

InEquality

by

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FADE IN ON:

CLOSE-UP

Static clogged scenes flicker; a Parade of History on Replay. A bio-red label glows:

Archived NYPD tapes: "The (in) Equality Riots of 2038."

EXT. CITY STREET - EVENING

It looks like the Occupy Protests of 2011. Fueled by Espresso - and Bath Salts laced with PCP.

PEDESTRIANS run rampant through high-tech, grungy streets. A banner undulates over their heads:

INSERT: "Explore Chinatown, NYC."

Blood SPLATTERS the fabric, stains it red.

ARMORED SWAT TEAMS split the crowd.

It's impossible to predict who will triumph in this fight. But either way, it won't end well.

INT. US CONGRESS - DAY

A seventy inch monitor is set up in front. Bits of the riot loop endlessly on display.

POLITICIANS SCREAM at each other - more crazed than the civilians in the streets.

A CONGRESSMAN snatches a microphone from a CONGRESSWOMAN'S hand.

She slashes manicured nails at his reddened face.

INSERT: Emergency Session 5:23 PM - March 23, 2038. The JUMP ACT is accepted on trial basis. A controversial - historic - vote.

INT. UNIVERSITY LABORATORY - DAY

50's style wholesome. With a touch of Cybernetic flair.

A SOLDIER lies half-conscious on a gurney.

A HELMETED HIPSTER slouches in a chair nearby.

SCIENTISTS surround both men.

The Hipster flashes "thumbs-up".

A SANDY HAIREd SCIENTIST flicks a switch.

The Hipster's eyes roll back in his head. His jaw drops to his chest.

The soldier writhes on the gurney.

Their spasms in sync - choreographed perfectly.

Soon, their shared pain ebbs away.

The test subjects sit up. Lock eyes. And smile.

Somehow, the movement of their facial muscles has changed. And the *personality* behind their eyes.

SUPER: 2042 - Congress declares JUMP Participation Mandatory. More than an Option, it's a Public Right.

The lab tableau fades away.

Replaced by scrolling text:

SUPER: Constitutional Amendment XXXI:

"The right of US Citizens to participate in the fruits of civil society will be deemed contingent upon enrollment in the Jump Program. All natural born Americans will be required to register for identity exchange. Starting from birth, randomized mind/body transfers will be scheduled every seven years, at assigned Government Facilities. Failure to comply is punishable by pre-mandated sentence. In certain instances, Forced Jumps. In other cases: Imprisonment or Death.

INSERT: Another clip of the '38 Riots.

Then, the echoes of violence fade away.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

TOURISTS clog well-swept streets.

RICH and POOR stroll side by side.

Judging from their clothing, differences still exist. But based on the number of goofy grins - the animosity's melted away.

Except in isolated places. Like...

EXT. MALL OF AMERICA - DAY

SUPER: June 5, 2050. Present Day.

CHIHUAHUA SIZED ROBOTS(Chi-bots) scamper alongside SHOPPERS; balance on multi-hinged legs.

The bots CHIRP.

Advertisement screens extrude from their collars at right angles; like a antique ceiling fans.

One Chi-bot tugs a WOMAN'S pants.

The woman shakes her foot violently. The Chi-Bot holds on for dear life with its claw.

FAMILIES bustle onto rolling Walkways. Chi-Bots frolic at their side.

The Walkways lead through thick glass doors...

INT. MALL OF AMERICA - DAY

To an orgasmic consumer paradise.

HOLOGRAM ADVERTISEMENTS BABBLE from scores of screens.

FAMILIES with Google Glass and Phone Implants drool at slick commercials - consumer lust in their eyes.

An AFRICAN AMERICAN BOY (7) waves his hand at a vending machine. A "CHERRY FIVE LOKO" drops - THUNK - into place.

His Caucasian Mother (30s) glares.

MOTHER

Five Loko, Ben? Seriously?

BEN

It's Retro, Mom. Alcohol-free!

Ben points towards the machine's receipt display.

INSERT: "ID CHIP VERIFIED. CONSUMER AGED 7.5. Last Jump: May 28, 2050. Alcohol de-synthesized."

A re-imagined Cartoon Ninja Turtle flashes on the vending screen. Donatello's had plastic surgery: big-time.

TURTLE CARTOON
Enjoy your Five Loko, Ben! Have a
Cowabunga Shopping Day!

Ben grabs for the can.

"Mom" snatches it out of his hand. Bumping into...

JOSH CADWELL (22) - callow youth personified. Expensive starched shirt. Designer pants.

The Five Loko SPLASHES across Josh's chest.

Girlfriend PERI ALLAN (20) - beautifully coiffed, less refined - GASPS in horrified dismay.

Peri jettisons her shopping bags. She roots through her purse, pulls out a spray.

JOSH
Peri, don't!

PERI
I'll get this. Please!

She mists Josh across the chest. Josh COUGHS like a vap-smoker. Chemical clouds obscure his face.

But as for his shirt - it's saved. The ruby-red stains fade away.

A CHI-BOT skitters closer, CHIRPS.

Peri SIGHS in relief.

JOSH
You didn't have to.

PERI
But I did. All better, now.

Until Peri examines her manicure. Thanks to her quick action, it's chipped.

She flips the spray-cylinder around, and TAPS the end against her finger. Miniature Bio-3d printers WHIR. The nail regrows - as good as new.

Ben's Mother watches, mortified.

MOTHER
I'm so sorry. We didn't see you there!

A GOLD PLATED CHI-BOT CHIRPS at Ben, extends a claw. It leads Ben and his Mom away.

Josh rubs mist-reddened eyes.

Peri dabs a handkerchief to his cheek and stands back to admire her good deed.

JOSH
(choking)
Where to next?

PERI
Your cousin Arthur's party's tomorrow.
What do you think he needs?

JOSH
A life?

PERI
Josh. Be nice.

JOSH
Fine. A stiff drink.

Over at the vending machine:

Hologram Donatello morphs into a gorgeous HOLOGRAM MODEL.

The CG "girl" "walks" clear out of the display - into a Directory nearby.

Once in place, the Hologram crooks a finger at Peri:
"Come on over here".

HOLOGRAM MODEL
Welcome to Paradise Mall.
(scans her chip)
Peri! Would you like one of our
complimentary new Smoothies? We have a
new Durian flavor that's *perfect* for your
exotic taste.

An attractive BRUNETTE passes by. Josh cranes his neck to get a view of her butt.

His guilty eyes slide toward Peri. She's busy with the Hologram, doesn't see.

PERI
(to the Hologram)
We're not thirsty. Where's the Sex Toy
Shoppe?

HOLOGRAM MODEL

You mean...

(calculates)

"Good Vibrations?"

PERI

No. "Slick Moves."

(to Josh)

I read it on today's Twigger Feed. They opened one here, just last week.

Peri turns towards the walkway.

The face on the model blinks - fades away. Turning into:

SARAH CADWELL (40s) - socialite vibe with "mature" flair. Tasteful green streaks through platinum hair.

The signal connects. BEEEEEEEEEP.

Sarah's over-botoxed face glares at Peri and Josh from the screen.

SARAH

Josh - Peri. I've been looking for you for hours!

JOSH

Ever heard of GPS?

SARAH

Have you finished shopping yet?

JOSH

Not yet. We gotta go to -

PERI

- "Slick Moves".

SARAH

Oh. A personal purchase? Or for Arthur?

JOSH

(eyes Peri)

Both. I guess.

Sarah rolls her eyes and disconnects. The overly-chipper Hologram Model retakes her place.

HOLOGRAM MODEL

Alrighty! It's "SM" for both you guys! It's just a hop, skip and jump. "Mount" the Walkway to your right!

A Chi-Bot scampers up to Peri. BEEPS. An automated VOICE RUMBLES overhead.

AUTOMATED VOICE
Attention Shoppers! Please visit Macy's
on our Penthouse Floor. 10% off for our
exclusive Jump-Day Sale!

CRAZED PATRONS stampede towards the Walkway.

Josh trips over the Chi-Bot. Staggers to the side.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

Downtown's even more crowded. Here, there are no gold-plated Chi-Bots to clear the way.

REZA FARSEE (22) weaves through a wall of sweaty BODIES - bounced like a pinball down the street.

A banner FLUTTERS over his head.

The text *used* to read "Explore Chinatown, NYC."

Decades ago, someone crossed that out. Replaced with the new neighborhood moniker:

"Little Islam."

Not surprisingly, Reza fits right in. Your average Middle Eastern face.

Reza slips past a RETRO-TEEN (17). Neon implants glow on the punk's pierced cheeks and lips.

A hybrid Korean/Arabic pin shines on his lapel.

Reza busts a series of gymnastic moves:

He limbos under a basket.

Nods to a NONDESCRIPT VENDOR. The man nods back.

Reza grabs a BOX under the man's cart. Then looks around. No-one sees.

Reza grins, and tucks the package under one arm. And keeps moving. Rapidly.

INT. MALL OF AMERICA - INCLINED WALKWAY

An annoyed Josh sways to and fro. The escalator crowd's getting on his nerves.

He fights for balance. Designer elbows poke his ribs.

A SHOPPER swings a "Hole Fuds" bag over one shoulder, and clocks Josh right in the face.

He DODGES to his left, lands on the rail. His ass sinks into silicone handles. Deep.

SECURITY ALARMS BLARE overhead.

AUTOMATED VOICE

Attention, Shoppers. Please do not sit on the hand rail. According to current measurement, you weigh -
(calculates)
- one hundred and sixty two pounds.

JOSH

(yells at the ceiling)
Sorry!

Peri giggles, and hides a smile.

EXT. CITY STREET - LITTLE ISLAM - DAY

Reza ducks through the crowd, the mystery box tucked like a football under his arm.

He moves constantly - like a shark. Until he FREEZES.

In front of him: a HISPANIC COP.

Reza slips between TWO ISLAMIC LESBIAN LOVERS. The girls dress conservatively in Burkas, hold hands.

The cop glances toward Reza.

Reza hides his face, and vaults over a subway rail.

He sticks the landing with both feet. SPLAT.

Reza looks down at grungy pavement and stares.

Stringy liquid clings to his boot. Colors in the puddle flow and flicker: mimicking the pattern of his heel.

Reza retracts his foot. The gunk holds tight with gooey "tentacles"; almost like it's alive.

A KOREAN GIRL (6) strolls by - a neon-lit ice cream in her hand. She watches Reza's antics. GIGGLES.

REZA
What are YOU looking at?

KOREAN GIRL
You. Silly "Gi".

REZA
You American? I am. Go back where you came from. Scat!

The little girl sticks out an ice-cream coated tongue. The colors morph in her mouth - reflecting body heat.

Reza flips a pinkie finger at the girl. She CURSES in Korean, then scoots away.

Reza spots a SECOND COP: A WHITE FEMALE.

His eyes flit to a street sign: Mulberry Avenue. Safety's a scant few feet away.

Reza covers the box with his jacket, and stalks away.

INT. SLICK MOVES SHOPPE - DAY

Josh and Peri stroll inside. The place looks designer - all the way. And *meticulously* organized.

SILICONE DILDOS stacked in one corner. Separated by color, shape and size.

Another section displays VIBRATORS, sorted into three huge piles:

Him. Her. And "Other." Peri and Josh drift that way.

PERI
(perky)
Look! They've got them in Lavender! What do you think Arthur would like?

JOSH
What *I'd* like is to get away.

A squat SALESWOMAN (50s) approaches. Frizzy short hair - face like a frog.

SALESWOMAN
Howdy, folks. Welcome to Slick Moves! How can I help you cute lovebirds today?

JOSH
Uh, lemme out of here?

PERI
Not yet, Josh. There's so much to see.

She picks up a MONSTROUS STUDDERED DILDO. The silicone flops in her petite hands.

JOSH
Put that down. Please?

PERI
You don't think Arthur's into this?

JOSH
I don't wanna know. And - if he is -
Arthur's anal retentive. That one's way
too big.

The Saleswoman grins.

SALESWOMAN
These are demo models. We have inventory
in different sizes. As for these - feel
free to touch and play. We encourage our
customers to go "wild".

She points towards a window in the back. Heavy velvet
curtains cover the pane.

SALESWOMAN
If you want to test drive anything -
we've got a privacy room, with sterilizer
bins. I can recommend specific items, if
you'd like.

PERI
That's neat.
(grins at Josh)
Should we experiment?

JOSH
No friggin' way!

Josh stares at the saleswoman. Her ugly face.

JOSH
You have - experience with these things?

The Saleswoman grins, flashes missing teeth. She doesn't
seem offended in the least.

SALESWOMAN

Oh, you have no idea. I was a licensed escort before my last Jump. That's the only memory I retain. Somewhere in Jersey, they tell me.

She takes the dildo from Peri, weighs it in her hand.

SALESWOMAN

If your friend Arthur's into this, we'll send a team to his home and make a mold. Use 3-d printers, have it custom-made.

Josh's eyes bug out of his head. He darts for the "Fleshlight" aisle as an escape.

JOSH

S'cuse me. I'll be over here.

EXT. MALL OF AMERICA

The Walkway rolls towards waiting CARS.

A gentle BREEZE ripples Josh's hair. He leans back and enjoys the ride.

Peri looks tense: she's holding all the bags.

A CHI-BOT bounces in front of her. She waves an "Apple Card" in its bug-like face.

The bot SQUEAKS. The displays on its collar flash a final tally of the purchases.

The screen blinks "Thank You". The bot departs.

JOSH

You tipped the ROBOT? Why?

PERI

It's a standard fifteen percent. They need maintenance. That's fair.

Peri roots through an over-stuffed shopping bag, and pulls out a liquor bottle:

INSERT ON LABEL: Heineken Whiskey, 2037.

PERI

Arthur'll dig this. It's Vintage!

JOSH

Who cares? Arthur's a dick.

PERI

Don't talk about your cousin like that!
I'll miss *mine*, when she's gone.

JOSH

Why? His ass'll stay imbedded in our
couch - smiling with that ugly face.

Peri ignores Josh's hissy fit and digs in her bag again.

This time, she retrieves a long, black box.

INSERT: Silver text with red lips. The name on the cover:
"Slick Moves."

A silver-plated Flesh-light shines under cellophane.
Diamonds decorate the hilt.

PERI

So what if Arthur's ugly? He's got this.
And the sale was two-for-one.

(grins)

Wanna give the extra a try?

EXT. CITY STREET - LITTLE ISLAM - DAY

Reza perches on a stoop. Very wary. And alert. He pops
open HIS box and looks inside.

CLOSE UP: Grungy, distressed metal gear. Not sexy. Or
well-designed.

A BEEP snatches Reza's attention away.

Panic floods Reza's face. Not because of the box.
Something else.

It's the cops from before. The Hispanic cop waves an ID
SCANNER at the teeming crowds.

CLOSE UP: The scanner coughs up a list of three names.

'Reza Farsee' is the first we see.

Reza whips a phony "pen" from his pants. He depresses a
hidden trigger: CLICK.

The ballpoint end FLASHES bright. Invisible "signals"
THRUM through the air.

The Hispanic Cop swings the ID Scanner towards Reza.
Almost like a dousing stick.

Mercifully, his screen blinks green.

HISPANIC COP
Mami, hold up. The text changed.

FEMALE COP
That's not the Reza kid?

HISPANIC COP
Nah. According to this, "Abtin Zubin."
(chuckles)
A to Z. This kid ain't our man.

The disappointed flat-foots turn away. Reza breathes a SIGH of relief.

As soon as they're gone, he leaps to his feet.

INT. AUTO-LEXUS - AFTERNOON

A perfect car, cruising down an idyllic street.

Josh and Peri canoodle in back. The wheel swings back and forth, in automatic drive.

A screen FLICKERS. Sarah's peeved face reappears.

SARAH
If you kids want to "get busy", I won't tell Roger. His wrinkled ass won't hear a thing from me.

JOSH
Mom, that's disgusting.

SARAH
Watching would be disgusting. I'm just letting you be "Chill" and Hulu is all.

PERI
Josh - relax. Your Mom is hip.

She waves the "Slick Moves" box at Sarah. Josh's mom arches her brow and grins.

SARAH
You went to SM? Ooooo, let's see!

The car makes a turn - bringing the CADWELL COMPOUND into view. It's a high-tech Xanadu, growing rapidly in size.

JOSH
Thank God. Home Sweet Home.

SARAH
 Who says this pathetic hovel's "Sweet"?
 (to Peri)
 We're decorating, though. Want to see?

A twist of her perfectly preserved fingers. The car screen pans back to reveal:

INT. CADWELL LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Luxurious furniture. Abstract paintings on the wall.

ARTHUR CADWELL (20.9999) waves at Josh and Peri from the couch. His patrician face matches the anemic move - his narrow ass sunk between velour seats.

Peri waves back, hides the sex-toy from Arthur's view.

PERI
 (whispers to Josh)
 You're right. He never moves!

SARAH
 Dear, you both should get back right away. I'm overwhelmed. We need to clean!

She runs a hand across the couch's arm, and flicks a dust-coated finger at the lens.

SARAH
 Isn't this positively *disgusting*?

EXT. CITY STREET - LITTLE ISLAM - AFTERNOON

Reza keeps running. He watches every face. Every side.

Darting through twists and turns, Reza skirts along the edge of Mott; towards a street once known as "Pell."

"Pay-Am"'s now scribbled on the sign.

Reza squeezes between two parked cars.

And spots *one person* out of place.

VALERIE JAVERT (30s). She's attractive enough - with no makeup. And no humor in those hazel eyes.

But - unlike anyone else on this street - her grim features are European white.

A suspicious Reza veers left. He trips on the curb: falls on his face.

He sits up quickly, and gingerly shakes his precious box. It doesn't *sound* like anything's broken.

He peeks under the lid. And confirms: it's okay.

REZA

Ow!

Reza raises a hand and examines his palm. It's covered with a million scrapes. And lots of nasty gutter slime.

INT. CADWELL LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

More palatial in person than on screen. And more cheerful, as well.

Bright banners flutter over Arthur's head:

"Best Wishes", "Bon Voyage", "Make Us Proud - Jump Ahead!"

Josh strolls in the front door.

Decorative SENSORS spray Eucalyptus mist at his face. Josh reflexively breathes in deep. So refreshing - scented air!

A Four-D HOLO TV CHATTERS in the background.

INSERT: A shot of neon strangled New Times Square. Parade decorations clog the tourist-trapped street.

The banners there read differently:

"Happy Jump Anniversary Day!"

ON-SCREEN:

DYKE CLARKE (30s) chats with Reporter REYNA RUDNER (20s).

Dyke's makeup is far more polished than Reyna's. S/He's a smooth drink of water - stylishly transgender queer.

REYNA

Here we have Dyke Clarke - the host of tomorrow night's party! Celebration of the day the Jump Program was universally accepted and activated - by both Congress and the House. Dyke, are *you* excited?

DYKE
OMG. We've got shit-loads in store!

REYNA
And even *more* celebrities. As our viewers
will soon see.

Sarah stalks towards son Josh - waves a dusty finger in
his face.

SARAH
Did you *see* this?

JOSH
Yeah, Mom. In the Lexus. Magnified two
hundred times.

SARAH
That's *after* Henry did three whole
sweeps! I told your father countless
times. We need his sensors replaced!

ROGER CADWELL (48) wanders into the room. His designer
suit would take Ralph Lauren's breath away. A laconic
expression on his face.

ROGER
My ears are ringing. Did I hear my name?

Sarah pokes his chest with her dusty finger. Roger waves
the dirt away.

SARAH
I told you - get that damned dog "fixed"!

ROGER
Henry? He's not the problem. Never is.

SARAH
Well then, we should renovate!

ROGER
It's not like *we'd* enjoy the benefits.
Remember, I'm Jumping next year.

SARAH
What about me? And our family's needs?

Josh and Peri exchange glances. This is a pissing match
they've heard before.

Sarah focuses on Josh next.

SARAH

Why don't you go and wrap that box, Sweet-Pea? Arthur deserves one surprise.

(mutters)

Bad enough his Jump party is almost the same as "Jump Day". Talk about a let down. It's like Christmas - on your birthday!

AUNT BEA (60s) totters into the room. She clutches a "mystery box" in her hands.

Bea pries off tape and shakes the box. COLORFUL BALLOONS self-inflate and rise.

A PUFF of IRIDESCENT GLITTER fills the air. It settles like shiny dandruff on Arthur's head.

AUNT BEA

Look what I ordered online. It's imported. From France!

SARAH

Bea! Henry just cleaned the floor!

Glitter rains down: like the tears of unicorns.

HENRY THE CHI-ROOMBA shoots around a corner, and slurps up glitter with his "mouth."

Peri watches the bot bounce around.

Aunt Bea taps Arthur's arm, still focused on the glitter's charm.

AUNT BEA

Beautiful. Biodegradable, too.

SARAH

Josh? Wouldn't you and Peri like to decorate? Add youthful touches - here and there?

ROGER

Dear? Don't you think our boy should focus on school? I hear mid-terms are next week.

JOSH

Hey. My grades are fine.

Peri shoots Josh a look: "Really?!?"

ROGER

They damn well should be. Cadwell Men
excel in class. Get to the top ten
percent, I'll make it worth your while.

(beat)

How do you feel about Two Mill? We'll
move it from your Trust fund. Just after
mid-terms end.

JOSH

Just two? Who says I'll use it? I'm due
to Jump next year.

ROGER

That's not the proper way to think.

He leans close to Josh, and whispers in his ear.

ROGER

There are ways to transfer funds. Help
people out *after* a Jump.

(out loud)

Make sure you study hard. I want my son
to be prepared!

SARAH

(pouts)

Strange. That's the *exact same argument*
you thought apropos for our house.

Josh's eyes scan the room. He's stuck between bickering
parents. Trapped.

AUNT BEA

Sweetie, think of it this way -

Aunt Bea pats Josh's hand, and points to the TV nearby.

ON-SCREEN: Dyke Clarke bro-hugs WILHELM OLDMAN (30s).

Wilhelm's dressed even brighter than Dyke. A silver
SYMBOL dangles from a chain around his neck.

Reporter Reyna primps for the camera.

REYNA

And here we have Wilhelm.

WILHELM

("air quotes")

The Conqueror...

REYNA

"Conqueror" is right! At least when it comes to hearts and minds. Wilhelm, many people call you "the most revolutionary religious figure of our decade." They say your views are refreshing. Unique. Your congregation has doubled in the past three years. Tell us, what's your secret?

WILHELM

Secret? I just stay with the times. Sure, technology changes with every generation. But Fundamentals stay the same. All I've ever said is the world must embrace the Jump Program for what it is. It's a blessing in disguise. A chance to be saved like Jesus. Reborn!

Back in the compound, Roger SIGHS.

ROGER

Mystic claptrap, you ask me.

(to Josh)

What are you and Lady Peri waiting for?

Take a study break. In your room.

SARAH

Or stay here, and keep Arthur company.

He's nervous. Who wouldn't be?

Arthur flashes a pathetic smile.

Aunt Bea grabs his wrist, and slips a card into his hand.

AUNT BEA

Here's one more gift. Just don't tell your Uncle. Please.

The glass GLOWS. Displaying:

A shuttle itinerary to Turks and Caicos. The time stamp: effective immediately.

AUNT BEA

(stage-whispers)

I hear the sea is beautiful. Sapphire blue and green. Honey, they don't honor extradition with the US. Just say the word, and I'll call a cab.

A COUGH from the doorway interrupts Bea.

LARRY CADWELL (60s) rests against the frame. Far more polished than Roger. Chiseled muscles and features. Aristocracy personified.

LARRY

I heard that, Bea. If you're going to talk Treason, I'd suggest you turn the volume down. Your hearing implant's charge is dead.

Aunt Bea turns pale under thick makeup.

AUNT BEA

You misheard. That's not what I said.

LARRY

Don't you know dodging a Jump is punishable by jail sentence? You think Arthur could handle that? And isn't that contrary to what you - and your "religious guru" Wilhelm believe?

Larry crosses the room like a panther.

Wilhelm chats it up with Reyna on-screen.

WILHELM

When placed under hypotherapy, thirty percent of all people remember the exact same "undeath" experience of their first Jump. A burning white, transcendent light...

LARRY

"Transcendent", Bea? Wouldn't you want that for your son? Family's important. Don't you agree?

AUNT BEA

(flustered)

I want the world for him. In every way.

LARRY

Come on, Sis, be careful. The Cadwell name is synonymous with Jumps. If any of us even *jokes* about defecting, it won't be seemly. Shall we say?

Aunt Bea kisses an apathetic Arthur on the forehead. Her lips tremble. She turns away.

Larry SNAPS off the Holo-Screen and turns to Josh.

LARRY

Kids! I heard you went to that new store.
What's the name? Slick Moves?

(joking)

Get anything fun for me?

Josh and Peri exchange looks.

JOSH

And you want to be part of *this* family?

PERI

Let's just be supportive. They love each other. That's real nice.

SARAH

Then be a Dear and decorate. This place is an unGodly mess!

EXT. CITY STREET - LITTLE ISLAM - AFTERNOON

Reza ducks low - out of Agent Valerie's line of sight.

He slips under the radar - high-tails to the next street.

This one's renamed "Farrokhzad" (Persian translation: "Happily Born").

Reza PALMS a faded door. SENSORS flash. Steel bars RETRACT.

Reza sneaks into...

INT. REZA'S LIVING ROOM

Dark mold dots peeling walls. Salvation Army furniture everywhere. Home Sweet Home.

Reza SIGHS.

A hand emerges from the shadows, and grabs Reza's collar from behind.

Reza SHRIEKS. A trickle of urine stains his pants.

He whips out his "pen" and twists around. Reza toggles a SECOND button - extrudes a KNIFE.

An angular face leers down at him:

"UNCLE" GIV (40s). Bearded. Thin. A nasty smirk on an even nastier face.

Giv grabs Reza's wrist, and SLAMS it against the wall.

REZA

Ow!

He drops the blade.

UNCLE GIV

(thick Iranian accent)

You wet yourself? Heroic boy.

REZA

Giv. I didn't know it was you!

UNCLE GIV

You should be careful whenever entering a room. Especially given your "commercial activities" of late.

REZA

But -

Giv RIPS the mystery box from Reza's hands. Then shoves Reza against the wall.

REZA

That's mine. Give it back!

A female voice intrudes - BAHADUR:

BAHADUR (O.S.)

Pesaeream, mind your elders. Giv - be gentle with my son.

REZA

Mom?

Reza stops scrambling for his box. He pivots towards his mother's voice.

BAHADUR (40s) stands in the center of the room.

NOURI (30s) and HASTI (6) on either side.

Hasti clings to her mother's leg. She stares at Brother Reza with deep, rich almond eyes.

Reza points a finger at Nouri. The man's fatter than Uncle Giv. Clean shaven, but just as vile.

REZA

Shit. You let *him* in here?

BAHADUR

Reza! Language!

Nouri CHUCKLES.

Hasti cringes at the sound. Slinks away.

UNCLE GIV

I invited Nouri. He's a friend.

REZA

That's what you call him these days?

Nouri waddles over to Reza.

Uncle Giv holds the young man at arm's length, and picks at the box with elegant fingers.

UNCLE GIV

Let's see what you've got here.

REZA

None of your business!

UNCLE GIV

Certainly it is. I'm family. And family's important. Don't you think?

REZA

(squirms)

"Uncle's" just a nickname. Please. Just gimme back what's mine.

UNCLE GIV

As a thief, you claim property?

He shoots a look towards Bahadur.

UNCLE GIV

He'll bring the cops down on our heads.

REZA

I bought it. I didn't steal. I swear!

UNCLE GIV

"Swear?" That term is appropriate.

(to Bahadur)

Your boy's already tainted by Western ways. First his tongue.

(to Reza)

Probably the rest of his body, as well.

REZA

My body?

Reza stares at Giv. Then gets the drift. His eyes skip towards his Mom in fear.

REZA

Okay. Fine. I had one drink.

UNCLE GIV

How many impure women have you touched?

REZA

I'm - a virgin. Okay?

Bahadur clamps her hands over Hasti's ears.

Reza reaches for his box. Giv holds it like bait above his head.

UNCLE GIV

Where'd you get this? Think-Geek? If you did, where's the receipt?

REZA

Fuckwad - stop. Give it to me!

The men turn disapproving eyes on Reza. He's trapped between two evils - far more than Josh was before.

UNCLE GIV

I will inform Abid what you've said.

Giv holds onto the box, and pushes Reza back.

...who rebounds with a vengeance. Nouri bars his way.

REZA

Fine. Tell him. I dare you. I'm being a good son. Helping Dad pay the bills.

UNCLE GIV

You wish to help? Work with me.

REZA

Where's Dad? Let's ask him!

Bahadur makes a face.

BAHADUR

Leave your father out of this. He's in the back room. Resting.

Uncle Giv lifts Reza's black-market gear from the box. He rests antique glasses on his nose, and squints.

UNCLE GIV
Ah, much better. Now, we'll see.

INT. CADWELL LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Sarah and Roger stand in front of Arthur; hostile faces nose to nose.

An amused Uncle Larry watches from the doorway. He drapes a restraining arm across Aunt Bea.

SARAH
Let me ask you a question, Roger.

ROGER
Go ahead. Make my day.

SARAH
You care about *anyone* but than yourself?

ROGER
Let's examine that, shall we? How hard do I slave to maintain this house?

SARAH
How about the *younger generation*? What do you do for them?

ROGER
I avoid asking for Divorce. That's something, isn't it?

Sarah shoots Roger a look of hate.

ROGER
I care for Josh. Are you insane?

He glances towards Josh and Peri. They're inching towards the exit. Until they freeze.

SARAH
I meant your Nephew Arthur!

ROGER
Oh. Arthur. I see.

He looks down at Arthur.

The kid watches the turned-off TV like he's brain dead. A well-dressed corpse on an expensive couch.

ROGER
What about him?

SARAH
His Jump Party's tomorrow night!

ROGER
And?

SARAH
We should celebrate in style.

Roger chews on those words, spits them out.

ROGER
Is that Arthur's needs, or yours? If you cared about *him*, you'd pull that precious credit card out of your purse. Dial up an escort and get him laid.

Peri raises her hand.

PERI
Actually, we got this.

She dives into her "Slick Moves" bag. An embarrassed Josh yanks her hand away.

JOSH
Peri. Enough. Let's go back to school.

PERI
But -

JOSH
Come on. We'll be late for class!

He waves to Larry, and Aunt Bea.

Then high-tails it out the door.

EXT. CADWELL PARKING PORT - AFTERNOON

Josh storms towards the Lexus - pulls Peri in his wake.

PERI
Stop. You're hurting me!

JOSH
If you break anything, we've got bio-spray in the car.

PERI
Don't be so insensitive. Stop and listen to me!

Josh reaches the Lexus. He whirls around, to Peri's face.

It's a tableau similar to his parents: though the dynamic's different this time.

JOSH

You're the one not listening. I told you
I didn't want to go home today!

PERI

You don't want me around your family. I
embarrass you? Is that the deal?

JOSH

I don't want to be embarrassed - by them!

He yanks Peri close. Kisses deep.

Peri melts against his chest.

Josh reaches behind his back, lips 100% engaged.

He fumbles - presses his fingers against a metal sensor
on the door. The Lexus BEEPS, opens wide.

JOSH

Get in. You've seen enough of my family
for one day.

Josh's phone BEEPS. He looks down. A text from Roger
glows on screen.

INSERT: Two mill? Let's try Ten. Talk to me at the party.
2-morrow night.

INT. REZA'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Giv holds Reza's tech up to a ceiling light. Loose wires
flop against his wrist. Reza glares at him.

REZA

Seen enough?

UNCLE GIV

Not yet.

REZA

Gimme. I mean, can I please have it back?
This is real important to me.

UNCLE GIV

Of course. Eventually.

Giv turns his back on Reza, towards Nouri.

UNCLE GIV

(in Farsi, subtitled)

This could be useful. Can it run on jail
broken OS? How much heat can it
withstand?

Nouri GRUNTS. Shrugs. Extends a hand.

Giv hands over the gear.

Reza snatches it away - mid-air.

He darts across the room, the tech hugged to his chest.

Nouri charges Reza. Just a few dodges back and forth, and
he traps Reza in a corner.

Reza slips to the left. Nouri feints, blocks the way.

Reza pivots to the right.

And bumps into Nouri again. The thug's built like a brick
wall: no matter what Reza tries, there's no escape.

Reza stares over Nouri's shoulder, on tip-toe.

He rolls pleading eyes towards Bahadur.

REZA

Mom! Talk to him. I have to deliver this.

BAHADUR

To whom?

REZA

Some guy.

BAHADUR

Some guy? Does he have a name?

REZA

I dunno. He's with Deaug, Northwest.

UNCLE GIV

Deaug? Isn't that a gang?

REZA

They ordered it special. Expedited
delivery. It's due today - by mid-night.

NOURI

Tell them you lost it.

REZA
I can't! There'll be -

UNCLE GIV
Hell to pay? From them or me?

The tall man turns to Bahadur.

UNCLE GIV
If so, who will pay the price? Perhaps
your mother? Or your sister?

REZA
Gimme the stuff. I'll take it away.

UNCLE GIV
What a surprise: the peril of doing
business with outsiders. You should work
with me instead. That would result in
more money. Instead it goes to 'some
gang'.

REZA
But -

UNCLE GIV
After all, your Father's sick. One must
find ways to pay the bills.

He crooks a finger at Nouri. The brute steps away from
Reza, and lumbers Giv's way.

UNCLE GIV
Nouri, tell this boy about your friend.

NOURI
I thought it was a secret.

Giv CLEARS his throat.

UNCLE GIV
(to Reza)
Nouri here knows a man who recently
arrived. From the homeland, three months
ago. He's now in the market for... a
child bride. One that's unsullied, and
pretty. He desires a girl from a good
family. One with very pure blood lines.

He nods towards Hasti. Reza and Bahadur turn sheet-white.

REZA
My sister? No fucking way!

He tosses the gear back into Giv's face.

REZA

Take this shit if you want. But if you touch Hasti, I'll have your balls. Don't even whisper her name. Or I'll take my sister away!

Giv waves his slender finger. TSSSSKKKS.

UNCLE GIV

Don't talk to your elders with disrespect. Hasn't your mother taught you to behave?

He beckons to Nouri.

They confiscate Reza's gear, and head out the door.

Reza watches the men leave, eyes glued to Uncle Giv's face. The door CLICKS behind them.

Reza turns back towards the room.

REZA

Mom -

BAHADUR

Shhhh. I understand. But you must learn - there are things you should never say.

REZA

He wants to sell Hasti!

BAHADUR

Never fear. That won't happen. Thanks to her fearless brother, your sister's safe.

Reza stares - unsure what to say. His eyes fall on a door towards the back.

It's ajar.

Reza breaks from his trance.

He moves quick. Efficiently. Just like always.

Step One: Kiss Bahadur on the forehead.

Step Two: Ruffle Hasti's dark, unruly hair.

Reza darts towards the back room.

A DARK FIGURE sits inside. Waiting.

INT. DORM ROOM HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

A digital message board decorates an aluminum door - covered with penis and animal cartoons. Some separate. Some combined.

Josh palms a sensor and swings it open.

He slings an arm over Peri, and steps inside.

INT. JOSH'S DORM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Typical college junk everywhere. The room's dark, curtains drawn.

A DARK FIGURE slumps in a chair.

He's partially hidden by shadow; illuminated solely by laptop light.

The figure raises his head. Revealing:

KURT (20s). A Slacker/Hipster wanna-be. Stringy hair covers his plaid shirt. An animated tattoo wriggles on one cheek.

PERI

Kurt, you're here? You didn't answer. We knocked!

Kurt sneaks a quick look at his pants. They're wide open.

He fumbles in the dark. ZIIIIIP.

KURT

Um, yeah. I was... busy.

Josh plops down on his bed. Kurt swivels toward him.

KURT

Speaking of busy. I Twigger-Skyped you. No dice. You upload that assignment yet?

JOSH

Uh, no. I'll get to it. Eventually.

KURT

Didn't you download Ackerson's codes?

Josh's eyes dart to Peri.

JOSH

Shhhhhh!

PERI
Josh? Are you cheating?

JOSH
Um, no. Kurt's just high.

Kurt swivels the other way. Towards Peri.

KURT
If he's cheating, do you blame him? You know how *badly* Ackerson reamed your boyfriend's ass last time? Right in front of the whole fucking class.

PERI
Figuratively? Or literally?

KURT
Both.

PERI
I know. I was there.

Kurt SIGHS. He scoops a "Five Loco" can off the floor. Takes a loud, dramatic SIP.

KURT
Whatever. Upload from your phone. We gotta get our butts outta here. Class starts at six. Unless...

He shoots a loaded look Peri's way.

KURT
You guys need a few moments alone. You know - get a quickie out of the way? If so, go for it. I won't watch. Unless you want me to. Then that's okay.

Josh glares around the room. It's destroyed.

JOSH
Looks like you were partying. In some freaky, smelly ways.

KURT
You want me out? That's just fine!

Kurt leaps to his feet, mock-annoyed.

A GADGET tumbles to the floor. It looks like Reza's custom wares. But with kinky add-ons. Everywhere.

Josh grabs the gear, and holds it up to the light.

JOSH

Wow. That's sick. What's this?

Silicone flops, tangles with tubes and electrodes.

KURT

Something I bought. My parents let me use
their card. It, uh, bonds people
physically. And mentally.

(beat)

Wanna give it a try?

Josh and Peri exchange glances. A disgusted look floods
Peri's face.

PERI

If it'll help our relationship...

JOSH

Not at the shop. And not here!

He throws the gear at Kurt. The floppy bits reduce the
missile's speed. SMACK. Silicone SPLATS Kurt in the face.

JOSH

Pervert! Keep this shit to yourself.

KURT

What crawled up your ass and died?

PERI

His family was fighting.

JOSH

You *know* my Uncle's in the Jump Program.

KURT

So?

JOSH

So - this is Black Tech!

KURT

Yeah. Sweet. Ain't it?

He grins, and rolls it back across the floor to Josh.

Josh deflects the trajectory with his foot, and kicks the
gear under the bed.

JOSH

Don't bring illegal junk in here. I don't
wanna risk my grade on a raid.

KURT

"On a raid"? Your grades are shit.

Josh grabs Peri's hand.

PERI

Ow!

JOSH

Fuck this. Let's go to class.

Kurt waves to the couple as they leave.

KURT

See you there. More private time for me!

INT. REZA'S HOME - BACK ROOM - AFTERNOON

Reza nudges the door and slinks inside.

His dark figure slouches in a chair as well. Hookah smoke curls through the air.

Inching closer, Reza sees:

ABID (50s). Pain ridden. Twisted. Bitter.

ABID

Reza.

REZA

Dad, you're awake?

ABID

With all that yelling, are you surprised?

REZA

I'm sorry. I didn't mean -

ABID

"Sorry?" I heard how you talked to your mother. And Uncle Giv. As your father, that brings me pain. Not to mention, much concern.

Abid sucks down more Hookah smoke. Tortured lungs protest and SQUEAK.

ABID

I forbid you to be a Western devil, like your friends.

REZA

But -

ABID

Tradition is *important* in this family.
You'll treat your elders with respect.

Reza storms across the room.

REZA

Respect? When you were listening, did you
hear what "Uncle" had to say? He wants to
sell off your daughter like a prostitute!
Does "tradition" make that okay?

Abid summons his strength in a sudden burst. He lunges
from his chair - BITCH SLAPS Reza across the face.

ABID

Such rebellion is unacceptable! I am the
head of this family. You think I would
allow them to take your sister away?

REZA

You won't be around *forever*.

ABID

That is true. But I'll beat sense into
you as I please. Until you're fit to take
my place.

He falls back into his chair with a WHEEZE.

ABID

Keeping culture alive is important, Reza.
Sacrifice is paramount in this world.

INT. CLASSROOM - AFTERNOON

The digital readout on the door reads: "Civics 101".

STUDENTS kneel in ergonomic chairs: Peri, Josh and Kurt
huddled on one side.

High tech GADGETS gleam everywhere.

In one corner: an ANTIQUE BULLETIN BOARD with index
cards. Decorative: and very, very obsolete.

PROF. J.V. ACKERSON (40s) paces energetically "on-stage".

He's a lean, mean, intellectual machine: fueled by *Five Loco*. Or Starbucks Crack. Complete with button-down 50s vibe, Ackerson's got glasses and razor-smarts.

Not to mention a Devil's Advocate 'tude on display.

Ackerson palms his desk.

A VIRTUAL BLACKBOARD extrudes from the ceiling.

Ackerson whips out a stylus shaped like chalk. He "writes" on the blackboard energetically.

INSERT: Pros and Cons in glowing columns.

PROS: Equality. Opportunity. The Shared Brotherhood of Man.

CONS: Sacrifice. Homogenized culture. Loss of tradition and ethnic identity.

ACKERSON

Okay, Kiddies. I warned you this was on it's way. Don't stop and think. Don't even breathe. And for God's sakes, don't Google *anything* on your screen. I want someone - anyone - to give me a list of Pros and Cons for the Jump Program. At least five arguments, each way. And they better be original. Nothing you vomited up from the assignment I spoon fed you last night.

Kurt raises his hand.

KURT

You want Cons? I thought the Jump Program was one hundred percent positive?

Ackerson grins and points towards the door.

ACKERSON

You see that sign? In case you can't read, it says "Civics." Which means, we're free - and expected - to debate *everything*. No holds barred. No party lines.

Ackerson holds a hand up to his face. Stage-whispers to his students.

ACKERSON

Though if you give me Con, I won't tell.

He strides over to SUTHERLAND (20s), a generic blond-headed boy. Kind of like Arthur's less lethargic twin.

ACKERSON

Sutherland, guess what: Tag, you're it. In your esteemed and learned opinion, has the Jump Program improved life in these United States? Or has it made it far, far worse?

Sutherland freezes. He's caught in the spotlight - with no answers.

SUTHERLAND

Um, better?

Ackerson BONKS Sutherland's skull with his stylus. Hard.

ACKERSON

You're sucking up to me. Don't lie.

SUTHERLAND

Okay. Worse!

ACKERSON

Worse? Really? But why?

A fragile RED HEADED GIRL (BECKY) raises a hand.

BECKY

Um, well, the Jump Program's slanted everyone's goals to Short Term. After all, if you're only gonna be in a body seven years - why would you plan for *anything*?

KURT

I'd plan for an awesome orgy on Jump Day!

The class CHUCKLES at the joke.

Becky's phone BUZZES. She looks down.

CLOSE-UP: BECKY'S PHONE: It's a text from Kurt. And a picture of his new sex toy.

INSERT: "Wanna party 2-night?"

Becky blushes, and waves his way. She throws him the "Thumbs-Up" sign. A-okay.

Sutherland regains his wits.

SUTHERLAND

Well, *some* people - not me - say
Jumping's made inequality worse. Who
needs to fix the ghettos anymore?
Everyone's guaranteed to leave.

Ackerson stylus-whips Sutherland again. He turns to his
class in an academic rage.

ACKERSON

Can I hear a "Pro" comment? Anywhere?
Anyone? Bueller?

No-one gets the reference. Silence reigns. Sutherland
rubs his battered head.

ACKERSON

Seriously?!? Not a single one? What kind
of one percent suck-loving bastards are
you guys? Don't you at least think
opportunities in life should be equal to
all? You got a problem with leveling the
playing field? Just 'cause you drew the
best card. For now?

Peri pokes Josh.

PERI

Come on. Here's your chance. You answer!

Josh shrugs: "I don't care."

Ackerson speed-walks to Becky. She cringes in her chair.

ACKERSON

You tell me. What makes a kid born with a
silver spoon up his ass more "valuable"
or "worthy" than some immigrant genius
from the streets?

He swings into Josh's face next.

ACKERSON

Do people have *more right* to an education
and health care - just because they were
squeezed out of some rich woman's vag?

Kurt sips on Five Loco. Spit-takes.

KURT

OMG!

He grabs his phone and replays a recording. The audio
loops Ackerson's voice saying "Vag."

Becky blushes, afraid.

BECKY

Um, Professor Ackerson? I'm really offended by that word. It makes me feel oppressed.

ACKERSON

(sarcastic)

Mea culpa. Please allow me to rephrase. For those more delicately inclined: do people have more right to anything - just because they slipped from the nether regions of polite society?

Finally, Sutherland raises his hand.

SUTHERLAND

Just for the record. I'm in *favor* of Jumps. I just said a "Con" to get an "A".

Ackerson stalks back to the stage.

ACKERSON

You're "in favor of it." Really? Then let's look at what Jumps truly mean.

He holds up a splayed hand, and ticks off point by point on his fingers.

ACKERSON

One: you're against the concept of Personal Liberty. Property. Reaping the Fair Benefits of One's Labors.

(to the class)

Do you naive Babies *really* think individuals should be enslaved to Society's every need? And what does "Society" mean anyway? Isn't that just a cowardly way of saying "Mob Rule" and "People Who Aren't You?"

KURT

Um, Professor Ackerson?

Ackerson swings towards him.

ACKERSON

Yes?

KURT

For the record, I think you're awesome and dynamic. But - don't you think it might be a good idea to mellow out?

ACKERSON

"Mellow Out?"

He aim his stylus at Kurt like a sword.

The class GASPS and holds their breath. Every single one afraid - and dying to see what happens next.

Kurt points at Josh.

KURT

Cadwell Jr.'s in the house. Shouldn't we keep the "Patrick Henry" schtick at bay?

Ackerson strolls over to Josh, ruffles his hair.

ACKERSON

Don't worry about it. Josh and I - we're pals. Isn't that right, Cadwell? We're best buds. Extra tight?

Josh rolls his eyes at Peri. Annoyed, but far from angry.

JOSH

When I do my homework, anyway. It's not like I'd tell my Uncle what you say.

Ackerson grins, vindicated. Turns towards class.

ACKERSON

You *all* should emulate the Cadwell style. Josh may be lazy, but he's got brains. And he knows: open discussion is the life-blood of the body politic. Even more important than water, or air.

Ackerson returns to the virtual blackboard.

Now, it's in energy saving mode:

INSERT: a shot of the Grand Canyon. It's filled to the edge with water - thanks to drastic climate change.

Ackerson waves his hand, turns it off.

ACKERSON

Okay, everyone upload your homework. Then get the hell out of my sight.

He eyes Kurt - the only student still paying attention.

ACKERSON

You like my class?

KURT
Yeah. It's intense!

INT. REZA'S HOME - BACK ROOM - AFTERNOON

Reza hovers over Abid, nursing his slap-reddened face.

REZA
I know I yelled. I'm sorry. I didn't mean
to be so intense.

Abid sucks on his Hookah, and looks away. He avoids
Reza's guilty eyes.

ABID
Get the hell out. Apologize to your
Mother. Let me sleep.

REZA
But -

ABID
When I wake up, I better not hear you've
gotten into more trouble. Or I'll make
sure to match those cheeks.

Abid slouches in his chair, drained. He sucks in a ragged
breath, then waves his son away.

Reza slinks out the door. Into...

INT. REZA'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON

Bahadur and Hasti stand side by side.

Listening. Waiting.

INT. CLASSROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Ackerson powers down more equipment.

The Holo blackboard retreats back to the ceiling.

Ackerson consults his desk. Everyone's homework uploads
on a recessed screen.

The digital tally builds quickly.

Ackerson watches. Counts. Doesn't look up at the anxious
young faces aimed at his desk.

ACKERSON

Ninety percent. Not bad. Class dismissed.

Ergonomic chairs SCRAPE, fold away.

Ackerson's recessed screen toggles into wallpaper mode.

Featuring: PICTURES OF OLD BUILDINGS. A PRETTY GIRL.

Ackerson TAPS the virtual keyboard on his desk.

Every student's phone instantly BEEPS.

CLOSE-UP ON JOSH'S CELL PHONE:

A homework PDF sent via text. A DIGITAL STICKY flashes.
"Alert: Today's submission not received."

Josh shrugs, and pockets the device.

Ackerson doesn't see. He's still staring at the Pretty Girl's picture on the screen.

ACKERSON

(mutters)

Sacrifice, kids. That's what's *truly* important in this world. Sacrifice to the Greater Good of Society. Sacrifice to reaching ultimate goals in this life. And sacrifice of short term pleasures - doing whatever it takes to make the grade.

(beat)

Except for cheating, of course. And my grade specifically. Don't forget. Your parents pay my salary. At least for the next seven years.

STUDENTS read their phones and GROAN.

This time, Ackerson does look up; a tired expression on his face.

ACKERSON

Bitch and moan if you must. But be glad that's the *worst* problem in your pampered, affluent lives. As opposed to desperately needing medical attention that just won't come. Education to improve your opportunities. Versus starving to death in the streets. You'd better thank whatever God your family prays to that this Brave New World Exists. You're in the Golden Age, Kiddies. Nothing's ever a dead-end.

INT. REZA'S LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

One of the light bulbs flickers.

Bahadur screws in a replacement. The harsh light makes the room look even worse.

Reza storms over. Bahadur shoots her son the evil eye.

BAHADUR

Did you speak with your father?

REZA

Yeah. I did.

BAHADUR

And?

REZA

Everything's okay.

BAHADUR

"Okay"? Is that what you kids call it these days?

REZA

I talked to him. He understands.

He glances over at Hasti.

REZA

As do I. "Uncle" Giv can keep the gear. I'll find more. Somewhere.

BAHADUR

Find more? Is that safe?

REZA

Safer than disappointing Deaug, anyway.

Reza digs deep in a pocket and tosses NU TECH CANDY into his sister's hands:

Sugar beads in bright colors. Hasti pops one in her mouth. The candy GIGGLES and SQUEAKS as she bites down. Hasti LAUGHS with sheer delight.

Reza kisses his sister, whispers in her ear.

REZA

Has - you're Jumping at your next birthday. Wanna go somewhere with me instead?

Hasti blinks at her brother; doesn't understand.

REZA

Shhhh. Think it over. Don't tell Mom.

Unaware of the exchange, Bahadur bear-hugs Reza from behind. The boy blushes, wriggles free.

And then darts for the door.

BAHADUR

Where are you going? Your curfew...

REZA

I gotta get replacement gear.

He retracts the security bolts, and squeezes through. Worry distorts Bahadur's face.

BAHADUR

Please stay safe!

REZA

I promise. Sure.

He waves to Hasti.

REZA

Eat more. Bye!

EXT. ALLEYWAY - EVENING

Reza slips out the door.

Uncle Giv and Nouri loiter at the far end.

Reza's eyes grow wide. Muscles tense.

...prepared for when they turn around.

Reza SPRINGS. He catches hold of a fire escape, and clamors quickly to the roof.

Looking down, he spots his stolen box of grey-tech gear.

Giv's stuffed it in a "Whole Fuds" shopping bag - balanced on top of a DUMPSTER lid.

It's *almost* within arm's reach.

Reza inches closer, on hands and knees. His scraped palms slide against hot tile.

He looks down at Giv and Nouri. Their backs are turned.

Reza scans the roof for tools.

And sees: a discarded aluminum gutter pipe.

He grabs it, weighs it in his hand. Analyzes the angle.
And his odds.

Giv and Nouri are deep in conversation:

UNCLE GIV
(to Nouri)
You understand what to do?

NOURI
I have picked out a man. Brave and quiet.
Very discrete.

UNCLE GIV
Trust worthy?

NOURI
He has no friends or family.

UNCLE GIV
Good traits. A man with nothing to lose.
And no-one to tell.

Reza lowers the gutter pipe slowly. It SCRAPES against
the brick wall.

Nouri pauses. Listens. Reza FREEZES in fear.

NOURI
What was that?

UNCLE GIV
We're in an alley. Rats.

Reza grins. He breathes deep, angles more.

The bag with his gear looks close enough to hook. Reza
slides forward on his stomach. Gains a few more inches.

The roof edge CRUMBLES. A little bit.

Giv and Nouri continue to converse, clueless.

NOURI
About my friend, who wants a girl. If I
disappoint him, it will hurt our trade. I
made him certain promises.

UNCLE GIV

Just because I made a deal with Reza?
I'll talk to her father, and he will
decide. Who cares about the boy? I lied.

Reza's eyes flash in anger. He hooks the gutter pipe
under the bag's handles with a SNAP.

PIGEONS on the roof burst upwards, startled by the sudden
movement. A DEAFENING FLUTTER OF WINGS.

Reza recoils.

The aluminum bends - breaks. SNAP.

The bag and pipe tumble from his hands!

Giv and Nouri swing around. The bag remains on the
dumpster lid, slumped to its side.

Giv spots the aluminum pipe on the ground.

He glances up at the roof, then down at the broken pipe.

Reza ducks low; does he best to hide.

UNCLE GIV

(sighs)

This place. It's a "shit-hole".

He hands the bag to Nouri.

UNCLE GIV

Take this to your friend. Meet me when
the delivery has been made.

Reza watches the men walk away.

The remaining PIGEON on the roof COOS.

Reza SNARLS and kicks it away.

REZA

(mutters)

You want Hasti, "Uncle" Giv? I'll tell my
gang what you did. They'll have your
balls. And sell *them* to me.

EXT. CITY STREET - LITTLE ISLAM - EVENING

Reza dodges and weaves through the street; the Artful
Dodger once again.

Though now it's not playing.

The game's turned deadly serious.

The retro-punk from before emerges from the crowd. His eyes look on Reza, just a block away.

The punk whips out his cell and starts to TEXT.

Still reading the screen, he takes a step.

And BARRELS into Agent Valerie Javier!

The punk glares down. He's a full head taller. Which should be intimidating. Maybe.

RETRO-PUNK

Yo, bitch. Outta the way!

Valerie grins. She flips over her cell phone, and displays:

A BADGE.

VALERIE

F.J.P. Special Agent. I'd suggest you watch what you say.

The Retro-Punk pales, and shrinks down several inches. Shaking hands fumble for his pocket.

Valerie waves her phone like a security wand. She sneaks a quick look at the screen.

VALERIE

Hmmmm. Is that "Shower Salts" or PCT? I'm not sure. They give off a similar chem trace.

RETRO-PUNK

I dunno how that got there!

VALERIE

And yet; you reach for it, all the same.

She raises her phone to the punk's face.

A name pops onto her screen.

INSERT: Mel Cottle. Last jump, August 14th, 2049.

Valerie bats innocent eyes at the Punk.

VALERIE

Your name's Mel? That's so sweet. You've been compensating all your life?

RETRO-PUNK

Uh...

He shrinks some more. Valerie's patter picks up speed.

VALERIE

Tell you what, "Mel." I'm just *so sure* someone planted that in your innocent pocket. But you know, I'm a federal agent. I've got responsibilities. If I don't make an arrest, there'll be shit-tons to explain. So, Mel: let's see if we can make a deal. Tell me something about that kid you've been tailing.

RETRO-PUNK

What kid?

VALERIE

The Iranian one that just passed by. Duh.

The Punk cops an attitude. Puffs his chest and scoffs.

RETRO-PUNK

We're in Little Islam. We got "Shit-Tons" of guys like that here!

VALERIE

(sarcastic)

Specifically, the one you've had your eyes glued on. Or were you just watching his butt? Is it an LBGT thing? Not that there's anything wrong with that.

RETRO-PUNK

Fuck no! I ain't gay!

VALERIE

Then it must be "business". Of some kind.

The punk stares at Val, unsure what lie to bust out next.

VALERIE

I have reason to believe the kid you've been watching sells gray tech. At least, that's what I've heard from my sources.

RETRO-PUNK

Grey tech?

VALERIE

Wet Ware implants. Hacked Jump Wares.
Anything you'd like to explain? For
instance, what gang does he run with?
South or Northwest? Kung? Or Deaung?

The Punk pales even more at that name.

Especially when he spots that little Korean girl, across
the street.

Valerie's back is turned. She doesn't see.

The girl waves towards the Punk and sticks out her
tongue.

Her face is innocent. But evil glints through those eyes.

The punk freaks, backs away.

VALERIE

Where are you going?

RETRO-PUNK

I just remembered. I gotta go home. My
mom said I can't break curfew. She'll
revoke my net privileges.

He turns tail and runs like Hell. Valerie SIGHS, lets him
run away.

VALERIE

Kids these days. Absolute pussies.

INT. JOSH'S DORM ROOM - EVENING

Speaking of certain body parts - things are gettin' hot
and heavy in here.

Peri and Josh roll with abandon on the bed. They're only
half dressed. And quite "busy".

A high-end HOLO TV BLEATS across the room.

Wilhelm "The Conqueror" is on-screen.

He chats non-stop with Reporter Reyna. Wilhelm's in full
preach mode today.

WILHELM

Jesus *always* argued material possessions
are no consequence. Who cares what we can
afford? Or the tax bracket we fall into?

REYNA

(nods)

That's wise.

WILHELM

The most important thing in this world is what we give to our neighbors. And our "enemies". That's the *true* meaning of Jump Day. A literal sharing of each other's lives!

Josh licks Peri's breasts.

She GROANS. Then rolls her head to the side and stares at the screen.

PERI

That is *so fucking loud*. We gotta turn it off. Or down.

Josh MUMBLES - his mouth too full of nipple to respond.

JOSH

Who cares? Focus on *me*.

He grabs her butt. Peri slaps his hand away.

PERI

I'm serious.

JOSH

So am I.

Wilhelm continues his digital tirade.

WILHELM

As Saint Jack Kennedy once said: ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your neighbor!

Peri wads up a blanket, and tosses it over the TV - exposing expanse of pretty legs.

PERI

I listen to that all the time. Whenever we have lunch with your Aunt Bea.

JOSH

I thought you *wanted* to hang with my family.

Josh dives between Peri's legs. He stares up and over - longingly - into her eyes.

JOSH
And you like *this*. So you say.

Peri shoves a foot in his face.

PERI
I don't want just sex. Commitment's what matters to me.

Josh rocks back on his knees.

JOSH
We've been through this. I'm gonna Jump in a year. What do words like that mean?

PERI
We *could* get a five year marriage. You know, like MY parents. They love each other. It'd mean something. Symbolically.

Josh crawls forward slowly, like a cat stalking his prey. He lowers his body onto Peri's chest.

JOSH
I'm here with you now. That's something.

PERI
Yeah. You're stalling. And don't wanna read.

Josh kisses her passionately. Peri melts, shuts up quick.

The blanket slides off the TV.

News Clips display the Jump parade.

BEGIN MONTAGE

A colorful array of holiday floats:

- "Bat-Guy" 2034.
- New Pokemon of every shape and size.

The "Dyke Clarke Clock" flashes a practice countdown:

50, 49, 48...

END MONTAGE

EXT. CITY STREET - LITTLE ISLAM - EVENING

PEOPLE roam the street. It's packed here, just as much as New Times Square.

Reza passes a tide of faces along the way.

Little Islam's in mini-celebration mode. Tons of diversity, despite the name.

HUGE VIDEO SCREENS depict New Times Square.

PEOPLE clog the sidewalk. No corner's empty.

- RETRO PUNKERS vape and exchange drugs.

- WILHELM FOLLOWERS pray near a Bodega. Silver symbols hang from their necks.

- MUSLIM GROUPS gather in cliques a few feet away.

Reza heads for the nondescript vendor who gave him the original gear.

The man rolls his eyes at Reza and shrugs. He's cleaned out: there's no more to take.

Reza turns: and spots a familiar face in the crowd.

It's Nouri. Handing Reza's tech to some DARK MAN.

Time slows to a crawl. Reza's eyes soak in the details:

The Dark Man appears Iranian. A trench coat hangs from his thin frame.

There's a bulge under the fabric. Either middle aged spread or...

Reza squints. It's...

A BELT! Wires wrap around the leather core. Fastened to it: a plastic 3-d printed GUN.

Reza GASPS. He scans other faces in the crowd. Nobody else notices the danger. Everyone's into their own thing.

Celebrating. Praying. Drinking.

Nouri points the Dark Man towards a white building.

Both he and the Stranger head that way.

Reza grabs his phone, and dials Bahadur. He thinks it over. Hesitates.

INT. REZA'S LIVING ROOM - FLASHBACK

Bahadur regards her son, concerned.

BAHADUR
Please stay safe?

REZA
I promise. Sure.

END FLASHBACK

Reza lowers his phone, disconnects the call.

He tails Nouri and the Stranger. Terrified. Curious. Afraid.

INTERCUT BETWEEN LITTLE ISLAM AND JOSH'S DORM ROOM

The Dyke Clarke countdown continues on TV.

39, 38, 37...

CROWDS CHEER in anticipation.

As for what's going on, in Josh's bed:

Peri's submitted to Josh's advances. It's a countdown to climax. Seconds left.

An AUTO CAR swerves in front of Reza.

He dodges adroitly out of the way.

Nouri parts ways with the Dark Stranger.

The man enters the white building. He slips through revolving glass doors, and disappears.

31, 30, 29...

Peri GROANS.

PERI
Don't stop!

JOSH
Stop? I'm gonna explode!

As does the white building. Dante's Inferno - in horrifying REAL LIFE.

The entire ground floor erupts. The top floors pancake like a failed souffle.

Burning tile rains down on Little Islam's streets.

CROWDS SCREAM and scatter. Some on fire. Many dead.

PRAYER GROUPS duck and run for shelter.

TOURISTS fall to their knees.

New Times Square still plays on-screen.

Reporter Reyna races to Dyke Clarke and Wilhelm's side. She WHISPERS (MOS) in their ears.

The two hosts freeze.

DYKE CLARKE

OMG. There's been an attack in Little Islam. That's just twenty-five blocks away!

Wilhelm turns to the cameras.

WILHELM

Everyone, don't panic. Please join me now in solemn prayer.

UNIFORMED COPS charge towards the explosion. Including the two that scanned Reza previously.

They push past Reza roughly.

He's no longer their main concern.

Reza spots Nouri a block away. The two lock eyes. The big man stares.

BLAMMMMM. A SECOND EXPLOSION rocks the street. Volcanic flame SPOUTS from sewer grates.

The aftershock knocks Reza off his feet.

The Hispanic cop SCREAMS and thrashes. Blood spurts from his ruined face.

Josh bites his lip hard. Thrusts into Peri, harder still.

Suddenly, he swoons. Blackout.

Both for him. AND Reza.

A HEARTBEAT in a void.

Then - a SWITCH.

POV: JOSH'S VIEW OF PERI'S FACE

"Josh" winces and opens his eyes.

As does "REZA". His face is pressed against filthy asphalt. "Reza" blinks and looks at his hand. And seems shocked that it's brown.

FIERY DEBRIS THUDS down. "Reza" flinches away.

"REZA"

Peri? Where are you?

(groans)

Kurt - you fuck. You put PCT in my beer?

PANICKED PEDESTRIANS stampede.

ONE FRIGHTENED MAN accidentally kicks "Reza" in the face.

"REZA"

Ow! Peri. Help me!

INT. JOSH'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

"Josh" GROANS, and opens his eyes. Reza's soul stares from his face.

Peri spasms against his body, hugs him tight.

"JOSH"

Who, who are you?

PERI

(grins)

Your angel. And personal "demon". You sexy beast.

"Josh" stares down at their entwined bodies. He SHRIEKS in horror. Jumps away.

EXT. CITY STREET - LITTLE ISLAM - NIGHT

"Reza" stands up.

One of his legs buckles instantly. A BURNING STREET SIGN juts from his left thigh.

A strong hand grabs his jacket, and lifts him up. It's Valerie. Suspicious. And REALLY pissed.

VALERIE

You were following those men. That makes you an accomplice to murder.

"REZA"

Who are you? What men do you mean?

VALERIE

Don't play retarded, Kid. The ones that detonated the bomb!

"REZA"

(gasps)

There was a bomb?

VALERIE

What do you think this is? Fireworks? This isn't Chinatown anymore!

"REZA"

I don't understand. Where am I?

VALERIE

In custody. Ass-wipe.

Valerie whips out a gun, and presses it to "Reza's" face. She waves her free hand at the flames.

VALERIE

Tell me the truth. Who were they?

"REZA"

I don't who you're talking about!

VALERIE

Don't try to protect them. That bomb almost cut your skinny leg off. Friends don't let friends detonate explosives, you ask me.

"REZA"

I'm innocent. Let go!

Valerie does the opposite. She pulls "Reza" even closer.

VALERIE

That's it. No more games. Who are YOU?

"Reza" shakes his head and SOBS.

"REZA"

That's the problem. I don't know!

Fires BLAZE behind them.

Josh's anguished eyes mirror the flames - in Reza's face.

INT. JOSH'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

A disgusted Peri shrugs on clothes and runs away. "Josh" scampers along in her wake.

He scoops up blankets as he goes. He hides his nakedness with everything he sees.

PERI

What do you mean, "who are you?" That's mean, Josh. And insane!

"JOSH"

My name is Reza. I think. Who's Josh?

PERI

(sarcastic)

My boyfriend. At least I *thought* he was!
You want to break up with me? Then be honest. Don't play games!

"JOSH"

We're dating?

PERI

Shit, Josh! Then how's about I be honest enough for both of us? How about I go tell your parents you've been cheating on homework. How's *that* for a clean break?!

She SLAMS the door, leaving "Josh" alone.

A horrified Reza stares out through his eyes.

The door CREAKS, opens once again.

It's Kurt and Becky; sloshed to the gills.

Kurt watches Peri storm down the hallway. He flashes a grin at his nude roommate.

KURT

You and Peri have another fight? Was it about "commitment" again?

He licks Becky's cheek. "Josh" cringes, horrified.

KURT

That's what makes our relationship work.
Beck and I don't play around with
emotions - we experiment. In every kinky
way.

He pinches Becky's butt. She GIGGLES. "Josh" recoils.

"JOSH"

Where am I?

KURT

In the best fuckin' place.

He digs under the bed and retrieves his new sex toy.
"Josh" stares at him in dismay.

KURT

Becky's into threesomes. Wanna party with
us tonight? Not that I want to touch *your*
dick. But Becky told me - she might.

BECKY

(to "Josh")

I've always found you sexy. I won't tell
Peri anything.

She slips off her shirt, exposing a lacy bra.

"Josh" SCREAMS and ducks out the door. He stumbles down
the dorm hallway, barely dressed.

Kurt turns to Becky. Shrugs.

KURT

Then there were two. Let's party.

The Holo TV BLEATS a SECURITY ALARM. A surprised Kurt
turns towards the screen.

Pictures of the downtown bombing light up in 4D. Kurt
stares at it, concerned.

KURT

Is that Little Islam? Damn. I know some
guys down there. Hope they're okay.

EXT. DORM PATIO - NIGHT

"Josh" curls in fetal position under the tree. Catatonic.
Shivering. STUDENTS walk by, WHISPERING.

STUDENT ONE
You hear about the bombing?

STUDENT TWO
Yeah. Can't wait 'til tomorrow.
Ackerson'll have something sick to say.

EXT. CITY STREET - LITTLE ISLAM - NIGHT

Valerie aims her gun a bit lower. She mashes it against "Reza's" chest.

VALERIE
That's it. You're under arrest.

She reaches for cuffs in her jacket.

A panicked "Reza" lashes out blindly. Valerie joint locks his wrist. "Reza" drops to his knees.

"REZA"
Please! I said, my name is... Um,
something starting with J. I think..

Another EXPLOSION. *Real* close by.

Debris shoots past Valerie's face, RIPS a furrow into her cheek. She stumbles backwards.

"Reza" pulls free.

Valerie shields herself as the crowd surges - in danger of being crushed by stampeding feet.

"Reza" sees her distress.

So he exploits the advantage. Runs away.

Down the streets of Little Islam. Panicked twists. Frenzied turns. *This* Artful Dodger doesn't have a clue where he's going. He's truly lost.

"Reza" swings around a corner.

...and collides with a fleshy wall. THUD.

He looks up. Nouri glowers down at him.

He grabs "Reza" by the arm and hauls him away.

"REZA"
Who are you?

NOURI
You know my name.

"REZA"
I don't! Where are we going?

NOURI
To see your Uncle. He wants to talk.
Privately.

"Reza" fights. Resists. To no avail...

INTERCUT BETWEEN "REZA" AND "JOSH"

"REZA" AND "JOSH"
Help me. Please!

FINAL FADE OUT