the crowd. You'll be okay.

ANYA

Everyone says that, but I'm still scared.

The song ends and the crowd is roaring. The SINGER takes a few bows.

SINGER

Tonight, I have a special treat for you. All the way from India for the first time on stage, allow me to introduce to you - Anya.

After one last glance to Jacob, Anya walks on stage and is enveloped by a thunder of applause.

ON STAGE

As Anya walks towards her, the singer raises her arms to grasp Anya's hands. She sees the fear in her eyes. She pulls Anya close, almost embracing her. She speaks in her ear.

SINGER

I'll start the song, just join in when you can. Keep looking at me.

Anya nods.

The singer nods to her band who start the song. The crowd quiets. After the first line, Anya raises the microphone and joins in. They sing in perfect harmony. When the song ends, Anya is exuberant. The singer lifts her hand in triumph.

SINGER

Let's hear it for Anya.

The crowd roars. Anya walks off the stage and into Jacob's embrace.

INT. ANYA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Anya and Jacob sit together in the couch. Lex is at the table pretending he's not there.

JACOB

You were wonderful tonight.

ANYA

I was so nervous, I thought I was going to throw up.

Lex snorts a low laugh. They look back at him.

JACOB

Have you thought about what you want to do?

ANYA

In what way?

JACOB

Do you want to teach? Do you want to keep singing? What do You want to do?

ANYA

Honestly, things have happened so fast, I haven't thought much about it. I still want to teach. That's what I love to do the most. But singing is fun, too.

JACOB

Is there any reason you can't do both?

ANYA

I don't know that much about singing to know.

LEX

No.

JACOB

Thank you, Lex. You see, you can be both. Now, where do you want to live?

ANYA

(A little louder than normal)
Can I live in America and India?

(CONTINUED)

LEX

Yes.

ANYA

Then that's what I want to do. Between concerts and records, we can go back and teach there.

LEX

There are recording studios in India.

ANYA

See, it'll work perfectly.

JACOB

(Loud)

And with our strong bodyguards, I'm sure Kuval and Nadir won't bother us.

LEX

Not a problem.

They hug tight and kiss.

MORNING

Naomi makes pancakes. Kenny has arrived for his shift, but Lex is still there. He and Rani are at the table with plates of pancakes. Rani is dubious. She picks one up, rolls it and takes a bite. She's confused. Lex picks up the syrup and pours it over her pancakes. He shows her his fork, cuts a piece and puts it to her mouth. She eats it and her eyes light up.

NAOMI

Who's ready for pancakes?

All hands go up.

NAOMI

Get your plates. Rani will you get Anya, please?

Rani jumps up and disappears in Anya's room. Julie walks in just as Anya comes out.

JULIE

I got us a singing engagement next week.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

You said I could go to India and see my parents.

JULIE

Maybe in a few months, but right now we need to keep up the momentum.

Naomi slams down the spatula and stalks into the livingroom. She stands in front of Julie.

NAOMI

You promised that girl she could see her parents as soon as she did the concert. You're going to keep your promise.

JULIE

I know what I promised, and I'll keep it. Just, later.

NAOMI

That girl has been to hell and back and yet she's done everything you've asked of her. She hasn't seen her parents in years. Have the decency to let her go.

KENNY

She's right, Julie, and you know it.

JULIE

You forget you work for me. I make the decisions.

JACOB

But Anya doesn't. I believe it's her choice, not yours.

JULIE

Is this a revolt?

LEX

More like a revolution.

NAOMI

Julie , you are a smart business woman. No one can deny that, but I'm sorry to say, your social skills suck. Anya is going with or without you. The question is, are

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NAOMI (cont'd)
you willing to bend enough to help
her or will you risk losing
everything.

JULIE
It sounds like I don't have a
choice.

NAOMI
Not really.

JULIE
Okay, I'll cancel the engagement
and rearrange some of my schedule.
(To Anya)
But I want your word you'll be
ready to go as soon as we get back.

LEX
Actually, Anya and Jacob have some
thoughts on that.

JULIE
Oh, Lord, now what? She doesn't
want to quit does she?

ANYA
No, I love the singing, but I want
to teach too. In India. That has
always been my dream.

Jacob comes to stand beside Anya.

JACOB
We thought we could live in India
and teach and come back to America
for the singing.

JULIE
But...

NAOMI
You can manage Anya just as well
while she is in India. Consider it
a challenge.

JULIE
Very well. So, my social skills
suck, huh?

NAOMI

You'll be much happier when you see
how happy they are.

JULIE

Somehow I doubt it, but we'll see.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY - PRESENT

Anya runs after Saad. Jacob gets out of the car.

JACOB

It reminds me of my home.

JULIE

I'm sorry, I never asked. Where is
your family?

JACOB

I don't have one. I was orphaned
as a young boy. That's how I ended
up working at the school. The same
organization raised me.

JULIE

I think we'd better follow or we'll
lose her.

EXT. PARENT'S HOUSE

Saad bangs on the door. It opens and Fahad looks out. Saad
points behind him. Anya runs up and stops.

FAHAD

Anya?

ANYA

Daddy.

He raises his arms and Anya runs into them. Both
cry. Fahad calls over his shoulder.

FAHAD

Ambi. Ambi, come here. It's Anya.

Ambi comes out. One look at Anya and she bursts into
tears. Anya releases Fahad and hugs her.

FAHAD

Until we got your phone call, we
didn't know if you were dead or
alive.

(CONTINUED)

Julie and Jacob walk up.

ANYA

This is Julie, the woman who took me out of the brothel to America. And that is Jacob, the man I'm going to marry.

FAHAD

Please, come in.

INT. PARENT'S HOUSE - DAY

AMBI

Sit down. I'll make some tea.

ANYA

(To Julie)

Have you ever had Chai tea?

Julie shakes her head.

ANYA

Would you like to try some. It's sweet and very good.

JULIE

I think I'd like that. Thank you.

FAHAD

Kedar said you ran away with another man. We did not believe him, but there was nothing we could do. We looked for you in Kalkata. A man named Patrick said he saw you, but by the time we got there, you were gone.

ANYA

Kedar is a liar. He sold me to some men to pay his debts. I was sold to a man named Kuval who took me to Daulatdia.

FAHAD

Oh, my child. I'm sorry. I thought it would be such a good match. I thought Kedar was a good man.

In the kitchen they hear the dishes rattle dangerously. Jacob jumps up.

(CONTINUED)

JACOB
I'll help her.

Fahad watches him.

FAHAD
He is a good man.

Anya smiles and nods.

KITCHEN

Ambi is nearly doubled over, crying. The tea service sits on a tray on the counter. Jacob puts his arm around her shoulders.

JACOB
She's safe now. It's time to rejoice. She's home.

AMBI
We knew what happened, but we couldn't protect her.

JACOB
You would have been proud. She was so strong and helped so many people. She gave them hope and courage when they had none.

AMBI
That lightens my heart. You are a good man. Are you really going to marry Anya?

JACOB
Yes. Let me help you with the tray.

Jacob picks up the tray.

LIVING ROOM

FAHAD
Anya tells me she was taken to Daulatdia.

AMBI
Bangladesh? We never imagined.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

There were times I didn't believe you would ever want me again. They told me I was just a woman and no one cared. You know what I had to do.

Fahad gets up and kneels before his daughter. He gathers her in his arms and holds tight.

FAHAD

You are our daughter, and will always be. Nothing will ever change that or our love for you.

In the corner, Julie cries openly.

LATER

Anya and Fahad walk outside.

FAHAD

Your story was difficult to hear. It makes me want to beat Kedar to an inch of his life.

ANYA

No, let it go. My life is so much better now than it would have ever been with him. Look, I'm rich and famous. I'm engaged to a wonderful man, and I can do anything my heart desires.

FAHAD

Everything I had ever hoped for you. What about the man who owned you. Ku...

ANYA

Kuval.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Kuval sleeps. The door opens and a bag thrown in. Kuval wakes up to see a large cobra slithering out. Kuval jumps up and the snake rears up to strike.

ANYA (V.O.)

Remember I told you the cobra they placed in my room was old with the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANYA (V.O.) (cont'd)
fangs pulled? Kuval was not so
lucky with the one Nadir placed in
his room.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY - PRESENT

FAHAD
And the other man?

ANYA
Nadir was killed in a fight over a
betting game.

FAHAD
So you now have no one to
fear. Good.

ANYA
Which means I can live in India
without worry.

Fahad puts an arm around her.

FAHAD
All the better when the
grandchildren come.

A few feet from the house, the door opens and Julie steps
out, phone in hand.

JULIE
I just got a call from Naomi. Rani
and Lex have eloped. They got
married last night.

Anya laughs in delight.

INT. CONCERT HALL - NIGHT

Anya, now 21, wraps up her song. She bows with confidence
and triumph as the applause thunders through the building.

ANYA
Thank you. Ladies and gentlemen, I
have an announcement.

Anya looks backstage where Jacob is watching. She reaches
out her hand and he comes on stage to take it.

(CONTINUED)

ANYA

As most of you know, I was rescued as a teenager from a brothel in Bangladesh. Though I was able to escape, I will always remember the ones I left behind. That is why my husband and I will be traveling back to India to help rescue the women still trapped in slavery.

Applause.

ANYA

Thank you. I promise, I will still be singing and performing. My name is Anya, and I am somebody.

As the crowd cheers, Anya and Jacob bow and leave the stage.

INT. PLANE - DAY

Anya and Jacob sit in first class. A YOUNG GIRL (14) walks up to their seats.

GIRL

You're Anya, aren't you?

ANYA

Yes, I am.

GIRL

You are like my greatest hero.

ANYA

Thank you. That encourages me.

GIRL

I have a step-father who likes to hit me. He keeps telling me I'm a nobody and won't amount to anything. But then I remember your story, and I know I can make it. If you can go through what you did and still be as strong as you are, then I can to.

Tears fill Anya's eyes.

GIRL

Because my name is Emily, and I am somebody.

THE END