

"SLUMDOG MILLIONAIRE"

BY

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1 INT. JAVED'S SAFE-HOUSE. BATHROOM. NIGHT. 1

An expensive bathroom suite. Excess of marble and gold taps. Into the bath, a hand is scattering rupee notes. Hundreds and hundreds of notes, worth hundreds of thousands of rupees. The sound of a fist thumping on the bathroom door, furious shouting from the other side.

JAVED O/S

Salim! Salim!

2 INT. STUDIO. BACKSTAGE. DAY. 2

Darkness. Then, glimpses of faces. In the half-light, shadowy figures move with purpose. An implacable voice announces.

TALKBACK V/O

Ten to white-out, nine, eight, seven...

PREM

Are you ready?

Silence. A hand shakes a shoulder a little too roughly.

PREM (CONT'D)

I said are you ready?

JAMAL

Yes.

3 INT. JAVED'S SAFE-HOUSE. BATHROOM. NIGHT. 3

The thumping at the door continues. The sound of mumbled Indian prayer. Dull gleam of a pistol. A hand cracks the chamber open. Loads a single bullet into the chamber, snaps the chamber shut.

TALKBACK V/O

...three, two, one, zero. Cue Prem, cue applause...

Suddenly, the door splinters as it is smashed through. A burst of gun-fire and white light as suddenly...

4 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT. 4

...we are back in the studio, the gun-fire morphing into rapturous applause.

(CONTINUED)

TALKBACK V/O

Go, Prem.

A wall of light and noise as the two walk on stage. Cheering, music, banks of searing studio lights. On stage, Jamal, an eighteen year-old Indian boy-man stares, petrified. He would surely turn and run but for the iron grip on his shoulder of the smiling host, Prem Kumar.

PREM

Welcome to *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire!*

More applause.

PREM (CONT'D)

Please give a warm welcome to our first contestant of the night- a local from our very own Mumbai!

Under cover of the wild applause, Prem ushers Jamal towards the guest's chair, leaning in and hissing.

PREM (CONT'D)

Smile, dammit.

The lights seem to bore into him but Jamal manages a tentative smile. Out of nowhere, a hand slaps him ferociously across the face. Then again and again. Blood trickles from his mouth.

INT. POLICE INTERVIEW ROOM. NIGHT.

The studio lights have seamlessly transformed into the harsh bulb of an interrogation light. Jamal is strung from the ceiling by his arms.

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

Your name, bhen chod.

Constable Srinivas's hand pulls back Jamal's head by the hair, forcing him to stare directly into the lights.

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS (CONT'D)

Your name!

JAMAL

Jamal Malik.

And seamlessly we are back....

6 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT. 6

...on the set of *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*. Prem leans back in his chair, a man at home in his surroundings. Jamal sits opposite, frozen.

PREM

So, Jamal, tell us a bit about yourself.

Close on Jamal's face. Without warning, it is shoved under water.

7 INT. BUCKET. NIGHT. 7

We look up from the bottom of the bucket at the screaming face of a drowning man. His head shakes desperately, pointlessly. Then Jamal's face is dragged up again, roaring for breath. Close on his eyes.

JAMAL V/O

I work in a call centre. In Juhu.

8 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT. 8

PREM

A Phone-basher! And what type of call centre would this be?

JAMAL

XL 5. Mobile phones.

PREM

Aha! So, you're the man who rings me up every single day of my life with Special Offers, huh?

JAMAL

No, actually, I'm an assistant.

PREM

An Assistant Phone-basher?

A raised eye-brow at the audience. Amusement ruffles through them.

PREM (CONT'D)

And what does an Assistant Phone-basher do, exactly?

JAMAL

I- I get tea for people and-

8 CONTINUED:

8

PREM

- a chi-wallah! Why didn't you say?

Laughter in the audience.

PREM (CONT'D)

So, ladies and gentlemen, Jamal Malik from Mumbai, let's play *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire...*!

9 OMITTED

9

10 INT. POLICE INTERVIEW ROOM. DAY.

10

Jamal's body dangles motionless from the ceiling. His head is bowed and he is moaning to himself. The ceiling fan thumps round slowly. In the corner, Constable Srinivas mops his brow and lights a cigarette. Hot work. The door opens and the Inspector of Police walks in. A ruffled man in his late forties who has seen pretty much everything. He eyes Jamal, surprised.

INSPECTOR

Has he confessed, yet?

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

Apart from his name, I can't get a word out of the runt.

INSPECTOR

You've been here all bloody night, Srinivas. What have you been doing?

Srinivas shrugs.

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

Tough guy.

INSPECTOR

A little electricity will loosen his tongue.

Constable Srinivas brings a box and a tangle of wires out of a cupboard and proceeds to put crocodile clips on Jamal's fingers. The Inspector stares, deep in thought. Sweat trickles down his face. He wipes it away with a handkerchief, seems to be talking to himself.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

Every night I get home, "why can't we have a/c like Bajan Chacha?"

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

Why don't you care about your poor family, dying in this heat." Twenty-four years a policeman and I can't afford bloody a/c.

Turns on Jamal.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

But you. You've got ten million rupees ek dum guaranteed, yaar? And who knows how much further? Fancy the twenty million, do you?

Jamal just stares.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

I think you probably do.

The Inspector nods absently to Constable Srinivas who turns a handle. Jamal's body pulsates and jerks. He screams. His body goes limp again. The Inspector goes over to Jamal.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

So. Were you wired up? A mobile or a pager, correct? Some little hidden gadget? No? A coughing accomplice in the audience? Microchip under the skin, huh?

Constable Srinivas hadn't thought of that. Grabs Jamal's arms and starts squeezing them all over until the Inspector has had enough.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

Srinivas! Look, it's hot, my wife is giving me hell, I've got a desk full of murderers, rapists, extortionists, assorted bum-bandits...and you. Why don't you save us both a lot of time? Hmm?

Jamal doesn't answer. The Inspector sighs and sits down. Looks at his watch, nods at Constable Srinivas again. Jamal's body jerks with electric current. When the shudders and screams have subsided, the Inspector goes over to Jamal's collapsed form. Clicks his fingers in front of Jamal's face to check for a response.

INSPECTOR OF POLICE

He's unconscious, chutiya. What good is that? How many times have I told you-?

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

Sorry, Sir.

An excited Young Police Constable sticks his head around the door.

YOUNG CONSTABLE

He's coming! Sir.

INSPECTOR

Aré wa, Srinivas, we'll have Amnesty International in here next, peeing their pants about human rights. Get him down, tidy him up, for God's sake.

Constable Srinivas goes over to Jamal and starts to undo the crocodile clips.

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

Maybe he did know the answers.

INSPECTOR

Have you gone soft, Srinivas? Professors, lawyers, doctors, General Knowledge Wallahs never get beyond sixteen thousand rupees. And he's on ten *million*? What the hell can a slum dog possibly know?

Jamal lifts his head.

JAMAL

The answers.

He lifts his head, spits blood out of his mouth and says again, straight into the Inspector's face.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

I know the answers.

Titles. **Slum Dog Millionaire.**

Bright sunlight filtered through the ever-present Mumbai dust. A group of children are playing cricket on a tarmac cricket ground. They are bare-foot, dressed in little more than rags, wiry-skinny and fast on their feet. Salim, a nine-year old, polishes the ball on his almost non-existent shorts, comes in with surprising speed and bowls. The batsman hooks it high in the air. The bowler screams at a boy in the outfield.

SALIM

Jamal! Catch it! Catch it!

The seven-year old Jamal stares up at the ball, jinks around trying to get into position.

11 CONTINUED:

11

He pays no heed to the rest of the children who are scattering fast to the edges of the tarmac. The ball seems suspended in the blue sky. Shouts from the other children seem very far away. He doesn't notice that they are screaming for him to get out of the way. Jamal adjusts his feet for the perfect catch. Then out of nowhere, a light aircraft almost takes his head off as it comes in to land on the tarmac runway. Jamal is knocked to his feet by the down-draft of the plane. The ball bounces away. Also flattened, Salim gets to his feet.

SALIM (CONT'D)

How could you drop that? It was a sitter.

Then Salim's face turns to one of alarm.

12 EXT. AIRPORT PERIMETER. DAY.

12

At the back of a pack of children, carrying a piece of wood crudely fashioned into a sword, Jamal is running for his life, pursued by an ancient but surprisingly nimble Security Guard from the airport who is screaming abuse and wielding a long stick. The kids dash across a rubbish dump and disappear down dozens of tiny lanes that run in between the shacks of the slum.

SECURITY GUARD

Private-ka land! Private-ka land! The planes won't kill you, mader chod, I will!

Jamal and Salim- also with a wooden sword- break off, head down a separate lane. The Guard pursues them.

13 INT. JUHU SLUM. DAY.

13

The lanes in between the corrugated iron shacks are three feet wide, with an open drain running down the middle. Many of the precarious upper floors of the shacks have been built right over the paths, turning them into black tunnels. Tunnels shot through with slivers of light. If you didn't live here, you would be lost and frightened in minutes.

But these children are natives and with the practice of many years, Jamal and Salim zig-zag down the warren of lanes.

They dodge past people cooking in the doorways, sleeping, washing clothes or in the case of Vinod, a naked four year-old, pissing into the drain. Salim shouts a warning.

(CONTINUED)

SALIM

Vinod! Musketeers coming
through!

Without breaking step, they both jump expertly over the stream of piss. Not so the Security Guard who gets it all over his trousers, but doesn't stop the pursuit.

The two children charge past a shack filled to the roof with chickens in cages who all start squawking. They break out into the sunlight of the 'main road' of the slum lined with shops. It is packed: with people, stalls, bicycles and cows. All modern India is here, drinking tea, shouting at each other, selling food, playing carom, video games. Leaving a trail of shouting and wreckage behind them, the pair approach a brand new Mercedes almost blocking the lane. Beside it stands Javed, an impressive man in a beautiful suit and his two Minders. Jamal and Salim skid to a stop, put their hands together in respectful greeting and edge ever so carefully past the immaculate paintwork of the car.

Still in pursuit, the Security Guard also slides carefully past the car with deprecating bows and smiles. On past the chi stall where a crowd has gathered to watch a hindi film blaring from the tv rigged up overhead. The irate Security Guard gets tangled up in a bicycle. Jamal and Salim stop to give him a taunting, hip-gyrating parody of the dance on the tv before scooting down another tunnel. They break out into sunlight again.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Jamal!

Jamal skids to a halt, bumping into Salim who is already frozen.

JAMAL

Shit. Mummy-ji.

JAMAL'S MOTHER

Don't you move a muscle.

The Security Guard arrives and he too skids to a halt at the sight of Jamal's mother.

JAMAL'S MOTHER (CONT'D)

Thank you, Mister Gupta. I will
deal with these two.

The Guard puts his hands together in grudging respect as Jamal's Mother lifts each skinny kid off the floor by their t-shirt and marches them down the road.

14 INT. SCHOOL. DAY.

14

The two renegades are dumped by Jamal's Mother into their desks as Mister Nandha hands out ancient school books.

MISTER NANDHA

So, the musketeers return. We are honoured. Salim. Or *Porthos*, isn't it?

He crashes the heavy book down on his head. Salim opens the book. Jamal glances over and turns the book the right way round for Salim.

SALIM

I know!

Mister Nandha hovers over Jamal's head. He winces in anticipation.

MISTER NANDHA

And Athos.

The book comes down like thunder. Jamal blinks from the impact and suddenly we are back....

15 INT. INSPECTOR'S OFFICE. DAY.

15

... in the Inspector's office. Jamal watches Srinivas fiddling with the video recorder, trying to get a picture. Through the pebbled glass, Jamal sees shapes moving along the corridor.

16 INT. CORRIDOR. POLICE STATION. DAY.

16

The Commissioner of Police is fawning along beside Prem as they walk. The Young Constable hurries behind.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

It is so kind of you to visit our station, Sir. A great honour.

PREM

Not at all, not at all. I hope you will visit *us*, Commissioner.

Out of his jacket pocket comes a couple of tickets.

PREM (CONT'D)

Bring the family. It's a lot of fun.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

Oh! A thousand thanks, Sir. Missus Janda will be overcome.

(CONTINUED)

He turns to the Young Constable.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
(CONT'D)

chi, you lazy chutiyé, chi!

The Inspector joins them in the corridor.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE
(CONT'D)

Ah, Inspector! Cracked it?

The Inspector moves his head. Maybe yes, maybe no.

INSPECTOR

Nearly, Sir.

The Commissioner is just able to contain his apoplexy.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

Nearly? Nearly? When Prem Kumar
himself has-

Prem holds up a tolerant hand to the Commissioner who falls silent. Turns his laser-like charm onto the Inspector.

PREM

Inspector. How good to meet you.
Clearly the kid cheated.

INSPECTOR

Clearly, Sir.

PREM

So, it is just a question of
how, no?

INSPECTOR

Indeed, Sir. The proof. That is
all we need.

PREM

We are lucky to have a man of
your obvious experience on the
case. This kid might run rings
around us filmi types, but he
won't make fools out of the
Mumbai Police Force, I can see
that.

Forced laughter from the Commissioner.

PREM (CONT'D)

In front of sixty million
people.

More laughter. And fear.

16 CONTINUED: (2)

16

PREM (CONT'D)

Which is what will happen if we don't get a result, Gentlemen. He goes back on the show to rob us all with the whole of India watching. But. I can rely on you.

Prem walks away down the corridor. Stops and turns, apparently casual.

PREM (CONT'D)

Has he- has he made any allegations?

INSPECTOR

Allegations?

PREM

He's a cunning one. A convincing liar. Don't be taken in, Inspector, don't be taken in.

Walks off. The Inspector stares after him. Goes back into his office.

17 INT. INSPECTOR'S OFFICE.

17

Srinivas has finally got the recorder to work. We get snatches of filmi dancing- heroines singing on mountainsides surrounded by implausible numbers of flags- cricket and finally after some shouting by the Inspector, *Who Wants to Be A Millionaire?*.

INSPECTOR

So, Mister Malik, the man who knows the answers. Talk.

We close in on the tv screen where Prem is smiling his crocodile smile and find ourselves....

18 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

18

...as Prem asks the first question.

PREM

So, are you ready for your first question for one thousand rupees?

JAMAL

Yes.

PREM

Not bad money to sit in a chair and answer a question. Better than making the tea, no?

(CONTINUED)

JAMAL

No. Yes. No.

PREM

No. Yes. No. Apka final answer?

Laughter from the audience. Jamal looks confused. Prem waves it away, switches on his serious face.

PREM (CONT'D)

Remember, you have three lifelines if you're not sure of your answer- Ask the Audience, 50/50 and Phone a Friend. So, the question:

The lights go down, the portentous music rolls.

PREM (CONT'D)

Who was the star of the 1973 hit film Zanjeer. Was it A-

Close on Jamal's eyes.

INT. SHACK. NIGHT.

A tiny shack. A garland of dirty plastic flowers surrounds a torn flyer for one of Amitabh Bacchan's films.

EXT. JUHU SLUM. RUBBISH DUMP. NIGHT.

Salim is sitting on a chair at the end of a rickety wooden pier, though it is not water, but a sea of rubbish and sewage that lies below them. There are dozens of these piers protruding from the slum onto airport land, each with a toilet shack perched right at the end. Another man hurries up the pier and hands Salim a coin.

SALIM

Immediately, sir.

Turns to the toilet door.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Bhai, get out of there. Prakash wants a shit.

JAMAL O.S.

Not finished.

PRAKASH

Stop your time-pass. This is urgent.

JAMAL O.S.

It's a shy one. Since when was there a time limit on a crap?

SALIM

Since there was a customer waiting, that's when.

He flashes another placatory smile at Prakash.

JAMAL O.S.

(singing/ grunting)

Come on out, you beauty, unveil yourself, my darling-warling....

PRAKASH

Look, kid, I got a bad stomach. It's borderline....

A disturbing combination of heaving and snake-charmer noises come from the toilet shack. Finally Prakash can stand it no longer.

PRAKASH (CONT'D)

I'm off to Devi's bog. Give me that.

He snatches the coin back from Salim and hurries off. Salim bangs on the toilet door.

SALIM

You just lost me good money, you stupid idiot-

Salim stops. In the distance, there is the faint sound of shouting, a crowd coming closer. Then the crowd bursts through the outer shacks of the slum, pour onto the rubbish dump and make for the airfield.

MAN

It's Amitabh! That's his helicopter!

JAMAL O.S.

Amitabh? Amitabh Bacchan?

Jamal peers through one of the many cracks in the shack. He sees crowds surging around the pier, charging towards a landing helicopter. Salim shoves the chair under the door handle- effectively locking it- and runs down the pier to join the chase. Jamal pulls up his shorts.

JAMAL

No! Wait! Salim, sala! Salim!

Rattles the locked door. Pulls a torn flyer from his pocket advertising an Amitabh movie.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Wait! Amitabh....

He looks down the toilet hole at the sewage beneath him, the landing helicopter, the disappearing crowd. A final rattle of the door. There is only one way out. He jumps down the hole, sprawling headlong into a year's worth of human waste, managing to keep the flyer out the mire. He runs for the helicopter.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Amitabh-ji! Amitabh-ji!

Salim is at the back of the crowd, trying to force a way through, but the adults shove him back. Not so for Jamal. The down-draft from the helicopter flicks bits of sewage from his clothes. Disgusted fans curse him and get out of his way. Suddenly, the red sea parts and there is nobody between Jamal and Amitabh Bacchan getting out of the helicopter.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Please. Amitabh-ji.

Jamal holds out his flyer. Used to signing autographs, the movie star barely looks at Jamal. He takes the flyer and scribbles his autograph on it.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

A thousand thanks, Amitabh-ji.

He hands the flyer back to Jamal as his bodyguards surround him and hustle him into a car. Jamal chases the flyer across the tarmac, grabs it. Kisses it.

From high up, the rickety tin roof-tops of the slum seem to stretch to the horizon. There is a distant shout, a figure waving an arm.

MAN

It's coming!

Then another shout and another, a chain of voices coming closer. People come out of their doorways with pails and buckets. The shouts come closer until we see a naked figure entirely encased in bubbles dancing and singing in the lane. Jamal is the happiest boy in the slum.

JAMAL

(singing)

Amitabh, Amitabh, oh Amitabh!

(MORE)

22 CONTINUED:

22

JAMAL (CONT'D)

I have your autograph, oh, holy
Amitabh!

MOTHER

Here it comes!

Water comes bubbling through a hose and Jamal's mother
hoses down her ecstatic son.

23 EXT. JUHU SLUM. NIGHT.

23

Not far away, Salim wanders to Mister Chi's stall. He
glances around to make sure everybody is glued to the
hindi film on Mister Chi's tv and surreptitiously slips
Mister Chi the signed flyer. Mister Chi takes a look
and gives Salim a small wad of rupees. He sticks the
money in his pocket, slinks away.

24 EXT. JUHU SLUM. NIGHT.

24

A tear-stained Jamal is furiously trying to batter
Salim, but Salim's extra strength and height means that
he can keep Jamal at bay with one hand, Jamal's
flailing fists punching thin air.

JAMAL

Sala! Sala!

Salim's laughter only makes Jamal cry harder.

25 INT. INSPECTOR'S OFFICE. NIGHT.

25

Close on the tv screen in the Inspector's office. Prem
ponders Jamal's choice. Presses a button on his
computer.

PREM V/O

You chose A- Amitabh Bacchan.
Guess what? You just won one
thousand rupees!

Applause on screen. The Inspector looks at Jamal. Jamal
shrugs.

JAMAL

You don't have to be a genius.

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

I knew it was Amitabh.

JAMAL

Like I said.

Constable Srinivas twists Jamal's arm behind his back,
evinced a squeal of pain from Jamal.

JAMAL (CONT'D)
 (squealing)
 He's the most famous man in
 India...!

The Inspector stares at Jamal, turns back to the tv
 where Prem is asking the next question.

PREM O/S
 For four thousand rupees....the
 national emblem of India is a
 picture of three lions. What is
 written underneath? Is it...

PREM
 ...A) The truth alone triumphs.
 B) Lies alone triumph. C)
 Fashion alone triumphs. D) Money
 alone triumphs.

Prem shoots a mock puzzled look out to the audience
 eliciting giggles from them.

PREM (CONT'D)
 What do we think, Jamal? The
 most famous phrase in our
 country's history. Maybe you
 want to phone a friend?

Laughter from the audience. The studio lights bear down
 on Jamal. a drop of sweat trickles down his forehead.
 Prem is loving his discomfort.

PREM (CONT'D)
 Or Ask the Audience? I have a
 hunch they might just know the
 answer. What do we think?

He gestures expansively at his audience. Oh, they love
 him.

JAMAL
 Yes.

PREM
 (startled)
 Yes?

JAMAL
 Ask the audience.

Prem whistles. Raises his eyes at the audience.

PREM
 Well, you're the contestant,
 Jamal.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

PREM (CONT'D)

Put the poor man out of his
misery, Ladies and Gentlemen.
Press your key-pad now.

The lights dim. Portentous music.

27 INT. INSPECTOR'S OFFICE. DAY.

27

The Inspector presses pause. Sighs.

INSPECTOR

So, Jamal. My five-year-old
daughter knows the answer to
that, but you don't. Strange for
a millionaire genius. What
happened? Your accomplice nip
out for a piss, did he? Or did
he just not cough loud enough?

Silence. Constable Srinivas kicks Jamal's chair.

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

The Inspector asked you a
question.

JAMAL

How much is bhelpuri at Jeevan's
stall on Chowpatty Beach?

INSPECTOR

What?

JAMAL

One bhelpuri. How much?

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

(can't help
himself)

Ten rupees.

JAMAL

Wrong. Fifteen since Divali. Who
stole Constable Varma's bicycle
outside Dadar Station last
Thursday?

INSPECTOR

(amused)

You know who that was?

JAMAL

Everyone in Juhu knows that.
Even five year-olds.

Despite himself, the Inspector laughs. Then leans in.

27 CONTINUED:

27

INSPECTOR

I'll give you five hundred rupees if you just admit it. You go home, I go home. Everybody happy.

Jamal just stares back.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

No, you want to go back on the programme and win twenty million rupees, don't you?

JAMAL

Wouldn't you?

28 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

28

PREM

The audience has chosen. And, whaddya know? Ninety-nine percent of them think the answer is A). The truth alone triumphs. What do we think, Jamal? A hundred percent would have made me a little more reassured, maybe....

Prem shrugs, makes a show of examining his computer. Suddenly fixes him with his eyes.

PREM (CONT'D)

Are you married, Jamal?

JAMAL

No.

PREM

Well, don't despair, there's someone out there who thinks our national motto is "Fashion alone triumphs". You two could be very well matched.

Audience laughter.

29 INT. GALLERY. NIGHT.

29

The Director is shaking his head.

DIRECTOR

What the bloody hell is he playing at? He's way off script...

VISION MIXER

Split up with his girl-friend.

(CONTINUED)

DIRECTOR

Which one?

VISION MIXER

All three, I heard. Nita as well. Back with the wife. She's pregnant again.

DIRECTOR

Oh, God, that's all we need....

VISION MIXER

Oh, for Sharukh Khan...Stand by white out.

INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

PREM

...won four thousand rupees!

Music, lights, applause.

PREM (CONT'D)

One more question before the commercial break. What will our Call Centre Assistant do next?

The lights dim. Prem presses his computer.

PREM (CONT'D)

Religion! Interesting. For sixteen thousand rupees, in depictions of the God Ram, he is famously holding what in his right hand? Is it A) a flower. B) a scimitar. C) a child or D) a bow and arrow?

EXT. DHOBI. JUHU SLUM. DAY.

Right next to the railway lines is a pond of dirty water surrounded by shacks in which dozens of women are washing clothes. Trains flash past only feet away from them. Down the other end of the pond, nine-year old Jamal and Salim are splashing noisily with some other children. Jamal's mother pauses in her scrubbing, wipes sweat from her forehead and gazes up at the leaden sky.

JAMAL AND SALIM'S MOTHER

It's going to come. Today. I can feel it.

The woman next to her nods.

WOMAN

Hope so. My head is exploding.

MOTHER

Yes. We need rain.

Jamal is trying to intercept the ball that Salim and Krishna are throwing to each other. He's not having much success. The ball flies overhead again from Salim to Krishna. Jamal dives for it, misses and goes underwater. When he comes up for air, he shakes his head, clearing his ears of water. Then he stops, listens. Shakes his head again. Definitely something strange. Thunder? Salim and Krishna are trading catches, unaware that anything has changed. But Jamal's mother has heard it too. The faintest sound of shouting, roaring. The wave of noise is still faint but getting louder. A frozen moment broken by:

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Run! Jamal, Salim, run!

Everybody stares at her. A train speeds through as she continues to shout, her words lost beneath the thundering train.

MOTHER (CONT'D)

Go! Run!

The train goes through, the last carriage flying past suddenly opening up the sight of a wall of rioting men wielding clubs, scythes, metal bars. They come screaming across the railway tracks.

SALIM

Krishna, quick!

Salim holds out his hand to Krishna who is wading with difficulty through the water.

KRISHNA

No way! You're a bloody Muslim.
Get away from me!

The rioters leap the tracks and are upon them.

KRISHNA (CONT'D)

They're Muslims! Him and him!

MOTHER

Go!

Salim and Jamal scramble out and retreat into the lanes. Salim turns to see his Mother felled by a rioter. She is surrounded by screaming, chanting men who rain blows down on her. Jamal runs back and drags Salim down an alley. As they head down the alley, they get glimpses of burning houses, fleeing women, a three-year old boy in a doorway, painted entirely in garish blue. He stares at them. In his hand, he is carrying a bow and arrow. An eleven-year old girl dressed only in a pair of pants runs after them.

(CONTINUED)

She has two bleeding red gashes on her back. They turn a corner and head towards some vans full of police. Jamal sees Mister Nandha, the school teacher, stops.

JAMAL

Salim!

Then Mister Nandha starts walking towards him. An oasis of calm in the chaos. Jamal looks at him with relief.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Mister Nandha.

Mister Nandha smiles, walks towards them.

MISTER NANDHA

Ram nam satya hai, Babri Masjid dhvasthan hai.

JAMAL

Mister Nandha?

MISTER NANDHA

We have destroyed your mosque. Now, the followers of Ram will drive you dogs out of our city.

From behind his back he produces a knife and runs towards Jamal, screaming.

MISTER NANDHA (CONT'D)

Ram has returned to his temple!
Ram has returned!

They flee, but Jamal turns, sees the girl, frozen. He chases back a few steps, hauls her arm. The spell broken, and they are off.

They reach the safety of the police vans. But inside the vans, the police are smoking, laughing, playing cards. Down the street, a man comes whirling out of a doorway, his hair on fire. He falls into the middle of the street and is engulfed by rioters. Unperturbed, the police continue to chat. Salim and Jamal look on, horrified. Then one of the police men turns, looks at them. Is interested. Motions to a colleague. Puts out his cigarette with purpose.

JAMAL

Let's go, bhai.

Salim and Jamal run. The girl follows.

33

EXT. MUMBAI. EVENING.

33

Salim and Jamal stand on a hill overlooking the city. Black smoke billows from a large area that is clearly the Juhu slum. Standing a little way off is the girl.

JAMAL

We should go back.

Silence.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

See if Ama-

Salim shakes his head fiercely, silencing Jamal for a moment. But only a moment.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

What about Jeevan Chacha?

Salim shakes his head.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Maybe he-

Salim shakes his head again.

SALIM

- I saw him. He was with them.

JAMAL

But he wouldn't hurt-

SALIM

- he was with them!

JAMAL

But-

SALIM

- shut up, Jamal, can't you?
Just shut up!

Salim turns away and sees the girl. Picks up a rock and hurls it at her. She dodges, takes a couple of steps back but makes no real attempt to get away. He finds another rock and hurls this in her direction too.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Ja!

Then a flash of lightning and thunder rumbles across the city. Rain begins to come down.

JAMAL

What shall we do?

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

No answer. Jamal sits down. Salim sits down. At a distance, the girl sits down. Rain pours down their faces.

34 INT. BUILDER'S YARD. NIGHT.

34

Rain as you've never seen. A pile of huge water pipes in a sprawling builder's yard. Jamal is in one pipe, Salim above him in another. They are both soaked, shivering, but have found some plastic sheet to wrap themselves in. Outside, thirty feet away, stands the girl. Staring. Salim hisses angrily at the girl.

SALIM

Go away. Ja, ja!

The girl might not even have heard.

SALIM (CONT'D)

She'll have the Security Guard onto us, standing there.

JAMAL

Not if we let her in.

SALIM

No.

JAMAL

She could be the third musketeer.

SALIM

I am the head of this family, now. And I say no. Piss off, you.

Salim huddles down in the pipe. After a while, Jamal follows suit.

SALIM (CONT'D)

We don't even know what the third musketeer's called.

35 EXT. JUHU SLUM. DAY

35

A flash of Jamal's mother being clubbed to the ground. Her scream.

36 INT. BUILDER'S YARD. LATER.

36

Jamal wakes with a jolt and a scream half-swallowed in his mouth. He shuts his eyes tight, trying to force the image out. His breathing slows and he sees the girl staring at him. Salim, too, is staring into nothing. The rain is still falling.

(CONTINUED)

The girl goes back to drawing shapes in the mud with her finger. Jamal climbs out of the pipe. Looks at Salim for permission or refusal, but he just continues to stare. So, Jamal walks across to her. She looks up, wary.

JAMAL

Where's your Mother?

Silence.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Father?

The girl shakes her head slightly. Jamal takes the plastic sheet from around his shoulders. Gives it to her.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

I'm Jamal. He's Salim.

LATIKA

Latika.

Jamal goes back to his water pipe, climbs in. Watches her huddled under the sheet. Sighs, motions for her to join him. She darts across, jumps into the water pipe and huddles up next to Jamal.

37 INT. INSPECTOR'S OFFICE. DAY.

37

Jamal looks at the Inspector.

JAMAL

I wake up every morning wishing I didn't know the answer to that question? If it wasn't for Ram and Allah, I would still have a Mother.

38 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT

38

JAMAL

D) A bow and arrow.

PREM

Final answer?

JAMAL

Final answer.

Prem stares at him for dramatic effect. Presses his computer.

PREM

Computer-ji, D lock kiya-jaye.

(CONTINUED)

The lights dim, the music swells.

PREM (CONT'D)

Jamal Malik, you answered D? Ram is depicted with a bow and arrow in his hand. And guess what? You've just won sixteen thousand rupees! Well done, my friend. Time for a commercial break—don't go away, now.

Music, applause. Prem switches off his professional smile. Gets up.

PREM (CONT'D)

Got lucky, huh? I'd take the money. You'll never get the next one.

JAMAL

You're from the Juhu slum, aren't you?

PREM

Hmm? Sure. Know where I live now, kid? Pali Hill. Twelve bedrooms, a/c in every room, two kitchens, a gym and a screening room. Steel balls is what it takes, my friend, steel balls.

The Floor Manager comes over and gives his head-phones set to Prem. Prem listens.

DIRECTOR V/O

Prem? Tone it down, for goodness sake. You're making him a laughing stock.

Prem glances up at the gallery with contempt.

PREM

We're having fun here. They love it...Where the hell do you get them from?

He makes no attempt to hide the conversation from Jamal.

DIRECTOR V/O

It's supposed to be a quiz show, not a blood sport.

FLOOR MANAGER

Two minutes.

38 CONTINUED: (2)

38

PREM

Stop wetting your pants. I'll be
a good little boy with the next
one. Promise.

He chucks the head-phones back at the Floor Manager.
Glances in the wings. Sees Nita, the make-up woman.
Gets up and goes over.

39 INT. STUDIO. BACKSTAGE. NIGHT.

39

In the half-light, backstage, Nita dabs his face with
powder.

PREM

Meet me after the show. Please.

NITA

No.

PREM

Nita, I can explain.

NITA

No need. I read it in bloody
Stardust. Didn't even have the
balls to tell me. "Prem's
happiness with another baby on
the way". After everything you
said...

PREM

Baby, it all happened before I
met you. I swear to you.

NITA

She's got the gestation period
of an elephant, then.

Prem is about to object. But instead, he laughs.

PREM

You see? Amidst all this misery,
only you can make me laugh.

Scornful but hints of melting.

NITA

All this misery...

PREM

Her and I- nothing. You have to
believe me, baby...

Nita turns away. The Floor Manager comes over.

FLOOR MANAGER

One minute.

(CONTINUED)

Prem slings himself in a chair.

PREM

No. I'm not going on.

NITA

Prem...

PREM

I can't. Without you, it's all pointless.

Clicks his fingers at the Floor Manager.

PREM (CONT'D)

You. Tell the Director.

Nita shakes her head at the Floor Manager who by now is looking very worried.

FLOOR MANAGER

Thirty seconds.

Prem shrugs and folds his arms. Sees her weaken.

NITA

Prem...

PREM

Calypso Bar, private room, just you and me?

FLOOR MANAGER

Fifteen.

NITA

(furious)

Alright.

He grins, jumps up, blows her a kiss, and stalks back on stage.

He sits back down, says almost to himself.

PREM

Steel balls.

Turns to Jamal.

PREM (CONT'D)

Okay, Juhu boy, you've had a good run. Take your Mother to Khandala and eat some chiki.

JAMAL

My Mother's dead.

PREM

Well, your girlfriend then. Even better.

JAMAL

I don't have a girl-friend.

PREM

Live wire like you? You surprise me.

FLOOR MANAGER

Five, four...

The warm-up man starts the applause.

TALKBACK V/O

....three, two, one...

Cheering and music. Prem switches on his charm.

PREM

Welcome back to *Who Wants to be a Millionaire!* Our contestant, Jamal Malik, Call Centre Assistant- from Mumbai, is on sixteen thousand rupees and has already used one lifeline: Ask the Audience. So, my friend: are you ready for the next question?

JAMAL

Yes.

PREM

Then, let's play.

Portentous music. The lights dim.

PREM (CONT'D)

For sixty-four thousand rupees. The British architect Frederick Stevens designed which famous building in India? Is it: A) The Taj Mahal. B) Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus. C) India Gate. D) Howrah Bridge. What do you think, Jamal? Are you one of those tea-boys with a penchant for architecture?

Known to everyone as VT station, this monument to Victorian railway architecture is a dangerous place to be at rush hour.

41 CONTINUED:

41

Even before the train has stopped, men are jumping from the open doors, or vaulting out of the windows or from the roof of the train to join the tens of thousands of Mumbaitees streaming to and from work. A seventeen-year old Jamal squeezes himself out of a train and shoves through the crowds. He checks the time. The digital numerals flick to five O'clock. Looks around the tide of humanity.

42 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

42

PREM

So, what's it to be? Walk away and this cheque for sixteen thousand rupees is yours. Look, it's even got your name on it.

He produces a cheque and waves it at Jamal.

JAMAL

I don't have a bank account.

Laughter from the audience. Prem is momentarily wrong-footed.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

But I'll take cash.

More laughter, this time with Jamal, rather than at him. Prem gets up and starts rummaging theatrically through his jacket pockets and trousers.

PREM

Nope. Looks like the Producer's stolen my wallet again-

JAMAL

- I'll play.

Nobody was expecting this. Least of all Prem who has to rearrange his features into one of surprised delight. He sits down.

PREM

You'll play?

JAMAL

Why not?

PREM

Well, well, well. We've got a wild one, here.

Prem tears up the cheque with theatrical slowness.

42 CONTINUED:

42

PREM (CONT'D)

For sixty-four thousand rupees,
Ladies and Gentlemen, the
question once again....

43 INT. CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI TERMINUS. DAY.

43

The digital clocks show five fifteen. Shoving the descending river of people out of his way, the eighteen year-old Jamal is forging a path up steps that cross the platforms. He pushes to the middle of the footbridge and leans out on the side railings. He scans the sea of people, desperately. Then he sees her: the eighteen year-old Latika, heart-stoppingly beautiful, over the other side of the station. A world away. She is scanning the crowd, as wired as he is.

JAMAL

Latika! Latika!

But though he is screaming her name, his voice is swallowed by the noise around him. Then he sees two thuggish-looking men also fighting a way towards her.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Latika!

Frightened now, he fights his way down the steps, one figure against an army of white-robed people.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Latika!

JAMAL V/O

Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus.

PREM V/O

Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus.
Sure?

JAMAL V/O

I think so.

PREM V/O

You *think* so. A brave man,
Ladies and Gentlemen, a brave
man.

44 INT. CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI TERMINUS. DAY.

44

The commuters have mostly gone. Jamal is pacing the platform desperately. He stops, stares blankly at the statue in front of him- a proud, rather pompous figure in a Victorian frock coat. The plaque reads: Frederick Stevens.

45 INT. INSPECTOR'S OFFICE. NIGHT.

45

The Inspector, Srinivas and Jamal are staring at the video recorder.

JAMAL

Yes. Final answer. Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus.

PREM

Is the right answer! Sixty-four thousand rupees to you, Sir!

Applause and music. The Inspector presses pause. Stares at Jamal.

INSPECTOR

And did she come back?

Jamal smiles sadly.

JAMAL

I wouldn't be here if she had.

INSPECTOR

Pretty was she?

Jamal stares down at his feet.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

Guess not.

Right in the eyes.

JAMAL

The most beautiful woman in the world.

Constable Srinivas snorts. Suddenly, Jamal is out of his chair and at Srinivas' throat. The combined force of the Inspector and Srinivas force him roughly back down. He is again handcuffed to the chair.

INSPECTOR OF POLICE

Well, well. The slum dog barks. Money or women. The reason for most mistakes in life. Looks like you got mixed up with both. Srinivas, you need the exercise: a trip to VT Station to check on the statue. And lock your bloody bike up.

Constable Srinivas swears under his breath but bumbles out.

(CONTINUED)

45 CONTINUED:

45

INSPECTOR

That's the chutiyé out the way.
Now, man to man. How did you
know all the answers?

JAMAL

If I knew, I'd tell you.

46 OMITTED

46

47 OMITTED

47

48 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

48

PREM

Now we're into the serious
money. For two hundred and fifty
thousand rupees, ladies and
gentlemen, a quarter of a
million rupees...the song Chalo
Ri Murali was written by which
famous Indian poet. Was it A)
Surdas. B) Tulsidas. C) Mira
Bai. D) Kabir. Remember you
still have two lifelines- fifty-
fifty and Phone A Friend.
Tempted to use one?

JAMAL

No.

PREM

No?

JAMAL

I know this one.

PREM

Oh. I see. An expert on the
poets, huh?

The lights dim, the music swells and Prem presses his
computer.

49 EXT. MUMBAI STREET. NIGHT.

49

Jamal is studying a piece of paper and reading out
numbers from it. There is something not quite right
about Jamal- perhaps the fact that there are two feet
by his ears. Salim is standing on his shoulders and
spraying the numbers on a wall with an aerosol and a
certain lack of confidence.

(CONTINUED)

JAMAL

Four, nine, zero, nine- the one
with the stick going down, Salim-
six- stick going up-

Latika's head appears from around the corner.

LATIKA

(whispered)

Oi!

But they don't hear. Then she is running for her life
past the pair of them.

JAMAL

Six, one, shit, let's go-

Salim collapses off Jamal's shoulders and all three run
off down an alley past a dozen of the gang's sprayed-on
adverts all reading: "Beanbags- 989 4909661". A fat
Security Guard with a long stick huffs round the
corner. Chases them up an alley. Nowhere to go except
through an imposing gate that clearly leads to a
private house.

SECURITY GUARD

Got you now, little shits.

They charge across the lawn, down one side of the house
where all the washing is hanging. The Guard gets caught
up in drying sheets, towels. He fights his way through
to see Salim, Latika and Jamal leaping over the wall to
safety. But Jamal turns, jumps back and grabs a girl's
dress from the line.

SECURITY GUARD

Aha! Little thief!

The Security Guard lands a couple of blows on Jamal's
back as he dodges around him and back across the lawn,
dress in hand. The Security Guard gives up.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)

Pervert!

Jamal is examing the bruises on his legs.

SALIM

Useless bloody look-out. What
good is she, huh?

51 CONTINUED:

51

LATIKA

(infuriated)

I tried to warn you.

JAMAL

It's okay, Salim.

Latika slips on the dress. Spins. Both of them look up. Stare. She pulls her hair back, smiles, is transformed into a beautiful girl.

52 EXT. GORAI BEACH DUMPING GROUND. DAY.

52

Blazing sun. Diggers and trucks are shifting mounds of rubble on a rubbish dump that seems to stretch for ever. Oblivious to the dust kicked up by the trucks, Latika is picking up old plastic bags, examining each one and putting the less worn in a big sack. The dress is recognisable but dusty and torn. She stoops to dig another bag out of the dirt, but stops and stares. Shimmering in the heat, a rickety pick-up truck comes through the rubbish dump gates. Toots at the Guard who waves, pulls up in the dump. "Hope Orphanage is written on the side of the van. A man gets out. Looks around.

53 INT. 'TENT'. DAY.

53

Under sheets of plastic propped up on sticks, Jamal and Salim are sleeping out the hottest part of the day. Jamal wakes to see a figure standing over him- a silhouette with a halo of sun behind him. Out of his bag, the man produces a bottle of *Thumbs Up*. He uncaps it with an alluring hiss. It is almost an advert for thirst-quenching affluence. Almost instinctively, Salim and Jamal stir.

MAN

Hello.

He hands the bottle to Salim, gets another from his bag and waves it questioningly at Jamal.

MAN (CONT'D)

Hot, huh? My name is Maman.

54 EXT. ORPHANAGE. EVENING.

54

The hills on the edge of Bombay. Greenery and space, for the first time in the film. The pick-up truck pulls up outside a building with Jamal, Salim and Latika sitting on a bench in the back. Maman gets out. Drops the gate on the back of the pick-up.

MAMAN

Anyone hungry? Come on in.

55 INT. ORPHANAGE COURTYARD. EVENING.

55

Twenty children are eating at long benches in a ramshackle courtyard. Maman, ushers Jamal, Salim and Latika in and sits them down at one of the benches. He waves a hand and a giant man, Punnoose, comes over with a big bowl of food. The three tear into it. Cleaning every last morsel of rice from his plate, Jamal looks up and notices a table peopled entirely with blind or crippled children. Some of the legless are eating on the floor next to the table. Jamal leans over to Salim.

JAMAL

He must be a very good man to look after these people.

SALIM

(glancing at them)

A saint.

Arvind, a boy smaller than either Jamal or Salim overhears.

ARVIND

We're not allowed to talk to them.

LATIKA

Why not?

Arvind shrugs. Latika licks her plate, glances at Maman who is looking right at them.

LATIKA (CONT'D)

Well, if there are seconds, Maman is definitely a Saint.

As if telepathic, Maman signals to Punnoose and he brings a large bowl of rice and dhal over to them. Latika looks at Jamal and Salim. They burst out laughing.

LATIKA (CONT'D)

I tell you, Lord Siva is with us.

56 INT. ORPHANAGE. EVENING.

56

Salim, Latika, Jamal and a group of children are standing in a line singing a doha- ancient lyrics set to music. Maman is leading the singing, walking up and down the line listening to each one individually. He stops at one small boy, Arvind, and listens. Nods his head, pleased, and continues down the line until he stops in front of Jamal. Holds up his hand.

MAMAN

Stop! You. Again.

(CONTINUED)

Jamal starts singing again. He has the sweetest of voices. Untrained but pure. Maman smiles, ruffles Jamal's hair, impressed.

MAMAN (CONT'D)

Everyone.

They all join in. Maman continues down the line. He stops at Salim whose octave-slipping singing is lusty and appallingly out of tune. Maman winces and moves on. Standing next to Salim, Latika giggles. Immediately, Salim is on her. Before a fight breaks out, Punnoose pulls Salim off Latika and hurls him across the room. Salim gets up and charges at Punnoose. For a second, Punnoose is back-footed, but then pins Salim's arms to his side. Maman laughs. Approaches Salim.

MAMAN (CONT'D)

You sing like one, and you fight like one. I think you've found your dog, Punnoose.

A group of children are sitting in the jumble of concrete under a motorway flyover. Cars surround them, bumper to bumper. Latika and Jamal are playing an improvised hopscotch on concrete slabs. They are giggling, bumping into each other, tickling, laughing. Salim and Punnoose are sitting together, smoking. Salim is staring hard at Jamal and Latika until Punnoose grunts, a sign for Salim to clap his hands.

SALIM

Okay, let's go, let's go! It's not a bloody holiday!

The children get to their feet. Latika sighs, puts a patch over her eye and grabs a pair of crutches. Suddenly, the lame beggar. Salim goes over to one of the girls, who is carrying a sleeping baby. Puts out his hand.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Give me that.

The girl shakes her head. Salim grabs her by the hair in one hand and takes the baby with the other. He shoves her to the ground. The other children stare.

JAMAL

Hey, Salim!

He challenges Jamal.

SALIM

What, choté bhai? You got a problem?

57 CONTINUED:

57

He laughs and walks over to Latika.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Here. For you.

LATIKA

I don't want it.

SALIM

You'll earn double. I'm doing you a favour, Latika.

JAMAL

She doesn't want it.

SALIM

Chup, Jamal.

Latika turns away and begins to walk towards the cars.

SALIM (CONT'D)

I'll drop it.

He holds the baby up. Latika grabs the baby with a cry just as Salim releases it from his hands. Salim pinches the baby.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Triple if it's crying.

Latika snatches it away. Salim laughs, goes back to sitting with Punnoose. The children scatter to the cars trapped at the lights, tapping plaintively on the windows and making the universal begging gesture.

58 INT. ORPHANAGE. KITCHEN. NIGHT.

58

Surrounded by beer bottles, Punnoose is slumped asleep by the kitchen door. Latika edges past, avoids the cook sleeping under the table and goes to a shelf laden with vegetables. She pulls down a bunch of chillies still on the vine, strips a few off and tip-toes out with them.

59 INT. ORPHANAGE. DORMITORY. NIGHT.

59

Sleeping children, three or four to a mattress on the floor. Latika tip-toes around the mattresses. She pauses over one in particular where we see Salim, asleep. She carefully pulls up the sheet, delves underneath. Pleasant dreams cross Salim's sleeping face for a second. Then suddenly, he is bolt upright and screaming. He charges around the room clutching his genitals in agony.

SALIM

Madher chod...!

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

59

He sprints out of the room, wailing.

60 INT. ORPHANAGE. SHOWERS. NIGHT.

60

The lights are on and two dozen children are screaming with laughter as Salim stands under the make-shift shower directing the water down his pants to his burning genitals, his face a picture of agony. Latika wipes crushed chillies from her hands.

SALIM

You're dead, sala.

She smiles and walks past Jamal with a shrug. Then Punnoose comes stalking in and the children scatter away.

PUNNOOSE

Get back to bed, dogs! What the hell...

JAMAL V/O

They taught me every song in the history of Indian music.

INSPECTOR V/O

And why would they do that, I wonder?

61 INT. SHACK. NIGHT.

61

In a shack, Arvind is singing one of Surdas' bhajans in front of Maman and an old man who by his ragged appearance must be a villager. Punnoose and Salim sit behind Arvind.

MAMAN

Very good, very good. I am pleased, Arvind. He is ready.

ARVIND

Ready?

Maman nods to Punnoose. Before Arvind can turn round, Punnoose has covered his mouth with a cloth and after the briefest of struggles, Arvind's body goes limp. The villager puts an old tin box on the table. Taking the lid from the tin, he brings out a cloth and unwraps it. Inside is a spoon. He checks the edge with his thumb. Sharp. Douses it with a clear liquid from a bottle and passes it over a candle flame. The spoon whooshes with a high flame for a moment. The villager wipes it with the cloth nods to Punnoose.

PUNNOOSE

Salim!

Utterly bemused, Salim nevertheless helps Punnoose lay Arvind on the table. The villager takes hold of Arvind's eyelid and pulls it open. He brings the spoon close. Suddenly, Salim is being sick in the corner of the shack. By the time he has turned back, the villager is wiping the spoon on a blood-soaked rag.

MAMAN

Okay. Take him out the back.

Punnoose picks up Arvind and carries him out.

MAMAN (CONT'D)

Now the other one. Salim, go get Jamal.

A frozen moment.

SALIM

What?

MAMAN

Gunfighter Number One, isn't that right, Salim? The money, the women, the cars...you want them bad, huh? And why not?

Maman gets out of his chair. Approaches Salim.

MAMAN (CONT'D)

The time has come to choose, yaar. The life of a slum dog or the life of a man. A real man. A gunfighter, Salim.

Maman holds Salim's head in his hands.

MAMAN (CONT'D)

Your destiny is in your hands, bhai. You can be me. Or nobody. Understand?

SALIM

Yes, Maman.

Maman nods.

MAMAN

So, brother, go get Jamal.

Salim is frozen for another few seconds, then turns and walks out of the door. Punnoose appears at the door. Maman nods to him and he slips off after Salim.

All the children are asleep apart from Jamal who is crouched underneath a couple of wash-basins.

(CONTINUED)

He is talking through a plate-sized hole in the crumbling masonry. Latika's eyes can be seen.

JAMAL

...weddings, government things,
big parties. If Maman says my
voice is ready. Big money.

LATIKA

Enough for a room?

JAMAL

Easily. Maybe an apartment.

LATIKA

Really?

JAMAL

That's what Arvind said. On
Harbour Road. You, me and Salim.
The three musketeers.

LATIKA

Harbour Road! We can have ice
cream from Babanji's.

JAMAL

Every day if we want.

Salim appears at the door. Nods his head at Jamal.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

It's my turn.

LATIKA

Good luck, Jamal.

Latika's hand comes through the gap. Jamal takes it for a moment. Salim hisses at Jamal. He lets go of the hand and heads out.

Salim and Jamal walk along the path, Jamal humming happily. Salim checks behind him, sees Punnoose following.

JAMAL

So, this is it, hey, bhai? The
good life, here we come....

SALIM

(conversationally)
Athos.

Jamal is suddenly alert. Slows

63 CONTINUED:

63

JAMAL

Porthos?

Salim nods. Big smile. Puts a hand on Jamal's shoulder.

SALIM

When I say.

64 INT. SHACK. NIGHT.

64

Salim guides Jamal into the shack where Maman and the Villager are waiting. Maman smiles. Punnoose slips in behind Salim.

MAMAN

Jamal, hello. You have done well. It's time for you to- turn professional.

JAMAL

Really?

MAMAN

Sing me a song, yaar. How about Chalo Ri Murali, huh? My favourite.

Jamal opens his mouth, then closes it again. Holds out his hand.

JAMAL

Fifty rupees.

MAMAN

What?

JAMAL

(shrugs)

I've turned professional. What can I do?

Maman laughs.

MAMAN

Sala...!

He throws some notes at him.

65 EXT. SHACK. NIGHT.

65

Outside, a giggle. Latika is peering through a gap in the wall.

66 INT. SHACK. NIGHT.

66

Jamal begins to sing. Maman waits a while, then nods to Punnoose. Behind Jamal, Punnoose hands Salim the bottle of chloroform and the rag. Salim approaches the back of Jamal. Salim waits until he has finished the song. Raises his hand with the rag in it. Maman smiles, nods. Salim flings the contents of the bottle in Punnoose's face. Punnoose screams and stumbles back clutching his eyes, knocking over the table.

SALIM

Go!

Salim and Jamal scramble for the door. The knocked-over candle catches the spilled chloroform and a curtain which whooshes up in flame.

LATIKA

Jamal!

JAMAL

Run!

66A EXT. SHACK. NIGHT.

66A

They charge past the prone Arvind- a flash of bloodied bandages covering his eyes.

67 EXT. HILLSIDE. NIGHT.

67

Heavy, desperate breathing. Feet stumble on roots. Fall into holes. The three children are running. Branches smack into their faces. But they are so scared, nothing will stop them. Behind them, torches scour the undergrowth. Men shouting. They break out of the woods and are confronted with a train goods yard.

68 EXT. GOODS YARD. NIGHT.

68

They run over the tracks, between the trains, but the shouts are getting louder, the torches closer. A diesel engine is moving out of the station. Jamal, Latika and Salim sprint for the Guard's Van at the very back of the moving train. Punnoose is closest to them. Salim is fastest and first to jump the train. He holds out his hand. Jamal grabs it and is hauled in. Jamal holds his hand out to Latika.

JAMAL

Come on! Faster!

She reaches out to him. Their hands almost touch.

(CONTINUED)

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Take it! Take it! I can't reach...

Salim barges Jamal out of the way. Jamal stumbles back as Salim reaches his hand out to Latika, so he doesn't see Latika's hand grasp Salim's, nor see their eyes lock onto each other, nor see Salim very deliberately let go of her hand. Latika stumbles.

LATIKA

Jamal!

Jamal scrambles to the rail. The train gains more speed. Jamal climbs on to the top rung, makes to jump, but Salim flings him backward. Jamal tries to scramble to his feet again, but Salim restrains him.

JAMAL

Got to go back. We've got to go back.

SALIM

He'll kill us if we go back.
Jamal! He was going to take your eyes out- with a bloody spoon!

The train is speeding along. Jamal breaks free and stares back at Latika.

SALIM (CONT'D)

She'll be alright. She always is.

Latika stumbles again and stops running. They watch as Punnoose catches up with her and stops running. He smashes Latika to the ground.

PREM

The question was, for two hundred and fifty thousand rupees: who wrote the famous song Chalo Ri Murali. I should warn you, Jamal: from this question on, if you get the answer wrong you lose everything. So. Are you sure? The life-lines are there....

JAMAL

Surdas.

PREM

Surdas. Apka final jawab?

69 CONTINUED:

69

JAMAL

Yes.

PREM

Computer-ji, A lock kiya-jaye.

The lights dim, the music swells. Prem presses a button on his computer: looks him straight in the eyes for an age.

PREM (CONT'D)

(simply)

Guess what? You're right.

Applause, music, lights.

70 INT. INSPECTOR'S OFFICE. DAY.

70

The Inspector is eying Jamal, weighing it all up.

JAMAL

(shrugging)

Blind singers earn double. You know that.

INSPECTOR

And what happened to the girl?
They blinded her too?

JAMAL

(shakes his head)

They had other plans. Though it
took me a long, long time to
find out.

71 EXT. TRAIN. MORNING.

71

Salim and Jamal are sitting on top of the train. Jamal is staring blankly down the track.

SALIM

Aré, Jamal...

Salim puts an arm around Jamal's shoulder. Jamal wipes the tears from his eyes, shakes his head furiously.

Salim gets up. Holds out his hand.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Come.

JAMAL

Where you going?

SALIM

First class, bhai. Where else?

72 INT/ EXT. FIRST CLASS CARRIAGE. MORNING.

72

The ancient train is huffing slowly up an incline. A middle class Indian couple with their three children are sitting at a table, their breakfast spread before them. Into this domestic scene, unseen by them comes Jamal. Upside down and still outside the train, he is clearly being dangled by his ankles from the train roof. He gives a few, silent directional signs to Salim who manoeuvres him across, dips his hand into the open window, snatches a chapatti and signals frantically to be hoisted up. The family continue to eat, unperturbed.

Then Jamal appears again. This time one of the children spots him. Despite Jamal giving her a friendly wave, she yelps. The father of the group grabs Jamal's hand which has just snatched a samosa. There is a tussle, Salim holding onto Jamal's legs, the father holding onto Jamal's arms and Jamal in the middle, shouting. Salim is losing the battle and his footing. He stumbles and the pair of them fall from the train, rolling and tumbling down an embankment in slow-motion. Interspersed with the seemingly endless tumble are images of Jamal and Salim on top of different trains-

- huddled together against the freezing rain...
- surfing the wind at the front of the train...
- admiring the distant Himalaya....

JAMAL V/O

We criss-crossed the country
from Rajasthan to Calcutta.
Every time we were thrown off we
got back on again. This was our
home for years. A home with
wheels and a whistle.

The final tumble as they crash onto flat ground.

73 EXT. RAILWAY EMBANKMENT. DAY.

73

Groggily, Jamal sits up and groans. Somehow in the tumble, he has been transformed into a twelve year-old. And Salim a strong fourteen year-old. Through the haze of pain and dust, Jamal sees something glinting in the distance- something impossibly beautiful.

JAMAL

Salim? Is this heaven?

SALIM

You're not dead, Jamal.

Jamal clears his head. Sees Salim picking himself up from the ground. But the apparition is still there.

(CONTINUED)

JAMAL

So what's that?

SALIM

Wow.

They stare at the apparition. The unmistakable outline of the Taj Mahal rises from the horizon, pink in the morning sun. Nothing could be more beautiful.

JAMAL

Some hotel, huh?

Jamal and Salim wander under the great dome of the Taj Mahal. Two tiny slum kids dwarfed by this massive monument to love. It is a moment of genuine wonderment for them. Then a tour guide bustles nearby, tourists flowing behind him.

GUIDE

...there are five main elements to the Taj. The Darwaza, the main gateway, the Bageecha or garden, the Masjid or mosque, the Naqqar Khana, the rest house and the Rauza or mausoleum. If you would like to follow me, I will show you the ninety-nine names of Allah on Mumtaz's tomb. As before, please remove your shoes.

Jamal follows the Guide and his entourage into the mausoleum. Salim meanwhile is studying the line of shoes. Tries a smart pair of women's court shoes, before slipping a foot into a nice, white sneaker. A smile crosses his face. His other foot quickly follows and he saunters away, all mock-innocence.

Jamal comes out of the mausoleum into the bright sunlight and looks around for Salim. No sign of him. Suddenly, a German couple approach.

ADA

Please, what time is the next tour?

JAMAL

Err-

PETER

- so much waiting around in this damned country.

Jamal notices that he is standing next to a sign advertising guided tours of the Taj.

JAMAL

No, I-

ADA

- we're on a very tight schedule, you see, young man. Have to see the Red Fort this afternoon. Would it be possible to show us around now? Obviously we understand it would cost more for just the two of us...

Peter waves a couple of thousand rupee notes at Jamal. His eyes widen.

JAMAL

But of course, Madam. Please follow me.

Jamal stalks off. The Germans follow. Jamal stops before the monument. Points a confident arm at it.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

This is....the Taj Mahal.

A terrible pause as Peter and Ada stare at him. Clearly more is expected. He moves off at a pace.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

The Taj Mahal was built by the Emperor Khurram for his wife Mumtaz who was maximum beautiful woman in the whole world. When she died, the Emperor decided to build this five star hotel for everyone who wanted to visit her tomb...but he died in- in fifteen eighty-seven, before any of the rooms were built. Or the lifts. The swimming pool, however, as you can see was completed on schedule in top class fashion.

He waves confidently in the direction of the fountains.

ADA

It says nothing of this in the guide book.

JAMAL

With respect, Madam, the guide book is written by a bunch of lazy, good-for-nothing, Indian beggars.

ADA

Oh.

JAMAL

And this, Lady and Gentleman, is
burial place of Mumtaz.

ADA

How did she die?

JAMAL

A road traffic accident.

ADA

Really?

JAMAL

Maximum pile-up.

PETER

(suspicious)

I thought she died in child-
birth.

JAMAL

(nodding sagely)

Exactly, Sir. She was on the way
to the hospital when it
happened.

Jamal moves on. Ada and Peter exchange a glance.

ADA

(shrugging)

You've seen the way they drive
around here...

Montage of Jamal authoritatively showing tourists
around the Taj Mahal.

JAMAL V/O

It was the best-paid job I've
ever had.

JAMAL

This is the Princess Diana seat,
Madam. Allow me.

Jamal shows the tourist a battered postcard of Princess
Diana, staring doe-eyed into the distance with the Taj
behind. The tourist sits. Jamal adjusts her legs so
that they match the postcard. Takes the photo....

SALIM O/S

Tourist police!

76 CONTINUED:

76

...and abandons the woman with a polite bow, charging for safety as two Police Officers race towards him.

CUT TO:

77 EXT. TAJ MAHAL. DAY.

77

Jamal stands a Tourist on a wall and positions his hands to create the optical illusion that he is dangling the Taj from his fingers. Takes a photo for the Tourist. Behind the Tourist, Salim and a boy called Shankar pick up the Tourist's shoes and saunter casually across the grass.

CUT TO:

78 EXT. ROADSIDE MARKET. AGRA. DAY.

78

By the side of a busy market street Salim stands next to a row of stolen shoes. Sneakers, court shoes, sandals, high heels...he is busy bartering with a man over a pair whilst Jamal tries to shout up business.

JAMAL

Top-class fashion, bottom-class prices! Shoes for all! Shoes for all!

79 EXT. BOYS CAMP, YAMUNA RIVER. DAY.

79

Hectares of drying clothes by the side of the river. Spectacular squares of red, saffron, white. Not far away from the dhobi ghat, there is a makeshift slum-camp where Salim and a gang of children are sitting, smoking. Jamal joins them, hands over a wad of rupees to Salim. Salim counts the cash, hands half to Shankar and slaps Jamal so hard on the back that he nearly falls over.

JAMAL V/O

And life was good.

80 EXT. SLUM. DAY.

80

Jamal gets out of a new Mercedes driven by an Indian Man. A middle-aged American couple also get out. Jamal points them down a lane which opens out on India's largest dhobi where hundreds of women are beating clothes on stone slabs.

JAMAL

This is the biggest dhobi ghat in the whole of India, Mister David.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JAMAL (CONT'D)

They say that every man in Uttar Pradesh is wearing a kurta that has been washed here at least one time.

CLARK

Is that so? That's amazing.
Let's get a look at this, Adele.

He gets out his video camera and wanders towards the dhobi ghat. Behind them a motor rickshaw pulls up. Salim, Shankar and a couple of the street kids from the Taj leap out. Within seconds, the Mercedes is up on bricks and the wheels are being removed. Salim takes a hacksaw to the Mercedes badge on the bonnet, whilst urging the others on.

SALIM

Aré, sala! Formula One, Formula One!
Pit-stop ka speed,
Schumacher ka ishtyle

The crowds in the lane barely notice as the car is stripped of all its parts.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Go, go!

A shout from the top of the lane and the boys scatter, bouncing the four wheels at speed down the lane. Jamal, the Indian driver and the two Americans return. They stop in front of the denuded car.

CLARK

Woah. What happened here?

Suddenly the Indian driver is slapping Jamal ferociously around the head with one of his shoes.

DRIVER

I give you two tight slaps,
mader chod!

JAMAL

I don't know! I didn't do it,
did I...? Nothing to do with
me...get off!

But the beating continues, the driver kicking Jamal down onto the floor. The two Americans stare, uncertain what to do.

ADELE

Do something, Clark.

CLARK

Well, I- I dunno, I-

Finally Clark intervenes, pulling the driver off Jamal.

(CONTINUED)

CLARK (CONT'D)

Okay, okay, just cool it. You're insured, aren't you? Jesus Christ...

Jamal sits up. He is bleeding from his nose and mouth.

CLARK (CONT'D)

You okay?

JAMAL

You wanted to see the 'real India', Mister David. Here it is.

ADELE

Well, here's a bit of the real America, too, son.

Adele pulls out his wallet and rummages for dollars.

81 EXT. YAMUNA RIVER. NIGHT.

81

A battered Jamal limps along the river bank towards the Taj. He stops, bathes his swollen face in the river. Then looks up. Strange lights appear to emanate from the base of the monument. And then strange sounds.

82 EXT. TAJ MAHAL. NIGHT.

82

Jamal climbs a crumbling wall and is confronted with an opera taking place right under the dome. Gluck's Orfeo ed Euridice. Hundreds of India's smartest professionals are watching from banked seating on a scaffolding frame.

83 EXT. STANDS. NIGHT.

83

Jamal and a couple of street kids slip under the scaffolding supporting the banked seats. The street kids are trying to reach the hand-bags of the women above them.

BOY

(hissing)

Oi, Jamal! There's a woman with no panties on over here.

Jamal reaches up and easily lifts a wallet from a man's trouser pocket. On stage, the actors start singing. Jamal seems to have forgotten the wallet and stares, mesmerised, at the stage.

WOMAN

Why don't you put it back and listen to the music?

(CONTINUED)

Jamal starts, makes to run, but the woman who spoke holds out a cigarette. A Canadian back-packer is sitting, staring at the singers.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

It's called Orfeo. Orpheus and Eurydice. Orpheus- that one there- is looking for his lover, Eurydice. She died, but he can't live without her.

She hands him a cigarette. He puts the wallet back. She smiles at him and they both turn to the stage.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

The pain is so bad that he goes to the underworld- the place we go when we die- to try to get her back.

JAMAL

You can't do that. Can you?

WOMAN

(shrugging)
You can in opera.

JAMAL

Does he find her?

WOMAN

Watch and see.

Jamal watches as Orpheus sings one of the most beautiful pieces of music a human is likely to hear. Tears are running down Jamal's cheeks.

Salim, Shankar, Jamal and the Taj Gang are gathered around a campfire. All of them wear extraordinary footwear of one form or another, from elaborate high heels to walking boots five sizes too large. A home-made hooka pipe is being passed around the fire. The eyes of the children have long since stopped focussing. Salim is sporting a Mercedes Benz badge on a chain around his neck. Behind him, Jamal appears, his face swollen. He takes off his fake Guide's Badge and throws it in the fire.

SALIM

Woah! What are you- Jamal?

JAMAL

We have to go, Salim.

SALIM

Go? Go where?

JAMAL

Bombay.

SALIM

Don't be stupid. We're making good money here.

JAMAL

We should have gone a long time ago.

Salim turns to Shankar with sudden understanding.

SALIM

Oh, God. Baby brother's in love. With a flat-chested hijra.

JAMAL

Latika was one of us. A musketeer.

SALIM

A musketeer...Grow up, Jamal. Look, how was I to know they'd beat you up. Here, you can have some of the cash. Come on...

JAMAL

I've got cash.

He rips out a wad of dollar bills from his pocket.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Dollars.

SALIM

How much?

JAMAL

Enough. I'm getting my stuff.

He walks off.

SALIM

Wait! Jamal! Ah, shit!

He gets up, kicks the fire in rage and stomps after Jamal.

Prem leans back in his chair.

PREM

So, my friend: ready for another question.

JAMAL

Yes.

Prem presses his computer. The lights dim again, the music comes up.

PREM

For a straight one million rupees, Ladies and Gentlemen...On an American One Hundred Dollar Bill there is a portrait of which American statesman? Is it A), George Washington, B) Franklin Roosevelt, C) Benjamin Franklin, D) Abraham Lincoln?

Silence from Jamal.

PREM (CONT'D)

Pay or play, Jamal? All you have to do is stop now and you walk away with a cool quarter of a million rupees. Decide to play, get the answer wrong and you walk away with absolutely nothing. But, get the answer right and you win a million rupees. So. You decide. Pay or play?

A long pause.

86 INT. GALLERY. NIGHT.

86

DIRECTOR

Okay, he hasn't got a clue. This is going to be a walk-away. Stand by.

VISION MIXER

No, he's going to play with him, first.

87 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

87

PREM

Get a lot of hundred dollar bills in your line of work, Jamal?

JAMAL

The minimum tip for my services.

Laughter from the audience.

PREM

Now I know why my cell phone bill is so high...they pay the chi-wallah in hundred dollar bills!

JAMAL

It's C. Benjamin Franklin.

A gasp from the audience. Prem is caught off-guard.

PREM

Woah! We haven't locked the computer, man. You're going to play?

JAMAL

I think I just have. Haven't I?

PREM

You certainly have. C. Right?

JAMAL

Right. C.

PREM

Not confusing your Franklins? Benjamin for Roosevelt?

JAMAL

I've never heard of Roosevelt Franklin.

PREM

There's a million rupees at stake and he's never heard of Roosevelt Franklin...I can't bear to look.

He gives this one to the audience who titter on cue. Jamal looks confused.

PREM (CONT'D)

No, no. Don't you worry, Jamal. You were asked which statesman is depicted on a hundred dollar bill. You said C. Benjamin Franklin. Ladies and Gentlemen...

He presses the computer, pretends to ruminate for a while with his finger pressed to his lips.

PREM (CONT'D)

Jamal Malik- you chose to play not pay. I'm afraid you no longer have two hundred and fifty thousand rupees....

87 CONTINUED: (2)

87

Prem leans over and tears up the cheque. There is a sigh of disappointment from the audience, a look of confusion on Jamal's face.

PREM (CONT'D)

...you in fact have one million rupees!

Wild applause from the audience. Jamal allows himself a genuine smile.

88 INT. INSPECTOR'S OFFICE. DAY.

88

The Inspector pulls out a note from his wallet. Glances at it.

INSPECTOR

Who's on the thousand rupee note?

JAMAL

I don't know.

He waves the note at him.

INSPECTOR

It's Gandhi!

JAMAL

I've heard of him.

The Inspector kicks his chair.

INSPECTOR

Don't get clever or I'll get the electricity out again.

JAMAL

They didn't ask me that question. I don't know why. Ask them.

The Inspector stares hard at Jamal.

INSPECTOR

Funny, you don't seem that interested in money.

Then, Constable Srinivas stomps back into the office, sweat pouring from him.

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

Platform Seventeen-

Has to consult his notebook.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

88

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS (CONT'D)

A statue of Frederick Stevens,
architect and builder of
Victoria Terminus in -

INSPECTOR OF POLICE

- yes, yes, Srinivas. The
hundred dollar bill.

89 EXT. BOMBAY. DAY.

89

From a thousand feet in the sky, looking down on the
limitless megatropolis of Mumbai. Half-built sky-
scrapers, slums, factories, roads, trains.

JAMAL V/O

Bombay had turned into Mumbai.

We descend, down until the lines of ants become people.

JAMAL V/O (CONT'D)

The orphanage had gone, the slum
had gone, the people.... all
gone. And everywhere was
building, building, building.

Descending even further, we pick out a construction
site and then Jamal....

90 EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE. DAY.

90

..who is staring through a wire fence at the
construction site.

JAMAL V/O

But I knew she was here.
Somewhere she was here.

He turns away, then something catches his eye.
Underneath all the scraps of flyers and posters on a
broken wall is a corner of something that Jamal
recognises. He tears back a poster. Underneath, faded
but recognisable is one of their beanbag graffiti
advertisements.

91 EXT. SLUM. NIGHT.

91

Jamal asks a group of stall-holders on the slum main
street. They shrug, aren't interested. The camera pulls
up and up until Jamal is nothing but a dot wandering
the maze of lanes, railways and highways, one among
endless millions of people.

JAMAL V/O

Evenings, I searched. Days, I
worked.

92 EXT. HOTEL. DAY. 92

Jamal wanders up to the rickshaw drivers parked outside the hotel. He stops and asks a question. The drivers shake their heads. Jamal continues up the steps towards a door, exhausted face and grubby clothes walking straight towards camera. He goes through the door and immediately....

93 INT. HOTEL. FOYER. DAY. 93

....is, without breaking step in a slightly grubby white uniform. He walks across the echoing, marble floor of a struggling four-star hotel, goes through double doors....

94 INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR. DAY. 94

...into a corridor that is devoid of carpet, paint-anything except a phone on the bare wall and a stool. The phone is ringing. Jamal sits on the stool and answers the phone.

JAMAL

Room service, good afternoon?...
Yes, sir. Two chicken burgers,
two fries, one cocoa-cola and
one mango lassi and a large
bottle of mineral
water...Bisleri or Himalayan
Spring, Sir?...Certainly, Sir.
That will be with you in fifteen
minutes, Sir. Thank you. Have a
nice day.

He hangs up and goes through another set of doors...

95 INT. HOTEL KITCHENS. DAY. 95

...to a cramped kitchen with definite hygiene problems. The cooks are playing carom on the table while under it Salim is dozing.

JAMAL

Two chicken burgers, coke, mango
lassi and a bottle of Bisleri.

Dozily, Salim gets up and takes a look behind one of the fridges. He chases out a chicken with a desultory kick and sorts through some empty mineral water bottles until he finds a Bisleri bottle. Salim fills the bottle of mineral water from the tap and begins delicately re-sealing the tamper-proof lid with super-glue. Jamal collects cutlery and starts laying out a tray.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

I'm going to Chowpatti again,
okay? Want to come?

SALIM

For God's sake. You got some
disease? You force me back to
this shit-hole, we leave our
friends, a good life, loads of
money- for this. Isn't that
enough?

JAMAL

We came back to find her.

SALIM

No, you did, Jamal, not me. Me,
I don't give a shit about her.
Plenty of pussy in Bombay for
Salim. Oh, yes, sir! You should
come down the Cages on Saturday
night instead of searching for
your lost love.

JAMAL

I'm going to Chowpatti.

SALIM

(impersonating Ram)
"I'm going to Chowpatti". There
are nineteen million people in
this city, Jamal. Forget her.
She's history.

JAMAL V/O

But she wasn't.

Jamal is dodging the traffic at a busy junction. He
moves around the beggars who are working the cars. Then
he hears singing. He looks around, suddenly panicked.
It is a siren song drawing him across the road, not
even noticing that he is narrowly run down by a couple
of cars, to a traffic island underneath a flyover. He
turns a corner and there is the singer, leaning up
against one of the struts of the flyover. Arvind. Older
now, just like Jamal, a fourteen year-old boy. But eye-
less. Jamal freezes. He approaches Arvind and waits
until he has finished singing. Despite his eyeless
sockets, Arvind appears to know somebody is there. He
turns and bows low, putting his hands together.

ARVIND

Namaste, Sahib. Any kindness you
give will be repaid in heaven
many times.

Jamal gets a couple of notes out of his pocket and puts them into Arvind's outstretched hand. He feels the notes with his fingers.

ARVIND (CONT'D)

A fifty. And a hundred!
Blessings upon you, Sahib.

JAMAL

How do you know?

ARVIND

There are many ways of seeing.

Arvind puts his hands together and bows deep again. Then, Jamal takes his shoe off and gets out a hundred dollar bill.

JAMAL

Here.

Jamal crouches down and puts the bill into Arvind's hand. His fingers feel it. He sniffs it.

ARVIND

Dollars. But how many?

JAMAL

One hundred.

ARVIND

Now you are playing with me,
Sahib.

JAMAL

No. I swear.

ARVIND

What is on it? The pictures.
Tell me.

JAMAL

A building. With a clock on it.
Trees behind it.

ARVIND

The other side. Turn it over.

JAMAL

A man- it doesn't say his name.
He is sort of bald, but has long
hair on the sides.

ARVIND

(smiling)
Benjamin Franklin. My God, my
God. Thank you, Sahib. You were
generous the first time. But
this...

(CONTINUED)

He stops. Suspects.

ARVIND (CONT'D)
And without even a song?

A long pause. Arvind keeps hold of Jamal's arm.

ARVIND (CONT'D)
So you are rich, now, are you,
Jamal? I am happy for you.

JAMAL
I am so sorry, Arvind.

ARVIND
You got away. I didn't. That is
all. No, no tears. Tears mock me
all the more.

JAMAL
Arvind, I am looking for-

ARVIND
- how's your voice, Jamal?

JAMAL
I don't know. I haven't sung
since- since then. Arvind, I-

ARVIND
- and your eyes?

JAMAL
(surprised)
My eyes? My eyes are fine.

ARVIND
Then stay away, chutiyé, and
count your blessings every
morning you open them and see
the sun rising. You owe Maman.
He doesn't forget.

JAMAL
I owe Latika.

Arvind shakes his head angrily.

JAMAL (CONT'D)
Please. Is she alive? Arvind, is
she alive?

ARVIND
Alive? Oh, she's alive alright.
It's your life, Jamal. Pila
Street. They call her Cherry,
now.

96 CONTINUED: (3)

96

JAMAL

Thank you.

Jamal heads off through the traffic. Arvind shouts after him.

ARVIND

I will sing at your funeral,
yaar.

97 EXT. PILA STREET. NIGHT.

97

Dark, crowded streets. Gangs of women stand outside the doorways or lean out of upstairs windows. They are garishly-dressed prostitutes varying in age from 13 to 60. Men wander past, eying the possibilities, exchanging lewd comments with them. Among the hordes on the pavement are Jamal and Salim. They pass doorway after doorway of narrow rooms where prostitutes wait for customers. Jamal and Salim stop at each group of women, Salim taking the lead, clearly asking them something, as the women either shrug or offer them something lewd- judging by the laughter that follows. But one woman in a narrow doorway points down the street. Jamal has to drag a reluctant Salim away from the group.

98 INT. BROTHEL. NIGHT.

98

They go into one of the tiny houses. Loud Filmi music comes from upstairs. They are confronted by a woman in her fifties watching tv. She is less than interested.

SALIM

I'm looking for Cherry.

WOMAN

No, kid. Not available. Plenty
of others. Take a look.

She indicates curtained cubicles behind him.

SALIM

I'm Latika's brother.

The Woman looks at him properly for the first time.

WOMAN

She's still not on the menu.
Choose someone else or piss off.

Then, Jamal pulls out some rupee notes.

JAMAL

Just two minutes to talk to her.

She takes the money, counts it.

(CONTINUED)

WOMAN

Two minutes.

She nods upwards. Salim and Jamal head up the dark, tiny staircase. The Woman picks up the phone on her desk.

On the tiny landing, Salim and Jamal pull back a curtain to reveal a humping couple. They move on, past more women lying on their beds or blankly having sex, not in the least perturbed to be interrupted. They reach the end of the landing. From the other side of the door comes the filmi music. Jamal puts his eye to one of the gaps in the slatted door. Through it he can see glimpses of a girl dancing to the music. Latika; though not the rag-picker of before. Now fifteen, she is a beautiful young woman and dressed in a revealing, turquoise, silk sari.

SALIM

Is it her or not?

He shoves Jamal out of the way and watches.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Shit, she's sexy, man....

Then the music stops, an effeminate man steps into the limited frame Salim can see and snaps a stick down hard on Latika's hand.

DANCE TEACHER

Smile! Flow, flow! You *entice*
with the hands not make
chapattis, you gawaar. Again.

The man starts the music again and Latika's hands flow elegantly around her head.

DANCE TEACHER (CONT'D)

Lift your feet, you lump. Stop,
stop!

The stick is raised to hit her but Jamal opens the door.

She can barely believe her eyes.

LATIKA

Jamal?

The Dance Teacher turns.

DANCE TEACHER

What the hell do you want?

He switches off the music.

JAMAL

Come. Quick.

But Latika remains fixed.

DANCE TEACHER

You silly little boys. Get out now while you can.

JAMAL

Come with us.

Latika runs to Jamal. But she freezes as she looks at the doorway. Maman, Punnoose and the Woman from downstairs stand there. The skin around Punnoose's eye bears the blisters from the chloroform burn years ago.

MAMAN

Look who we have here, Punnoose. Hello again, Jamal. Salim. Never forget a face. Especially one that I own.

PUNNOOSE

Shall I take them to the marshes?

MAMAN

Whatever you like. Have fun. Just make sure that you dispose of them properly afterwards. No traces, thank you.

He turns to Jamal.

MAMAN (CONT'D)

You really thought you could just walk in and take my prize away? Have you any idea how much this little virgin is worth, bhen chod?

He fingers Latika's hair.

MAMAN (CONT'D)

Get them out of here.

Punnoose and the Muscle walk towards Jamal. Maman turns to the Dance Teacher as they grab his arms.

MAMAN (CONT'D)

Please continue, Master-ji.

The Dance Teacher puts the music back on.

(CONTINUED)

SALIM

No.

Suddenly, Salim is holding a pistol.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Leave him. Get over there.

Punnoose and the Muscle slowly release Jamal and join Maman.

MAMAN

Let's not be foolish, Salim.
Heavy, aren't they?

Salim straightens up his gun arm.

SALIM

Money.

MAMAN

You can have money. Here.

Maman gets out his wallet and throws all the money in it on the floor.

MAMAN (CONT'D)

Take it. Go. Disappear with your
friend and we'll forget all
about this. Okay?

Salim collects up the money.

SALIM

Maman never forgets. Isn't that
right?

MAMAN

Oh, Maman can make an exception.

Salim walks over to the music, turns it up. Picks up a cushion from the bed and walks right up to Maman.

SALIM

Can't take that risk, Maman.
Sorry.

He wraps the cushion around the gun and pulls the trigger. Or tries to. Nothing happens. There is a frozen moment as they watch him fail to shoot. Everybody watches with surreal interest as Salim fumbles with the pistol. Eventually he looks up, giggles stupidly.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Safety catch.

Shrugs apologetically and shoots. Nobody is more surprised than Maman who crumples onto the floor.

(CONTINUED)

100 CONTINUED: (3)

100

Latika starts desperately gathering up the notes on the floor, grabs Maman's wallet. Jamal just stands.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Come on.

They run out of the room and down the stairs as Maman dies on the floor in front of his frozen colleagues.

101 EXT. CHOWPATTY BEACH. DUSK.

101

Children are splashing in the sea, flying kites, digging sand, laughing. Salim, Latika and Jamal are crouched on the shore watching the sun sink into the sea. Latika is going through Maman's wallet, Salim is fingering the pistol, admiringly. Jamal is staring out to sea. Each in their own world, yet sharing swigs from a bottle of Johnny Walker.

LATIKA

Shit, there's thousands here.

SALIM

We should be celebrating.

JAMAL

You just killed somebody.

SALIM

He was going to kill us.

JAMAL

Where did you get the gun?

SALIM

Bought it. Now, I'm going to have to throw this beauty in the sea.

LATIKA

You didn't need to kill him.

SALIM

What? Typical. I save your life and you're on at me. All you ever do is mess us up. Whenever you're around-

JAMAL

- shut up, can't you? Just shut up.

Silence.

SALIM

Why can't you just be happy, huh?

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

JAMAL

Happy?

SALIM

You got what you wanted, didn't you? So, let's celebrate.

LATIKA

Yeah. Let's celebrate.

She takes a long swig from the bottle.

LATIKA (CONT'D)

While we can.

She nudges Jamal and holds the bottle out to him. Smiles at him. He smiles back, shakes the black dog from his head and takes a long, long drink. Latika and Salim cheer.

101A EXT. TULIP STAR. NIGHT.

101A

Latika, Salim and Jamal bend back a bit of the wire mesh fence that protects the deserted hotel. Crawl in.

102 INT. TULIP STAR. LOBBY. NIGHT.

102

A very wobbly Latika, Salim and Jamal walk up the frozen escalators of the empty hotel, lit only by security lights. Kick through the odd pile of rubbish and stacked-up chairs. Go to the dusty reception desk.

JAMAL

Service!

SALIM

Reception!

JAMAL

We want a room, boy. Executive Class with smoking. Third floor with balcony.

LATIKA

Sea-facing, yaar.

SALIM

Have the bags brought up.

And they scoot off, giggling into the dark.

102A INT. TULIP STAR. KITCHENS. NIGHT.

102A

Jamal and Latika wander the vast, empty kitchens. Jamal searches the empty chillers and cabinets. Then, realises that he is alone.

(CONTINUED)

102A CONTINUED:

102A

JAMAL

Latika? Salim?

Where are they? Suddenly,

LATIKA

Room service!

She comes shooting out of the darkness across the kitchen floor riding a trolley with Salim pushing her at top speed. Jamal has to skid out of the way. He grabs another trolley and glides off in pursuit.

102B INT. TULIP STAR. CORRIDOR. NIGHT.

102B

The three stand by a mirror and play with their reflections.

102C INT. TULIP STAR. HOTEL LOBBY. LATER.

102C

On top of the metal preparation counters, Salim and Jamal are fencing: Jamal with a fish slice and Salim with a large spoon.

103 INT. HOTEL ROOM. NIGHT.

103

An empty, dusty hotel suite. Jamal is on the phone.

JAMAL

307 here. I want a bottle of
Johnny Walker Red Label, beer,
wine-

LATIKA

- chicken.

JAMAL

Ah! Chicken....

Jamal closes his eyes at the wonderful thought.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

What kind of chicken?

LATIKA

(also dreaming)
Tikka Masala. With roti-

SALIM

Naan, chutney, dal-

LATIKA

- aloo gobi, rice-

She stops. Change of mind.

(CONTINUED)

LATIKA (CONT'D)

Pop Tarts!

JAMAL

Hold the line, chutiye.
Pop Tarts?

LATIKA

On the tv. The commercial.
Everybody's happy when they have
Pop Tarts.

JAMAL

Exactly! A *bucket* of Pop Tarts,
chutiye.

Jamal slams down the phone.

104 INT. HOTEL ROOM. LATER.

104

Latika is clearly in the shower. Jamal wanders in carrying an old pair of lunghi. Shouts through the door.

JAMAL

Found some lunghi!

LATIKA V/O

Stay there. Look away.

The shower stops.

JAMAL

Atcha, atcha.

LATIKA V/O

I'll know if you're looking....

JAMAL

I'm not!

With a towel around her, Latika comes to the doorway where Jamal is holding out a the lunghi with his eyes tight shut.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Where's Salim?

LATIKA

Dunno.

She watches this innocent a second with true fondness.

LATIKA (CONT'D)

You're a sweet boy, Jamal.

104 CONTINUED:

104

She takes the lunghi from his outstretched hand and disappears into the bathroom, slamming the door with a giggle.

105 EXT. MUMBAI SLUM STREET. NIGHT.

105

Salim wanders the crowded streets of a slum. He stops uncertainly at a doorway where a group of men are lolling, smoking. Plucks up his courage.

SALIM

I'm looking for Javed-bhai.

MAN

Ja, mada chod. He's not looking for you. Ja!

SALIM

I need to see him.

The group of men stir, irritated now. Salim begins to back away, then stops. Pulls the gun from behind his back.

SALIM (CONT'D)

I killed Maman. I'll kill you too. Easy.

The group are frozen.

JAVED

You killed him?

Javed is standing in the doorway.

JAVED (CONT'D)

My enemy's enemy is my friend, no? So, come in, friend.

106 INT. HOTEL ROOM. LATER.

106

Jamal and Latika lie on the bed, drunk, though still coherent. Latika is dressed in the Bell-Boy's jacket and the old lunghi.

LATIKA

Maman's gang will hunt us. You know that?

JAMAL

I don't care.

LATIKA

Me neither.

They burst into stupid laughter. The laughter subsides.

(CONTINUED)

JAMAL

That dance you were doing. In Pila Street. Show me.

Latika rolls over and switches off the light. Rolls back. In the half light, her hands begin to move for Jamal, the elegant, alluring hand movements of the bar-girl dancers. Jamal stares, mesmerised.

LATIKA

You came back for me.

JAMAL

Of course.

LATIKA

I thought you'd forgotten.

AMIR

I never forgot. Not for one day. I knew I'd find you in the end. It's our destiny.

LATIKA

Destiny. Yes.

Latika stops her hands. They stare at each other, their faces inches away from each other. Latika strokes Jamal's face.

LATIKA (CONT'D)

Thank you.

And face to face, they slowly fall asleep.

SALIM

Hey.

Jamal opens his eyes. Salim is standing over them, swaying with alcohol.

JAMAL

Salim?

He puts his hand out to Latika.

SALIM

Come.

JAMAL

No. Salim....Bhai, you've had a lot to drink...

Jamal tries to get up, but Salim's hand is round his throat and pushes him down on the bed.

SALIM

I am the elder. And I am the boss. For once, you do as I say.

JAMAL

No.

Salim pulls Latika to her feet.

SALIM

I saved your bloody life, didn't I?

LATIKA

Salim, please-

SALIM

- chup, sali.

As he turns, pulling a protesting Latika, Jamal leaps on him. The two brothers go down fighting, but of course it is Salim who comes up on top. Latika launches herself at Salim, but he smashes her away, almost delighted that she has joined in. He drags Jamal to the door, laughing.

Salim throws him out into the corridor, slams the door.

SALIM

I am Number One now!

JAMAL

Salim, no, no....!

SALIM

Get yourself a room, bhai.

Salim slams the door. Jamal gets up, bangs on the door, keeps on banging until the door opens and Salim stands there with the pistol pointing straight at Jamal's head.

SALIM (CONT'D)

The man with the Colt 45 says chup.

He shoves Jamal hard down the corridor, the gun pointed at him all the while.

JAMAL

Salim...

Salim nods towards the fire escape door.

SALIM

Now go. Or Gunmaster G-9 will shoot you right between the eyes. Boom. Don't think he won't. You have five seconds. One, two, three, four-

Salim cocks the pistol. Jamal screws up his eyes for the inevitable. But Salim shoves him out with a roar and slams the door. Jamal bangs on the door.

JAMAL O/S

Salim...

Salim walks slowly back down the corridor as Jamal bangs and bangs on the door. Down the hall, Salim's door shuts.

109 INT. INSPECTOR'S OFFICE. DAY.

109

The Inspector is staring hard at Jamal. Srinivas is desperately trying to get his attention.

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

Sir, sir!

INSPECTOR

(eventually)
Enlighten us Constable.

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

Accessory to murder, Sir.

The Inspector puts his hands in the air, palms up. Simple.

INSPECTOR

Only the finest minds in the Mumbai Police Force.

Untroubled by irony, Srinivas looks extremely pleased.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

Go check the files, Constable.

Srinivas goes out.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

You puzzle me, Slumdog. Admitting murder to avoid a charge of fraud is not exactly clever thinking. Now, why would you do that?

Jamal shrugs.

109 CONTINUED:

109

JAMAL

When somebody asks me a question, I tell them the answer.

110 EXT. TULIP STAR. MORNING.

110

At the gate, a Security Guard is sitting in his chair.

JAMAL

Where are they?

The Guard grunts.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Where did they go?

A more impatient grunt from the Guard. He stands up, walks towards Jamal.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Please, Sir. Which way?

SECURITY GUARD

I don't know and I don't care.

The Guard raises his stick and gives him a roar. Jamal backs away onto the street. The Guard slams the gate shut. Jamal looks despairingly up and down the street at the teeming traffic, the crowds.

PREM V/O

Ready for another question.

JAMAL V/O

Yes. I'm ready.

111 OMITTED

111

112 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

112

We are back in the Studio.

PREM

For two and a half million rupees. Ladies and Gentlemen. Cambridge Circus is in which UK City. Is it A) Oxford, B) Leeds, C) Cambridge, D) London.

Jamal smiles.

PREM (CONT'D)

He's smiling. Why does that worry me?

113 EXT. MUMBAI. DAY. 113

Leaden skies. Torrential rain is hammering on the tin roofs of the slum.

114 INT. SHACK. DAY. 114

Eighteen year-old Jamal's eyes open. Now with the beginnings of a beard and moustache, Jamal wakes in a tiny shack just big enough for a mattress on the floor. He pulls on a shirt, lifts the mattress and takes out his trousers which have been pressing there all night, puts them over his shoulder, picks up his shoes and goes down a ladder.

115 INT. SHACK. DAY. 115

He descends into a room and two feet of water that is eddying around the ground floor of the shack. Wades out of the door into the narrow lane of the slum.

116 EXT. SLUM. DAY. 116

Jamal nods hello to a number of neighbours, also bare-legged, also with their shoes in hand. Together, they wade to higher ground, put on their trousers and shoes and trudge up to the main road.

117 INT. CALL CENTRE. NIGHT. 117

Ultra-modern, glass-windowed office. The words Cultural Studies are written on the white board. Jamal walks in with a tray of glasses of chi. He puts a glass down on the young, hip, Teacher's desk and heads out again.

TEACHER

Okay, guys, it's been a big week in UK. Kat is back.

He holds up a copy of Radio Times showing Kat from East Enders smiling at them. A collective groan from the Trainees.

BARDI

She's already back.

TEACHER

Bardi...Jamal?

JAMAL

Oh. Well. She did come back, then she went away when Alfie split up with her and now she's back again.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

117 CONTINUED:

117

JAMAL (CONT'D)

But it looks as if Alfie still
fancies Mo after all, so-

TEACHER

- thank you, Jamal. Keep up,
Bardi. The chi-wallah knows more
than you.

Bardi glares at Jamal. Jamal shrugs apologetically and
goes out.

TEACHER (CONT'D)

Okay, it's been super-duper hot
for UK this week, so there'll be
a lot of chat about that- they
love their weather- and there's
the festival in Edinburgh-
Edinburgh?

He points at a young woman Trainee.

NASREEN

Scotland. Kilts, castles, err,
haggis? Porridge, the Highlands,
mountains. Ben- Ben Nevis?

The Teacher points at another Trainee.

TRAINEE 2

Detective Taggart. Whisky, Sean
Connery!

TEACHER

And lochs. Their word for lakes.
Good. It's also double bonus
time for an upgrade to the
'friends and family' package
this week, so remember to push
for an upgrade...

EVERYONE

...Every Call!

Jamal walks out, turns a corner.

118 INT. CALL CENTRE. UK FLOOR. NIGHT.

118

We are confronted with a room you could swing a Boeing
in. Rows and rows of Operators in tiny booths stretch
into the distance. On the walls are pictures of London,
Tony Blair, red telephone boxes, the Yorkshire Dales,
the Highlands- a snapshot of tourist Britain. Huge
posters of soap stars and celebrities adorn the rest of
the walls. Slogans hang from the ceiling. "When the sun
comes up, you'd better be running", "you snooze, you
lose", "Upgrade for a better, faster life." "Every call
is a new opportunity".

(CONTINUED)

Each section of the room has a banner with a British city's name on it and various mock sign-posts for the different aisles. A Manager under the banner "Bradford", is standing over an Operator, listening in on a call. The Manager leans over and presses a key.

MANAGER

If they want an upgrade, a new tariff or we're stealing them from the other networks, you take the call. Anything else-

He mimes cutting his throat.

MANAGER (CONT'D)

No time-wasters on Team Bradford, kid. Leave that to the homosexuals on Tunbridge Wells.

Jamal stops by him. The Manager takes a glass of tea from Jamal.

MANAGER (CONT'D)

Where've you been? Dave on Cornmarket's virtually lost his voice, there's two on Ilkley Moor who've had their hands up for hours. Come on, move it!

Jamal hurries down the aisle signposted "Cornmarket", gets to a male trainee and hands him a tea. Dave glances around to check nobody's looking and slips off his head-set.

DAVE

Two minutes, Jamal. I'm on "Millionaire" duty.

JAMAL

Rajneesh...

DAVE

It's my turn, Jamal. I've had my pee breaks. Please. If he comes just keep your head down and pretend you're doing an upgrade on the-

JAMAL

- 'friends and family'. I know.

Jamal still looks unwilling.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Two minutes.

118 CONTINUED: (2)

118

Dave heads off towards a Rest and Recreation room, where a big plasma screen on the wall is showing "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire." Jamal grabs the jacket from the back of Dave's chair, puts the head-set on and hunches over the booth, just another Operative at work. We become aware that every operator down the Cornmarket aisle- and quite a few other aisles besides- is staring in the direction of the Rest and Recreation Room.

119 INT. REST AND RECREATION ROOM. NIGHT.

119

Dave is watching the screen.

PREM

...if you want a chance to be a contestant on *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*, dial the number now.

Dave dives for the doorway and waves.

120 INT. CALL CENTRE. UK FLOOR. NIGHT.

120

Suddenly all the operators are dialling. Almost simultaneously, twenty or so voices say.

OPERATORS

I'd like to be a contestant on *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*.

Most of the Operators- including the man next to Jamal- suddenly lose their tension.

OPERATOR

Bloody bastard. I *never* get it.

JAMAL

You have to dial when Prem says "if". "If you want the chance to be a contestant on *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire*..." That's when they open the lines.

The Operator looks at him. Jamal shrugs.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

That's what Anjum in Technical says. He put the system in.

OPERATOR

So why don't you?

WOMAN V/O

Hello? Hello? Have I been transferred again, for God's sake?

(CONTINUED)

Jamal freezes with fear. The head-set speaks again with its broad Scottish accent.

WOMAN V/O (CONT'D)

Hello? Jesus, God, will somebody talk to me?

JAMAL

Hello, Mrs...

He stares at the computer.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

...Mackintosh from King Gussie.

WOMAN V/O

(weary)

It's Kingussie, love. Pronounced Kinoosie.

JAMAL

Kinoosie?

WOMAN V/O

So where are you from? Abroad, I bet. China or somewhere. What good is-

JAMAL

- just down the road from your house, Mrs Mackintosh. Next to the loch.

WOMAN V/O

(suspicious)

Oh aye? Which loch?

Jamal searches desperately around, spots a picture of Big Ben.

JAMAL

Loch Big- Loch Ben. Next door to Detective Taggart's flat.

WOMAN V/O

Loch Ben? Och, no, hen, that's one of the wee ones up in the Highlands. You're all the way up there? But I bet it rains, eh, hen?

JAMAL

Indeed yes, Mrs Mackintosh. I have to wade through a metre of water every morning.

WOMAN V/O

No!

JAMAL

Yes, yes, Mrs Mackintosh. In my kilt.

WOMAN V/O

Och, no, hen.

Jamal puts his feet on the desk.

JAMAL

It's alright once I've had my porridge, my haggis and a few Scotch whiskies- and the monsoon's nearly over, so-

WOMAN V/O

- and what monsoon would that be? I'd like to speak to your supervisor, son.

JAMAL

I don't think that's a good idea. He is a very important man, Mrs Mackintosh-

WOMAN V/O

- get me the supervisor on this line now-

JAMAL

- and he doesn't like bloody time wasters.

Jamal panics, presses the button he saw the Manager press earlier. The screen goes blank, then reboots itself. Jamal looks around. Where the hell is Dave? On the screen, Jamal is faced with the question: "what name do you require?" He looks around again, and then with one finger types in the word "Latika". He presses enter. Hundred upon hundred of Latikas with their surnames and phone numbers scroll down the page. He erases her name and enters the name Salim K. Malik. Presses enter. Fifteen numbers come up. He stares at the numbers for a long time, then types it into his computer and presses dial.

MAN V/O

Yeah?

JAMAL

Salim?

MAN V/O

Who wants to know? Do you know what bloody time it is?

Clearly not Jamal's brother. Jamal cuts the line. Dials the next number.

MAN V/O (CONT'D)

Huh. Hello?

Clearly not his Salim. He cuts the line. Dials again.

SALIM V/O

Hello? Hello? Who is this?

But Jamal can't speak.

SALIM V/O (CONT'D)

Hey. Is someone screwing with me?

Silence.

SALIM V/O (CONT'D)

Who is this?

JAMAL

I am calling from XL 5 Communications Sir. As a valued customer, we are offering you a free upgrade with our 'friends and-

Jamal's voice peters out.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Family.

SALIM V/O

Jamal? Is that you? Brother? Where are you, man?...I thought you were dead or something...we had to go, Jamal. Maman's guys. They were searching the hotel...Jamal, say something. Please.

There is another long silence.

JAMAL

Hello, Salim.

PREM

Ever been to Cambridge?

JAMAL

No.

PREM

Ever been to the circus?

121 CONTINUED:

121

JAMAL

No. And I've never been to UK before. But I'll still have a go.

Gasps and laughter from the audience. Jamal laughs and shrugs.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Why not?

Prem grips his heart theatrically.

PREM

Can someone call me an ambulance?

122 INT. CALL CENTRE. NIGHT.

122

A flash of a sign post reading 'Oxford Circus', pointing down one of the aisles. The banner above that section of the warehouse reads 'London'.

CUT TO:

Jamal hurrying down another 'Kings Parade' carrying glasses of tea. He glances up to see a large banner that says 'Cambridge'.

CUT TO:

Jamal comes back up an aisle named 'Broad Street'. An Operator on the adjacent 'The High' clicks his fingers for another cup. Jamal hurries under the sign marked 'Oxford'.

CUT TO:

The signposts of the aisles come faster and faster 'Pembroke Street', 'Trafalgar Square', 'East India Dock' and finally 'Cambridge Circus'.

PREM V/O

So, Jamal....

123 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

123

Jamal is sweating, his face scrunched up in thought.

JAMAL

I can't remember.

PREM

You can't remember. Does that mean you did know? Once?

(CONTINUED)

JAMAL

I don't think it's Oxford.

PREM

Based on your extensive travelling, right?

JAMAL

(almost to himself)

Well, Oxford has Broad Street, Saint Aldates, Turl Street, Queen Street, The High and Magdalene Bridge- which is pronounced Maudlin, so-

He stops as he hears the surprised laughter of the audience.

PREM

I thought you hadn't been to UK.

JAMAL

Oh, I haven't. And it's not Leeds, because that's Elland Road, Kirkgate Market, Commercial Street, St Peter's-

PREM

(icy)

- what *might* it be then, Jamal?

JAMAL

Well, I don't think it's Cambridge.

PREM

Cambridge Circus is not in Cambridge? Dare I ask why?

JAMAL

Too obvious. There's definitely an Oxford Circus in London, and there's a rowing race between Oxford and Cambridge so there's probably a Cambridge Circus too. I'll go for D) London.

PREM

That's the logic that's got him this far, Ladies and Gentlemen. Who are we to argue? So. Jamal. D. Apka final jawab?

JAMAL

(shrugs)

If the Gods are with me...Final answer. D.

The lights dim, the music swells as Prem pushes the button on his computer.

PREM

Computer-ji, D lock kiya-jaye.

More portentous music.

PREM (CONT'D)

It's been a rollercoaster ride all the way, a pleasure to have you on the show, my friend, but I'm sorry to say that you're....incredibly, absolutely right!

Huge cheers and applause. Even Jamal laughs at this. He cannot quite believe it himself.

PREM (CONT'D)

Ladies and Gentlemen, Jamal Malik, the man with two and a half million rupees!

More applause. Prem hands him a cheque. Jamal looks at it. Laughs again.

PREM (CONT'D)

A few hours ago, you were fetching tea for the phone-wallahs. Now you are richer than they ever will ever be. What a player, Ladies and Gentleman! What a player.

The lights dim, the music swells. Prem consults his computer.

PREM (CONT'D)

For five million rupees, my friend: who invented the revolver? Was it A) Samuel Colt, B) Bruce Browning, C Dan Wesson or D) James Revolver?

Dramatic pause.

A flash of Salim shooting Maman. Another flash of Salim in the doorway, holding the pistol up to Jamal's head.

JAMAL

(suddenly)

A). Samuel Colt.

125 CONTINUED:

PREM

A). Samuel Colt. Are you sure?

Jamal nods.

PREM (CONT'D)

Final answer?

JAMAL

Final answer.

The music swells again. Prem presses his computer.

PREM

You had two and a half million rupees. If I may-?

He holds out his hand. Jamal hands him back the cheque. He tears the cheque in two.

PREM (CONT'D)

Ladies and Gentlemen, the chivallah has done it again! D. Is right! Incredible!

Cheers and applause from the audience.

125A INT. INSPECTOR'S OFFICE. NIGHT.

125A

INSPECTOR

Not that incredible. You'd just murdered somebody with a Colt 45, after all.

JAMAL

It was self-defence.

INSPECTOR

Let's call it manslaughter, then, shall we?

126 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

126

PREM

Getting hot in here, isn't it?

JAMAL

(genuinely)
Are you nervous?

The audience laugh. Prem is momentarily flustered.

PREM

What? Am I nervous? You're the one who's in the hot seat, my friend.

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED:

JAMAL

Oh. Yes. Sorry.

More laughter.

127 INT. GALLERY. NIGHT. 127

DIRECTOR

Bloody hell. He's got Prem on the run...

128 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT. 128

Music, lights. Prem presses his computer.

PREM

What sports do you play?

JAMAL

None.

PREM

None. Oh, dear, oh dear, oh dear. Not to worry, there's only ten million rupees at stake... Which cricketer has scored the most first class centuries in history. Was it A) Sachin Tendulkar, B) Ricky Ponting, C) Michael Slater, D) Jack Hobbs.

Prem allows the question to sink in.

PREM (CONT'D)

You've got a cheque for five million rupees in your hands. You've still got two life-lines, Phone A Friend and 50/50. For ten million rupees: pay, play, or bail out. It's still an option. Remember, if you get the answer wrong, you will lose everything like that.

He clicks his fingers.

PREM (CONT'D)

Are you sure you want to do this?

129 EXT. CRICKET GROUND. DAY. 129

An Indian batsman hits a nicely-timed stroke, heads down the wicket for a single. Turns. The other batsman is taking a second run.

129 CONTINUED:

129

The Indian tries to halt the other batsman with a shout, then succumbs to the inevitable and charges down the wicket. A fielder hurls the ball at the stumps. The bails fly off.

130 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

130

JAMAL

I'll play.

Tense laughter from the audience. Prem holds up the cheque. Jamal nods. Prem tears it up slowly. Allows the pieces to fall to the floor.

PREM

The dreams of so many. On the floor.

131 EXT. TOWER BLOCK. DAY.

131

Jamal is riding the construction lift to the top of a high building, still just a shell but buzzing with carpenters, bricklayers, cable-layers. The lift stops at the top. Jamal gets out. Looks around. He is miles up. Alone.

SALIM

Jamal!

Jamal looks around. There is Salim standing on the edge of the building. He saunters over to Jamal, his arms outstretched in theatrical greeting. He is groomed, expensively dressed with the best mobile money can buy dangling from a gold chain around his neck.

SALIM (CONT'D)

God is good, bhai. God is good.

He tries to embrace Jamal. With as much force as he can muster, Jamal punches him in the face. Salim takes it. Stands there. Wipes blood from his lip. Gets another punch. Then another and another, not even defending himself, until he is being beaten back by a raging Jamal towards the edge of the building. Finally, he tries to reason with Jamal

SALIM (CONT'D)

Maman's boys were after us. Had to skip.

Jamal keeps on beating him back.

JAMAL

Liar.

SALIM

Left a message at reception.
Waited weeks for you in Nagpur.

JAMAL

There was no message at
reception.

SALIM

Bhai, I left a message.

Salim opens his arms, defenceless. It would take one, small push to send him over the edge. There is a moment, when Jamal might. He even has his hands on his chest.

JAMAL

I will never forgive you.

SALIM

I know.

The fury in Jamal subsides minutely. Finally, he turns away with a roar of frustration. Salim hangs his head.

131A EXT. TOWER BLOCK. LATER.

131A

Jamal and Salim are sitting on the very edge of the building. They can see for miles across the city. Salim has rediscovered his attitude.

SALIM

Can you believe it? This was our slum. We lived just there, huh? Now it is business, apartments, call centres...Fuck USA, fuck China. India is at the centre of the world, now, bhai. And I am at the centre of the centre, Jamal. This is all Javed-bhai's.

JAMAL

Javed Mehta? The Gangster from our slum? You work for him?

SALIM

Who else would protect us from Maman's gang, huh?

JAMAL

What do you do for him?

SALIM

Anything he asks.

Salim's mobile rings. Salim is immediately subservient on the phone. Rings off.

131A CONTINUED:

131A

SALIM (CONT'D)

He is coming. You must go. My card.

He hands Jamal a card.

JAMAL

What for?

SALIM

You think I am going to let you out of my sight again, little brother? You stay with me now. Ab phut!

JAMAL

Salim, where's Latika?

SALIM

Still? She's gone, Jamal. Long gone. Now go. Quick.

Jamal gets up, hurries away, hidden behind piles of building materials just as Javed appears in his flash suit and jewelry. Three of his young henchmen walk alongside.

132 INT. SALIM'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

132

Jamal is asleep on a mattress on the floor of a smart apartment. A mobile phone rings. The muffled sound of Salim talking quietly next door. Then, Salim creeps into the room, checks to see Jamal is asleep, unlocks a desk drawer and brings out his pistol. He puts it in a hold-all and goes out the front door. Jamal's eyes snap open. He has seen it all.

JAMAL V/O

Slum dogs never sleep, only nap.
He would disappear for a couple
of days and come back changed.
Sometimes elated-

133 INT. SALIM'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

133

The door bangs open and a giggling-drunk, half-naked Bar Girl drags the sleeping Jamal up and into the bathroom.

BAR GIRL

He has flipped! I can't do anything with him....

Salim is in the bath, bathing, literally, in money.

(CONTINUED)

133 CONTINUED:

133

SALIM

Look at it, bhai, look at it!

134 INT. SALIM'S APARTMENT. DAWN.

134

JAMAL V/O

Sometimes the opposite.

Jamal creeps towards Salim's bedroom door. He pushes it open a fraction to see Salim crouched on the floor in prayer, sobbing quietly.

SALIM

(whispering)

Aé khuda mujhé baksh dé mainé
bahut gunaah kiyé hain....

JAMAL V/O

But younger brothers don't
interfere. Mostly.

135 EXT. SALIM'S APARTMENT. DAY.

135

Salim comes out of his apartment block. Gets into his jeep. Drives off. Doesn't notice Jamal in the motor rickshaw that pulls out and follows him.

136 EXT. JAVED'S BUNGALOW. DAY.

136

Salim approaches a gate-house to a large bungalow. The Door-Keeper nods to him, rings a bell. From the rickshaw, Jamal watches a woman come to the door. Latika. Eighteen, completely beautiful and rich. She hands Salim a package and goes back inside. Salim gets in his jeep and drives away.

137 EXT. JAVED'S BUNGALOW. DAY.

137

Jamal approaches the Door-Keeper's gate-house.

JAMAL

Baba, I am the new cook from the
agency. A thousand apologies, I
am late for the Memsaab.

The Door-Keeper grunts and goes inside. After a brief pause, he returns.

DOOR-KEEPER

She doesn't know anything about
any cook. There's supposed to be
a dishwasher being delivered.
Know anything about that?

JAMAL

Baba, I am your dishwasher!

The Door-keeper grunts at this attempt at humour.
Latika appears at the gate.

LATIKA

Haven't I told you, don't
interrupt when I'm watching-

She looks at Jamal. Is silenced briefly.

LATIKA (CONT'D)

- come inside. I'll show you the
kitchen.

Latika and Jamal go into the kitchen. *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire* plays on the tv in the background. She turns and hugs him tight. They laugh with happiness.

LATIKA

(delighted)

Jamal, Jamal, look at you...!

Their heads are close, they might kiss. Then Latika turns away, stares out of the window.

LATIKA (CONT'D)

Aré wa, Jamal....

Jamal smiles hopefully at her. But there is sadness in her now. She takes her sunglasses off, rubs her eyes. There is a bruise there.

JAMAL

You've hurt your eye.

LATIKA

Why are you here?

JAMAL

To see you.

LATIKA

Well. You see me.

She stands there, challenging. On the tv, somebody is winning money.

JAMAL

Why does everyone love this
programme?

LATIKA

It's the chance to escape, isn't it? Walk into another life. Doesn't everyone want that?

JAMAL

You have another life. A rich one.

LATIKA

Who'd have thought it possible? A slum dog, with all this.

JAMAL

Are you happy?

LATIKA

I have five star food, five star clothes. I sleep in a bed, not on the street. From where we come from, Jamal, that is happiness.

JAMAL

You don't look so happy with a black eye.

LATIKA

You turn up here out of nowhere, telling me I'm not happy: how dare you?

Voices at the gate-house.

LATIKA (CONT'D)

God, Javed will kill you. Here.

JAMAL

Javed? You are with *him*?

She throws him an apron. He gets it on just in time for Javed to walk in. Jamal turns away.

JAVED

First you want a dishwasher, now a bloody cook-

LATIKA

-I just thought-

JAVED

- chup. The cricket's on.

Javed changes channel and dials on his mobile.

JAVED (CONT'D)

Why do you always watch that shit? Huh? I'm already a millionaire.

He laughs at his own joke. Turns to Jamal.

JAVED (CONT'D)

Well, come on then, *Cook*. I'm hungry. Get me a sandwich.

JAMAL

Immediately, Sir.

Javed stares at Jamal a moment, trying to place a face he vaguely recognises. Then the Bookie comes on the line and he turns back to the television.

JAVED

Atcha...

Latika hurries around the kitchen getting out bread and condiments, whispering while Javed talks on the phone.

JAMAL

Come away with me.

LATIKA

Chutiyé. Away where? And live on what? What can you provide? What have you *got*, Jamal?

JAMAL

Love.

JAVED

(on the mobile)

..yeah. He's on eighty-five. I want four lakh on him making a century. What are you giving?...Okay, make it five lakh.

Javed pours himself a glass of whisky, never taking his eyes from the television.

TV COMMENTATOR

We are watching history unfold today at the Wankhedé Stadium as Sachin Tendulkar carves his way towards another magnificent century and the record books. His thirty-eighth century- the most by any Indian cricketer ever...

LATIKA

Love. That will feed us, will it?

JAMAL

It won't buy you a new dishwasher, but it might make you happy.

(CONTINUED)

LATIKA

Where have you been? Get in the real world, Jamal.

JAMAL

You and me. That is the real world. Come away with me.

Latika snatches the sandwich from him and gives it to Javed. Goes back to Jamal, whispers under cover of putting condiments away.

LATIKA

You're crazy.

JAMAL

Salim will help us.

LATIKA

Salim? You still believe in Salim? Jamal...I'll be gone soon, anyway. Bombay's got too dangerous for-

She indicates Javed.

JAMAL

Where?

LATIKA

You think he'd tell me?

JAVED

Straight bat, straight bat, dammit.

Then the batsman at the other end calls to take a second run.

JAVED (CONT'D)

No! A single!

Tendulkar seems to agree, tries to halt the other batsman with a shout, then succumbs to the inevitable and charges down the wicket. A fielder hurls the ball at the stumps. The bails fly off.

JAVED (CONT'D)

No, no, no! stupid ben chod idiot...

He flings his glass of whisky at the television. Suddenly tastes what he has been eating.

JAVED (CONT'D)

And what is this shit supposed to be, mader chod? Get out. Get out!

Javed throws the sandwich at him and slams out of the room. His footsteps can be heard stomping into another room.

LATIKA

Now go, before he kills us both.

She leads Jamal to the door.

JAVED

Latika, where's my bloody shirt?
The Armani.

Latika shouts over her shoulder.

LATIKA

Coming!

Back to Jamal.

LATIKA (CONT'D)

(whispered)

You want to do something for me?

JAMAL

Anything.

LATIKA

Then forget me.

JAMAL

I'll wait at VT station. Five
o'clock every day until you
come.

She shakes her head.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

I love you.

LATIKA

So what, Jamal? So what?

(loudly)

Now, get out and tell your no-
good agency not to send anybody
else until they've learnt to
cook. You hear?

She slams the door. Hurries back into the kitchen, throws Javed's plate into the sink. The Door-keeper comes in.

DOOR-KEEPER

Madam, your dishwasher has
arrived.

Leaning over the sink, Latika weeps silently.

139 INT. SALIM'S APARTMENT. NIGHT.

139

Salim has his hand around Jamal's throat.

SALIM

Why can't you let it alone? You want money, I'll give you money. Girls? I can get you girls.

JAMAL

You know what I want.

SALIM

You're like some crazy man—you're obsessed.

JAMAL

She is my destiny, Salim.

SALIM

Know what your destiny is, crazy boy? A bullet between the eyes. And after that, he'll kill her. Is that what you want? Huh?

JAMAL

Me, I don't care. Latika? She's already half dead.

Salim takes his hand away from Jamal's neck.

SALIM

Yes. About that, you are right.

JAMAL

You sold her.

SALIM

(fierce)

I didn't sell her. Javed wanted her. He gets what he wants.

He turns away bitterly.

SALIM (CONT'D)

She's doing alright. Get it into your thick head, Jamal. She's not yours and she never will be.

140 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

140

PREM

Time for a commercial break, Ladies and Gentlemen. I know, I know, I can't stand the tension either. Don't even think about leaving your seat. We'll be back.

(CONTINUED)

140 CONTINUED:

140

The lights flick back on. Prem slumps back in his chair.

PREM (CONT'D)

You've got the luck of the devil, yaar, I'll give you that.

JAMAL

I- I need to-

PREM

Oh, the toilet. Sure. Naveed, Jamal wants the bog.

The Floor Manager and a Security Guard usher Jamal off-stage. Prem looks up at the gallery, raises his eyes at the Director. Some show. Then he gathers himself and heads off-stage.

141 INT. CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI TERMINUS. DAY. 141

The clock reads five oh three. Jamal stands on the footbridge. Humanity washes around him. His eyes dart around, frightened to miss her. Checks the clock again. Six. The platform is almost deserted. He wanders away.

142 INT. CORRIDOR. NIGHT. 142

Prem wanders down the corridor followed by a Security Guard. Another Security Guard is waiting at the entrance to the toilet. Prem goes in, leaving the two Guards in the corridor.

143 INT. CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI TERMINUS. DAY. 143

Jamal stands on the footbridge gazing down at the hordes of commuters. Five o'clock, five fifteen, five thirty. Six. Jamal rests his head against the railings.

144 INT. TOILET. NIGHT. 144

Jamal is in one of the cubicles. Prem goes to the urinal. Unzips.

PREM

A guy from the slums becomes a millionaire overnight. You know the only other person who's done that? Me. I know what it's like. I know what you've been through.

JAMAL O/S

I'm not going to become a milionaire. I don't know the answer.

(CONTINUED)

PREM

(laughs)

You've said that before, yaar.

Prem finishes peeing. Goes over to the washbasins, runs the taps and washes his hands.

JAMAL O/S

No, I really don't.

PREM

What? You can't take the money and run now. You're on the edge of history, kid!

JAMAL O/S

I don't see what else I can do.

PREM

Maybe it is written, my friend. You're going to win this. Trust me, you're going to win.

Prem leaves. Jamal flushes and comes out of the cubicle. Goes to the washbasins. In the mist on the mirror above the taps is written the letter "B". Jamal stares at it. Gradually it fades, leaving only the growing fury on his face staring back at him.

145 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

145

Jamal stalks back onto the set. Sits down in his chair. Stares at Prem who looks unconcernedly back.

TALKBACK V/O

Twenty seconds.

145A INT. CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI TERMINUS. DAY.

145A

The digital clocks show five fifteen. Shoving the descending river of people out of his way, the seventeen year-old Jamal is forging a path up steps that cross the platforms. He pushes to the middle of the footbridge and leans out on the side railings. He scans the sea of people, desperately. Then he sees her: the eighteen year-old Latika, heart-stoppingly beautiful, over the other side of the station. A world away. She is scanning the crowd, as wired as he is.

JAMAL

Latika! Latika!

But though he is screaming her name, his voice is swallowed by the noise around him. Then he sees two thuggish-looking men also fighting a way towards her.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Latika!

Frightened now, he fights his way down the steps, one figure against an army of white-robed people. He gets to the bottom of the steps, is making progress against the tide. But so are the two men. Jamal is now on the same platform. Shouts her name again. She turns with a smile. But the two Thugs leap through a train onto her platform. She sees them, starts running, is lost in the crowd. Jamal runs off along the platform after Latika.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Latika! Latika!

By the time Jamal has fought himself to where Latika was- she is gone. He whirls around, mad with frustration.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

Latika! Latika!

146 OMITTED

146

147 EXT. CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI TERMINUS. DAY.

147

Latika is jumping the tracks, crossing in front of trains. But the Thugs are gaining on her. He brings her down and drags her across to Javed's waiting Mercedes. Salim is standing by the car. Jamal pushes through the crowds just in time to see Salim bundling her into the car.

JAMAL

Salim!

Salim spits disgustedly on the ground. Gets in. Latika twists her head to see Jamal as the car skids off. Jamal screams with hopeless fury.

148 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

148

TALKBACK V/O

Fifteen seconds.

Jamal and Prem stare at each other. Prem smiles.

PREM

Do the right thing and in approximately three minutes you will be as famous as me.

TALKBACK V/O

Ten seconds.

(CONTINUED)

PREM

And as rich as me.

TALKBACK V/O

Five seconds.

PREM

Almost.

TALKBACK V/O

Four, three...

PREM

From rags to Raja. It's your destiny.

TALKBACK V/O

...we're on.

Applause from the audience.

PREM

Welcome back to *Who Wants to Be A Millionaire?* In the chair tonight is Jamal Malik- as if we don't know! In an amazing run, Jamal has already five million rupees but, not content with that, has chosen to gamble for one Crore- that's ten million million rupees. What a player! The question one more time: Which cricketer has scored the most first class centuries in history. Was it A) Sachin Tendulkar, B) Ricky Ponting, C) Michael Slater, D) Jack Hobbs.

JAMAL

I know it isn't Sachin Tendulkar.

PREM

That's a start. So, it could be Ricky Ponting, Jack Hobbs or Michael Slater.

JAMAL

I'll use a life-line. Fifty-fifty.

PREM

Okay. Computer, take away two wrong answers.

Music swells, lights dim.

PREM (CONT'D)

Well, you were right about Sachin Tendulkar. The computer has taken away A) Sachin Tendulkar and C) Michael Slater. That leaves you a fifty-fifty choice, Jamal. B) Ricky Ponting or D) Jack Hobbs. What do you think? Decision time. For half a million rupees. Your answer: B) Ricky Ponting or D) Jack Hobbs.

A hideous, never-ending pause while Jamal stares into Prem's eyes.

JAMAL

D.

A barely perceptible jump from Prem.

PREM

You sure? Not B) Ricky Ponting? The Australian? Great cricketer.

JAMAL

D. Jack Hobbs.

PREM

Do you *know*?

Jamal shakes his head.

PREM (CONT'D)

So it could be B, Ricky Ponting?

JAMAL

Or D. Jack Hobbs.

PREM

Final Answer?

JAMAL

Final Answer. D.

A just-perceptible narrowing of the eyes.

PREM

Computer-ji D lock kiya-jaye.

Prem turns to the computer. Music. Lights.

PREM (CONT'D)

With one hundred and ninety-seven first class centuries, the answer is...D. Jack Hobbs!

The audience go wild. Prem's smile is thin.

PREM (CONT'D)

Jamal Malik, Crorepati!

The camera goes off Prem for a second. He mimes a disgusted spit. Then he is back on.

PREM (CONT'D)

I cannot believe what I am seeing here, tonight, Ladies and Gentlemen....So, are you ready for the final question for two Crore rupees- twenty million rupees?

JAMAL

Not really, but...maybe it is written, no?

PREM

Maybe, indeed. Okay, okay. For twenty million rupees, the final question on *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?*

The lights dim again, the portentous music increases. Suddenly a klaxon sounds. The audience burst into nervous laughter and groans. Prem laughs.

PREM (CONT'D)

Ohhhhh! Just when I thought I would need a pacemaker fitted, we're out of time! What a show, Ladies and Gentlemen, what a show. Join us tomorrow night to see if Jamal Malik has made the biggest mistake of his life or has just won the biggest prize in the history of Indian television....Same place, same time. You wouldn't dare miss it. Goodnight!

Applause. The studio lights come up. Prem switches off his smile as fast as the cameras switch off. Gets up and pulls out his mobile.

Waving a kitchen knife in on hand, a desperate Jamal slams through the gates of Javed's bungalow, the objecting Doorkeeper running along behind. He bangs open the front door.

JAMAL

Latika!

150 INT. JAVED'S BUNGALOW. DAY.

150

Stops dead. The place has been stripped of everything. Not a single thing remains. Jamal runs into another room. As empty as the first. He stops in his tracks.

DOOR-KEEPER

Told you.

JAMAL

Where? Where is she?

DOOR-KEEPER

Dunno.

He grabs the Door-keeper by the shirt-collar, slams him up against the wall. Holds the knife against his throat.

JAMAL

Where?

DOOR-KEEPER

I don't know! Wouldn't say, would they? They had to get out fast. The police. Honestly.

Jamal lets go of the Door-keeper. Goes hopelessly to the window. On the window sill is a phone. He picks it up. There is a dial tone. Jamal rummages in his trouser pocket. Gets out the battered card with Salim's details on. Dials. Salim picks up.

JAMAL

Where are you? Where is she?

150A INT. JAVED'S SAFE HOUSE. SALIM'S ROOM. DAY.

150A

Salim is stalking around his room in Javed's new house. Hold-alls of clothes and possessions lie around the room. A chest of drawers sits with its drawers open, still empty.

SALIM

Where you'll never find her. Or me. You could have joined us, you bloody idiot, been one of us. You've lost everything now. Everything.

Cuts the call off and slings the phone in a drawer. Takes the gun from his waist, and throws that in too. Slams the drawer shut with as much force as he can.

150B INT. JAVED'S BUNGALOW. DAY. 150B

JAMAL

Salim...!

The line goes dead. Jamal slides to the floor...

151 INT. SALIM'S APARTMENT. NIGHT. 151

...the camera pulls out from Jamal's face revealing that Jamal is sitting on the floor of Salim's apartment. In the background can be heard the sound of the television. Jamal looks at the knife in his hand, wonders what he might do with it. The sound of Prem's voice on the tv.

PREM O/S

...if you want a chance to play
Who Wants to be a Millionaire,
call now...!

Jamal looks up. Stares at the tv.

152 INT. STUDIO. BACKSTAGE. NIGHT. 152

PREM

This way, Jamal, this way. Great
show, my friend. See you
tomorrow, huh?

In the half-light, Prem guides him to a stage door.

153 EXT. STUDIO. BACKSTAGE. NIGHT. 153

Jamal steps outside the backstage door. Leans on the rail and takes a huge breath. Immediately, a blanket is thrown over his head and two police men bundle him into the back of a police van. The Director joins Prem at the back-stage door as the van pulls away, sirens screaming.

DIRECTOR

What's going on?

PREM

He's a cheat.

DIRECTOR

This was you? You called them?

Prem shrugs.

DIRECTOR (CONT'D)

How d'you know he's cheating?

PREM

Oh, come on! Of course he is.
He's a bloody village boy. Even
when I fed him the wrong answer
the little shit got it right.

Director stares at him.

DIRECTOR

You gave him an answer?

PREM

Well, I didn't exactly-

The Director walks away shaking his head. In the doorway, Nita is standing there, watching.

PREM (CONT'D)

Nita?

But she too turns and walks away.

154 INT. INSPECTOR'S OFFICE. DAY.

154

INSPECTOR

It is all bizarrely plausible.
And yet...

JAMAL

Because I am a slum dog, chi-
wallah, I am a liar, right?

INSPECTOR

Most of you are.

Srinivas comes hurrying in carrying a file, very pleased with himself.

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

Shooting at Pila Street, October
19th...Maman Hossani....Victim
pronounced dead at scene.
Suspects absconded: two males,
early teens, one female, early
teen.

The Inspector takes the file. Stares at it. Shakes his head.

INSPECTOR

But you: you're not a liar,
Mister Malik, that is for sure.
You are too truthful.

He turns to Srinivas.

154 CONTINUED:

154

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

Thank you, Constable. All that remains is to work out whether it was manslaughter or murder. Ten years, or life.

The Young Constable sticks his head around the door.

YOUNG CONSTABLE

The Commissioner's here, Sir.

The Inspector sighs. Gets up. Accompanied by Srinivas, he leaves the room. Jamal sits there. Lets his head drop. The camera floats from the room, down the dingy corridor and out through a window...

155 EXT. POLICE STATION. DAY.

155

....alighting on a crowd of hundreds of people jostling to get a view of the building. News crews are setting up around them. A tv Reporter is doing a piece to camera.

TV REPORTER

....behind the walls of this police station lies the mystery all of India is talking about. Did Jamal Malik, an uneducated, eighteen year-old boy from the slums of Mumbai win one Crore rupees by fair means or foul? And in the crowds all around me there is an even bigger question. Will he be back on the show tonight to play for twenty million rupees...

156 OMITTED

156

156A INT. POLICE OFFICE. DAY.

156A

The Commissioner is waiting in the outer office.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

So? Have you charged him yet?

INSPECTOR

I- progress is being made sir.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

Progress? Have you *charged* him?

INSPECTOR

No, Sir.

(CONTINUED)

The Commissioner dumps a copy of the *Times of India* down on the desk. Then the *Hindustan Times*, the *Amar Ujala* and the *Afternoon Dispatch* thump down after them. All have photos of Jamal on *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* on the front page.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

And if that isn't enough for you...

He motions the Inspector to come over to the window.

Lifts the blind. The Inspector hurries over. Looks alarmed.

INSPECTOR

That's-?

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

- yes, yes! The boy's a bloody hero with every beggar and thief in the city. We're in danger of looking very stupid, here, Inspector.

INSPECTOR

Whilst I'm not convinced he actually cheated, I have got-

The Inspector brandishes the file.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

- Prem Kumar himself- a man of great standing and integrity- said the kid was a liar and a cheat. What more do you need?

The Inspector pauses.

INSPECTOR

A liar.

Then he puts the file behind his back. Srinivas frowns.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

Indeed, sir.

Srinivas coughs pointedly. Gets a steely look from the Inspector. The Commissioner has been staring out of the window at the crowds. Turns back to them.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

He's in for fraud, so you charge him for fraud. Fast. Or you'll find yourself on traffic duty at the Gateway of India. Understand?

156A CONTINUED: (2)

156A

INSPECTOR

Yes, sir.

The Commissioner walks out.

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

Sir-?

INSPECTOR

Not a word, Srinivas.

157 INT. JAVED'S SAFE-HOUSE. SITTING ROOM. NIGHT.

157

A cheek scarred by disfiguring knife scars. Pulling back we see it is Latika, staring frozen at Jamal on the television news. A palatial living room. Dealing cards to Salim, is Javed Khan. A couple of Bar Girls giggle next to Javed and a couple of his Thugs. Pouring drinks at a sideboard is Latika. Javed glances up at the screen, clearly not recognising Jamal on a clip from Who Wants to be a Millionaire. Salim, too is staring, wide-eyed at the tv. Javed picks up the remote, doesn't even notice and switches over to a music channel. Latika hurries out.

JAVED

What about my bloody whisky,
woman?

But she has already gone. He growls after her.

JAVED (CONT'D)

Hey, Salim.

He motions Salim to get him a drink. Javed's mobile rings as Salim goes over to the sideboard. Shifts a bottle to the back.

SALIM

We're out. I'll just get- Syed.

Salim smiles faintly at the image of Jamal and hurries out.

158 INT . JAVED'S SAFE-HOUSE. SALIM'S ROOM. NIGHT.

158

A drawer opens. Inside is Salim's pistol. And a phone- the same one he threw in there months ago. Salim stares at both for a long time. Finally, picks up the gun and phone.

SALIM

(to himself)
Final answer?

He finds this faintly amusing.

159 INT. JAVED'S SAFE-HOUSE. KITCHEN. NIGHT.

159

Latika sits in the kitchen, staring at the tv, tears running down her cheeks. A reporter is talking in front of an enlarged photograph of Jamal. Latika wipes away the tears quickly as Salim comes in. He locks the door behind him. Stares at the tv.

SALIM

That boy. He will never give up.
Never.

He shakes his head.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Crazy chutiyé.

Salim approaches Latika. She flinches as he walks towards her. He puts some car keys in front of her.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Ja. Go.

LATIKA

But-

SALIM

- just drive. There won't be
another chance. Go.

Latika takes the keys. Hesitates.

LATIKA

He'll kill you.

Salim smiles, shakes his head.

SALIM

It is not written.

JAVED O/S

Salim!

Salim goes to the back door. Unlocks it. Opens it for her.

LATIKA

Salim, I....can't.

Salim points at the television.

SALIM

You have to. It'll take you two
hours if you drive fast. Here.

He holds out his mobile phone.

SALIM (CONT'D)

For God's sake, hold on to it.

(CONTINUED)

159 CONTINUED:

159

Latika takes it. Salim takes hold of both sides of her head for a moment.

SALIM (CONT'D)

For what I have done, please forgive me.

Salim releases her.

SALIM (CONT'D)

Go. Have a good life.

Salim puts his hands together in blessing. She leaves. Salim shuts the door, locks it. Smiles.

160 INT. INSPECTOR'S OFFICE. NIGHT.

160

Jamal is dozing in the chair. He wakes with a shout. Srinivas has just thrown a bucket of water in his face. He unlocks the handcuffs. Jamal looks up at him. Srinivas shrugs.

CONSTABLE SRINIVAS

You're back on the show.

161 INT. BACKSTAGE. NIGHT.

161

The audience for *Who Wants to be a Millionaire* are standing in line. They are being body-searched by police. Mobiles are being confiscated and put in bags.

162 INT. BACKSTAGE. NIGHT.

162

Gaffers make last-minute adjustments to the lights shining on the empty chairs in the middle of the set. Camera positions are checked by the Floor Manager.

163 INT. POLICE OFFICE. NIGHT.

163

Srinivas walks Jamal through the police office, past the Inspector sitting at his desk, his arms behind his head, pondering. He watches Jamal go and then asks:

INSPECTOR OF POLICE

What happened? To the girl?
Latika?

Jamal stops.

JAMAL

Who knows?

Jamal walks on. The Inspector watches him all the way.

164 INT. POLICE JEEP. NIGHT. 164

Jamal sits in the back of the police jeep. It pulls out of the police station car park into a sea of people all cheering and shouting at the jeep. Jamal looks terrified.

165 INT. CAR. NIGHT. 165

Latika drives through the slums of Mumbai. She hoots her horn furiously at a cart-driver ambling across the road.

166 INT. POLICE JEEP. NIGHT. 166

The jeep stops at the lights and a beggar wanders up, tapping on the windscreen. The beggar studies Jamal's face for a second, then starts shouting and pointing at him.

BEGGAR

Crorepati! Crorepati!

Other beggars- just like the one Jamal used to be- join him and start cheering and applauding. The jeep pulls away.

167 OMITTED 167

168 EXT. SLUM. NIGHT. 168

At the chi stall, everyone gathers around the tv, watching.

169 EXT. ROADSIDE CHI HOUSE. NIGHT. 169

A rickshaw parks up next to a hundred others. The Driver leaps out, abandoning the irate business man in the back and runs to the tv in the café.

170 INT. CALL CENTRE. NIGHT. 170

The Manager walks into the aircraft hanger of a building. Stops. Where is everyone? Then he sees everyone crowded around the tv in the Recreation Room. Stalks over.

MANAGER

Oi! Get back to work.

Then he sees Jamal's face on the tv.

170 CONTINUED:

170

MANAGER (CONT'D)

The chi-wallah?

171 EXT. ROADSIDE SHACKS. NIGHT.

171

All along the highway, one by one the televisions in a hundred shacks flick on, silhouetting the family huddled in front of it.

172 INT. STUDIO. BACKSTAGE. NIGHT.

172

In the half-light, Jamal is being powdered by Nita.

NITA

Good luck.

Prem sneers.

TALKBACK V/O

Two minutes.

She finishes powdering Jamal.

PREM

Hey. Sweetheart. What about me?
I'm sweating, here.

NITA

You should be.

She dumps the powder compact in his hand.

PREM

So. Tonight. The Calypso Bar.

NITA

Not if you were the only man in
the world.

She walks off.

PREM

(genuinely puzzled)
But I am the only man in the
world.

173 EXT. MUMBAI STREET. NIGHT.

173

The traffic is gridlocked. Latika is pumping the horn.

LATIKA

Come on, come on!

She glances out of the window, sees one of the roadside shacks with the television on. Gets out of the car and runs to it.

173A INT. COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE. NIGHT. 173A

The Commissioner grabs his phone.

COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

Get me the Inspector on the
phone now!

173B INT. INSPECTOR'S OFFICE. NIGHT. 173B

The Inspector wanders into his office, still deep in thought. Switches on the television just as the *Millionaire* music starts. Sits. The phone rings.

174 OMITTED 174

175 OMITTED 175

176 OMITTED 176

177 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT. 177

Prem and Jamal walk on-stage. Blinding light. They take their seats to tumultuous applause.

PREM

Welcome back to *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* I can safely say that tonight is the biggest night of both of our lives, Ladies and Gentlemen. Jamal Malik, the Call Centre worker from Mumbai has already won one Crore rupees, a cool ten million. Tonight, he can walk away with that in his pocket or make the biggest gamble in television history and go for the final question and a staggering twenty million rupees! Jamal, are you ready for that question?

JAMAL

Yes.

The lights dim, the music rumbles. Prem pushes the button on his computer. Pauses. Gets conversational.

PREM

Big reader, are you Jamal? A lover of literature?

Nervous laughter from the audience. Jamal just shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

177 CONTINUED:

177

JAMAL

I can read.

Even more nervous laughter.

PREM

Lucky! In Alexandre Dumas' book, The Three Musketeers, two of the musketeers are called Athos and Porthos. What was the name of the third musketeer. Was it A) Aramis, B) Cardinal Richelieu, C) D'Artagnan, D) Planchet.

An involuntary laugh comes out of Jamal's mouth.

178 INT. ROADSIDE SHACK. NIGHT.

178

In the shack, sitting on an upturned oil drum, surrounded by puzzled Indians in rags, a slow smile comes to Latika's face.

179 OMITTED

179

180 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

180

Camera on Prem.

PREM

The final question, for twenty million rupees: and he's smiling. I guess you know the answer.

JAMAL

Would you believe it? I don't.

Jamal laughs. There's nothing else to do. The audience groan.

PREM

You don't? So, you're going to take the ten million and walk?

JAMAL

No.

PREM

No?

JAMAL

I'll play.

A gasp from the audience.

PREM

You just said you don't know the answer. I heard that, right? You do understand that if you get the answer wrong, you lose everything? Ten million rupees. A fortune, Jamal.

A terrible pause.

JAMAL

I'd like to phone a friend.

PREM

We're going to the wire, Ladies and Gentlemen, we are going to the wire. The final Life-line. Here we go....

181 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

181

Prem presses his computer. Ominous rumble of drums. The lights dim. A phone can be heard ringing, the amplified sound echoing around the studio.

PREM

It's ringing.

The phone continues to ring.

182 INT. ROADSIDE SHACK. NIGHT.

182

Latika is staring at the television. Then an electric current seems to shoot through her and she is running, dodging the static traffic, street vendors, the odd cow, heading for her abandoned car. Hooting horns, shouting drivers. The phone rings on...

183 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT.

183

And on...

PREM

Doesn't look as if your friend is in, Jamal. Who is it?

JAMAL

My brother's number, but-

PREM

- the sort of brother who'd go for a walk on the twenty million rupee question?

JAMAL

It's the only number I know.

184 INT. CAR. NIGHT. 184

On the passenger seat of Latika's car, Salim's phone continues to ring...

185 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT. 185

...and ring.

PREM

You're on your own, Jamal.

Prem looks up at the gallery. The Director shakes his head, mimes cutting his throat.

186 INT. CAR. NIGHT. 186

Latika wrestles the door open, grabs the phone.

187 INT. STUDIO. NIGHT. 187

Prem opens his mouth to speak. Then, out of the darkness of the studio,

LATIKA V/O

Hello?

A gasp from the audience.

LATIKA V/O (CONT'D)

Hello? Jamal?

PREM

Wow! That's cutting it fine. I'm guessing this isn't your brother. This is-

LATIKA V/O

My name is Latika.

The first real smile of Jamal's adult life.

188 EXT. STUDIO. BACKSTAGE. NIGHT. 188

A small smile spreads across the Inspector's face.

INSPECTOR

That's why he's on the show.

He picks up his hat and hastens out of the room.

189 INT. JAVED'S SAFE-HOUSE. NIGHT. 189

Javed pulls the Bar Girl from him, stares open-mouthed at the television.

JAVED

What the bloody-?

He pushes the girl off him. Gets to his feet.

JAVED (CONT'D)

Latika! Salim!

190 INT. STUDIO/ INT. ROADSIDE SHACK. NIGHT. 190

PREM

Okay! So, Latika, you want to hear the question one more time? And let's be clear about this. Twenty million rupees ride on your answer. You have thirty seconds. Jamal, please read out the question to Latika.

JAMAL

Is that really you?

LATIKA V/O

Yes.

PREM

The question, Jamal.

JAMAL

In Alexandre Dumas' book, The Three Musketeers, two of the musketeers are called Athos and Porthos. What was the name of the third musketeer. Was it A) Aramis, B) Cardinal Richelieu, C) D'Artagnan, D) Planchet.

Silence. The electronic clock ticks loudly.

PREM

Fifteen seconds.

JAMAL

Where are you?

LATIKA V/O

I'm- I'm safe.

PREM

Ten seconds. So, Latika, what do you think?

Silence.

(CONTINUED)

PREM (CONT'D)

Five, four, three, two, one.
Time's up! Your answer.

LATIKA V/O

I don't know.

The audience groan.

PREM

Oh...

LATIKA V/O

I've never known.

PREM

You really are on your own, now,
Jamal. Your answer: for twenty
million rupees.

Jamal shrugs.

JAMAL

A.

PREM

A. Because?

JAMAL

Just...because.

PREM

Apka final jawab?

JAMAL

Yes. Final answer. A. Aramis.

The lights dim, the music crescendoes. A buzz runs around the audience. Prem pushes the button on his computer. Stares hard at Jamal.

PREM

Computer-ji A lock kiya-jaye.
Jamal Malik, Call Centre
Assistant from Mumbai, for two
Crore, twenty million rupees,
you were asked who the Third
Musketeer was in the novel by
Alexandre Dumas. You used your
final life-line to phone a
friend. You answered A.
Aramis.....which is...I have to
tell you...the correct answer!

Wild applause. Prem jumps up and pulls a bemused Jamal to his feet, raising his arm in the air. Jamal is smiling, but disorientated.

PREM (CONT'D)

Ladies and Gentlemen, Jamal Malik, Crorepati! What a night! We have all been present at the making of history, Ladies and Gentlemen! Jamal Malik, millionaire!

JAMAL

Latika? Latika?

To ever-increasing roars and applause from the audience, Prem escorts Jamal off-stage.

191 INT. ROADSIDE SHACK. NIGHT.

191

The line goes dead in Latika's hand. She stares down at the phone. The bemused family are still eying her like an alien. She smiles at them and goes out. The traffic on the road is still grid-locked. She starts walking, faster and faster. Then she breaks into a run.

192 INT. JAVED'S SAFE-HOUSE. BATHROOM. NIGHT.

192

A small tv in the bathroom. Salim smiles.

JAVED O/S

Salim! Teri ma ki chute! Salim!

Javed is banging on the door. Salim gets up from where he has been praying. He climbs into the bath which is full of bank notes and lies down amongst the money. He reaches across for the pistol and picks it up. Smiles slightly as Javed smashes down the door, pulls the trigger and shoots Javed. He falls onto the floor, dead. But the Thug right behind him shoots Salim in the chest. He lies back in the bath, the faintest trace of a smile on his face as he stares at the pictures of Jamal on the tv.

SALIM

God is good.

Salim dies.

193 INT. STUDIO. BACKSTAGE. NIGHT.

193

Prem and Jamal are being posed by photographers. A giant-sized cheque for twenty million rupees is manhandled onto the floor by the Floor Manager and an Assistant amidst much cheering and laughter. Jamal is snapped next to a scowling Prem. The Inspector appears next to them.

INSPECTOR

Just one more thing left, Sir.

(CONTINUED)

193 CONTINUED:

193

Prem smiles.

PREM

Finally, huh?

INSPECTOR

If you'd like to come with me.

He takes Jamal by the arm, leads him backstage.

194 INT/EXT. POLICE JEEP. NIGHT.

194

Jamal sits silent in the back seat next to the Inspector as he drives through the traffic. Then:

JAMAL

Truth alone triumphs? I should have known better.

The Inspector stops the jeep. Unlocks the handcuffs. Holds the back door open for Jamal.

INSPECTOR

Thought you might need a lift, Sir.

He nods towards the outside world. Dazed, Jamal gets out.

195 EXT. CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI TERMINUS. NIGHT.

195

Jamal finds himself gazing up at VT station. Slowly, he wanders inside. The Inspector takes the contents of the file and tears them slowly in half. Lets the pieces fall on the ground. Gets back in the jeep and drives away.

196 OMITTED

196

197 INT. CHHATRAPATI SHIVAJI TERMINUS. NIGHT.

197

VT station is awash with the evening commute. Thousands of people crowd the platforms, jostling the only still figure who is sitting at the base of the statue of Frederick Stevens. Jamal. Then there is a gap in the wall of bodies that swirls around him. Jamal gets to his feet.

JAMAL

Latika?

Then she is gone in the melee again. Only to reappear.

LATIKA

Jamal?

Jamal forces himself through the people. Nothing will stop him. Latika too is shoving them aside until they are face-to-face. They stop, look at each other, hold each other's hands tight. The whole station seems frozen, the only movement from a thousand bodies being Jamal and Latika.

LATIKA (CONT'D)

I thought we would meet again
only in death.

He shakes his head.

JAMAL

I knew you'd be watching.

Jamal puts his hand on Latika's chin, turns her head gently so that she is facing him. He sees the knife scars on her cheek for the first time. She tries to turn her head, but he won't let her. Runs his hand slowly down the scar. Rests his hand there.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

This is our destiny.

He gently kisses the scarred cheek.

JAMAL (CONT'D)

This is our destiny.

The camera pulls back and back, rising above the station. The music starts and the frozen station comes alive, two thousand kurta-clad men and saree-clad women dancing in and out and on top of the trains, an unbound celebration of hope and humanity that has at its centre, Jamal and Latika.

THE END.