

BOY MEETS GIRL

by
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Developed from the stage production of Find Me Amongst the Black
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FADE IN:

EXT. HANDSWORTH CEMETRY, BIRMINGHAM, UK - DAY

JAVED KHAN (22), in funeral black attire and trimmed goatee, stands at the front of relatives of Mirpuri MEN, watching a coffin lowering into a dug out plot.

He turns his attention at the women's section, towards an attractive young woman - SHEHNAZ(Sheni) 19, SOBBING, clinging to her MOTHER for support.

EXT. CEMETRY GATE - CONTINUOUS

FUNERAL ATTENDANTS file past Jav offering condolences.

A burly MAN dressed in traditional Mirpur garb, comes to stand next to him. He is JAV'S UNCLE

He too singles out Sheni amongst the women who stand aside.

JAV'S UNCLE
She is your responsibility now,
Javed. Do it soon.

Jav tries to ignore him.

JAV'S UNCLE
Javed?

JAV
Yes, Tao-jan.

INT. POLICE CELL - NIGHT

MUSHTAQ, (22), aka Mush, in baseball cap and black hoodie, looks up to see a POLICE OFFICER enter his cell.

POLICE OFFICER
Go on, fuck off.

FRONT DESK, POLICE STATION - CONTINUOUS

Mush acknowledges Jav, now in phat baseball cap sideways, a Jay-Z /RocaWear hoodie - a Sparbrook Homie, waiting for him.

Mush jumps the DUTY OFFICER behind the desk.

JAV
Mush! Leave it.

Jav drags him out of the station.

INT. KHAN MECHANICS, SPARBROOK, BIRMINGHAM - NIGHT.

Serious hardcore HIP HOP blares from inside the yard.

A customised BMW crawls across the road thudding BHANGRA.

Jav, in a hoodie over his overalls, steps out from underneath a jacked up Saloon.

He stares at the BMW, trying to make out the figures inside the blackened windows.

The wheeler trawls off.

NAZ (24), a look-alike of Jav in appearance, peers over from the office.

NAZ

That's not him. He won't show here.

Jav acknowledges, slips off his overalls.

DIALS a call on his mobile.

JAV

(into phone)
Where're ya?

FEMALE VOICE (PHONEVOICE)

Home. Why?

JAV

Okay.
(off phone. To Naz)
Dude, I got a gig.

NAZ

Okay. Peace

JAV

Peace, yo.

INT. CLUB - NIGHT

Jav walks through, into..

DRESSING ROOM

It's full of other ARTISTS.

Greets them.

JAV

Hey, y'all.

Then moves to ..

STAGE WINGS

Watches a performance of an ASIAN FEMALE SOLO MC artist with back up DANCERS.

Jav rolls his eyes, SIGHS irritation. Looks at the roster billing of artists underneath the poster of the gig. He checks his name REBEL X - middle position in the roster.

He gets greeted by AMO, (early 30's), all bling-ed up, but betrays it with mock formality. Amo notices Jav's oncoming agitation.

AMO
Alright, Jav.

JAV
Amo.

AMO
What's up, bro'?

JAV
Wassup? Bro, you aksing wassup?
Fuckin' clown show you've booked
me in again.

He leads Amo back into the corridor to the Dressing Room.

JAV
And the same shit one year on,
same place, same gig, same. Look
at it, fuckin' lollipops on
stage. We were supposed to move
on from this.

AMO
We are.

JAV
Where? When? I don't see it. You
my manager, Amo. You got to be
straight with me. Where we going?

AMO
I'm trying, bruver.

JAV
You've been trying for two years.
What you said to me then, you
could get me on the circuit.

AMO
Maybe it's just not happening.

JAV
My shit kills, man. I kill with
my music.

AMO
Yeah , I know that. You don't
think I know that?

JAV
Then?

AMO
I don't know, bruver. Like I
said, I'm trying.. But they just
don't wanna book you when they
see you what you look like.

JAV
Don't piss me with that ethnic
shit, man. I don't have to be
black to do Hip Hop. Those days
are gone. It's about music now.

AMO
Maybe, it's that then.

JAV
Fuck you, man! Fuck you! My music
is murder! Y'know what, we're
through with this. I'm going to
go and do my own thing. I don't
need a manager.

AMO
Jav, bruv. Be real.

JAV
Real is my music, man. I'm going
to go places with it. You just
stalling me.

He looks towards the stage again.

JAV
Bedroom stuff, man. That's your
cash.

He gathers his stuff, walks off.

AMO
Jav! Jav, I got a contract on
this gig!

Jav sticks his finger up at him. Walks out through the
stage door SECURITY.

EXT. CLUB, CAR PARK - NIGHT

He walks to his car - a black RANGE ROVER, but gets thrown off when a COUPE cuts into his path.

He looks familiarly at the driver of the Coupe - DEBBIE (20), with cute Irish looks.

She lowers her window for him.

JAV

Hey.

DEBBIE

Hey.

She pulls his hips to her, lifts his T Shirt, kisses him on his navel.

DEBBIE

You want to leave your car here?

She lowers him down into her car.

INT. COUPE - CONTINUOUS

Closes on his uneasy eyes.

DEBBIE

What's up, baby? You okay?

He nods slightly.

JAV

I just thought to be on my own tonight.

DEBBIE

Okay. Maybe later, yeah? I'll bell ya.

He takes himself out of her car, but comes to the window.

JAV

We should talk.

DEBBIE

I thought that was coming.

JAV

I'll call ya.

She turns her IGNITION. Jav watches her DRIVE off.

INT. JAV'S RANGE ROVER - NIGHT

Through his rear mirror, Jav watches a POLICE CAR signal him down.

Two POLICE OFFICERS approach his window. They survey his vehicle.

POLICE OFFICER
Have you been drinking, sir?

Jav shakes his head. The Police observe him turn his gaze towards the ENGRAVED KORANIC TEXTS hanging from the grip of the rear window mirror.

They let him go.

EXT. SMALL TERRACED HOUSE - NIGHT

Jav jumps out of his Rover into his small front house yard.

Picks the empty garbage bin lying randomly on its side to return to its rightful corner position. Lord of his Manor.

INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS

Walks into the house.

Takes his coat off. Looks up to see Sheni, sitting on the top stair.

SHENI
How was the gig, bhai-jan?

JAV
Why aren't you 'sleep?

SHENI
Why did you bell me to know where I was?

JAV
Is mum sleep?

SHENI
Yeah.

Jav walks into the house, through the kitchen then out into the..

EXT. BACKYARD - NIGHT

Spots the lights in the pre-fab shed - the Studio.

INT. STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Jav steps in to find KULLY and MUSH, (early 20's) Jav's friends, working the sound decks o, which is small, compact with walls adorning images of black Hip Hop culture, mainly all USA, mixed with general black militant posters of MALCOLM X, CHE and GANDHI.

MUSH

Yo' Jav, what's happening?

JAV

Mush. What's up Kal? Who let you in?

MUSH

Your sis, man, who else? We weren't going to break in, is it?

KULLY

You rocked?

JAV

Huh?

KULLY

The gig'yo?

JAV

Hold up.

Jav returns to the house.

SHENI'S BEDROOM

Jav steps in to find Sheni with her headphones on, while going through a stack of CDs on the floor. Her walls are decked with pin up posters of recognizable Hip Hop STARS - Lil' WAYNE, JAY -Z, 50 CENTS, XSHOT.

She takes her headphones off to the stare of Jav.

JAV

What'd I say to ya?

SHENI

What d'ya mean?

JAV

You let them in. I told you not to show your face to any of my mates. Didn't I tell ya?

SHENI

The door was knocking. What was I supposed to do?

JAV
Where was mum then?

SHENI
I don't know, she didn't get it.

JAV
Did Gurps call ya?

SHENI
No.

JAV
Has he been in touch?

SHENI
No.

JAV
I saw his car today.

SHENI
So? His brother could've been driving it.

JAV
They know the zone.

SHENI
I told you, I'll tell ya if he calls.

Jav rips the headphones off her.

JAV
I don't want to see you in a hearse, Shen'. I've warned you enough. Dad ain't here. You my responsibility now. I don't want the fuckin' hassle like last time. You get me?

He THROWS the headphones against the wall.

INT. STUDIO

Jav returns. Starts LIGHTING a joint.

JAV
So, dudes, where y'all at the gig?

MUSH/KULLY
You kidding?

JAV
What?

MUSH

You don't remember?

JAV

Remember what?

KULLY

Bro, you said it's just another gig. So we said' we'll meet you here. You're supposed to organize it.

JAV

Yeah, nah, du', I forgot. Shit.

MUSH

Too much skunk, bruv.

JAV

You sorted now?

KULLY

'Xcept your genius.

JAV

What you supposed to be doing here, anyways?

MUSH

Kully's got a rap.

JAV

Yeah? What kind of rap?

MUSH

For his girl.

JAV

A birthday song?

KULLY

Well, it's a kind --

JAV

You kidding me? Tell me you're joking. You serious?

MUSH

Bro', he's proposing, innit.

JAV

What?

KULLY

I just want to do it differently. Kind of my way.

JAV

You want me to do a wedding song?
You want me to do a fuckin'
wedding song?

KULLY

Nah, c'mon, bro', it ain't a
wedding rap. Just want you to lay
the back track.

JAV

(sighs)

Oh, man. Why weren't you at the
gig?

MUSH

We told you.

KULLY

How was it?

JAV

Fuck this shit.

He clears the desk.

KULLY

Jav! C'mon bro.

JAV

We'll do it tomorrow.

He re-boots the console to upload his files from the
control panel.

His MUSIC plays: style of 'old skool' hardcore Hip Hop.

MUSIC TRACK

*Fear is the virus
you spread about me
Fear is all you have,
is what you breed
but you don't even see
or understand me
Who is I am, Who is am about
Am I you disease?
Am I your dark cloud?
But you made me the caliphx,
a bomber with a fix
You made me the Convict,
brought it out of me
The Convict , The Convict in me
The Convict , The Convict in me*

MUSH

That new?

JAV

Hear it.

MUSIC TRACK

*Who is I am, Who is am about
Am I your disease?
Am I your dark cloud?
But you made me the caliphx,
a bomber with a fix
You made me the Convict,
brought it out of me
The Convict , The Convict in me
The Convict , The Convict in me*

The TRACK plays to fade.

MUSH

Fuck, it's kickin' man. 'The Convict in Me'. Hardcore, man.

KULLY

I like that. Where d'ya come with titles like that?

JAV

What's that supposed to mean?

KULLY

Y'know, it's heavy.

JAV

What's it sound like?

MUSH

Told you, hardcore man.

JAV

Yeah, Du', but, who like?

KULLY

It's there, man. It's like Lil , it like old skool NWA, it's like Mos Def with a 'gangsta' tip.

JAV

If you heard that, who would you picture?

MUSH

What do you mean?

JAV

You know --

MUSH

Yeah, like some black kutha.

KULLY
It's on the album, right?

JAV
No album no more.

KULLY
No album?

Jav switches the lights off. Goes out.

MUSH
Jav! Where you going, bro'?

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE JAV'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Jav hovers around restless.

Mush and Kully follow him out.

MUSH
What's up, man?

JAV
Nothing. C'mon, I'm a hungry.

They jump into Jav's Rover.

INT. RANGE ROVER - CONTINUOUS

Hip Hop BOOMS from the Rover's adapted bass woofers inside the blacked out windows and leather interior.

Jav drives while stretching his index finger for Kully, who carefully lays out Cocaine on it.

Jav SNIFFS it between thumb and finger, Mirpur style.

They drive past some POLICE OFFICERS apprehending a number of ASIAN MALES outside a CAR. Jav checks out the POLICE OFFICERS who stare back at him.

Mush changes the TRACK. AKON (LIL WAYNE section)

Moves to its beat. Joins its CHORUS RAP.

MUSH
(rapping along)
*"Gorillas they want war but ain't
got money
'Cause I've seen 'em all talk
until they start gunnin'
Quicker than Usain Bolt, the
fastest thing runnin'
Yeah, Weezy! Block oil holdin'
down Jersey
(MORE)*

MUSH (cont'd)
*Devine makin' sure we gettin' it
 up front
 My little brother Boo got that
 vision, baby"*

Kully joins in. But not Jav.

MUSH/KULLY
 (rapping-along)
*"Ah-oh, big money Weezy
 White wife-beater with the cig
 underneath it
 How do I feel? Bitch, I feel
 undefeated
 Snap my fingers, disappear from
 the precinct, yeah
 I'm ballin', we ball out
 Thoughts of we fallin' until the
 ball bounce
 I send some niggas with guns at
 y'all house
 Only to find out you live in a
 doll house"*

INT. RESTAURANT TOILET - NIGHT

Jav lines up some more coke.

Checks himself in the cracked mirror, rising up from the wash basin.

Walks out to ..

MOMOS RESTAURANT COUNTER

Underneath a neon - MOMOS KARAHAI - a Pakistani joint with plenty of halal displayed, Jav checks the food in the counter.

Decides against it.

Joins Mush and Kully in a circular cubicle table to Naz.

JAV
 I ain't hungry. What you saying,
 Naz?

MUSH
 Just order something. Anything,
 man.

NAZ
 I got couple of Bacardis.

JAV
 Here?

NAZ

Here.

JAV

So?

NAZ

I was just waiting for you. Am surrounded by these pussies.

MUSH

I told you, bro' I got an early start.

NAZ

Early start, I'll give you a fuckin early eerly start....
Pussy.

Naz brings out a Bacardi bottle wrapped in a plastic bag. Pours it out for himself and Jav.

KULLY

Yeah, alright. But you should eat something before you touch that shit, Jav. Your stomach's going to get all churled up.

JAV

Du, you sound like my mum there.

KULLY

Your mum know you drink?

NAZ

She knows everything. Head of the family now, boy. He got some privileges.

The Plasma TV on the wall showing some Bollywood RAP DANCE clip grabs their attention, except for Jav.

Mush and Kully sway with the BEAT on the video.

JAV

How can you get into that shit, man. It's fuckin' stupid. It's like, fuckin' disgraceful.

NAZ

Yeah, Disgraceful is the word. See, this guy lets his sister go out with some gora. Fuckin' if ever that happened to me, man, I'd fuckin' be happy, willingly happy, to spend a life inside.

KULLY

Yeah, what if he's a eight foot motherfucker loaded with a shooter.

NAZ

Who's talking about doing the guy, it ain't his fault. The girl, man. I'd do her.

MUSH

Imagine if it was a kutha, man? I mean, can you imagine you sis with a kutha!

NAZ

Hey yo, so I got a call from Amo asking if I'd seen you. Said you didn't do the gig.

KULLY

What, you kidding? You didn't do the gig!

JAV

Yeah --

NAZ

He said you bailed out.

JAV

Fuck, nothing like that. Just ain't happening, man.

Naz looks across the restaurant at one of only few other tables occupied - at a group of YOUNG SOMALIANS, dressed in traditional robes - he clocks them looking and talking about them.

One the Somalians calls the WAITER - aka PRINCE, a mid 20's Mirpur PAKISTANI, who has appearance of the artist Prince, therefore his nickname.

Prince walks over to them. They talk to him(MOS).

He then approaches Jav's table.

PRINCE

Paape, drink not allowed.

Naz cuts the Somalians with a stare.

NAZ

It's okay, bruv, it's ours. No problem for you.

PRINCE

If the Police come in --.

JAV
C'mon, Prince, what's the matter
with you today? Missus ok?

PRINCE
Brother,
(looks over at the
Somalians)
License, y'know.

NAZ
Who're they?

PRINCE
It's Jamat, they like to keep it
pure.

NAZ
So? I've been here on Fridays,
never seen them before. Your
brothers, Prince?

PRINCE
Brothers? Paape, if it was upto
me, these kuthe wouldn't be seen
dead in here. Their money is more
pure to the Manager.

JAV
Prince told me he shagged his
missus eleven times in one night.
This bad boy, this bad boy here
eleven times in one night!

They all CHEER.

PRINCE
C'mon, boys.

NAZ
I just opened the bottle as well.
Ok, let us finish this, yeah?

MUSH
Anyway, Prince, who you talking
to, bro'? I mean we're here
everyday.

Prince shrugs his shoulders and walks to the Somalians.

Mush decides to follow him.

NAZ
Mush!

JAV
Oi, what you doing, Mush!

They watch Prince talk to the Somalians. Mush interjects.

The Somalians get up to leave the restaurant. Mush follows them out.

Prince joins Jav and Naz watching Mush through the Restaurant window talking vigorously to the Somalians

JAV

Kully, tell Mush to cool that heat.

Then all of a sudden they see one of the Somalian push Mush, who strikes him back in retaliation.

NAZ

Fuck, man!

They all rush out.

EXT. MOMOS RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Jav spots the steel of a knife on one of the Somalians as they stand off Mush.

JAV

Easy, easy! Mush get inside.

MUSH

I'm ok.

NAZ

Inside, Mush!

Mush reluctantly goes inside the restaurant.

JAV

Boys, now, let's get real. We need to put that away --

SOMALIAN YOUTH

How can you say that to me, man?

JAV

I can, man, and I am saying it.

SOMALIAN YOUTH

Man, we come to this place coz it's clean from clubs and bars. We're true, man, to Allah's pure word. And you just come in with your booze and shit, and you desecrate it.

JAV

It's just a fuckin restaurant --

SOMALIAN YOUTH 2

And Prince told you it ain't allowed anyway. So, what's with the attitude? Who you to talk to us?

He shows off his knife more.

NAZ

C'mon, man, you don't want the Police seeing you with that.

SOMALIAN YOUTH

If it's Allah's wish, then so be it. I'm only doing his work to cleanse this world.

JAV

Let's leave Allah out of this, shall we?

SOMALIAN YOUTH 2

What you say, man?

JAV

What you mean "what I say", boy? You saying I am not a believer coz I drink alcohol? Fuck you, man, fuck you! You want get fundi with me? C'mon then, do Allah's wish.

Jav lifts his T-shirt off inviting the Somali to stab him.

JAV

I'll make it easier for you.

The Somali hesitates.

JAV

C'mon, what you waiting for, boy?

In the Somali's hesitation, Naz jumps him, nicking the knife off him, taking the power in the stand off.

JAV

Here's some advice for a true believer, boy - never show, weakness.

Jav takes the knife off Naz. Hands it to Prince.

JAV

Fuck this shit!
(spots Amo pull up his car)

(MORE)

JAV (cont'd)
 I get told I'm not black enough,
 now I just get accused I don't
 believe enough. Fuck it, I'm
 outta here.

AMO
 Where you going to go, Jav?
 Nowhere for you to go,

JAV
 Yeah? We'll see.

Just then Mush slips out of the restaurant back onto the street provoking one of the other Somalian to take out his blade.

He pierces Mush's gut.

JAV
 Mush!

SOMALIAN YOUTH
 (to Jav)
 You want to see who you call
 weak.

The Somalians all run off, as Mush collapses in a pool of blood.

NAZ
 Fuck! Fuck! Call the Ambulance!

KULLY
 Mush! Can you hear me? Mush!

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Jav walks out of the main doors to meet Debbie, but spots MEMBERS of an ASIAN FAMILY walking up towards him.

DEBBIE
 How is he?

He side steps her to a WAILING older ASIAN WOMAN from the family.

He leads her into the Hospital.

Debbie shuffles, returns to her car.

INT. OFFICE, POLICE STATION - DAY

A Plain Clothes DETECTIVE shows Jav a digital sketch fit of the Somalian Youth on the computer screen.

DETECTIVE OFFICER
So, you confirm?

Jav nods.

DETECTIVE OFFICER
Okay, thank you Mr Khan.

He leads Jav out to the..

WAITING AREA

Kully acknowledges Jav, before he is led into the Office by the Detective.

INT. STUDIO - NIGHT

Jav stares at the console.

Looks around slowly at his studio.

Brings up 'CONVICT IN ME' from his console music files.

Listens to it.

His Phone BEEPS with a message. He reads.

DEBBIE: CALL ME PLS. FEEL WEIRD

Continues to listen to the track. Then abruptly stops it.

DIALS from his phone.

JAV
(into phone)
Hi.

DEBBIE (PHONEVOICE)
Hey. Do you want me to convert,
is that what this is about?

JAV
No, no, you won't be the same.

DEBBIE
Then? You've been different since
your Dad died.

JAV
Our paths are not same anymore.

DEBBIE
It's all about family, isn't it?
I always thought this would never
be our reason.

(MORE)

DEBBIE (cont'd)
Baby, you are never going to be
you if you do this.

JAV
It was a mistake. We were a
mistake. I got to go.

DEBBIE
That's it? Fuck you!

Jav hears an abrupt CLICK on the phone.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Jav shows Sheni to takes an envelope from a pile, inserts a
CD and a paper sheet - his music bio, from another pile,
make sure it is the right way up.

Seals it.

Throws it onto a pile of already addressed envelopes.

INT. BOXERS GYM - DAY

Jav searches around. He finds what he's looking for - a
heavy built, bling-ed up Afro-Caribbean MAN, (40's).

Jav finds a spot not very far from him. Starts his work
out.

Finds courage to approach him.

JAV
Sammy! How you doing? I didn't
know you worked out here.

SAMMY
Sorry, man, I didn't get your
name?

JAV
Rebel X. I sent you my stuff,
couple of tracks.

SAMMY
Rebel X. Yeah, oh yeah, I got
that, but I got sent that some
time ago by, uh,, what's his
name.. Amo. Amo sent it to me.

JAV
You know Amo?

SAMMY
He knows me.

JAV

So, I've been working on some new tracks. I sent them to you to check out.

SAMMY

To be honest, man, I'm kinda booked up now for the year.

JAV

Maybe some cancellations, yeah?

SAMMY

Maybe. Let's see.

INT. KHAN MECHANICS SHOP - DAY

Jav takes five from the work. Closes the office door behind him.

Makes a CALL. But gets interrupted by his UNCLE walking in.

JAV

(In Urdu)

Assaklamualaikum, Tao-jan.

JAV'S UNCLE

Wali-kum Salam, Javed. What happened?

JAV

Happened, about what?

JAV'S UNCLE

Mushtaq. I heard you involved in some knife fight, y'know.

JAV

No, no nothing like that. It was just --

JAV'S UNCLE

There was drink, y'know.

JAV

Just some friends, uncle.

JAV'S UNCLE

Mushtaq's father came to see me. He told me. I haven't seen you at the mosque for a while, Javed. We have to keep respect for the family, y'know the situation with your sister.

JAV
I'll be there this Friday, Tai-
Jan.

JAV'S UNCLE
Why are you delaying things with
her? She is not working, is she?

JAV
I'll definitely be there this
Friday,.

JAV'S UNCLE
Okay, see you then.

He leaves.

Jav resumes with the PHONECALL

MONTAGE

JAV
(into phone)
Hello, hi, can I speak to Mr
Clarence Bell?.. Yeah I sent him
some tracks to listen.. yeah, its
I'm called Rebel X.. busy, is he?
Okay, I'll try again

Makes another CALL.

JAV
(into phone)
Yeah, hello, I'd like to speak to
Dee.. It's Rebel X... Busy? Ok,
thanks.

And ANOTHER.

JAV
(into phone)
Hi, can I try for Clarence Bell
again? Yep, I'll hold..

Still holding.

JAV
Okay, look, I'll bell him later.

END MONTAGE

EXT. EXCLUSIVE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Jav sits in the Range Rover.

He looks out at the street, as if waiting. Watches an AFRO-CARIBBEAN MAN walk into the restaurant with a BLONDE.

Jav's phone RINGS. Sees its Naz's ID.

JAV
 (into phone)
 Yeah?... No, I ain't been. How's
 he?.. Fuck.. I know, it's so
 totally unnecessary.. Yeah.. I'll
 swing by later.

Hangs up. Follows the couple into the ..

INT. RESTAURANT

Jav finds a spot at the bar with a full view of the Couple.

He watches the MAN get up to go to the Toilets.

INT. TOILETS - CONTINUOUS

Jav waits by the wash basins **for the MAN to walk out of the cubicle.**

JAV
 Hey, Clarence Bell ain't it?

CLARENCE BELL
 That's me.

JAV
 Look, I'm sorry to hustle you in
 the toilet of a fuckin'
 restaurant, but look I'd
 appreciate if you could be
 straight up. I've been calling
 you and I sent you some tracks. I
 just want to know --

CLARENCE BELL
 Come see me at the office. We'll
 talk there.

JAV
 Tomorrow?

CLARENCE BELL
 Yeah, tomorrow's cool.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Jav pulls up in his Range Rover.

Stares at the entrance.

Decides against it. Drives off.

INT. CLARENCE BELL'S OFFICE - DAY

Jav walks up to the RECEPTIONIST, the same Blonde from the restaurant.

JAV
I got a meeting with Clarence.

RECEPTIONIST
He's in London all day.

JAV
He said to call for him at the office, today.

RECEPTIONIST
You know, if I were you, I would enter Recognition.

JAV
Recognition? That's just a new talent competition. I've been around, I got my own studio, I do my own production. I got over dozen tracks.

She hands him a flyer for RECOGNITION

RECEPTIONIST
You get noticed.

He takes it from her. Notices the Judges listed on the flyer.

JAV
XShot? He's a judge?

RECEPTIONIST
Date for calls is next week.

JAV
What, he's coming from Chicago all the way for this?

She hands him another clean Flyer.

RECEPTIONIST
Recognition is international now. You should know.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Sheni continues to pack the sample CDs.

JAV
Leave it. I'm doing Recognition.

Sheni gives him a surprise look.

JAV
XShot's a judge on it. It's safe.

SHENI
XShot? You mean XShot? Here?

INT. MOMOS RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Prince brings some coffee to Jav and his crew.

They stare at a POLICE NOTICE displayed outside asking for 'Information on a serious incident'.

KULLY
(cuts the silence)
Jav, so what's the deal on
Recognition, bro'?

JAV
You win, you get to record and a
circuit tour.

KULLY
Mush lying in hospital and you
want to do a gig?

Jav remains silent.

NAZ
What you saying, Kully, we stop
living? And it's not just a gig
is it? Jav makes it and we got
something to be proud of.

KULLY
XShot ain' had a new album for
while.

NAZ
So?

Kully studies the Recognition Flyer.

KULLY
He's just fishing. This ain't
genuine.

JAV
It's called Artist Development.
He's been setting up his own
label, and yeah, fishing for some
new acts.

(MORE)

JAV (cont'd)

And for your information, he has
a new album coming.

KULLY

Hands down man, Recognition's
going to be a walk in the park
for ya.

NAZ

Fucking cut the sarc, bro. Mush
be alright, ok. He'll pull
through.

Just then some SOMALIAN YOUTH enter the restaurant, but
without the one who attacked Mush.

NAZ

Are ther serious?

Prince rushes to them.

PRINCE

Not allowed. Sorry.

SOMALIAN YOUTH

What you mean not allowed? We
coming in.

PRINCE

No, you go to Police.

SOMALIAN YOUTH

Police? What you talking about?

The Somalian steps up, but Prince pushes him back, to which
the Somalian retaliates.

Naz get up but Jav restrains him. Kully notices.

The KITCHEN STAFF and MANAGER rush to contain the
Somalians, pushing them out of the restaurant.

PRINCE

Go to another restaurant,
Haramzade!

SOMALIAN YOUTH

We'll be back. You see, we'll be
back!

NAZ

How come the Police haven't got
to them?

PRINCE

You know what I think, the Police
are scared of them.

Jav gets a TEXT on his phone from Sheni - 'I NEED TO SPEAK TO YOU'

JAV
I gotta go.

INT. SHENI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sheni takes out her MP3 Player.

SHENI
Listen to this track, Bhai-jan. I think you should --

JAV
Track? I thought this was about Gurps. I thought it was urgent.

SHENI
No. Why is it always have to be about him?

JAV
When was he last in touch with you?

SHENI
It's over, I told you. How can I be in touch with him, anyway, I'm never allowed out of this house.

JAV
What do y'a expect when you pull a stunt like that.

SHENI
It happened. It's done. It was no one's fault.

JAV
Gurps was a mate. Because of you I had to drive him out of town. Next time...

SHENI
I know.

He goes to leave.

SHENI
Wait. Are you going to listen to this? You should use it for Convict.
(she hands the MP3 to him)
Listen to it. It'll set you apart at Recognition.

Jav takes the MP3 Player.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - NIGHT

Jav and Naz look on as Mush's mother prays over her son's bed.

INT. JAV'S RANGE ROVER - NIGHT

Naz drives. Jav checks himself in the glove mirror.

CONVICT track plays from the car stereo. He mimes to it.

A new Indian RIFF plays within the track.

Naz inquires Jav about it.

Jav acknowledges.

EXT. STAGE, CLUB - CONTINUOUS

They jump out of the Rover to check the club's billing - RECOGNITION shining in NEONS.

Walk to the Back door.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Naz gives Jav a hug.

NAZ
Kill'em, bro'.

Leaves Jav to check himself in the mirror.

INT. CLUB - CONTINUOUS

Jav hands his CD to the SOUND ENGINEER. Steps on the stage.

Scans the audience. Eventually finds Naz with Kully drowned amongst a sea of unfamiliar AFRO-CARIBBEAN FACES.

Stares out at the cautious unfriendly CROWD.

Throws a glance at the JUDGES. Checks out XSHOT (29) - an African-American, dark in his designer shades, and expensive street wear; he looks back, uninterested.

Acknowledge the SOUND ENGINEER in the wings, as the back track counts in..

JAV
 (performing)
*Fear is the virus
 you spread about me
 Fear is all you have,
 is what you breed
 but you don't even see
 or understand me
 Who is I am, Who is am about
 Am I you disease?
 Am I your dark cloud?
 But you made me the caliphx,
 a bomber with a fix
 You made me the Convict,
 brought it out of me
 The Convict , The Convict in me
 The Convict , The Convict in me
 Now, its spreading
 like my own virus,
 contagious, like a fire
 that's gonna control us ,
 On every street corner,
 face of every foreigner,
 I want to bury you, I want to
 desecrate you, castrate you,
 exterminate you and terminate you
 The Convict is who
 you made out of me
 You let it be, Now it is in me
 The Convict , The Convict in me
 The Convict , The Convict in me
 (Repeat)*

Finishes to polite AUDIENCE APPLAUSE.

He stares back at them, instead of taking a bow.

Rushes off the stage.

INT. DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jav storms in SMASHING the CD to pieces. Starts pacing.

Naz follows in.

JAV
 Fucking niggers. They never
 fuckin going to let us in.

The CLUB TANNOY comes on.

TANNOY: "CAN WE HAVE ALL THE CONTESTANTS ON STAGE PLEASE"

Jav stays put.

Sinks himself onto the sofa.

TANNOY: "SO THE JUDGES HAVE LISTED THE TOP THREE WINNING CONTESTANTS.. THE FIRST RUNNER UP IN POSITION THREE IS--"

Jav throws his coffee mug at the Tannoy. Breaking it.

JAV
Maybe Amo was right.

NAZ
It's all cool, bro. You tried and it ain't happening.

JAV
What you sayin'?

NAZ
Maybe its time to move on.

JAV
Is it? What do you know?

NAZ
I just said, it's cool, that you tried and..

JAV
I heard what you said. Why don't you fuck off, like all the rest!

NAZ
Ok, I hear you.

JAV
Just fuck off!

Naz leaves.

Jav throws himself onto the sofa.

Then starts packing his bag.

His phone RINGS. Looks at the ID. It's his uncle. He lets it RING.

It RINGS again. Lets it go.

And then again.

JAV
(into phone)
Tai-jan.. Aases-le-kum.. Ok.. Ok.

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE DRESSING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jav hurries along.. but can't escape the..

TANNOY: "AND HUGE BIG UP AGAIN TO THE WINNER OF RECOGNITION
- MICHELLE BROWN"

Just as he reaches the door.

XSHOT (O.S.)
Hey! Hey, Rebel X! Hey, man!

Jav turns to see XShot.

XSHOT
You leaving? You didn't come on
stage.

JAV
No.

XSHOT
You alright, man?

JAV
I'm good.

XSHOT
I know how you feeling, man. But
it's like this, it's not always
about winning. Y'know what I am
saying?

JAV
Nah. What is it about?

XSHOT
Okay.

JAV
Sorry, I don't mean to be rude.
It's good to meet you. It's an
honour in fact

XSHOT
Thank you. I get where you coming
from. Listen, man, you want to
grab some coffee?

Jav looks puzzled.

XSHOT
I'm doing this wrong. Bad timing.
Look, this is my card, and this
is the hotel I'm staying. If you
get time, you drop by.

JAV
Er, uh, look I'm not that way
...uh inclined.

XSHOT

No, dawg. No! What do you think I am? I want to talk about your music, man.

JAV

Music? Why is that?

XSHOT

Coz I develop new talent. Give me a call tomorrow. We're all tired now. My name's.. I mean you can call me Carl.

Jav acknowledges. Leaves out of the back door.

INT. MOSQUE - DAY

Jav gets up from his prayer. Checks on his Uncle's approval.

INT. JAV'S RANGE ROVER - CONTINUOUS

Jav jumps in. Spots XShot's card on the dashboard.

INT. KHAN MECHANICS SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Jav paces, restless, flicking XShot's card through his fingers.

EXT. HOTEL - DAY

XShot steps out of the lobby with his luggage as Jav walks in.

XSHOT

Hey.

They greet each other.

JAV

Hey. You going?

XSHOT

Yeah, waiting for my cab to the Airport.

JAV

I'll take you.

XSHOT

Sure? Okay, man. Let's go.

INT. JAV'S RANGE ROVER - CONTINUOUS

They jump in with XShot's luggage. Drive off.

XSHOT

Listen, can we go by your neighborhood?

JAV

My neighborhood?

XSHOT

If it's alright with you? Just want to get a sense of that anger.

JAV

Anger?

XSHOT

It's ripping your music, dawg.

JAV

You got time?

XSHOT

I got couple of hours. See, it's why you didn't make it at Recognition. Too much anger. Whereas you need to fish more of that sound, you know that mysterious feel sounding all eastern, oriental, you know what I am saying. That was a smart move. You need more of that melody. Mellowness. I like that, it sets you apart, but your market ain't ready.

They pass through Jav's streets. Past his garage.

JAV

This is where's it's at. All this.

XSHOT

It's nice. Kind of leafy.

JAV

My studio's just down the road. You want to see?

XSHOT

We could do that.

INT. JAV'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Jav leads XShot through his living room, into the back of the house to the back door.

XShot observes the traditional cultural decor of the home.

INT. STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Xshot requires no introductions to the consoles.

XSHOT
You fully loaded up here, man.

He turns on the terminal himself, loading up Jav's tracks.

XSHOT
Mind if I play?

JAV
Go ahead, man. I got nothing to hide, got nothing to lose.

XShot plays one of Jav's TRACKS.

Then SCANS through ANOTHER and ANOTHER.

XSHOT
So, Convict is only one with the mystery sample.

JAV
You mean sounding 'eastern'?
'Oriental'?

XSHOT
I'll put it straight to you
Rebel...

JAV
Jav. Call me Jav.

XSHOT
Okay, Jav, what I am saying is
I'm thinking I want to work on
couple of tracks with you.

JAV
What?

XSHOT
I've gotta deliver my new album
this year. I'd like to get a
track with this sound on it. I'll
feature you on it.

JAV
You kidding?

XSHOT
I'd work with you, man. And I think you could use that exposure. You know what I am saying.

JAV
Dude, you want to record with me?

XSHOT
You got that sound, man. It's fresh. I'd like to break it into the market.

JAV
Wait, you moving too fast here. So you want me to record with you?

XSHOT
And spend some time to write some new tracks. I like to get a sense of the feel, know what I am saying.

JAV
Here?

XSHOT
Yeah, man, we could do it here and do the production work in my studios.

JAV
Fuck, man! This is crazy. You want to record with me?

XSHOT
I got some commitments now, but I could be back in couple of weeks.

He offers his hand to Jav.

XSHOT
I'll put my resources into this. And with my name, my brand, it'll give you that push you've been wanting. What d'ya say?

Jav hugs him.

JAV
I can't believe this, man. Fuck, this better be real.

XSHOT

It's real, as real can be. Now,
let's catch that plane.

They leave the studio to enter the house through the back door into the..

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Sheni prepares food by the cooker.

She turns around to see XShot step in from the back door.

They look at each other.

Jav clocks their eyes finding each other.

EXT. MOMOS RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Jav pulls in his Rover, but spots a large number of SOMALIANS trying to get into the Restaurant.

Prince and the staff have the doors shut .

INT. JAV'S STUDIO - NIGHT

Jav tidies his studio.

Looks around.

Starts shining the console.

Sheni enters with a mug of beverage.

SHENI

You want me to do that for you?

JAV

Oh, ok. Just a little, yeah,
thanks.

SHENI,

This is going to be so cool for
ya.

JAV

Can't say I ain't nervous. It's
now or never.

SHENI

I know what you mean. I think
it'd be alright, bhaijan. I got a
good feeling about it.

JAV

Let's see.

SHENI

You got to believe in yourself,
yeah? Show who you really are.
Look, what I found.

She shows him an old photograph of Jav as a young boy in a Hip Hop pose with all the gear.

JAV

Fuck, I forgot about all that.

SHENI

Dad really beat you up wearing
all that gear. Thought you were
going to turn out all black.

JAV

I don't want any distractions,
Sheni.

SHENI

What's that supposed to mean?

JAV

I saw how he looked at you.

She continues to help with the cleaning.

JAV

Tai-jan wants me to marry you off
soon as.

SHENI

And you?

He doesn't answer. Takes the cleaning off her.

JAV

It's alright. I'll finish off.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - NIGHT

Jav walks in to find Mush's heavily serenely asleep face.

Watches Mush's mother PRAYING in desperation tone.

Walks away, without being noticed

INT. STUDIO - NIGHT

Jav surveys the clean up.

Makes sure everything is in place.

His phone RINGS. Spots his uncle's ID. He ignores it.
The switches it off.

EXT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY

Xshot walks out to greet Jav by his Rover.

XSHOT
Hey'yo.

JAV
Dude, you made it then.

XSHOT
I'm here. In flesh and blood.
Just made it tho'. My people kept
planning me to do other things.
But I said, I got to do this.
like some calling, it has to
happen.

JAV
Glad you feel like that, dude.

XSHOT
Too right. Let's load up.

They get into the Rover, loading Xshot's baggage first.
Drive off.

EXT. LUXURY HOTEL - DAY

Jav pulls up into the driveway.

Gets out to go to the other side to open the passenger.

XSHOT
Man, you ain't my bitch.

JAV
What?

XSHOT
Why are you opening the door for
me?

JAV
You are my guest.

XSHOT
Here? This is a hotel.

JAV

Yeah, I've booked you in. It's alright, I'm taking care of the tab.

XSHOT

Nah, man. I ain't staying here. Have you ever stayed in places like these? They fuck your creativity.

JAV

It's the best in this town.

XSHOT

Nah, you don't get me, man. This ain't a vacation for me. Remember I only got a few days and want to get dirty right now. I want to stay in your neighborhood. I wanna know what it's all about. Like what's kicking here. What your words are about. So, I'm just gonna crash on your floor, man.

JAV

On my floor?

XSHOT

In the studio is cool. I saw it, man. It's good enough for me to lay my bed on. C'mon, let's get outta here.

JAV

My studio?

XSHOT

If that's cool with you?

JAV

Er, yeah, but that's like, family and all that. It just gets in the way, if you don't mind... Okay, look, let's head that way while I find you some digs.

XSHOT

Nearby. It's got to be in the neighborhood.

JAV

Yeah, yeah, we'll sort something.

XSHOT

Just some space to lay my head and where I can shower.

(MORE)

XSHOT (cont'd)

Listen, I rested on the airplane.
They knew me. Took good care of
me. So, we can get started right
now.

They drive off.

INT. STUDIO

XShot throws his sole luggage onto the small sofa. And
himself onto the console chair.

XSHOT

(rubs his hands)

This is what I live for, man.
This is all, know what I'm
saying?

JAV

Ditto. This is my air, this my
breath, this is my water, it's my
god, it's my birth, it's my
death.

XSHOT

Death, too?

JAV

It ain't easy tho. I ain't
y'know... a 'nigger'.

Jav checks him.

XSHOT

It's cool.

JAV

And coz of that, they won't take
me seriously.

XSHOT

Let's see about that. In my book,
you don't have to be no-one. You
just have to be you. Now, how
many tracks on here. What's your
rep?

JAV

Twenty six finished. About double
that still in progress.

XSHOT

That's major play. OK, let's
hear.

JAV

All of them?

XSHOT
The whole library.

Jav concedes a smile.

JAV
All loaded up. So, why don't I
sort your digs while you listen.

XSHOT
Okay.

JAV
Just let you know toilets down
here. And any coffee, tea all
here too.

XSHOT
Cool. I'll see ya. Peace.

JAV
Yeah, laterz. Peace.

Jav leaves.

INT. JAV'S RANGE ROVER OUTSIDE HIS HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Jav jumps in. Punches the air. Punches the steering wheel
in excited resolution.

JAV
Yes!

His phone RINGS. It is his uncle. Jav lets it ring.

INT. JAV'S STUDIO - LATER

XShot makes a CRACK sound with his fingers to stretch his
arms from the tiredness, while still listening to Jav's
TRACKS.

He looks over to the kettle. Heats it up. Checks and scorns
at instant coffee granules, but pours them into a mug.
Checks the refrigerator to see the milk carton all empty.

Walks out of the studio to the main house.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Xshot enters the kitchen startling Jav's MOTHER who SCREAMS
and runs out.

XSHOT
Hey, hey.. sorry! Hey, I'm a
friend of Jav.

But she's disappeared into the house.

XSHOT

Hello. I just want to get some milk. Your son, Jav, I came with him.

Just then the front door of the house opens.

Sheni enters in her work clothes - a trouser suit. She is also surprised to see XShot.

SHENI

Hey.

XSHOT

Hey. I think I've scared your mother.

JAV'S MOTHER (O.S.)

(subtitled)

Sheni, is that you? Don't come inside. There's a black burglar in the house. I've called the police.

SHENI

No! Don't call the police! Mum!

She runs upstairs.

XSHOT

Hey, I was just in the studio...

Sheni comes back.

SHENI

It's alright, it's okay.

XSHOT

Did she really call the police?

SHENI

Oh, don't worry about it. I've called them off.

XSHOT

Okay, that could have been a bit scary. I was just looking for some creamer for the coffee. Jav's gone into town to fix some accommodation for me.

SHENI

Do you want some milk?

XSHOT

Just some whitener. Milk will be cool.

She gets a milk carton from the fridge.

SHENI

Do you want some sugar? I don't think there is any in the studio.

She hands the milk carton to him. Their hands slightly touch at the fingertips.

XSHOT

Uhm, sugar?

SHENI

Do you take sugar?

XSHOT

This is sweet enough.

She blushes.

XSHOT

So you just got back from work?

SHENI

Yes, but not at work for long. This week's my last.

XSHOT

What do you do?

SHENI

Oh, just a boring high street bank job.

XSHOT

High street? What's that?

SHENI

It's like your main street.

XSHOT

Oh, okay, but hey, that's not boring. That's got prospects. Why are you quitting?

SHENI

Oh, just..

XSHOT

It's okay. I don't need to pry into your personal...

SHENI

No, its not like that... It's just... you don't want to know. Too boring.

XSHOT

Well, I better return to the studio.

EXT. MOMOS RESTAURANT - DAY

Jav walks in through smashed up windows being replaced.

JAV

Yo Prince. That room upstairs, you got, it's free, yeah?

PRINCE

Yeah. He's on the street, paape. He was here. We didn't let him in. Pehn chod!

JAV

What?

PRINCE

The Somalian, the Police let him go free. These blacks are getting too much. Why they let them in the country, I don't know.

JAV

The room?

PRINCE

Yeah, it's free. Who wants it?

JAV

Just a mate.

PRINCE

So what are we going to do?

JAV

About what?

PRINCE

The police aren't doing anything.

JAV

I'll be back, yeah.

He makes a CALL from his phone.

JAV

(into phone)

Sheni...

INTERCUT WITH

KITCHEN, JAV'S HOME - DAY

Sheni watches XShot leave the kitchen as she answers her phone.

JAV

Yeah, I don't want you going into the studio. You get me?.. I'm on my way back, yeah.

SHENI

Okay, bhaijan.

INT. JAV'S RANGE ROVER - DAY

Old Skool Hip Hop plays from his car stereo, as Jav pulls into the Hospital.

He hesitates.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - CONTINUOUS

Jav finds some of Mush's family; Kully and Naz there too.

Watches Mush's mother PRAYING by his bed where he lies serenely asleep.

Naz avoids a look at Jav, but Kully looks up.

KULLY

They let him go. Police let him go.

JAV

I know.

Jav steps back out of the cubicle out into the Ward.

INT. STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Jav walks in to find XShot still listening attentively to his music.

JAV

Hey.

XSHOT

Hey. So, I been through them all. Man, you got some nice tunes there. But a lot of anger. Some major anger. Boiling hot.

He notices Jav hovering around.

XSHOT
You alright?

JAV
I am good. You not jet-laged? You
need rest or something?

Jav's phone RINGS with his uncle's ID. Jav switches it off.

XSHOT
I am energized, man. Look like
you want to be somewhere else.

JAV
You must be hungry.

XSHOT
That you got right, but you look
agitated. You want to share that
with me now on the decks? Your
call.

JAV
I'm good.

XSHOT
Okay. So, you get some digs for
me?

JAV
Yeah, We can take your stuff too.

XSHOT
My luggage?

JAV
Yeah.

XSHOT
So, I'm sleeping in a restaurant?

JAV
No. Well, yeah, something like
that.

They leave the studio to enter the ..

INT. KITCHEN

They walk pass Sheni by the cooker, who is SINGING a random
Tune.

XSHOT
(to Sheni)
Hey, that's a nice voice. You
should be in the studio.

Sheni blushes.

XSHOT
Thanks again for the milk.

SHENI
You're welcome.

Jav cuts a look at Sheni.

XSHOT
By the way, your brother got some
real talent, and I mean real.

SHENI
I know. I been telling him. Are
you going?

XSHOT
Yes, we getting something to eat.

SHENI
Oh, I could have made something
for you ...

JAV
No, we've made plans.

XSHOT
Have we?

JAV
Yeah, we should go.

He takes XShot gently by the arm to lead him out, but XShot catches a glance of Sheni smile back at him.

Jav returns once XShot is out of the door, to catch Sheni.

JAV
What did I tell ya?

INT. MOMOS RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Jav walks in with Xshot.

JAV
Have a seat, man. This is the
best in town. What do you like?
Chicken? Lamb?

XSHOT
I'm a vegetarian.

JAV
Yeah? Really?

XSHOT
You look surprised?

JAV
Yeah, no, I mean it's cool. I mean, I'd never have guessed. So, something vegetarian?

XSHOT
Will they have that?

JAV
I'll see what they can do.

XSHOT
By the way, is this where I am sleeping?

JAV
They have a room upstairs.

XSHOT
Okay. I dig that.

JAV
You said neighborhood. This is where it beats.

XSHOT
You don't see me complaining.

Jav goes to the counter instead of asking Prince to come over.

He watches Prince check XShot.

JAV
Leave it. Can you get some veg' stuff for him.

PRINCE
Your friend?

JAV
Prince, I got no time for this. I'm taking him up to the room.

PRINCE
You want him to stay here? Paapa, how Mush?

Jav ignores him. Walks back to XShot.

JAV
So they going to do room service for you.

XShot gets his luggage.

XSHOT
Sounds good.

INT. ROOM, UPSTAIRS AT MOMOS - CONTINUOUS

Jav leads XShot in, checks all the facilities, lights switches, the bed, the bathroom; all basic.

JAV
Sure?

XSHOT
It's all good.

JAV
Okay. They'll bring the food over. So you get some rest and I'll pick you up tomorrow?

XSHOT
Remember I only got a few days, man.

JAV
Yeah. Peace.

XSHOT
Peace.

RESTAURANT FLOOR

Jav comes down the stairs to see Naz and Kully settling in the usual cubicle.

They clock each other, but Jav moves on.

INT. MOSQUE - DAY

Jav greets his Uncle, who escorts a YOUNG MAN accompanied by a MIDDLE- AGED MAN.

JAV'S UNCLE
Javed, meet Mohammed Iqbal and this is his uncle.

Jav studies Mohammed's traditional Mirpuri robes, his sharp features, someone just 'off the boat.'

He watches Mohammed offering his hand to him. Clocks why he is being introduced to him.

INT. JAV'S HOME - NIGHT

Jav walks up the stairs upto Sheni's room. Sees the lights out.

KNOCKS the door gently.

There is no answer.

Gently opens it.

Notices Sheni fast asleep.

Walks softly to her.

Watches her.

Notices collection of old photographs of her and him, when they were younger, lying randomly by her side. He picks them to tidy them in a neat pile on her bedside table.

Then tucks in her duvet, gently.

Leaves the room.

INT. JAV'S STUDIO - DAY

XShot works the console. Jav watches him.

XSHOT

So I am going to separate the vocal here.

JAV

The vocals?

XSHOT

I think maybe we need a new treatment.

JAV

You mean a new set of lyrics?

XSHOT

You averse to that?

JAV

Uh.. don't know. You feel we need it?

XSHOT

Put it this way, it's a bit raw, you know what I am saying, We can put it to a test. See if it works.

JAV

Sure. You want to have a go?

XSHOT

Me, no, no, homie. this is you,
this is you on the stamp. You do
it your way, and I'll see what I
can do with the music.

JAV

It's a bit raw?

XSHOT

On the bone.

INT. MOMOS RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Jav sits secluded in a cubicle with his notepad.

He watches Kully and Naz come in to find a table on the
other side.

Kully spots him. Comes over to him.

KULLY

Jav.

JAV

Kul.

KULLY

What's up with you and Naz?

JAV

Nothing. Why?

KULLY

I can see. You been to see Mush?

JAV

I know what's happening.

KULLY

He woke up. Asked for you.

JAV

I'll go see him.

KULLY

The Somalians are from Church Rd
end.

JAV

Yeah, the Police know that.

Kully stares at him.

JAV

Stop looking at me, Kully. What do you want me to do? It was Mush's own call.

KULLY

What you saying, bro'?

JAV

I said stop looking at me like that.

KULLY

Naz?

Naz look away.

Prince comes in with some beverages.

PRINCE

Church Rd? Isn't that Lozells? Where else, paape, Lozells is full of kuthe. Mind you, there's a kutha upstairs.

KULLY

What kutha?

JAV

I said leave it, Prince.

PRINCE

Whatever you say, Paape.

JAV

Going up their estate is getting into a war. Mush should have shacked up with Prince here, they would get on well wiping out the Africans off the streets.

KULLY

Mush stood up...

JAV

I got no time for this. That 'kutha' upstairs is XShot, by the way, alright? His music is what you been getting off on.

Jav clears his table. Walks out of the restaurant.

EXT. HIGH STREET - DAY

XShot with a spring in his step walks across the span of shops. Scans the number of banks in a row.

Walks into one of them.

INT. HIGH STREET BRAND BANK - CONTINUOUS

He smiles at the CASHIER, looks around, then steps out

EXT. HIGH STREET - CONTINUOUS

He walks into another bank.

Steps out.

Then another.

INT. BANK - CONTINUOUS

Xshot stands in the queue of CUSTOMERS, trying to look conspicuous from the counter.

He lets other customers go first.

But when the 'next' buzzer sounds at a particular counter, he steps forward.

Sheni prepares a smile for her next customer, but -

XSHOT
Hi.

SHENI
Hi.

XSHOT
Hey.

SHENI
Hey.

They stare at each other. Sheni breaks it.

SHENI
You run out of milk again?

XSHOT
I haven't had my coffee this morning. I thought you might join me?

SHENI
Uh...

XSHOT
When are you on your break?

SHENI
Not for another hour.

XSHOT
It's okay, I'll wait.

SHENI
No.
(She looks around)
I suppose..uh, give me five
minutes?

XSHOT
Okay. I'll wait outside.

SHENI
No. There's a coffee place on
the corner to your left.

XSHOT
Cool, so I'll see you there.

SHENI
Okay.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Sheni walks in, scans the people in the shop.
Nervously walks to XShot seated in the corner.

SHENI
Hey.

XSHOT
Hey. You okay?

SHENI
Yeah, I got just fifteen minutes.
So, what's up?

XSHOT
No, nothing's up.

SHENI
You came to see me?

XSHOT
Yeah.

SHENI
How did you know I was working at
this bank?

XSHOT
Jav gave me directions.

SHENI
(giggles)
You want me to believe that?

XSHOT
Why won't he?

SHENI
Brotherly love.

XSHOT
Is that what it is? You said you
worked in a bank, so I walked
into every bank in town.

SHENI
You did that?

XSHOT
Yes, I did. Into each one of them
until I came across yours. So you
going to sit and have your
coffee?

He pulls a chair for her. Hands her coffee he already
ordered for her.

She takes the lid off the cup. Dips her fingertip into the
froth to taste it.

SHENI
Caramel! How did you know?

XShot glows.

SHENI
Okay, just a wild guess, huh?

XSHOT
You think?

SHENI
I know.

Sheni takes out a pen and pad from her bag.

She looks around, starts writing randomly on the pad.

SHENI
Please don't mind this.

He looks at her curiously.

SHENI
It's safe this way.

XSHOT

Safe? Oh right, in case your boss steps in. It's got to be like a meeting. You know, someone like you shouldn't be working in a bank, or like that. You should be out there on the catwalks. You are stunning.

SHENI

Thank you. And you think being on the catwalks is better?

XSHOT

Uh, duh!

SHENI

But this might be my dream job.

XSHOT

Dream job? In a bank?

SHENI

I might like working with numbers.

XSHOT

You kidding me. You serious? You are serious. Okay, I take all that back. Sorry for being, what they say, presumptuous. Just, I see talent all over here, like Jav, he's got what it takes, but... I need to know more why it's not getting out there. I need to check more of the scene here. What about that voice of yours? You ever go into the studio?

SHENI

I messed around a bit.

XSHOT

Messed around?

SHENI

Y'know, it's really good what you doing for Jav. Like he's been trying so hard all these years, but not getting anywhere. He's been dreaming of this so much. Thank you for coming out here.

XSHOT

I also came out for myself. To see what's out there, coz , I mean, us in the scene, keep going around and around in our ghettos.

SHENI

I like that. I can't believe I am sitting opposite you. It's just so unbelievable. I've got a poster of you in my bedroom.

XSHOT

You have? Which one?

SHENI

From your 'DowgCollar' album.

XSHOT

You liked that album?

SHENI

It was your best. I listened to it a million times.

XSHOT

You making me blush now.

SHENI

It's good.

XSHOT

Yeah, the Grammy was good too.

SHENI

That's not a blush, that's gloating.

XSHOT

I'm having so much fun. So, is there a lucky guy out there?

SHENI

Hmmm, no, there is not. And not likely to be one either.

XSHOT

Just like me.

SHENI

But you were with, it was in that magazines.. uh.. what's her name?

XSHOT

No. That's all over.

She looks at her watch. Starts packing her bag.

XSHOT
You have to go?

SHENI
Yes, otherwise they'll start asking a billion questions.

XSHOT
Will I see you again?

SHENI
Yeah, course. You'll be at the studio, right? Well, I'm always in the kitchen.

XSHOT
I meant like this. Can I see you again?

SHENI
Uhm.. put it this way.. 'I locked my doors and my armies are on my shore'. But thank you.

XSHOT
Have I hit intruder alert alarm?

SHENI
I got to go. Thanks for the coffee. It was lovely.

She leaves for the door.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

XShot listens to one of Jav's track.

Works on the decks.

Creates a new INSERTION in the track.

Plays it. It sounds more mellow and 'exotic'.

Jav enters.

XSHOT
Hey, yo.

JAV
Hey.

XSHOT
You work something?

JAV
Kind of.

XSHOT

So, this is what I got.

He plays the track.

Jav listens.

XShot waits for his reaction.

JAV

That's a lot of changes, du'.

XSHOT

Yeah.

JAV

It sounds different.

XSHOT

Right on.

JAV

Kind of, gone mellow.

XSHOT

I've taken the anger down.

JAV

I notice.

XSHOT

But the track's same.

JAV

You think it works?

XSHOT

You don't seem sure.

JAV

If it works for you.

XSHOT

Work for me? Sure, it works for me, but it's got to work for you too, homie.

JAV

You hungry?

XSHOT

I can be.

JAV

Let's go.

XSHOT

But we can eat here. I'm sure
your sister could fix us
something.

JAV

It's a trip.

XSHOT

A trip? Okay, I'm up for a trip.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Jav leads XShot towards Mush's bed, sealed by curtains
drawn all around.

He greets Kully on the vigilance, who looks cautiously at
XShot, as does Mush's mother breaking her permanence
prayer.

KULLY

XShot?

JAV

This is Carl.

XSHOT

Hi.

JAV

Nice you keeping an eye, Kully.
I'm sorry not being here.

Jav walks XShot to Mush's bedside. Shows him the deep knife
gash.

KULLY

Shall I wake him up?

JAV

No, I'll come back.

KULLY

He asked for you.

Jav abruptly takes XShot out.

INT. MOSQUE - DAY

Jav shows XShot the washing of hands and feet routine in
the ante-chamber.

Then leads him into the main chamber which is crowded with
other WORSHIPPERS.

Jav is greeted respectfully by the ELDERS as well as some of the YOUNG worshippers.

He sees his Uncle, who looks across to XShot, coldly.

Approaches Jav.

JAV'S UNCLE
Aasalamualaikum, Jav.
(subtitled)
Who is this? A new believer?

JAV
(subtitled)
A friend, Uncle.

The Uncle takes Jav aside into a side room, but Jav tags XShot along.

The room exhibits PHOTOGRAPHS cutting from Arabic vernacular press of the war in AFGHANISTAN, but not the kind you see in the western media. These are more graphic of VICTIMS injuries.

XShot begins to look around at the images.

XSHOT
Horrific.

JAV'S UNCLE
American?

JAV
He's a friend.

The Uncle tenses up. He pulls Jav aside.

JAV'S UNCLE
Did you get my message? Mohammed and his uncle are only here for another week. Have you told Sheni? Make it happen, Javed.

Jav nods. Leads Xshot out of there.

INT. MOMOS RESTAURANT - DAY

Jav escorts XShot to a cubicle table.

Opens up the menu.

Looks towards Prince to take their order, but Prince hesitates.

JAV
Think you should order, yourself.

XSHOT
Pardon me?

JAV
Request your order.

Jav gestures for Prince, who come over to the table, but makes no eye contact with XShot.

JAV
Alright, Prince?

Prince nods.

JAV
Lamb curry for me.

Prince leaves.

JAV
Prince! My friend wants to order.

Princes hesitates to turn around.

XSHOT
I'll just have the vegetable cutlets, please.

Prince heads back to the counter.

XSHOT
Thank you.

But Prince ignores his gratitude.

JAV
You feel something?

XSHOT
Yeah, I feel. Like I was in Southern Alabama.

JAV
So, I go to war with my knives and steel or I go to war with my music. What is my ammunition? I can't be mellow. You get me? This is my anger.

XSHOT
I get you, man, I get you.

INT. JAV'S HOME - DAY

Sheni enters the kitchen. Starts to get some pots out of the cupboards when she spots an envelope by the side of the sink, next to the back door.

She picks it up to open it.

"Please Meet me 4pm @ARTEMIS RESTAURANT - xx" - 07984
656971

She looks around. Hides it swiftly.

INT. SHENI'S BEDROOM - DAY

Sheni keeps looking at the card.

TEXTS a message on her phone to the number on XShot's card.

"Pls, not good idea, but thnx 4 your invitation - Sheni"

She sends it.

INT. STUDIO - NIGHT

Jav stands steady by the microphone with a writing pad in his hand.

JAV
This say, 'sublime'?

XSHOT
That's right.

JAV
And you want me to rhyme it with
'partner in crime'?

XSHOT
And then we go to your verse.

JAV
Du', this sounds like a love
song.

XShot checks the text message on his phone. From Sheni.

XSHOT
What? Well, that's 'coz I see
myself as the love convict.

JAV
That ain't happening with me. I
got no love inside me.

XSHOT
Ha, ha. They all say that.
Everybody got love inside.

JAV
Nah, not me. My love is just for
this.

XSHOT

I know and I see. I gotta say, I see your ghetto is peculiar, man.

JAV

Peculiar?

XSHOT

I am just sensing your hip hop ain't our hip hop.

JAV

I don't know what you mean.

XSHOT

You want to be free from your enemy, but you don't want to be free from yourself. I'm going to count you in, homie, then we'll see your love. You on cue?

Jav looks at his phone RINGING in silent mode. It's his uncle. Jav ignores it.

JAV

Yeah.

(starts a rap)

(performing)

*Fear is the virus
you spread about me
Fear is all you have,
is what you breed
but you don't even see
or understand me
Who is I am, Who is I'm about
Am I your disease,
Am I your dark cloud
But you made me the caliphx, a
bomber with a fix
You made me the Convict, brought
it out of me
The Convict , The Convict in me
The Convict , The Convict in me
Now, its spreading
like my own virus,
contagious, like a fire
that's gonna control us ,
On every street corner,
face of every foreigner,
I want to bury you, I want to
desecrate you, castrate you,
exterminate you, terminate you
The Convict is who
you made out of me
You let it be, Now it is in me
The Convict , The Convict in me
The Convict , The Convict in me
(Repeat)*

XSHOT

Tight. I like that. You feel comfortable with that?

JAV

Yeah. I'm cool.

XSHOT

Still a love song?

JAV

Dancing under the moonlight,
ain't I?

XSHOT

Okay, so let's go to your verse.
Remember same beat.

JAV

(starts his verse)

*Now, I know what y're saying
ain't no bereavement,
ain't no agreement
You see it like this,
I see it like this
But I like it like this,
my homies in my yard,
bubble busting in my heart
so high, high on me high on you
but you so sublime
a partner in crime
a star on shine
Come and see me in my yard
See it from side
You'll like it like this,
Y'all like this,
Stirring the Convict in Me
The Convict , The Convict in me
The Convict , The Convict in me*

XSHOT

You cool with that?

JAV

Doesn't sound like you are.

XSHOT

No, I 'm good, if you are.

JAV

Du, what do you mean your hip hop ain't ours? And what's that mean that we ain't free from ourself. I can see what you thinking. You want me to change this line? "I feel a caliph, a bomber with a fix"

XSHOT

It ain't about one line, bro, but I told you where it's at. You're on my album.

JAV

So, why you letting me do that?

XSHOT

I like diversity. But, yeah, another thing I don't like violence. We're over that.

JAV

All kinds of violence?

XSHOT

Homie, I'm going to say any violence.

JAV

But what about violence that's a means to justice.

XSHOT

Justice in whose eyes?

JAV

Good and bad. Who is good and bad, right?

XSHOT

You decide good and bad?

JAV

'Cos I've been told this is good and this is bad. That's how it is, that's how its meant to be.

XSHOT

See, this is how it is. Hip Hop mean protest, y'know that, where it came from, but you see now what has happened. The White boy has taken, analysed it and given us back all hashed up so we don't need to fight the power. It's lost the edge, lost the reason to survive. Yeah, it's out of the ghetto coz the ghetto ain't all we got. Why should we always be angry, why should it always be about gangstas, be about guns or causes or destruction or whining and moaning. Nigger, we're as capable of being mellow as any other.

(MORE)

XSHOT (cont'd)
 We are as capable at looking at
 ourselves. You get me?.. But.

Jav stares at him.

XSHOT
 What's up?

JAV
 You just used nigger on me.

XSHOT
 I did? So, I did. What's up?

JAV
 No, nothing.

XSHOT
 But, what I was saying, there
 ain't no protest left. The white
 boy showed us dollars and class,
 and that's what we fighting about
 now. Whereas, you, you have
 something to protest about, what
 I see here, you got a load of
 protest, that's why you into hip-
 hop. Except, see this man,
 (he prods Gandhi's
 poster)
 He was saying that it ain't worth
 protesting against something
 unless you can protest against
 yourself. Your women ain't free,
 Jav. You need them. You need your
 women, and they ain't free.

JAV
 Let's take it from the change,
 yeah?

XSHOT
 Take it from the top. And go
 straight onto my verse.

JAV
 (starts his verse with
 the change)
*Fear is the virus
 you spread about me
 Fear is all you have,
 is what you breed
 but you don't even see
 or understand me*
 (Jav gets nervy with the
 delivery)
*Who is I am,
 Who is I'm about
 Am I your disease,
 (MORE)*

JAV (cont'd)
*Am I your dark cloud
 But you made me the caliphx,
 with mission for a fix
 You made me the Convict, brought
 it out of me
 The Convict , The Convict in me
 The Convict , The Convict in me*

EXT. HIGH STREET - DAY

Heavy rain. XShot waits by the shelter of a bus stop.

He spots Sheni walk out of her Bank.

She looks into her bag, but doesn't find what she's looking for.

Runs into the shelter of a shop front.

Xshot rushes into a nearby shop.

INT. SHOP - CONTINUOUS

He pays for an Umbrella. Large size.

EXT. HIGH STREET - CONTINUOUS

XShot runs to Sheni. Offers her the shelter of his umbrella.

She looks around, worried of being seen. The heavy rain makes everything hazy.

She comes to him under the umbrella.

They walk. Not saying anything to each other.

He spots a turning into a secluded arch of a railway bridge.

Leads Sheni into it. The heavy noise of the rain gives it more shelter from outside.

XSHOT
 Hey. I don't want you to think
 I'm stalking you, but I'm getting
 crazy about you.

He approaches his hand to caress her cheeks. She lets him.

XSHOT
 You are so beautiful.

His lips are just inches away from her. Sheni lowers her guard.

They kiss.

Then she runs away.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

Jav checks Mush sleeping deep.

Kully appears from behind the scene.

KULLY
You just missed him. Can't wake
him now.

JAV
I'll come back.

KULLY
Why don't you stay?

Jav looks around the cubicle - at Mush's mother's belongings as if she lives there.

JAV
I'll be back.

Kully pushes his smart phone at Jav.

KULLY
We been busy for Mush.

Jav sees a video on the phone screen. Watches it.

VIDEO INSERT

EXT. HOUSING ESTATE - NIGHT

Prince leads Naz and Kully down the estate's alleyways onto the stairs and the passages to the flats.

Prince KNOCKS on one of the doors.

No answer

Kully KNOCKS again. More vigorously.

The door opens to reveal a young Somalian GIRL (8).

PRINCE
(tightens his grip onto
a baseball bat)
Is your brother home?

GIRL
My daddy's not home.

KULLY
Daddy? Fuck, they start early.
Where is he?

GIRL
He's gone away.

NAZ
Where?

GIRL
I am not supposed to tell.

KULLY
He's legged it. No wonder Police
ain't done nothing.

Kully takes the baseball bat to holds it to the girl's neck.

KULLY
If you see him, tell him...

NAZ
Kully! What you doing, man? You
out of your mind? Leave her
alone, will ya!

He withdraws the bat.

NAZ
Thank you. What's your name?

GIRL
Ayesha.

NAZ
Okay, Ayesha. Thanks for your
help.

He pulls the door to shut it.

OFF VIDEO

Jav burns Kully.

JAV
You dumb fucker!

INT. SHENI'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sheni stares at her phone. At a new text message from XShot.

"I WANT YOU SO BADLY"

She looks at the Poster of XShot on her wall.
Switches her light off. Goes to sleep.

INT. BANK - DAY

Sheni gets another TEXT from XShot.

'I CAN'T CONCENTRATE ON THE MUSIC. YOU IN MY SYSTEM. I WANT
TO SEE YOU. XXX'

She checks the clock on the wall.

Looks around. Checks with her BOSS.

SHENI

I'm not feeling well. I should go
early.

SHENI'S BOSS

Okay. Take some rest.

She leaves.

INT. ART GALLERY - DAY

Sheni steps into the cafe, which is a crypt in the basement
level.

XShot follows through.

They find a table, again in a secluded corner with Sheni
sitting face to the wall.

He takes her hands, brings them closer to kiss them.

SHENI

Please, don't do this.

XSHOT

You don't like it?

SHENI

Don't. I'm falling for you. But I
can't.

XSHOT

I want to be everything to you. I
want to take care of you.

They kiss. Sheni breaks it.

SHENI

No. What am I doing? Look, I just
want to think this through.

XSHOT

What's there to think?

SHENI

I can't fall for you.

XSHOT

It's how we feel about each other.

SHENI

I just can't.

XSHOT

Can't or won't? I don't get you. Are we no good?

SHENI

I can't believe this is happening. I need to pull back. And I want everything for Jav...

XSHOT

Babe, babe, my intentions are sincere. I ain't using the music thing.

SHENI

I know, this may seem stupid.

XSHOT

I didn't know you existed before I came here. But, it's like I am here and everything in my life suddenly all makes sense. Like, I've driven to this for some reason, and that reason is you. To meet you,

SHENI

Look, I am not who you think I am. You don't know anything about me.

XSHOT

Huh, so what, you some alien creature from the other side of the galaxy? All I can say, they sure do have some beautiful women there. Kept that a secret.

SHENI

You won't understand.

XSHOT

Make me, please.

SHENI

Why did I let you in? Why? Why did I do that? I thought I was so fortified.

XSHOT

'Coz it was meant to happen. Us. You can't stop it now

SHENI

I have to. I'm sorry. I have to go.

XSHOT

It's family, ain't it? That's what I am picking up. Look, Jav and me are so close. Creativity brings people together.

SHENI

That's so good. I'm happy that things are finally happening for him.

XSHOT

We almost like brothers now. You want me to talk to him?

SHENI

No! No., please don't. Don't ever do that. I have to go. I have to be home.

She gets up abruptly to leave. But stops. Hugs him.

Then rushes off, leaving him with their drinks still unattended.

INT. STUDIO - NIGHT

Jav works on the console mixing his VOCALS.

XShot makes some coffee, while watching him.

JAV

Okay dude, so this is from the top.

He plays the TRACK SEGMENT. Pauses it.

JAV

So here.

Continues with the TRACK. Pause it again.

JAV

And here.

Checks XShot.

JAV
What's up? You kinda look low.

XSHOT
I'm cool. Let me know when.

JAV
I'm ready.

XSHOT
Let me have a shot of caffeine
first, man.

JAV
You need something else?

XSHOT
I got something else, already.
You get me?

JAV
Must be nice.

XSHOT
No, that it ain't, it's the
opposite. Come on.

He settles into the cubicle.

XSHOT
(starts his vocals)
*Now, I know what y're saying
Ain't no bereavement,
Ain't no agreement
You see it like this,
I see it like this
But I like it like this,
My homies in my yard,
Bubble busting in my heart
So high, high on me high on you
But you so sublime
A partner in crime
A star on shine
Come and see me in my yard
See it from my side
You'll like it like this,
Y'all like this,
Stirring the Convict in Me
The Convict , The Convict in me
The Convict , The Convict in me
This unhappiness
This loneliness
This sadness
This badness
In me
You've gotta take it
(MORE)*

XSHOT (cont'd)
Out of me
It's your responsibility
Your liability,
Accountability
It's because of you
Am a convict
It's what you do
Am a Convict
The Convict , The Convict in me
The Convict , The Convict in me

JAV
 That's burning, man.

XSHOT
 You down with that?

JAV
 It's murder, Du'. Like real
 emotion cutting it.

XSHOT
 Not too sentimental?

JAV
 Nah, man. It's rocking.

XSHOT
 Let's take it for a spin.

JAV
 Now? Ok, cool.

INT. JAV'S RANGE ROVER - NIGHT

They cruise through the streets, with the TRACK pumping at full volume.

JAV
 Works for me, du.

XSHOT
 This ghetto's got a good layer on
 it. New sound. Market's going to
 love it.

INT. JAV'S HOME - NIGHT

Sheni waits at the top of the stairs.

She has her MP3 Player on with her headphones listening to CONVICT with XShot and Jav's vocals.

She sees Jav come into the house. Quickly takes off her headphones.

SHENI
Bhai-jan. Bhai-jan!

But Jav walks through the hall into the kitchen.

SHENI
Bhai-jan!.

She follows him, cautions herself.

SHENI
I wanted.. I just wanted to..
(ges nervous)
How is it going with Carl?

JAV
Alright. Why, what's up?

SHENI
Nothing, it's okay.

Jav shrugs it off, goes into the studio.

She bites her lips, missing her chance.

INT. BANK - DAY

In a corner of the office behind the counters, simple decorations including a small banner - GOOD LUCK - WE'LL MISS YOU - are arranged by the work desks, where Sheni's work COLLEAGUES are gathered around.

The BANK MANAGER opens a Wine Bottle. Pours it out for the rest of the STAFF. When it comes to Sheni, she politely refuses and chooses the Orange Juice Carton.

BANK MANAGER
So, here's to Sheni. All the best wishes to her, wherever she goes from here. I just want to say she has been a wonderful asset for us. Her hard work and commitment has been exemplary. As to why and where you are going, Sheni, remains a mystery especially when you have such a bright future with us. We'll miss you!

STAFF
Here, here..!

BANK MANAGER
And as token of our appreciation here's a little gift.

He hands a small package to Sheni. She unwraps to reveal a pair of earrings.

SHENI

They're wonderful. Thank you.

BANK MANAGER

So, we have another few minutes,
don't think there are any
customers out there, are there?
No, good,
(referring to the drinks
and snack bites)
let's finish all these.

SHENI

Thank you. Thank you all.

She walks towards her desk to gather her things and GOOD LUCK, FAREWELL CARDS.

Her phone BLEEPs for a message alert.

She reads the message from XShot - "CAN I SEE YOU?"

Sheni keys in a reply - "NOT GOOD IDEA"

Another message comes through from XShot - "PLEASE"

EXT. PARK - DAY

As dusk prepares to settle, two figures silhouette against its glow from the horizon arising from the sloped hill.

The figures are huddled close to each other, but Sheni takes a step back.

SHENI

No, please. It's getting too emotional.

XSHOT

We're good together, Sheni. Why don't you come away with me. Out of here.

SHENI

Look, you don't understand my family.

XSHOT

That's all be taken care of.

SHENI

What do you mean? You didn't talk to Jav, did you?

XSHOT

No.

SHENI

Whatever you do, I told you never do that! Promise.

XSHOT

I don't need to. We're close. He'll be cool when he finds out.

She wonders. He moves closer to her. She lets him

But across the other pathway that runs parallel, a Somalian Youth watches them - XShot closing in on Sheni.

EXT. MOMOS RESTAURANT - DAY

Jav waits by his Range Rover, out of view from Naz as he steps out of the restaurant with Kully.

NAZ

It's them.

KULLY

Are they insane?

Prince follows them out.

PRINCE

Insane? Pappé, what else they going to do? Police done nothing. You done nothing. Manager says he's losing business so he let them back again.

KULLY

Even the brothers at the mosque expecting something.

Jav steps in.

JAV

What, they want a riot?

PRINCE

Your Tao-jan said he's waiting to finish it off. You talk to him, pappé?

JAV

Finish what off?

KULLY

Jav, you in, bro?

Just then XShot comes out of the side door to the first floor.

XSHOT
Hey. Some kind of meeting? Hope I haven't cut in?

Prince stares at him.

JAV
No, no. Let's go.

The others watch Jav whisk him away into his Rover.

INT. RANGE ROVER - CONTINUOUS

Xshot helps himself with the car console to put the TRACK on.

XSHOT
My management want me to try the new music out here with a couple of appearances.

JAV
Yeah? When?

XSHOT
Soon. They're fixing dates. One in London and one here.

JAV
Proper gig?

XHOT
Something like that. My band's going to fly in. I want you on it.

JAV
Me?

XSHOT
Support. A few tracks.

JAV
You serious? Fuck, motherfucker, you is serious.

XSHOT
Hey, I ain't no motherfucker.

JAV
You know I don't meant it like that.

XSHOT

I'm just joking with you, man.
You know, you're almost like
family.

JAV

Yeah?

XSHOT.

I mean it sincerely, man. You've
looked after me well. I can see a
bonded future for us. I do. But
you got change your stage name,
man. Rebel X is a bit y'know..
Like, how about The Monarch?

JAV

The Monarch?

Jav acknowledges.

XSHOT

Yo' dig it? And I think you need
to get your sis involved, with
the creatives. I think you're
missing out on some talent there.
I got to talk to you about
something about that.

Jav looks at him, uncomfortably suspicious.

INT. STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

XShot turns on the console.

But Jav hears a TEXT MESSAGE on his phone, attends to it.

KULLY: - WE GOING IN FOR MUSH

JAV

Fuck! Fuck! Listen, I gotta go.
I'll be back, yeah. Just couple
of hours.

XSHOT

Sure. I got stuff to carry on
with.

Jav darts out.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Finds Sheni.

JAV

Stay in your room.

She follows him out of the kitchen.

INT. CAR, BACKSTREET FROM SOMALIAN ESTATE - NIGHT

Naz, Kully and Prince wait in their car, keeping a watch on the SOMALIANS assembled chatting amongst themselves in the pathway of the Estate.

PRINCE
Javed not coming, paape?

Naz looks out to the stretch of the road.

PRINCE
Come, on.

He jumps out of the car. The others follow.

EXT. ALLEYWAY, ESTATE - CONTINUOUS

Prince walks to the figures who are in fact the Somalian Youth from the Restaurant

PRINCE
Hello, my brothers.

The Somalians turn around to immediately stand guard.

SOMALIAN YOUTH
Assalamualaikum, brother. What's up?

PRINCE
Walei kum salaam. Nothing. Nothing. Just, my friends here want to talk to you.

SOMALIAN YOUTH 2
They could talk to us at the restaurant. Why bring them here?

PRINCE
It's more quiet, here.

SOMALIAN YOUTH
So, what do you want to talk about?

KULLY
Where is he?

SOMALIAN YOUTH 2
Who?

PRINCE

Come on, brothers. We went to the house. He not there.

SOMALIAN YOUTH

I don't know what you talking about?

NAZ

A true believer, uh? A believer never lies. Unless it's against a kafir.

PRINCE

They mark us kafirs, paape.

SOMALIAN YOUTH

You think we are lying? You know, you people don't like us coming to the mosque. You are the one lie to Allah, you have no shame.

PRINCE

My brothers. That is a different story. Yeah, you need to build your own mosque. But now, there has to be punishment. You tell us where he is, so we can walk him to the Police station. Or you are all in it.

SOMALIAN YOUTH 2

Only Allah can give us punishment.

Naz loses it, strikes the Somali with the baseball bat, hitting him severely in the back as he ducks from the blow.

KULLY

Grab the knife off him!

Prince does so. The Somalis back off. Couple of them run away.

Naz grabs the other one. Kully is about to strike him, when he spots Jav walk up from his Rover.

SOMALIAN YOUTH

You can beat us now. But we'll come back and skin everyone of you, everyone of your family, your mothers! Your whore sisters!

PRINCE

Watch your dirty mouth, pehn-chod.

SOMALIAN YOUTH

I don't need to. What, you don't know? One of your sisters fucking that nigger who lives upstairs in the restaurant. I saw them yesterday, kissing and doing haram.

NAZ

What the fuck you talking about?

SOMALIAN YOUTH

Fuck off, man! Pretending you don't know? You think I am lying? I told you how I saw them. Haram, all of you, man. Haram.

They all look at Jav.

He registers them. Walks back to his Rover.

Then they too, back to their car. A withdrawal.

INT. JAV'S RANGE ROVER - CONTINUOUS

Grief and anger fuels Jav's driving speed.

He spots for the first time POSTERS on the streets, of XShot gigs with his own new name - THE MONARCH as support.

INT. JAV'S HOME - NIGHT

Jav barges into the house. Up the stairs into Sheni's room.

She listens to MUSIC through her headphones. He rips them from her.

SHENI

Bhai-jan?

She sees him lock the door.

JAV

Where were you yesterday?

SHENI

At work? It was my last day. You know that.

JAV

After that?

SHENI

I came home.

JAV
 Don't lie, Sheni. Don't lie to
 me. Were you with Carl?

Sheni hesitates.

SHENI
 I've been wanting to talk to you
 about it.

Jav STRIKES a blow across her face.

Blow after blow. Unable to hear BANGING on the door from
 outside. His Mother SCREAMING

JAV'S MOTHER (O.S.)
 No! Don't! Javed! Stop it!

Violence exudes from him as if he was fighting for his own
 life, his own survival.

Sheni puts up no resistance.

Eventually, Jav breaks down CRYING in front of her
 motionless, but still whimpering body.

JAV'S MOTHER (O.S.)
 (wailing)
 Javed!

JAV
 (sobbing)
 Why did you have to do it? Why?

He opens the door. Their mother rushes to grab Sheni.

JAV
 She doesn't listen.

He DIALS his phone.

JAV
 (into)
 Ambulance, please.

EXT. STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Jav stands in his backyard, looking at the pre-fab, light
 on inside - XShot working.

Goes back to the house.

INT. AMBULANCE - CONTINUOUS

Jav watches his mother, pouring a mother's affection on the
 battered Sheni as though she was just now born to her.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

One of the two plain clothed POLICE OFFICERS switches on a tape recorder.

POLICE OFFICER - 1
Time 1.35 am. Thurs 16th. First
Interview. Officer Nichols. Can we
have your full name?

Across the table, Jav stares blankly.

POLICE OFFICER - 1
You name?

JAV
Javed Khan.

POLICE OFFICER - 2
Date of birth?

JAV
Third October 1987.

POLICE OFFICER - 1
So, do you want to tell us what
happened?

Jav doesn't answer.

POLICE OFFICER
Did you beat her?

Still no answer.

POLICE OFFICER - 1
Did you find her like that?

No answer

POLICE OFFICER - 2
Aren't you worried, if she ever
wakes up.

JAV
What do you mean?

POLICE OFFICER - 2
Concerned are you? She is in a
coma, if you must know.

The Officers watch him hide a pang of hurt.

POLICE OFFICER - 1
So where were you before you came
home?

JAV

Why don't you wait for her to
wake up?

POLICE OFFICER - 1

You think she's going to tell us?

POLICE OFFICER - 2

Interview ended. Time one fifty.

He switches off the tape recorder.

POLICE OFFICER - 1

We don't need this, do we? So,
what do you think she's going to
tell us?

JAV

She'll tell you how it was.

POLICE OFFICER - 2

Yeah, you're right. She'll tell
us that she fell down the stairs,
she hit her face on the door.
What she won't tell us is how you
beat her to pulp, how you kept
hitting her, hitting her because
she was going out with some black
guy or a Sikh guy, eh? Isn't that
the truth?

The Police Officers leave the room.

INT. STUDIO - NIGHT

XShot looks at his watch. SIGHS.

EXT. STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

He tries to open the back door to the house. But it is
locked.

Looks through the windows. All dark and no life.

DIALS Jav from his phone. The call goes straight to his
answerphone.

EXT. MOMOS RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

XShot approaches the side door to the upstairs to find his
baggage outside for collection.

He DIALS Jav again. No answer.

INT. HOSPITAL WARD - DAY

The Police Officers who interviewed Jav now surround Shení's bed.

A DOCTOR steps up.

DOCTOR
Just simple questions, please.

The Officer steps near to Shení's bedside.

The other officers lead Shení's mother and Jav's uncle away.

POLICE OFFICER
Shenaz? Hello, Shenaz, can you hear me?

She shifts a little. Barely opens her eyes.

POLICE OFFICER
Shenaz? I am Police Officer Nichols. I just want to ask you some questions. Would that be okay for you?

She opens her eyes more. Tries to sit up.

SHENI
Where are my mother and my brother?

POLICE OFFICER
They're fine. Can we ask you what happened to you?

SHENI
Nothing. Nothing happened.

POLICE OFFICER
Who did this to you?

SHENI
No one. It was all my fault.

She shuts her eyes. Withdraws.

POLICE OFFICER
Sheni? Why was it your fault?

She doesn't answer.

POLICE OFFICER
Sheni, why was it your fault?

DOCTOR
I am sorry. That might be enough.

The Police Officer begins to leave.

SHENI
I fell down the stairs.

The Police Officer and the Doctor exchange a look.

The Police officer, SIGHS and leaves.

Her mother is allowed back.

SHENI
I want to go home.

Her mother cradles her, pouring a mother's assurance, bringing her back to the fold.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Jav exits from the back to a waiting Kully.

Jumps in his car.

EXT. HOUSING ESTATE - NIGHT

Jav waits by the alley.

He sees the Somalian who saw Sheni and Xshot in the park, walk up.

Jav hides, - then jumps on the Somalian at the opportune time. Pulls him away from the main path.

Confronts him.

JAV
So, what did you see?

SOMALIAN YOUTH
I told you what I saw.

Jav repeatedly punches him. Severely.

JAV
One more time, what did you see?

SOMALIAN YOUTH
I told you.

Jav brings out a metal knuckle brace. Punches him in the face. It draws blood from the deep cut.

JAV
What did you see? Tell me what you saw?

The Somalian looks at Jav's anguished desperate eyes.

SOMALIAN YOUTH
I didn't see anything.

JAV
What did you say?

SOMALIAN YOUTH
I saw nothing.

JAV
What did you see?

SOMALIAN YOUTH
I saw nothing.

Jav releases him.

Stares at him. Begins to walks away.

SOMALIAN YOUTH
But I see you.

JAV
What?

SOMALIAN YOUTH
I see you, man. You think you is
Hip Hop artist, you ain't got no
hip hop, man. You don't even know
who your enemy is.

Jav walks away.

INT. STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

Jav stares at the Console. Hard.

Then SMASHES it, kicking his boot into it.

Follows it through BREAKING the other equipment.

CRASHES all the contents of the studio with violent venom.

Breathless, he stands amongst the debris of his dreams.

INT. MOMOS RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Jav walks in.

Finds Naz and Kully by their usual cubicle. Mush there too.

Kully offers him a high-five. Jav meets it lukewarm.

Then Naz, but Jav looks into his congratulatory eyes first. Follows again with a lukewarm gesture.

Jav gives Mush a big hug, careful of his fragile body.

JAV
Y'alright?

Prince brings the beverages.

PRINCE
Paape, you become man in my eye
today. Now, your father can rest
in peace.

But Jav looks through the restaurant windows, across the street at a poster - XSHOT - support: THE MONARCH.

EXT. JAV'S BACK YARD - DAY

Xshot climbs over the fence.

Breaks into the studio.

Sees the wanton damage of someone's broken dream.

EXT. JAV'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

XShot KNOCKS on the front door.

No answer.

Then aggressively.

Gets aware of eyes staring at him from NEIGHBOURS.

Couple of MEN approach him.

NEIGHBOUR
Hey! Go away from here! Go!

Xshot watches more MEN rounding on him.

NEIGHBOUR
Haramzada! Bastard!

He paces away.

INT. MOMOS RESTAURANT - DAY

XShot enters. It is mostly empty.

Walks straight to the counter, where Prince is sorting dishes.

Prince doesn't meet his eyes. Carries on what he was doing.

XSHOT

Excuse me.

Prince still ignores. But the restaurant MANAGER catches his eye.

MANAGER

(in Punjabi)

Prince, you deaf?

Prince reluctantly steps up.

XSHOT

Thank you. Have you seen Jav?

Prince doesn't reply.

XSHOT

Any reason you don't want to talk to me?

Prince walks away.

XSHOT

Hey man, why don't you tell me your problem?

PRINCE

What, you don't know?

XSHOT

Know what?

PRINCE

You see her face now? All smashed up. Because of you.

XSHOT

What are you talking about?

PRINCE

Boy, don't pretend you don't know. Just get out of here. Go back home! Jav did the right thing.

XSHOT

Jav? I swear, I don't know what you are talking about. Please make some sense.

PRINCE

He is what you call a man.

XSHOT

Why do you say that? What did Jav do?

The Manager appears again.

PRINCE

(in Punjabi)

He is that black bastard.

The Manager changes his attitude to XShot.

XSHOT

What did Jav do? Tell me.

Prince and the Manager staff ignore him.

XShot rushes out of the restaurant.

INT. JAV'S HOME - DAY

Jav greets his Uncle, who escorts Mohammed and his relative into the living room where they all try to vie for space to sit.

His mother carries in beverages and sweet on a tray.

JAV'S MOTHER

(in Punjabi)

Assalamua - laikum.

JAV'S UNCLE

Wali kum salam.

The others follow with the greeting.

She sits opposite the guests alongside next to Jav.

MOHAMMED'S RELATIVE

(in Punjabi)

Is it possible to see the girl?

Jav's Uncle checks Jav. But Jav is blank and indifferent.

JAV'S UNCLE

Actually, she is not feeling well. You've seen the photograph.

MOHAMMED'S UNCLE

No education, correct?

JAV'S UNCLE

Just high school. We have to do that in this country.

MOHAMMED'S UNCLE

That is good. No education is better. So, Mohammed will be going back next few days. The wedding can take place in Pakistan and the girl can stay there until the first child.

They get up to leave.

INT. HALL - CONTINUOUS

Jav watches his Uncle escorting the guests out.

Turns to hear KNOCKING in the back yard.

EXT. JAV'S BACK YARD

Jav opens the back door. Xshot makes a grab for him.

XSHOT

What you do to her?

Jav takes his anger.

XSHOT

What you do to her? Where is she?

Just then Sheni appears from the back door of the house, her bruises showing.

SHENI

Stop it! Leave him.

XShot releases Jav on seeing Sheni.

XSHOT

Sheni! Oh, my god! You did this to her?

He strikes Jav, who falls to the ground.

SHENI

Leave him!

Sheni shields Jav. Puts her arms around him.

XSHOT

Babe, we can go from here. Let me take you.

SHENI

Just go. Go!

XSHOT

Sheni. I don't understand.

XShot stares at Jav cowered in Sheni's arms.

XSHOT

This is what I meant, my friend.
Your hip hop, it ain't no hip
hop, man. You ain't got none.

He backs up to the gate. Takes one final look at Sheni.

She too, but lowers her eyes.

XShot leaves.

Sheni embraces Jav.

She watches him walk away from her into the studio.

INT. STUDIO - DAY

Jav starts to tidy up the debris of his broken studio.

Brings them outside the yard. Dumps them into the rubbish bins.

Cleans out the room.

Reaches the final object of his studio - his digital player.

Decides to leave it, places it on a higher shelf.

Looks around the empty studio.

Then carries in large BOX PACKAGES.

INT. STUDIO - NIGHT

Jav puts the final touches to the assembled equipment.

What once was his Studio is now his GYM.

Tries out the bench press.

After a few sets he looks around. Spots the digital player on the higher shelf.

Plays it. It is the same track CONVICT, that he and XShot worked on.

Switches it off abruptly.

Leaves the studio, SLAMMING the door behind him.

INT. JAV'S RANGE ROVER -

He drives randomly. Switches his CAR SOUND SYSTEM

It plays his track - CONVICT.

Tries to shut it off. Punches the console. It breaks.

Notices the posters of his upcoming gig with Xshot have CANCELLED banners pasted on them.

INT. STUDIO/GYM - DAY

Jav works on the bench press. A POP MUSIC STATION plays from his sound system.

Sheni, dressed traditionally with her coat, walks in.

She looks around his newly fitted gym for the first time.

SHENI

Uncle's taking me to the airport.

Jav stops his exercise. But doesn't meet her eye.

SHENI

Aren't you going to say good bye,
bhai-jan?

He can't find the emotional strength to look at her.

SHENI

You shouldn't give up. Don't give up. Me and you've been dreaming of this since we were small kids. You almost there now. No use walking away from it. It's in your blood, Jav. I don't know whether you did the right thing with me. Who's to know what's best. But, you've been different since all the troubles, I get you. I get the pressure and now with dad going. I get what you got to do, but we're all in it. Ain't been easy to walk away from what we were before. Anyways, I'm out of your way now. And I am sorry for... y'know, well, maybe this my destiny. Get married and have children. I don't know, maybe I need to go through this to be who I am, to be independent. You should go your own way. Do your own thing. I'll always love you. I love you now, bhai-jan.

She waits for him to make a move to hug her or something.
But he doesn't.

SHENI

They are waiting. I better go.

She slowly leaves.

He stares into the space she just vacated.

He hears them all leave the house.

INT. JAV'S RANGE ROVER - CONTINUOUS

Jav drives down the road of Momos restaurant but Passes the restaurant without stopping.

He spots Amo pulls up in his Merc at the traffic lights.

Their eyes meet.

Amo smirks, sending Jav a cocked gun gesture to his head.

Jav stares back at Amo.

Amo's gesture impacts him.

Turns his Rover around.

INT. SHENI'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jav walks in to see Sheni's past things all tidied up.

Finds collection of old PHOTOGRAPHS of her and him, when they were younger, lying neatly by the pillow - and some photographs of them as teenagers in his studio, with her on headphones.

Notices her headphones, taped by repair, lie on her pillow, still attached to the MP3 player.

He puts the headphones on - notices a TRACK has been playing on REPEAT.

TRACK/HEADPHONES

(Sheni's voice)

*..There's someone here
And it's not me
How could this be
I locked my doors
Kept my armies on my shore
Point my rockets at my skies
I'm so fortified
I built my wall so high*

(MORE)

TRACK/HEADPHONES (cont'd)
 SO WHY OH'
 WHYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY

Intruder Alert
Intruder Alert
Intruder Alert
Intruder Alert

He goes through the photographs of them together in the Studio.

Holds back his tears.

INT. JAV'S RANGE ROVER - CONTINUOUS

Jav jumps in to speeds off. *The headphones around his neck.*

Spots signs to the AIRPORT

EXT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - CONTINUOUS

Jav stops his Range Rover by the passenger 'Drop Off' bay.

Jumps out to run into the Departures.

A TRAFFIC OFFICER tries to get his attention.

INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - CONTINUOUS

Jav looks at the FLIGHT INFORMATION screen. Checks the flight to Pakistan. It is still boarding.

Locates a Ticket Agent desk.

JAV
 Chicago. Next flight.

Collects the ticket. Rushes, searching, through the busy terminal.

Finally finds her, still with the family, saying her final farewells.

JAV
 Sheni!

She turns around to seem him calling her.

JAV
 Come on.

He pulls her away from the family.

JAV'S UNCLE

Javed!

He rushes her to the Security Gate entrance. Hands her the ticket.

JAV

It's to Chicago.

SHENI

What?

JAV

Go!

She hugs him. Tight.

She notices her headphones around his neck. Takes them off him to take one side to her ear, and the other on him.

TRACK/HEADPHONES

(Sheni's voice)

*..There's someone here
And it's not me
How could this be
I locked my doors
Kept my armies on my shore
Point my rockets at my skies
I'm so fortified
I built my wall so high
SO WHY OH'
WHYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY*

SHENI

(off headphones)

I know you.

Crumples the Chicago ticket.

SHENI

When I am ready.

Jav's Uncle and Sheni's prospective in-laws catch up with them.

JAV'S UNCLE

Javed? What are you doing?

JAV

Like you said, Uncle, she is my responsibility.

She wipes her rolling tars, herself.

SHENI
(leads Jav)
Come on, let's go home.

FADE TO BLACK