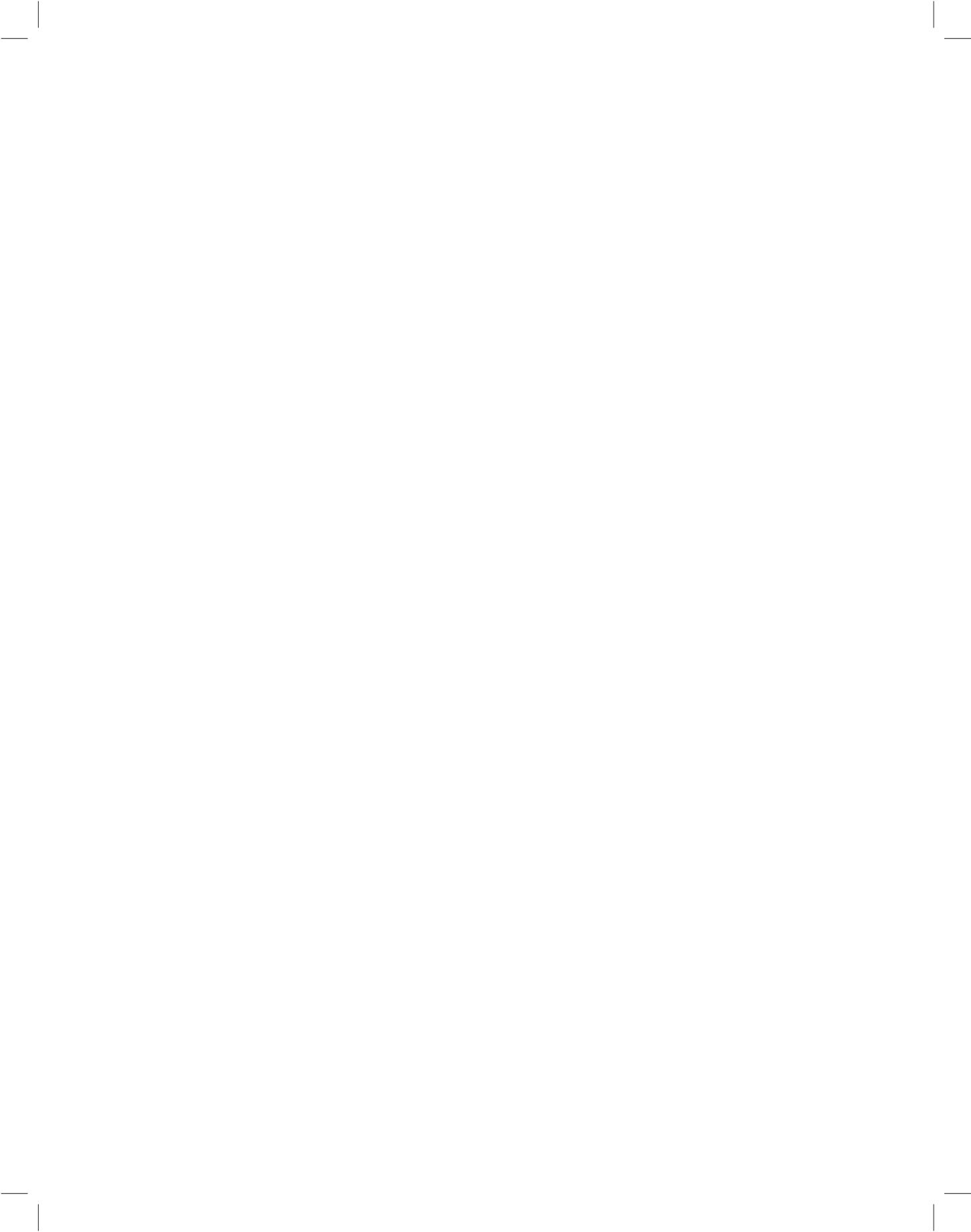




3 idiots

THE ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY





3 idiots

THE ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

OM

Om Books International

First published in 2010

OM

Om Books International

Corporate & Editorial Office
A-12, Sector 64, Noida 201 301
Uttar Pradesh, India

Phone: +91 120 477 4100

Sales Office

4379/4B, Prakash House, Ansari Road
Darya Ganj, New Delhi 110 002, India

Phone: +91 11 2326 3363, 2326 5303

Fax: +91 11 2327 8091

Email: sales@ombooks.com

Website: www.ombooks.com

© VINOD CHOPRA FILMS PVT. LTD.

www.vinodchopra.com

Cover visuals © VINOD CHOPRA FILMS PVT. LTD.

Film poster on front cover by Rahul Nanda (H-One)

Conceptualised & Compiled by Smriti Kiran

Cover Design by Sneha Pamneja

Book Design by Shraboni Roy

Typeset by Mindways Design, New Delhi

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, except as may be expressly permitted in writing by the publisher.

ISBN: 978-93-80070-18-6

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed at Replika Press Pvt. Ltd., India

CONTENTS

7	Acknowledgements
9	Introduction: <i>Rajkumar Hirani</i>
21	The Original Screenplay
319	The Method in the Madness: Rajkumar Hirani, Abhijat Joshi, & Vidhu Vinod Chopra Recollect: <i>Smriti Kiran</i>
345	Things of Beauty: <i>Abhijat Joshi</i>
357	Casting a Spell: <i>Smriti Kiran</i>
385	Opening Credits
391	End Credits
409	Profiles
421	Publisher's Note



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

India produces about 800 films every year but not even eight get documented. There is no reading material available for film students or film lovers on the behind-the-scenes action, the vision of the filmmakers, and the processes involved in making a film. *Lage Raho Munnabhai: The Original Screenplay* was published last year. *3 Idiots: The Original Screenplay* is our second attempt in this direction. This book is not just the screenplay; it is also a peek into the minds of its makers.

I would like to thank Smriti Kiran who took the initiative to come up with this book within 5 months of the release of the film. She has spent many long days and long nights chasing the cast and crew, writing and rewriting, with a smile on her face. Without her persistence, this book would not have happened.

I would also like to thank Ajay Mago and his team at Om Books International for giving shape to our vision.

I also wish to thank Maheep Dhillon for tirelessly redrafting the screenplay; Supriya Kelkar for her eye for detail; Rohan Mapuskar for poring over the dialogues; Dileep Desai, Amit Gulati, Mustafa Neemuchwala, Teja Pratap, Insia Lacewalla for production support; Anupama Chopra for her invaluable insight.

And Vinod Chopra for clearing all obstacles as always.

— *Rajkumar Hirani*

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

Every story has a back story and so does mine.

My father, Suresh Hirani, was fourteen years old when he along with the family moved to India during Partition. Initially, they took shelter in refugee camps in Agra and later shifted to Ferozabad. He had lost everything so education was low on the priority list. There were more pressing and immediate concerns like food, clothes, and shelter to worry about. To make ends meet, my father started working in a bangle factory where he painted patterns on bangles. Later, he began selling ice-cream on the streets. Despite compelling and adverse circumstances, his thirst for knowledge did not wane.

My father's sister, who was married in Nagpur, got him a job there in a general store as a store attendant. The city brought with it opportunity. My father enrolled himself in night school. Work in the day and classes at night continued and he somehow managed to graduate. Fortified with a degree and some savings, he was itching to grow. So when a friend suggested that typewriters, which were new at the time, were the future, my father decided to explore this avenue. He invested his life's savings, borrowed the rest of the money needed and opened a typewriting institute which was referred to as a 'Commerce Institute' then. My father christened it 'Rajkumar Commerce Institute'. I was not even born then. So now you know that I was named after a typewriting institute and not the other way round! Most parents would name their enterprises after their children, but I've had the rare honour of being named after my father's enterprise. I'm proud of that fact.

My father's business flourished. He got married and I was born soon after. The plan was to get into engineering but I didn't have enough marks in my higher secondary exams (12th standard) to make the cut so I studied commerce. I had also enrolled in this foundation course for chartered accountancy simultaneously, the classes for which were held in the evenings. At the end of the foundation

course, the exams for chartered accountancy were to be held. I despised these classes from the very beginning. I had no interest in chartered accountancy and these classes were a huge imposition, both in terms of time and the fact that I was wasting this time on something I knew was not for me. But I had the baggage of the engineering debacle on my head so abandoning this very viable option would have appeared self-indulgent, foolish, and luxurious at the time. I was afraid I



Rajkumar Hirani with his father, Suresh Hirani.

Photo Credit Himmat Singh Sekhawat, Tehelka

would hurt my parents and also somewhat scared to take this step that could harm my 'future'. I carried on with the charade.

Subconsciously, I was aware that there were some set presumptions about my future. I was expected to either become a chartered accountant or take over my father's business. Both possibilities mortified me. Though at that point in time, I was not thinking about what would make me happy. Like any normal person, I had responsibilities and the usual concerns that range from job to future to career. As

the time for the foundation course's exams drew close, I would often wake up in the middle of the night in cold sweat.

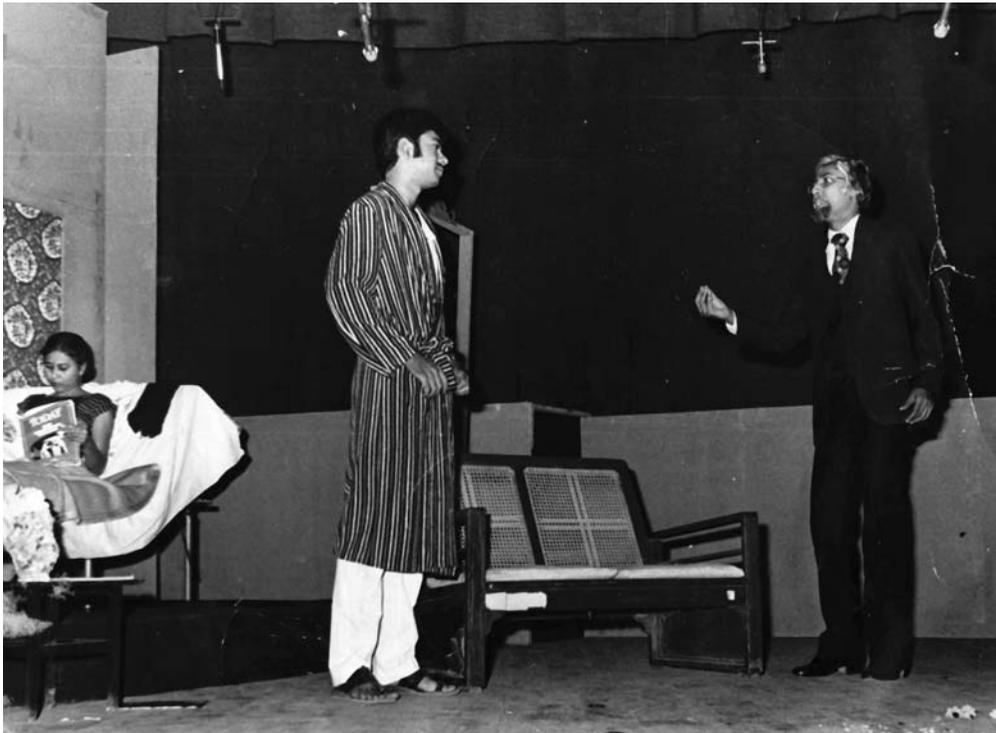
Finally, the exams were upon me. I realised that there was no escaping the inevitable. It was imperative to tell my father that I found a root canal procedure more exciting than chartered accountancy. Even after twenty years, that evening is as clear in my head as if it had happened just yesterday.

It was a regular evening in Nagpur but for me it was going to be the most significant and decisive evening of my life. My father was standing alone in the living room. I walked in and walked up to where he was standing, taking lead-laden steps. My throat was dry with uncertainty and fear. It was one thing to tell your father that you did not want to pursue what seemed like an excellent career choice but it was another thing to not offer an alternative plan. The only thing I was clear about was that chartered accountancy was not my cup of tea. My voice quivered with apprehension as I told him that I did not want to take the exams because I did not enjoy chartered accountancy at all. He looked at me and then in the most nonchalant manner told me to not do it and join his office starting next morning. It was as short and simple as that. I was ecstatic. The weight of the world had lifted from my shoulders. I felt free. This happened during the period leading up to the festival *Makar Sankranti* which is known for kite flying. I remember running up to our terrace right after 'the conversation' and flying kites with this silly grin on my face. Now, the kite flying seems almost like a symbol for the sense of freedom and relief that had swept over me that day.

My commerce classes in college occupied only four hours of my time in the morning (7 am to 11.00 am), so the rest of my time was devoted to helping my father with his business (11.30 am to 6.30 pm) which had graduated from typing courses to repairing and selling new kinds of calculators and other office equipment. I immersed myself in it with the gusto of a man who had just been extracted from the gallows. I used to teach typing, go out and give demos to prospective clients, and repair spoiled units. I was even sent to Delhi to do a course in repairing electronic calculators.

This is the period where I had my first brush with theatre. I met Narendra Thakur and a few other students who used to perform and produce plays regularly at our college. I joined them. (Before this, my only experience on stage was in the 9th standard. I was cast in the role of 'Noorjahan' in a play.) I became a regular with the theatre gang. Abandoning the foundation course opened up my evenings to

be occupied, and occupied they were with writing, reading, and brainstorming about plays. This stirred something within me. I have always believed that there are two approaches to learning: one is to study something academically and the other is to get interested in something and then start to gather material on it and learn about it. The latter is always a more gratifying experience. I would hunt for Hindi plays in quaint bookshops. I would devour anything on theatre. We would participate in competitions, youth festivals, and travel to any place that even hinted at an opportunity for exposure in the field. Youth festivals were a platform where teams from all the colleges in Nagpur came and performed. At one such festival, I met another theatre group which was performing for the Nagpur Medical College. There were a few people in that group, especially Debashish Naha, who were passionate about theatre and took this enterprise very seriously. There was an instant connection with Debashish and soon our friendship led to my theatre group merging with his to form a new theatre group called *Awaaz*. Debashish and I would spend hours working on plays. He would get me plays written in Bangla



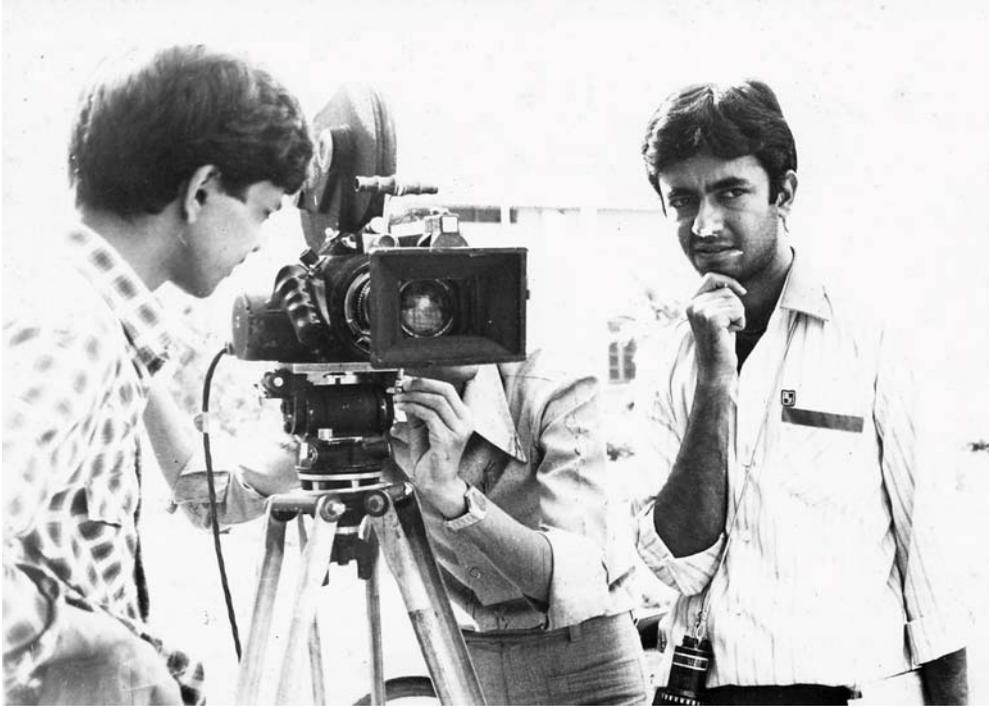
Finding his voice ... performing on stage (middle) for Awaaz, in Nagpur.

and we would sit down and translate them in Hindi. We started putting up plays under our banner. Personalities such as Marathi theatre-director Kishore Kulkarni, who had received acclaim on stage were invited to direct plays for our group. We learnt under many such people who had a command over their craft and a natural flair for the medium. Since everyone was busy till 6 pm everyday, we used to meet after that. These meetings were held either at the Bengali Association Hall or at the Sindhi Gurudwara nearby which had a hall, or at the local school hall. Wherever we found some empty space, we parked ourselves. The rehearsals used to go on till midnight.

We pursued this with such passion that theatre soon became an obsession. We managed to put up a record three to four plays a year. These plays were not restricted to performing at colleges. We started putting up ticketed shows. Apart from the creative aspect, the entire production of the play was handled by us. We organised everything from booking the hall, putting up the sets, props, costumes, accounts, and even ticketing. Watching plays was not the preferred pastime in Nagpur, so we used to sell the tickets to friends and relatives. Accounts were maintained diligently. In fact, I still have some of the accounts from those days. We used to barely cover our production costs and that is all we wanted. We were not doing this for profit. We just wanted to be able to put up plays and hoped to cover costs and use the money to put up the next one. On those rare occasions, if anything was earned over and above the production cost, it ensured a grand meal for our entire group.

It was not difficult to speak to my father the second time. Intuitive and observant, he was not blind to my growing passion for theatre. The suggestion to tread this path in earnest came from my father. He told me to enrol in a program to get formal education (my father is a great believer in learning) in the field of writing, directing, and storytelling. The natural choice was to apply to the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII).

My first attempt (1983) to get into FTII in the direction course was unsuccessful. I had very little knowledge of the exam and the enrolment procedures. I had travelled to Mumbai to take the exam. There I learnt that the entrance exam for FTII was exactly like bank exams, and anyone studying for it would clear it without blinking. I also realised that seats for the direction course were few and almost everyone applied for this course. I came back to Nagpur and enrolled myself in the Faculty of Law as that seemed like a reasonable option if things did not work out. Alongside, I started preparing for the FTII exam. The next year (1984), I applied again to FTII but



Learning the grammar of cinema ... at FTII.

this time for the editing and not the direction course. I got admission. The day I received the telegram, informing me about my admission to FTII, was the happiest day of my life. I was delirious with joy. I thought I had arrived and my life was made. This thought stemmed from naiveté. Sitting in Nagpur, I had only heard of the ten to fifteen names of really successful people who had graduated from FTII so I assumed that getting admission meant I was set up for life. I looked at my admission in the Institute as one looks at getting into law school or engineering. Once you get in and work hard, the moment you graduate, you become a director. All these illusions were shattered two days into my time at FTII. My enthusiasm was replaced by an inferiority complex. I was from a small town in the midst of students waxing eloquent about theories, films, and ideas that were Greek and Latin to me. It took me time but I found my feet again and got my voice back. It taught me a very important lesson: you cannot lose yourself just by perceiving yourself to know less. If stereotypes have to be broken, then first they have to be broken within you.

Thus, began the journey of disillusionment and enlightenment, unlearning and learning, passion, failure, and fulfillment. After three years at FTII, I moved to Mumbai (1987) and stayed with my friend and batchmate Sriram Raghavan (filmmaker). My first job was as an editor on an advertisement directed by Bharat Rangachari. After this, I was recommended by late editor Renu Saluja and I edited a documentary. I was paid Rs 1500 for my first job and Rs 500 for the second one. But things were slow to come by. After sometime, the situation became precarious. Video had just exploded on the scene so we were hard pressed for assignments as we did not know how to edit on video. I could not even turn to my father for help because he was going through a financial slump. His business of typewriters had taken a beating because of the arrival of computers. So both my father and I were facing what you can term a 'technological gap'.

The first year in Mumbai (1987), after passing out from the Institute, was a difficult one. I came very close to giving up during that year. There were many dark nights of the soul. I thought about going back to Nagpur. Maybe do something related to cinema there. It was a matter of survival, and the strangest options came to my mind. I entertained the idea of shooting marriage videos creatively and putting a completely unique spin to them. Maybe do multiple camera set-ups and scale things up considerably. Exports, which was a much talked about thing back then, was the other option that came to mind. I went to Fort in Mumbai (there are many street vendors of second-hand books in Fort) and picked up a book on exports. I was desperately groping in the dark trying to hold on to something. Fortunately, FTII revived its one-month video course that was promised to us. We rushed back to the Institute for the course. After one month, we returned to Mumbai with the knowledge of what would be our survival kit in the city: video editing.

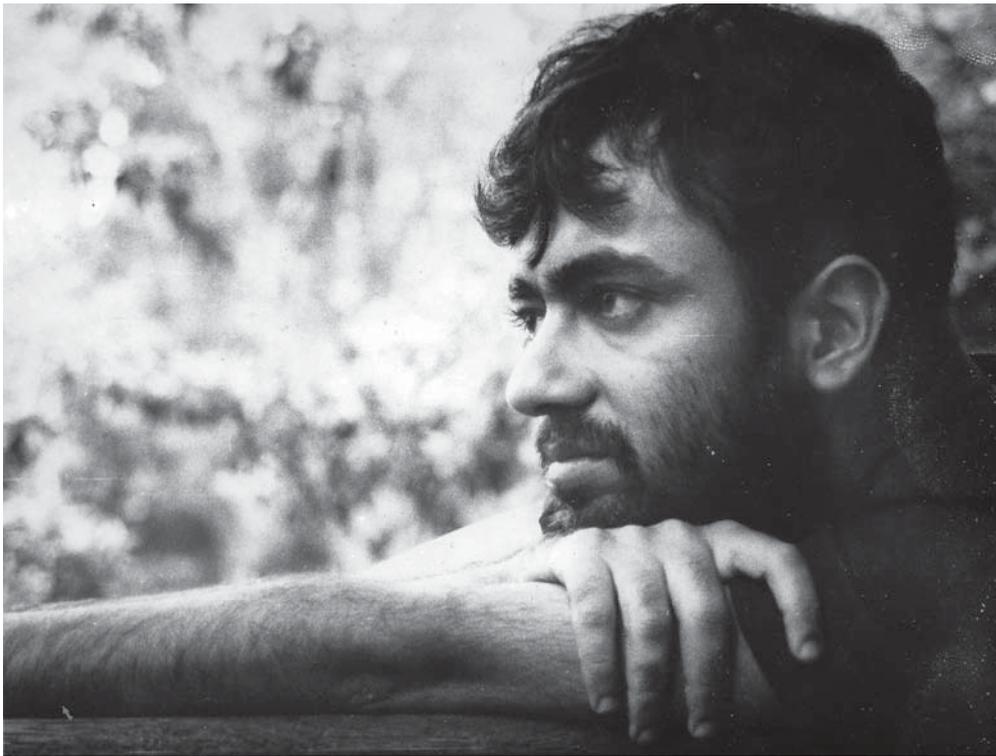
I joined an editing studio called Ekta Studio (1988) as an in-house editor on a monthly salary of Rs 1000. My six-month stint here gave me enough contacts and clout in the market to get regular work. I told myself, rather theatrically, that it mattered not if I didn't make a lot of money: this life I have devoted to cinema. I convinced myself with something as dramatic as that. Once you accept this, then the dark nights disappear and all nights convert to being nights of battle: the battle to become better, to excel, to strive towards quality.

During this phase of finding my feet in the business, Sanjay Leela Bhansali, my peer from FTII, who was assisting Vinod, called me to edit the promos of *1942: A Love Story* (1992). But things did not go beyond that just yet. Meanwhile, from editing I

had moved up to directing advertising films and opened my own production house called Canvas Films (1991).

In 1998, I was called in to edit the promos of *Kareeb* as well because Vinod had liked my work on *1942: A Love Story*. This was again a one-off stint. I continued doing work in advertising. Canvas Films flourished and I became financially secure.

I had settled into a comfortable pattern till the morning I received a call from Vinod (2000). He wanted me to edit *Mission Kashmir*. Not just the promos but the entire film. Initially, I was reluctant as I did not want to leave a lucrative set-up. But once I learnt of Renu's condition (Renu, Vinod's first wife and film editor, was suffering from cancer and her condition was going from bad to worse with each passing day), I could not say no. It was during the making of *Mission Kashmir* that my latent desire to direct a feature film resurfaced. Watching cinema being made with such passion and commitment by Vinod and his team rekindled the spirit in me that I had in my theatre days.



Miles to go before I sleep ...

I knew I was ready to make a film. And I began working on writing my first film. How *Munna Bhai* came about is another long story but that I will keep for the book on *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.*

So why did I just spill my guts and share my life with you?

Simply because so much of *3 Idiots* is personal. I am a small town man from Nagpur with no connections or background in films. I started working towards something that made me happy and that is all there is to it. I worked with passion and honesty, and even if success had not come my way, I would still have been really happy as I got to chase my dreams.

It has been a long and wonderful ride, but the key here is, it has been a ride of my choice. The desire to make *3 Idiots* stemmed from this thought. I am not trying to say that engineering or chartered accountancy or any other profession for that matter is any less than wildlife photography or filmmaking, and so on. My belief is simple. Choose your own path. Choose without fear. It is not a foolproof formula for happiness or success but it is definitely one that is most likely to work.

— *Rajkumar Hirani*

THE ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY

THE ORIGINAL SCREENPLAY



EXT. AIRPORT – DAY

A plane taxis on the runway.

INT. AIRPLANE – DAY

An AIR HOSTESS closes the overhead bins. FARHAN (30s), a passenger, is reading a book when his phone rings. He scrambles for it, embarrassed he hadn't turned it off. Other passengers look at him disapprovingly. He sheepishly takes the call.

फरहान
हैल्लो हॉं।

FARHAN
Hello... Yes?

A beat.

फरहान
(*incredulous*)
क्या?

FARHAN
What?

AIR HOSTESS

Sir, kindly switch off your mobile phone.

FARHAN

Just one sec, please, one sec, please.

The airplane revs its engines. Farhan hangs up, looking disturbed. He tries to catch the attention of the Air hostess.

FARHAN

Excuse me.

The plane races down the runway.

Farhan appears to be in acute physical discomfort as the plane takes off.

FARHAN
(to the Air hostess)
Excuse me.

He unbuckles his seat belt and stands up.
The Air hostess is alarmed.

AIR HOSTESS
Sir, please sit down.

Farhan tries to steady himself but keels over
and falls in the aisle, unconscious.

AIR HOSTESS
(into the phone)
Captain, there's a medical emergency.
A passenger has just fallen down in the
aisle.

INT. COCKPIT – CONTINUOUS

CAPTAIN
Delhi, Air India 101 returning due to
medical emergency.

EXT. AIRPORT – CONTINUOUS

The plane returns to the airport.

INT. AIRPLANE – CONTINUOUS

The Air hostesses rush to help Farhan.

AIR HOSTESS
Excuse me Sir. Sir, excuse me. Sir, excuse
me Sir.

INT. TERMINAL – MOMENTS
LATER

The airline ground STAFF and a DOCTOR
are taking an unconscious Farhan on a

wheelchair through the terminal. As they approach the exit, Farhan opens his eyes, looks around furtively, and jumps out of the wheelchair.

फरहान
एक मिनट!

FARHAN
Hold on!

Farhan takes several deep breaths. The Doctor and the Airline Staff are astonished and concerned.

फरहान
नहीं मैं बिल्कुल ठीक हूँ। थैंक्यू। आप लोग जाएं,
आप लोग जाएं। मैं चला जाऊंगा।

FARHAN
I'm fine now, thanks. Carry on, please.
I will go.

Farhan starts running towards the exit. The flummoxed Medical Staff call out after him.

MEDICAL STAFF
Gentleman, wait!

Farhan charges through the crowded terminal, slowing down only once he nears the exit.

EXT. AIRPORT – CONTINUOUS

Outside the terminal, waiting for arriving passengers, is a queue of DRIVERS holding placards. Farhan randomly picks one with a placard that reads MR. DHILLON.

फरहान
गाड़ी निकालो यार।

FARHAN
Get the cab yaar!

The driver looks at Farhan suspiciously.

ड्राइवर
तुस्सी मि. दिल्लीं?

फरहान
क्यों, नाम यहाँ टेटू करवाऊं क्या? अरे जल्दी
निकालो यार गाड़ी।

INT. CAB / EXT. DELHI ROADS –
MOMENTS LATER

Farhan is in the cab and on the move.
He takes out his phone and starts to dial
a number.

ड्राइवर
होटल जायेंगे ना सर?

फरहान
हाँ हाँ होटल जायेंगे, लेकिन वसंत विहार होके।
वहाँ ले लो।

A beat.

फरहान
(*impatiently*)
अरे ऐक्सेलरेटर पे थोड़ा लोड दे काके?

INT. RAJU'S NEW HOUSE /
CAB – DAY

The screen of RAJU's phone, on his
bedside table, illuminates with Farhan's
call. Raju (30s) peeps out from under
the bedsheet, grabs the phone, looks at
it and answers it.

राजू
हाँ फरहान ... बोल।

फरहान
तू जल्दी बाहर आ। मैं पाँच मिनट में तेरे यहाँ
पहुँच रहा हूँ।

DRIVER
Mr. Dhillon?

FARHAN
Want the name tattooed? Get the car
fast man!

DRIVER
To the hotel, Sir?

FARHAN
Yes, yes, but via Vasant Vihar.

FARHAN
Step on the gas, dude!

RAJU
Yeah, Farhan?

FARHAN
Get ready. I'll pick you up in five
minutes.

राजू
(*sleepily*)
क्या हुआ यार?

फरहान
चतुर का फोन था। रिमेम्बर हिम?

राजू
कौन साइलेन्सर?

फरहान
हाँ वोही वोही। बोल रहा है कि रैन्चो आ रहा है।

Raju sits up on the bed with a jerk. In the balcony, outside the room, his wife, SOONI, does breathing exercises.

राजू
क्या बोल रहा है?

फरहान
हाँ, बोला कि अगर रैन्चो से मिलना है तो ठीक आठ बजे कैम्पस आ जा, टंकी पे।

RAJU
(*looks at his watch*)
Oh, shucks!

फरहान
अरे तू जल्दी बाहर आ ना यार।

राजू
हाँ ठीक ठीक है, ओके।

He grabs a toothbrush and tube of toothpaste and rushes back into the room. Sooni gives him a puzzled look as he throws on a *kurta*.

RAJU
What happened?

FARHAN
Chatur called. Remember him?

RAJU
Who? 'Silencer'?

FARHAN
Yeah. He said Rancho is coming.

RAJU
What?

FARHAN
He said: If you want to meet Rancho come to the campus at 8. On the tank.

FARHAN
Hurry!

RAJU
Ok.

राजू
सूनी मैं थोड़ी देर में आ रहा हूँ। अरे जूते।

He grabs his shoes

राजू
अरे ... अपना दोस्त मिल गया।

In response, Sooni indicates something with her eyes, without breaking her breathing pattern.

राजू
क्या?

She gestures frantically, without speaking.

राजू
यार मैं आके बात करता हूँ। बाँय।

She finally breaks her breathing pattern and yells out to him.

सूनी
अरे पैन्ट तो पहन के जाओ।

EXT. RAJU'S NEW HOUSE –
CONTINUOUS

Raju runs out of his home, shoes, water bottle, toothbrush, and toothpaste in hand. He is not wearing his trousers. Farhan's cab screeches to a halt in front of him and he gets in. They take off.

ड्राइवर
अब तो होटल जायेंगे ना सर?

RAJU
Sooni, I'll be back soon. Oh, shoes.

RAJU
We found our buddy.

RAJU
What?

RAJU
I will talk after coming back – bye.

SOONI
You forgot your pants.

DRIVER
Now to the hotel, Sir?

फरहान
अरे होटल जायेंगे काके, लेकिन इम्पीरियल कॉलेज
ऑफ इंजिनियरिंग हो के।

FARHAN
Yes, but via Imperial College of
Engineering.

ड्राइवर
(*with resignation*)
ओके सर।

DRIVER
Ok, Sir.

Raju shakes out his shoes, peering into
them.

राजू
(*disappointed*)
यार, सौक्स लेना भूल गया हूँ!

RAJU
Forgot my socks.

फरहान
(*amused*)
तू सौक्स की बात कर रहा है, अबे नीचे देख –
पैन्ट भी भूल गया है।

FARHAN
More than just your socks. Your pants.

Startled, Raju looks down at his bare
legs.

राजू
ओय तेरी!

RAJU
Oh no!

Farhan chuckles.

EXT. IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF
ENGINEERING – MOMENTS
LATER

The taxi enters the campus of Imperial
College of Engineering (ICE). It comes
to a halt in front of a building. Raju
runs out, brushing his teeth. Farhan
follows, calling out instructions to the
driver.

फरहान

भाई साहब, अब आप होटल जाना, लेकिन एयरपोर्ट होकर जाना। मेरे भाई साहब आ रहे हैं। उनको होटल पहुँचा देना। सेम सरनेम यार – दिल्ली।

EXT. AIRPORT – DAY

A SIKH MAN waits outside the airport. Referring to the slip of paper in his hand, he speaks into his phone.

हरभजन सिंह दिल्ली

(angrily)

मैं दिल्ली। गड्डी भेजी तो गई किथ्थे? ... रनवे पै?

EXT. WATER TANK, ICE – DAY

Farhan and Raju bolt up the steps towards the water tank. They climb up the ladder that leads to the terrace of the tank, and emerge, panting. CHATUR (30s), stands at the far end of the terrace, his back to them. Raju and Farhan frantically search the terrace.

फरहान

ओये रैन्चो।

राजू

हे चतुर, रैन्चो कहाँ है?

(looking around)

रैन्चो!

No Rancho in sight, they finally walk up to Chatur.

फरहान

रैन्चो कहाँ है?

FARHAN

Now get my brother from the airport. Same last name – Dhillon.

HARBHAJAN SINGH DHILLON

This is Dhillon. Where's my cab? On the runway?

FARHAN

Hey Rancho.

RAJU

Hey Chatur, where's Rancho?

FARHAN

Where's Rancho?

Chatur types something on his fancy phone. The electronic English to Hindi dictionary shows the translation 'LIQUOR = MADIERA' on the phone screen.

CHATUR

(calmly)

Welcome, idiots.

He turns to face them.

चतुर

मदिरा पियोगे?

(takes out a bottle from his jacket pocket)

ये वही रम है न जो तुम लोग यहाँ पीते थे?

He throws the bottle at them. Farhan catches it.

CHATUR

Have a drink.

राजू

(exasperated)

अरे रैन्चो कहाँ है यार?

चतुर

बताता हूँ। पहले ये देखो।

Chatur holds up his phone to Raju and Farhan. On the screen is a picture of his wife in front of a mansion.

चतुर

मेरा वाइफ को नहीं, उसके पीछे का बंगला देखो, इंडियट्स 3.5 मिलियन।

Chatur presses a button on the phone.

CHATUR

Some 'madeira' for you? The same rum you guzzled those days.

RAJU

Where is Rancho?

CHATUR

I will tell you. First look at this.

CHATUR

Don't eye my wife. Check out the mansion behind, idiots, \$ 3.5 million.

As a slide show of photographs starts on it, he keeps up a running commentary.

CHATUR

Swimming pool – heated. Living room – maple wood flooring.

The photograph changes on the phone.

CHATUR

My new Lamborghini 6496cc – very fast!

Farhan and Raju are perplexed.

फरहान

अबे हमे क्यों दिखा रहा है ये सब?

चतुर

भूल गये?

Chatur's fingers glide over his phone again. A date appears on screen: 5th September.

चतुर

यह क्या है?

राजू

(looks at the phone)

पाँच सित्मबर। आज की डेट। और क्या यार?

Chatur pushes through them and shuffles up to the dome-like structure in the centre of the terrace. He wipes the fungus off a portion of the wall, to reveal a date chiselled into it – SEPT 5. Farhan and Raju look on, baffled.

FARHAN

Why're you showing us all this?

CHATUR

Forgot?

CHATUR

What's this?

RAJU

'5th September'. Today's date. What else?

FLASH:

It's ten years back. A drunk and angry Chatur stands next to the same wall and yells.

चतुर

चल लगा बैट। दस साल के बाद वापस आएंगे। यहीं पे। आज ही के दिन। देखेंगे, कौन ज्यादा सक्सेसफुल है। है हिम्मत? बोल? आएगा? आएगा?

END OF FLASH

चतुर

कृछ याद आया? यहीं पे उस इडियट से शर्त लगाई थी। आई केप्ट माई प्रोमिस। आई एम बैक।

Farhan loses his temper. He flings down the bottle he is holding at Chatur. It shatters at Chatur's feet. He moves threateningly towards Chatur but Raju holds him back.

फरहान

साले, मैं हवाई जहाज़ छोड़ के आया हूँ। ये अपनी पैंट छोड़ के आया है। सिर्फ रैन्चो से मिलने के लिए। पाँच साल से हम उसको ढूँढ रहे हैं। जिन्दा हैं कि मर गया, नहीं पता। और तुझे क्या लगता है, तेरी यह फूद्दू सी शर्त के लिए यहाँ आएगा?

Chatur continues, unfazed.

चतुर

नहीं आएगा। मुझे मालूम है वो नहीं आएगा।

Farhan lunges at Chatur.

CHATUR

I challenge you. We'll meet again after ten years. Same day. Same place. We'll see who's more successful. Have the balls? C'mon, bet!

CHATUR

Remember? I'd challenged that idiot right here. I kept my promise. I'm back.

FARHAN

Jackass! I aborted a flight, he forgot his pants all to meet Rancho. Five years we've searched. Don't even know if he's alive. And you think he'll show up for your silly bet.

CHATUR

I know he won't show up.

फरहान
यार तू इसके दांत तोड़ता है या मैं तोड़ूँ?

राजू
(*restraining Farhan*)
एक मिनट फरहान, एक मिनट। अबे साले तो
तूने हमें क्यों बुलया?

चतुर
रैन्चो से मिलाने। चल के देखो वो कहाँ रहे
गये ओर मैं कहाँ पहुँच गये।

राजू
मतलब तुझे मालूम है रैन्चो कहाँ है?

चतुर
येस।

फरहान
कहाँ है रैन्चो?

CHATUR
He is in Shimla.

Farhan and Raju's faces light up with hope
and happiness.

EXT. ENROUTE TO SHIMLA – DAY

Opening Titles roll.

PBS 1 – BEHTI HAWA SA THA WOH

बहती हवा सा था वो
उड़ती पंतग सा था वो
कहाँ गया उसे ढूँढें

बहती हवा सा था वो
उड़ती पंतग सा था वो

FARHAN
You gonna break his jaw or should I?

RAJU
So why did you call us here?

CHATUR
To meet Rancho. Come and see where
I've reached and where he rots.

RAJU
So you know where Rancho is?

CHATUR
Yes.

FARHAN
Where?

*Free as the wind was he
Like a soaring kite was he
Where did he go ... let's find him*

*Free as the wind was he
Like a soaring kite was he*

कहाँ गया उसे ढूँढें

हम को तो राहे थी चलाती
वो खुद अपनी राहें बनाता
गिरता, सम्भलता, मस्ती में चलता था वो

हम को कल की फ़िक्र सताती
वो बस आज का जश्न मनाता
हर लम्हें को खुल के जिता था वो

कहाँ से आया था वो
छू कर हमारे दिल को
कहाँ गया उसे ढूँढें

सुलगती धूप में छाँव के जैसा
रेगिस्थान मे गाँव के जैसा
मन के घाव पे महरम जैसा था वो

हम सहमे से रहते कुँपे मे
वह नदिया मे गोते लगाता
उल्टी धरा चीर के तैरता था वो

बादल आवारा था वो
यार हमारा था वो
कहाँ गया उसे ढूँढें

Chatur's SUV is cruising along on the
beautiful road leading up to Shimla.

INT. SUV – CONTINUOUS

Chatur is at the wheel. Farhan sits next
to him, in the front. Raju, still without
pants, sits in the backseat.

Farhan looks out of the window and
reminisces.

Where did he go ... let's find him

*We were led by the path we took
While he carved a path of his own
Stumbling, rising, carefree walked he*

*We fretted about the morrow
He simply revelled in today
Living each moment to the fullest*

*Where did he come from ...
He who touched our hearts and vanished ...
Where did he go ... let's find him*

*In scorching Sun, he was like a patch of
shade ...
In an endless desert, like an oasis ...
On a bruised heart, like soothing balm
was he*

*Afraid, we stayed confined in the well
Fearless, he frolicked in the river
Never hesitating to swim
against the tide*

*He wandered lonesome as a cloud
... Yet he was our dearest friend
Where did he go ... let's find him*

फरहान

रैन्चो। रणछोड़दास स्यामलदास छौंछड़। जितना
अलग साले का नाम था उतनी ही अलग सोच।
हमने तो बचपन से यही सुना था कि लाइफ
एक रेस है, तेज़ नहीं भागोगे तो लोग तुम्हे
कुचल कर आगे निकल जाएंगे।

The SUV enters a tunnel and the screen
goes black.

FLASHBACK:

MONTAGE

A shoal of sperms surge forward. One happy
sperm races ahead and hits the ova.

फरहान (V.O.)

साला पैदा होने के लिए भी तीन सौ मिलियन
स्पर्म से रेस लगानी पड़ी थी।

From the point of view of the mother
delivering the baby, the gloved hand of a
doctor brings out a baby.

फरहान V.O.

1978। मेरा जन्म पांच बजकर पंद्रह मिनट
पे हुआ।

फरहान (V.O.)

और पांच बजकर सोलह मिनट पर अब्बा ने
कहा ...

फरहान के पिताजी

मेरा बेटा इंजिनियर बनेगा।

फरहान की आंटी

फरहान कुरैशी बी.टेक. इंजिनियर।

FARHAN

Rancho. Ranchhoddas Shamaldas
Chanchad. He was as unique as his name.
From birth we were taught – life is a race.
Run fast or you'll be trampled.

FARHAN

Even to be born, one had to race 300
million sperms.

FARHAN

1978. I was born at 5.15 pm.

FARHAN

At 5.16, my father announced ...

FARHAN'S FATHER

My son will be an engineer.

FARHAN'S AUNTY

Farhan Qureshi. B.Tech. Engineer.

An Imperial College of Engineering identity card, with Farhan's photograph on it, is stamped.

FARHAN

And my fate was sealed.

EXT. IMPERIAL COLLEGE OF
ENGINEERING – DAY

From the stamp on the card, dissolve to the ICE logo outside the ICE campus where Farhan stands facing it. It's ten years back. He has a suitcase in one hand, a holdall in another, a rucksack on his back and a pillow tucked under his arm.

फरहान (V.O.)

मैं क्या बनना चाहता था, साला किसी ने पुछा तक नहीं।

Farhan walks into the college.

EXT. CORRIDOR, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

He enters a corridor bustling with FRESHMEN and walks up to the notice board. He moves his finger up the room list and stops on his name. Next to his name are the names of his room-mates. Farhan reads aloud.

फरहान

राजू रस्तोगी, रणछोड़दास छॉछड़।

Farhan notes the room number. Just then, MANMOHAN, AKA MILLIMETER, a street-smart 12 year old, comes up behind him.

FARHAN

What I wanted to be ... no one asked.

FARHAN

Raju Rastogi, Ranchhoddas Chanchad.

मिलीमीटर
रूम नम्बर बोलो।

MILLIMETER
Room number?

A startled Farhan turns to face him.

FARHAN
D-26.

Millimeter picks up Farhan's bags and starts to walk away.

मिलीमीटर
चलो।

MILLIMETER
C'mon.

Farhan follows him, taking in the ambience of the college as they walk.

मिलीमीटर
मैं मन मोहन। एम एम। ये सब इंजिनियर्स मुझे मिलीमीटर बुलाते हैं। दूध, अंडा-ब्रेड, कपड़े धोना, इस्त्री करना, जरनल भरना, असाइन्मेंट कॉपी करना, कोई भी काम है, बोलो। फिक्स्ड रेट है। नो बारगेन।

MILLIMETER
I'm Man Mohan. M.M. These engineers call me Millimeter. For eggs, bread, milk, laundry, finishing journals, copying assignments, I'm your guy. Fixed rates. No bargaining.

Farhan spots a litter of puppies and gets excited.

फरहान
अरे एक मिनट, एक मिनट ... एक मिनट इसको पकड़।

FARHAN
Hey wait, hold this.

He takes out a camera from his rucksack and clicks their photographs from different angles.

मिलीमीटर
ये किलोबाइट है। ये मेगाबाइट और ये इनकी माँ, गीगाबाइट। ले लो, फोटो ले लो। ये फैमली बाइट नहीं करती।

MILLIMETER
Meet Kilobyte, Megabyte, and their mother Gigabyte. Go ahead, click – this family doesn't bite.

Still pictures of Gigabyte and the puppies cover the screen.

INT. ROOM, HOSTEL, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

The door opens and Millimeter and Farhan enter the room. Glancing at them briefly, Raju continues to perform *'aarti'* in front of a wall covered with pictures of different gods and goddesses.

मिलीमीटर
लो आ गया एक और भक्त।

MILLIMETER
Check him out ... another god-fearing soul.

Amused, Farhan looks at the wall, and then extends his hand to Raju.

फरहान
हाए। फरहान कुरैशी।

FARHAN
Hi. Farhan Qureshi.

राजू
(*ignoring the proffered hand*)
मै राजू रस्तोगी।

RAJU
I'm Raju Rastogi.

Raju immediately goes back to praying. Millimeter is putting Farhan's bags in a corner. He looks at Farhan. Raju starts to move around the room with a *'puja thali'* with burning incense on it. With the turn of his hand, he shoves the fumes from the incense in every corner of the room.

मिलीमीटर
घबराओ मत। थोड़े दिन इधर रहेगा ना तो अपने आप भगवान से विश्वास उठ जाएगा ... फिर बाजू मै नंगी लड़की की तस्वीर लगाएगा और कहेगा – ओ भगवान, एक बार दिला दे।

MILLIMETER
Don't worry, a few days here and he'll lose faith in God. Then naked babes will be on the wall, and he'll say – "Oh God, give me one chance with her".

राजू
(*irritated at Millimeter's irreverence*)
ये, चल निकल यहाँ से। निकल।

मिलीमीटर
चार रुपये दो। दो रुपया पर बैग।

फरहान
ये ले। पाँच रुपये। चेंज रख ले।

मिलीमीटर
क्या साहिब। तुमने अपने को टिप दिया तो
आपूना भी तुमको एक टिप देगा। आज रात
को अंडर्वियर बिना होल वाले पहना।

Millimeter leaves the room. Raju
wonders.

राजू
क्यों?

EXT. CORRIDOR, HOSTEL, ICE –
NIGHT

In the corridor, a group of bare chested
freshmen, standing in a row, take off their
pants to reveal their underwear. They bend
down and shout in unison.

सब विद्यार्थी
जहाँपनाह, तुस्सी ग्रेट हो।

In a coordinated move, they spin around
and offer up their backsides, patting
them.

सब विद्यार्थी
तोहफा कबूल करो।

RAJU
Get out of here.

MILLIMETER
Four bucks. Two per bag.

FARHAN
Here's five. Keep the change.

MILLIMETER
Thanks boss. For your tip, here's one
in return – wear your best underwear
tonight.

RAJU
Why?

ALL STUDENTS
Your Majesty, Thou art great.

ALL STUDENTS
Accept this humble offering.

A Senior moves down the line, inspecting butts and stamping them.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1

आह, ये तो ही-मैन है। ही-मैन। ये लो। अरे-अरे, नन्हा सा, प्यारा सा। हो हो हो चिकना चिकना चिकना।

Farhan and Raju are part of the butt-offering line-up.

फरहान (V.O.)

इज्जत ज़मीन पे बिखरी हुई थी, हाथ सलामी ठोक रहे थे, सिर गुलामी में झुके थे, जब हमने पहली बार रैन्चो को देखा।

From their positions of obeisance, Farhan and Raju spot RANCHO. Though laden with luggage, he walks briskly into the corridor, before faltering to a halt.

Bewildered, he takes in the scene before him. To his right, a group of freshmen in their underwear perform pelvic thrusts to a Senior's instructions.

रैगिंग सीनियर

चार आना, आठ आना।

He cuts his eyes to the left. There, Chatur, in his snazzy briefs, does a James Bond act.

And then, Rancho is spotted by a predator.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1

नया तोहफा। तोहफा ... तोहफा ... तोहफा ... तोहफा। नमस्ते सर। पैन्ट उतारिए और ठप्पा लगा लो

RAGGING SENIOR 1

Ha ... here's a He-Man. What a pretty piece. Cute and compact.

FARHAN

A campus tradition – on Day 1. Freshmen must pay their respects to seniors in their underwear. This is when we first saw Rancho.

RAGGING SENIOR

Spiderman, Batman.

RAGGING SENIOR 1

Fresh meat, Greetings. Drop your pants, get stamped.

The Senior crows in delight.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
नाम क्या है तेरा? बोल।

RAGGING SENIOR 1
Name?

Ragging Senior 2 pulls out the name tag
from Rancho's bag.

रैगिंग सीनियर 2
'रणछोड़दास स्यामलदास छौंछड़'।

RAGGING SENIOR 2
'Ranchhoddas Shamaldas Chanchad'.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
ओए, सुना भाईयों रट्टा मार लो। फाइनल ईयर
तक याद हो जाएगा।

RAGGING SENIOR 1
What a mouthful! Needs serious
cramming.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
चलो – पैन्ट उतार! पैन्ट उतार।

RAGGING SENIOR 1
Come on – pants off.

Rancho is silent, rooted to the spot.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
अच्छा, तो तू ऐसे नहीं सुनेगा?

RAGGING SENIOR 1
Being stubborn?

Ragging Senior 1 takes out Rancho's water
bottle from his bag and empties the bottle
into the pocket of his jeans.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
गीली पैन्ट नहीं पहनते बच्चु। चल उतार। चल
चल चल....

RAGGING SENIOR 1
Wet pants not good, kiddo. Take them
off.

Rancho does not react. Instead, he holds
his hand over his heart and mumbles.

रैन्चो
आल डिज़ वेल ... आल डिज़ वेल।

RANCHO
Aal izz well ... aal izz well.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
क्या बोला?

RAGGING SENIOR 1
What's that?

रैन्चो
आल डिज़ वेल ... आल डिज़ वेल।

RANCHO
Aal izz well ... aal izz well.

Farhan and Raju are so immersed in Rancho's situation that they inadvertently straighten up, pulling up their pants.

फरहान
(*whispers to Raju*)
ये क्या बोल रहा है?

FARHAN
What did he say?

Rancho does not break his silence. Ragging Senior 1 gestures to Chatur.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
ये कोई समझा इसे! ऐ जैम्स बांड – समझा इसे। हूँ!

RAGGING SENIOR 1
Someone tell him. Hey James Bond – make him understand!

Chatur obediently runs up to Rancho.

CHATUR
Take off your pants or they are going to piss on you.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
ओए अंग्रेज, हिन्दी बोलने में शर्म आती है?

RAGGING SENIOR 1
Hey 007! Ashamed to speak Hindi?

CHATUR
Sorry Sir, I was born in Uganda, studied in Pondicherry, so little slow in Hindi.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
तो स्लोली समझा ना इसे। जल्दी किसको है।

RAGGING SENIOR 1
So explain slowly. No hurry.

Leaving Chatur to explain, Ragging Senior 1 walks up to Farhan and Raju.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
फिर से पहन लिया आपने?

RAGGING SENIOR 1
Feeling cold?

Chatur opens his dictionary and puts together a literal translation of the Senior's threat.

चतुर
वस्त्र उतारिये नहीं तो यह आप पर मूत्रविसर्जन करेगा।

The Seniors burst out laughing.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
ऐ! पिस को मूत्रविसर्जन बोला?

रैगिंग सीनियर 2
अबे महापंडित आए है इंजिनियरिंग पढ़ने।

The Seniors are absorbed in making fun of Chatur.

Rancho takes advantage of this distraction and slips into his room, banging the door shut. Ragging Senior 1 notices this and runs after him. He starts banging on the door.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
ये बाहर आ साले ... ऐ बाहर आ।

All the students, including Farhan and Raju, watch with interest. Ragging Senior 1 calls out threateningly.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
बाहर आ, नहीं तो ... नहीं तो मैं तेरे दरवाजे पे मूत्रविसर्जन करूंगा।

There is no response from the room.

CHATUR
Pray undress or he'll do 'urine-expulsion' on you.

RAGGING SENIOR 1
Calls pissing 'urine-expulsion'!

RAGGING SENIOR 2
A true linguist in the land of engineers!

RAGGING SENIOR 1
Hey, come out of there.

RAGGING SENIOR 1
Come out or ... or I'll do 'urine-expulsion' on your door.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1

दस तक गिऊंगा। बाहर नहीं आया तो -- तो मैं -- तो पूरे समेस्टर मे तेरे दरवाजे पे मूत्रविसर्जन करूंगा।

Inside the room, Rancho thinks.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1

एक ... दो।

He looks around the room and as his eyes rest on the ceiling, he seems to have found a solution.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1

तीन!

Rancho looks around the room again. He spots something and throws off his rucksack moving towards it. Outside, curious students pour out of their rooms. The tension mounts.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1

चार!

Ragging Senior 1 bangs on the door again.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1

पाँच!

Inside the room, Rancho climbs onto a chair, unscrews the bulb from the hanging light and rips out its wire.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1

छः!

RAGGING SENIOR 1

If you aren't out by the count of ten, I'll do 'urine-expulsion' on your door all semester.

RAGGING SENIOR 1

One ... two.

RAGGING SENIOR 1

Three!

RAGGING SENIOR 1

Four!

RAGGING SENIOR 1

Five!

RAGGING SENIOR 1

Six!

Rancho turns off the switch that the hanging light was attached to. With his teeth, he bites off the plastic from the ends of the wire.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
सात!

RAGGING SENIOR 1
Seven!

Rancho places the exposed wire ends strategically under a metal spoon, and starts binding the spoon to a wooden ruler. Outside, in desperation, Ragging Senior 1 calls out again.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
आठ! नौ!

RAGGING SENIOR 1
Eight! Nine!

A laugh escapes Farhan. The Senior whips around menacingly. Raju surreptitiously indicates Farhan to him. Inside the room, Rancho has finished binding the spoon to the wooden ruler.

रैगिंग सीनियर 1
दस!

RAGGING SENIOR 1
Ten!

Angry, frustrated and with no other option, the Senior walks to the door, faces it and unzips. Unseen by him, from underneath the door, Rancho slides out the spoon. He then puts on the switch that the wire under the spoon is connected to. The Senior starts urinating. As the stream of urine hits the spoon, he gets electrocuted. He jerks back and collapses, writhing in pain. The semi-naked group of Freshmen break into delighted laughter.

Rancho's door opens and he walks out. Laughter changes into sounds of scurrying

as everyone tries to get out of his way. He just walks to where his water bottle had fallen, picks it up and walks back into his room.

Farhan and Raju exchange a look.

Fully dressed again, they open their room door tentatively. Rancho is sprawled on his bed, fast asleep, not a care in the world.

फरहान (V.O.)

साल्ट वाटर इस अ ग्रेट कनडक्टर आफ इलैक्ट्रिसिटी। एट्थ स्टैंडर्ड फिज़िक्स। हमने पढ़ा था। साले ने अप्लाई किया।

FARHAN

Salt water is a great conductor of electricity. 8th-grade-physics. We had studied it. He applied it.

EXT. ICE – DAY

VIRU SAHASTRABUDDHE (mid-50's) cycles to work. On the carrier of his bicycle is a bird's nest with a clay bird and five eggs in it.

फरहान (V.O.)

आइसीई के डायरेक्टर का नाम डा. वीरू सहस्त्रबुद्धे था, पर सब उन्हें वाइरस ... कम्प्यूटर वाइरस बुलाते थे।

FARHAN

Dr. Viru Sahastrabuddhe was the Director of ICE. Students called him Virus, computer Virus.

EXT. HOSTEL, ICE – CONTINUOUS

Millimeter stands in the centre of the hostel courtyard and calls out.

मिलीमीटर

अरे वाइरस आ रहा है अंडे – लेके। फर्स्ट इयर को नीचे बुलाया है ... जल्दी आओ, जल्दी आओ। जल्दी आओ।

MILLIMETER

Virus is on the way, with eggs. First year students are summoned. Come quickly.

EXT. CAMPUS, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

An office PEON, on his bicycle, overtakes the Director.

FARHAN (V.O.)

Virus was the most competitive man we had ever seen.

The Director pedals harder to get ahead of the peon.

फरहान (V.O.)

कोई उनसे एक कदम भी आगे निकल जाये ...
उनसे बरदाश्त नहीं होता था।

FARHAN

He couldn't bear anyone getting ahead of him.

MONTAGE

The Director puts on a shirt and smooths his hand over the buttons to fasten the velcro beneath them. He hooks a tie onto his collar.

फरहान (V.O.)

टाईम बचाने के लिए शर्ट पे बटन नहीं, वेलक्रो लगाते थे, और टाई में हुक।

FARHAN

To save time, his shirts had Velcro and his ties had hooks.

In a classroom, the Director writes on the board with both hands.

फरहान (V.O.)

माइन्ड को ऐसा ट्रेन किया था कि दोनों हाथों से एक साथ लिख सकते थे।

FARHAN

He'd trained his mind to write with both hands simultaneously.

The clock in the Director's office strikes 2 pm. A shaving kit is opened, the Director lies down on a couch and a needle is placed on a gramophone record. Music envelopes

the room. The Director's man-Friday, GOVIND, shaves him as he naps.

फरहान (V.O.)

रोज़ दो बजे, एकजैकटली साढ़े सात मिनट का पावर नैप लेते थे, और औपेरा सुनते थे। गोविन्द को इन्सट्रक्शन्स थे कि सारे अन्प्रडक्टिव काम जैसे शेविंग करना, नाखून काटना, इन्ही साढ़े सात मिनट में किये जायें।

EXT. HOSTEL FOYER / CORRIDOR,
ICE – CONTINUOUS

The Director reaches the hostel. He strides down the corridor, bird nest in hand, as nervous freshmen rush past him to gather in the courtyard. The Director reaches them and slows down.

डाइरेक्टर

(*re: nest in his hand*)

ये क्या है?

Chatur pipes up.

CHATUR

Sir, nest.

डाइरेक्टर

किसका?

चतुर

सर कोयल बर्ड का नेस्ट।

DIRECTOR

Wrong.

He starts moving towards a raised platform in the courtyard, where Govind stands

FARHAN

Everyday at 2 pm he took a 7½ minute power nap with an opera as lullaby. Govind, his valet, had instructions to carry out all unproductive tasks such as shaving, nail-cutting, etc. during this time.

DIRECTOR

What is this?

DIRECTOR

Whose?

CHATUR

Koel bird's nest, Sir.

attentively, next to a pile of cardboard cartons.

डाइरेक्टर

कोयल अपना घोंसला कभी नहीं बनाती। वो अपने अंडे दूसरों के घोंसले में रखती है।

Rancho, Farhan and Raju make a rushed, belated entry, looking like they've just woken up. The Director turns around to face the students.

डाइरेक्टर

और जब उसके बच्चे इस दुनिया में आते हैं तो सबसे पहले क्या करते हैं?

A beat.

डाइरेक्टर

वो बच्चे दूसरे अंडो को धक्का मार के घोंसले से गिरा देते हैं।

He holds up an egg from the nest and drops it. The egg splatters on the ground. The students wince at the brutal action.

DIRECTOR

Competition over. Their life begins with murder. That's nature. Compete or die.

While everyone listens transfixed, Rancho starts getting restless. The Director hands over the nest to Govind.

DIRECTOR

You also are like the *koel* birds.

With a sudden movement, he turns over a carton. ICE application forms spill out onto the courtyard floor.

DIRECTOR

A *koel* bird never makes her own nest. She lays her eggs in other nests.

DIRECTOR

And when they hatch, what do they do?

DIRECTOR

They push the other eggs out of the nest.

डाइरेक्टर

ओर ये वो अंडे हैं, जिनको धक्का मार के तुम लोग आइसीइ में पहुँचे।

Millimeter irons clothes in the corridor adjoining the courtyard.

He lip syncs to the Director's words.

डाइरेक्टर/मिलीमीटर

डोन्ट फोरगेट की हर साल आइसीइ में चार लाख एप्लीकेशन्स आती हैं और उनमें से सिर्फ दो सौ सिलैक्ट होती हैं। यू।

A beat.

डाइरेक्टर

और ये ...फिनिशड। ब्रोक्न एग्स। मेरे खुद के बेटे ने तीन साल एप्लाई किया था...

The Director's voice softens with sadness.

डाइरेक्टर

... रिजेक्टेड ऐवरी टाईम। रिमैम्बर लाईफ इज़ अ रेस। अगर तेज़ नहीं भागोगे तो कोई तुम्हें कुचल के आगे निकल जायेगा।

He takes out a pen from his shirt pocket and holds it up for the students to see.

डाइरेक्टर

लेट मी टेल यू अ वैरी इनट्रेसटिंग स्टोरी। ये ऐस्ट्रोनॉट पेन है। स्पेस में फाउनटेन पेन, बॉलपेन कुछ नहीं चलता। तो लाखों डॉलर खर्च करने के बाद, साइअन्टिस्ट ने ऐसा पेन इज़ाद किया – जिससे कोई भी एन्गल, कोई भी टेम्परेचर, जीरो ग्रेविटि में, हम लिख सकते हैं।

DIRECTOR

And these are the eggs you pushed to get into ICE.

DIRECTOR / MILLIMETER

Don't forget, ICE gets 400,000 applications a year and only 200 are selected – you!

DIRECTOR

And these? Finished. Broken eggs. My son ... he tried for three years.

DIRECTOR

... Rejected. Every time. Remember, life is a race. If you don't run fast, you'll get trampled.

DIRECTOR

Let me tell you a very interesting story. This is an astronaut's pen. Fountain pens and ballpoint pens don't work in outer space. So scientists spent millions to invent this pen. It can write at any angle, in any temperature, in zero gravity.

All the students look at the pen.

DIRECTOR

One day, when I was a student, the Director of our institute called me. He said, "Virus Sahastrabuddhe." I said, "Yes Sir" "Come here!" Main darr gaya. He showed me this pen. He said, "This is a symbol of excellence. I give it to you. Aur jis din tumhe tumahre jaisa koi extraordinary student mile, to yeh pen usse paas on kar dena."

A beat.

DIRECTOR

Battis saal se Virus Sahastrabuddhe is waiting for that student. But no luck. Anyone here, who'll strive to win this pen?

Led by an over eager Chatur, whose hand shoots up first, all the students raise their hands.

DIRECTOR

Good. Put your hands down.

As all the hands go down, Rancho raises his. The Director looks up after putting the pen back in his shirt pocket. He sees the lone, raised hand.

DIRECTOR

(sarcastically)

Shall I post it on the notice board? Hands down.

रैन्चो

सर, मेरा एक सवाल है सर।

RANCHO

One question, Sir.

रैन्चो

सर, स्पेस में फाउन्टेन पेन, बॉलपेन चलता नहीं हैं, तो ऐस्ट्रोनॉट ने पेन्सिल का इस्तेमाल क्यों नहीं किया? लाखों डॉलर बच जाते सर।

There's a burst of involuntary laughter from the students. Raju glares at Rancho disapprovingly. The Director seems stumped. Chatur looks at him anxiously.

DIRECTOR

I will get back to you on this.

Seeming disoriented, he walks away.

EXT. CORRIDOR, ICE – MOMENTS LATER

Farhan and Raju walk behind Rancho on the way to their first class. In a low voice, Raju speaks reprovingly of Rancho's antics, even as Farhan looks on with amused enjoyment.

राजू

साला रात को सीनियरस की नूनू पे झटका देता है, दिन में डाइरेक्टर को ऊंगली करता है। बोल रहा हूँ, इसके साथ रहेंगे तो ये मरवायेगा।

In front of them, ambling along, carefree, Rancho encounters Millimeter.

मिलीमीटर

चार तू तो वाइरस का फुल केएलपीडी कर दिया? जहांपनाह तुस्सी ग्रेट हो। तोहफा कबूल करो।

Rancho and Farhan dissolve into laughter. Raju looks at Millimeter with displeasure.

RANCHO

Sir, if pens didn't work in outer space why didn't the astronauts use a pencil? They'd have saved millions.

RAJU

He zaps a senior's privates at night. Fingers the Director in the day. Best avoid him.

MILLIMETER

You deflated Virus's erection. Your Majesty, thou art great. Accept this humble offering

राजू
अबे, भाग यहाँ से। स्कूल नहीं है तेरा?

मिलीमीटर
फीस कौन भरेगा ... तेरा बाप?

Angered at his impertinence, Raju takes off his slipper and rushes towards him threateningly.

राजू
साले, बाप पे जाता है, तेरी ...

Rancho and Farhan quickly intercede and restrain Raju.

रैन्चो
रुक जा, छोड़ ना।

फरहान
राजू, क्या कर रहा है यार!

Rancho puts his arm around Millimeter and starts to walk with him.

Farhan and Raju follow.

रैन्चो
सुन, स्कूल के लिये फीस थोड़ी लगती है। यूनीफॉर्म लगता है। यूनीफॉर्म। रुक।

Rancho takes out money from his pocket and hands it over to Millimeter.

रैन्चो
तुझे जो भी स्कूल पसंद है ना, उसका यूनीफॉर्म खरीद ले और चुपचाप जाके क्लास में बैठ जा। इतनी आबादी है, किसको क्या पता चलने वाला है?

RAJU
Buzz off. You don't have school?

MILLIMETER
Who'll pay for it? Your pop?

RAJU
Keep off my dad! You ...

RANCHO
Relax.

FARHAN
Raju, what are you doing!

RANCHO
For school you don't need any money. You need a uniform.

RANCHO
Pick a school, buy the uniform and slip into class. In so much of a crowd, no one will notice.

मिलीमीटर
और पकड़े गये तो?

रैन्चो
पकड़े गये तो यूनीफॉर्म चेंज, स्कूल चेंज।

He puts his arm around Millimeter as they continue to walk on. Raju purses his lips and gives Farhan an 'I told you so' look.

राजू
देखा ...

But Farhan gazes after Rancho admiringly.

फरहान (V.O.)
कुछ बात थी उसमें। साला दुनिया के तौर तरीके कदम कदम पे चैलेन्ज करता था। वाइरस के घोंसले में एक आज़ाद पंछी घुस आया था। हम सब तो प्रोफेसर के रिमोट कन्ट्रोल पे चलने वाले रोबोट थे। वो बस एक था जो शायद मशीन नहीं था।

INT. CLASSROOM, ICE – DAY

A class is in progress. PROFESSOR POTDAR writes the word 'MACHINE' on the blackboard and turns to face the students.

PROFESSOR POTDAR
What is a machine?

Chatur's hand, and one other, shoots up. Professor Potdar looks around. His eyes alight on Rancho who has a beatific smile on his face.

MILLIMETER
If I get caught?

RANCHO
Then new uniform, new school.

RAJU
See that?

FARHAN
He was different... He challenged conventions at every stage. A free-spirited bird had landed in Virus's nest. We were robots, blindly following our professors' commands. He was the only one who was not a machine.

प्रोफेसर पोद्दार
आप मुस्कुरा क्यों रहे हैं? नहीं

PROFESSOR POTDAR
What're you smiling for?

रैन्चो
ऐकचवली सर, बचपन से चाहता था कि
इन्जीनियरिंग कॉलेज में पढूं। आज यहाँ बैठा
हूँ। बहुत मज़ा आ रहा है सर।

RANCHO
Sir, to study engineering was a childhood
dream. I'm so happy to be here finally.

प्रोफेसर पोद्दार
ज्यादा मज़ा लेने की जरूरत नहीं है।

PROFESSOR POTDAR
No need to be so happy.

Taken aback, Rancho stops smiling.

प्रोफेसर पोद्दार
बोलो, मशीन का ड्यफिनेशन बोलो।

PROFESSOR POTDAR
Define a machine.

RANCHO
A machine is anything that reduces human
effort.

PROFESSOR POTDAR
Will you please elaborate?

Rancho stands up and starts to explain.

रैन्चो
सर, हर वो चीज़ जो इन्सान का काम आसान
करे या वक़्त बचाये वो मशीन है, सर।

RANCHO
Anything that simplifies work, or saves
time, is a machine.

Chatur frowns at Rancho in disdain.

रैन्चो
गरमी लग रही है? बटन दबाया, हवा चालू -
फैन ... मशीन है, सर।

RANCHO
It's a warm day, press a button, get a blast
of air. The fan ... a machine!

Rancho launches into examples to
illustrate his point with gusto and
enthusiasm.

रैन्चो
मीलों दूर आप अपने दोस्त के साथ बात कर सकते हैं ... टेलीफोन ... मशीन है सर।

A beat.

रैन्चो
करोड़ों का हिसाब चुटकी में करता है ... कैल्कुलेटर ... मशीन है सर। सर, ऐक्चवली हम मशीनों से घिरे हुए हैं सर। पेन की निब से लेके पैन्ट की जिप तक, सब मशीन है, सर।

Rancho pulls his jeans zipper up and down to demonstrate.

रैन्चो
एक सैकेण्ड में अप, एक सैकेण्ड में डाउन। अप डाउन ... अप ... डाउन अप डाउन।

Students laugh.

Furious, Professor Potdar throws a piece of chalk at Rancho. Rancho looks at him in shock.

प्रोफेसर पोदार
डेफिनिशन क्या है?

रैन्चो
सर, वो ही तो बता रहा हूँ, सर।

Chatur laughs jeeringly, braying in his typical style.

Professor Potdar imitates Rancho, pulling the zip on his fly, up and down.

प्रोफेसर पोदार
इग्ज़ैम में ये सब लिखोगे ... ये मशीन है? अप डाउन ... अप डाउन ... इडियट! ऐनीबडी ऐल्स?

RANCHO
Speak to a friend miles away. The telephone ... a machine!

RANCHO
Compute millions in seconds. The calculator ... a machine! We're surrounded by machines. From a pen's nib to a pants' zip – all machines.

RANCHO
Up and down in a second. Up, down, up, down...

PROFESSOR POTDAR
What is the definition?

RANCHO
I just gave it to you, Sir.

PROFESSOR POTDAR
You'll write this in the exam? This is a machine – up, down ... idiot! Anybody else?

Chatur raises his hand.

प्रोफेसर
येस?

PROFESSOR
Yes?

CHATUR

Sir, machines are any combination of bodies so connected that their relative motions are constrained and by which means, force and motion may be transmitted and modified as a screw and its nut, or a lever arranged to turn about a fulcrum or a pulley about its pivot, etc., especially, a construction, more or less complex consisting of a combination of moving parts, or simple mechanical elements, as wheels, levers, cams, etc.

Professor Potdar looks at Chatur with admiration and approval.

प्रोफेसर पोद्दार
क्या बात है? परफैक्ट! प्लीज़ सिट डाउन

PROFESSOR POTDAR
Wonderful. Perfect. Please sit down.

Chatur sits down and looks around triumphantly.

CHATUR

Thank you ... Thank you.

Rancho is puzzled.

रैन्चो
लेकिन सर ... मैंने भी तो वही बताया सर।
आसान भाषा में।

RANCHO
But Sir, I said the same thing, in simple language.

प्रोफेसर पोद्दार
(*derisively*)

आपको अगर सिम्पल भाषा पसंद हो तो आर्ट्स
एण्ड कोमर्स कॉलेज जॉइन कीजिये।

PROFESSOR POTDAR
If you prefer simple language, join an Arts
and Commerce college.

रैन्चो

लेकिन सर, मतलब भी तो समझ में आना चाहिये।
ऐसे किताबी डेफिनिशन रट के क्या फायदा?

प्रोफेसर पोद्दार

आप किताब से ज्यादा जानते हैं? किताब में
यही डैफिनेशन है और अगर आपको पास होना
हो तो आप यही लिखेंगे।

रैन्चो

लेकिन सर, और भी तो किताबे हैं जिनमे ...

Rancho is abruptly cut short by the
Professor.

PROFESSOR POTDAR

Get out!

RANCHO

Why?

प्रोफेसर

आसान भाषा में बाहर जाइये।

Rancho is stunned. Raju and Farhan look
from the Professor to Rancho, not daring
to utter a sound. Rancho starts to walk
out of the classroom.

PROFESSOR POTDAR

Idiot!

Rancho stops mid-way and starts walking
back to his seat.

PROFESSOR POTDAR

So, we were discussing the machine ...
Why're you back?

RANCHO

But Sir, one must get the meaning too ...
What's the point of blindly cramming a
bookish definition?

PROFESSOR POTDAR

You think you're smarter than the book?
Write the textbook definition, mister, if
you want to pass.

RANCHO

But there are other books ...

PROFESSOR

In simple language – out!

रैन्चो

सर, कुछ भूल गया हूँ सर।

प्रोफेसर पोद्दार

क्या?

RANCHO

Instruments that record, analyse, summarise, organise, debate and explain information; that are illustrated, non-illustrated, hard-bound, paperback, jacketed, non-jacketed; with foreword, introduction, table-of-contents, index; that are intended for the enlightenment, understanding, enrichment, enhancement and education of the human brain through the sensory route of vision. Sometimes touch.

Professor Potdar and the students gape at Rancho.

प्रोफेसर पोद्दार

अरे कहना क्या चाहते हो?

रैन्चो

किताबें सर। बुक्स।

There is a wave of laughter in the class.

रैन्चो

बुक्स भूल गया हूँ सर। ले लूँ?

प्रोफेसर पोद्दार

तो सीधे सीधे नहीं कह सकते थे?

रैन्चो

थोड़ी देर पहले कोशिश की थी सर। लेकिन आपको सीधा सीधा पसन्द नहीं आया।

RANCHO

I forgot something.

PROFESSOR POTDAR

What?

PROFESSOR POTDAR

What do you mean?

RANCHO

Books, Sir

RANCHO

I forgot my books. May I?

PROFESSOR POTDAR

Couldn't you ask simply?

RANCHO

I tried earlier, Sir. It simply didn't work.

The class, except for Chatur and Raju, bursts into laughter, Farhan chuckling the loudest. Professor Potdar is rendered speechless.

INT. / EXT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS,
CAMPUS, ICE – DAY / NIGHT

MONTAGE

- A) Rancho strolls in the corridor.
- B) Rancho attends a senior class.

फरहान (V.O.)

रैन्चो को प्रोफेसर क्लास में कम, बाहर ज़्यादा रखते थे। वो एक क्लास से निकाला जाता था तो दूसरे में जाके बैठ जाता था। कहता था चारों तरफ ज्ञान बंट रहा है, जहां से मिलता है, लपेट लो। वो हम सबसे अलग था। हम रोज़ बाथरूम के लिए लड़ते रहते थे, उसे जहां पानी मिले, वहीं नहा लेता था ...

- C) In the hostel bathroom, students mill around the shower stalls, yelling at those inside to hurry.
- D) In the campus lawns, a bare-bodied Rancho soaps himself, rinsing off with water from the garden hose. Passing professors stare at him in surprise.

RANCHO

Morning Sir!

- E) In the college cafeteria, Rancho dismantles a mixer with his screwdriver. Behind him, an attendant opens the refrigerator door – and it comes off in his hand. Rancho darts him a guilty look.

FARHAN

Professors kept Rancho mostly out. ... Seldom in, when thrown out of one class, he'd slip into another. He said – “First year or fourth year, it's knowledge. Just grab it.” He was unlike any of us. We fought for a shower every morning. He'd bathe wherever he found water.

फरहान (V.O.)

मशीनों से बहुत लगाव था। जेब मैं स्कूट्रावर लेके घूमता था। जो मशीन दिखे, उसे खोल देता था। कुछ बंद होती थी, कुछ नहीं।

INT. / EXT. LAB / CORRIDOR, ICE
– DAY

In a lab, JOY LOBO, a student, works on his creation, a miniature helicopter.

फरहान (V.O.)

एक और था, जो बिल्कुल उसके जैसा था, जॉय लोबो।

From the window he spots the Director walking down the corridor. Joy rushes out of the lab towards him.

JOY

Sir. Excuse me, Sir.

The Director continues walking. Joy keeps up with him.

डाइरेक्टर

मिस्टर जॉय लोबो

जॉय

येस सर। सर वो कान्क्वेशन के डेट्स अगर पता चल जाते तो ...

डाइरेक्टर

क्यों?

जॉय

एक्चवली, डैड रिज़र्वेशन कराना चाहते थे। अपने गांव से मैं पहला इन्ज़ीनियर हूँ सर। सारे रिलेटिव्स कान्क्वेशन पे आना चाहते हैं।

FARHAN

Machines were his passion. When he spotted them, he opened them. Some he could re-assemble ... some he couldn't.

FARHAN

There was another, just like him, Joy Lobo.

DIRECTOR

Mr. Joy Lobo.

JOY

Sir, if I could know the convocation dates ...

DIRECTOR

Why?

JOY

Actually, Dad wants to make train reservations. I'm the first engineer from my village. Everyone wants to attend.

The Director takes out his mobile phone and hands it over to Joy.

डाइरेक्टर
इन दैट केस, आपके डैड को फोन लगाओ
प्लीज़।

Joy looks a little unsure.

DIRECTOR
Come, please, please. Hurry up. Don't
waste my time.

He reluctantly dials his Father's
number.

An ELDERLY MAN potters around
amongst plants in his backyard. He is
Joy's father, MR LOBO.

His phone rings. He answers the call.

जॉय के पिताजी
हैल्लो

JOY'S FATHER
Hello.

जॉय
डैड, डाइरेक्टर साहब आपसे बात करेंगे।

JOY
Dad, the Director wants to speak to
you.

जॉय के पिताजी
(*filled with happiness*)
जॉय

JOY'S FATHER
Joy.

डाइरेक्टर
मिस्टर लोबो, इस साल आपका बेटा ग्रेजुवट
नहीं होगा।

DIRECTOR
Mr. Lobo, your son won't graduate this
year.

The blood drains from Joy's face.

जॉय के पिताजी
(*crushed*)
क्या हुआ सर?

DIRECTOR

He has violated all deadlines. Mr. Lobo, it's an unrealistic project. He's making some nonsense helicopter. I suggest you don't book your tickets. I'm so sorry.

The Director disconnects the phone.

JOY

Sir, I am this close, Sir.

DIRECTOR

Is your project ready?

JOY

I ...

DIRECTOR

Is your project ready?

जॉय

सर, आप एक दफ़ा देख तो लीजिए सर,
प्लीज़

डाइरेक्टर

सबिमत करलो, तो हम कनसीडर करेंगे।

जॉय

सर मुझे थोड़ा सा एक्सटेंशन दे दीजिए।

DIRECTOR

Why! Why should I give you an extension?

JOY'S FATHER

What happened, Sir?

JOY

Sir, see it once, please.

DIRECTOR

Submit it, and we'll consider.

JOY

Sir, a small extension ...

जॉय
सर डैड के स्ट्रोक के बाद मैं दो महीने कान्सन्ट्रेट
नहीं कर पाया सर। प्लीज़।

The Director stops and looks at Joy
sternly.

डाइरेक्टर
दो महीने खाना पीना छोड़ दिया था?

जॉय
नहीं

डाइरेक्टर
नहीं। नहाना छोड़ दिया था?

जॉय
नो।

डाइरेक्टर
नहीं। तो पढ़ाई क्यों छोड़ दी?

जॉय
सर आई एम वेरी क्लोज़। सर आप एक दफ़ा
देख तो लीजिए प्लीज़।

डाइरेक्टर
मिस्टर लोबो, संडे ऑफ्टरनून को मेरा बेटा ट्रेन
मे से गिर के मर गया था। मंडे मॉरनिंग को
वीरू सहस्त्रबुद्धे ने इसी कॉलेज में लेक्चर दिया
था! सो डोन्ट गिव मी दैट नॉनसेन्स!

A beat.

डाइरेक्टर
मैं आपको सिमपैथि दे सकता हूँ, ऐक्सटेंशन
नहीं, आई एम सॉरी।

The Director walks away.

JOY
After Dad's stroke, I couldn't focus for
two months.

DIRECTOR
Did you stop eating for two months?

JOY
No.

DIRECTOR
Stopped bathing?

JOY
No.

DIRECTOR
So why did you stop studying?

JOY
Sir, I'm very close. See it once, please ...

DIRECTOR
Mr. Lobo! Sunday afternoon, my son fell
off a train and died. Monday morning,
I taught a class. So don't give me that
nonsense.

DIRECTOR
I can give you sympathy, not an extension,
I'm sorry.

JOY

(desperately)

Sir ... I'm very close ...

His words trail away. He looks down at the helicopter in his hand. Despair and frustration well up inside him. He smites his forehead in agony, then turns around and drops the helicopter into a dustbin. He walks away. From behind a pillar, Rancho gazes after him compassionately. He walks up to the dustbin, retrieves the helicopter and looks at it wonderingly.

Fade IN: *Give me some sunshine.*

EXT. HOSTEL, ICE – NIGHT

PBS 2- GIVE ME SOME SUNSHINE

सारी उम्र हम
मर मर के जी लिए
एक पल तो अब हमें
जीने दो जीने दो

सारी उम्र हम
मर मर के जी लिए
एक पल तो अब हमें
जीने दो जीने दो

गिव मी सम सनशाइन
गिव मी सम रेन
गिव मी ऐनेदर चान्स
आई वाना ग्रो अप वन्स अगेन

गिव मी सम सनशाइन
गिव मी सम रेन
गिव मी ऐनेदर चान्स
आई वाना ग्रो अप वन्स अगेन

*Lifelong I lived
The life of another
For just one moment
Let me live as I...*

*Lifelong I lived
The life of another
For just one moment
Let me live as I ...*

*Give me some sunshine
Give me some rain
Give me another chance
I wanna grow up once again*

*Give me some sunshine
Give me some rain
Give me another chance
I wanna grow up once again*

On a ledge outside his hostel room, Joy strums a guitar and sings in a voice filled with pain and hopelessness.

Rancho observes him from a distance.

INT. ROOM, HOSTEL, ICE – NIGHT

A portable black and white monitor shows candid images of the trio's room. The images are being shot by the camera atop Joy's helicopter. Rancho operates the helicopter with childish enthusiasm. He goes up to Raju, who is studying at his desk. Raju glances into the camera disapprovingly.

रैन्चो

(in awe)

साले ने क्या डिज़ाइन बनाया है, यार हैलीकॉप्टर के ऊपर वायरलेस कैमरा। दगा दगा दगा ... ट्रैफिक अपडेट, सिक््यूरिटी, सब के काम आ सकता हैं।

He zeroes in on Farhan's face.

फरहान

ए, पर वाइरस तो कह रहा था कि बहुत इम्प्रेक्टिकल डिज़ाइन है। उड़ेगा ही नहीं

Rancho pans the camera to himself.

रैन्चो

उड़ेगा कैसे नहीं। हम उड़ायेंगे। ए, जॉय को मत बोलना। उसको सरप्राइज़ देंगे। उसकी खिड़की के बाहर उड़ायेंगे, उसका रिएक्शन रिकार्ड करेंगे।

Raju's not drawn in by Rancho's enthusiasm.

RANCHO

Dude's come up with an amazing design. A wireless camera atop a helicopter. Can be used for traffic updates, security ... Wow!

FARHAN

But Virus said it's an impractical design, it won't fly.

RANCHO

It will fly! We'll make it fly. Don't tell Joy. It'll be a surprise. We'll fly it up to his window and capture his reaction.

राजू

अरे हम उसका प्रोजेक्ट करेंगे तो हमारे कौन करेगा? टेस्ट्स, वाइवाज़, क्वीज़स मिला के हर सेमिस्टर में 42 इग्ज़ैम हैं।

रैन्चो

(unfazed)

अरे तू डरता बहुत है यार। ये हाथ ले, अपने दिल पे डाल, और बोल – ऑल इज़ वेल, ऑल इज़ वेल।

Rancho grabs Raju's hand and places it on Raju's heart.

राजू

ऑल इज़ वेल।

रैन्चो

ऑल इज़ वेल।

फरहान

अबे ये कुछ नया लाया है हमारे बाबा रणछोड़दास।

रैन्चो

अरे हमारे गांव में एक चौकीदार हुआ करता था। वो रात को पहरा देते वक़्त जोर जोर से चिल्लाता था – “ऑल इज़ वेल”।

Raju rolls his eyes.

रैन्चो

और हम लोग सुकून से सो जाते थे। एक रात गांव में चोरी हुई, तो पता चला की साले को रात में कुछ दिखता ही नहीं हैं, यार। ऐसे ही चिल्लाता रहता था “ऑल इज़ वेल”, “ऑल इज़ वेल”। और हम लोग बेफिक्र होके सो भी जाते थे। उस दिन एक बात समझ में आई। ये जो अपना दिल है ना, बड़ा डरपोक है, यार। उसको

RAJU

If we work on his project, who'll work on ours? Tests, vivas, quizzes – 42 exams per semester.

RANCHO

You scare easily, bro. Take your hand, put it over your heart, and say, “aal izz well”.

RAJU

Aal izz well?

RANCHO

Aal izz well.

FARHAN

New words of wisdom from his Holiness Guru Ranchhoddas.

RANCHO

We had an old watchman in our village. On night patrol, he'd call out, “aal izz well”.

RANCHO

And we slept peacefully. Then there was a theft and we learned that he couldn't see at night! He'd just yell “Aal izz well”, and we felt secure. That day I understood this heart scares easily. You have to trick it. However big the problem, tell your heart, “Aal izz well, pal”.

बेवकूफ बना के रखो। लाइफ में कितनी भी बड़ी प्रोबलम हो ना, उसको बोली कोई बात नहीं चाचू – सब ठीक ठाक है। ऑल इज़ वेल। ऑल इज़ वेल।

राजू
(*sarcastically*)
हाँ! और उससे प्रॉबलम सौल्व हो जायेगी!

रैन्चो
नहीं। लेकिन उसको झेलने की हिम्मत आ जाती है।

Farhan breaks into a laugh.

रैन्चो
ये मंत्र याद कर लो, यहाँ पर बहुत ज़रूरत पड़ने वाली हैं।

Raju makes a derisive sound.

INT. / EXT. – VARIOUS LOCATIONS,
ICE – DAY / NIGHT

PBS 3 – AAL IZZ WELL

जब लाइफ़ हो आउट ऑफ़ कंट्रोल
होंगे को करके गोल
होंगे को करके गोल
सीटी बजाके बोल
ऑल इज़ वेल

जब लाइफ़ हो आउट ऑफ़ कंट्रोल
होंगे को करके गोल
होंगे को करके गोल
सीटी बजाके बोल
ऑल इज़ वेल

RAJU
Yes. That resolves the problem?

RANCHO
No. But you gain courage to face iat.

RANCHO
We're gonna really need the mantra.
Learn it.

*When life spins out of control
Just let your lips roll
Let your lips roll
And whistle away the toll
Yell – Aal izz Well ...*

*When life spins out of control
Just let your lips roll
Let your lips roll
And whistle away the toll
Yell – Aal izz Well ...*

मुर्गी क्या जाने अंडे का क्या होगा
अरे लाइफ मिलेगी या तवे पे फ्राई होगा
कोई ना जाने अपना फ्युचर क्या होगा
ऑल इज़ वैल ...

होंठ घुमा,
सीटी बजा
सीटी बजा के बोल भाइया
ऑल इज़ वैल

अरे भाइया ऑल इज़ वैल
अरे चाचू ऑल इज़ वैल
अरे भाइया ऑल इज़ वैल

कंनफ्युजन ही कंनफ्युजन है
सोलूशन कुछ पता नहीं
सोलूशन जो मिला तो साला
कोशचन क्या था पता नहीं

दिल जो तेरा बात बात पे घबराए
दिल पे रख के हाथ उसे तू फुसला-ले
दिल इडियट है, प्यार से उसको समझा ले

होंठ घुमा
सीटी बजा
सीटी बजा के बोल
भाइया ऑल इज़ वैल

अरे भाइया ऑल इज़ वैल
अरे चाचू ऑल इज़ वैल
अरे भाइया ऑल इज़ वैल

स्कोलरशिप की पी गया दारू
गम तो फिर भी मिटा नहीं
अगरबत्तियाँ राख हो गईं
गौड तो फिर भी दिखा नहीं

*The chicken's clueless about the egg's fate
Will it hatch or become an omelette
No one knows what the future holds*

*So let your lips roll
And whistle away the toll
Whistle away the toll
Yell – Aal izz Well ...*

*Hey bro – Aal izz Well
Hey mate – Aal izz Well
Hey bro – Aal izz Well*

*Confusion and more confusion
No sign of any solution
Ah ... finally a solution
But wait ... what was the question?*

*If the timid heart with fear
is about to die
Then con it bro, with this simple lie
Heart's an idiot, it will fall under that spell*

*Let your lips roll
And whistle away the toll
Whistle away the toll
Yell – Aal izz Well*

*Hey bro – Aal izz Well
Hey mate – Aal izz Well
Hey bro – Aal izz Well*

*Blew the scholarship on booze
But that did not dispel my blues
Holy incense lit up my plight
And yet God's nowhere in sight*

बकरा क्या जाने उसकी जान का क्या होगा
सीख घुसेगी या साला कीमा होगा
कोई ना जाने अपना प्रयुचर क्या होगा

तो होठ घुमा
सीटी बजा
सीटी बजा के बोल भाइया
ऑल इज़ वैल

अरे मुर्गी ऑल इज़ वैल
अरे बकरे ऑल इज़ वैल
अरे भाइया ऑल इज़ वैल

Working on Joy's helicopter in the spare time he gets, Rancho is still unable to make it fly. In the midst of revelry with his friends, he hits upon the solution.

रैन्चो
मिल ... गया, मिल ... गया यस ...

In the hostel corridor stand, Farhan, Raju and Millimeter. Next to Rancho who operates a remote designed for the helicopter. The helicopter starts to fly. Ecstatic, the friends follow it, navigating. Other students join them, the excitement spreading, until a huge crowd stands outside Joy's block.

फरहान
ये जॉय की खिड़की पर ले चल, जॉय की खिड़की पर ले चल ना।

Rancho takes the helicopter up, towards Joy's room.

*The lamb is clueless for what it's destined
Will it be served on skewers or simply minced
No one knows what the future holds*

*So let your lips roll
And whistle away the toll
Whistle away the toll
Yell – Aal izz Well*

*Hey Mrs. Chicken – Aal izz Well
Hey Mr. Lamb – Aal izz Well
Hey bro – Aal izz Well*

RANCHO
Got it, got it ... yes

FARHAN
Hey, take it up to Joy's window.

राजू
ये जाँय।

फरहान
ऊपर, ऊपर!

The helicopter crosses Chatur's window. Raju, holding the monitor, guffaws with laughter at the sight of Chatur dancing in his underwear – and cramming.

राजू
वो तेरे! ए साइलेन्सर को देख! रंगा का नंगा!

Everyone laughs. The helicopter continues to rise.

राजू
ओए जाँय, बाहर आ यार।

फरहान
हे जाँय। जाँय ... जाँय खिड़की पर आ।

राजू
ओये जाँय, बाहर देख।

The helicopter reaches Joy's window. On the monitor is Joy's body, suspended from the ceiling.

राजू
जाँय ... जाँय ...

Even as time seems to stand still, Rancho, Farhan and Raju run to Joy's room. They fling open the door and stand, shell-shocked, looking at Joy's lifeless body – and the 'I QUIT' he's written on the wall.

RAJU
Hey Joy.

FARHAN
Take it higher.

RAJU
Look at Silencer – the nude dude!

RAJU
Joy, come out.

FARHAN
Hey Joy, come to the window.

RAJU
Joy, look outside.

RAJU
JOY ... JOY ...

EXT. GRAVEYARD – DAY

In the steady drizzle, a group of black umbrellas huddle around a fresh grave. Hugging his son's coffin, crying inconsolably, is Joy's father.

PRIEST

We commend our brother Joy to the Lord. May the Lord receive him into his peace and raise up his body on the final day.

Farhan and Raju stand together, grief etched on their faces. Rancho stands by himself, oblivious to the rain soaking him, his tears mingling with the raindrops.

PRIEST

Let us pray for our brother Joy to our lord Jesus Christ who said "I'm the resurrection and the life. The man who believes in me will live even if he dies. And every living person who puts his faith in me will never suffer eternal death ...".

Rancho makes a futile attempt to wipe his eyes, and looks up. He spots the Director on the fringe of the group of mourners. His eyes suddenly fierce, he walks up to him.

रैन्चो

(in a low voice)

गुड न्यूज़ है सर। ना पुलिस को पता चला, ना जॉय के बाप को। सब सोच रहे हैं सुसाइड है सर।

RANCHO

Good news, Sir The police and Joy's father have no clue. Everyone thinks this is suicide.

The Director waits, frowning.

रैन्चो

पोस्टमार्टम रिपोर्ट में आया – मौत का कारण: इनटैन्स प्रेशर ऑन विंडपाइप, रिजल्टिंग इन चोकिंग।

The Director nods in grim agreement.

रैन्चो

वो बेवकूफ सोच रहे है कि इधर प्रेशर पड़ने की वजह से मर गया। और पिछले चार साल से जो यहाँ प्रेशर पड़ रहा है, उसका क्या? वो तो रिपोर्ट में है ही नहीं सर।

Surprise and disbelief race across the Director's face. From a distance, with increasing alarm, Farhan and Raju watch their friend speak to the Director.

रैन्चो

ये इन्जीनियर भी बड़े चालाक हैं सर – ऐसी कोई मशीन ही नहीं बनाई जो यहाँ का प्रेशर नाप सके।

The Director's face is set in anger.

रैन्चो

बनाते तो पता चल जाता कि ये सुसाइड नहीं, मर्डर है सर।

In fury, the Director turns to look at Rancho.

Joy's coffin is lowered into the grave.

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, ICE – DAY

The Director sits in an armchair, seething with anger. Rancho stands before him.

RANCHO

The post mortem report – Cause of Death: Intense pressure on windpipe resulting in choking.

RANCHO

All think the pressure on the jugular killed him. What about the mental pressure for the last four years? That's missing in the report.

RANCHO

Engineers are a clever bunch. They will never make a machine to measure mental pressure.

RANCHO

If they had, all would know ... this isn't suicide ... it's murder, Sir.

डाइरेक्टर

(in a raised voice)

जाँय के सुसाइड के लिए तुम मुझे दोष दे रहे हो? एक स्टूडन्ट प्रेशर नहीं ले पाता तो हम जिम्मेदार कैसे? वैसे जिन्दगी में कई प्रेशर आएंगे तो हमेशा तुम दूसरे पे दोष डालोगे?

रैन्चो

सर, मैं आपको दोष नहीं दे रहा हूँ सर। सर मैं ऐक्ववली सिस्टम को दोष दे रहा हूँ। सर मेरे पास कुछ स्टटिस्टिक्स हैं सर। सर सुसाइड में इंडिया न. 1 है सर। हर डेढ़ घंटे में कोई न कोई स्टूडन्ट सुसाइड का अटेम्प्ट करता है। सर यहाँ पे स्टूडन्ट बिमारी से कम ओर सुसाइड से ज्यादा मरते हैं। कुछ तो गलत हो रहा है न सर।

डाइरेक्टर

मैं दूसरे कॉलेज्स के बारे में नहीं बता सकता बट दिस इज़ वन ऑफ द फाइनेस्ट कॉलेज्स इन द कन्ट्री। बतीस साल से मैं यह कॉलेज चला रहा हूँ ओर आइडिस्वी पॉजिशन से न. 1 तक लेकर आया हूँ मैं।

रैन्चो

सर वॉट न. 1, वॉट न. 1। सर, यहाँ पे कोई नये आइडियास की बात ही नहीं करता सर, इनवैन्शन की बात ही नहीं करता। बात करते हैं तो सिर्फ मार्क्स की – या फिर, यूएसए में नौकरी की। सर यहाँ पे ज्ञान नहीं मिल रहा है सर, यहाँ पे सिर्फ यह सिखाया जा रहा है कि मार्क्स कैसे लाते हैं।।

Beside himself with rage, the Director springs to his feet.

डाइरेक्टर

(shouting)

अब 'तुम' मुझे सिखाओगे कैसे पढ़ाते है?

DIRECTOR

How dare you blame me for Joy's suicide? If one student can't handle pressure, is it our fault? Life is full of pressures. Will you always blame others for pressure in life?

RANCHO

I don't blame you, Sir. I blame the system. Look at these statistics – India ranks No.1 in suicides. Every 90 minutes, a student attempts suicide. Suicide is a bigger killer than disease. Something's terribly wrong, Sir.

DIRECTOR

I can't speak for the rest but this is one of the finest colleges in the country. I've run this place for 32 years. We were ranked 28th. Now we're No. 1.

RANCHO

What's the point, Sir? Here they don't discuss new ideas or inventions. They discuss grades, jobs, settling in USA. They teach how to get good scores. They don't teach engineering.

DIRECTOR

Now you will teach me how to teach?

रैन्चो
नो सर, आइ ...

RANCHO
No Sir, I ...

The Director grabs Rancho's hand and starts dragging him out of the office. Stunned, unable to retaliate, Rancho glances back helplessly at his fallen sheet of statistics.

रैन्चो
सर, सर माइ पेपर ...

RANCHO
Sir, Sir my paper ...

EXT. CORRIDOR, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

As students and professors watch stunned, the Director drags Rancho through the corridors of ICE.

INT. CLASSROOM, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

The Director enters a classroom with Rancho. The teaching professor falls silent as the Director hurls Rancho towards his table. The class watches, baffled.

DIRECTOR
(to the professor)
Vaidyanathan, please sit down.

Farhan and Raju glance at each other, worried.

डाइरेक्टर
(addressing the students, re: Rancho)
आज हमारे बीच एक ऐसे लीडर हैं, जिनका मानना है कि वो हमारे हाईली क्वालिफाइड टीचर्स से बेहतर पढ़ा सकते हैं। तो आज प्रोफेसर रनछोड़दास छॉछड़ हमें इंजिनियरिंग सिखाएंगे।

DIRECTOR
Here is a self-proclaimed professor who thinks he is better than our highly qualified teacher. Professor Ranchhoddas Chanchad will teach us engineering.

Leaving Rancho at the head of the class, the Director joins the seated students facing him.

Rancho looks at a loss for words. Chatur smiles broadly, enjoying his discomfort. Farhan and Raju look at their friend anxiously.

DIRECTOR

We do not have all day.

Rancho collects himself. He takes off his sling bag, places it on the table and picks up a book lying there. He leafs through the book and then, referring to it, writes two words on the board – FARHANITRATE and PRERAJULISATION. He turns to face the class.

रैन्चो

आपके पास तीस सैकेंड है। बोर्ड पे लिखे हुऐ शब्दों का मतलब समझाना है।

Chatur quickly sets the timer on his watch.

रैन्चो

आप चाहे तो किताब का इस्तेमाल कर सकते हैं। जिसे जवाब मिलेगा वो हाथ ऊपर करेगा। देखते हैं कौन फर्स्ट आता है और कौन लास्ट। यूअर टाइम स्टार्ट्स ... नॉव।

There's a flurry of activity in the classroom. The students search through their textbooks frantically. Chatur charges to the teacher's table and grabs the book Rancho had referred to.

RANCHO

You have 30 seconds to define the terms. written.

RANCHO

You may refer to your books. Raise your hand if you get the answer. Let's see who comes first, who comes last. Your time starts ... now.

CHATUR

Give me this!

The Director, his competitive spirit awoken, snatches a book, and then another, from the student next to him. He goes through both books simultaneously: ambidextrous. The whole class works through text books manically. Rancho keeps time.

RANCHO

Time up.

The students look up reluctantly. The Director is still flipping pages.

रैन्चो

(to the Director)

Time up Sir, time up.

(to the class)

क्या? किसी को जवाब नहीं मिला? अब अपनी लाइफ का एक मिनट रिवाइन्ड करो और सोचो। जब मैंने यह सवाल पूछा किसी ने यह सोचा कि आज कुछ नया सीखने को मिलेगा, मज़ा आएगा ...? ऐनीवन? सर? नहीं। सब रेस में लग गये। ऐसे पढ़ के फर्स्ट आ भी गये, तो क्या फ़ायदा। आप लोगों की नौलेज बढ़ेगी? नहीं! सिर्फ़ प्रेशर बढ़ेगा! और ये कॉलेज है, प्रेशर कुकर नहीं।

Farhan gives an involuntary laugh.

रैन्चो

अरे चाबुक के डर से तो सर्कस का शेर भी उछल के कुर्सी पर बैठना सीख जाता है। लेकिन ऐसे शेर को हम वेल ट्रेन्ड कहते हैं, वेल एजुकेटिड नहीं।

RANCHO

No one got the answer? Now rewind your life by a minute. When I asked this question, were you excited? Curious? Thrilled that you'd learn something new? Anyone? ... Sir? No. You all got into a frantic race. What's the use of such methods, even if you come first. Will your knowledge increase? No, just the pressure. This is a college, not a pressure cooker.

RANCHO

Even a circus lion learns to sit on a chair in fear of the whip. But you call such a lion 'well trained', not 'well educated'.

डाइरेक्टर
हैल्लो! दिस इज़ नौट अ फिलोसॉफी क्लास। उन दो वर्डस का मतलब बताओ, बस।

रैन्चो
सर ऐसे कोई वर्डस है ही नहीं सर।

The Director looks incredulous.

रैन्चो
सर। ये तो मेरे दोस्तों के नाम हैं। फरहान और राजू।

Rancho goes up to the board and underlines FARHAN in FARHANITRATE and RAJU in PRERAJULISATION. The students break into laughter.

डाइरेक्टर
क्वाइट! नोनसेन्स! क्या ऐसे पढ़ाओगे इंजिनियरिंग!

रैन्चो
नहीं सर। मैं आपको इंजिनियरिंग नहीं पढ़ा रहा था सर। वो तो आप मुझसे बेहतर जानते हैं।

A beat.

रैन्चो
मैं तो आपको यह पढ़ा रहा था कि पढ़ाते कैसे हैं।

The Director looks apoplectic.

रैन्चो
और मुझे यकीन है कि आप एक दिन जरूर सिखेंगे सर, क्योंकि मैं अपने कमज़ोर स्टूडेंट्स का हाथ कभी नहीं छोड़ता।

DIRECTOR
Hello! This is not a philosophy class. Just explain those two words.

RANCHO
Sir, these words don't exist.

RANCHO
These are my friends' names. Farhan and Raju.

DIRECTOR
Quiet! Nonsense! Is this how you'll teach engineering?

RANCHO
Sir, I wasn't teaching you engineering. You're an expert at that.

RANCHO
I was teaching you ... how to teach.

RANCHO
And I'm sure one day you'll learn because unlike you, I never abandon my weak students.

Before the Director's wrath can spill over, Rancho grabs his bag from the table and makes a run for the exit.

रैन्चो
बाय, सर!

RANCHO
Bye, Sir!

The students crack up in mirth. In helpless rage, the Director yells at them.

DIRECTOR
Quiet! Quiet, I said!

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, ICE –
DAY

The Director sits at his desk and writes two letters simultaneously: Ambidextrous.

डाइरेक्टर (V.O.)
बड़े खेद के साथ मैं आपको सूचित करना चाहता हूँ कि आपका बेटा ...।

DIRECTOR
I regret to inform you that your son ...

In one letter he writes –

डाइरेक्टर (V.O.)
फरहान।

DIRECTOR
Farhan.

In the other letter he writes –

डाइरेक्टर (V.O.)
राजू।

DIRECTOR
Raju.

In both letters, he writes simultaneously.

डाइरेक्टर (V.O.)
गलत संगत में हैं। सही कदम नहीं उठाए गये तो उसका फ्यूचर बर्बाद हो सकता है।

DIRECTOR
– have fallen into bad company. Without urgent corrective steps, his future will be ruined.

INT. FARHAN'S HOUSE / RAJU'S HOUSE – DAY

Split screen. Farhan and Raju's FAMILIES receive the letters from the Director.

फरहान (V.O.)

वायरस के लैटर्स हमारे घर पे ऐटम बम की तरह गिरे। हिरोशिमा और नागासाकी मे मातम छा गया। और हमको दोनों घरों में जूते खाने के लिए इनवाइट किया गया।

INT. FARHAN'S HOUSE – DAY

The door to Farhan's room opens. Farhan's Father leads the trio into the room. He points towards the air conditioner.

फरहान के पिताजी

आइए। अन्दर आइए। आइए आइए। उधर देखिए। एक ही एयर कंडिशनर ऐफोर्ड कर सकते थे हम। और वो हमने अपने नहीं, फरहान के कमरे मे लगाया, ताकि वो सुकून से पढ़ सके। कार नहीं खरीदी मैंने। आज तक स्कूटर चलाता हूँ। सारा पैसा हमने फरहान की पढ़ाई में लगा दिया। अपना फ्यूचर हमने फरहान के फ्यूचर के लिए कुर्बान कर दिया। समझे की नहीं आप?

Rancho fidgets and looks around restlessly, to the left, to the right

A beat.

And then he stands riveted. The far wall in the room is covered with wildlife photography. The pictures are stunning. Hunters and prey, newborn cubs, unrehearsed moments of nature. Farhan's Father drones on, but Rancho is no longer listening.

FARHAN

Virus's letters dropped on our homes like atom bombs. Hiroshima and Nagasaki plunged into gloom. Our parents invited us for a dressing down.

FARHAN'S FATHER

Come in. See that? We could afford just one air-conditioner We put it in Farhan's room, so he could study in comfort. I didn't buy a car. I managed with a scooter. We put all our money into Farhan's education. We sacrificed our comforts for Farhan's future. Understand?

फरहान के पिताजी
और उसके बाद जब मुझे ऐसा खत आया
पिसिंपल साहब से, तो क्या आप अन्दाज़ा लगा
सकते हैं कि मुझ पर क्या बीत रही होगी?

Rancho walks towards the photographs,
riveted.

रैन्चो
हे, ये फोटोस तूने लिए फरहान?

Even as Farhan tries to shush Rancho, his
Father answers.

फरहान के पिताजी
फोटोग्राफी का भूत सवार था जनाब के सर पर।
जानवरों की तस्वीरें लिए फिरते थे। कहते थे कि
मुझे वाइल्डलाइफ फोटोग्राफर बनना है। बेटे उस
साल तुम्हारी परसैटेज़ कितनी थी? बताओ।

फरहान
(*meekly*)
91%।

फरहान के पिताजी
सुना आपने? 94% से सीधे 91%।

Rancho stifles a spontaneous giggle. But
the damage is done.

फरहान के पिताजी
आपको मज़ाक लग रहा है?

रैन्चो
नहीं, नहीं अंकल, सॉरी ... ऐक्चवली मैं यह कह
रहा हूँ कितने कमाल के फोटो खींचे है सर,
उसने! इसको आप इंजिनियर क्यों बना रहे हैं?

FARHAN'S FATHER
And after that when I get such a letter
from the Principal, can you imagine how
I must have felt?

RANCHO
You took these pictures, Farhan?

FARHAN'S FATHER
He was obsessed with photography for
a while. Went around taking pictures
of animals. Wanted to be a wildlife
photographer. Son, what was your score
that year? Tell.

FARHAN
91%.

FARHAN'S FATHER
Hear that? Straight drop from 94% to
91%.

FARHAN'S FATHER
You find it funny?

RANCHO
No Sir, sorry. I'm just amazed at the
photos. Why make him an engineer ...?
Why not a wildlife photographer?

इसको तो वाइल्ड्लाइफ फोटोग्राफर बनना चाहिए।
बहुत आगे बढ़ेगा ...

Farhan's Father interrupts Rancho and speaks with barely contained fury.

फरहान के पिताजी
सुनिये ... हाथ जोड़ कर आपसे गुज़ारिश करता
हूँ, मेरे बेटे का प्रयुचर बरबाद मत कीजिए।

Unaware of the tension within the group,
Farhan's Mother comes up to the boys,
smiling warmly.

फरहान की माताजी
बच्चों, खाना लग गया। आ जाओ।

फरहान
हाँ चल ना, खाते हैं।

As the visibly relieved boys start moving
towards the dining area, Farhan's Father
steps in front of Rancho and places a
restraining hand on his shoulder.

फरहान के पिताजी
अगली बार आओगे तो खाना ज़रूर खाके
जाना।

INT. / EXT. RAJU'S HOUSE –
NIGHT

फरहान (V.O.)
अब्बा ने तो खाना दिया नहीं ... अब हम अपना
भूखा पेट भरने और डांट का कोटा पुरा करने,
राजू के घर पहुँचें।

The images on screen turn black and white.
Raju's one-room home is in the low-income

FARHAN'S FATHER

Enough! I humbly request you – don't
ruin my son's future.

FARHAN'S MOTHER

Food's on the table, boys.

FARHAN

C'mon, let's eat

FARHAN'S FATHER

If you ever visit again, do eat with us.

FARHAN

Dad denied us a meal ... So, to fill our
bellies with food ... and ears with more
reprimands, we reached Raju's house.

housing sector of the city. Inside the house, his paralysed father occupies the only bed. At the cooking stove, his Mother coughs incessantly. And his sister, KAMMO, sits at the window, staring at nothing.

The sofa has exposed springs and a strategically placed bowl catches the water leaking from the roof.

फरहान (V.O.)

राजू का घर 1950s की ब्लैक एण्ड व्हाइट फिल्मों की याद दिलाता था। एक छोटा सा कमरा जिसमें एक पैरालाइज्ड बाप, एक खाँसती हुई माँ और एक विनब्याही बहन। सोफे पे खिले हुए स्प्रिंग और छत से 24 अवर्स रनिंग वाटर। माँ स्कूल से रिटायर्ड थीं और ज्यादातर टायर्ड रहती थीं। बाप किसी ज़माने में पोस्टमास्टर थे, परैलिसिस के बाद बॉडी आधी बन्द हो गई और सैलरी पूरी ... और बहन ...

The trio sits on the floor with plates, waiting to be served their meal. Raju's Mother starts making *rotis*.

राजू की माताजी अट्टाईस की हो गई है कम्मो। मारुति 800 मांगते हैं दहेज में। अरे तू पढ़ेगा लिखेगा नहीं तो शादी कैसे होगी इसकी?

Kammo starts serving the food to the boys.

कम्मो
भिन्डी लीजिये ना।

राजू की माताजी पता है तुझे, भिन्डी बारह रुपये किलो हो गई है। और गोभी दस की!

FARHAN

Raju's house was straight out of a '50s black and white film. A small, dingy room, a paralysed father, a coughing mother and an unwed sister. A sofa sprouting springs and a 24-hour water supply from the leaking roof. His mother was a retired school teacher and a tireless complainer. His father was once a postmaster. Paralysis shut down his body partly – and his salary completely. And the sister ...

RAJU'S MOTHER

Kammo's turned 28. They demand a Maruti 800 in dowry. If you don't study and earn, how will she marry?

KAMMO
Some lady's finger?

RAJU'S MOTHER

Lady's finger is now Rs. 12/ per kilo, cauliflower is Rs. 10/.

Rancho and Farhan exchange a look.

राजू की माताजी
लूट मची है सारे देश में! और उसपर तेरी
ऐसी चिट्ठियाँ आएंगी कॉलेज से, तो बता हम
खायेंगे क्या!

राजू
(*embarrassed*)
माँ ...

Kammo ladles some cottage cheese on to
Rancho's plate.

कम्मो
पनीर लेंगे?

राजू की माताजी
पनीर तो बेटा कुछ दिनों में इत्ती-इत्ती थालियों
में सुनार की दुकान में बिकेगा ...

Rancho and Farhan stiffen with
discomfort.

कम्मो
पनीर दूँ?

फरहान
नहीं, नहीं, बस बस, थैंक यू।

राजू
मां तू रहने दे ना अभी, ये क्या ...

राजू की माताजी
ठीक है भाई, चुप हो जाती हूँ।

A beat.

राजू की माताजी
ये अच्छा है – बच्चों के लिये कमाओ, नौकरानी
की तरह काम करो और उसके बाद मौन व्रत

RAJU'S MOTHER

It's daylight robbery! What will we eat if
we get warnings from your college?

RAJU
Mom!

KAMMO
Cottage cheese?

RAJU'S MOTHER
Cottage cheese should be sold at the
jewellers, in velvet pouches.

KAMMO
Cottage cheese?

FARHAN
No, no, it's ok. Thank you.

RAJU
Mom, please.

RAJU'S MOTHER
Alright, I'll shut up.

RAJU'S MOTHER
Earn for the family, slave like a maid
and then take the vow of silence. If not

रखो। अरे घर की समस्या है तो बेटे को नहीं बताऊंगी तो और किसे बताऊंगी? उसके दोस्तों को?

Rancho and Farhan, about to take their first bites, stop. Raju, fed up of the whining, pushes away his plate and walks out in a huff.

फरहान
ए राजू!

with my son, with whom do I share my woes – his friends?

FARHAN
Hey Raju.

Raju's Mother starts crying.

Rancho and Farhan look nonplussed, food morsels still in their raised hands, inches away from their mouths.

फरहान (V.O.)
बड़ी दुविधा थी। दोस्त को सम्भालते की दोस्त की मां के आंसू पोछते। हमने सोचा हयो यार, मटर पनीर पे कान्सनट्रेट करो।

FARHAN
We were in a huge dilemma. Do we comfort our friend or console his mom? Screw it, we thought, let's focus on the cottage cheese.

They put the food into their mouths and start chewing.

Raju's Father starts making small, moaning sounds.

Raju's Mother, still weepy, leans over and scratches his chest with her rolling pin. Rancho and Farhan stop chewing, their mouths agape with shock.

राजू की माताजी
इनकी एग्जीमा की क्रीम भी अब पचपन रुपये की आती है।

RAJU'S MOTHER
Even his eczema cream costs Rs. 55/ now.

She continues making *rotis* with her rolling pin. A hair, fresh off her husband's eczema-infected chest, gets rolled into the dough. Farhan starts retching.

राजू की माताजी
और रोटी दूँ बेटा?

RAJU'S MOTHER
Another *roti*?

Rancho and Farhan decline hurriedly and emphatically.

फरहान / रैन्चो
नहीं नहीं आंटी। बस, हो गया, पेट भर गया।

FARHAN / RANCHO
No, thank you. We're through.

EXT. ROADSIDE – MOMENTS
LATER

The images on screen return to colour. Rancho, Farhan and Raju are walking down a street. Rancho suddenly starts laughing.

रैन्चो
भिन्डी ... बारह रुपये की ...

RANCHO
Lady's finger for Rs. 12/.

Farhan joins Rancho.

फरहान
गोभी दस की ...

FARHAN
Cauliflower for Rs. 10/.

Raju gets angry.

राजू
अरे कम से कम खाना ऑफर तो किया। तेरे भुखड़ बाप जैसा नहीं। हिटलर कुरेशी।

RAJU
At least you were offered a meal. Unlike your sadistic dad ... 'Hitler' Qureshi!

फरहान
हाँ हाँ, तेरी मां तो मदर टेरेसा हैं! खुजली वाली रोटी खिला रही थी।

FARHAN
And your mom is Mother Teresa ... Feeding us 'eczema *roti*'!

Raju grabs Farhan's collar. Rancho intervenes.

राजू
मेरी मां को लेके मज़ाक नहीं करने का!

फरहान
छोड़ ना यार राजू।

रैन्चो
राजू! छोड़ यार तुम लोग क्या झगड़ा कर रहे हो! भूख लगी है यार। कहीं बाहर चलते हैं, खाना खाने के लिए।

फरहान
मन्थ-एन्ड है यार। पैसा क्या इसकी मदर टेरेसा देगी?

रैन्चो
ओए खाना खाने के लिए पैसे नहीं लगते, यूनिफॉर्म लगती है, यूनिफॉर्म।

Rancho points towards a brightly decorated wedding venue.

रैन्चो
वो देख।

Rancho's eyes dance with childish mischief.

रैन्चो
चल!

फरहान
चल ...

As always, Farhan follows Rancho enthusiastically and Raju follows them both reluctantly.

RAJU
Don't poke fun at my mom!

FARHAN
Enough, Raju.

RANCHO
I'm famished. Let's eat out.

FARHAN
It's month end. Who'll pay? His Mother Teresa?

RANCHO
To eat out, you don't need money. Just a uniform.

RANCHO
Look ...

RANCHO
C'mon!

FARHAN
Come ...

EXT. GATE, WEDDING VENUE –
CONTINUOUS

The boys enter the wedding wearing pink *pagdis* and carrying white envelopes. They greet the hosts at the gate with enthusiastic familiarity.

रैन्चो / फरहान
नमस्ते, नमस्ते।

RANCHO / FARHAN
Good evening, good evening.

रैन्चो
ओह अंकल!

RANCHO
Oh, Uncle!

INT. HALL, WEDDING VENUE –
CONTINUOUS

The three friends sit at a table. Rancho hails a waiter.

रैन्चो
अरे सुन, तीन लार्ज वोडका लेके आ।

RANCHO
Three large vodkas.

फरहान
हॉफ सोडा, हॉफ पानी।

FARHAN
Half soda, half water.

Raju glances around nervously.

राजू
यार मरवाओगे यार तुम लोग।

RAJU
If we're caught, we're dead.

रैन्चो
(*to the waiter*)
और स्टार्टर्स में क्या है?

RANCHO
What's for starters?

The waiter offers Rancho the snacks he's carrying.

फरहान
यार जो भी है, दो-दो प्लेट ले आ।

FARHAN
Get double portions.

Instead of picking a snack or two, Rancho relieves the waiter of his entire tray of snacks.

रैन्चो
और ये छोड़ दे। और म्यूजिक चेंज कर यार
— कुछ गज़ल वज़ल लगा।

A pompous, nasal voice carries across to them. They look in its direction. And see the flashily dressed SUHAS holds up PIA's wrist in indignation. Pia's back is to the boys.

SUHAS (O.S.)
Pia, what the hell!

Suhas's tone becomes condescending.

सुहास
ये क्या पहना है? ब्लडी ऐटीन्थ सेन्चुरी की
वॉच। पिया, लोग क्या बोलेंगे, सुहास की
फ्रियान्सी को देखो, डॉक्टर बनने वाली है, पर
दो सौ रुपये की घड़ी पहनती है। प्लीज़ टेक
इट ऑफ़। थैंक यू।

Rancho looks on, amused. Before Pia can respond to Suhas, Suhas is accosted by a jewel-bedecked, perfectly coiffed, distant AUNT of his.

AUNTY
Hi, handsome.

SUHAS
Hey, Aunty, you're looking good.

AUNTY
Don't miss my set, darling!

RANCHO
Leave this here and start some peppy
music.

SUHAS
Why're you wearing this ancient piece
of junk? What'll people say – "Suhas
fiancée ... a doctor in the making, wearing
a cheap, 200-rupee watch!" Please take it
off. Thank you.

SUHAS
Rubies?

आंटी
मेंडाले से हैं।

सुहास
मेंडाले, वॉव।

आंटी
हे ल्येट्स गो मीट डेविड, चलो तुम्हें मिलाती
हैं।

SUHAS
Of course ... Of course.

Before leaving with his Aunt, Suhas turns to Pia and indicates his watch, reminding her of his instructions.

A gleam in his eyes, Rancho gets up from his table. Armed with a bouquet of flowers, he taps Pia on the shoulder.

RANCHO
Excuse me.

Pia turns around to face him.

PIA
Yes?

Rancho offers her the flowers. She accepts, with a gracious smile, holding the flowers in one hand, a drink in the other.

RANCHO
Flowers. May I take the glass?

AUNTY
From Mandalay.

SUHAS
Mandalay ... Wow!

AUNTY
Hey, let's go meet David.

Rancho gently extracts from her hand the glass with her drink in it. Pia is taken aback.

पिया
क्यों?

PIA
Why?

रैन्चो
आप ग्लास फेंक के मारेंगी, मेरा सर फट जायेगा।

RANCHO
So you don't break it on my head.

पिया
मैं आपको क्यों मारूंगी?

PIA
Why would I do that?

रैन्चो
क्योंकि मैं आपको थोड़ी सी फ्री एडवाइज़ देने वाला हूँ।

RANCHO
For the free advice I'll now impart.

पिया
(*curiously*)
क्या?

PIA
What?

Rancho points towards Suhas.

रैन्चो
उस गधे से कभी शादी मत करिए।

RANCHO
Don't marry that ass.

Pia's smile fades.

PIA
(*coldly*)
Excuse me?

रैन्चो
वो आदमी नहीं, प्राइस टैग है, प्राइस टैग।

RANCHO
He's not a human being, he's a price tag.

पिया
Listen ...

रैन्चो

ज़िन्दगी भर आपको अलग अलग प्रोडक्ट्स के दाम बता बता के पका देगा।

With increasing incredulity and anger, Pia tries to get a word in edgeways.

पिया

Hello!

रैन्चो

आपकी लाइफ़ बर्बाद हो जायेगी, यूअर फ्यूचर विल बी फिनिश़ड। डेमो दूँ? उसके जूते कितने के हैं, पता करूँ? मैं नहीं पूछूँगा। वो खुद बतायेगा। जस्ट सी। होल्ड।

Before Pia can object, Rancho hands her drink back to her and walks off, towards Suhas. Despite herself, Pia watches, fascinated.

Rancho waylays a waiter, lifts a bowl of mint chutney from his tray, and gestures to him to follow him. He then walks by Suhas, and, with a nimble flick of his wrist, empties the bowl on his shoes. Pia gasps in shock. As Rancho strolls on unnoticed, the waiter tries to make a quick getaway.

AUNTY

Oh my God!

सुहास

(*to the waiter*)

हे ... हे ... हे! क्या! अरे क्या किया भाई? अरे तीन सौ डॉलर के शूज़ हैं! पुदीने की चटनी ऑन माइ 300-डॉलर शूज़।

RANCHO

He'll turn your life into a nightmare of brands and prices.

RANCHO

He'll ruin your life. Your future will be finished. Want a demonstration? Shall I find out the price of his shoes? I won't ask. He'll announce it himself. Just see. Hold.

SUHAS

What the hell ... Mint chutney on my \$300 shoes!

As Suhas has a meltdown, a smug Rancho walks back to Pia.

रैन्चो

भाग लो। फ्री एडवाइस है। लेना है तो लो नहीं तो जाने दो।

Rancho walks away.

Suhas continues bawling over his ruined Italian shoes.

SUHAS

Genuine Italian leather – hand stitched!

Pia walks up to a MAN and taps him on the shoulder.

The man turns. It's Viru Sahastrabuddhe.

पिया

डैड, ये आपके गेस्ट हैं?

The Director looks in the direction she's pointed in. And sees Rancho, Farhan and Raju piling food into their plates from the buffet.

डाइरेक्टर

(*baffled*)

ये तो मेरे स्टूडन्ट्स हैं। ये यहाँ क्या कर रहे हैं?

The Director makes as if to move towards them. Pia stops him. She has a look of glee and resolution on her face.

पिया

एक सेकेण्ड, डैड।

RANCHO

Run for your life! It's free advice. Take it or leave it.

PIA

Dad, are they your guests?

DIRECTOR

My students. What're they doing here?

PIA

Hold on, Dad.

Typical, hungry hostel residents, the boys keep adding to the mounds of food in their plates, discussing the spread reverentially.

रैन्चो
यस छोले बहुत अच्छे लग रहे हैं यार — स्मेलिंग
वैरी गुड यार।

RANCHO
These chick peas smell great.

फरहान
अबे, पूरी के लिए जगह नहीं है।

FARHAN
No room for *puri*.

रैन्चो
एडजैस्ट कर लेना साइड में।

RANCHO
Just pile it on.

फरहान
अच्छा ...!

FARHAN
Ok ...!

Pia appears before them.

PIA
Hi!

रैन्चो
(*pleasantly surprised*)
हे! हाय!

RANCHO
Hey!

पिया
आपने मेरी आंखे खोल दी। थैंक यू सो मच।

PIA
That was an eye-opener. Thank you so much.

The Director walks up from the back and stands behind the trio.

रैन्चो
ओह हो हो हो! अरे, ऐसी क्या बात है, वो तो मेरा फर्ज था।

RANCHO
It was my moral responsibility.

PIA
Can I ask you for little more help?

रैन्चो
या, या

पिया
मेरे डैड सुहास के साथ ये एंगेज्मन्ट तोड़ने नहीं
देगे। आप इतना अच्छा एक्सप्लेन करते हैं, अगर
आप उनको भी एक डेमो दे दें तो...

रैन्चो
हाँ हाँ क्यों नहीं क्यों नहीं डेमो देगे। राजू
चटनी दे।

राजू
हाँ।

PIA
You're really sweet.

रैन्चो
अरे! कहाँ है डैडी आपके?

पिया
बिल्कुल आपके पीछे।

रैन्चो
ओह!

The boys turn around – and freeze in shock.
The Director regards them icily. In a reflex
action their hands go over their hearts and
they start mumbling.

राजू / रैन्चो / फरहान
ऑल इज़ वेल ... ऑल इज़ वेल।

Thoroughly enjoying Rancho's discomfiture,
Pia speaks close to his ear.

RANCHO
Yes, yes.

PIA
Dad won't let me break off this engagement.
You explain so well. Can you give him a
demo too? Certainly.

RANCHO
Certainly. Raju, the mint chutney.

RAJU
Yes.

RANCHO
Where is your daddy?

PIA
Right behind you.

RANCHO
Oh!

RAJU / RANCHO / FARHAN
Aal izz well ... aal izz well.

पिया
भाग लो। फ्री एडवाइज़ है। लेना है तो लो
नहीं तो जाने दो।

डाइरेक्टर
तुम लोग यहाँ क्या कर रहे हो?

Rancho springs into action. He takes out
the white envelope from his pocket.

रैन्चो
सर ... लिफाफा देके आते हैं सर, स्टेज पे।

Pia snatches the envelope from Rancho's
hand.

पिया
मुझे दे दो। मेरी बहन की शादी है।

Reeling from this new blow, Rancho looks
from Pia to the Director to the bride on
stage.

रैन्चो
ओह! बहन! सर, आपकी टोटल कितनी बेटियां
हैं सर?

Pia tears open the envelope and holds
it up, shaking it out. Nothing comes
out.

पिया
खाली है!

रैन्चो
खाली? तूने डाला नहीं, राजू ... फरहान ...

PIA
Run for your life! It's free advice. Take it
or leave it.

DIRECTOR
What're you doing here?

RANCHO
We'll hand these gifts to the couple.

PIA
I'll do that for you. It's my sister's
wedding.

RANCHO
Oh sister! Sir, how many daughters do
you have?

PIA
Empty. No gift cheques.

RANCHO
(feigning innocence)
Forgot the cheques, Raju ... Farhan?

Ignoring this feeble attempt at deception, Pia breaks in, smiling sweetly, savouring her revenge.

पिया

वैसे हमने तो आपको बुलाया नहीं। आप शायद लड़के वालों के तरफ से होंगे?

रैन्चो

नहीं सर ... हम ऐक्चवली साइन्स की तरफ से हैं सर, साइन्स की तरफ से।

डाइरेक्टर

कैसे? कैन यू एक्सप्लेन?

पिया

डैड ये एक्सप्लेन बहुत अच्छा करते हैं। अभी डेमो देंगे। दो ना!

रैन्चो

सर ऐक्चवली दिल्ली में इलैक्ट्रिसिटी बहुत जाती है सर और शादी में बड़ी प्रोबलम होती है सर, उसकी वजह से। तो मैंने सोचा की एक ऐसा इनवर्टर बनाऊं जो शादी में आई हुई गाड़ियों की बैट्रीज़ से पावर ले सर।

डाइरेक्टर

अच्छा।

पिया

वाँव। तो बना दिया इनवर्टर?

Rancho glares at Pia.

रैन्चो

सर, डिज़ाइन रेडी है।

The Director extends his hand for the design.

PIA

We didn't invite you. You must be from the groom's side.

RANCHO

No Sir, we're here as the emissaries of science.

DIRECTOR

How? Can you explain?

PIA

Dad, he explains superbly. I'm sure he'll give us a demo. Won't you?

RANCHO

Well, Delhi has plenty of power cuts that ... disrupt wedding celebrations. So I thought of making an inverter that ... draws power from guests' cars.

DIRECTOR

I see.

PIA

Wow. So where's the inverter?

RANCHO

Sir, the design is ready.

रैन्चो
डिज़ाइन कहाँ है ... फरहान

RANCHO
Where's the design, Farhan?

Everyone looks at Farhan.

FARHAN
Hmm?

रैन्चो
डिज़ाइन दिया था ना तुझे?

RANCHO
I gave you the design?

Farhan points towards Raju.

फरहान
ओह – मैंने राजू को दिया था।

FARHAN
I gave it to Raju.

All turn to look at Raju now.

रैन्चो
राजू डिज़ाइन?

RANCHO
Raju, design?

In response, Raju lets out a loud,
involuntary burp.

रैन्चो
सर, ऐक्चवली डिज़ाइन छोड़िये ना, सर। सर, मैं
आपको डाइरेक्ट इनवर्टर बना के दिखाता हूँ।

RANCHO
Never mind the design. I'll make the inverter
and show you.

डाइरेक्टर
तुम सिर्फ बेवकूफ बना सकते हो। इनवर्टर
नहीं।

DIRECTOR
You can only invent stories, not an
inverter.

रैन्चो
नहीं सर, सर मैं आपको इनवर्टर ज़रूर बना के
दिखाऊंगा, सर। आइ प्रोमिस और, और उसको
आपका नाम दूंगा सर। क्योंकि ऑफ्टर ऑल
आपकी बेटी की शादी में इनवैन्ट हुआ है। तो,
इट विल बी ऐन आनर

RANCHO
I'll make one, I promise. And I'll name
it after you. After all, it was invented ...
at your daughter's wedding. So it'll be an
honour. ...

The Director cuts Rancho short.

डाइरेक्टर

फरहान। राजू आप दोनों से कल मैं ऑफिस में मिलना चाहूँगा।

DIRECTOR

Farhan, Raju. I'll see you in my office tomorrow ...

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, ICE –
NEXT MORNING

Faces pinched with anxiety, eyes downcast, Farhan and Raju sit uncomfortably on their seats in the Director's office. Opposite them, the Director chomps on his afternoon meal, never taking his gaze off them.

राजू

(bravely)

सर आपका पर प्लेट कौस्त कितना था सर? हम लोग भर देंगे सर... इन्स्टालमेन्ट्स में सर।

RAJU

Sir, what was the cost per plate? We'll reimburse you ... in installments.

In response, the Director snaps a food morsel off his fork and bites down fiercely.

फरहान

और आगे से हम किसी शादी में नहीं घुसेंगे सर।

FARHAN

We'll never gate-crash a wedding again..

राजू

हाँ सर, मैं तो अपनी शादी में भी नहीं घुसूँगा।

RAJU

Not even my own.

फरहान

इनफैक्ट सर, मैं शादी ही नहीं करूँगा।

(looks at Raju)

और ये भी नहीं करेगा सर।

FARHAN

In fact, I won't even marry. Nor will he.

राजू

(glaring at Farhan)

हाँ हाँ सर... मैं... मैं भी नहीं करूँगा सर।

RAJU

Uh ... right. No marriage.

डाइरेक्टर
तुम्हारे मां बाप को भी शादी नहीं करनी चाहिए
थी।

Finally, having finished his meal, he lays
down his fork and knife.

डाइरेक्टर
इस दुनिया में दो इंडियट्स कम पैदा होते।

He dabs his mouth with a napkin and
gets up. Farhan and Raju also start to
rise.

डाइरेक्टर
सिट!

The Director walks to the portable white
board in his office. He wheels it up to
the boys.

DIRECTOR
Pay attention.

He starts writing on the board. Farhan
and Raju exchange a puzzled look. The
Director finishes writing and turns. On
the board is written – “25000000”.

डाइरेक्टर
ये हैं रणछोड़दास के पिताजी की मंथली इनकम।
ढाई करोड़ रुपये।

Farhan and Raju gape in surprise. The
Director wipes out two zeros from the
figure. The figure on the board now reads,
“250000.”

DIRECTOR
Your parents shouldn't have married
either.

DIRECTOR
The world would have two less idiots
to feed.

DIRECTOR
Sit!

DIRECTOR
This is Ranchhoddas's father's monthly
income.

डाइरेक्टर

अब इसमें से एक या दो जीरो निकाल दो तो उससे कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ता।

He wipes out another zero from the figure. The figure on the board reads, "25000."

डाइरेक्टर

लेकिन एक और जीरो कम हो जाए ... तो आइ वुड वरी अ लिटिल। यह तुम्हारे पिताजी की महीने की इनकम है मि. फरहान?

फरहान

या या, यस सर।

The Director wipes out another zero. The figure on the board reads, "2500."

डाइरेक्टर

और अब एक और जीरो कम करदो ... तो ये तुम्हारी फैमिली इनकम है मिस्टर राजू रस्तोगी ... बिग रीज़न टू वरी।

The Director faces the boys, his hands behind his back.

डाइरेक्टर

वीरू सहस्रबुद्धे की बात मानों और अपना कमरा चेंज करो। चतुर रामालिंगम के साथ शिफ्ट हो जाओ। इग्ज़ैम आ रहे हैं। उस छाँछड़ के साथ रहोगे तो कभी पास नहीं होंगे।

The clock strikes two. The door opens and Govind walks in with a shaving kit.

The Director removes his spectacles and tie and loosens his shirt from the collar. He lies down on his couch and closes his eyes. Govind places the needle on

DIRECTOR

Couple of zeroes less, and it's still a sizeable income.

DIRECTOR

But erase another zero, and I would worry a little. Isn't that your father's income, Farhan?

FARHAN

Yes, Sir.

DIRECTOR

Now take away another zero ... and that's your family income, Raju Rastogi ... big reason to worry.

DIRECTOR

Take my advice and shift into Chatur Ramalingam's room. Exams are on you head. Stay with Chanchad and you're sure to fail.

the gramophone record and, as opera music fills the room, he starts lathering the Director's face.

The boys stare, open-mouthed, at this elaborate ritual.

The Director holds up a restraining finger to Govind, opens his eyes and looks at Farhan and Raju.

डाइरेक्टर
शेव करानी है?

DIRECTOR
Want a shave?

फरहान
नहीं सर!

FARHAN
No Sir.

DIRECTOR
Then get lost!

The boys scurry out.

INT. TOILET, HOSTEL, ICE – DAY

Rancho, Farhan and Raju sit on commodes in their respective stalls.

रैन्चो
राजू तू समझा कर। वायरस हमारे साथ गेम खेल रहा है – डिवाइड एण्ड रूल। अरे तू डर मत यार।

RANCHO
Raju, don't worry. This is Virus's move to split us. Divide and rule.

राजू
डरना पड़ता है। मुझे अच्छी नौकरी के लिये अच्छे ग्रेड्स चाहिये। और ग्रेड्स उसके हाथ में है। तेरे जैसा रईस बाप नहीं है मेरा, जिसके खर्च पर पूरी ज़िन्दगी निकाल लूंगा।

RAJU
I have to worry. He grades us, and I need good grades for a good job. Unlike you, I don't have a rich dad I can live off.

फरहान
ऐ राजू, तू क्या बकवास कर रहा है यार?

FARHAN
What nonsense are you speaking, Raju?

INT. BATHROOM, HOSTEL ICE –
CONTINUOUS

The trio shaves at the wash basins.

राजू

(yelling)

जो बोलेगा हम वही करेंगे क्या? ऑल इज़
वेल ... ऑल इज़ वेल ... । तू होगा चमचा
इसका, मैं नहीं।

फरहान

ए अब तू लाइन क्रॉस कर रहा है।

राजू

नहीं मैं बीच में लाइन बना रहा हूँ। क्योंकि मुझे
मेरी फैमिली को सपोर्ट करना है।

A beat.

राजू

(overcome with emotion)

मां की आधी सैलरी बाबा की दवाइयों में जाती
है। कम्मो की शादी नहीं हो रही क्योंकि लड़केवालों
को मारूति 800 चाहिए। पिछले पांच सालों में
मां ने एक साड़ी तक नहीं खरीदी।

फरहान

यार अब तू आरग्यूमेन्ट में मां की साड़ी घुसाएगा
तो फिर हम लोग क्या बोल सकते हैं?

रैन्चो

वैसे एक साल में कितनी साड़ियां रिज़नेबल
होती हैं?

Rancho and Farhan break into a laugh.
Raju doesn't appreciate it.

राजू

मां को लेके मज़ाक नहीं, हँ।

RAJU

Must we follow all his hogwash? "Aal
izz well"... I won't be his flunky ... like
you.

FARHAN

You're crossing the line ...

RAJU

No, I'm drawing one. I have a family to
support.

RAJU

Dad's medicines swallow up Mom's
pension. My sister can't marry because they
want a car in dowry. Mom hasn't bought
a single saree in five years.

FARHAN

Now don't get your mom's wardrobe into
the debate.

RANCHO

By the way, how many sarees per annum
is reasonable?

RAJU

Hey ... no wisecracks about Mom.

Rancho walks up to Raju.

रैन्चो

अरे राजू, हम लोग पढ़ेंगे। जी लगा के पढ़ेंगे। लेकिन सिर्फ इग्ज़ैम पास के लिए नहीं। किसी महापुरुष ने कहा है कि कामयाब होने के लिए नहीं, काबिल होने के लिए पढ़ो। सकसैस के पीछे मत भागो। एक्सीलैन्स, एक्सीलैन्स का पीछा करो। सकसैस झक मारके तुम्हारे पीछे आयेगी।

राजू

किस महापुरुष ने कहा है? बाबा रणछोड़दास ने?

Farhan chuckles. Rancho nods, merriment dancing in his eyes.

राजू

मरो तुम लोग।

Raju walks away, angrily. Farhan runs after him.

फरहान

अरे, अरे यार राजू, टैनशन मत ले यार। हम लोग टॉप करेंगे ना यार। नथिंग इज़ इमपॉसिबल।

Raju pulls out the tube of toothpaste from Farhan's t-shirt pocket. He squeezes out the entire tube on Farhan's palm.

राजू

नथिंग इज़ इमपॉसिबल, ना? ले डाल दे इसको वापस अन्दर।

Raju walks away.

Farhan looks on helplessly.

RANCHO

We'll study with all our heart, but not just for grades. To quote a Wise One – “Study to be accomplished, not affluent. Follow excellence. And success will chase you, pants down!”

RAJU

Which Wise One says this? His Holiness Guru Ranchhoddas?

RAJU

Go rot in the bogs!

FARHAN

Raju, don't stress. We'll top our class. Nothing is impossible.

RAJU

Nothing is impossible? Shove this back into the tube.

EXT. CORRIDOR, HOSTEL, ICE – DAY

Raju, his trunk and idols of gods in hand, comes out of the room he shares with Rancho and Farhan. He walks down the corridor and enters Chatur's room.

फरहान (V.O.)

राजू ने ट्रेन का डिब्बा बदल दिया। अब वो चतुर के साथ सफर करने निकल पड़ा। हिन्दी का सफर नहीं, अंग्रेज़ी का सफर। स-अ-फ-फ-अ-र।

INT. CHATUR'S ROOM, HOSTEL, ICE – NIGHT

Chatur paces his room, memorizing loudly from a textbook. From time to time, he tilts a bottle of pills into his mouth. Raju studies at his desk and the third roommate is sprawled on his bed.

फरहान (V.O.)

चतुर को सब साइलेन्सर बुलाते थे। माइन्ड को शार्प करने के लिए कोई बंगाली बाबा का चूरन खाता था, फिर साइलैन्टली गरम हवायें छोड़ता था।

A foul smell assails the room. Raju and the boy on the bed jump up and try to get as far away from Chatur as possible.

चतुर

आइ डिड नौट डू इट ... राजू?

Chatur continues cramming, unfazed.

फरहान (V.O.)

और इल्ज़ाम हमेशा दूसरों पे ठोकता था।

FARHAN

Raju got onto another train. His travails with Chatur began. Yes, I mean travails, not travels.

FARHAN

Chatur was called 'Silencer'. To sharpen his memory, he popped pills from a local quack. And then let off silent ... but lethal farts.

CHATUR

I didn't do it ... Raju?

FARHAN

He always blamed others for the output.

EXT. CORRIDOR, HOSTEL, ICE – NIGHT

Graffiti on Chatur's room door reads "GAS CHAMBER".

Chatur opens his door, looks around furtively, and then scurries out. He holds a pile of magazines in his hands.

फरहान (V.O.)

साइलेंसर दिन में अठारह घंटे रट्टे मारता था। और इग्जैम्स की रात दूसरों को पढ़ाई से डिस्ट्रेक्ट करता था।

Chatur starts sliding the magazines under the doors of the hostel rooms. They're porn magazines.

फरहान (V.O.)

उसका मानना था कि इग्जैम्स टॉप करने के दो ही तरीके हैं। या तो खुद के मार्क्स अच्छे लाओ या दूसरों के कम कराओ।

In their rooms, textbooks forgotten, students drool over the magazines.

Rancho sees Chatur in action, and frowns. And then, smiles slowly.

फरहान

रैन्चो ने साइलेंसर को सबक सिखाने का और राजू को बचाने का कम्बाइन्ड प्लान बनाया।

INT. LIBRARY, ICE – DAY

Chatur and the ICE librarian, DUBEY are sitting at the computer on the first floor of the library. Chatur types as Dubey dictates.

FARHAN

Silencer crammed 18 hours a day. On exam eve, he would distract others.

FARHAN

His belief – there are only two ways of topping. Elevate your own grades or lower your opponents' grades.

FARHAN

Rancho decided to subdue Silencer and rescue Raju ... with one master plan.

दूबे
हमारे डाइरेक्टर साहब ने यहाँ कई चमत्कार किये
हैं। चमत्कार का मतलब है ...

चतुर
मतलब नहीं चाहिए दूबेजी। मैं याद कर लेंगे।
आइ विल मेमोराइज़ इट।

दूबे
अरे रद्द पोपट।

Rancho watches, unseen. He turns from
them and makes an indication to someone,
miming a telephone receiver.

फरहान (V.O.)
टीचर्स डे पे इन्ट्रोडक्टरी स्पीच देने के लिए चतुर
को चुना गया था। उसने वायरस को इम्प्रेस
करने के लिए अपनी स्पीच लाइब्रेरियन दूबे से
शुद्ध हिन्दी में लिखवाई।

A phone rings at the library reception,
downstairs.

क्लर्क
हैल्लो। हाँ, बुलाता हूँ।
(*looking up at Chatur*)
चतुर, तुम्हारा फोन है।

Chatur gets up and runs down to take
the call.

चतुर
दूबेजी प्रिंटआउट अपने पास रखिए। मैं आती
हूँ।

दूबे
चलो भाई, ये भी काम करो इनका।

DUBEY
Our Director has unceasingly served ...
'Served' means ...

CHATUR
Damn the meaning, I'll memorize it.

DUBEY
Memorising parrot.

FARHAN
Chatur was the introductory speaker, at
the Teachers' Day function. To impress
Virus, he got his speech written by the
librarian ... in high-brow Hindi.

CLERK
Hello. Hold on.
Chatur, call for you.

CHATUR
Please collect the printout. I'll be right
back.

DUBEY
Oh ... the things I have to do ...

Dubey collects the printout from the printer.
As he's perusing it, Rancho hails him.

रैन्चो
अरे दूबेजी, आपको डाइरेक्टर साहब ने अभी
याद किया है।

RANCHO
Mr. Dubey, the Director was remembering
you.

दूबे
(*surprised*)
अच्छा।

DUBEY
Really?

रैन्चो
हाँ। अभी।

RANCHO
Yes. Just now.

Dubey hands over the printout of the
speech to Rancho and leaves hurriedly.

दूबे
अच्छा ठीक है, तुम ये चतुर को दे देना। मैं,
मैं आता हूँ।

DUBEY
I'll see him right away. Give this to
Chatur.

रैन्चो
हाँ।

RANCHO
Yes.

Rancho tears up the printout of the
speech.

Chatur reaches the reception and picks
up the phone receiver.

CHATUR
Hello! Hello!

FARHAN
Hello, Mr. Ramalingam?

Standing at a spot from where he can see
Chatur but Chatur cannot see him, Farhan
speaks to him on a cell phone.

चतुर
हाँ?

फरहान
जी मैं लाजपत नगर पुलिस स्टेशन से बोल रहा हूँ। आप उगान्डा से हैं?

CHATUR
Yes, Sir.

फरहान
ह...म। जी, आपकी जान को खतरा है।

CHATUR
What! How?

फरहान
मेरे इन्सट्रक्शन्स ध्यान से सुनिए, वरना कॉलेज के गेट के बाहर निकलते ही बीच रोड में आपकी मौत हो जाएगी।

चतुर
क्यों। क्या हुई?

Rancho works on the computer, Chatur and Dubey were on, moments ago. He alters key words in Chatur's speech.

फरहान (V.O.)
चतुर इस सदमे से रिकवर करता, उससे पहले रैनचो ने उसके स्पीच के चन्द शब्द बदल डाले। जैसे, 'चमत्कार' बन गया 'बलात्कार'।

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

Dubey enters the Director's office.

दूबे
आपने मुझे बुलाया, सर?

CHATUR
Yes?

FARHAN
I'm calling from the police station. Are you from Uganda?

FARHAN
Your life is in danger.

FARHAN
Listen carefully, or else you'll get killed as soon as you step out of the college gate.

CHATUR
Why? What happened?

FARHAN
While Chatur was kept engaged, Rancho altered a few words in his speech, for e.g., 'served' became 'screwed'.

DUBEY
Yes, Sir?

डाइरेक्टर
(*astonished*)
कौन हो तुम?

DIRECTOR
Who are you?

दूबे
दूबे। लाइब्रेरियन। परमानेंट हूँ सर।

DUBEY
Dubey. Librarian. I'm permanent staff,
Sir.

DIRECTOR
(*sarcastically*)
Congratulations!

INT. LIBRARY, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

Farhan is still on the phone with Chatur.
He's running out of things to say.

फरहान
हाँ, एक मिनट, एक मिनट। कमिशनर साहब
का फोन है। होल्ड कीजिए।

FARHAN
Hold on a moment. The chief's on the
other line.

CHATUR
Excuse me, Sir!

Rancho has finished altering Chatur's
speech. He gives a print command for the
changed speech and goes to the printer
to collect it. Farhan rushes to him with
the cell phone, gesturing to him to speak
into it.

रैन्चो
हां, हैल्लो जी हाँ जी, मैं कहाँ था।

RANCHO
Yes ... so where was I?

चतुर
आपने बोला गेट के बाहर ... मेरी मौत ...

CHATUR
You said I may die outside the gate.

रैन्चो

हाँ। देखो जब तुम गेट के बाहर निकलोगे तब सामने तुम्हें एक सिग्नल दिखेगा। ट्रैफिक सिग्नल।

चतुर

ट्रैफिक सिग्नल। हाँ। ओके। ओके।

रैन्चो

जब वो सिग्नल लाल हो जायेगा, यानी की रेड, तब सारी गाड़ियाँ रुक जायेंगी ...

चतुर

ओके ... ओके। फिर?

रैन्चो

तुम ध्यान से रोड क्रॉस करना। वो क्या है ना बेटा, आजकल ट्रैफिक बहुत ज्यादा है। तो कभी गाड़ी-वाड़ी से टकरा गये तो मौत हो सकती है।

Farhan stifles his laughter.

CHATUR

What nonsense! I know that!

रैन्चो

ओह, यू नो दैट। वेरी गुड बेटा। तब तो तुम सेफ हो। शाबाश शाबाश!

Rancho hangs up. A baffled Chatur walks up to the first floor. He encounters Rancho and Farhan on the stairs.

रैन्चो

हे साइलेंसर, दूबे ने तेरे लिए दिया है।

Chatur snatches the printout from Rancho's hand.

RANCHO

Right. As you get out of the gate, you'll see a traffic signal.

CHATUR

Traffic signal. Ok. Ok.

RANCHO

When it turns red, all the cars will halt.

CHATUR

Ok ... Ok. Then?

RANCHO

Then cross the road with great caution. Because son, in rush hour if a car hits you, you're dead.

RANCHO

You know that? Excellent. Then you're safe my boy.

RANCHO

From the librarian, Silencer.

चतुर
यू डोन्ट कॉल मी दैट, छांछड़!

Rancho and Farhan charge out of the library, laughing, exhilarated.

फरहान
छांछड़!

They bump into Dubey, returning from the Director's office, and immediately sober up.

दूबे
अरे, डाइरेक्टर तो बोले, हमने नहीं बुलाया?

रैन्चो
बुलाया थोड़ी था दूबेजी। मैंने तो कहा याद किया।

The boys run off, trying not to laugh too loudly.

दूबे
याद किया? नालायकों!

INT. AUDITORIUM, ICE – DAY

Chatur, formally attired, walks onto stage to thundering applause.

The auditorium is packed with students, teachers and guests.

The Director sits with the Chief Guest, the Minister of Education, in the first row.

Rancho and Farhan sit together, eager with anticipation.

CHATUR
You don't call me that, Chanchad!

FARHAN
Chanchad!

DUBEY
Hey. The Director said he didn't call for me.

RANCHO
Who said 'called'? I just said he 'remembered' you.

DUBEY
Remembered? Rascals!

Chatur starts speaking into the mike, after the applause dies down.

चतुर
आदरणीय सभापति महोदय।

Dubey, sitting right behind the Director, gives Chatur an encouraging thumbs up.

चतुर
अतिथि विशेष शिक्षण मंत्री श्री आर. डी. त्रिपाठी जी, माननीय शिक्षकगण और मेरे प्यारे सहपाठियों। आज अगर आईसीई आसमान की बुलदियों को छू रहा है तो उसका श्रेय सिर्फ एक इन्सान को जाता है।
(*beaming at the Director*)
श्री। वीरू सहस्त्रबुद्धे!

Everyone applauds. Dubey taps the Director's shoulder.

दूबे
सर, बोल वो रहे हैं, पर शब्द हमारे हैं।

CHATUR
He's a great guy, really you are!

Rancho and Farhan get up from their seats and make their way to where Raju is. They sit down behind him.

चतुर
पिछले बत्तीस साल से इन्होंने निरन्तर, इस कॉलेज में, बलात्कार पे बलात्कार किये ...

The auditorium explodes with laughter and hooting. The Minister is in splits. The

CHATUR
Distinguished Mr. Chairperson.

CHATUR
Chief Guest, the Honorable Minister of Education, respected teachers and friends, if ICE has now soared beyond the stratosphere, the credit goes solely to Dr. Viru Sahastrabuddhe!

DUBEY
Sir, the voice is his but the words are mine.

CHATUR
For 32 years, he has unceasingly screwed students.

Director is shocked. Dubey looks stunned and uncomprehending.

रैन्चो

(explains to an astonished Raju)

इसका मतलब है चमत्कार पे चमत्कार किये हैं।

चतुर

उम्मीद है आगे भी करते रहेंगे।

The Minister guffaws loudly.

चतुर

हमें तो आश्चर्य होता है कि एक इन्सान अपने जीवन काल में इतनी बलात्कार कैसे कर सकता है।

The students, including Rancho, Farhan and Raju, howl in mirth. Encouraged, Chatur continues.

चतुर

इन्होंने कड़ी तपस्या से अपने आप को इस काबिल बनाया है। वक्त का सही उपयोग, घंटे का पूर्ण इस्तेमाल कोई इनसे सीखें। सीखें इनसे, सीखें!

The Director tries to get up but the Minister, roaring with laughter, holds him back.

As Chatur starts on the next line, the Director turns around to Dubey and gives him a murderous look.

Dubey frantically tries to mime his innocence.

RANCHO

This means he has pulled off one wonder after another.

CHATUR

I'm sure his endeavours will continue.

CHATUR

We are astounded at how one man, in one lifetime, can screw so many, so well.

CHATUR

With rigorous training, he's built up his stamina. He's spent every living minute just screwing. Let's replicate his methods.

चतुर

आज हम सब छात्र यहाँ हैं। कल देश विदेश में फैल जायेंगे, वादा है आपसे, जिस देश में होंगे वहाँ बलात्कार करेंगे।

The students hoot appreciatively. Rancho, Farhan and Raju clap enthusiastically. Chatur is on a high.

चतुर

आईसीई का नाम रौशन करेंगे।

CROWD

I-C-E ... I-C-E ... I-C-E

Millimeter stands next to some students, laughing loudly.

चतुर

दिखा देंगे सबको जो बलात्कार करने की क्षमता यहाँ के छात्रों में है वो संसार के किसी छात्र में नहीं। नो अदर छात्र, नो अदर छात्र!

Dubey has had enough. He gets up from his seat and heads for the stage.

चतुर

नो अदर छात्र, नो अदर छात्र!

Chatur laughs along with the crowd, thoroughly enjoying his new-found status. He waits until the auditorium quiets.

चतुर

आदरणीय मंत्रीजी, नमस्कार।

At the mention of his name, the Minister stiffens, suddenly wary.

CHATUR

Tomorrow ICE students will go across the globe. Wherever we go, we promise to screw.

CHATUR

We will make ICE proud.

CHATUR

We'll hoist this screw's flag all over the world. We'll show the world that our capacity to screw... cannot be matched by any student... anywhere on the planet.

CHATUR

No other student, no other student!

CHATUR

Mr. Minister. Good evening.

चतुर
आपने इस संस्थान को वो चीज़ दी जिसकी हमें
सख्त ज़रूरत थी।

रैन्चो
(*to Raju*)
धन।

चतुर
स्तन।

In the wings, Dubey slaps his forehead
in frustration.

The students go mad with delight.

Raju gapes, incredulous.

Dubey desperately tries to stop Chatur,
miming the meaning of *Sttan*.

दूबे
स्तन नहीं! स्तन माने

The indignant Minister turns towards
the Director.

मिनिस्टर
कैसी अपमानजनक बातें कर रहा है ये
लड़का।

चतुर
स्तन होता सभी के पास है। सब छुपा के रखते
हैं। देता कोई नहीं। हाँ हाँ!

The crowd agrees loudly, raucously.

मिनिस्टर
(*with mounting anger*)
अश्लील है ये लौंडा!

CHATUR
You have given this institution what it
sorely needs.

RANCHO
Booty, funds.

CHATUR
Bosom!

DUBEY
It's bosom, stupid. Bosom means ...

MINISTER
What nonsense! That's insulting.

CHATUR
Everyone has a bosom, but it remains
pocketed. No one offers it so readily!

MINISTER
Vulgar fellow!

चतुर
आपने अपना स्तन इस बलात्कारी पुरुष के हाथ
में दिया है।

More hoots and catcalls.

चतुर
अब देखिए ये कैसा इसका उपयोग करता है।

मिनिस्टर
सहस्रबुद्धे, इतनी बुद्धि नहीं है, तुम्हारे पास!

Furious, the Minister gets up and starts
walking out. The Director follows him.

मिनिस्टर
वेइज्जती के लिये बुलाया था तुमने यहाँ पे।

DIRECTOR
It's miscommunication.

मिनिस्टर
बत्तमीज़ कहीं के!

In the wings, Dubey faints.

Chatur gestures graciously to the clapping
and hooting crowd to settle down.

चतुर
इस स्वर्ण अवसर पर एक श्लोक याद आ
रहे हैं।

रैन्चो
सुन सुन अब अपने पादने की ताकत संस्कृत
में समझाएगा।

चतुर
उत्तमम् दाड़-दाड़-आंत पादम्!

CHATUR
You have generously offered your bosom
... to this relentless screwer.

CHATUR
Now see how he makes it grow.

MINISTER
Is this what you teach here, Director?

MINISTER
Had you invited me here to insult me?

MINISTER
Impertinent fool!

CHATUR
On this august occasion, here's a Sanskrit
verse

RANCHO
Listen to this – the might of his farting
in verse.

CHATUR
A good loud fart is honourable.

मिलिमिटर
पादम्? ओए साइलेन्सर!

चतुर
मध्यम् पादम् – थुचुक थुचुक।

रैन्चो
थुचुक थुचुक!

चतुर
कनिठतम् – तुडतुड्डी पादम् सुरसुरी – प्राण
गटकम्।

The Director runs onto the stage. He slaps Chatur on the back of his head, grabs him by the neck and shakes him. He then kicks him on his butt, driving him off the stage.

For the students this is the grand finale to an evening of entertainment. They throw handkerchiefs up in the air, rejoicing.

चतुर
आई ...! क्या हुआ, क्या हुआ सर!

DIRECTOR
Out!

Rancho and Farhan, traces of mirth still on their faces, speak to Raju.

फरहान
देख, बिना समझे रट्टा मारेगा तो यही होगा।
देख, देख, देखना!

रैन्चो
रट्टा मार के तू कॉलेज के चार साल तो अपनी
इज्जत बचा लेगा। लेकिन लाइफ के अगले चालीस
साल तेरा बलात्कार होता रहेगा, बलात्कार!

MILLIMETER
'Fart'? Go, Silencer!

CHATUR
A medium fart is tolerable.

RANCHO
Tolerable tolerable!

CHATUR
Softer windbreaks are terrible.

CHATUR
What did I do?

FARHAN
That's what mindless cramming does to
you.

RANCHO
Cramming may see you through four years
of college but it will 'screw' you for the
next 40 years!

Farhan laughs at the usage of the word. Raju, however, is all serious and cold again. Ignoring the other two boys, he gets up and leaves.

रैन्चो

अरे, अरे यार, इतना समझाया, समझता नहीं है!

RANCHO

He still doesn't get it

EXT. WATER TANK, ICE – LATER THAT NIGHT

Rancho and Farhan laugh as they go over the events in the auditorium.

फरहान

मध्यम् पादम् थुचुक थुचुक ... अनबिलीवल! तू तो पोयट है यार रैन्चो। हॉव डिड यु थिंक ऑफ दिस मैन!

FARHAN

'Medium fart is tolerable'... Unbelievable! You're a poet, Rancho. How did you think of this?

रैन्चो

क्या मज़ा आया यार। बिचारे को कुछ आइडिया नहीं था।

RANCHO

That was fun. He didn't know what hit him.

Chatur comes onto the terrace, swaying on his feet, drunk and dishevelled. He hurls a bottle at them, which smashes just missing their feet.

फरहान

ऐ तेरी...

RANCHO

Hey!

रैन्चो

ओए!

RANCHO

Oye!

Chatur trembles with anger and humiliation.

चतुर

यू स्वाइन्स। मैंने तुम्हारा क्या बिगाड़े है?

CHATUR

You swines. What did I ever do to you?

Rancho and Farhan try to lighten him up.

रैन्चो
सॉरी यार। पर्सनली मत ले यार।

चतुर
पर्सनली लूंगा। चतुर रामालिंगम ये इनसल्ट नहीं भूलूंगा। आई विल थिंक ऑफ इट ऐवरी मिनट। ऐवरी सेकेण्ड ऑफ माइ लाइफ।

रैन्चो
(*placatingly*)
यार, छोड़ ना यार, ऐक्चुअली क्या है, हम लोग राजू को डेमो दे रहे थे – कि रट्टा मार के मत पढ़ो। कुछ समझ के पढ़ो यार। साइन्स का मज़ा लूटो यार! ...

In a friendly gesture, Rancho puts his hand on Chatur's arm but Chatur shrugs it off viciously. Rancho backs away warily.

चतुर
मैं यहाँ मज़ा लूटने नहीं आया हूँ।

फरहान
तो क्या इज्जत लूटने आया है? साइन्स का बलात्कार करने आया है? थुचुक थुचुक...

Farhan and Rancho crack up again.

चतुर
हंसो... मेरे मैथड्स पे हंसो। एक दिन इन्हीं मैथड्स से मैं सकसैसफुल बनके दिखाऊंगा। फिर मैं हसूंगा – एण्ड तुम रोओगे।

रैन्चो
यार तू फिर गलत ट्रेन पकड़ रहा है। सकसैस

RANCHO
Sorry man. Don't take it personally.

CHATUR
I will. Chatur Ramalingam will never forget this insult. I'll think of it every minute, every second of my life.

RANCHO
Sorry man. That was a demo for Raju – don't cram blindly. Understand and enjoy the wonders of Science.

CHATUR
I'm not here to enjoy.

FARHAN
So you're here to screw science.

CHATUR
Laugh at my methods. But one day these methods will bring me success. That day I'll laugh and you'll cry.

RANCHO
You're on the wrong track again. Don't

के पीछे मत भाग। इतना अच्छा इंजिनियर बन की सकसैस तेरे पीछे भागे, यार।

चतुर

दीज़ आइडियाज़ डोन्ट वर्क इन द रीयल वर्ल्ड, छांछड़। तू तेरी ट्रेन पकड़, मैं मेरी ट्रेन पकड़ता हूँ। दस साल के बाद इसी स्टेशन पे वापस आयेंगे। आज ही के दिन। देखेंगे, कौन ज्यादा सकसैसफुल हूँ। तुम या मैं। हैं हिम्मत। हैं हिम्मत तो लगा बेट? बोल आयेगा? आयेगा? आयेगा?

Chatur lunges in their direction, towards the broken bottle on the ground. He picks up a shard of glass.

रैन्चो

क्या कर रहा है यार।

Chatur stumbles up to the partly constructed dome-like structure in the centre of the terrace.

रैन्चो

अरे संभल!

फरहान

क्या हो गया इसको।

With the glass shard, Chatur starts to scratch something into the wall of the dome. Rancho and Farhan watch, mystified.

रैन्चो

क्या लिख रहा है यार?

Chatur finishes writing and turns to the boys, his eyes filled with venom.

chase success. Become a good engineer and success will chase you.

CHATUR

These ideals don't work in the real world. You take your train, I'll take mine. Ten years from now, we'll meet at the same station. Same day. Same place. We'll see who's more successful you... or I. Have the balls? C'mon, bet! It's a challenge. Watch it!

RANCHO

What are you doing?

RANCHO

Watch it!

FARHAN

What has happened to him?

RANCHO

What's he writing?

चतुर
ये डेट भूलना मत।

CHATUR
Don't forget this date.

The date chiselled on the wall reads:
SEPT 5.

INT. WATCH SHOWROOM, MARKET
– NIGHT

An expensive new watch adorns Pia's wrist.
Pia looks embarrassed.

पिया
ऐसी एक्सपेंसिव गिफ्ट्स की मुझे आदत नहीं
है सुहास।

PIA
I'm not used to such expensive gifts,
Suhas.

सुहास
(*patronisingly*)
आदत डाल लो पिया।
यू आर गोना बी सुहास टंडनस वाइफ।
(*to the salesperson*)
वेयर इस दा बिल मैन?

Pia looks at her wrist, trying to get used
to the weight and feel of the watch.

She glances up – and sees Rancho and
Millimeter passing outside the watch
showroom. Her eyes narrow in sudden
anger.

PIA
I'll be back.

EXT. CORRIDOR, MARKET –
CONTINUOUS

Pia walks out of the watch showroom,
looking for Rancho. She spots him. Pushing
her way through the crowd of shoppers,

she reaches him and Millimeter as they walk on, their backs to her.

She grabs Rancho's shoulder and turns him around.

पिया

(*livid*)

स्पीच तुमने चेंज की थी?

PIA

You changed the speech?

रैन्चो

(*startled*)

हाँ?

RANCHO

What?

पिया

झूठ मत बोलना।

PIA

Don't lie.

रैन्चो

ओह ... हाँ।

RANCHO

Oh ... Yeah.

पिया

तुम्हें डेड से क्या प्रोबलम है।

PIA

What's your problem with Dad?

रैन्चो

मुझे कोई प्रोबलम नहीं हैं। मैं तो उनके नाम का इनवर्टर बना रहा हूँ। ये देखो!

RANCHO

I have no problem I'm making an inverter named after him.

Rancho points down to the box he is holding. It says – '*VIRUS INVERTER*'.

He realises his mistake and quickly tries to cover the lettering with his hand. But Pia has seen it. She grabs the box from his hands and flings it on the ground.

रैन्चो

अरे ...!

RANCHO

Look ... Oh!

Rancho looks from the smashed inverter to Pia, with indignation. Millimeter

rushes to gather the scattered parts of the box.

मिलीमीटर
अरे तोड़ दिया!

पिया
क्यों डैड के पीछे पड़े हो?

रैन्चो
क्योंकि वह कॉलेज नहीं, फैक्टरी चला रहे हैं।
जिसमें हर साल गधे मैनुफैक्चर होते हैं।
(*pointing behind her*)
वो देखो वो, तुम्हारा गधा!

Pia turns to see Suhas standing in the sea of people, looking around with a supercilious expression on his face.

Millimeter hands the retrieved inverter to Rancho. They walk away.

रैन्चो
(*inspecting the inverter*)
पूरा तोड़ दिया यार!

Pia catches up with them and grabs Rancho by his shoulder again.

पिया
(*furious*)
हॉव डेयर यू कॉल हिम अ गधा?

रैन्चो
तो और क्या बोलूँ? पहले इंजिनियरिंग की, उसके बाद एमबीए किया। उसके बाद अमेरिका जाके, बैंक में नौकरी कर रहा है। हूँ! अगर बैंक में नौकरी करनी थी तो इंजिनियरिंग काहे के लिए

MILLIMETER
She destroyed it!

PIA
Why're you harassing Dad?

RANCHO
'Cause he runs a factory, not a college.
Churning out asses. Like that one!

RANCHO
She destroyed it, man.

PIA
How dare you call him an ass?

RANCHO
He is one! First engineering, then MBA, then becomes a banker in USA. Because it rakes in more money? Life for him is just a profit-loss statement.

किया! ऐसे गधों के लिये लाइफ सिर्फ एक प्रोफिट और लौस स्टेटमेंट होती है।

Pia raises a finger threateningly, but Rancho doesn't let her speak, pressing on relentlessly.

रैन्चो

तुममें प्रोफिट नज़र आ रहा है इसलिए तुम्हारे साथ है। डाइरेक्टर की बेटी हो, डॉक्टर बनने वाली हो, उसकी इमेज़ के लिये अच्छा है, वगैरह, वगैरह ... उसको तुमसे कोई लगाव नहीं है।

Pia listens with growing outrage.

पिया

तुम समझते क्या हो अपने आप को? क्या मतलब सुहास को मुझमें इनट्रैस्ट नहीं हैं, हाँ?

Rancho notices the new watch on her wrist.

रैन्चो

अरे, ओह, नयी घड़ी ली? एक मिनट, पकड़ ना।

He hands the inverter to Millimeter.

मिलीमिटर

हाँ।

रैन्चो

तुमको क्या हर बार, हर वक्त डेमो दिखाना पड़ता है?

Rancho takes off the new watch from Pia's wrist.

RANCHO

He sees profit in you, so he's with you. Director's daughter, doctor in the making ... Good for his image! It's not you he cares for.

PIA

Who do you think you are? What do you mean he doesn't care for me?

RANCHO

New watch? One moment.

MILLIMETER

Yes.

RANCHO

Do you always need a demo?

रैन्चो
हे, सुहास!

RANCHO
Hey, Suhas!

Suhas turns around, spots them and walks up to them.

सुहास
(*exasperated*)
कहाँ थी? आइ हैव बीन लुकिंग फॉर यू।

SUHAS
Where were you?

रैन्चो
घड़ी गुम गई उसकी यार। दूढ़ रही है बेचारी।

RANCHO
She's looking for her watch.

Suhas grabs Pia's wrist. He explodes.

SUHAS
What? Lost the watch!

रैन्चो
अरे कोई नहीं यार। नयी ले लेना।

RANCHO
Never mind. Get another.

सुहास
अरे चार लाख की थी।

SUHAS
It cost 400,000!

Pia is taken aback by his reaction.

रैन्चो
शअ! चार लाख! मेरी तो ढाई सौ की है यार,
लेकिन टाइम वही बताती है।

RANCHO
Mine's just 250/ but keeps the same time.

SUHAS
(*to Rancho*)
Just shut up!
(*to Pia*)
How could you be so careless, Pia?! And this callous attitude – It's disgusting! It's disrespectful!

Eyes wide with shock, Pia stares at Suhas.

सुहास
नॉव डैट वॉज़ अ लिमिटेड ऐडिशन वॉच यू
जस्ट लौस्ट। फ्री में मिली तो बस! अब डिनर
पे पहनना अपनी वो तुम्हारी एटीन्थ सैनच्युरी
की घड़ी!

Tears of humiliation fill Pia's eyes.

सुहास
क्या? क्या घूर रही हो?

Pia swallows, blinking back the tears.

सुहास
हाँ, लो, लो, अब रोना शुरू। रियल मैच्युर,
पिया। आइ कान्ट हैन्डल दिस! अब रोना बन्द
करो और दूढ़ो!

Suhas moves away, searching the ground for the watch. The truth behind his character finally hits Pia. Anger replaces hurt.

She turns to the grinning Rancho, grabs the 4-lakh watch from his hand, and marches upto Suhas. She taps Suhas on the shoulder, grabs his hand, and slams the watch into it.

पिया
कोई और हाथ दूढ़ लेना इस घड़ी के लिए ...
गधे!

She storms off, leaving a gaping Suhas behind.

SUHAS

That was a limited-edition watch. Now wear your ancient piece of junk at dinner.

SUHAS

What are you staring at?

SUHAS

Here come the tears! Real mature, Pia. I can't handle this! Stop crying and look for it.

PIA

Find another wrist for this watch ... Ass!

EXT. PARKING LOT, MARKET –
CONTINUOUS

Impressed, Rancho and Millimeter run up to Pia.

रैन्चो
हे, तुम तो सौलिड हो यार! उसको मूँह पर
गधा बोल दिया!

PIA
Get lost!

Pia has reached the parking lot where her scooter's parked.

रैन्चो
यार, बहुत शोर हो रहा है यहाँ पे? यार ये
मुझे “थैंक यू” बोल रही है, मुझे “गेट लौस्ट”
सुनाई दे रहा है।

She gets her helmet out of her scooter.
In a burst of anger, she threatens Rancho
with it.

पिया
मैंने गेट लौस्ट ही बोला।

रैन्चो
अरे इतना क्या भड़क रही हो! तुम्हे पता है
ऐक्चवली तुम्हे भी उसके साथ प्यार था ही
नहीं।

PIA
What do you mean?

रैन्चो
मतलब ये कि जब वो तुम्हारे सामने आता है
तुम्हे कभी ऐसा लगा की हवायें चलने लगी, स्लो

RANCHO
You are solid! You called him an ass to
his face!

RANCHO
It's too noisy here. She's saying “Thank
you”, I hear “Get lost”.

PIA
I said “Get lost”.

RANCHO
Don't get so uptight. Actually, you never
really loved him.

RANCHO
When you see him, do the winds
whisper a melody? Does your scarf fly

मोशन में दुपट्टा उड़ने लगा है, या आसमान में चांद कुछ ज्यादा बड़ा हो गया।

पिया

(snapping)

ऐसे सिर्फ फिल्मों में होता है, रियल लाइफ में नहीं।

रैन्चो

अरे नहीं नहीं रियल लाइफ में भी होता है। इन्सानों के साथ प्यार करोगी तो होगा। गधों के साथ नहीं होता है।

Pia gives Rancho a sweet, fake smile, then swings her helmet at him again.

Rancho's phone rings. He answers it.

रैन्चो

हेल्लो। या?

Rancho's bantering tone changes to one of shock.

रैन्चो

क्या? ओह गॉड? ओके ओके, मैं आता हूँ! या बाय बाय!

He hangs up, thinking hard. He glances at Pia as she gets on her scooter. Sudden hope on his face, he runs up to her.

रैन्चो

हे! तुम मैडिकल स्टूडेंट हो ना?

Pia nods dismissively.

रैन्चो

(desperately)

मुझे तुम्हारी हेल्प चाहिए। इट्स ऐन एमरजेंसी! प्लीस, प्लीस!

in slow motion? Does the moon appear gigantic?

PIA

That happens in films, not in real life.

RANCHO

Happens in life too – if you love a person ... not an ass.

RANCHO

Hello. What?

RANCHO

Oh God! Ok, I'm on my way.

RANCHO

You're a Medical student right?

RANCHO

Need your help. It's an emergency, please.

PIA
What?

रैन्चो
(*pleading*)
मेरे साथ चलो, प्लीज़। अरे यार, तुम डॉक्टर लोग क्या कसम खाते हो ... कि कभी पेशेंट को ना नहीं बोलोगे ... वो क्या बोलते हैं उसको – हिप्पोक्रेटिक औथ ... हाँ? यार मेरी हैल्प करो, इट्स ऐन एमरजेंसी प्लीज़।

EXT. ENROUTE TO RAJU'S HOUSE
– MOMENTS LATER

Pia's scooter speeds down the road. Rancho rides, Pia is sitting behind him.

पिया
मेरी बहन की शादी में घुस आये, मेरी एंगेजमेन्ट तोड़ दी, डैड तुम्हारी वजह से बीपी की गोलियां खा रहे हैं, और मैं तुम्हारी हैल्प कर रही हूँ! अनबिलिवेबल! ये हिप्पोक्रेट्स की तो मैं ...
(*grits her teeth in frustration*)
... साले ने लगा दी डॉक्टरों की।

EXT. RAJU'S HOUSE –
CONTINUOUS

The scooter stops in front of Raju's house.

INT. RAJU'S HOUSE –
CONTINUOUS

The images on screen turn black and white.

Pia and Rancho rush into the house.

रैन्चो
आंटी, राजू कहाँ है?

RANCHO
Please come with me. What's that oath you doctors take – you'll never deny a patient help ... the Hippocratic Oath. Please help me, it's an emergency.

PIA
You gate-crash my sister's wedding, break off my engagement, my dad is popping BP pills because of you and here I am, helping you! Unbelievable! This Hippocratic Oath, It's really done us in!

RANCHO
Where's Raju, Aunty?

राजू की माताजी
टैक्सी लेने गया है, बेटा। ऐम्बुलैन्स को दो घंटे
पहले फोन किया था! अजीब देश है हमारा
– पीज़ा तीस मिनट में पहुंचने की गारंटी है,
लेकिन ऐम्बुलैन्स!

Pia examines Raju's Father.

पिया
होस्पिटलाइज़ करना पड़ेगा। अरजैन्टली।

राजू की माताजी
हे राम।

Rancho's mind scrambles for a solution.
And then, he has it.

EXT. ENROUTE TO HOSPITAL –
MOMENTS LATER

Rancho, Pia and Raju's Father travel on
the scooter. Rancho rides.

Raju's Father is propped upright between
Rancho and Pia, lengths of coloured fabric
binding him to Rancho. His arms dangle
by his sides. From time to time, he lurches
and is steadied by Pia.

The scooter weaves through traffic, and
is spotted by a traffic cop.

ट्रैफिक कौप
ओये रोक ओये!

Rancho ignores him, rushing on.

EXT. / INT. HOSPITAL –
CONTINUOUS

Rancho takes the scooter into the hospital.
Shouting warnings to people in his way

RAJU'S MOTHER

Gone to get a cab. Called the ambulance
two hours ago. In this country, pizza reaches
in 30 minutes but an ambulance!

PIA

He needs hospitalisation. Urgently

RAJU'S MOTHER

Oh God.

TRAFFIC COP

Hey stop!

and using the horn liberally, he rides into the entrance lobby and past the waiting area. Pia hangs on for dear life.

Doctors, nurses, attendants, patients and relatives watch in startled amazement.

रैन्चो

हटो, हटो, हटो! हटो, मूव, मूव इट्स एन एमरजैन्सी!
मूव, मूव ... मूव मूव हटो हटो ... ये।

Rancho travels through corridors, crossing nurses' stations and doctors' cubicles. He turns into a ward and finally comes to a stop next to a doctor examining his patient.

RANCHO

Doctor, Doctor, emergency, emergency!

He turns off the ignition and indicates Raju's Father to the bemused doctor.

RANCHO

Patient!

EXT. / INT. HOSPITAL –
CONTINUOUS

Raju jumps out of an autorickshaw, pays the driver, and rushes into the hospital. Rancho and Farhan stand, talking, in the waiting area.

रैन्चो

ये तू रखता है, अपने पास?
(*on seeing Raju*)
ऐ, आया राजू। राजू ...

Raju charges up to Rancho and Farhan.

RANCHO

Move, it's an emergency! Move! Move!
Move! Move! It's an emergency!

RANCHO

That's the patient. Keep this. Hey, here's
Raju ...

राजू
(*furiously, to Rancho*)
कमीने, बाबा को स्कूटर पे ले आया?

Rancho's taken aback. A flicker of hurt crosses his face. He covers it up quickly.

रैन्चो
तो क्या स्पीड पोस्ट से भेजता?

राजू
ऐ! बाबा के प्रोफेशन में नहीं जाने का!

रैन्चो
अरे! डॉक्टर से पूछ।

Raju hurries towards the doctor walking down the corridor with Pia. The two of them cross him, talking.

डॉक्टर
इट वाज़ अ क्लोज़ कॉल पिया। दो ढाई मिनट और देरी हो जाती, वी वुड हैव लौस्ट हिम।

At the doctor's words, Raju's face fills with consternation.

डॉक्टर
अच्छा किया जो ऐम्बुलेन्स के लिये वेट नहीं किया, स्कूटर पे ही ले आई। अच्छा मैं अब चलता हूँ, कुछ प्रोबलम हो तो मुझे फोन करना, ओक?

PIA
OK.

DOCTOR
Bye.

RAJU
What the hell! You brought Dad on the scooter.

RANCHO
Should I've sent him by courier?

RAJU
No wisecracks on Dad's profession! Where is he?

RANCHO
Go ask the doctor.

DOCTOR
Close call, Pia. A little delay and we would have lost him.

DOCTOR
Glad you didn't wait for an ambulance and got him on the scooter. Call me if there's a problem.

Raju lowers his head, filled with remorse.
He then looks up at his friends.

राजू
रैन्चो ... थैंक यू यार।

RAJU
Rancho. Thank you.

Farhan tries to lighten things up for Raju.
He applauds lightly.

फरहान
साले दोस्त को थैंक यू बोलता है! वो साइलैन्सर
तुझे मैनर्स सिखा रहा है, हाँ?

FARHAN
Thanking your buddies! Silencer teaching
you manners?

Rancho and Farhan chuckle.

रैन्चो
उसने तुझे ये नहीं बताया कि दोस्त ही इन्सान
का सबसे बड़ा स्तन होता है?

RANCHO
Didn't he teach you – a friend is a man's
greatest bosom?

As Rancho and Farhan crack up at their
joke, Raju smiles at them fondly.

Pia walks back to the boys after
completing some admission formalities
and paperwork.

पिया
चलो चलो अब चलो। कल इग्जैम है तुम
लोगों का।

PIA
Go on now. You have an exam
tomorrow.

रैन्चो
अरे इग्जैम तो बहुत होते हैं। बाप मोस्टली एक
ही होता है। अब तो पोस्टमास्टर साहब को साथ
लेके ही जायेंगे। फिकर नौट।

RANCHO
Exams we have many but Dad mostly just
one. We won't budge from here without
your father. Don't worry.

Raju is overcome with emotion. His eyes
fill with tears. He rushes to Rancho and
envelopes him in a hug.

राजू
रैन्चो मुझे माफ कर दे यार ...।
(*sobbing*)
मैं डर गया था।

RAJU
Rancho, forgive me. I was scared

रैन्चो
(*teary eyed*)
बस बस बस, चुप ... चुप ...।

RANCHO
It's ok. Quiet, now.

राजू
मुझे माफ कर दे ...

RAJU
Please forgive me.

Moved by the scene in front of her, Pia exchanges a look with Farhan.

रैन्चो
श... बस, चुप चुप चुप। बस। चुप। जा बाबा
को मिल ले।

RANCHO
It's ok, calm down. Go see your dad.

Rancho wipes Raju's face with the sleeve of his jacket.

रैन्चो
और ऐसी रोती शक्ल मत लेके जा, हॉ।

RANCHO
And don't go with that weepy face.

राजू
थैंक्स यार।

RAJU
Thanks buddy.

Smiling through his tears, Raju leaves.

रैन्चो
जा।

RANCHO
Go.

Rancho watches him go, an affectionate smile on his face. He wipes his eyes.

Pia looks at Rancho like she's never seen him before, her eyes filled with wonder.

EXT. HOSPITAL – MOMENTS
LATER

Rancho and Pia walk out of the hospital.
Rancho wheels Pia's scooter.

रैन्चो
तुम्हारी स्कूटर ने तो आज जान बचा दी, हॉ! अच्छी हैं। कितने की हैं?

पिया
(*smiling mischievously*)
चटनी डाल के देखो। शायद बता दे।

रैन्चो
आइन....

He puts the scooter on its stand.

रैन्चो
हे, हैप्पी इनडिपैन्डैन्स डे यार!

पिया
(*puzzled*)
लेकिन आज पन्द्रह अगस्त नहीं है।

रैन्चो
तुम्हारे लिये तो है। अब तुम जब चाहो अपनी मां की घड़ी पहन सकती हो।

Pia looks startled by Rancho's words.

रैन्चो
कोई नहीं बोलेगा की एटिथ सैन्चुरी की घड़ी क्यों पहनी है एण्ड ऑल दैट। बाय।

As Rancho starts to walk back into the hospital, Pia finds her voice.

RANCHO
Natty scooter. Saved a life. How much does it cost?

PIA
Pour some mint chutney on it. It'll tell you.

RANCHO
Oh...

RANCHO
Hey, Happy Independence Day, buddy!

PIA
But today isn't Independence Day.

RANCHO
For you it is! Now you're free to wear your mom's watch.

RANCHO
No ass can say it's an ancient piece of junk. Bye.

पिया

हे! तुम्हे कैसे पता की वो मेरी मां की घड़ी थी?

Rancho smiles at her.

रैन्चो

(gently)

बहन की शादी में लड़की ऊपर से नीचे तक बन-ठन के हो, सिर्फ हाथ में घड़ी पुरानी हो, क्या मतलब होता है?

Pia smiles, acknowledging the truth of his words.

रैन्चो

उस दिन तुम अपनी मां को बहुत मिस कर रही थी ना।

Pia swallows the lump in her throat.

पिया

हाँ।

रैन्चो

तुम्हारी मां बहुत खूबसूरत रही होंगी, ना?

पिया

हाँ। तुम्हे कैसे पता?

रैन्चा

अपने बाप को देखा है – ‘लाइफ़ इज़ अ रेस। इफ़ यू डोंट रन फ़ास्ट, यू विल बी लाइक अ ब्रोकन अण्डा ... और द कुक्कु बर्ड ...’.

Pia lunges at him in mock anger.

PIA

You!

PIA

Hey! How do you know it was my mom's watch?

RANCHO

At your sister's wedding, you wore sparkling new clothes. Only the watch was old. What could that mean?

RANCHO

You really missed your mom that day, didn't you?

PIA

Yes.

RANCHO

Your mom must've been really beautiful?

PIA

Yes. How do you know?

RANCHO

Seen your dad? "Life is a race. If you don't run fast you'll be a broken egg ... the cuckoo bird".

Rancho dodges her, laughing. She smiles back. He waves at her as he walks back into the hospital. She looks at his receding back with a dreamy look in her eyes.

The wind picks up, whipping her hair around her face.

The song starts in the background.

INT. / EXT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS
– NIGHT

PBS 4 – ZOObI DOObI

गुनगुनाती हैं ये हवाएं
गुनगुनाता हैं गगन
गा रहा हैं ये सारा आलम
जूबी डू ... परम पम

जूबी डूबी परम ... पम ...
जूबी डूबी ... जूबी ... डूबी पम पारा
जूबी डूबी परम ... पम ...
जूबी डूबी ... जूबी डूबी नाचे
क्यों पागल स्टूपिड मन ...

शाखों पे पत्ते गा रहे हैं
फूलों पे भवरे गा रहे हैं
दीवानी किरणों गा रही हैं
ये पंछी गा रहे हैं

बगिया में दो फूलों की
हो रही है गुप्तगू
जैसा फिल्मों में होता है
हो रहा है हू ब हू ...
जूबी डूबी परम ... पम ...

जूबी डूबी ... जूबी ... डूबी पम पारा
जूबी डूबी परम ... पम ...

*The winds whisper a melody
The sky hums along
Time itself is singing ...
Zoobi do ... pum para*

*Zoobi doobi param ... pum ...
Zoobi doobi ... zoobi ... doobi pum paara
Zoobi doobi param ... pum ...
zoobi doobi ... as it jives and jigs along
My silly heart goes 'Zoobi doobi'*

*Leaves sing on their branches
Bees jam with flowers
Crazy sunbeams dance off petals
As birds yodel in the skies*

*Flowers, bold and brazen
Snuggle and cootchie-coo
I've seen it happen in films
What's now happening with us*

*Zoobi ... doobi ... zoobi doobi pum paara
Zoobi doobi param ... pum*

जूबी डूबी ... जूबी डूबी नाचे
क्यों पागल स्टूपिड मन ...

रिमझिम रिमझिम रिमझिम
सन सन सन सन हवा
टिप टिप टिप टिप बूदें
गुराती बिजलियां
भीगी भीगी साड़ी में
यूं ठुमके लगाती तू
जैसा फिल्मों में होता है
हो रहा है हू-ब-हू...

जूबी डूबी ... जूबी ... डूबी पम पारा
जूबी डूबी परम ... पम
जूबी डूबी ... जूबी डूबी नाचे
क्यों पागल स्टूपिड मन ...

अंबर का चांद ज़मी पर
इतराके गा रहा
इक टिम-टिम टूटा तारा
इठलाके गा रहा
है रात अकेली तन्हा
मुझे छू ले आके तू
जैसा फिल्मों में होता है
हो रहा है हू-ब-हू

जूबी डूबी ... जूबी ... डूबी पम पारा
जूबी डूबी परम ... पम
जूबी डूबी ... जूबी डूबी नाचे
क्यों पागल स्टूपिड मन ...

INT. HOSPITAL – NEXT
MORNING

On a bench in the waiting area, the trio is fast asleep. Pia, dressed and ready to face the day, walks up to them briskly and starts waking them.

*Zoobi doobi as it jives and jigs along
My silly heart goes 'Zoobi doobi'*

*Pitter-patter go the raindrops
Whish-whoosh whistles the wind
Do-da-dee waltzes the rain
Boom-boom echoes the sky
Drenched in rain and passion
You sway your hips on cue
I've seen it happen in films
What's now happening with us*

*Zoobi doobi ... zoobi ... doobi pum paara
Zoobi doobi param ... pum ...
Zoobi doobi ... as it jives and jigs along
My silly heart goes 'Zoobi doobi'*

*The gorgeous low moon
Serenades the earth
A shooting star skips along
Crooning a ballad of love
The night is bright but lonesome
Come touch me, my handsome
I've seen it happen in films
What's now happening with us*

*Zoobi doobi ... zoobi ... doobi pum paara
Zoobi doobi param ... pum ...
Zoobi doobi ... as it jives and jigs along
My silly heart goes 'Zoobi doobi'*

पिया
हैल्लो ... उठो ...

रैन्चो
(*startled*)
क्या? अंकल ऑफ हो गये क्या?

राजू
(*panicking*)
क्या?

पिया
नहीं ... स्टुपिड! साढ़े आठ बजे गये हैं। नौ
बजे इग्जैम है ... जाना नहीं है क्या!

They are all awake now.

फरहान
अरे यार, उनको यहाँ अकेले छोड़ के कैसे जा
सकते हैं?

पिया
मैं हूँ। यहाँ डॉक्टरस हैं। तीन घंटे की तो बात
है। चलो, मेरा स्कूटर लेकर जाओ। एण्ड गो,
कम ऑन! इट्स गेटिंग लेट।

Pia indicates the time on her wrist watch
and Rancho does a double-take. She's
wearing her mother's watch. He grabs her
wrist and looks into her face.

रैन्चो
हे! क्या पुरानी घड़ी पहन रखी है!

He gives her a warm smile.

PIA
(*whispers tenderly*)
Go!

PIA
Hello. Wake up ...

RANCHO
Huh ... Uncle's dead?

RAJU
What?

PIA
No, stupid! It's 8.30, your exam is at 9.

FARHAN
But we can't leave him alone.

PIA
I'm here. It's a matter of three hours. Take
my scooter. It's getting late.

RANCHO
Hey ... Gosh, what an ancient watch!

EXT. ENROUTE TO ICE – MOMENTS
LATER

The boys race towards college on Pia's scooter.

The tower clock at the campus gate shows 9.30 am, as the scooter zips in.

EXT. CORRIDOR, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

Rancho, Farhan and Raju run through a corridor, to their class.

INT. CLASSROOM, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

The classroom is filled with the silence of students writing an exam. Rancho, Farhan and Raju rush in, creating a minor disturbance. They grab blank answer sheets from the Examiner's desk.

राजू
सॉरी सर, लेट हो गये, सर।

RAJU
Sorry, we're late.

रैन्चो
सॉरी सर, एमरजेंसी!

RANCHO
It was an emergency!

They scramble to find their seats.

EXAMINER
Settle down there!

The Examiner looks at the clock on the classroom wall. It is a few minutes past nine-thirty. Time passes. The clock now shows a few minutes past twelve.

The classroom is empty except for Rancho, Farhan, Raju and Chatur. Chatur is on his

way out. He submits his answer sheet to the Examiner and indicates the trio.

CHATUR

(in a theatrical whisper)

Sir, they're still writing.

EXAMINER

(to the trio)

Hello! Time up!

रैन्चो

(pleading)

सर, पांच मिनट सर। हम आधे घंटे लेट आये थे।
इट् वाज़ ऐन एमरजैन्सी, सर, प्लीज़, प्लीज़

The Examiner looks at them indignantly.

फरहान (V.O.)

इग्ज़ामिनर ने हमें ऐसे देखा जैसे हमने उसकी
दोनो किडनीस मांग ली हो।

The boys continue to write. The Examiner starts to organise the answer sheets.

फरहान (V.O.)

हम फिर भी लिखते रहे। और वो पेपर्स को रोल
नम्बर से अरेन्ज करने में बिज़ी हो गया।

Rancho finishes. He gets up and walks up to the Examiner's desk. Farhan and Raju also rush across with their answer sheets.

रैन्चो

हो गया सर।

इग्ज़ामिनर

आप लेट हो गये ... मैं नहीं ले सकता है।

RANCHO

Please, five minutes. We started half an hour late. It was an emergency.

FARHAN

He glared at us like we'd asked for both his kidneys.

FARHAN

But we continued writing. He got busy in arranging the answer sheets.

RANCHO

Done, Sir.

EXAMINER

You're late. I can't accept these.

फरहान
सर प्लीज़, सर!

Suddenly Rancho's tone and body language change.

रैन्चो
सर आप जानते हैं हम कौन हैं?

Unperturbed, the Examiner leans on his desk and looks at Rancho.

इग्ज़ामिनर
प्राइम मिनिस्टर के बेटे हो तो भी आइ विल नौट ऐक्सेप्ट यूअर पेपर्स।

रैन्चो
सर, आप को हमारा नाम और रोल नम्बर पता है?

The Examiner is a little disturbed now.

इग्ज़ामिनर
नहीं ... कौन हो तुम लोग।

Rancho, holding his own answer sheet, takes Farhan and Raju's answer sheets from them too. In a sudden move, he jumbles them up with the rest of the answer sheets on the Examiner's desk.

रैन्चो
(*yelling*)
नहीं पता है। भाग, भाग, भाग, भाग, भाग।

He dashes out of the classroom, Raju close on his heel. After freezing for a second, Farhan comes to and bolts out

FARHAN
Sir, please, Sir!

RANCHO
Sir, do you know who we are?

EXAMINER
Prime Minister's son? Even then ... I will not accept your paper.

RANCHO
Do you know our names and roll numbers?

EXAMINER
No ... Who are you?

RANCHO
He doesn't know – Run! Run! Run! Run!
Run!

too. The Examiner runs after them, to the door.

इग्जामिनर
(*shouting*)

ऐ! तुम्हारा रोल नम्बर क्या है!

EXAMINER

Hey, what's your roll number?

He runs back to his desk, confused, and tries to look through the mess there.

इग्जामिनर

ओए किधर है उसका पेपर ... किधर है ... किधर है वो पेपर?

EXAMINER

Where the hell are their papers?

He finally gives up, slamming his hands on the desk in frustration.

इग्जामिनर

आह!

EXAMINER

Aah!

INT. / EXT. VARIOUS LOCATIONS,
CAMPUS, ICE – DAY

Rancho is fast asleep on his bed. Raju prays fervently to the images and idols of gods and goddesses in his corner of the room.

राजू

अब प्रभु दया दीन पर कीजिए, अपनी भक्ति शक्ति कछु दीजिए ...

RAJU

O Lord, have mercy.

फरहान (V.O.)

आज रिजल्ट्स लगने वाले थे। डरे सहमे सब भगवान के साथ डील स्ट्राइक करने में लगे थे ...

FARHAN

Today was Results day. Everyone was striking a deal with god ...

राजू

प्रभु बस इलैक्ट्रॉनिक्स संभाल ले ... मैं नारियल फोड़ूंगा।

RAJU

Just take the case of my Electronics. I'll offer a coconut.

Outdoors, a Student pours milk into a bowl near a snake coiled at the base of an ant hill.

स्टूडन्ट 1
नाग देवता, मेरा फिज़िक्स बचा लेना। रोज़ एक लीटर दूध भिजवाऊंगा।

A Student feeds grass to a cow, by the roadside.

स्टूडन्ट 2
हे गऊ माता, बस ... बस पासिंग मार्क्स दिला देना।

A Student prays in the shower.

स्टूडन्ट 3
भगवान, मालती और संगीता को अपनी बहन की नज़र से देखूंगा। बस रिज़ल्ट संभाल लेना।

A Student places a currency note before the idol of a local god, under a tree.

स्टूडन्ट 4
भगवान, भगवान मैं सौ रुपये पर मंथ चढ़ाऊंगा, भगवान। पक्का भगवान, प्रोमिस।

EXT. CORRIDOR, ICE – DAY

Farhan and Raju run through a corridor to the throng of students around the notice board.

फरहान (V.O.)
सौ रुपये में तो आजकल ट्रैफिक हवलदार भी नहीं मानते, भगवान क्या खाक बिकने वाले थे!

STUDENT 1
Sir Snake, please take care of my Physics.
I promise a pint of milk per day.

STUDENT 2
O Mother Cow, help me pass ...

STUDENT 3
Oh God! I will see Malti and Sangita as my sisters. But take care of my results.

STUDENT 4
Watch over my results God, I'll offer Rs 100/ every month, promise.

FARHAN
100/ won't bribe even a traffic cop let alone the Almighty.

They squeeze their way through the cluster of bodies, Raju finally reaches the notice board, Farhan behind him.

फरहान
वो चैक कर, नीचे से चैक कर, नीचे से चैक कर यार।

FARHAN
Check from the bottom. Check from the bottom.

Raju scans the list on the board.

राजू
तेरा है यार ... लास्ट!

RAJU
You are ... last!

फरहान
और तेरा?

FARHAN
And you?

He looks at the list again.

RAJU
(*in a faltering voice*)
Second last.

फरहान
रैन्चो?

FARHAN
Rancho?

Raju's gaze travels up and down the list.

राजू
(*in dismay*)
नहीं है यार ...!

RAJU
Not there!

फरहान
हाँ?

FARHAN
What?

Deeply disturbed, Farhan pushes his way out of the group at the notice board.

फरहान (V.O.)

दिल बैठ गया। इसलिये नहीं की हम लास्ट थे, पर इसलिए की हमारा ... हमारा दोस्त फेल हो गया था।

Farhan sits on a step, away from everyone. Behind him, Chatur is in an agitated conversation with another student.

CHATUR (O.S.)

There's a mistake. It's not possible. It's injustice!

Chatur's voice breaks. He slams his hand on a pillar in frustration and despair.

Raju comes and sits next to Farhan. He looks even more depressed than he did earlier.

फरहान

साला ये साइलेंसर इतना चिल्ला क्यों रहा है यार?

राजू

(*flat voice*)

सैकेण्ड आया है।

फरहान

साला! फर्स्ट कौन आया?

राजू

रैन्चो।

Startled, Farhan looks at him.

फरहान

रैन्चो?

Raju nods, miserable.

FARHAN

My heart sank. Not 'cause our ranks tanked, but 'cause our friend flunked.

FARHAN

What's Silencer howling about?

RAJU

He got the second rank.

FARHAN

Who's first?

RAJU

Rancho.

FARHAN

Rancho?

फरहान
(*incredulously*)
साला!

FARHAN
What?

Farhan jumps up and rushes back to the notice board. He pushes aggressively through the crowd of students.

फरहान
हट ना ... हट ना यार!

FARHAN
Move over!

Farhan's eyes skim over the list Raju missed before. At the top, at number 1, is the name 'Ranchhoddas Chanchad'.

Farhan and Raju walk away, together, faces morose, eyes downcast.

फरहान (V.O.)
ह्यूमन बीहैवियर के बारे में उस दिन हमने कुछ जाना। दोस्त फेल हो तो दुख होता है। लेकिन दोस्त फर्स्ट आये तो ज्यादा दुख होता है। हम दुखी थे, लेकिन हमसे ज्यादा दुखी दो और लोग थे।

FARHAN
We learned a lesson in Human Behavior: Your friend fails, you feel bad. Your friend tops, you feel worse. We were sad. Two others were sadder.

EXT. OPEN-AIR AUDITORIUM, ICE
– CONTINUOUS

The Director and Chatur sit with glum faces, in the first row of a series of seats.

The seats have been arranged for the group photograph. Govind is arranging students in the seats according to their rank in the exams.

GOVIND
Ranchhoddas Chanchad. Front row. Right of the Director.

Rancho runs up, bright and sprightly, to sit next to the Director, on his right. Chatur flanks the Director on the left.

GOVIND

Uday Sinha. Second row. Third the seat.
Alok Mital Second row fifth Seat.

Rancho looks around for Farhan and Raju. They are sitting at the extreme corner. He waves at them. They wave back unhappily. Rancho's cheery expression changes into a troubled one.

रैन्चो

सर, ये रैंक के हिसाब से बैठना ज़रूरी है।

डाइरेक्टर

(sarcastically)

क्यों, तुम्हें कोई प्रोबलम है?

रैन्चो

(missing the sarcasm)

सर, मुझे तो पूरे ग्रेडिंग सिस्टम से ही प्रोबलम है, सर। ऐसा लगता है कोई कास्ट-सिस्टम है। 'ए' ग्रेड स्टूडन्ट बादशाह, सी ग्रेड स्टूडन्ट्स गुलाम। इट्स नॉट नाइस सर।

डाइरेक्टर

तुम्हारे पास कोई बेहतर उपाय है?

रैन्चो

(enthusiastically)

हाँ, हैं ना सर। सर रिजल्ट्स जो है ना, वो नोटिस बोर्ड पे लगना ही नहीं चाहिए, सर। किसी की कमियाँ, किसी की खामियाँ, हम क्यों खुले आम सबके सामने पेश करें? अभी सर, अगर आपके ब्लड टेस्ट में हेमोग्लोबीन कम निकले तो

RANCHO

Sir, why this seating according to rank?

DIRECTOR

Any problem with that?

RANCHO

Yes, this grading system is like a caste system: A-graders: Masters C-graders: Slaves. It's not nice, Sir.

DIRECTOR

You have a better idea?

RANCHO

Yes. Results should not be displayed at all. Why publicise someone's flaws? If your iron count is low, will the doctor prescribe tonic or air your report on TV. You see, Sir?

डॉक्टर आपको टॉनिक देगा या आपकी रिपोर्ट टीवी पे दिखाएगा। यू सी सर।

डाइरेक्टर

बेसिकली, व्हट यू आर सेइंग इस की मैं वन बाई वन सबके रूम में जाऊँ और कान में रिजल्ट बोलूँ? यू हैव कम फर्स्ट। आप सैकेण्ड आये हैं। ओह, आइ ऐम सॉरी, आप फेल हो गये।

Rancho laughs good-naturedly at the Director's mocking words.

रैन्चो

नहीं सर, मेरा मतलब वो नहीं था, लेकिन क्या है, ग्रेड क्रीयेट्स अ डिवाइड सर। डिवाइड। अभी देखिए मैं फर्स्ट आया हूँ, मैं आपके साथ में बैठा हूँ। मेरे दोस्त बिचारे लास्ट आये हैं तो उनको पीछे डाल दिया है। कोने में।

डाइरेक्टर

कम से कम कोने में बैठे हैं ... तुम्हारे साथ रहेंगे तो नैक्स्ट टाइम फोटो से बाहर ही हो जाएंगे। ना पास होंगे, ना कोई कम्पनी उन्हें जॉब्स देगी।

रैन्चो

सर, जॉब तो मिल जायेगा सर उनको। कोई तो कम्पनी होगी जो ...

(looking over at Chatur)

मशीनों को नहीं इन्सानों को नौकरी दे। ऐसा नहीं है सर, जॉब मिल जायेगी सर। आइ गारन्टी।

डाइरेक्टर

यू गारन्टी इट! यू गारन्टी इट!

RANCHO

(excitedly)

Bet, Sir bet?

DIRECTOR

So basically, what you are saying is, I should personally go to each student's room and whisper in the ears ... "You have come first"; "You're second"; "Oh, I'm so sorry, you have failed".

RANCHO

No Sir, I mean grades create a divide. I've topped, so I'm next to you. My pals came last, they're in the back in the corner.

DIRECTOR

At least they're in the corner. More time with you, and they'll be out of the photo. They will neither pass, nor get a job.

RANCHO

They'll get jobs, Sir. There must be some firm that prefers humans to machines. They'll get jobs. I guarantee.

DIRECTOR

You guarantee it! You guarantee it!

डाइरेक्टर
ये गोविन्द!

DIRECTOR
Govind!

गोविन्द
जी सर।

GOVIND
Yes, Sir?

Govind comes running up to them.
The Director gestures towards Raju and Farhan.

डाइरेक्टर
उन दोनों में से एक को भी कैम्पस इन्टरव्यू में
जॉब मिले ना ...

DIRECTOR
Even if one of them gets a job in campus
interviews ...

गोविन्द
हाँ?

GOVIND
Yes?

डाइरेक्टर
... तो मेरी मूँछ काट देना।

DIRECTOR
... shave off my moustache.

The enormity of the Director's words stuns
both Govind and Rancho.

रैनचो
सर:

RANCHO
Sir!

डाइरेक्टर
हैप्पी?

DIRECTOR
Happy?

Rancho breaks into a smile.

PHOTOGRAPHER (O.S.)
Smile, please.

रैनचो
हैप्पी, सर!

RANCHO
Happy, Sir!

Camera flashes. The image on screen freezes
to the group photograph of the class.

END OF FLASHBACK.

BACK TO PRESENT:

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF SHIMLA –
DAY

The sound of incessant honking fills the soundtrack.

Farhan, Raju and Chatur are travelling in Chatur's SUV.

Chatur, in the driver's seat, is pressing down on the horn.

A foul smell hits Farhan and Raju.

राजू
(*explosively, wrinkling his nose*)
कार के हॉर्न के नीचे अपना हॉर्न कवर कर रहा है साले।

फरहान
(*trying to wave away the smell*)
साले सैप्टिक टैंक! फिर चूरन खाया तूने?

They roll down their windows and fan their hands frantically in front of their noses to ward off the stink.

CHATUR
I didn't do it ...

चतुर/फरहान/राजू
राजू ...!

फरहान
(*in disgust*)
ओए, बहुत पुरानी पहचान है इन गरम हवाओं से।

RAJU
Jackass! Honking to hide your tooting.

FARHAN
Septic tank! Popping pills again?

CHATUR / FARHAN / RAJU
Raju ... !

FARHAN
This is a familiar stink.

राजू
ग्लोबल वारमिंग के लिये यही कमीना रिसपोन्सिबल
है। ऊह आई कान्ट टेक इट!

Raju rolls down the window and sticks out
his head and torso, breathing deeply.

EXT. RIDGE, SHIMLA CITY –
CONTINUOUS

In a popular, bustling spot of the city,
an Arab tourist clicks pictures of a row
of women, all burkha-clad. Chatur's SUV
comes to a halt near them.

Farhan, Raju and Chatur get out of the
SUV.

राजू
(to Farhan)
ला यार, तेरा बटुआ दे। मैं पैन्ट खरीद के
आता हूँ।

Farhan takes out a suit on a hanger, from
the car.

फरहान
छोड़ ना यार, ये चतुर रामालिंगम का सूट पैन्ट
पहन ले।

Chatur rushes up to Farhan and grabs the
suit from him.

CHATUR
Don't you touch my suit!

फरहान
(to Raju)
छोड़ ना यार, रैन्चो तेरे को बिना पैन्ट के भी
पहचान लेगा।

RAJU
He's the sole cause for global warming.

RAJU
Toss me your wallet – I'll buy pants.

FARHAN
Take Chatur's suit instead.

FARHAN
Rancho will recognise you even in
underwear.

Chatur walks up to a chick peas seller and shows him an address on his phone.

चतुर
मिस्टर, ये ऐडरैस किधर है?

CHATUR
Where's this?

चनेवाला
भाई साहब, इतना पढ़ा लिखा होता तो चने बेचता?

CHANAWALA
If I could read, would I sell chick peas?

चतुर
(to Raju)
इसको पढ़ना नहीं आती है।

CHATUR
He can't read.

राजू
बोलना तो आती है ना।

RAJU
But he can speak.

Raju hails the chick peas seller again.

राजू
भाईसाहब, भाईसाहब – यहाँ शिमला में कोई रणछोड़दास छाँड़ रहता है, कुछ ...?

RAJU
Wait. Do you know a Ranchhoddas Chanchad?

The chick peas seller points. Farhan, Raju and Chatur follow his gaze. There, looming proud at the top of a hill, taller than the tallest trees around it, is a beautiful, palace-like mansion.

चनेवाला
हाँ, वो वहाँ रहते हैं।

CHANAWALA
Yes, he lives there.

Farhan and Raju's faces light up with pride. Chatur looks disgruntled.

Farhan and Raju exchange a smile, anticipating the end of their search.

फरहान
(*eagerly*)
चल!

FARHAN
Let's go!

EXT. CHANCHAD BHAWAN, SHIMLA
– MOMENTS LATER

Chatur's SUV enters the gates of Chanchad Bhawan. A series of vehicles line the driveway. In the sprawling lawn is a crowd of people dressed in white.

Farhan hurries up the pathway leading to the house. Raju and Chatur follow. Raju flings Chatur's pill box at him.

राजू
ओए चतुर तेरा चूरन का डब्बा।

RAJU
Chatur, your pills.

Chatur catches it.

चतुर
(*gratefully*)
ओ थैंक्स। कहाँ मिले?

CHATUR
Thanks. Where were they?

राजू
(*indicating his trousers*)
पॉकेट में था।

RAJU
In the pocket.

Chatur looks at Raju and sees his trousers on him.

CHATUR
Hey how dare you! That's my pant!

Chatur grabs Raju's arm and pulls him up short. He bends down and tries to tug his trousers off Raju.

राजू
अबे क्या तेरा और क्या मेरा। गीता में लिखा
है सब सबका है।

Raju shakes Chatur off and tries to walk
on. Chatur pulls him back and buries
his head between his legs, pulling at his
trousers.

चतुर
ए शट् अप। पैन्ट उतारो ...

राजू
क्या कर रहा है यार! लोग गलत इन्टरप्रेट करेंगे,
पागल साले! ओए ...

Raju breaks free and charges ahead. Chatur
stumbles behind him, yelling.

CHATUR
I want it now!

INT. CHANCHAD BHAWAN, SHIMLA
– CONTINUOUS

Farhan rushes through the open doors of
the house and stops short.

He sees a body laid on the ground, in
the hall. People mill around, paying their
respects. The mood is somber.

Raju and Chatur enter.

राजू
क्या हुआ?

FARHAN
Rancho's father.

RAJU
Karl Marx says to share all resources.

CHATUR
Hey Shut up. Take off the pants.

RAJU
Hey you will give people the wrong
idea.

RAJU
What happened?

A huge portrait of a ferocious-looking MAN is displayed in the room. The name under the frame says – SHAMALDAS CHANCHAD. Farhan addresses someone who looks like an ATTENDANT in the household.

फरहान
भाईसाहब, ये रणछोड़दास कहाँ मिलेंगे?

FARHAN
Brother, where can Ranchhoddas be found?

The Attendant points to a MAN sitting with his back to them, in conversation with someone who looks like a POLITICIAN.

अटेंडेंट
वो बैठे हैं।

ATTENDANT
There he is sitting.

फरहान
धैंक यू।

FARHAN
Thank you.

With suppressed excitement, Farhan, Raju and Chatur walk slowly towards the seated Man. Reaching him, Farhan taps his shoulder.

फरहान
रैंचो ...

FARHAN
Rancho ...

The Man turns around ...

But it is not Rancho.

REAL RANCHO
Yes?

फरहान
ओह सॉरी। हम रणछोड़दास से मिलना चाहते थे।

FARHAN
Sorry. We're looking for Ranchhoddas.

रियल रणछोड़दास
मैं ही रणछोड़दास हूँ, कहिए।

फरहान
नहीं, रणछोड़दास श्यामलदास छांछड़।

रियल रणछोड़दास
रणछोड़दास श्यामलदास छांछड़ मैं ही हूँ।
कहिए?

Farhan looks at Raju and Chatur. They
are all nonplussed.

The Politician rises from his seat. The
Man stands up with him.

मंत्री
रणछोड़ बेटा, अपना ध्यान रखना।

They clasp hands. The Politician leaves
with his entourage. The Man starts walking
away too, directing a dirty look at Farhan,
Raju and Chatur.

Unable to comprehend what is happening,
Farhan looks around, baffled. Something
on the wall catches his eye. It's a framed
ICE degree.

Farhan goes closer to the wall. In mounting
shock, he reads out the name on the
degree.

फरहान
'रणछोड़दास छांछड़'

His gaze travels downward, to the framed
photograph below the degree. He pales.
Without taking his eyes off the photograph,
he beckons Raju.

REAL RANCHO
I am Ranchhoddas.

FARHAN
No, I mean ... 'Ranchhoddas Shamaldas
Chanchad'.

REAL RANCHO
Ranchhoddas Shamaldas Chanchad. That's
me.

POLITICIAN
Ranchhod, take care, Son.

FARHAN
'Ranchhoddas Chanchad'.

फरहान
राजू!

FARHAN
Raju!

Raju and Chatur come up beside Farhan to look at the photograph. It's the group photograph of all of them at ICE. In place of Rancho, however, is the Man they've just met.

INTERVAL

FADE IN

EXT. RIDGE, SHIMLA – DAY

The city looks quaint and pretty from the balcony of the café. Farhan leans over. However, the view is the last thing on his preoccupied mind.

Next to him, seated at a table, Raju absently reaches for some cookies from a hamper Chatur's left there.

राजू
यार मैं इतिहास में पहला आदमी होंगा जो दिल्ली से शिमला तक अन्डरवियर में आया और वो भी गतल आदमी से मिलने।

RAJU
I'll be in the Guinness book for driving from Delhi to Shimla in an underwear. That too, for the wrong guy!

Farhan turns towards Raju.

फरहान
यार, वही नाम, वही डिग्री। और वही फोटो! लेकिन आदमी अलग! चक्कर क्या है, समझ में नहीं आया यार!

FARHAN
Same name, same degree, same photo, but a different guy. What's going on?

राजू
लेकिन ये साइलेंसर को रैनचो का ये ऐड्रेस मिला कहाँ से?

RAJU
How did Silencer get Rancho's address?

Raju's words make Farhan realise where to start solving their puzzle.

फरहान

हाँ!

(calls out)

ओए चतुर। इधर आ।

FARHAN

Good point!

Hey Chatur, come here.

Chatur is taking a leak against someone's compound wall. At the sound of his name, he turns – and yelps in horror.

चतुर

ऐ! ऐ!

CHATUR

Hey! Hey!

He rushes towards Farhan and Raju, zipping up on the way. He snatches the tin of biscuits as well as the biscuit in Raju's hand.

CHATUR

How dare you open this? I got this from San Francisco, handmade biscuits.

Chatur picks up the hamper and takes it away from Raju.

CHATUR

Specially for Mr. Phunsukh Wangdu.

राजू

फुनसुख बांगदू? अबे ये कौन है?

RAJU

Phunsukh Bangdu? Now, who's that?

चतुर

अरे नॉट बांगदू। वांगदू। वा ... वा ... फुनसुख वांगदू। डू यू नो हू दैट इज़? ही इज़ अ ग्रेट साइन्टिस्ट। 400 पेटेंस द वर्ल्ड वांट्स हिम। एक साल से चेस कर रहा हूँ, अब जाके मीटिंग फिक्स

CHATUR

Not Bangdu. Wangdu. 'W'. Phunsukh Wangdu. Do you know who that is? He's a great scientist. 400 patents. The world wants him. Took me a year to get

हुए हैं। यू नो, वन्स ही साइन्स द डील विथ माइ कम्पनी, आइ विल बी ह्ययूज! ह्ययूज!

Chatur finishes tidying up and re-packing the hamper.

राजू
अबे वांगडू की आरती उतारना बंद कर और ये बता की तेरे को रैनचो का ये एडरैस मिला कहाँ से?

चतुर
यू शुड बी थैंकिंग फुनसुख वांगडू उसी की वजह से रैनचो का क्लू मिला।

Chatur takes out a photograph from his laptop bag and gives it to Raju.

चतुर
ये देखो।

Raju looks at the photograph. He is stunned.

चतुर
मेरी सैकेट्री ट्रेसी लास्ट मंथ यहाँ आई थी मिस्टर वांगडू से मीटिंग करने।

Farhan takes the photograph from Raju.

It's a tourist like photograph of TRACY, taken in a street of Shimla. In the background, at the far corner of the photograph, is Rancho.

चतुर
ट्रेसी को फुनसुख का अप्वाइन्टमेन्ट तो नहीं मिला। पर मुझे रैनचो मिल गया। मैंने शिमला की फोन डारेक्ट्री चेक की। उसमे नाम था। छांछाड़ रणछोड़दास।

an appointment. Once he signs the deal with my company, I'll be huge!

RAJU
Forget Wangdu. How'd you get Rancho's address?

CHATUR
You should be thanking Phunsukh Wangdu. He led me to Rancho.

CHATUR
See this.

CHATUR
My secretary was here to fix an appointment with Wangdu.

CHATUR
She didn't get the appointment with Wangdu but I found Rancho. I checked the Shimla directory and found Rancho's name.

राजू
अबे तो शकल कैसे चेंज हो गई? तेरे आने की
ख़बर सुनके प्लास्टिक सर्जरी करवा ली क्या!

Farhan puts his hand on Raju's shoulder.
He has a resolute look on his face.

फरहान
इसका जवाब सिर्फ़ एक ही आदमी दे सकता
है।

INT. CHANCHAD BHAWAN, SHIMLA
– MOMENTS LATER

REAL RANCHO stands before his Father's
portrait, a brass urn with his Father's ashes
in his hand.

रियल रैन्चो
(*choked with emotion*)
आइ ऐम सॉरी पापा। मैं आपकी आखरी इच्छा
पूरी नहीं कर पाया। आप बोलते रहे हरिद्वार ले
चलो, हरिद्वार ले चलो और मैं हाइवे के टेन्डर
खुलने का वेट करता रहा।

Farhan, Raju and Chatur walk down a
long corridor into the room. They stop at
a table covered with urns, a little distance
away from Real Rancho.

रियल रैन्चो
वहाँ टेन्डर खुला और यहाँ आपने आंखे बन्द
कर ली। आइ एम सो सॉरी पापा। आइ कुड
नॉट बी अ गुड सन...

फरहान (O.S.)
(*sarcastically*)
अरे क्या बोल रहा है यार तू ...

RAJU
What happened to his face? Plastic surgery
in honour of your visit?

FARHAN
Only one man has can give the answer.

REAL RANCHO
Sorry Papa, I couldn't fulfill your last
wish. You kept asking me to take you
on a pilgrimage. But I waited for the
highway tender.

REAL RANCHO
There the tender opened, here you closed
your eyes. I am so sorry, Papa. I could not
be a good son...

FARHAN
What are you saying ...

Startled, Real Rancho turns towards them.

फरहान

तू इतना बता इंजिनियर बना। डिग्री दिवार पर लटकी है। यू वर अ वैरी गुड सन।

रियल रैनचो

(aggressively)

बिना परमिशन मेरी प्रोपर्टी में घुसे कैसे? हाँ? अंदर करवा दूंगा।

फरहान

(eyes flashing with anger)

अंदर तो तू जायेगा साले। हमने सब पता किया है। आइसीइ की डिग्री के जोर पे ये हाइवे कॉन्ट्रैक्ट्स और हाइड्रो प्रोजेक्ट्स ले रहा है तू?

राजू

ये डिग्री हमारे दोस्त की है। तेरे पास कैसे आयी?

Real Rancho comes to a decision. He places the urn on the table between him and the other three. He walks up to a cabinet – and takes out a rifle.

As he loads the first bullet, Chatur turns tail and runs out of the house.

In a smooth, expert action, Real Rancho points the rifle at Farhan and Raju.

रियल रैनचो

(menacingly)

डेढ़ सौ एकड़ की प्रोपर्टी है। भेजा उड़ा के कहीं कोने में दफना दूंगा, किसी को पता भी नहीं चलेगा। नौ गेट द पाइन्ट गेट लौस्ट।

FARHAN

You're an engineer. Your degree's on the wall! You were a very good son.

REAL RANCHO

How dare you barge in without permission? I'll have you arrested.

FARHAN

No, you'll be arrested. We've made enquiries. You use the degree to clinch contracts.

RAJU

It's our friend's degree. How did you get it?

REAL RANCHO

This is a 150-acre estate. If I shoot and bury you, no one would even notice. Get the point? Now get lost.

Farhan and Raju glance at each other but don't move. Real Rancho indicates to the urn on the table.

रियल रैनचो
पापा की अस्थियां लेके हरिद्वार जा रहा हूँ। कहो
तो तुम्हारी अस्थियां भी साथ ले जाऊं।

Slowly, Farhan and Raju walk backward. They exchange another, brief look. Then Farhan yells out.

फरहान
पापा को उठा ...

Simultaneously, Raju makes his move. He grabs the urn from the table and dashes through a door, Farhan on his heel.

Real Rancho jerks out of his inertia and starts running after both of them.

REAL RANCHO
No!

Raju runs back into the room they were in, looking around wildly. Farhan urges him towards another door.

फरहान
इधर, इधर, इधर।

They barge in through the door of a bathroom. Real Rancho comes galloping after them, sees them and stops. He cocks his gun and aims at them.

रियल रैनचो
पापा को छोड़! ये ये...ह

REAL RANCHO
I'm taking Papa's ashes to the sacred river.
Can take yours too.

FARHAN
Grab Papa! Here, here.

FARHAN
Here, here!

REAL RANCHO
Let go of Papa!

Cornered, Raju and Farhan scramble desperately to the only weapon they find – the commode. Raju drops to his knees beside it, slams back the cover and dangles the urn in the open cavity.

राजू
बता कौन है तू, वरना यही पे अस्थिविसर्जन
कर दूंगा तेरे पापा का।

रियल रैनचो
पापा को मेरे हवाले कर!

राजू
पापा गंगा में नहीं, गटर में जाएंगे।

रियल रैनचो
या आह... पापा को पौट से निकाल, निकाल
पौट से!

Real Rancho places his finger on the
trigger.

Raju places his finger on the flush lever.

राजू
तू ट्रिगर दबाएगा, मैं फ्लश दबाऊंगा।

रियल रैनचो
देख, मैं तीन गिनूंगा ... बस।

Farhan takes a step towards Real Rancho,
bluffing bravely.

फरहान
(*aggressively*)
अबे डराता किसको है, हाँ? चला गोली।

Farhan reaches out and takes the lid off
the urn in Raju's hand.

RAJU
Tell the truth or Papa is flushed!

REAL RANCHO
Hand over Papa!

RAJU
Papa goes to the sacred sewer.

REAL RANCHO
Get Papa out of the pot.

RAJU
You pull the trigger, I pull the flush.

REAL RANCHO
I'll count to three.

FARHAN
Whom are you scaring? Fire.

फरहान
राजू, डाल दे अंदर।

FARHAN
Raju, scatter the ashes.

Raju looks into the urn. It's empty. The colour drains from his face.

रियल रैनचो
एक।

REAL RANCHO
One.

Raju looks behind Real Rancho, at the table covered with urns. He sees the correct urn there.

फरहान
अबे हम तो लुड़क जाएंगे, लेकिन साथ में तेरे पापा को भी लुड़का के जायेंगे। समझे?

FARHAN
Take us down, and Papa's going down the drain.

Raju nudges Farhan.

फरहान
क्या है?

FARHAN
What?

Real Rancho starts to panic now.

REAL RANCHO
Two.

An incensed Farhan continues his verbal barrage.

फरहान
फिर छलनी से छान छान के निकालते रहना अपने पापा को।

FARHAN
Then grope for him in the gutter.

Raju gets up and taps Farhan.

फरहान
क्या है?

FARHAN
What is it, Raju?

राजू
(*in a low voice*)
हम गलत लोटा ले आये यार। ये तो खाली
है।

फरहान
(*flabbergasted*)
खाली?

रियल रैनचो
खाली?

फरहान
(*in a frenzy*)
खाली कर देंगे, खाली कर देंगे, मैं कह रहा हूँ
खाली कर देंगे।

रियल रैनचो
(*fearfully*)
नहीं, नहीं, नहीं।

फरहान
खाली कर देंगे, खाली कर देंगे!

Farhan's shaking hands drop the lid into
the commode. Real Rancho panics and
throws down his gun, raising his hands
in surrender.

रियल रैनचो
नहीं! हैण्ड्स अप।

Silence descends on the room. Farhan and
Raju look at Real Rancho warily. Slowly,
Raju kneels by the pot again.

राजू
(*threateningly*)
चल बता, बता कौन है तू?

RAJU
We've got the wrong urn. It's empty!

FARHAN
Empty?

REAL RANCHO
Empty?

FARHAN
Empty – we'll empty it out!

REAL RANCHO
No, no!

FARHAN
We'll empty it out

REAL RANCHO
No! Hands up!

RAJU
Who are you?

रियल रैनचो
अरे मैं रणछोड़दास हूँ यार।

REAL RANCHO
I am Ranchhoddas.

Raju jerks the urn downward, into the commode.

रियल रैनचो
(*yelling out in alarm*)
आ ... ये! नहीं, पापा की सौगंध, पापा की सौगंध, सच बोल रहा हूँ, यार! मैं ही रणछोड़दास हूँ। वो तो छोटे था।

REAL RANCHO
I swear on Papa, it's true. I am Ranchhodas!
That was Chhote.

राजू/फरहान
छोटे?

RAJU / FARHAN
Chhote?

INT. BATHROOM, CHANCHAD
B H A W A N , S H I M L A –
CONTINUOUS

Farhan, Raju and Real Rancho sit on the bathroom floor. Raju is still holding onto the urn. Farhan holds Real Rancho's rifle, it's barrel pointing upward, away from everyone.

Real Rancho launches into his story.

रियल रैनचो
वो हमारे माली का बेटा था। सब लोग उसे छोटे बुलाते थे। मां बाप के गुज़रने के बाद भी पापा ने उसे घर में रहने दिया। घर के ऑड जॉब्स करता था। बल्ब बदलना, अंडे ब्रेड ले आना, इस्त्री करना, लाइक ... पढ़ने का बड़ा शौक था।

REAL RANCHO
He was our gardener's son. Everyone called him Chhote. He stayed on with us after he was orphaned. He did odd jobs around the house, ran errands. He had a passion for learning.

FLASHBACK

Chhote (10 years) enters a school compound and pauses, looking around, adjusting his ill-fitted tie. Then, a gradual smile lights up his face. He starts walking.

रियल रैन्चो (V.O.)

वो मेरा पुराना यूनिफॉर्म पहन के स्कूल में घुस आता था। जो क्लास पसंद आये उसमें जाके बैठ जाता था।

Chhote sits in a classroom, smiling, happy to be there.

He studies on a bench in the school compound. Real Rancho (10 years) runs up to him with a pile of books and mouths some instructions to him. Chhote grins good-naturedly.

रियल रैन्चो (V.O.)

मैं उसका फायदा लेता था। उससे अपना होमवर्क भी करवाता था और इग्जैम के पेपर्स भी लिखवाता था। मेरी अच्छी कट रही थी ... फिर एक दिन ...

Chhote writes on the board of an empty classroom, solving a complex mathematical equation.

A TEACHER watches him from the door of the classroom.

रियल रैन्चो (V.O.)

मास्टरजी ने देखा की छठी क्लास का एक बच्चा दसवीं के मैथ्स प्रोबलमस सौल्व कर रहा है।

मास्टरजी

कौन सी क्लास में हो बेटा? नाम क्या है तुम्हारा?

Chhote turns and looks at the teacher, wide eyed with fright and guilt.

REAL RANCHO

He'd wear my old uniform and slip into school. And attend any class he liked.

REAL RANCHO

I took advantage of him. I made him do my homework, take my exams. It was going well, till one day ...

REAL RANCHO

Our teacher saw a sixth grader doing tenth grade math.

TEACHER

Which grade are you in, son? What's your name?

रियल रैन्चो (V.O.)

हम पकड़े गये। पापा बड़े आदमी थे, इसलिए मास्टरजी ने प्रिंसिपल को बताने से पहले उन्हें बताना ठीक समझा।

The Teacher leads Chhote down a school corridor.

INT. CHANCHAD BHAWAN, SHIMLA
– DAY

An imposing looking man, SHAMALDAS CHANCHAD, sits in his grandiose home. Chhote and the Teacher stand before him.

श्यामलदास

शुरूआत तुमने की है, तो खतम भी तुम ही करोगे।

Shamaldas rises from his leather sofa and goes up to the Teacher.

श्यामलदास

पूरे हिमाचल में लोग मुझे सलाम ठोकते हैं, और मेरे घूमते ही, मेरी पीठ के पीछे अंगूठा छाप कहते हैं। मेरे बेटे के साथ ऐसा नहीं होगा।

(glancing at Chhote)

इसे विद्या चाहिए, और मुझे सिर्फ डिग्री। जैसा चल रहा है वैसा चलने दें। इन्जिनियर बनाइये इस लौंडे को। और रणछोड़दास के नाम की डिग्री वहाँ उस दिवार पे चाहिए, मुझे।

END OF FLASHBACK

INT. BATHROOM, CHANCHAD
BHAWAN, SHIMLA – DAY

Real Rancho continues his reminiscing.

REAL RANCHO

We got caught. Papa was a powerful man, so our teacher alerted him before going to the Principal.

SHAMALDAS

You started it, you will finish it.

SHAMALDAS

People pretend to show me respect, but behind my back they mock me as an illiterate. I won't let that happen to my son. This boy wants to study. I want just a degree. Let the game go on. Make this kid an engineer and I'll have a degree in my son's name on that wall.

रियल रैन्चो

मैं चार साल के लिये लंदन चला गया और वो मेरे नाम से आइसीइ में पढ़ता रहा। पापा के साथ डील थी कि डिग्री मिलने के बाद आइसीइ के किसी आदमी से लाइफ में नहीं मिलेगा।

Deeply moved by the story, Farhan and Raju are in tears.

रियल रैन्चो

वो अक्सर कहता था – मैं तो नहीं मिलूंगा, पर एक दिन दो इंडियट आयेंगे मुझे ढूढ़ते हुए। तब तुम लोग क्या करोगे?

Farhan and Raju smile.

रियल रैन्चो

बहुत मिस करता है तुम दोनों को। मैं एड्रेस देता हूँ। जाओ उसके पास। पर मेरा ये सीक्रेट किसी को मत बताना यार।

Farhan and Raju exchange a look and speak together.

फरहान / राजू
कौन सा सीक्रेट?

Raju places the urn in front of Real Rancho.

EXT. CHANCHAD BHAWAN, SHIMLA
– CONTINUOUS

Real Rancho stands in his driveway, watching Chatur's SUV zoom away. He turns from the SUV with a sigh of relief and looks down at the urn in his hands. He lifts the lid to look inside and does a double take. He peers into

REAL RANCHO

I went to London for four years, he went to college as me. He'd promised to cut contact with all after getting the degree.

REAL RANCHO

But he always said, "I will not meet but then what will you people do? Two idiots will come looking for me."

REAL RANCHO

He really misses you both. I'll give you his address, go to him. But please keep my secret.

FARHAN / RAJU

What secret?

it, upturns it – to no avail. It's empty.
In panic and anger, he yells after the
retreating SUV.

रियल रैन्चो
पा ... आये!

REAL RANCHO
Papa!

Just then, an attendant rushes to him with
a similar urn in his hands.

अटेंडेंट
साहबजी, आप गलत लोटा ले आये। बड़े साहब
तो इसमें हैं।

ATTENDANT
You got the wrong urn, Sir. Papa is in
here.

EXT. ROADS – MOMENTS LATER

From the backseat of the SUV, an anxious
Chatur pesters Farhan and Raju.

चतुर
ए वौट द हेल इज़ गोइंग ऑन? ये गन वाला
आदमी कौन है?

CHATUR
What the hell's going on? Who was that
gun guy?

Raju is at the wheel. Farhan is sitting
next to him.

राजू
अबे बहुत कम्प्लीकेटिड स्टोरी है, और बिना
सबटाईटल के है। तेरे को नहीं समझ आएगी।

RAJU
Complicated story. Without subtitles. You
will not understand.

फरहान
इग्नौर कर। इग्नौर कर।

FARHAN
Ignore it.

चतुर
हम कहाँ जा रहे हैं?

CHATUR
Where are we going?

फरहान
लद्दाख।

FARHAN
Ladakh.

CHATUR
Ladakh! Why?

फरहान
रैन्चो से मिलने।

चतुर
वो लद्दाख में है? वहाँ क्या कर रहे हैं?

फरहान
पता नहीं। लेकिन ये कोई स्कूल का एड्रेस है।

CHATUR
School teacher?

Chatur brays with laughter, in his typical style.

चतुर
मास्टरजी? आइ ऐम वाइस प्रेजिडेन्ट ऑफ रौकलयज़ कॉर्पोरेशन और वो ... ए फॉर ऐपल, बी फॉर बॉल।

RAJU
D for Donkey man!

चतुर
नैक्स्ट वीक में फुनसुख वांगडू के साथ मल्टी मिलियन डॉलर डील साइन करूंगा और वो ...

A clothes peg holds a notepad dangling from the rear view mirror of the SUV. Raju pulls it off and clips it onto his nose, as Farhan plugs cotton into his ears, both shutting out Chatur.

FARHAN
To meet Rancho.

CHATUR
What's he doing in Ladakh?

FARHAN
No clue. We have the address of a school.

CHATUR
I'm Vice President of Rockledge Corporation, and he ... A for Apple, B for Ball ...

CHATUR
Next week I will sign a huge deal with Phunsukh Wangdu and he ...

चतुर

ए फॉर ऐपल, बी फॉर बाल। हा ... हा।
बड़ी बड़ी बातें करता था ... डोन्ट कम्पीट
... को-ऑपरेट ...

फरहान (V.O.)

आज उस कमीने रैन्वो के लिए इज्जत और
भी बढ़ गई। हम सब तो कॉलेज सिर्फ डिग्री
पाने के लिये जाते थे, डिग्री नहीं होगी तो
नौकरी नहीं होगी, नौकरी नहीं होगी तो कोई
बाप अपनी बेटी नहीं देगा, बैंक क्रेडिट कार्ड
नहीं देगी, दुनियां रिसपैक्ट नहीं देगी, लेकिन वो
साला कॉलेज डिग्री के लिए नहीं, सिर्फ पढ़ने
के लिए आया था। उसे ना लास्ट का डर था।
ना फर्स्ट आने का लालच।

The SUV travels through stunning
landscapes. Farhan looks out of the window,
remembering.

FLASHBACK:

INT. AUDITORIUM, ICE – DAY

The auditorium is packed with students.
They listen to the commanding voice of
the Director.

डाइरेक्टर

मून पे कदम रखने वाला पहला इन्सान कौन
था?

Chatur, sitting in the front row, pipes
up eagerly, along with almost everyone
else.

CHATUR / STUDENTS

Neil Armstrong, Sir.

CHATUR

And he ... A for Apple, B for Ball ...

FARHAN

Today my respect for that idiot shot up.
Most of us went to college just for a
degree. No degree meant no plum job,
no pretty wife ... no credit card, no social
status. None of this mattered to him. He
was in college for the joy of learning. He
never cared if he was first or last.

DIRECTOR

Who was the first man on the Moon?

DIRECTOR

Obviously, it is Neil Armstrong. We all know it. Who was the second?

A beat.

DIRECTOR

Don't waste your time, it's not important. Nobody remembers the man who comes second.

Rancho, Farhan and Raju, sitting together in the back row, exchange looks.

डाइरेक्टर

दो महीने बाद, छब्बीस कंपनियाँ इस कैम्पस में आयेंगी, आपको जॉब्स ऑफर करने के लिए। उसका मतलब ये है आपके फाइनल इग्जैमस के पहले, आपके हाथ में जॉब्स होंगे।

Unimpressed by the Director's words, Rancho shifts restlessly. He glances at his friends. They're both transfixed by the Director.

DIRECTOR

This is your last lap, my friends Put the medal on the pedal. Accelerator dabao. Go out there and make history!

The auditorium reverberates with applause.

DIRECTOR

Any questions?

Raju raises his hand tentatively.

DIRECTOR

Yes?

DIRECTOR

Soon, 26 companies will be here with job offers. You'll have a job even before your final exam.

राजू
सर ... सपोज़ ... किसी स्टूडन्ट को जॉब मिल जाए
... और वो फाइनल्स में एक दो मार्क्स से फेल
हो जाए ... तो क्या। जॉब ... रहेगी या ...?

Chatur and a few other students snigger.

डाइरेक्टर
(*sarcastically*)
वैरी गुड क्वेश्चन? और कोई है जिसके मन में
ये सवाल उठता है।

Farhan raises his hand.

DIRECTOR
(*raising his eyebrows*)
As expected.

A beat.

DIRECTOR
Please come on stage. Everybody give them
a big hand. Come on stage. Come!

Students start clapping. Rancho rubs
his hand across his face in exasperation.
Looking trapped, Farhan and Raju make
their way slowly to the stage.

डाइरेक्टर
आइये, आइये, डौन्ट वेस्ट माइ टाइम!

As Farhan and Raju climb the steps to
the stage, the Director goes up to them,
continuing to speak.

डाइरेक्टर
पिछले चार साल से ये आइसीइ के सबसे
कंसीस्टेंट स्टूडेन्ट्स रहे हैं। क्योंकि ये कंसीस्टेंटली
हर इग्जैम में लास्ट आये हैं।

RAJU
Sir, suppose a student gets a job. But
narrowly fails the final exam, will he still
have the job?

DIRECTOR
Very good question. Anyone else with the
same question?

DIRECTOR
Come, come, don't waste my time!

DIRECTOR
For the last four years they've been our
most consistent students. Consistently last
in every exam.

A few students laugh again, Chatur among them.

Rancho watches through narrowed, troubled eyes.

The Director leads the cringing Farhan and Raju to the centre of the stage.

डाइरेक्टर

कम माइ ज़ीनियससेस कम। इन दो ज़ीनियससेस के ब्रेन्स को निकाल के हम बाज़ार में बेचेंगे तो बहुत अच्छा प्राइस आयेगा, क्योंकि ये अनयूस्ड ब्रेन्स हैं। कभी इस्तेमाल ही नहीं किया।

Chatur brays loudly. But most students are not laughing anymore. Rancho looks deeply disturbed and angry.

डाइरेक्टर

एण्ड टू आन्सर दियर क्वेशन। इनके पास या फेल होने से इनके जॉब्स पे कोई असर नहीं पड़ने वाला। क्योंकि इनको जॉब्स मिलने वाली ही नहीं है। आइ गारान्टी इट। इनका नाम गोल्ड में लिखा जायेगा। फरहाननाइट्रेट एण्ड प्रीराजूलाइज़ेशन।

As Farhan and Raju stand there, battered, the Director stares piercingly at Rancho. Rancho looks back at him steadily, anger flashing in his eyes.

DIRECTOR

Give them a big hand, please everybody.

The Director starts clapping. No one else joins in.

DIRECTOR

Come my geniuses, come. Their brains will fetch a handsome price. 'Cause they're completely unused.

DIRECTOR

And to answer their question, the exam won't affect their jobs because no company will hire them anyway! They're so unique, their names will be written in gold – 'Farhanitrate' and 'Prerajulisation'.

EXT. WATER TANK STEPS, ICE –
NIGHT

Rancho, Farhan and Raju sprawl on the wide steps leading up to the tank. They are drunk.

फरहान

(slurring)

साले ने पूरा बलात्कार कर दिया। सामूहिक बलात्कार, यू नो। इन फ्रन्ट ऑफ सबके सामने।

Raju suddenly raises his hand to the heavens.

राजू

(shouting)

भगवान! मैं नॉन-वैज़ छोड़ दूंगा, हज़ारों अगरबत्तियाँ जलाऊंगा,

(stumbling to his feet)

बस एक काम कर दे। वायरस को इस दुनिया से उठा ले।

Rancho cracks up, holding on to Farhan's shoulder.

राजू

नरक में जला उसे। गरम तेल में पकौड़े बना उसके, भगवान!

रैन्चो

ऐ, भगवान को सुपारी दे रहा है क्या?

Rancho sips his drink, still laughing.

फरहान

(to Rancho)

ए साले तू चुप बैठ, हाँ। साला हर साल तू

FARHAN

He screwed us! In front of everyone.

RAJU

God, I'll give up meat, light a 1000 incense sticks. Do me just one favor – pick Virus from this world!

RAJU

Burn him in hell. Fry Virus-nuggets in bubbling hot oil, God!

RANCHO

You think God is a contract killer?

FARHAN

You shut up. You're in the centre of the photo every year. We're rotting in the

वायरस के साथ सैन्टर में बैठ के फोटो खिचवाता है, हम लोग साले साइड में खड़े रहे होते हैं, हाँ! इस साल तो लगता है कि साला हम फोटोग्राफ के बाहर ही लुढ़क जाएंगे।

रैन्चो

ए, पता है मैं फर्स्ट क्यों आता हूँ?

फरहान

क्यों?

रैन्चो

क्योंकि मुझे मशीनों से प्यार है। इन्जिनियरिंग मेरा पैशन है, पैशन। तेरा पैशन पता है क्या है?

Rancho grabs Farhan's rucksack from next to him.

फरहान

अबे वो मेरा बैग है।

रैन्चो

ए, चुप रह!

फरहान

तू क्या कर रहा है रैन्चो!

Rancho opens the bag and empties it, picking out an envelope from the spilled contents.

फरहान

अबे! अरे!

रैन्चो

(holding up the envelope)

तेरा पैशन ये है, ये ये ये। ये लैटर जा के पोस्ट कर।

corner. This year we may fall out of the photo altogether.

RANCHO

Know why I come first?

FARHAN

Why?

RANCHO

Because I love machines. Engineering is my passion. Know your passion?

FARHAN

That's my bag.

RANCHO

Be quiet.

FARHAN

What are you up to?

FARHAN

Hey!

RANCHO

This ... is your passion. Go post this letter.

राजू
अरे लेकिन है क्या वो?

Farhan snatches the envelope from Rancho.

Rancho snatches the envelope back from Farhan.

फरहान
अरे!

रैन्चो
पांच साल पहले उसने ये खत लिखा था।
अपने फ़ैवरिट वाइल्ड लाइफ़ फोटोग्राफर को।
आंद्रे ...

FARHAN
Istvan.

रैन्चो
हाँ, इस्तवान। उसके पास जाके, हंगरी जाके
काम सीखना चाहता था वो। लेकिन अपने बाप
हिटलर कुरेशी के डर से उसने कभी ये लैटर
पोस्ट ही नहीं किया ...

Raju sips his rum and chuckles appreciatively
at the nickname.

रैन्चो
अरे इन्ज़िनियरिंग छोड़ और वाइल्ड लाइफ़ फोटोग्राफर
बन। वो काम कर जिसमें तेरा टैलन्ट है।

A beat.

रैन्चो
अगर लता मंगेशकर के फादर ने उसे बोला होता
कि तू फास्ट बौलर बन जा, या सचिन तेंदुलेकर
के फादर ने उसे बोला होता कि तू सिंगर बन
जा, तो सोच आज वो कहाँ होते?

RAJU
What is it?

FARHAN
Hey!

RANCHO
5 years ago he wrote this for his favorite
wildlife photographer, André ...

RANCHO
He wanted to train with him in Hungary.
But in fear of his dad, Hitler Qureshi,
never posted it.

RANCHO
Quit engineering, marry photography,
follow your talent.

RANCHO
If Lata Mangeshkar's dad forced her to
be a fast bowler and Sachin Tendulkar's
dad pushed him to be a singer, imagine
the disaster?

Rancho fixes his gaze on Farhan.

रैन्चो

तु समझ रहा है, मैं क्या बोल रहा हूँ? साले इश्क करता है जानवरो से, ओर शादी कर रहा है मशीनों से।

Raju gets on his haunches and bows his head in front of Rancho.

राजू

बाबा रणछोड़दास मेरी गर्ल फ्रेंड और वाइफ दोनों इन्जिनियरिंग हैं। फिर मैं लास्ट क्यों आता हूँ?

फरहान

अब बोल!

रैन्चो

(to Raju)

क्योंकि तू डरपोक है। डरपोक। ये देख, इसका हाथ देख। उंगलियाँ कम हैं, अंगूठियाँ ज्यादा हैं। ये इग्जैम के लिए, एक बहन की शादी के लिए, एक जॉब के लिए। अरे फ्यूचर से इतना डरेगा, तो क्या खाक जियेगा। और फोकस कहाँ करेगा, आज मैं?

रैन्चो

अज़ीब दोस्त मिले हैं यार।

(indicating Raju)

एक डर डर के जीता है,

(indicating Farhan)

एक साला मर मर के।

Farhan is struck by a thought.

फरहान

ऐ! पर तू तो साला दोनों करता है! डरता भी है और मरता भी है!

RANCHO

Do you get it? Idiot! Loves Photography, but is marrying machines.

RAJU

Your Holiness Guru Ranchhoddas engineering is my girlfriend and wife both. But I still fail. Why?

FARHAN

Explain.

RANCHO

'Cause you're a coward. Scared of the future. Look at this, more holy rings than fingers. One ring per fear: exam, sister's dowry and job. With such fear of tomorrow, how will you live today? How will you focus on studies?

RANCHO

Strange buddies! One lives in fear and the other in pretense.

FARHAN

You live in both – fear and pretense.

रैन्चो
ऐ! मैं डरता नहीं हूँ!

फरहान
ऐ! ऐ सुन ना! ये ना, पिया पे मरता है, लेकिन
बोलने को डरता है!

राजू
हाँ!

Farhan and Raju guffaw with laughter at
their observation.

रैन्चो
ऐ! चल, चल, ऐ हट! हट!

राजू
फ्री एडवाइज़ देना ईज़ी है काके। करना
मुश्किल।
(*challengingly*)
हैं हिम्मत तो जा के पिया को बोल!

रैन्चो
ऐ!

राजू
बोल

रैन्चो
(*protesting weakly*)
क्या तुम लोग कहाँ का कहाँ कनेक्शन जौइन
कर रहे हो यार।

राजू
फुल कनेक्शन है बाबा।

फरहान
मेरी बात सुन, मेरी बात सुन! मैं क्या बोलता

RANCHO
Hey! I am not scared!

FARHAN
Listen, he loves Pia but is scared to tell
her ...

RAJU
Yes!

RANCHO
What rubbish!

RAJU
Easy to offer free advice, tough to follow
it. Have the guts? Go confess to Pia.

RANCHO
Hey!

RAJU
Say!

RANCHO
There's no connection!

RAJU
Deep connection, Your Holiness.

FARHAN
Listen, if you confess to Pia. I'll tell

हूँ – अगर तू पिया को अपनी दिल की बात जाके बोलेगा ना तो मैं भी जा के अब्बा से बोलूंगा कि मुझे फोटोग्राफर बनना है, और इन्जिनियर नहीं बनना।

राजू
हाँ!

फरहान
हाँ!

राजू
मैं भी अपनी अंगूठियां निकाल के इन्टरव्यू देने जाऊंगा! ले बोल!

फरहान
बोल, है क्या हिम्मत?

The words of his friends seem to have set wheels in motion in Rancho's mind.

राजू
अरे बाबा की बोलती बंद, बोलेगा क्या!

Rancho gets on his feet. He descends a few steps unsteadily.

रैन्चो
चल।

Farhan and Raju don't move from where they are. Rancho takes a gulp of his drink, almost as if he is gathering courage.

रैन्चो
चल।

His friends finally pay attention.

Dad – No engineering, I'm marrying photography.

RAJU
Yes!

FARHAN
Yes!

RAJU
And I'll dump my rings before the job interview. Deal?

FARHAN
Have the guts?

RAJU
His Holiness is speechless.

RANCHO
Let's go.

RANCHO
Follow me.

फरहान
किधर?

FARHAN
Where?

राजू
कहाँ?

RAJU
Where?

Rancho descends a few more steps. A reckless smile comes onto his face.

रैन्चो
चल।

RANCHO
Let's go.

राजू
कहाँ?

RAJU
Where?

EXT. GATE, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE,
ICE – MOMENTS LATER

The Director's house is in darkness except for the florescent lamps lighting the driveway. The nameplate at the gate reads 'Virus Sahastrabuddhe'.

Farhan falls on the nameplate.

फरहान
वीरू, जय आ गया है वीरू

FARHAN
Hey Virus! I'm anti-Virus.

Raju peers through the bars of the closed gate.

राजू
ऐ देख लो, कोई डौगी वौगी तो नहीं है।

RAJU
Hope no dog here.

रैन्चो
ऐ डरपोक, मैं डरता नहीं हूँ। चल।

RANCHO
Cowards! Let's go.

Rancho pushes open the gate.

फरहान

ए, तुम लोग घुसो। बाहर कोई डेन्जर आयेगा तो मैं वायरस अलर्ट दूंगा।

Farhan makes the sound of a siren.

राजू

श... श....

FARHAN

If there is any danger, I'll give the Virus alert.

RAJU

Shh, sshh!

INT. DIRECTOR'S BEDROOM,
DIRECTOR'S HOUSE, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

The Director, fast asleep in his bed, gives a start, but continues sleeping.

EXT. GARDEN, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE,
ICE – CONTINUOUS

Rancho and Raju steal through the garden to a trellis grill attached to a wall of the house. They start climbing the grill.

EXT. GATE, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE,
ICE – CONTINUOUS

Farhan attacks the Director's nameplate with a rock.

EXT. GARDEN, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE,
ICE – CONTINUOUS

Rancho and Raju have climbed the trellis and reached the top of the wall.

EXT. GATE, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE,
ICE – CONTINUOUS

Farhan has gouged out key alphabets from the Director's nameplate. The nameplate now reads 'Virus buddhe'.

फरहान
साले, वायरस बुद्धे।

FARHAN
Beware – Virus inside.

INT. PIA'S ROOM, DIRECTOR'S
HOUSE, ICE – CONTINUOUS

Rancho and Raju are at an open bedroom window. The bedroom is dark, just the outline of a sleeping figure under a quilt, on the bed is visible.

As Raju takes a swig from his rum bottle, Rancho climbs into the room clumsily.

राजू
हो ...

RAJU
Hoi ...

रैन्चो
श ...

RANCHO
Shh!

EXT. DRIVEWAY, DIRECTOR'S
HOUSE, ICE – CONTINUOUS

Farhan deflates the tyres of the Director's car, laughing delightedly.

INT. PIA'S ROOM, DIRECTOR'S
HOUSE, ICE – CONTINUOUS

Rancho weaves his way to the bed. The person sleeping on the bed is completely covered by a quilt – except for her hand.

Plonking down on a stool beside the bed, Rancho smiles at the hand.

Raju makes himself comfortable on the window sill. He picks up a guitar lying near the window.

राजू
हे! मैं बैकग्राउण्ड म्यूज़िक दूँ?

रैन्चो
पिया!

The quilt moves suddenly.

मोना
कौन है?

Rancho clasps down on the hand to stop it from moving.

रैन्चो
श ... चिल्लाना मत। मैं रणछोड़दास छांछड़।
दो मिनट मेरी बात सुन लेना फिर मैं चला जाऊंगा।

Raju starts singing.

राजू
कुछ ना कहो...

रैन्चो
पिया ... तुम्हारे साथ स्कूटर पे बिताये वो बाइस मिनट ... मेरी ज़िन्दगी के सबसे खूबसूरत बाइस मिनट थे।

Dream sequence cut – Rancho and Pia cootchie-coo on Pia's scooter, Raju's Father sitting between them.

रैन्चा
मैं अपनी पूरी लाइफ तुम्हारे साथ स्कूटर पे बिता सकता हूँ।

The hand sticking out from under the blanket makes a thumbs-up sign.

RAJU
Need background score?

RANCHO
Pia!

MONA
Who's it?

RANCHO
Don't yell! It's me, Ranchhoddas Chanchad.
Just listen for a moment, then I'm gone
Say not a word ...

RAJU
Say not a word ...

RANCHO
Pia ... Those 22 minutes with you on the scooter were the most enchanting 22 minutes of my life.

RANCHO
I could spend an eternity with you on the scooter.

MONA
Wow!

Raju continues to sing.

राजू
थम्म सा गया है।

Rancho takes 'Pia's hand' in his hands.

रैन्चो
पता है, तुम रोज़ दुल्हन के कास्ट्यूम में स्कूटर
पर बैठ कर मेरे सपनों में आती हो।

Dream sequence cut – a smiling Pia rides
her scooter wearing bridal finery and her
helmet.

रैन्चो
घूँघट की जगह अपना हेल्मेट उठाती हो ...

Dream sequence cut – the hint of a smile on
her face, Pia walks purposefully, removing
her helmet as she walks.

रैन्चो
और मुझे किस्स करने मेरे पास आती हो।

Dream sequence cut – Pia and Rancho's
faces close in for a kiss.

रैन्चो
लेकिन वो किस्स हो नहीं पाती यार।

मोना
(*gesturing with her hand*)
क्यों?

RANCHO

Every night you ride into my dreams on
your scooter, dressed as a bride.

RANCHO

Instead of a veil, you lift your helmet

RANCHO

... and come close to kiss me.

RANCHO

But that kiss doesn't happen.

MONA

Why?

रैन्चो

क्योंकि नाक बीच में आ जाती है, और फिर मैं जाग जाता हूँ।

The hand Rancho is talking to, slams on a light switch. The light comes on to reveal the person the hand belongs to, as she sits up.

मोना

नाक बीच में नहीं आती है स्टुपिड!

Rancho recoils with shock at the sight of Mona, falling off the stool.

Raju gets ready to make a run for it.

रैन्चो

आइ ऐम सॉरी ... मुझे लगा तुम पिया हो।

मोना

(wistfully)

काश होती।

From under the quilt next to Mona, Pia emerges.

पिया

दीदी! बीच में क्यों टोका! चार साल लगे इसको यह बोलने को।

मोना

(enthusiastically)

पिया इसे किस करके बता की नाक बीच में नहीं आती है! मेरी परमीशन है तुझे! किस हिम यार, ही इज़ सो क्यूट।

रैन्चो

(befuddled)

ये कौन है?

RANCHO

Because the noses collide, and I wake up.

MONA

The noses never collide, stupid!

RANCHO

I'm sorry, I thought you were Pia.

MONA

I wish I was.

PIA

Sister, why did you interrupt? It took him four years to say this.

MONA

Pia, kiss him. Show that noses don't collide. You have my permission, kiss him... He's so cute!

RANCHO

Who's this?

पिया
दीदी!

PIA
My sister!

मोना
(looking at Raju)
तुम कौन हो?

MONA
Who are you?

Panicking, Raju drops the guitar and swings out of the window.

EXT. GARDEN, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE,
ICE – CONTINUOUS

Raju jumps off the wall leading from the window, and lands in the garden below, with a loud thud.

EXT. DIRECTOR'S BEDROOM,
DIRECTOR'S HOUSE, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

The Director starts in his sleep again.

EXT. GARDEN, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE,
ICE – CONTINUOUS

Finding himself still in one piece, Raju trills with laughter. The rum bottle in his hand is intact too, and he takes a celebratory swig from it, still lying on the ground.

EXT. PIA'S ROOM, DIRECTOR'S
HOUSE, ICE – CONTINUOUS

Pia is sitting up in bed, and Mona stands beside it, talking to Rancho. Mona is in an advanced stage of pregnancy.

मोना
(excitedly, holding her belly)
पता है, जब तुम बात कर रहे थे ना, ही
किक्ड। फर्स्ट टाइम।

MONA
When you were talking, he kicked. First
time!

रैन्चो

हे? तुम्हें कैसे मालूम की वो 'ही' है या 'शी'?

मोना

पापा ने ज्योतिष से पूछा था। ही वान्टेड टू नो कि घर में इंजिनियर आ रहा है या डॉक्टर।

रैन्चो

(*confused*)

मतलब?

पिया

मतलब – लड़का हुआ तो इंजिनियर, लड़की हुई तो डॉक्टर।

Rancho addresses Mona's belly.

रैन्चो

ओए चैम्प ... तू अंदर ही रह भाई। बाहर बहुत सर्कस है। और इस सर्कस का रिंगमास्टर है ना, तेरा नाना, वो हंटर घुमाएगा और बोलेगा भागो, लाइफ इज़ अ रेस, भागो, इंजिनियर बनो। लेकिन तू वोही बनना जो तेरा दिल बोले। ज्यादा डरायेगा ना, अपने दिल पे हाथ रखना और बोलना ऑल इज़ वेल।

Mona stiffens with surprise.

मोना

(*holding her belly*)

हहहह! ही किक्ड! फिर से बोलो "ऑल इज़ वेल"।

रैन्चो / पिया

ऑल इज़ वेल।

RANCHO

He? How do you know the baby is a 'he' or 'she'?

MONA

Papa asked the astrologer if we'd get an engineer or a doctor.

RANCHO

Meaning?

PIA

Boy becomes an engineer, girl a doctor.

RANCHO

Champ, better stay inside. Out here it's a circus. Your grandpa is the ringmaster. He'll crack his whip – "Run! Life is a race. Be an engineer". But you follow your heart. If Grandpa scares you then put your hand on your heart and say, "Aal izz well".

MONA

Ha! He kicked! Say it again "Aal izz well".

RANCHO / PIA

Aal izz well!

मोना
(*gasps*)
ह मारा! मारा! पिया बोलो।

Mona takes Pia and Rancho's hands and places them on her belly along with her own.

रैन्चो / पिया / मोना
(*loudly, in unison*)
ऑल इज़ वेल।

All three of them feel the baby's kick at the same time and are overjoyed.

From outside comes another, much louder chant. Rancho, Pia and Mona look up in alarm.

फरहान / राजू (O.S.)
ऑल...

MONA
Kicked again. Once more – “Aal izz well”.

RANCHO / PIA / MONA
Aal izz well!

FARHAN / RAJU
Aal...

EXT. FRONT DOOR, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE, ICE – CONTINUOUS

Farhan and Raju urinate into the Director's mailbox.

फरहान / राजू (O.S.)
... इज़ वेल!

FARHAN / RAJU
... izz well!

INT. DIRECTOR'S BEDROOM, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE, ICE – CONTINUOUS

The Director wakes up with a start.

डाइरेक्टर
कौन है!

DIRECTOR
Who is it?

INT. PIA'S ROOM, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE, ICE – CONTINUOUS

In panic, Pia pushes Rancho towards the window.

PIA
Go!

EXT. FRONT DOOR, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE, ICE – CONTINUOUS

Oblivious to the imminent threat, Farhan and Raju are still urinating on the Director's mailbox.

फरहान
अब्बा को चिट्ठी भेजता है! ये ले – हमारी तरफ से – पी मेल!

FARHAN
You sent hate-mail to Dad, here's pee-mail for you!

INT. LIVING ROOM, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE, ICE – CONTINUOUS

The Director heads to the front door with a torch.

EXT. FRONT DOOR, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE, ICE – CONTINUOUS

Rancho reaches his friends in a run. He pulls them away from the mailbox.

The lights inside the house come on.

राजू
कबूतर जा! कबूतर जा, जा, जा, जा, जा।
कबूतर जा, जा ...

RAJU
Enjoy the pee-mail, happy reading!

The trio charges away from the house.

फरहान
(as Rancho flings Raju's blanket over him)
ये मेरे पे नहीं रे।

FARHAN
Not on me buddy!

The front door opens and the Director rushes out.

डाइरेक्टर
कौन है?

DIRECTOR
Who is it?

He skids on the urine-slick floor, steadying himself in time.

डाइरेक्टर
कौन है ...?

DIRECTOR
Who is it?

फरहान
(yells)
तेरा होने वाला दामाद, साले वायरस।

FARHAN
Your future son-in-law.

The Director sees three people run out of his gate.

As the other two run out of sight, Raju, with drunk bravado, fires a parting shot.

राजू
और बाराती...

RAJU
And the wedding party!

For just a moment, the randomly moving beam of the Director's torch catches Raju's face, before his friends yank him away.

डाइरेक्टर
रस्तोगी!

DIRECTOR
Rastogi!

INT. BUILDING FOYER, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

The three run into a college building,
whooping and laughing.

EXT. GATE, DIRECTOR'S HOUSE,
ICE – CONTINUOUS

The Director hurries down his driveway,
pointing his torch in the direction the
boys ran in.

डाइरेक्टर
सिक्कूरिटि ... उस तरफ ... उस तरफ ...

DIRECTOR
Security, that way!

INT. BUILDING STAIRS, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

The trio runs up a flight of steps in the
college building.

INT. BUILDING FOYER, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

A security guard runs into the building,
flashing his torch around searchingly.

INT. BUILDING CORRIDOR, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

The trio charges down a corridor, Raju still
swilling down rum from his bottle.

INT. CLASSROOM, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

The boys barge into a classroom, hooting
with delight. They vault over desks and
dive to the ground, just in time.

The security guard enters the classroom
and flashes his torch around. He doesn't

see anyone. He leaves, shutting the door behind him.

INT. CLASSROOM, ICE – NEXT MORNING

The trio is fast asleep on the ground, behind desks and chairs

PROFESSOR

So you all have already learnt about the simple pendulum. Now let's get down to the advanced study about the compound pendulum. It's an irregular object oscillating about its own axis. Let me demonstrate to you.

Rancho wakes up, disoriented. He glances at his sleeping friends, then creeps up to a desk and peers over it. The classroom is packed with students. A Professor is teaching. He holds up pencil.

PROFESSOR

What's this?

CLASS

Pencil.

PROFESSOR

What's inside?

CLASS

Lead.

Rancho's peeping head is joined by Farhan's. Both sets of eyes go wide with horror.

Rancho and Farhan straighten up stealthily and slide into chairs at the back of the class.

PROFESSOR

Good. Lead is the axis to this pencil. Even you can be a compound pendulum, if you oscillate about ...

The Director strides into the classroom, snapping his fingers at the Professor. The hapless Professor falls silent. The Director stands at the head of the class and scans it, his face contorted with anger. His gaze travels over Rancho and Farhan.

डाइरेक्टर
राजू रस्तोगी कहाँ है?

DIRECTOR
Where is Raju Rastogi?

RAJU (O.S.)
Present, Sir!

Startled, Rancho and Farhan turn around as does the rest of the class.

A dishevelled and drunk Raju comes to his feet. Rancho and Farhan, trepidation on their faces, help him steady himself.

RAJU
Hi! Everybody is here!
Good Morning, Sir!

डाइरेक्टर
(*in a dangerous voice*)
कल रात तुम कहाँ थे?

DIRECTOR
Where were you last night?

Before Raju can say anything, Rancho pipes up.

रैन्चो

सर पढ़ाई कर रहा थाए सर। फुल नाईट पढ़ाई कर रहा था, सर।

RANCHO

Studying all night, Sir.

राजू

(looking at Rancho, puzzled)

अच्छा?

RAJU

Really?

डाइरेक्टर

(with mock amazement)

रियली?

DIRECTOR

Really?

Farhan joins in.

फरहान

हाँ सर दो रात से सोया नहीं इसलिए ऐसा दिख रहा है सर...

FARHAN

Hasn't slept for two nights, that's why he looks scruffy.

राजू

क्या बात कर रहे हो?

RAJU

Not slept?

Farhan and Rancho tug at Raju, trying to get him to shut up.

डाइरेक्टर

क्या पढ़ाई कर रहे थे?

DIRECTOR

What did you study?

RAJU

Aah ... hmmm ...

रैन्चो

इनडक्शन मोटर, सर। इनडक्शन मोटर। फुल पढ़ लिया सर इसने, इनडक्शन मोटर।

RANCHO

Induction motor, Sir. The whole chapter.

राजू

(to Farhan)

फुल पढ़ लिया?

RAJU

Whole chapter?

फरहान
श... श... ।

FARHAN
Shh, shh.

DIRECTOR

In that case, Mr. Raju Rastogi ...

RAJU

(shouting out, military style)

Yes, Sir!

DIRECTOR

Can you tell us how an induction motor starts?

Without hesitation, Raju brings his hands together in a loud clap, and proceeds to answer the question.

RAJU

Vrrrrrrroooooommmmmmm! Vvroom
vroom...

All the students laugh. Rancho and Farhan, horrified, try to stop Raju.

फरहान / रैन्चो
राजू ... राजू ...

FARHAN / RANCHO
Raju ... Raju ...

DIRECTOR

Stop it!

RAJU

(petering off)

Vrrrrmmm... rmm... rmm

An empty rum bottle tumbles down from under the desks.

Chatur picks up the bottle and shows it to the Director.

CHATUR
Sir, rum!

The Director looks at the still beaming Raju menacingly.

DIRECTOR
Mr. Rastogi, let's have a cup of tea in my office.

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, ICE –
LATER

Door to the Director's office opens.

Raju enters. Sober, cleaned up and humbled.

RAJU
(*meekly*)
Sir?

The Director sits at his desk, his laptop before him. He looks up, his face inscrutable.

DIRECTOR
Close the door.

Raju closes the door and stands there, fearful.

डाइरेक्टर
टाईप करना आता है?

राजू
हाँ, सर।

DIRECTOR
Can you type?

RAJU
Yes, Sir.

डाइरेक्टर
मेरे लिये एक लैटर टाईप करोगे?

DIRECTOR
Will you type a letter for me?

RAJU
(*surprised, swallowing nervously*)
Definitely, Sir.

DIRECTOR
Come, sit.

Raju walks towards the desk.

RAJU
Sir, I'm sorry, Sir ...

He sits opposite the Director. The Director turns his laptop towards him.

DIRECTOR
Please type. 'Dear Sir,

Raju starts to type diligently.

DIRECTOR
It is my painful duty to inform you that your son is rusticated ...'

Raju looks up.

DIRECTOR
No, sorry, delete that. Go back
(*as Raju starts typing again*)
Your son, Mr. Raju Rastogi...

Raju looks up, stricken.

DIRECTOR
... is rusticated from the Imperial College of Engineering. Come on, type, go on ...

Raju starts breaking down. Tears roll down his face.

राजू
(*pleadingly*)
बाबा मर जायेंगे सर।

DIRECTOR
Please type!

RAJU
Sir, please, Sir!

DIRECTOR
My decision is final and irrevocable.'

राजू
(*sobbing*)
वो ज़िन्दा सिर्फ़ इसलिए है कि मुझे इन्ज़िनियर बनता देख सकें, सर।

डाइरेक्टर
ये बात मेरे दरवाज़े पे सुसु करने से पहले सोचनी चाहिए थी।

राजू
(*begs*)
सर। एक मौका और दे दीजिए सर, प्लीज़। एक मौका दीजिए। सर प्लीज़ सर!

The clock strikes 2 pm. The door opens and Govind walks in with the shaving kit. The Director gets up from his chair.

डाइरेक्टर
ठीक है। लैटर में से अपना नाम निकाल दो। और रणछोड़दास छांछड़ का नाम डाल दो। मुझे पता है कि कल रात वो तुम्हारे साथ था। मेरे विटनेस बन जाओ और मैं तुम्हें कॉलेज़ से नहीं निकालूंगा।

RAJU
It'll kill my dad, Sir.

RAJU
He lives just to see me become an engineer.

DIRECTOR
Should've thought of that before peeing on my door.

RAJU
Sir, give me one chance ... please.

DIRECTOR
Ok, remove your name from the letter and put in Rancho's. I know he was with you last night. Be my witness and I'll spare you.

He lies down on the couch. Govind readies him for the shave.

डाइरेक्टर
तुम्हारे पास सोचने के लिए साढ़े सात मिनट है।

DIRECTOR
You have 7½ minutes to think.

Opera music fills the room. A shell-shocked Raju stands next to the desk, rooted to the spot.

As Govind begins lathering the Director, tears pour down Raju's face. Images of his Father, Mother and Sister flash before him in quick succession. And then one of Rancho enveloping him in a hug after saving his Father's life.

He starts sobbing uncontrollably at the choice he has to make.

When he finally falls silent, there's a dark hopelessness in his eyes. He starts walking. Unmindful of the wire his foot gets tangled in, he steps up on the sill of a large, open window in the room. He stands there a moment, facing the skyline.

There's a crash, and a lamp in the room is yanked towards the window.

The Director and Govind look up startled.

EXT. CAMPUS, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

PBS 5 – *JAANE NAHI DENGE TUJHE*

जाने नहीं देंगे तुझे
जाने तुझे देंगे नहीं

*We won't let go of you
We're not done yet... no way*

जाने नहीं देंगे तुझे
जाने तुझे देंगे नहीं

*We won't let go of you
We're not done yet... no way*

The lamp from the Director's room dangles outside the window, suspended by the wire Raju's foot had got tangled in.

Raju's twisted body lies on the ground, three floors below.

People rush towards him, from all over.

From under Raju's lifeless face, blood trickles out, slowly gathering momentum.

EXT. / INT. ROADS / AMBULANCE
– MOMENTS LATER

Rancho, his clothes smeared with blood, races through the traffic on Pia's scooter, making way for the ambulance behind him.

Inside the ambulance, a distraught Pia and Farhan sit with the unconscious Raju, willing him to hold on.

SONG CONTINUES

चाहे तुझको रब बुला ले
हम ना रब से डरने वाले
राहों में डटके खड़े हैं हम

*The heavens may beckon you
But we'll take up arms against God
And it's not a fight we intend to lose*

INT. HOSPITAL – CONTINUOUS

MONTAGE

- A) Raju is wheeled in on a stretcher. The Medical Staff, Rancho, Farhan and Pia all running alongside the stretcher.
- B) Doctors operate on Raju.

- C) Rancho and Farhan, in blood-stained clothes, crying and anxious, wait outside in the corridor.

SONG CONTINUES

यारों से नजरें चुरा ले
चाहे कितना दम लगा ले
जाने ना तुझको ऐसे देंगे हम ...
जाने नहीं देंगे तुझे
जाने तुझे देंगे नहीं

*You may try your best to escape
Try with all your might
But there is no way
we are letting go of you
We won't let go of you*

MUSIC FADES OUT

INT. WARD, HOSPITAL – DAY

Raju lies on a hospital bed. He is heavily bandaged and has tubes and wires coming out of his body. His eyes are open and vacant.

Rancho, Pia, Farhan and Raju's Mother are gathered at the foot of the bed.

पिया
रैन्वो... उस मोनिटर को देखना।

PIA
Rancho, watch that monitor.

Rancho looks at the monitor.

पिया
(loudly)
राजू!

PIA
Raju!

The monitor begins to beep. The numbers and graphs that denote Raju's heart rate start fluctuating.

Pia takes Farhan, Rancho and Raju's Mother away from Raju's bed.

पिया

(softly)

बाँडी शॉक के वजह से पैरालाइज़्ड हैं पर माइन्ड अलर्ट हैं। वो हमें देख सकता हैं, सुन सकता है। प्लीज़ आंटी, उसके सामने रोना नहीं। उससे नॉरमल बातें करो, मोटिवेट करो, जोक्स सुनाओ, खुश रखो।

Rancho listens to Pia intently. Suddenly something flashes in his eyes. He walks up to Raju's bed.

रैन्चो

(excitedly)

ओए राजू, गुड न्यूज़ है यार! तेरे बाबा ठीक हो गये यार। वो जो नयी दवा है ना, वो काम कर गई।

Pia, Farhan and Raju's Mother look at Rancho, puzzled.

Raju's POV: Rancho's distorted image covers the screen. His voice is distorted.

रैन्चो

रस्तोगी परिवार की कोई प्रथा है क्या... कि घर का एक मर्द उठेगा तो दूसरा लेट जायेगा। चल चल उठजा अभी।

Pia and Farhan are moved by Rancho's brave attempt at lightheartedness. Raju's Mother starts crying.

रैन्चो

पिया का स्कूटर मांग रहे है तेरे बाबा।

Raju's POV: A distorted image of Rancho speaks in a warbling voice.

PIA

His body is paralysed with shock, but his mind is alert He can see and hear us. Please don't cry in front of him. Speak to him normally, motivate him, joke around.

RANCHO

Good news, Raju. Your dad's recovered The new medicine worked.

RANCHO

Is this your family tradition? As one man in the family gets up, the other conks out? Come, wake up.

RANCHO

Your dad wants Pia's scooter.

रैन्चो

क्या बोलता है ... दे दूँ? ठोक तो नहीं देंगे?

Raju remains as still and unmoving as before. In his mind, however, he imagines in technicolour ...

EXT. INDIA GATE – DAY

Raju's Father rides Pia's scooter with a beatific smile on his face. He is still unshaven and clad in just his vest and long underwear.

INT. WARD HOSPITAL – NIGHT

Rancho carries a laptop to Raju's bed and places it on the tray table in front of him. Pia is with him.

रैन्चो

ऐ राजू, फरहान तुझसे कुछ बोलना चाहता है।
वेबकैम पर, लाइव। होस्टल से।

Farhan's face fills the laptop screen. He holds up a letter.

फरहान

ये देख – वायरस ने तेरा सस्पेन्शन कैंसल कर दिया है। प्रोब्लम सौल्वड। चल अब तो जाग जा।

रैन्चो

अब सब सौल्व हो गया है। ओए सुन रहा है?

In the common room, Farhan leans forward into the web camera, forcing a playful note into his voice.

RANCHO

Should I give it to him? Hope he won't dent it?

RANCHO

Raju, Farhan is live on webcam. From the hostel.

FARHAN

Look, Virus has cancelled your suspension order. Problem solved. ... Wake up now.

RANCHO

Everything's resolved! You hear that?

फरहान
अबे! जग ना रस्तोगी

FARHAN
Rise and shine, buddy.

Raju does not move. Farhan leans back, upset.

INT. WARD, HOSPITAL – NIGHT

MONTAGE

- A) Rancho, Farhan and Raju ride triple seat on Pia's scooter, racing to college for their exam.
- B) The three friends pop their heads out of barrels of water in the bathroom.
- C) They fool around on the bum seats.
- D) Farhan and Rancho flank a blindfolded Raju on the parapet of the tank. Rancho removes his blindfold. Raju sees where he is and jumps into Rancho's arms with fright.

Rancho sits at Raju's bedside, holding his hand in both of his, remembering all the good times they had together.

दो कदम का ये सफ़र है
उम्र छोटी सी डगर है
इक कदम में लड़खड़ाए क्यों

*In this journey of few strides
On the path called life don't quit...
Just celebrate the ride*

Rancho smiles through his tears at the memories. He looks at Raju and places a tender hand on his forehead.

सुन ले यारों की ये बातें
बीतेगी सब गम की रातें
यारों से रूठा है साले क्यों

*Listen please to those who love you
Every dark night is followed by sunrise
Don't shut out those who love you*

INT. WARD, HOSPITAL – DAY

SONG CONTINUES

जाने नहीं देंगे तुझे
जाने तुझे देंगे नहीं
जाने नहीं देंगे तुझे
जाने तुझे देंगे नहीं

*We won't let go of you
We're not done yet ... no way
We won't let go of you
We're not done yet ... no way*

It's Raju's birthday and the whole ward is decorated for a party. Rancho and Farhan lead a mob of boisterous students with party hats, balloons and gifts. Rancho carries a cake, Farhan a bottle of rum.

They all surround Raju's bed. Farhan waves the rum bottle in Raju's face. Rancho, at the monitor connected to Raju, indicates that there's no response.

Farhan holds up a dart board with the Director's face on it. A dart hits it. Raju's monitor readings go wild. Delighted, his friends start pelting the Director's face with darts.

Pia walks into the festive atmosphere, smiling. Like magic, everyone disappears, leaving Rancho alone. Puzzled, Pia walks up to the dart board – and then turns on Rancho indignantly. Rancho smiles sheepishly – and then tries, too late, to also hide the rum bottle from her.

MUSIC FADES OUT

INT. WARD, HOSPITAL – DAY

Raju's Mother stands at the foot of his bed in a bright, shiny *saree*. Rancho and Farhan flank Raju on both sides, addressing him excitedly.

रैन्चो
ये देख, मां ने साड़ी खरीदी है, नयी साड़ी!

FARHAN
Brand new!

माताजी
पूरे दो हजार की है, बेटा! देख ...

रैन्चो
ओए, अब तो उठ जा साले ... अरे एक नहीं,
दस साड़ी खरीदी है, दस।

राजू की माताजी
(*voice breaking*)
देख तो!

रैन्चो
ओए, ओए राजू!

राजू की माताजी
राजू! बोल ना, कैसी लग रही हूँ?

Raju does not react. Desperate and defeated,
Raju's Mother breaks down.

FADE IN

माँ ने ख़त में क्या लिखा था
जीए तू जुग-जुग ये कहा था
चार पल भी जी ना पाया तू
यारों से नज़रें मिला ले
एक बार तू मुस्कुरा ले
उठ जा साले यूँ सताता है क्यों

Raju's Mother runs to the far end of the
ward to hide her tears from Raju. Farhan
rushes after her and tries to console her,

RANCHO
Look, Mom bought a new saree.

MOTHER
It cost Rs 2000.

RANCHO
Wake up now She bought not one,
but ten sarees.

RAJU'S MOTHER
Look!

RANCHO
Hey Raju!

RAJU'S MOTHER
C'mon tell me ... How do I look?

*Remember the letters Mom would write ...
Always blessed you with eternal life
Don't die on her ... you can't die
Look at us now, don't turn away
Smile once to show you care
Wake up, don't torment us anymore*

bolster her spirits. But as she collapses, weeping, into his arms, his own despair shows in his eyes.

At Raju's bedside, Rancho rants at his comatose friend for making his Mother cry.

Next to Raju's monitor are pictures of his Mother and Father and his sister, Kammo. Rancho randomly picks up Kammo's picture and thrusts it into Raju's face while chastising him. Raju's monitor beeps loudly, the graphic lines on it changing rapidly.

Rancho stops short, looking from the monitor to the picture. A desperate idea takes hold in his mind.

MUSIC FADES OUT:

रैन्चो
ऐ! अरे कम्मो!

Raju's POV: A distorted image of Rancho addresses him.

रैन्चो
ऐ! ऐ तूने सुना कम्मो के बारे में? अरे कम्मो की शादी तय हो गयी है!

Startled, Farhan pops his head out from the corner he was in, looking at Rancho.

रैन्चो
(*excitedly*)
और वो भी बिना दहेज के! ओए! दुल्हे को, दुल्हे को मारुति 800 नहीं चाहिये!

RANCHO
Hey Kammo.

RANCHO
Ae! Ae did you hear about Kammo? She's getting married.

RANCHO
Without any dowry! The bridegroom wants nothing at all.

Raju's POV: A distorted image of Rancho continues to speak, as Farhan, gaping at the monitor, walks to the bed.

रैन्चो
कुछ भी नहीं चाहिए! सिर्फ कम्मो चाहिये,
कम्मो हाँ!

RANCHO
Nothing at all. He just wants Kammo.

There is rapid movement on the monitor.

रैन्चो
अरे, और तुझे मालूम है कि दुल्हा कौन है?

RANCHO
You know who the bridegroom is?

Farhan joins in with vigour.

फरहान
हाँ!

FARHAN
Yeah!

रैन्चो
हाँ! मालूम है दुल्हा कौन है?

RANCHO
Yes! You know who the bridegroom is?

फरहान
ग्यस कर ना!

FARHAN
Guess!

रैन्चो
अरे तू उसको बहुत अच्छी तरह जानता है!

RANCHO
You know him very well!

फरहान!
हाँ!

FARHAN
Yes.

रैन्चो
उसको जानवरों से बहुत प्यार है!

RANCHO
He loves animals.

A terrible foreboding seizes Farhan.

फरहान
(weakly)
हाँ ...?

FARHAN
Huh ... ?

रैन्चो

हाँ! और, और वो वाइल्डलाइफ़ फोटोग्राफर बनने वाला है!

Farhan's fear is confirmed. In panic, he tries to shut Rancho up.

फरहान

चुप हो जा, क्या कर रहा है तू! चुप हो जा ओए ...

रैन्चो

नहीं समझा?

Raju's POV: Rancho, distorted, speaks enthusiastically, as a horrified Farhan tries to quieten him.

रैन्चो

अरे अपना फरहान यार! अरे अपना फरहान थोड़ी लेगा यार अपनो से दहेज!
(*thrusting Kammo's picture into Farhan's hands*)
अरे फरहान करेगा तेरी बहन से शादी, फरहान!

Raju's hand twitches.

रैन्चो

और वो भी फ्री, फ्री, फ्री!

Raju's hand twitches again. And his mouth. His eyes move.

रैन्चो

(*joyful*)
हे, हे हे! राजू, हे!

RANCHO

He's going to be a wildlife photographer.

FARHAN

Quiet ... Shhhh ...

RANCHO

Didn't get it?

RANCHO

It's our Farhan. Farhan will never take any dowry. Farhan will marry your sister.

RANCHO

For Free! Free! Free!

RANCHO

Hey, hey, hey! Raju, hey!

रैन्चो / फरहान
राजू!

RANCHO / FARHAN
Raju!

फरहान
राजू!

FARHAN
Raju!

Raju regains consciousness. Rancho is ecstatic, the other patients in the ward share his joy.

Farhan looks from Kammo's picture to Raju, aghast.

फरहान (V.O.)
साले को एक किलो भिण्डी और आधा किलो पनीर फ्री दे देते, तो भी जाग जाता। मुझे कुर्बान करने की क्या जरूरत थी?

FARHAN
One kilo lady's finger, 500 grams cottage cheese for 'free' would've woken him. Why sacrifice me?

As Farhan lowers Kammo's picture, Raju smiles up at him. Before he can muster up a smile in return, Rancho envelopes him in a hug.

रैन्चो
वेल डन यार। वेल डन! वेल डन यार!
(to Raju)
सब फिक्स हो गया। तेरी बहन की शादी फिक्स हो गई। फरहान करेगा, ओके? डन!

RANCHO
Well done, buddy. So it's all fixed. Farhan will marry your sister.

राजू
(faintly)
रैन्चो।

RAJU
Rancho.

रैन्चा / फरहान
हाँ?

RANCHO / FARHAN
Yes?

Rancho drops his head down, his ear next to Raju's mouth.

राजू
कमीनो कितना झूठ बोलोगे?

A grinning Rancho turns to Farhan.

रैन्चो
बच गया तू साले!

Farhan rejoices as relief sweeps over his face.

A relieved smile lights up Farhan's face.

INT. CORRIDOR, HOSPITAL – DAY

FADE IN:

जाने नहीं देंगे तुझे
जाने तुझे देंगे नहीं
जाने नहीं देंगे तुझे
जाने तुझे देंगे नहीं

RAJU
Rascals. Stop fibbing.

RANCHO
Lucky escape!

*We won't let go of you
We're not done yet ... no way
We won't let go of you
We're not done yet ... no way*

Celebrating Raju's recovery, Rancho sprints into the ward with a box of sweets, feeding a piece to everyone he meets – doctors, nurses, patients.

Raju, now in a wheelchair, watches him, his eyes welling up. Rancho goes up to him and tenderly feeds him a piece too. Overwhelmed with emotion, they hug each other.

Farhan captures all these moments on his camera.

INT. WARD, HOSPITAL – DAY

Raju reclines on his hospital bed as his Mother feeds him lady's finger with *roti*. Farhan, sitting by Raju's side, scrawls something on the cast on his arm. Raju

raises his arm to see – lady's finger Rs. 12 kg. He lowers his arm, his expression inscrutable. Then he and Farhan break into laughter simultaneously.

SONG ENDS.

EXT. FOYER, HOSPITAL – DAY

A taxi enters the hospital premises.

INT. WARD, HOSPITAL –
CONTINUOUS

Farhan at the nurse's station is arranging his certificates in files.

A nurse walks up to him.

नर्स
आपने टैक्सी बुलाई है?

NURSE
You called for a taxi?

Raju, dressed formally, is in a wheelchair. Rancho wheels him out to where Farhan is, as Pia packs his bag at his bed.

राजू
मैंने बुलाई है।

RAJU
I did.

NURSE
It's waiting.

फरहान
थैंक यू।
(to Raju)
क्यों?

FARHAN
Thank you.
Why?

राजू
जॉब इन्टरव्यू के लिये जाना है।

RAJU
I'm going for the job interview.

Farhan's face lights up.

फरहान
अच्छा तू चल रहा है मेरे साथ?

Pia joins Rancho and Raju and exchanges
a smile with Rancho.

राजू
नहीं। तुझे तेरे घर ड्रौप करूंगा और मैं जॉब
इन्टरव्यू के लिए जाऊंगा।

Raju takes off the rings on his fingers as
he speaks.

फरहान
साले, मैं घर क्यों जाऊंगा?

राजू
भूल गया? इस कमीने को कुछ प्रोमिस किया
था।

Farhan stares with disbelief as Raju drops
the rings in a bed pan.

राजू
ला तेरी टाई दे ...

फरहान
(*befuddled*)
क्यों?

Pia plucks an envelope from Rancho's
hands.

पिया
दे दो। मुझे नहीं लगता कि ये पढ़ने के बाद
तुम इन्टरव्यू के लिए जा पाओगे।

फरहान
क्या है ये?

FARHAN
You coming with me?

RAJU
No. I'm going for the interview. You're
going home.

FARHAN
Why would I go home?

RAJU
Remember, we promised this rascal.

RAJU
Give me your tie.

FARHAN
Why?

PIA
I doubt you'll go for the interview after
reading this.

FARHAN
What's that?

पिया
चिट्ठी है

रैन्चो
तेरे लिए आई है - हंगरी से

पिया
कोई फोटोग्राफर है - आंद्रे इस्तिवन।

Farhan's mouth falls open with shock. He turns to his bag and frantically searches it. He doesn't find what he's looking for. He looks up to see Rancho, Pia and Raju smiling at him.

फरहान
साले तुम लोगों ने मेरी चिट्ठी पोस्ट कर दी!

रैन्चो
तेरे फोटोस उसे बहुत पसंद आये। पगला गया साला! तुझे असिस्टेंट बनाना चाहता है।

A flash of excitement crosses Farhan's face. Pia holds out the letter to him.

पिया
एक साल के लिए ब्राज़िलियन रेन फ़ॉरेस्ट में काम करने के लिए बुलाया है।

रैन्चो
कहता है तुझे सैलरी भी देगा।

Farhan grabs the envelope. He takes out the letter with trembling hands and starts reading, incredulous.

As he reaches the end of the letter, something strikes him and the joy fades from his face. He looks up at his friends, despair clouding his eyes.

PIA
A letter.

RANCHO
For you, from Hungary.

PIA
Some photographer called André Istvan.

FARHAN
You posted my letter!

RANCHO
He loved your pictures. The guy wants you to assist him.

PIA
Internship in the Brazilian rain forest, for a year.

RANCHO
Will pay you, too.

फरहान
अब्बा नहीं मानेंगे।

रैन्चो
जा उनके पास, और प्यार से समझा उनको।

Farhan shakes his head.

Rancho persists.

रैन्चो
आज डर मत फरहान। नहीं तो पचास साल बाद जब तू बुढ़्ढा होकर ऐसे ही किसी अस्पताल में पड़ा होगा, और मरने का इंतजार कर रहा होगा, तब सोचेगा — कि लैटर हाथ में था, टैक्सी गेट पर थी, ज़रा सी हिम्मत कर लेता ना, तो साली ज़िन्दगी कुछ और हो सकती थी।

INT. FARHAN'S HOUSE – SOMETIME LATER

Farhan's Mother opens a gleaming new laptop, a ribbon rosette on it. Farhan's Father looks at her expectantly.

फरहान के पिताजी
क्या ख्याल है? पसन्द आयेगा उसे?

माताजी
(happy, but trying to be practical)
इतना महंगे वाला खरीदने की क्या ज़रूरत थी।

फरहान के पिताजी
आज साहबज़ादे को नौकरी मिल रही है। अब तो सर उठा कर फक्र से घूमने के दिन आ रहे हैं और तुम कंजूसी कर रही हो, हॉँ!

Eyes downcast, letter in hand, Farhan enters the living room of his home.

FARHAN
Dad will never agree.

RANCHO
Go speak to him ... from your heart.

RANCHO
For once, dump your fears or someday, on your deathbed, you'll regret it. You'll remember that the letter was in your hand, the taxi at the gate with just a little courage, you could've turned your life around.

FARHAN'S FATHER
Do you think he'll like it?

MOTHER
Why such an expensive gift?

FARHAN'S FATHER
Our son's getting his first job today. Don't be stingy at such a proud moment.

फरहान की माताजी
(*spotting him*)
अरे फरहान।

FARHAN'S MOTHER
Farhan?

Farhan's Father turns around in surprise. He walks up to Farhan, his wife following.

फरहान के पिताजी
फरहान, आज तुम्हारा इन्टरव्यू था ना?

FARHAN'S FATHER
Didn't you have the job interview today?

फरहान
मैं नहीं गया। मैं इन्जिनियर नहीं बनना चाहता, अब्बा।

FARHAN
I didn't go. I don't want to be an engineer, Dad.

Farhan's Father looks at him uncomprehendingly.

INT. INTERVIEW HALL –
CONTINUOUS

Raju sits across an interview panel, in his wheelchair.

His face is peaceful and calm.

इन्टरव्यूवर 1
(*indicating the wheelchair*)
क्या हो गया? यू हैड एन एक्सीडेन्ट?

INTERVIEWER 1
What happened? You had an accident?

राजू
सर। वो सामने जो बिल्डिंग है ना, सर, मैं उसके थर्ड फ्लोर से कूद गया था, सर।

RAJU
See that building? I jumped from its third floor.

The interviewers exchange looks.

INTERVIEWER 2
Why?

राजू
क्योंकि मुझे रस्टीकेट कर दिया गया था।

RAJU
Because I was rusticated from college.

इन्टरव्यूवर 3
क्यों?

राजू
सर, मैंने नशे में डाइरेक्टर के दरवाजे पे पेशाब
किया था।

The interviewers try and digest these
facts.

INT. FARHAN'S HOUSE –
CONTINUOUS

Farhan's perturbed Father struggles to make
sense of the situation.

फरहान के पिताजी
वो शैतान रैन्चो अब भी तुम्हारे दिमाग से खेल
रहा है।

फरहान
मुझे नहीं समझ आती इंजिनियरिंग। बन भी गया
तो बहुत खराब इंजिनियर बनूंगा, अब्बा! रैन्चो
बहुत सिम्पल सी बात कहता है। जो काम में
आपको मज़ा आये उसे अपना प्रोफेशन बनाओ।
फिर काम काम नहीं खेल लगेगा।

फरहान के पिताजी
अरे, कमाओगे कितना उस जंगल में?

फरहान
अब्बा, स्टिपेंड ज्यादा नहीं है, लेकिन सीखने
को बहुत कुछ मिलेगा।

फरहान के पिताजी
पांच साल बाद जब अपने दोस्तों को गाड़ी
खरीदते, अपना घर बनाते देखोगे तो अपने
आप को कोसोगे।

INTERVIEWER 3
Why?

RAJU
Drunk, I urinated on the Director's
door.

FARHAN'S FATHER
That scoundrel Rancho is messing with
your mind!

FARHAN
I don't enjoy engineering. I'd make a terrible
engineer. Rancho has a simple belief: Make
your passion your profession. Then work
will become play.

FARHAN'S FATHER
What will you earn in that jungle?

FARHAN
A small stipend, but I'll learn a lot.

FARHAN'S FATHER
Five years from now when you see your
friends buying cars and homes, you'll
curse yourself.

फरहान

इंजिनियर बनके फ्रस्ट्रेट हो जाऊंगा। फिर जिन्दगी भर आप को कोसूंगा। बेहतर यही है ना कि मैं अपने आप को कोसू अब्बा।

फरहान के पिताजी

(shouting)

अरे, हंसेंगे लोग। कहेंगे कि फाइनल इयर में आके छोड़ दिया। वो अपने कपूर साहेब कह रहे थे कि खुशकिस्मत हो कि तुम्हारा बेटा आइसीइ में पढ़ता है। वो क्या सोचेंगे?

A beat.

फरहान

कपूर साहेब ने मेरे कमरे में एसी नहीं लगवाया था। मुझे आराम से सुलाकर वो खुद गरमी में नहीं सोये थे। अपने कंधे पर बैठा कर कपूर साहेब मुझे जू में घुमाने नहीं ले गये थे।

A beat.

फरहान

वो सब आपने किया था अब्बा।

A beat

फरहान

आप क्या सोचेंगे, फर्क पड़ता है। कपूर साहेब क्या सोचेंगे, इससे मुझे कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ता। अरे मुझे तो उनका पहला नाम तक नहीं पता।

फरहान के पिताजी

फ़िल्म देख कर आये हो? ड्रामा कर रहे हो?

Farhan's Mother, her face fearful, puts a restraining hand on her husband's shoulder.

FARHAN

Life as an engineer will bring only frustration. Then I'll curse you I'd rather curse myself, Dad.

FARHAN'S FATHER

The world will laugh! Label you a loser, for quitting in the final year. Mr. Kapoor feels you're fortunate to be at ICE. What'll he think?

FARHAN

Mr. Kapoor didn't provide me with an air-conditioner. It wasn't Mr. Kapoor who slept in discomfort while I slept well. He didn't take me around the zoo on his shoulders.

FARHAN

You did all that Father.

FARHAN

Dad, how you feel, matters to me. Mr. Kapoor makes no difference. I don't even know his first name.

FARHAN'S FATHER

You think you're the hero of a melodrama?

माताजी

(tearfully)

बस भी कीजिए। परेशान है बेचारा। खुदा ना करे, राजू जैसा कुछ कर बैठा तो ...

फरहान के पिताजी

(in a buff)

फिर तो डिस्कशन ही खत्म हो गई ना। कुछ मत बोलो सहाबजादे से, वरना छत से कूद पड़ेंगे।

Disturbed and angry, Farhan's Father walks towards a chair and sits down. Farhan turns to face his Father.

फरहान

(softly)

नहीं अब्बा। मैं सुसाइड नहीं करूंगा। आइ प्रोमिस।

Farhan walks up to where his Father is sitting. Takes out his wallet, kneels before his Father and shows him a photograph in his wallet. It's a picture of Farhan's Father and mother, smiling.

फरहान

वो जो रैन्चो है ना, जिसे आप शैतान कहते हैं, उसने जबरदस्ती इसमें आपके और अम्मी का फोटो डलवाया। कहने लगा कि प्रोमिस कर, जब भी ऐसे स्टुपिड ख्याल आयेंगे तो ये फोटो को देखना और सोचना कि इस स्माइल का क्या होगा जब ये तुम्हारी उधड़ी हुई बाँड़ी देखेंगे तो।

Farhan's Father looks from the photograph to Farhan's face, silenced. A sob escapes Farhan's Mother.

FARHAN'S MOTHER

Enough, please. He's upset. God forbid, if he did something crazy like Raju.

FARHAN'S FATHER

Then the discussion is over. Don't say a word or his Lordship will jump off the roof.

FARHAN

No, Dad. I'll never attempt suicide. I promise.

FARHAN

The Rancho you detest put this picture in my wallet. Told me to see it if a suicidal thought crossed my mind and imagine what'd happen to your smiles when you see my dead body.

फरहान
अब्बा, मैं आपको कन्विन्स करना चाहता हूँ।
पर ये सुसाइड की तलवार आपके सर पे लटका
कर नहीं।

Farhan clasps his Fathers hand in between
his hands.

फरहान
क्या होगा हाँ? अगर मैं फोटोग्राफर बन गया
तो कम पैसे कमाऊंगा ना। घर छोटा होगा,
गाड़ी छोटी होगी। पर अब्बा मैं खुश रहूंगा।
आइ विल बी रियली हैप्पी। आपके लिये जो
भी करूंगा दिल से करूंगा।

Farhan's Father looks at his son like he's
never really seen him before.

फरहान
आज तक मैंने आपकी हर बात सुनी है। आज
बस एक बार मुझे अपने दिल की बात सुनने
दीजिए ना। प्लीज़ अब्बा।

Farhan's Father turns his gaze away from
his son's beseeching one. He gets up and
walks away from Farhan.

Farhan looks at his Father's receding back
in growing desperation.

फरहान
अब्बा? अब्बा जाइये मत ना प्लीज़।

Farhan's Father walks to the new laptop
and closes it. He turns to his wife.

फरहान के पिताजी
इसे वापस कर देना।

FARHAN
I want to convince you, Dad but not with
a suicide threat.

FARHAN
Dad, what will happen if I become a
photographer? I'll earn less I'll have a
smaller house, a smaller car But I'll be
happy. I will be really happy Whatever I
do for you will be out of genuine love.

FARHAN
I've always listened to you For once, let
me listen to my heart. Please, Dad.

FARHAN
Dad Please don't go away.

FARHAN'S FATHER
Return this.

Farhan, standing behind his parents, head lowered in defeat, looks up sharply.

फरहान के पिताजी
बेटे, तुम्हारा वो प्रोफेशनल कैमरा कितने का आयेगा।
इस लैपटॉप के अंग्रेस्ट आ जायेगा ना?

Farhan breaks down, overcome with love and happiness.

फरहान के पिताजी
अगर और पैसे लगे तो मांग लेना बेटा।

Farhan rushes to his Father and hugs him. They are both crying. Farhan's Mother looks on, sobbing.

फरहान के पिताजी
जा बेटे, अपनी ज़िन्दगी जी ले।

INT. INTERVIEW HALL –
CONTINUOUS

The Interviewer refers to Raju's file, open before him.

इन्टरव्यूवर 1
आपके मार्क्स कॉन्सिस्टेन्टली पूवर हैं। कोई खास वजह?

राजू
डर, सर। बचपन से ब्राइट स्टूडन्ट था। मां बाप को लगा ये हमारी गरीबी मिटाएगा। मैं डरने लगा।

Raju speaks in a calm, matter-of-fact tone.

FARHAN'S FATHER
Son, what's the cost of a professional camera? Can the laptop be exchanged for it?

FARHAN'S FATHER
If you need more money, just ask.

FARHAN'S FATHER
Go live your life, my son.

INTERVIEWER 1
Your grades are consistently poor. Reason?

RAJU
Fear. I was a good student since childhood. Parents hoped I'd end their poverty. That scared me.

राजू
यहाँ आया तो देखा रेस लगी हुई है। फर्स्ट नहीं आओगे तो कोई जानेगा भी नहीं। मैं और डरने लगा।

(smiling ruefully)

पूजा करने लगा। पूजा क्या, भगवान से भीख मांगने लगा। ये दे दो ... वो दे दो।

The Interviewers listen in silence.

राजू
सोलह हड्डियां टूटी, दो महीने सोचने का मौका मिला। तब बात समझ आयी।

A beat.

राजू
सर, आज मैंने भगवान से नहीं कहा कि मुझे यह जॉब दिला देना, मैंने सिर्फ हाथ जोड़े और इस लाइफ के लिए थैक्यू बोला। क्योंकि मैं आपनी लाइफ के साथ कुछ ना कुछ ढंग का तो कर ही लूंगा सर। अगर आप लोग आज मुझे रिजेक्ट कर दे ना सर, तो कोई अफ़सोस नहीं।

कम्पनी हैड
देखिए, आपका इतना फ्रैंक बिहैवियर हमारी कम्पनी के लिये ठीक नहीं है। क्लाइन्ट्स को हैण्डल करने के लिए हमें एक डिप्लोमैटिक आदमी की ज़रूरत है। आप कुछ ज्यादा ही स्ट्रेटफॉरवर्ड हैं।

The Interviewer slides Raju's open file back to him.

कम्पनी हैड
बट अगर आप हमें भरोसा दिलाएं कि आप अपने इस ऐचिच्यूट को कंट्रोल कर सकते हैं ...

RAJU

Here I saw the mad race. You don't count if you're not first My fear grew. Fear is not good for grades, Sir. Prayed to God for favours. No ... begged for favours.

RAJU

16 broken bones gave me two months to think and reflect. Finally, sense dawned.

RAJU

Today, I didn't beg God for this job, just thanked him for this life. If you reject me, no regrets I'll still do something worthwhile with my life.

COMPANY HEAD

Such frank behaviour is not good for our firm. We need someone diplomatic to handle clients. You're too straightforward.

COMPANY HEAD

But if you assure us you'll control this attitude ...

The Company head and the Interviewer exchange a look.

कम्पनी हैड
... तो कुछ हो सकता है।

COMPANY HEAD
... We may consider you.

इन्टरव्यूवर 1
श्यूर।

INTERVIEWER 1
Sure.

Raju smiles at them pleasantly.

राजू
दोनों टांगे तुड़वा के अपने पैरों पे खड़ा होना सीखा है, सर। बड़ी मुश्किल से आया है ये एचिच्यूड। नहीं होगा

RAJU
It took two broken legs to get me up on my feet. Wasn't easy to get this attitude. Can't change it, Sir.

Raju closes his file.

राजू
आप अपनी नौकरी रख लीजिए, मैं अपना एचिच्यूड रख लेता हूँ। आइ एम सॉरी, डोंट माईंड सर।

RAJU
You keep your job... I'll keep my attitude. I'm sorry, don't mind, Sir.

He turns his wheelchair around and starts to wheel himself out.

कम्पनी हैड
रुको।

COMPANY HEAD
Wait.

Raju turns around.

कम्पनी हैड
पच्चीस साल से मैं रिकर्यूटमेन्ट कर रहा हूँ। बहुत सारी इन्टरव्यूस लिये हैं। जॉब पाने के लिये लोग हमारी हाँ में हाँ मिला ही लेते हैं। तुम कहाँ से आये हो यार।

COMPANY HEAD
I've interviewed countless candidates for 25 years. Everyone turns into a yes-man to get the job. Where did you spring from, Son?

राजू
(*puzzled*)
जी, मैं...

RAJU
Sir?

कम्पनी हैड
सैलरी कितना लोके भइया। डिस्कस कर लें?

COMPANY HEAD
Shall we discuss the salary?

Raju's eyes brim up with tears of gratitude.

RAJU
Thank you, Sir! Thank you!

EXT. CAMPUS, ICE – MOMENTS
LATER

Rancho and Pia sit on a bench, restless with anxiety, waiting for Farhan and Raju. Pia spots them and points them out to Rancho.

Farhan wheels Raju in his wheelchair. The two of them stop, on seeing Rancho and Pia. Farhan helps Raju up.

As Rancho and Pia look on, confused, Farhan and Raju exchange a smile, and drop their pants. They bow to Rancho, saluting him.

फरहान / राजू
(*yelling*)
जहांपनाह तुस्सी ग्रेट हो!
(*voices breaking*)
तोहफ़ा कबूल करो!

FARHAN / RAJU
Your Majesty, thou art great. Accept this humble offering!

Rancho breaks down, tears of joy rolling down his face. Farhan and Raju smile at him through their tears.

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, ICE –
DAY

The needle is placed on the record. Strains of opera flood the room.

The Director is asleep on his couch, one hand on his face. Govind shifts his hand, and lifts his razor.

INT. / EXT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE /
CORRIDOR – CONTINUOUS

The Director looks in the mirror with disbelief and screams in anger.

The barber's kit crashes on the ground outside the Director's office.

डाइरेक्टर
गोविन्द ।

DIRECTOR
Govind!

The Director holds Govind by his collar and shakes him violently.

गोविन्द
सर आप ही ने तो बोला था, नौकरी मिल जाये तो काट देना ।

GOVIND
You had said, 'If one of them gets a job, shave it off.'

As Govind lies dazed on the Director's couch, the Director looks at his face from different angles, in a hand mirror. Nothing makes it look better.

INT. DIRECTOR'S HOUSE, ICE –
NIGHT

The Director sits at the dining table, drinking, the hand mirror concealing his face from his daughters. Pia moves the mirror away. She and Mona gasp.

पिया
(*voice quavering with laughter*)
ये क्या कर दिया?

Mona bursts out laughing.

डाइरेक्टर
ऐसा लग रहा है कि किसी ने मेरे कपड़े उतार
दिये! इज्जत लूट ली मेरी!

Pia giggles along with Mona. But the
Director is beside himself with anger.

डाइरेक्टर
मैं हार नहीं मानूंगा रस्तोगी। तेरे को नौकरी तब
मिलेगी जब तू फाईनल्स में पास होगा। और
इस बार पेपर मैं सैट करवाऊंगा।

The smile fades from Pia's face.

PIA
Dad, that's not fair.

The Director rises and walks unsteadily,
the glass of whiskey in his hand.

डाइरेक्टर
ऐवरीथिंग इज़ फेयर इन लव एण्ड वार। एण्ड दिस
इज़ वरल्ड वार III। रस्तोगी तू तो गया।

INT. ROOM, HOSTEL, ICE –
NIGHT

A whiskey bottle thumps down on the
ledge outside the trio's room. Rancho
looks up from the desk he's working at
and sees Pia at the window. She has her
helmet on.

PIA
What have you done?

DIRECTOR
I feel naked without my moustache. I've
lost my dignity.

DIRECTOR
I won't accept defeat, Rastogi. The job isn't
yours until you pass your final exam. And
this time, I will set the question paper.

DIRECTOR
Everything is fair in love and war. And
this is World War III. Rastogi, you're
dead meat!

RANCHO
Hey!

Pia giggles.

रैन्चो
तुम यहाँ क्या कर रही हो?

RANCHO
What are you doing here?

He helps her in, through the window. She almost loses her balance, squealing loudly. Farhan wakes up with all the commotion and peeps out of his quilt.

रैन्चो
सम्भाल, सम्भाल, ऐ!

RANCHO
Be careful.

रैन्चो
ए! तुमने पी रखी है।

RANCHO
You've been drinking.

पिया
हाँ यार। दो चार लगानी पड़ी।

PIA
Yup, had to down a couple.

रैन्चो
दो चार! दो या चार!

RANCHO
A couple too many!

पिया
हिम्मत चाहिए थी!

PIA
Needed the guts.

रैन्चो
काहे के लिये?

RANCHO
For what?

Pia pulls out a set of keys and holds them up for Rancho to see.

पिया
ये चुराने के लिए।

PIA
For stealing this.

रैन्चो
ये क्या है?

RANCHO
What's this?

पिया
वायरस की ऑफिस की डुप्लीकेट चाबी।

Farhan's eyes widen in shock.

रैन्चो
श, श, श ...

पिया
लाल सील के ऐनवलप में क्वेशन पेपर है, जो
डेड ने खुद सेट किया है...
(*indicating the sleeping Raju*)
राजू को फेल करने के लिए। निकाल लाओ।

Rancho is both shocked and amused.

रैन्चो
मैड और वौट? ये तो चीटिंग है यार, हट!

PIA
Everything's fair in love and war.

Farhan giggles into his quilt.

Pia wraps her arms around Rancho.

पिया
अच्छा एक बात बताओ। डू यू रियली फील
किस्स करने में नाक बीच में आती है?

She moves closer to Rancho, pouting her lips. Farhan watches with interest. Just before she can touch Rancho's lips with hers, Rancho pulls her helmet visor over her face. Farhan subsides disappointed.

रैन्चो
एक मिनट। ढोकला खाओ। ये लो, पकड़ो।

PIA
The duplicate key to Virus's office.

RANCHO
Shh, shh, shh

PIA
The question paper's in a cover with a red seal. Dad has set it, to fail Raju. Go get it!

RANCHO
Are you mad or what! That's cheating!

PIA
Tell me something, Do you really feel the noses collide while kissing?

RANCHO
Wait. Have some *dhokla*.

He hands her a plate of *dhoklas*.

पिया

तुम गुजराती लोग कितने क्यूट होते हो। पर तुम लोगो का खाना इतना खतरनाक क्यों होता है। ढोकला, फाफडा, हन्डवा, थेपला, खाखरा।

Rancho opens the room door expecting her to leave but she sits down on the bed and does a newsreader act.

पिया

ऐसा लगता है जैसे कोई मिसाइलस है। 'आज बुश ने इराक पे दो ढोकले गिरा दिये ...'

Farhan cracks up under his quilt.

पिया

चार सौ लोग मारे गए, दो सौ लोग घायल!

रैन्चो

चल।

Pia walks up to the door but instead of leaving she shuts it.

रैन्चो

चल, कम, अरे ...

पिया

ये खाखरा, फाफडा तो मैं झेल लूंगी, पर तुम्हारा ये नाम — रणछोड़दास श्यामलदास छांछड़ — यक्क! मैं शादी के बाद अपना सरनेम नहीं चेज़ करूंगी, हाँ!

Pain clouds Rancho's face.

रैन्चो

पिया, हमारी शादी नहीं हो सकती।

PIA

You Gujaratis are so cute. But why does your food sound so dangerous? *Dhokla, fafda, handwa, thepla, khakhra*.

PIA

Sound like missiles – 'Today Bush dropped two *dhoklas* on Iraq ...'

PIA

'400 dead, 200 injured!'

RANCHO

C'mon.

RANCHO

C'mon. Oh ...

PIA

I can deal with *khakhra, fafda*. But your name ... 'Ranchhoddas Shamaldas Chanchad' – yuck, I won't change my last name after marriage.

RANCHO

Pia, we can't get married.

Rancho turns away from Pia. She comes from behind him and hugs him.

पिया
क्यों? किसी और को चाहते हो?

PIA
Why? Is there someone else?

Rancho does not respond.

पिया
गे हो?

PIA
Are you gay?

Farhan chuckles softly.

रैन्चो
नहीं ...

RANCHO
No ...

पिया
फिर मुझे प्रपोज क्यों नहीं करते?

PIA
Then why don't you propose to me?

Rancho is silent.

पिया
(*aggressively*)
इम्पोटैन्ट हो?

PIA
Are you impotent?

Farhan is thoroughly entertained. Pia grabs Rancho's face in both hands, trying to get him to kiss her.

PIA
Then prove it. Prove it.

रैन्चो
पिया!

RANCHO
Pia!

Pia grabs Rancho's face by the cheeks and moves closer to him.

PIA
Prove it.

Rancho moves back.

RANCHO

Pia, no!

Farhan emerges from under the blanket.

फरहान

ऐ रुक, रुक, रुक, रुक

FARHAN

Stop, stop!

END OF FLASHBACK

BACK TO PRESENT

INT. / EXT. EN-ROUTE TO LADAKH /
THE DIRECTOR'S HOUSE – DAY

Farhan turns to Raju who is driving the
SUV.

फरहान

रुक! ... रुक ...!

FARHAN

Stop! Stop!

राजू

अरे हुआ क्या?

RAJU

What happened?

फरहान

यार हमने पिया को इन्फॉर्म किया ही नहीं।

FARHAN

We didn't inform Pia.

CHATUR

Stop here, my bladders are bursting.

फरहान

शटअपू यार।

FARHAN

Shut up!

राजू

यार तू टच में है उसके?

RAJU

Are you in touch with her?

फरहान

नहीं यार। लेकिन उसका घर का नम्बर मेरे
पास है।

FARHAN

No but I have her home number.

राजू
अरे तो लगा ना, मैं रोकता हूँ।

RAJU
Then call her, I'll stop.

फरहान
हाँ रोक, रोक, रोक।

FARHAN
Stop, Stop, Stop.

The SUV stops. Raju and Farhan get out.

Chatur rushes out to a spot by the road, to take a leak.

चतुर
ओह, नो प्लेस फॉर मूत्रविसर्जन इन दिस कन्ट्री।

CHATUR
No place for urine-expulsion in this country.

Farhan dials Pia's residence number.

फरहान
हैल्लो। हैल्लो, हॉं पिया है?

FARHAN
Hello, is Pia there?

मेड (O.S.)
नहीं है जी।

MAID
No, she's not.

फरहान
अच्छा कहाँ मिलेगी? अस्पताल में?

FARHAN
Is she at the hospital?

मेड
ओह जी, अस्पताल क्यों जाएगी। आज शादी है उनकी। मनाली गई है।

MAID
Why would she be there? She's getting married today in Manali.

Raju sits on a rock, next to Chatur's SUV. Farhan stands a little away, looking into the distance.

फरहान
पिया की तो शादी हो गयी।

FARHAN
Too late! She's married?

राजू

अभी हुई है नहीं। देख छः घंटे का रास्ता है। गाड़ी भागेगी तो फेरो से पहले तो पहुंच ही जाएंगे। क्या बोलता है?

फरहान

अब जब सोच ही लिया है पार्टनर तो मार यू टर्न।

चतुर

ऐ! नो यू-टर्न। स्ट्रेट टू लद्दाख। रैनचो से मिलेंगे और वापस। फ्राइडे को मेरा फुनसुख वागंडू से मीटिंग है। चल चल गाड़ी में बैठो। मिस हो गई तो पता है क्या होगा? द जैपनीज़ विल गेट हिम। दे आर ऑफरिंग हिम अ फस्ट नेम इन द कम्पनी। फुनसुख एण्ड फूजियासी, प्रॉफिट शेयरिंग, स्टॉक ऑपशन्स, फुल क्रीयेटिव कन्ट्रोल

As Chatur rambles on, Farhan and Raju exchange a look. They plug their ears with cotton and move to the car.

The SUV takes a U-turn.

Inside the car, in the boot, Chatur lies gagged and bound.

चतुर

(muffled)

राजू ... राजू।

EXT. PIA'S WEDDING VENUE,
MANALI – DAY

The SUV drives into a wedding venue and stops in the porch. There, a signboard made up of flowers proclaims the bride and groom's names.

RAJU

Not yet. It's a six-hour drive. If we rush, we'll reach before the vows. What do you say?

FARHAN

It's a no-brainer. Let's turn back.

CHATUR

No turning back. Straight to Ladakh. We'll meet Rancho and return. I have a Friday meeting with Phunsukh Wangdu. Get into the car. If I miss my meeting, the Japanese will get him. They're offering him a first name in the company 'Phunsukh and Fujiyashi', profit sharing, stock options, full creative control

CHATUR

Raju ... Raju.

FARHAN

(exclaims)

'Pia weds Suhas'!

Raju takes out the hanger with the rest of Chatur's suit on it.

राजू

एण्ड थैंक्स फॉर द सूट हॉ।

Chatur protests by banging his bound feet and hands against the SUV.

Farhan and Raju, now wearing pink *saafas* and with white envelopes in hand scurry up a flight of stairs.

फरहान

यार, ये वायरस को तो हार्ट अटैक आ जायेगा ...

(to passing guests)

हैल्लो!

(to Raju)

जब भी उसकी बेटियों की शादी होती है, बैंड बज़ाने हम पहुंच जाते हैं।

They reach the first floor and split up.

फरहान

अच्छा सुन, पिया को मैं संभालता हूँ, प्राइस टैग को तू उखाड़।

राजू

ठीक है।

INT. PIA'S ROOM, WEDDING VENUE – CONTINUOUS

Pia sits before a mirror in bridal finery, fastening an earring.

RAJU

Thanks for the suit.

FARHAN

Virus will have a heart attack ...

Hello ...

At every daughter's wedding, we're there to rock the party.

FARHAN

Listen, I'll update Pia, you peel off the price tag.

RAJU

Ok.

Farhan enters the room and stands behind her.

Pia sees his reflection in the mirror.

पिया
(*surprised and happy*)
फरहान!

PIA
Farhan!

फरहान
(*with a huge smile*)
रैन्चो मिल गया पिया

FARHAN
We found Rancho.

Pain clouds Pia's face. Her smile fades. She turns away from Farhan and starts slipping on her bangles.

EXT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE SUHAS'S ROOM, WEDDING VENUE – CONTINUOUS

A member of the hotel Housekeeping Staff, a clothes iron in his hand, approaches Suhas's door. Raju waylays him.

राजू
107 के लिये?

RAJU
For Room 107?

HOUSEKEEPING
Yes, Sir!

राजू
(*taking the clothes iron*)
इधर लाओ। कितना टाइम लगाते हो यार!

RAJU
You've taken ages.

HOUSEKEEPING
Sorry, Sir.

राजू
चलो जाओ चलो।

RAJU
Off, now.

The man leaves. Raju takes off his jacket and *saafa*. He keeps on the waistcoat of Chatur's three piece suit.

He knocks on Suhas's door.

RAJU

Housekeeping, Sir.

SUHAS (O.S.)

Come in.

INT. SUHAS'S ROOM, WEDDING VENUE – CONTINUOUS

Raju enters holding up the clothes iron, a big, fake smile on his face.

Suhas, in his bathrobe, sits before the mirror, snipping hair from his nose. He sings along with the music playing in the room.

SUHAS

Amore Amore ... Amore ...

(to Raju)

Quick quick... Quick, iron my *sberwani*.

INT. PIA'S ROOM, WEDDING VENUE – CONTINUOUS

Farhan desperately tries to reason with Pia.

फरहान

अरे रैन्चो मिल चुका है। अब भी इस गधे से शादी करोगी?

FARHAN

We found Rancho! Now you can't marry this ass.

PIA

You're mad, Farhan!

फरहान

डोन्ट फूल यूअरसेल्फ पिया। तुम भी रैनचो को चाहती हो। और उसकी याद में आज भी यह ढोकला खा रही हो।

(indicating a plate of dhokla and mint chutney)

INT. SUHAS'S ROOM, WEDDING VENUE – CONTINUOUS

A bowl of mint chutney lies next to a half-eaten *dhokla* on a plate. Raju empties the bowl into the plate.

Suhas sings loudly, in high spirits.

Casting a furtive glance in Suhas's direction, Raju dips the iron into the mint chutney. He then brings the sauce-smearred iron down on the *sherwani*.

Suhas stands before the mirror, spraying himself liberally with cologne, singing loudly and moving along with the song.

SUHAS

Amore ... Amore ... Amore ...

Raju smiles at Suhas, pretending to be ironing efficiently. He looks down at the *sherwani*. There's a huge green stain on it.

INT. PIA'S ROOM, WEDDING VENUE – CONTINUOUS

फरहान

(referring to Suhas)

कुत्ते की दुम है वो। बारह साल नली में डाल के रखो, जब निकालोगे टेड़ी की टेड़ी

FARHAN

Don't fool yourself, Pia. You still love Rancho. You're still eating his favourite food.

FARHAN

He's incorrigible. Once a price tag, always a price tag.

पिया
शटअप फरहान। सुहास इज़ अ चेंज्ड मैन।
अब वो ब्राण्ड्स और प्राइज़ैस की बिल्कुल बात
नहीं करता।

There's an anguished yell from outside.

सुहास (O.S.)
मेरी ढेड लाख की शेरवानी ...

INT. SUHAS'S ROOM, WEDDING
VENUE – CONTINUOUS

Suhas is holding Raju by the collar and
shaking him vigorously.

सुहास
अरे चटनी क्यों खाते हो तुम लोग।

राजू
मैं कुछ करता हूँ, सर।

सुहास
क्या करोगे, क्या करोगे?

राजू
सर, सर हमारी लॉड्री में रोज़ ऐसी चटनी वाली
शेरवानी आती है सर। मैं दो मिनट में क्लीन
कर दूंगा सर। एक मिनट सर।

Raju slips out of Suhas's grip, grabs the
sherwani from the ironing board ...

राजू
एक मिनट, सर मैं क्लीन कर दूंगा सर, मैं
आया

And runs out of the room.

PIA
Shut up, Farhan. Suhas is a changed man.
He doesn't speak of brands and prices
anymore.

SUHAS
My Rs 150,000 *sherwani* ...

SUHAS
Why do you people eat chutney?

RAJU
I'll sort it out, Sir.

SUHAS
How?

RAJU
Our laundry specialises in cleaning mint-
stained suits. I'll clean it in a jiffy.

RAJU
One minute, Sir!

SUHAS
Get it soon!

INT. PIA'S ROOM, WEDDING VENUE
– CONTINUOUS

Pia is unrelenting.

PIA
But it's too late now, Farhan.

Farhan looks down helplessly.

मोना (O.S.)
पिया!

MONA
Pia!

Mona comes to the door. Farhan shifts to hide from her gaze.

मोना
पिया चलो, लेट हो रहे हैं। आ जाओ।

MONA
Let's go, Pia, we're late.

Pia gets up to leave.

EXT. MANDAP, WEDDING VENUE –
CONTINUOUS

Farhan watches dejectedly as Pia sits beside the groom. The groom wears a *sherwani* and, over his face, the traditional flower veil.

Farhan looks away, defeated. And catches sight of the groom's discarded shoes. A pair of bright red sneakers. With sudden hope, Farhan looks at the groom again.

राजू
(*from behind the flower veil*)
पिया मैं राजू। चिल्लाना मत। लोग मुझे मार डालेंगे।

RAJU
Pia, it's me ... Raju. Don't yell, they'll kill me.

Pia's eyes widen with shock

Farhan hurries out of the wedding area, smiling in relief.

पिया
(*in a low, angry voice*)
सुहास कहाँ है?

PIA
Where is Suhas?

INT. SUHAS'S, WEDDING VENUE
ROOM – CONTINUOUS

Suhas, still in his bathrobe, speaks agitatedly to housekeeping, on the phone.

सुहास
अरे हाऊसकीपिंग से आया था वो, शेरवानी लके गया।

SUHAS
Housekeeping took my *sherwani*.

EXT. MANDAP, WEDDING VENUE –
CONTINUOUS

The Priest recites the wedding mantras as Pia and Raju speak in whispers.

पिया
अंदर जाओ और सुहास को भेजो।

PIA
Go ... Send Suhas here.

राजू
मंत्र चालू है पिया। उठके जाऊंगा तो रूड लगेगा।

RAJU
It's rude to leave the ceremony.

Farhan slowly manoeuvres Chatur's SUV to the entrance of the wedding area. Still trussed up in the back of the SUV, Chatur makes angry sounds. Farhan takes out his phone and calls Raju.

A phone rings in the *mandap*. The mantra-reciting Priest and Raju, both feel in their pockets and take out their cell phones.

राजू
हाँ फरहान बोल ...

The Priest looks mildly disappointed that it's Raju's call.

फरहान
गाड़ी गेट पे रेडी है। मैं कह रहा हूँ, पिया को उठा और भाग।

फरहान
(*to Chatur, snapping*)
अबे चुप हो जा, हिल मत यार

INT. CORRIDOR OUTSIDE SUHAS'S ROOM, WEDDING VENUE – CONTINUOUS

Suhas steps out of his room, bouncing in frustration and helplessness. A passing waiter stops short on seeing him.

वेटर
(*shocked*)
साहब!

सुहास
शेरवानी?

वेटर
आप यहाँ है?

सुहास
हाँ।

वेटर
... वहाँ फेरे कौन ले रहा है?

RAJU
Yeah, Farhan?

FARHAN
The car's ready. Grab her hand and run.

FARHAN
Don't move.

WAITER
Sir ...!

SUHAS
My *sherwani*?

WAITER
You're here ...?

SUHAS
Yes.

WAITER
So who's at the altar?

सुहास
फेरे?

SUHAS
Altar?

Suhas runs towards the *mandap*.

EXT. MANDAP, WEDDING VENUE –
CONTINUOUS

The *phas* have started. Pia and Raju
circle the holy fire.

राजू
और फेरे हो गये तो हमारी शादी हो जायेगी।
मैं पहले से शादी शुदा हूँ पिया। चलें ...

RAJU
Another couple of rounds, and we'll be
considered married I'm already married,
Pia. Let's go.

पिया
(*whispering with worry*)
कितने सारे लोग हैं यहाँ सब हंसेंगे।

PIA
It's too late. People will laugh at me.

Raju stops in front of Pia and takes off
the veil.

राजू
लोग हंसेंगे, इस लिए तुम सुसाइड करोगी?

RAJU
So you'll commit suicide?

The Director, still moustacheless, stands
in the *mandap* with Mona. They both are
startled, on seeing Raju.

डाइरेक्टर
रस्तोगी!

DIRECTOR
Rastogi!

राजू
पिया लोग दो दिन के लिये गौसिप करेंगे, फिर
भूल जायेंगे।

RAJU
People will gossip briefly, then forget.

The Director starts to move towards Raju
but Mona stops him.

राजू
लेकिन आज अगर तुमने यह शादी की ना तो
ज़िन्दगी भर नहीं भूलूंगी की गाड़ी गेट पे थी ...

Pia looks up, Raju's words stirring the memory of similar words once spoken by Rancho. Words she had believed in.

राजू
हम तुमको रैन्चो के पास ले जाने आये थे
लेकिन सिर्फ लोगों के डर से,
(*indicating Suhas, who's just come running up*)
तुमने इस गधे से शादी कर ली।

Suhas stands in the aisle leading up to the *mandap*, his feet in pink furry slippers, his flowered robe flapping, his face bewildered.

SUHAS
(*pointing at Raju*)
Housekeeping?

Pia looks at Suhas, glances at the Director and Mona and then at Farhan waiting in the SUV. Farhan opens the back door of the SUV, in readiness and encouragement. A look of determination replaces the apprehension and doubt on Pia's face and she takes Raju's hand.

They run past the guests and dive into the waiting SUV.

The Director, Mona and Suhas run after them.

But they're too late. The SUV zips out of the venue as everyone looks on in shock.

RAJU
But you ... you'll regret on your deathbed that the car was at the gate ...

RAJU
Rancho within reach but in the fear of people, you married this ass.

EXT. ROAD – CONTINUOUS

Pia and Raju giggle in the backseat.
Farhan drives.

फरहान
(*hesitatingly*)
यार पिया, एक थोड़ा सा माइनर सा टेंशन
है।

FARHAN
Pia, minor problem.

पिया
क्या?

PIA
What?

फरहान
(*sheepishly*)
रैन्चो की शादी हुई की नहीं, ये नहीं पता।

FARHAN
We don't know if Rancho's married.

Pia's smile vanishes. She squeals in
outrage.

PIA
What?

राजू
(*placatingly*)
नहीं हुई होगी यार, नहीं हुई होगी।

RAJU
He won't be married.

पिया
(*livid*)
हो गई होगी तो?

PIA
And if he is?

राजू
तो तुमको वापस ड्रॉप कर देंगे।

RAJU
Then we'll drop you back.

Pia pummels Raju with her hands. He
laughs, warding off her blows. Trying
to distract her, he reaches for a tin of
biscuits in Chatur's hamper, and holds it
out to her.

राजू
अरे टेंशन मत लो यार, नहीं हई होगी। ये बिस्किट
खाओ। हैंडमेड है, फ्रौम सैन फ्रांसिको..

Chatur makes loud protesting sounds.
Startled, Pia peers over her seat and sees
him in the boot.

पिया
यह कहाँ से आया?

फरहान
इग्नोर कर... इग्नोर कर...

राजू
तुम बिस्किट खाओ ना, बिस्किट खाओ – बहुत
अच्छा है

Pia is livid.

She thrusts the biscuits back at him in
annoyance.

फरहान
ऑल इज़ वेल, ऑल इज़ वेल...

The SUV travels through hills and valleys.
Farhan reminisces as he drives.

फरहान
कल तक मै इस देश का एक शरीफ नागरिक
था। पर पिछले चौबीस घंटों में मैने एक
हवाई जहाज की एमरजैन्सी लैन्डिंग कराई
थी, श्यामलदास की आत्मा ऑलमोस्ट गटर
में पहुंचाई थी, और एक दूल्हन को शादी से
किडनेप किया था।

RAJU
Relax! Handmade biscuit? Handmade from
San Francisco.

PIA
What's he doing here?

FARHAN
Ignore him ...

RAJU
The biscuits very good.

FARHAN
Aal izz well, aal izz well ...

FARHAN
Till yesterday, I was a law-abiding citizen.
But in the last 24 hours, I had grounded
an aircraft, almost assigned Shamaldas's
ashes to the sewers, and made a bride
elope from her own wedding!

FLASHBACK

INT. / EXT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE,
ICE – NIGHT

Farhan and Rancho stand outside the Director's office trying to unlock the door.

फरहान (V.O.)
सब उस कमीने रैन्चो के लिए।

FARHAN
All for Rancho.

His hands shake with fear, Farhan finally opens the lock. They slip into the office and look around in the dark.

फरहान (V.O.)
पर वो भी तो साला दोस्तों पे जान छिड़कता था। राजू के लिए क्वेश्चन पेपर चुराने, रावण की लंका में घुस गया था।

FARHAN
But he too would do anything for friends. Like stealing the question paper... from the lion's den.

Rancho puts on a torch.

रैन्चो
लाल सील वाला ऐनवलप ढूँढ़।

RANCHO
Envelope with the red seal.

फरहान
ओके!

FARHAN
Ok!

They search the office for the envelope with the question paper in it.

फरहान (V.O.)
उसे बहुत डर था कि अगर राजू फेल हो गया तो फिर से साला हाई जंप मारने निकल पड़ेगा। लेकिन हम भी बड़े उसूलों वाले चोर थे। कसम ली थी कि पेपर सिर्फ राजू के लिए चुराएंगे। खुद देखेंगे भी नहीं।

FARHAN
He feared that if Raju failed, there would be another high jump. We were principled thieves, stealing the paper only for Raju. We'd sworn we won't even take a peek.

रैन्चो

अरे यार, कहाँ छुपाया है उसने?

Frustrated at not being able to find the envelope, Farhan lifts the phone off its cradle and hands it over to Rancho.

फरहान (V.O.)

यार दूढ़ते दूढ़ते गुड मॉरनिंग हो जायेगी! रैन्चो, पिया से पूछले ना।

INT. DIRECTOR'S HOUSE, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

Pia's cellphone vibrates with an incoming call. It is on the dining table, close to the laptop and files the Director is working on.

Behind the Director, Mona and Pia speak to Mona's husband on the land line.

मोना

(on the phone)

कहाँ हो तुम! कब से फोन कर रही हूँ तुम्हे।
अरे फोन तो किया करो!

The Director looks up, distracted by the cellphone's buzzing.

डाइरेक्टर

पिया तुम्हारा फोन।

मोना

(as Pia grabs the receiver from her)

एक मिनट, पिया! पिया!

पिया

(on the phone)

जीजू, जब इसको ऑल इज़ वेल बोलो ना तो किक मारता है।

RANCHO

Where's it hidden ...?

FARHAN

We'll grow old searching! Ask Pia.

MONA

Mr. Papa-To-Be!

DIRECTOR

Pia, your phone.

MONA

One minute, Pia! Pia!

PIA

If you say 'Aal izz well', he kicks.

मोना
(*clutching her stomach, delighted*)
हे मारा, मारा!

MONA
He kicked!

Pia's cellphone vibrates again.

डाइरेक्टर
(*exasperated*)
पिया तुम्हारा फोन।

DIRECTOR
Pia, your phone.

पिया (O.S.)
जीजू, कब आ रहे हो। कम सून।

PIA
Brother-in-law, when are you coming?
Come soon.

The Director reaches out and picks up the phone. On the screen, the caller ID is 'DAD OFFICE'. His face goes rigid with shock.

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

As Rancho waits for Pia to answer her phone, Farhan calls out in triumph.

फरहान
(*holding the question paper*)
मिल गया। रैन्चो!

FARHAN
Found it! Rancho!

Rancho hangs up.

INT. DIRECTOR'S HOUSE, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

The Director answers Pia's phone.

डाइरेक्टर
हैल्लो?

DIRECTOR
Hello?

The line disconnects just as the Director speaks into the phone. Behind him,

oblivious to the situation, Mona and Pia continue chatting to Mona's husband on the land line.

The Director rushes out of the house, under an umbrella.

It is raining heavily outside.

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

As Farhan holds the torch, Rancho deftly detaches the circular seal from the envelope.

(Intercut – The Director runs into a corridor in the college building, closing his umbrella)

Rancho opens the envelope. He takes out the question paper and gives it to Farhan.

रैन्चो
इसका कॉपी बना, जीरोक्स कॉपी बना जल्दी।

RANCHO
Quick, photocopy this.

Farhan puts the question paper into the copier and switches it on.

(Intercut – The Director hurries down a corridor.)

Farhan picks up the copy that emerges from the copier and returns the original to Rancho.

फरहान
ये ले!

FARHAN
Take it!

Rancho inserts the question paper back into the envelope and brings out a bottle of glue.

(Intercut – The Director heads towards a flight of steps)

Rancho glues the seal back onto the envelope.

(Intercut – The Director hurries up the stairs)

Rancho presses down on the seal.

रैन्चो
कहाँ से मिला था?

RANCHO
Where was it?

फरहान
पीछे।

FARHAN
Back there.

रैन्चो
वहीं पर रखदे।

RANCHO
Then keep it back.

FARHAN
Ok.

रैन्चो
आराम से।

RANCHO
Carefully.

Rancho gives Farhan the envelope.

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

The Director flings open his office door and surveys it, panting with rage and exertion. At first glance, everything seems in its place, untouched. Then his gaze falls on the copier. It's on.

He rushes to the cabinet with the question paper in it. He checks the seal on the envelope and feels the glue on it.

Rage fills his face.

INT. ROOM, HOSTEL, ICE –
MOMENTS LATER

Raju is studying at his desk.

The room door swings open and Farhan and Rancho rush in, drenched and panting.

फरहान
बच गये!

FARHAN
We're safe!

राजू
ओए कहाँ गये थे यार? हाँ?

RAJU
Where were you?

Farhan and Rancho sit down, their heartbeats gradually slowing down. Rancho takes out the question paper from his bag and hands it to Raju.

रैन्चो
ये ले।

RANCHO
Here!

राजू
क्या है ये?

RAJU
What's this?

फरहान
ऐश कर।

FARHAN
A gift.

RANCHO
Question paper.

Raju gives a start.

रैन्चो
वायरस ने तुझे फेल करने के लिए खुद सेट किया था।

RANCHO
Virus set it himself, to fail you.

Raju looks from Farhan to Rancho. He glances at the question paper, shaking his head.

राजू
अजीब दोस्त मिले हैं यार। पहले सर उठा के
जीना सिखाते है। फिर सर झुकाने के काम
करवाते है। नहीं यार ... पास होंगे तो अपने
दम से ...

He crumples up the question paper and
throws it over his head, towards the
door.

फरहान
अरे!

राजू
... वरना फेल सही।

Rancho and Farhan stare at Raju with
new respect and pride.

Rancho's eyes well up at his friends courage.
He envelopes Raju in a brief hug, before
Farhan comes up and does the same.

फरहान
(*affectionately*)
साले!

फरहान (V.O.)
कमीने ने दिल जीत लिया। मन किया साले को
साला बना लूं ...

Farhan glances at the photograph of
Raju's Sister.

फरहान (V.O.)
... पर फिर मैंने अपने इमोशन को कन्ट्रोल
किया।

The door to the room is flung open. The
Director flanked by two security guards

RAJU
Strange buddies! First teach you to be
upright, then offer a path to shame No way.
If I pass, it'll be on my own steam ...

FARHAN
Hey!

RAJU
If I don't, it's still ok.

FARHAN
Idiot!

FARHAN
He'd won us over! I felt like embracing
him as family ...

FARHAN
... but then I controlled my emotions.

stands at the entrance. Raju, Farhan and Rancho look at him with shock.

Glowering with rage, the Director enters the room and stops at the crumpled question paper on the ground. He picks it up, opens it and looks at it. He looks up at the boys. His gaze focusses on Rancho. He takes the umbrella from under his arm and starts hitting Rancho with it.

डाइरेक्टर
ब्लाडी चोर!

DIRECTOR
Damn thief!

Farhan and Raju call out to him, pleading, trying to get him to stop. Rancho stands silent, head bowed, taking every blow without protest.

RAJU
Sir, please, Sir.

डाइरेक्टर
चोर!

DIRECTOR
Thief!

RAJU
Sir, please, Sir.

DIRECTOR
Rascal!

FARHAN
Sir sorry Sir! Sir please, please, please!
Sorry, Sir!

DIRECTOR
Rascal!

FARHAN
Sir, Sir, Sir!

डाइरेक्टर
सिस्टम चेंज करने आये थे।

DIRECTOR
Wanted to change the system.

FARHAN
Sir!

डाइरेक्टर
मेरे दरवाज़े पे सु सु करोगे! सु सु करोगे मेरे
दरवाज़े पर!

DIRECTOR
You'll pee on my door!

फरहान
सर क्या कर रहे हैं सर!

FARHAN
Sir, what are you doing? Sorry Sir.

Rancho continues to stand still and silent
as the Director hits him like a man
possessed.

DIRECTOR
Bloody rascals!

FARHAN
Sir!

Exhausted, the Director finally stops.

FARHAN
Sorry Sir, sorry Sir!

डाइरेक्टर
यू आर रस्टीकेटिड। कल सुबह तक तुम लोग
यहाँ से निकल नहीं गये तो आइ विल कॉल द
पुलिस! आइ विल कॉल द पुलिस!
(to the three of them)
रास्कल्स! रास्कल्स, ऑल ऑफ यू!

DIRECTOR
You are rusticated! If all of you aren't out
by morning, I'll call the police! I will call
the police! Rascals! Rascals, all of you!

Throwing his umbrella on the ground, he
leaves the room.

डाइरेक्टर (O.S.)

उसके पास मेरे ऑफिस की चाबी कहाँ से
आयी?

INT. DIRECTOR'S HOUSE, ICE –
LATER THE SAME NIGHT

Pia gathers the used plates at the dining
table. Mona sits on a chair a little away.
The Director stands in the centre of the
room, waiting for an answer.

पिया

चाबी मैंने उसको दी थी डैड।

A beat.

पिया

आइ विश ये चाबी भइया को दी होती। आज
वो ज़िन्दा होते।

Mona looks at Pia, alarmed.

MONA

Stop it, Pia!

Pia turns and looks into her Father's
eyes.

पिया

आपको क्या लगता है, कि भइया ट्रेन से गिर
के मरे थे?

Mona gets up from her chair and rushes
forward.

MONA

Shut up, Pia!

Increasingly distraught, Pia lashes out at
her Father.

DIRECTOR

How did he get my office key?

PIA

I gave him the key, Dad.

PIA

I wish I'd given this key to my brother.
He would be alive today.

PIA

You think your son fell off a train and
died?

पिया
आपने डिसाइड कर लिया कि वो इंजिनियर बनेंगे।
कभी उससे पूछा की वो क्या बनना चाहते हैं?

The Director looks at Pia stunned,
uncomprehending.

पिया
(*her voice breaking*)
कितना प्रेशर डाला भइया पे डैड इन्टरेन्स इग्जैम
देने से मर जाना उन्हें आसान लगा।

Catching her breath on a sob, she stares
at her Father accusingly, before leaving
the room.

डाइरेक्टर
(*to Mona, whispering, shocked*)
ये क्या कह रही है?

मोना
(*urgently*)
डैड ... आप कमरे में जाइये। आप अपने कमरे
में जाइये

Pia comes back into the room, her face
tear-stained, a duffel bag in her hand. She
upturns the bag. Her brother's knick-knacks
tumble onto the dining table.

मोना
पिया, स्टॉप इट! क्या कर रही है पिया! मैंने
कहा ना...

Unheeding of Mona's words, Pia pulls out
a piece of paper from the contents of the
bag. Holding it with both hands, weeping,
she turns to her Father.

PIA
You decided he'd be an engineer. Did you
ever ask him what he wanted to be?

PIA
You put such pressure on him ... that he
chose death over the entrance exam.

DIRECTOR
I don't understand ...

MONA
Dad, you go to your room.

MONA
Pia, don't do this!

पिया
भइया लिटरेचर पढ़ना चाहते थे। राइटर बनना चाहते थे।

She holds up the piece of paper in her hands.

पिया
पर इस सुसाइड नोट से ज्यादा कुछ लिख नहीं पाये, डैड।

मोना
(*tears filling her eyes*)
पिया वापस रख दे वो लैटर प्लीज़!

पिया
(*shouting, in anguish*)
कब तब छुपा के रखोगी दीदी।

She looks at her Father, weeping uncontrollably.

पिया
एक बार, बस एक बार आप उसे कह देते — कि नहीं होती इन्जिनियरिंग तो छोड़ दे। जो पसंद है वो कर ...
(*shaking the suicide note in his face*)
तो आज भइया जिंदा होते डैड।

The Director reaches for the note. He pulls at it with both hands. Pia, sobbing brokenly, finally lets it go.

डाइरेक्टर
(*fiercely, on the verge of breaking down*)
वो सुसाइड नहीं कर सकता।

Pia looks at him through her tears.

PIA
He wanted to study literature, be a writer.

PIA
But all he wrote was this suicide note.

MONA
Put that away, please!

PIA
No more cover-ups!

PIA
Just once if you'd only said — “Don't do engineering if you don't want to. Just do what your heart is in,” then he would be alive today.

DIRECTOR
He didn't commit suicide.

पिया

(delivering a verdict)

यू आर राइट डैड। वो सुसाईड नहीं, मर्डर था।

PIA

You're right, Dad. It wasn't suicide ... It was murder.

She runs out of the house, grabbing her helmet and raincoat on the way out.

The Director shuts his eyes, a broken man.

EXT. CITY, MUMBAI – LATER SAME NIGHT

It's has been raining ceaselessly. The traffic in the city has come to a standstill.

INT. HOSPITAL–LATER SAME NIGHT

Pia, still distraught, sits in the waiting area of her hospital, trying to calm herself down. On a television set behind her, a Newsreader reports that many city roads are completely submerged because of the rain.

EXT. CORRIDOR, HOSTEL, ICE – CONTINUOUS

Laden with their luggage, Rancho, Farhan and Raju step out of their room, into knee-deep water. Raju walks with a crutch.

Millimeter follows the boys with his own bag.

INT. DIRECTOR'S HOUSE, ICE – CONTINUOUS

With shaking hands the Director reaches into the pile of his son's belongings, on the dining table. He picks up a book and

opens it slowly. Mona's voice comes from across the room.

MONA
Dad ...

The Director, in the fog of grief, doesn't hear her. Behind him, Mona crouches on the ground, holding her stomach. She's in pain.

MONA
Dad!

DIRECTOR
(snapping to attention)
Mona?

EXT. CAMPUS, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

It's pouring down.

The trio trudges through the water, Millimeter close behind. Rancho turns to Millimeter.

रैन्चो
अरे तुझे बोला ना वापस जाना। तो पीछे पीछे क्यों आ रहा है?

मिलीमिटर
क्यों, ये रोड क्या तुम्हारी अम्मा की है।

DIRECTOR (O.S.)
Please help, we are desperate here!

Rancho looks in the direction of the voice.

A car is stalled in water.

RANCHO
Go back, Millimeter. Why're you following us?

MILLIMETER
Why? Your mom owns the road?

डाइरेक्टर (O.S.)
क्या सारे शहर में एक ही ऐम्बुलेन्स है?

The Director stands before the raised bonnet of the car, talking agitatedly on the phone.

डाइरेक्टर
किसी और हॉस्पिटल से ऐम्बुलेन्स मंगाओ।

(Intercut – An ambulance driver sits inside his unmoving ambulance as the rain beats down)

ऐम्बुलेन्स गाय
पूरे शहर में पानी भरा हुआ है जनाब। हम कुछ नहीं कर सकते।

The trio and Millimeter reach the car. Mona is in the backseat, moaning in pain, on the phone with Pia.

मोना
नहीं पिया वो ...

Mona hands over the phone to Rancho.

रैन्चो
हे मोना, क्या हुआ?

MONA
Rancho, Pia.

RANCHO
Hello?

(Intercut – Pia, still in the hospital waiting area, speaks urgently into the phone)

DIRECTOR
You can't send an ambulance?

DIRECTOR
Get it from another hospital.

AMBULANCE GUY
The entire city's flooded, Sir. We're helpless.

MONA
No Pia, he ...

RANCHO
Mona, you ok?

पिया
रैन्चो यहाँ पहुँचना इम्पॉसिबल है। अब मैं जैसा
कहती हूँ वैसा करो।

डाइरेक्टर (O.S.)
आप समझ नहीं रहे हैं, द वाटर बैग हैज़ बर्स्ट।
आप लोगो ने इतना सब ...

He takes the phone off his ear and looks
at it.

डाइरेक्टर
डिस्कनेक्ट कर दिया! मोना!

He turns around and hurries to the back
of the car. He peers into the car. The back
door is open and Mona's gone.

डाइरेक्टर
(alarmed)
मोना?

EXT. CORRIDOR, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

Rancho and Farhan carry Mona through
a flooded corridor, Millimeter walking
beside them. Raju follows behind, on the
phone with Pia.

Mona is crying out in pain.

INT. COMMON ROOM, ICE /
HOSPITAL – CONTINUOUS

They all enter the common room. It's
pitch dark.

रैन्चो
संभाल ... संभाल।

PIA
Rancho, you can't reach here. Do as
I say.

DIRECTOR
The water bag has burst ...

DIRECTOR
Disconnected! Mona.

DIRECTOR
Mona!

RANCHO
Carefully.

रैन्चो
(*to Millimeter*)
लाइट ऑन कर, लाइट ऑन कर!

RANCHO
Turn on the lights.

फरहान
(*to Rancho*)
कहाँ कहाँ कहाँ।

FARHAN
Where to?

RANCHO
To the table tennis table!

Rancho and Farhan put Mona down on the table tennis table.

राजू
(*to Pia, on the phone*)
हाँ, हम लोग पहुँच गये, कौमन रूम के अन्दर।

RAJU
Pia, we're in the common room.

At the hospital, Pia hurries up to a nurse's station and opens a laptop.

पिया
राजू, वेब कैमरा ऑन करो।

PIA
Raju, turn on the web camera.

Raju hobbles over to the computer in the common room and turns it on.

राजू
हाँ हाँ।

RAJU
Yes, yes!

At the nurse's station, Raju's image fills the screen on Pia's laptop.

राजू
हाँ पिया।

RAJU
Yes Pia.

पिया
राजू, दीदी कहाँ हैं? शो मी।

PIA
Where's Mona? Show me.

राजू
हाँ ... हाँ ... होल्ड ऑन, होल्ड ऑन, डोन्ट
वैरी! होल्ड ऑन, होल्ड ऑन!

Raju, with Farhan's help, wheels the
computer table to where Mona is lying.

फरहान
ये लो, पिया।

पिया
दीदी सब ठीक हो जायेगा। मैं हूँ तुम्हारे पास,
ओके?

Mona writhes in pain.

MONA
(yelling)
Pia, I'm dying!

At the nurse's station, a hospital Matron
joins Pia. She looks at the laptop screen,
worried.

पिया
रैन्चो जब दुनिया में हॉस्पिटल और डॉक्टर नहीं
थे तब भी बच्चे पैदा होते थे।

In the common room, Rancho, Millimeter
next to him, nods, dazed.

रैन्चो
हाँ।

At the nurse's station, Pia speaks firmly
into the web camera.

पिया
दीदी की डिलीवरी तुम लोग करोगे।

RAJU
Yes ... Yes ... hold on, hold on, don't worry!
Hold on, hold on!

FARHAN
Here, Pia.

PIA
Didi, don't worry. I'm with you.

PIA
Rancho, even when there were no hospitals
or doctors, babies were delivered.

RANCHO
Yes.

PIA
You all will deliver this baby.

In the common room, Mona screams with fear and pain.

Raju and Farhan look at Mona, petrified. Rancho puts his hand over his heart.

रैन्चो
ऑल इज़ वेल, ऑल इज़ वेल!

RANCHO
All izz well, all izz well!

The Director storms in through the common room door, bellowing.

डाइरेक्टर
हॉव डेयर यू? तुम लोग कर क्या रहे हो?

DIRECTOR
How dare you? I'll kill you?

Pia's voice stops him in his tracks.

पिया ऑन द कोमन रूम काम्प्यूटर
डेड बीच में मत आओ। प्लीज़ स्टे आउट ऑफ
दिस, ओके!

PIA
Dad, stay out of this!

The Director falls silent, looking around in confusion.

पिया ऑन द कोमन रूम काम्प्यूटर
फरहान तुम टॉवल्स और सीसर्स लेके आओ।
मिलीमिटर कपड़े सुखाने का क्लिप और गरम
पानी लाओ। रैन्चो तुम दीदी को कवर करो।

PIA
Farhan, get towels and scissors. Millimeter,
get clothes clips and hot water. Rancho,
cover Mona.

रैन्चो
हाँ ... हाँ!

RANCHO
Yes, Yes.

Everyone rushes to their tasks.

Rancho looks around searchingly, then dashes towards a window.

The Director, anxious but out of his depth, backs away, into a corner.

Rancho yanks down the curtain from the window.

He and Raju cover Mona with the curtain.

At the nurse's station, Pia speaks to Mona gently, encouragingly.

पिया
दीदी पुश करो।

PIA
Mona, try pushing.

RANCHO ON PIA'S LAPTOP
Ya, ya, push!

राजू
कमऑन मोना, कमऑन मोना, दम लागाके।

RAJU
Mona, try pushing.

पिया
पुश करो

PIA
Push!

In the common room, Raju and Rancho continue to urge Mona on.

RANCHO / RAJU
C'mon c'mon Mona ...

In frustration, Mona slaps the person closest to her – Rancho. He holds his face, shocked.

मोना
(*screaming*)
शटप! क्या पुश पुश पुश, नहीं हो रहा।

MONA
Stop it! I can't do it.

At the nurse's station, Pia speaks urgently to Rancho.

पिया
रैन्चो देखो क्राउनिंग हो रहा है क्या?

PIA
Rancho, check if there's crowning?

In the common room, Rancho and Raju look baffled. Mona whimpers in pain.

रैन्चो
क्राउनिंग ... मतलब?

RANCHO
Crowning...?

पिया ऑन द कोमन रूम काम्प्यूटर
(*to the matron*)
वो डाइग्राम लेके आओ।

PIA
Get that diagram.

At the nurse's station, the Matron hands Pia a diagram. Pia holds it up to the web camera. She indicates the baby's head in the diagram.

पिया
रैन्चो, देखो सर बाहर आ रहा है क्या।

PIA
See if the head is coming out?

In the common room, Rancho, taken aback, hesitates.

रैन्चो
हाँ?

RANCHO
Yes?

At the nurse's station, Pia calls out with increasing panic.

पिया
कम ऑन रैन्चो जल्दी।

PIA
Come on Rancho, check quickly.

In the common room, Rancho is still hesitant. Mona explodes.

MONA
Go!

राजू
जा जा जा, रैन्चो, जा कम ऑन।

RAJU
Go, Rancho, go.

Rancho walks to the foot of the table tennis table and goes under the curtain covering Mona.

At the nurse's station, Pia waits anxiously.

RAJU

Mona, Mona, easy, easy!

In the common room, Farhan, getting a towel out of his bag, glances at the table tennis table with worry.

Rancho emerges from under the curtain.

रैन्चो

नहीं। नहीं, नो क्रौनिंग। नहीं आ रहा हैं।

RANCHO

No crowning.

At the nurse's station, Pia, now desperate, pleads with Mona.

पिया

दीदी प्लीज़ पुश करो।

PIA

Mona, please push.

In the common room, Mona slumps back exhausted. She starts to lose consciousness.

The Director rushes to her side and takes her hand in his.

DIRECTOR

Mona! Mona!

At the nurse's station, the Matron shakes her head.

मैटरन

वो थक गई हैं पिया।

MATRON

She's tired, Pia.

पिया

(in panic)

उठाओ उसे! अगर वो पुश नहीं करेगी तो बहुत प्रोब्लम हो जायेगी

मैटरन

वैक्यूम कप लगाना पड़ेगा ना पिया

पिया

वहाँ कहाँ मिलेगा वैक्यूम कप?

In the common room, Rancho springs into action.

रैन्चो

वैक्यूम कप क्या होता है? कैसा होता है? क्या करते है उससे?

At the nurse's station, Pia hits some keys on her laptop.

PIA

I'll show you.

An animated sequence of a vacuum-assisted delivery starts playing on the computer screen in the common room.

पिया (V.O.)

अगर माँ थक जाये और पुश नहीं कर पाये तो ये कप बेबी के सर पे लगाते हैं। सक्शन पंप वैक्यूम क्रियेट करता है और ये कप बेबी के सर पे चिपक जाता है। फिर बेबी को बाहर खींच लेते हैं।

In the common room, Rancho snaps his fingers decisively.

PIA

Wake her! If she won't push, it's a big problem.

MATRON

They need a vacuum cup.

PIA

Where will they get one?

RANCHO

What's a vacuum cup? How is it used?

PIA

If the mother's too fatigued to push, a cup is placed on baby's head. Suction makes the cup stick to the head and the baby is pulled out.

रैन्चो
मैं ये बना सकता हूँ! आइ कैन मेक इट!

RANCHO
I can make this.

डाइरेक्टर?
कैसे?

DIRECTOR
How?

रैन्चो
वैक्यूम क्लीनर से।

RANCHO
With a vacuum cleaner.

डाइरेक्टर?
वैक्यूम क्लीनर से?

DIRECTOR
Vacuum cleaner?

RANCHO
Yes Sir, vacuum cleaner!

At the nurse's station, Pia looks troubled.

पिया
पर वैक्यूम क्लीनर का प्रेशर बहुत ज्यादा होता है, रैन्चो।

PIA
That pressure's too high. Rancho.

रैन्चो ऑन द लेपटॉप
प्रेशर मैं कन्ट्रोल कर लूंगा।

RANCHO
I'll control it.

पिया
वहाँ है वैक्यूम क्लीनर?

PIA
Do you have a vacuum cleaner?

In the common room, the Director answers Pia's question.

डाइरेक्टर
है मेरे ऑफिस में।

DIRECTOR
Yes, in my office.

रैन्चो
फरहान, जल्दी जा, सर के ऑफिस से ले के आ।

RANCHO
Farhan, rush and get it.

Rancho and the Director feel in their pockets, take out the office keys and throw them at Farhan simultaneously.

रैन्चो / डाइरेक्टर
ये ले चाबी।

RANCHO / DIRECTOR
Here's the key.

Farhan catches both keys and holds them up for an embarrassed, awkward moment.

The Director turns to Rancho, looking explosive.

Rancho hurriedly attempts a diversion.

RANCHO
Mona, push Mona! C'mon, push! Mona, C'mon!

Farhan runs to the door. A blinding flash of lightning fills the room and then the room plunges into darkness. Farhan stops at the door.

फरहान
ओ माइ गॉड! अरे!

FARHAN
Oh my God!

राजू
क्या हुआ।

RAJU
What happened?

At the nurse's station, Pia's laptop screen goes blank.

पिया
(alarmed)
क्या हुआ?

PIA
What happened?

In the common room, Raju's phone rings.

राजू
(*putting his phone on speaker*)
हां पिया।

RAJU
Yes, Pia.

पिया
हैल्लो राजू, क्या हुआ?

PIA
Raju, what happened?

राजू
वो लाइट चली गई है

RAJU
The power's gone.

At the nurse's station, Pia panics.

पिया
ओ गॉड! अब वैक्यूम क्लीनर कैसे चलेगा?

PIA
How'll the vacuum work now?

In the dark common room, Rancho starts issuing instructions.

RANCHO
Farhan!

फरहान
हां।

FARHAN
Yes.

रैन्चो
फरहान तू वैक्यूम क्लीनर ला, मैं लाइट लाता हूँ।

RANCHO
Farhan, you get the vacuum, I'll get the power.

फरहान
ओके!

FARHAN
Ok!

डाइरेक्टर
(*hysterical*)
कैसे?

DIRECTOR
How?

रैन्चो
मिलीमीटर वायरस को बाहर निकाल। जल्दी।
कम ऑन!

RANCHO
Millimeter, get Virus out.

Millimeter runs up to the Director, grasps his arm and tugs.

मिलीमीटर
ओके चल वायरस बाहर चल चल वायरस बाहर
चल वायरस वायरस ...

The Director, flabbergasted, tries to swat Millimeter away.

DIRECTOR
What nonsense is this!

रैन्चो
(*cutting into the fracas*)
अरे ये वायरस नहीं यार, अरे मेरा वायरस, जो
मैंने बनाया था, इनवर्टर, वो! वो जल्दी लेके
आ, जल्दी, जा!

मिलीमीटर
सॉरी सॉरी समझ गया, समझ गया

Millimeter rushes out of the room.

रैन्चो
राजू!

राजू
हाँ?

रैन्चो
हॉस्टल में सब को जगा और उनको बोल की
कार बैट्रीज़ चाहियेए वायर्स चाहिए, टूल किट
चाहिए और वैक्यूम गौज़। कम ऑन!

EXT. HOSTEL, CAMPUS, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

Farhan runs through knee-deep water with a torch.

MILLIMETER
C'mon Virus, get out!

RANCHO
Not this Virus. My Virus, the inverter.
Get that, quick!

MILLIMETER
Sorry, sorry, got it now.

RANCHO
Raju!

RAJU
Yes?

RANCHO
Raju, wake up the hostel boys. Get car
batteries, wires, and a vacuum gauge.

EXT. CORRIDOR, HOSTEL, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

Raju bangs on room doors, waking up students.

राजू
राजेश, दीपक, बाहर निकलो, कौमन रूम में
एमरजैन्सी है!

RAJU
Emergency in the common room!

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

Farhan enters the Director's office and looks around.

EXT. CAMPUS, ICE – CONTINUOUS

Students run through water with torches.

INT. DIRECTOR'S OFFICE, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

Farhan finds the vacuum cleaner.

EXT. CAMPUS, ICE – CONTINUOUS

The students, led by Rancho and Raju, run to parked cars in the campus. Using crowbars, they pry open bonnets and remove the batteries from the cars.

EXT. CAMPUS, ICE – CONTINUOUS

Farhan hurries back to the common room with the vacuum cleaner.

EXT. CAMPUS, ICE – CONTINUOUS

Millimeter runs back to the common room with the Virus inverter, holding an umbrella over it to shield it from the rain.

INT, COMMON ROOM, ICE –
CONTINUOUS

The Director looks up as students, eager to help, pour into the common room.

STUDENTS

Good evening Sir, good evening Sir ...

डाइरेक्टर
रैन्चो कहाँ है?

DIRECTOR
Where's Rancho?

Rancho rushes in, making his way through the group.

रैन्चो
सर सर।
(*to the students*)
सब लोग अपनी बैट्री यहाँ रखो, कम ऑन!
एण्ड द वायर्स!

RANCHO
Here, Sir. Keep the batteries here and the wires.

The batteries are lined up, an intricate web of wires connecting them. All connections go into the Virus inverter.

Rancho works furiously on the setup, issuing rapid instructions all the while.

रैन्चो
राजू!

RANCHO
Raju!

राजू
हाँ।

RAJU
Yes.

रैन्चो
सब स्विचिस ऑफ कर और इनवर्टर को मेन्स मे कनेक्ट कर। ये ले।

RANCHO
Raju, switch off everything, connect the inverter to the mains.

RAJU
Ok.

रैन्चो
(*throwing him a wire*)
ये लो!

RANCHO
Take this!

Raju goes to the main switchboard, turns off all the switches and starts working.

Farhan runs in with the vacuum cleaner.

FARHAN
Rancho, vacuum cleaner!

Rancho gets up from the battery line-up and moves across the room.

रैन्चो
फरहान, वो तेरा कैमरा साफ करने वाला, क्या बोलता है उसको, फुस फुस?

RANCHO
Farhan, get your lens cleaner?

FARHAN
Blower blower.

रैन्चो
हां, वो ले के आ जल्दी।

RANCHO
Yeah, get it.

FARHAN
Ok!

Farhan opens his camera bag and takes out the blower. Rancho is already working on the vacuum cleaner.

फरहान
रैन्चो, ये ले ब्लोवर।

FARHAN
Rancho, blower.

रैन्चो
हाँ, गुड! ये वैक्यूम गौज़ पाइप में लगा इधर।

RANCHO
Good. Fix this to the gauge.

FARHAN
Ok!

Rancho slices the blower into two cups.

Farhan inserts the vacuum gauge nozzle into the vacuum cleaner pipe.

Rancho attaches one of the blower cups to the end of the vacuum cleaner pipe.

Millimeter runs in with a bucket of hot water.

The Director looks at all the activity and then towards Mona, with growing concern.

Raju finishes connecting the inverter wire to the mains.

राजू
रैन्चो, हो गया!

RAJU
Rancho, I'm done!

Rancho runs to the Virus inverter.

रैन्चो
सब स्विच ऑफ है?

RANCHO
All switches off?

राजू
हाँ

RAJU
Yes.

Rancho switches on the Virus Inverter.

रैन्चों
अब सिर्फ टीटी टेबल और कम्प्यूटर का लाइट
ऑन करो।

RANCHO
Hit the table and computer switches.

राजू
हाँ!

RAJU
Yes!

Raju pauses before the switchboard, glancing towards the room nervously.

Millimeter crosses himself in prayer.

The Director stares towards the switchboard, waiting for a miracle to happen.

Raju takes a deep breath and presses the table tennis switch.

The light above the table tennis table comes on.

The room erupts with claps and cheers.

रैन्चो

(briskly)

राजू, कम्प्यूटर ऑन करो।

RANCHO

Raju, turn on the computer.

Raju hurries to the computer and Rancho rushes towards the vacuum cleaner.

RANCHO

Farhan!

फरहान

हाँ?

FARHAN

Yes?

रैन्चो

कम ऑन, हैल्प मी, कनेक्ट कर इसको!

RANCHO

Come on, help me.. connect this!

FARHAN

Ok!

रैन्चो

इसमे लगा।

RANCHO

Connected with this.

They get the vacuum cleaner to the table tennis table.

At the hospital, the Matron, at Pia's laptop, calls out to her excitedly.

मैटरन
पिया, पिया जल्दी आओ, जल्दी आओ।

MATRON
Pia, come here quick.

Pia rushes back to her laptop which now has a small crowd of nurses and patients around it. Pia sees the common room image back on the screen and Rancho ready with his vacuum device.

PIA
Love you, Rancho!

In the common room, Rancho stands at the foot of the table tennis table, holding the modified vacuum cleaner.

रैन्चो
फरहान!

फरहान
हाँ?

रैन्चो
ऑन कर!

फरहान
हाँ!

FARHAN
Yes?

RANCHO
Farhan, turn it on!

FARHAN
Yes!

Farhan switches on the vacuum cleaner. It comes to life with a loud, jarring sound. The thought of that machine being used on his daughter makes the Director's head spin. He collapses into Millimeter's arms.

रैन्चो
पिया, सक्शन कितना होना चाहिए?

RANCHO
Pia, how much suction?

At the nurse's station, Pia leans into her web camera to answer Rancho.

पिया
0.5 से ज्यादा नहीं रैन्चो।

PIA
Not more than 0.5.

In the common room, Farhan stands by the vacuum cleaner, the gauge in his hand. Rancho calls out to him.

रैन्चो
फरहान, 0.5!

RANCHO
Farhan, 0.5!

फरहान
कवर कर!

FARHAN
Cover it!

Rancho covers the improvised vacuum cup with his palm.

रैन्चो
हाँ!

RANCHO
Yes!

फरहान
0.5!

FARHAN
0.5!

Rancho covers and uncovers the vacuum cup a couple of times, to test it.

RANCHO
Ok!

At the nurse's station, there is an air of suppressed excitement in the crowd around the laptop. Pia smiles, her eyes brimming with confidence in Rancho.

मैटरन
वैक्यूम क्लीनर से डिलीवरी, बीस साल के कैरियर में आज तक नहीं देखी।

MATRON
Vacuum cleaner baby! Mother of all deliveries.

In the common room, the boys are ready to take the plunge.

रैन्चो
फरहान ऑफ कर।

RANCHO
Farhan, stop.

फरहान
हाँ!

FARHAN
Yes!

Rancho stands still for a moment, gathering courage.

RANCHO
Ok.

Vacuum cup in hand, he goes under the curtain covering Mona.

PIA
Raju, get on the table.

In the ward, adjoining the nurse station, Pia has the Matron lying on a bed.

पिया
मुझे देखो। बेबी को ऐसे नीचे पुश करो। ऐसे।

PIA
Push the baby down, like this.

राजू
हाँ, हाँ

RAJU
Ok, ok.

Raju rushes to the table tennis table. Mona stirs weakly.

रैन्चो
(*from under the curtain*)
ऑन कर!

RANCHO
Farhan, turn it on!

फरहान
हाँ।

FARHAN
Yes!

Farhan turns on the vacuum cleaner.

At the hospital, Pia rushes back to the laptop.

पिया
(to Mona)
कम आन दीदी, पुश करो, यू कैन डू इट।

PIA
C'mon sister, C'mon, you can do it C'mon,
push ... it.

Mona starts pushing. Raju kneels next to her, on the table tennis table, his hands on her belly, gently pushing downward.

RAJU
C'mon, you can do it C'mon, push ...

Mona tries to push, crying out with the effort. Raju's hand strokes her forehead.

पिया
चैम्प के बारे में सोचो, कम ऑन, फॉर चैम्प!

PIA
Do it for Champ!

FARHAN
Come on Mona, come on Mona, Mona push!

Her face contorting with agony, Mona keeps trying to push.

RAJU
Yes come on, Mona, push push Mona, come on come on come on!

From under the curtain covering Mona comes a welcome yell.

रैन्चो
आ रहा है!

RANCHO
He's coming out!

The Director, leaning heavily on Millimeter, is roused from his stupor.

PIA

Come on, Didi, you can do it.

RAJU

Push Mona, come on, push!

FARHAN

Yes Mona good, push Mona, you can do it Mona!

The Director is at the table. He holds Mona's hand, leans over her and joins in the spirit of encouragement all around the room.

Mona's body half rises from the table, she gives one final push and falls back, exhausted.

रैन्चो

(from under the curtain)

फरहान बन्द कर

RANCHO

Farhan, turn it off.

फरहान

हाँ बन्द किया, बन्द किया।

FARHAN

Ok, off.

Rancho emerges from under the curtain, holding a baby.

There is awed silence in the room.

Tears course down Mona's face.

Raju smiles through tears.

Farhan stands stunned.

The Director looks at his grandson incredulously.

At the nurse's station, Pia cries with joy.

The crowd around her stares at the laptop

screen in startled wonder. The Matron finally finds her voice, remembering her professional training.

मैटरन
दो क्लिप लगाओ, अम्बीलिकल कॉर्ड काटो।

MATRON
Two clips, cut the umbilical cord.

In the common room, everyone snaps to life.

रैन्चो
फरहान दो क्लिप ला जल्दी! अम्बीलिकल कॉर्ड पे लगा

RANCHO
Farhan, two clips on the cord.

Farhan puts two clothes clips on the umbilical cord.

फरहान
हाँ, ये ले, ये ले।

FARHAN
Take this!

रैन्चो
कैंची लाओ, कैंची।

RANCHO
Get scissors.

डाइरेक्टर
संभाल के, संभाल के!

DIRECTOR
Be careful!

रैन्चो
ये काट, बीच में से काट ...।

RANCHO
Cut at the centre.

Farhan cuts the umbilical cord.

रैन्चो
टॉवल लाओ, टॉवल!

RANCHO
Get a towel.

राजू
टॉवल!

RAJU
Towel!

Farhan holds out a towel, Rancho carefully places the baby in it and wraps him with it.

At the nurse's station, the Matron steps up to Pia, troubled.

मैटरन
पिया, पिया ये रो क्यों नहीं रहा?

MATRON
Pia, he's not crying?

In the common room, everyone stops short.

रैन्चो
हाँ?

RANCHO
Yes?

He looks down at the swaddled baby in his arms. He shakes him gently.

RANCHO
Hey Champ!

The baby doesn't respond.

At the nurse's station, Pia instructs Rancho in a voice trembling with panic.

पिया
रैन्चो, रैन्चो उसके बैक को रब करो।

PIA
Rancho, rub his back.

Farhan helps Rancho turn the baby over.

फरहान
ये ले!

FARHAN
Here!

Rancho rubs the baby's back.

RANCHO
Hey, Champ!

FARHAN
Come on, Champ!

RANCHO

Come on, Champ!

(to Pia)

नहीं, कुछ नहीं हो रहा है।

At the nurse's station, the Matron breaks down. Pia is frantic.

पिया

उसके मूँह में हवा ब्लो करो।

Rancho blows air into the baby's mouth repeatedly. The Director looks from the baby to Mona, desperate, hoping. Mona stares at her baby, trembling.

FARHAN

Come on. Come on, Champ!

The baby doesn't cry. Rancho finally looks up. He walks to the web camera, and holds up the still baby.

रैन्चो

कुछ नहीं हो रहा है।

At the nurse's station, Pia breaks down and turns away from her laptop.

In the common room, Rancho slowly turns to Mona. As the reality hits her, she is racked with grief. She stretches out her hand towards her baby, sobbing.

राजू

चुप मोना चुप... ऑल इज़ वेल बोल... ऑल इज़ वेल बोल, ऑल इज़ वेल।

The baby's leg swings up and hits Rancho on the cheek.

RANCHO

Champ come on.

No, nothing.

PIA

Blow air into his mouth.

RANCHO

No response.

RAJU

Hush Mona, say – "Aal izz well, aal izz well."

Stunned, Rancho looks down, from the baby's leg to his face.

He looks up again, and speaks falteringly.

रैन्चो
लात मारा।

RANCHO
He kicked.

Raju looks up sharply.

राजू
क्या?

RAJU
What?

रैन्चो
(*dazed*)
लात, लात मारा।

RANCHO
He kicked

He looks at the baby from head to toe again. And suddenly understands. His eyes widen with excitement.

रैन्चो
ऑल इज़ वेल बोल ऑल इज़ वेल।

RANCHO
Say – “Aal izz well, aal izz well.”

At the nurse's station, Pia hears the familiar words and rushes back to the laptop.

In the common room, the trio chants to the baby.

रैन्चो/राजू/फरहान
ऑल इज़ वेल बोल ... ऑल इज़ वेल बोल ...
ऑल इज़ वेल बोल ...

RANCHO / FARHAN / RAJU
Aal izz well, aal izz well, aal izz well.

At the nurse's station, Pia chants into the web camera.

पिया
ऑल इज़ वेल बोल।

PIA
Aal izz well, aal izz well.

In the common room, everyone is now chanting.

एवरीवन
ऑल इज़ वेल बोल।

The baby kicks Rancho again. And starts crying.

Roars of jubilation fill the room. Rancho, Farhan, Raju and Millimeter laugh and cry at the same time.

The Director and Mona hug each other, sobbing in relief and happiness.

At the nurse's station, Pia weeps with joy, along with everyone else. Rancho holds the baby up to the web camera. Her eyes brimming with love, Pia blows a kiss to her little nephew.

In the common room, Farhan gets ready to click a picture as Rancho hands the baby to the Director.

फरहान (V.O.)
उस वक्त अगर वायरस कहता की मेरा पोता इंजिनियर बनेगा तो मैं साले का बलात्कार कर देता। पर साले ने जब मूंह खोला तो चमत्कार ही हो गया।

The Director holds his grandson, speaking to him.

डाइरेक्टर
सॉलिड लात मारता है तू! फुटबॉलर बनेगा? बन्ना! जो दिल करे बन्ना!

Farhan looks at the Director in incredulity and laughs.

EVERYONE

Aal izz well, aal izz well.

FARHAN

If Virus had said, "My grandson will be an engineer," I would've broken his jaw. But when he finally spoke, he stunned us.

DIRECTOR

What a kick! Wanna be a footballer? Be what you want to be.

While everyone's attention is on the baby, Rancho picks up his luggage and quietly walks out. The Director sees him leave. He puts the baby into Mona's arms and follows him.

EXT. CORRIDOR, ICE – DAWN

Rancho trudges through the waterlogged corridor. The Director shouts out to him from behind, hurrying after him.

डाइरेक्टर
रुको! कहाँ जा रहे हो? आइ ऐम नॉट फिनिशड
विथ यू!

Rancho stops and turns.

डाइरेक्टर
कॉलेज के पहले दिन तुमने मुझे एक सवाल
पूछा था, याद है? कि स्पेस में पैन्सिल क्यों
नहीं यूज़ करते?

Rancho listens with downcast eyes.

डाइरेक्टर
(increasingly agitated)
अगर स्पेस में पैन्सिल की टिप टूट जाती है तो
ज़ीरो ग्रेविटी में घूमती रहेगी, किसी के आंख में
जा सकती है, किसी के नाक में जा सकती है,
इन्सट्र्यूमेन्ट पैनल में जा सकती है,

The Director's voice breaks.

DIRECTOR
You were wrong, you were wrong!

A beat.

DIRECTOR
You cannot be right all the time! You
understand?

DIRECTOR
Wait – I've not finished with you!

DIRECTOR
First day of college, you'd asked me a
question ... Why didn't astronauts use a
pencil in space?

DIRECTOR
If a pencil tip breaks in space it would float
in zero gravity. It could get into someone's
eyes or nose or the instrument panel.

Rancho looks at the Director, with understanding in his eyes.

RANCHO

(softly)

Yes, Sir.

The Director takes out the astronaut's pen from his shirt pocket and waves it in Rancho's face.

DIRECTOR

This was an important invention. You understand?

RANCHO

Yes, Sir.

डाइरेक्टर

मेरे डाइरेक्टर ने कहा था कि जब कोई एक्सट्रॉऑडनरी स्टूडन्ट आये...

Overcome with emotion, the Director breaks down. His body shakes with silent sobs as he clips the pen onto Rancho's t-shirt.

Stunned at the magnanimity of the gesture, Rancho gazes up at the Director. A smile comes onto his face.

डाइरेक्टर

(gruffly)

गो गो गो गो, गो स्टडी। इग्जैम में पास होके यहाँ से निकल जाओ।

The Director pushes Rancho aside. Dawn is breaking. He looks up and sighs, having come to some sort of peace within himself.

DIRECTOR

My Director said, "When you find an extraordinary student ..."

DIRECTOR

Go, study! Pass your exams and leave.

Rancho gives him one last look and, his smile widening, walks away.

EXT. GROUNDS, ICE – DAY

It's graduation day. Students in their graduation robes and hats sit facing the stage on which they will get their degrees on.

ANNOUNCER (OS)

And now, student of the year ...
Ranchhoddas Shamaldas Chanchad!

As Rancho walks up to the stage, the students, with the exception of Chatur, give him a standing ovation. Among those applauding, their eyes brimming with pride, are Raju, Pia and Millimeter.

On stage, the Director hands Rancho his degree with aplomb. Farhan, the only student not in a graduation robe, has his camera ready.

FARHAN

Sir, one photo, Sir!

The Director grabs Rancho's hand and drags him forward in a mock imitation of dragging him through the college corridors.

He stops, puts his arm around Rancho and smiles warmly.

Farhan clicks.

The new graduates throw up their hats in celebration.

Farhan walks in the crowd, capturing moments on his camera; the Director

laughing with his students, a grimacing Chatur being kissed on his cheek by his Mother, Raju and his Mother embracing while weeping tears of joy.

In the midst of all this, unnoticed by anyone, his degree in his hand, Rancho loads his luggage into a taxi.

फरहान (V.O.)

इन सारी यादों को कैमरे में समेट कर मैं साथ ले जाना चाहता था। उस दिन सब एक दूसरे से गले मिल रहे थे। इमोशनल होके वादे कर रहे थे, कि टच में रहेंगे साल में एक बार जरूर मिलेंगे। किसे पता था कि हम रैन्चो को आखिरी बार देख रहे थे।

Rancho looks around once, tears in his eyes, before getting into the taxi. Farhan, looking through his viewfinder, sees this. He lowers his camera, puzzled, and watches as the taxi drives away.

EXT. LADAKH ROADS – DAY

Chatur's SUV travels through the stark, stunning landscape of Ladakh.

Inside the SUV, Chatur, still gagged and bound, now sits on the backseat. He is flanked by Pia and Raju. Pia has her eyes closed and hands folded in prayer.

Farhan drives.

The SUV turns in the direction of a road sign reading 'Skitsal School'.

Chatur makes angry noises through his gag.

Farhan glances at him through his rear-view mirror.

FARHAN

I wanted to capture all these memories and take them home. That day, we hugged, we rejoiced, we cried ... We vowed that we'd meet at least once a year ... Who knew then, we were seeing Rancho for the last time ...

फरहान
चार खोल दे उसको।

FARHAN
Untie him.

Raju removes Chatur's gag.

CHATUR
I'll sue you all in an American court.

EXT. DRIVEWAY, SCHOOL – DAY

The SUV drives up a path lined with solar panels and comes to a halt beside a beautiful wooden building.

Raju, Pia, Farhan and Chatur rush out.

EXT. COMPOUND, SCHOOL –
CONTINUOUS

Raju, Pia and Farhan run into a compound filled with children in the midst of fun activities and science experiments.

A child dressed as an astronaut passes them.

पिया
राजू!

PIA
Raju!

Pia shows Raju a group of children around an old, battered scooter. They use a contraption on the back of the scooter to grind grain into flour.

Farhan looks at a group of children shearing sheep, using power generated by a moving bicycle.

राजू
ऐसा स्कूल तो साला रैन्चो ही बना सकता है।

RAJU
Only Rancho can create a school like this.

पिया

(looking around searchingly)

पर वो है कहाँ?

PIA

But where is he?

EXT. BUILDING, SCHOOL –
CONTINUOUS

Away from the bustling compound, against a seemingly deserted school building, Chatur finds a spot to relieve himself. As he unzips, a Child calls out to him in Ladakhi.

किड 1

(giggling)

इति चीची मटंका।

KID 1

Don't pee here.

Chatur looks up, irritated. From a window above him, two Children peer down at him.

चतुर

गो अवे, क्रीचर्ज, चल!

CHATUR

Go away creatures!

The second, slightly Older Child tries again.

किड 2

अरे यहाँ सु सु मत करो।

KID 2

Don't pee here.

चतुर

यू वान्ट मार, हूँ?

CHATUR

I'll smack you?

The Boys exchange a look. As Chatur starts to urinate against the wall, they throw down a wire with a live, broken light bulb attached to it. The bulb hits the stream of urine and Chatur gets electrocuted. He starts yelling in pain. The Children start laughing.

Farhan, Raju and Pia come running towards the noise. Their faces break into grins of delight.

फारहान
(*excitedly*)

मिल गया। कमीना कहीं आस पास ही है।
चलो चलो ...

Leaving Chatur, the three of them run towards another part of the school, looking around searchingly.

They pass a neatly dressed YOUNG BOY carrying a file. Farhan stops and addresses him.

फरहान
भाई साहब, रणछोड़दास कहाँ मिलेगा।

Raju and Pia join them.

पिया
उसका नाम रणछोड़दास थोड़ी है।

राजू
रैन्चो ... रैन्चो ...

फरहान
छोटे ... छोटे ... छोटू, यार
(*frustratedly*)
उसका नाम क्या है आखिर?

The Boy looks from one to the other with amusement and a dawning realisation.

मिलीमिटर
अरे शान्त हो जाओ, शान्त हो जाओ ... आओ
मेरे साथ।

FARHAN
Bingo! He cannot be far ...

FARHAN
Excuse me, where is Ranchhoddas?

PIA
He's not Ranchhoddas!

RAJU
Rancho ...

FARHAN
Chhote... Dammit, what's his name?

MILLIMETER
Calm down. Come with me.

INT. PHUNSUKH WANGDU'S ROOM,
SCHOOL – CONTINUOUS

Farhan, Raju and Pia follow the Boy into a colourful, cluttered workshop-office. Intriguing gadgets and experimental setups vie for space with the books, blackboard, computer and charts.

राजू
(*looking around*)
कहाँ है, रैन्चो कहाँ है?

RAJU
Where's he?

फरहान
रैन्चो!

FARHAN
Rancho.

Without answering them, the boy gets out some books from a bookshelf and places them before Farhan.

मिलिमीटर
फरहान, पता है, तुम्हारी लिखी हर किताब उसने पढ़ी है। ये देखो! और ये भी!

MILLIMETER
Farhan, he's read all your books.

Farhan looks down at the books. They're all books he's written. He looks up, moved.

The Boy switches on the computer. The screen is filled with the home page of 'Raju Rastogi's blog'.

मिलिमीटर
राजू, तुम्हारे ब्लॉग्स रोज पढ़ता है। बच्चों को तुम्हारी रिसर्च के बारे में बड़े गर्व से बताता है।

MILLMETER
Raju, he reads your blog everyday. Proudly shares it with the kids.

Raju looks at the computer screen, then looks up wonderingly.

The Boy takes a battered, red helmet off a wall peg and turns to Pia.

मिलिमीटर
आपको हेलमेट याद है पिया दीदी? चोरी हो
गया था ना?

Pia looks at the helmet in surprised
wonder. She looks up at the young man
smiling at her.

पिया
(*softly, puzzled*)
तुम कौन हो? और हम सब का नाम कैसे
जानते हो?

मिलिमीटर
पहचाना नहीं?

पिया
नहीं।

मिलिमीटर
कैसे पहचानोगे। मिलिमीटर अब सेंटीमीटर जो
बन गया है।

Pia, Raju and Farhan gasp. Surprised
pleasure and recognition replaces the
bafflement on their faces and everyone
speaks at the same time.

फरहान
साले!

राजू
ओए ओए ओए ओए — साले — काहे का
सेंटीमीटर, किलोमीटर बन गया है तू।

Farhan and Raju envelope Millimeter in a
hug. Pia smiles, blinking back tears.

MILLIMETER
Remember your helmet, Pia? It was
stolen ...

PIA
Who are you? How do you know us?

MILLMETRE
Didn't you recognise me?

PIA
No.

MILLIMETER
How would you? Millimeter is now
Centimeter.

FARHAN
Rascal!

RAJU
Not Centimeter, you're Kilometer.

फरहान

ओह लेकिन तू यहाँ क्या कर रहा है?

मिलिमीटर

पहली बार मेरे नाम पे एक चिट्ठी आयी।
अन्दर से ट्रेन का टिकट निकला। पीछे लिखा
था, पढ़ना चाहता है तो ट्रेन पकड़ ले। भाई
मैंने पकड़ ली।

फरहान

साला रैन्यो।

Pia, touched by Millimeter's story, averts her face, wiping off a tear. She looks back at Millimeter, with growing indignation and anger in her eyes.

पिया

कहाँ है वो इडियट्?

EXT. LAKE, LADAKH – MOMENTS LATER

A model plane circles over the shimmering turquoise of a lake. On a narrow strip of sand jutting into the lake, stands the group controlling the plane – Rancho and several laughing, clamouring children.

Rancho manoeuvres the plane with a remote control, childish glee and enthusiasm on his face. He turns from the lake and stops short. Riding towards him, on the old, flour-making scooter from his school, is Pia. Without taking his eyes off Pia, Rancho addresses the Child next to him.

रैन्या

डोरजे, खोरन ऊरचुक।

FARHAN

How did you get here?

MILLIMETER

I got a letter with a train ticket inside It said – “Miss being in school? Catch this train” ... I did.

FARHAN

That rascal Rancho!

PIA

Where is that idiot?

RANCHO

Dorje, you fly it.

He hands over the remote control to the Child and stares at his fantasy-come-alive. The Children chase behind the plane.

The scooter stops.

Rancho tilts his head to the side and looks at Pia dreamily, a small smile on his face.

रैन्चो (V.O.)

तुम रोज दुल्हन के कस्ट्यूम में स्कूटर पर बैठ कर मेरे सपनों में आती हो।

Pia parks the scooter and starts walking towards Rancho. She takes off her helmet as she walks.

रैन्चो (V.O.)

घूंघट की जगह अपना हेल्मेट उठाती हो और मुझे किस करने मेरे पास आती हो।

Rancho's smile grows as Pia comes closer.

Pia reaches him and slaps him across his face.

रैन्चो

आह! आउच!

पिया

(*furious*)

बोल के नहीं जा सकते थे?

रैन्चो

(*lowering his eyes*)

नहीं... सॉरी।

पिया

शादी की?

RANCHO

Every night you ride into my dreams on a scooter, dressed as a bride.

RANCHO

Instead of a veil, you lift your helmet and come close to kiss me.

RANCHO

Ouch!

PIA

Couldn't you tell me before leaving?

RANCHO

No. Sorry.

PIA

Did you marry?

Rancho gives an incredulous laugh.

रैन्चो
क्या, कहा! नहीं।

RANCHO
What? No.

The importance of the question suddenly hits him and he sobers down in a hurry.

रैन्चो
तुमने?

RANCHO
You?

PIA
Almost Idiot!

Rancho breathes out in relief, smiling. Pia starts smiling too.

She looks at Rancho expectantly, waiting.

पिया
तो?

PIA
So?

रैन्चो
तो वोट?

RANCHO
So what?

पिया
किसी से प्यार करते हो?

PIA
Do you love someone?

Rancho hesitates, then speaks reluctantly.

RANCHO
Yes.

Pain and disappointment fill Pia's face. She manages to mask her emotions and turns her face away from Rancho, unable to look at him as she asks her next question.

PIA
Who?

Rancho looks at her, a slow smile starts to appear on his face.

RANCHO
You.

Pia looks back at him, startled. Her face floods with relief and joy. She grabs Rancho and kisses him on the lips.

When she finally lets go of him, Rancho staggers back astounded. He has a thrilled smile on his face. Pia smiles back.

पिया
देखा, नाक बीच में नहीं आती है स्टूपिड।

PIA
See, the noses don't collide, stupid.

RANCHO
That's right!

फरहान
(*shouting*)
साले रैन्चो...

FARHAN
Rancho!

Rancho turns to see Farhan standing behind him at a distance. He smiles in delight.

रैन्चो
अरे फरहान!

RANCHO
Hi ... Farhan!

फरहान
(*angrily*)
अरे तेरे हाई की तो ऐसी की तैसी

FARHAN
Screw your 'Hi'.

Farhan takes off a shoe and starts moving towards Rancho, aggressively.

रैन्चो

अरे, अरे, मेरी बात तो सुन ...

RANCHO

Hey, listen to me ...

Rancho starts to walk backwards.

फरहान

नहीं नहीं, तू मेरी बात सुन।

FARHAN

No, you listen to me.

रैन्चो

अरे अरे, मेरी बात तो सुन

RANCHO

I can explain everything.

फरहान

नहीं नहीं, तू मेरी बात सुन।

FARHAN

No, you listen to me.

Rancho starts running backwards. Farhan runs towards him.

रैन्चो

अरे यार मैं सब समझता हूँ ना।

RANCHO

I can explain everything.

Someone shoves him from behind. Rancho turns around to see Raju. Rancho smiles, overjoyed to see his friend.

रैन्चो

अरे राजू!

RANCHO

Hi ... Raju!

Raju slaps him. Rancho, reeling from the blow, spins towards Farhan. Farhan slaps him. Rancho starts running. Raju and Farhan chase him, swearing loudly.

राजू

साले!

RAJU

Rascal!

फरहान

इधर देख।

FARHAN

Look here.

Rancho runs around Pia's parked scooter, trying his best to dodge his furious friends. They catch up with him and all collapse on the sand, pummelling each other.

राजू
साले कहाँ कहाँ दूँडा तुझे! यहाँ छुपा हुआ है।
फोन नहीं कर सकता था? हम लोग कितना
परेशान थे! भागता किधर है साले! साले कहाँ
कहाँ दूँडा।

फरहान
एक फोन नहीं, एक फोन नहीं!

Pia watches the three friends affectionately.

पिया
मारो, और मेरी तरफ से भी दो-तीन मारो

राजू
क्या क्या बनना पड़ा, मालूम है! एक फोन नहीं
किया इसने?

फरहान
कमीने! साले!

Pia finally decides Rancho's been punished enough.

पिया
अरे, छोड़ छोड़।

Farhan and Raju stand back and look at Rancho curled up on the sand.

फरहान
चल, उठ साले उठ।

RAJU
How we hunted for you! Didn't have a
coin for one phone call?

FARHAN
One phone call?

PIA
Add a couple from me too.

RAJU
One phone call?

FARHAN
Rascal, scoundrel!

PIA
Let him go now.

FARHAN
On your feet, C'mon!

Farhan gives Rancho a hand and Rancho hauls himself up. The three friends hold their sides, panting. They straighten up and, slowly, start laughing.

फरहान
अबे साले ...

FARHAN
You idiot.

Farhan steps forward and hugs Rancho. Rancho opens out an arm and Raju steps into it. The three hug each other laughing and crying.

Pia looks at them, smiling, wiping a tear.

Chatur's SUV comes to a halt a little away from them. Chatur pokes his head out of the SUV.

CHATUR
Having fun, idiots?

RANCHO
Hey ... Hi Chatur.

Chatur walks towards Rancho, still limping from the electric shock.

चतुर
(*mockingly*)
रणछोड़दास छाँछड़! नमस्ते मास्टरजी! आप कहाँ पहुँच गईं... गांव में टीचर बन गई हैं? ए फॉर ऐप्पल ... बी फॉर बॉल

CHATUR
Ranchhoddas Chanchad. How do you do, Mr. Teacher? Wow, you're a teacher in a village – A for Apple, B for Ball...

Chatur gives a loud braying laugh at his own joke. His laugh ends abruptly as he winces with the remnant of pain from the shock. He clutches the front of his pants briefly, then resumes.

चतुर

हम दोनों एक साथ ट्रेन पकड़े थे ना। पन तेरे ट्रेन रिजर्व मे चली गयी। इन्जिनियर से सीधे प्राइमरी टीचर।

Chatur laughs again. Rancho smiles, amused and completely unaffected. He glances at the others, his eyes twinkling.

चतुर

ए सैलरी कितनी है छांछड़? बोल? पांच हजार? फॉर मी दैट्स लाइक अ 100 डॉलर्स। मेरे बेटे का पॉकेट मनी तुम्हारी सैलरी से ज्यादा है।

Raju and Farhan look at Chatur with increasing anger and disgust.

राजू

(snapping)

अबे बकवास बन्द कर।

CHATUR

Our trains left together. But yours travelled in reverse ... from engineer to primary teacher.

CHATUR

What's your salary, Chanchad? Rs 5000? For me that's \$100. My son's pocket money is more than your salary.

चतुर

बकवास तो ये करता था। ऐजुकेशन सिस्टम को बदलने चला था। दुनिया को बदलने चला था। अब यहाँ बच्चों के डाइपर बदलता है।

Chatur cracks up again. Farhan lunges towards him.

CHATUR

Crap is what he gave us. Wanted to change the education system, change the world. Finally what does he change? Kids' diapers

फरहान

तू इसके दांत तोड़ेगा हैं या मैं तोड़ूं, साले?

Rancho restrains Farhan.

FARHAN

You gonna break his jaw or should I?

रैन्चो

रहने दे, यार, छोड़ ना।

RANCHO

Just relax.

Rancho grins, thoroughly entertained by Chatur.

चतुर

(*gloating*)

याद आया। मैं बोला था ... एक दिन तुम रोओगे और मैं हँसूंगा।

He takes out a document and hands it over to Rancho.

चतुर

साइन कर यहाँ। ऐक्सेप्ट कर की तू हारा, मैं जीता।

Rancho scans the document and reads the heading out loud.

रैन्चो

‘ड्यकलरेशन ऑफ डिफीट’? अनविलिवल यार!

Everyone starts to laugh.

राजू

चतुर!

RANCHO

Unbelievable!

फरहान

तू पागल है क्या!

Rancho takes out a pen and starts to sign the document. Chatur notices the pen he’s signing with. His face falls.

चतुर

ऐ यह तो वायरस का पेन है। तेरे पास कैसे आया? तूने चुराया?

CHATUR

Remember I’d said one day you’d cry and I’d laugh?

CHATUR

Sign here. Accept – You lost, I won!

RANCHO

‘Declaration of Defeat’? Unbelievable, man!

RAJU

Chatur!

FARHAN

Crazy guy.

CHATUR

Hey, this is Virus’s pen! You pinched it?

रैन्चो
अब क्या बताऊं यार।

Chatur snatches the pen from Rancho's hands.

CHATUR
(*viciously*)

This is for winners, not losers!

Suddenly changing tack, Chatur puts his arm around Rancho's shoulder and starts walking with him, towards his car.

चतुर
(*condescendingly*)
कोई बात नहीं, कभी स्कूल में तकलीफ हो और डोनेशन चाहिए, तो कॉल माइ असिस्टेंट हूँ।

He hands over his assistant's visiting card to Rancho. Rancho stands still, looking at the card, bemused. Chatur walks off, singing.

CHATUR
'A for apple, B for ball ...'

Laughing incredulously, Rancho turns to his friends.

रैन्चो
ये बिल्कुल नहीं बदला, यार!

Thinking that Chatur's jibes might have hurt him, Rancho's friends try to make him feel better.

फरहान
यार इग्नोर कर, इग्नोर कर।

RANCHO
Forget it, man.

CHATUR
If your school ever needs help, call my assistant for a donation.

RANCHO
He hasn't changed at all!

FARHAN
Ignore him.

राजू
छोड़ यार उसको, कुछ भी बोलता रहता है।

पिया
छोड़ ना ... गुड न्यूज़ ये है कि तुम्हारा नाम
रणछोड़दास छांछड़ नहीं है। इमेजिन शादी के
बाद मैं पिया छांछड़! यक! वैसे तुम्हारा असली
नाम क्या है?

RANCHO
Phunsukh Wangdu.

Farhan and Raju do a double-take.

Pia looks horrified.

RAJU / FARHAN
Wangdu!

PIA
(*in revulsion*)
Pia 'Wangdu'!

रैन्चो
हाँ।

राजू
नहीं, मतलब, तू साइन्टिस्ट है?

रैन्चो
हाँ।

फरहान
यानी की तेरे नाम के 400 पेटेन्स है?

रैन्चो
हाँ।

Pia makes the point most important to
her.

RAJU
He's full of crap.

PIA
The good news is your name isn't
Ranchhoddas Chanchad Imagine, after
marriage, I'm Pia Chanchad – Yuck! By
the way, what is your real name?

RANCHO
Yes.

RAJU
You mean, you're a scientist?

RANCHO
Yes.

FARHAN
You have 400 patents?

RANCHO
Yes.

पिया
मैं शादी के बाद अपना सरनेम नहीं चेंज
करूंगीं

PIA
I won't change my name after marriage.

राजू
नहीं नहीं मतलब तू चतुर का वांगडू है?

RAJU
You mean you're Chatur's Wangdu?

रैन्चो
हाँ।

RANCHO
Yes.

फरहान
यानी की जैपनीज़ तुझे दूढ़ रहे हैं?

FARHAN
It's you the Japanese are wooing?

PIA
(*crying out in despair*)
I don't like Wangdu!!

RANCHO
(*to Farhan*)
I think so ...

फरहान
यार एक बात बता, तू साइन्टिस्ट है या
टीचर?

FARHAN
Are you a scientist or a teacher?

रैन्चो
साइन्टिस्ट हूँ लेकिन बच्चों को भी पढ़ाता हूँ।

RANCHO
Scientist, but I also teach children.

राजू
मतलब तू द फुनसुख वांगडू है?

RAJU
So you are The Phunsukh Wangdu?

Pia finally realises what Raju and Farhan
are getting at. Her pained expression turns
into a gradually widening smile.

रैन्चो
हाँ बाबा हाँ।

RANCHO
Yes, yes!

As Raju and Farhan burst into ecstatic, triumphant laughter.

FARHAN

(yells)

Hey Silencer.

राजू

ऐ चतुर, वापस आ!

फरहान

ऐ रुक रुक रुक।

Chatur ignores their shouts. Instead, he kisses his hand and pats his butt with it, in a silent rendition of 'Kiss my ass'.

CHATUR

Take that!

रैन्चो

वो ऐसे नहीं रुकेगा। डीयर, मैं उसका रोकता हूँ।

Rancho pulls out his cellphone and dials a number.

Chatur has almost reached his car. His cellphone rings. He takes it out of his pocket. 'Phunsukh Wangdu calling' flashes on the screen. Chatur stops in his tracks. With reverence he answers the phone.

चतुर

मिस्टर वांगडू ... आइ कान्ट विलीव अपने फोन की!

रैन्चो

(in a businesslike tone)

आइ ऐम सॉरी मिस्टर चतुर, लेकिन आपकी कम्पनी के साथ मैं डील नहीं साइन कर पाऊंगा।

RAJU

Hey Chatur, come back!

FARHAN

Stop!

RANCHO

Wait, I'll stop him.

CHATUR

Mr. Wangdu, I can't believe it's you.

RANCHO

I'm sorry, Mr. Chatur. I can't sign the deal with your company

Chatur's face loses colour.

CHATUR

What Sir? Why sir?

Rancho's tone changes back to his natural one.

रैन्चो

अरे कैसे साइन करूं यार। मेरी पेन तो तू ले गई।

RANCHO

How do I sign, man? You took my pen.

Farhan, Raju and Pia burst into loud laughter.

Chatur puts his hand on his free ear, trying to block out the sound.

CHATUR

(confused)

What pen, Sir? I didn't get you...

रैन्चो

वो जो तेरे हाथ में है वायरस की पेन!

RANCHO

The one in your hand – Virus's pen!

The four friends guffaw with mirth.

चतुर

वायरस की पेन?

CHATUR

Virus's pen?

Chatur looks at the pen in his hand. A terrible realisation begins to dawn on him. He turns around.

CHATUR

(falteringly)

Mr. Wangdu...?

Four hands wave at Chatur.

रैन्चो
हाँ बोल चतुर।

राजू
ए फॉर ऐप्पल, बी फॉर बॉल की एल फॉर
लग गई!

A dazed Chatur looks down at the document Rancho had signed. The signature reads 'Phunsukh Wangdu'.

फरहान
यार इसका तो बलात्कार हो गई।

They can't stop laughing.

The truth finally hitting him, Chatur gasps and stutters, desperately grappling for a way to retrieve the situation.

He starts talking nervously, too fast, keeping a fake, sickly sweet smile plastered on his face.

चतुर
यू गौट मी, यू गौट मी, रैन्चो, आइ मीन मिस्टर
वांगडू। टोटली फ्लौर्ड मी, गुड वन हॉ। आइ
होप हमारे पर्सनल प्रोबलम इस डील को कुछ
फर्क नहीं पड़ेगा।

Raju juts out his hip and does his own rendition of 'Kiss my ass'.

राजू
ऐ चतुर! इत्थे, इत्थे!

चतुर
ऐ आइ वाज़ जोकिंग यार! अंदर से मालूम था
तू लाइफ में ... में कुछ करेगा।

RANCHO
Yes, Chatur?

RAJU
A for Apple, B for Ball is...

FARHAN
... S for 'Screwed'.

CHATUR
You got me, Rancho – I mean, Mr. Wangdu. Totally floored me. Good one I hope our personal problems won't affect this deal.

RAJU
Hey Chatur – take that.

CHATUR
I was just joking, man. Deep down, I knew you'd do great things.

रैन्चो / राजू / फरहान
हाँ ... नहीं झूठ बोल रहा है?

RANCHO / RAJU / FARHAN
You're fibbing!

चतुर
नो नो नो नो, आइ ऐम ट्रयलिंग यू शपथ।
रैन्चो 100, चतुर 0। यू विन, आइ लूज़। यू
डौन्ट विलीव मी?

CHATUR
No, really, I swear. No no no no, I'm
telling you, Rancho – 100, Chatur – 0.
You win, I lose. You don't believe me?

Chatur turns around and pulls down
his pants, exposing his bright blue
underwear.

The four wince and turn away.

चतुर
जहाँपनाह तुस्सी ग्रेट हो ... तोहफू कबूल
करो।

CHATUR
Your Majesty, thou art great. Accept this
humble offering.

पिया
एक फ्री एडवाइस दू मिस्टर वांगडू – भाग
लो!

PIA
Free advice, Mr. Wangdu - Run for your
life!

रैन्चो
चलो!

RANCHO
Chalo!

As Chatur turns back towards them, pants
still down, the four of them turn and run
away from him.

Alarmed, Chatur calls out.

चतुर
हे रैन्चो।
(*wheedling*)
मेरी जॉब चली जाएगी यार। मेरे छोटे छोटे
बच्चे हैं ...

CHATUR
Hey Rancho. Rancho, I'll lose my job,
man. I have small kids ...

Chatur hobbles behind them, pulling his
pants up on the way.

फरहान (V.O.)

बाबा रणछोड़दास सही कहते थे – बच्चा काबिल बनो काबिल, कामयाबी तो साली झक मारके पीछे भागेगी।

In a paradisiacal valley ringed by mountains, Rancho, Farhan, Raju and Pia run, laughing with exhilaration, jewel-like waters lapping the shore they run on, as Chatur stumbles after them, whining.

FADE OUT

THE END

FARHAN

His Holiness Guru Ranchhoddas had correctly stated – “Follow Excellence ... Success will chase you, pants down.”

THE METHOD IN THE MADNESS

THE METHOD IN THE MADNESS

Rajkumar Hirani, Abhijat Joshi, & Vidhu Vinod Chopra Recollect



In the course of putting this book together, the many conversations I had with Rajkumar Hirani revealed that in a life spanning over four decades filled with many challenging and debilitating experiences, the one that is clearly etched in his memory as the most oppressive of them all is the month preceding his 12th standard exams. “Every night I would get a recurring dream that I was taking an exam and I did not know the answer to even a single question. I would wake up in cold sweat,” he said. Raju attributes this to the fear psychosis created around exams and grades in India. The first few daunting months at FTII, a year without work and money in Mumbai, myriad struggles to set up a career, the Herculean task of making movies were lesser strains compared to the pressures of Higher Secondary exams in his life.

It was no surprise then that when he started hunting for a subject he felt deeply about as the DNA for his first feature film, he decided on the story of three friends in a medical college. The aim was to weave a tale that enthralled with anecdotes from life in a hostel and make a comment both on the education system and the medical practice in India. For Raju, life in a hostel signified freedom. The time he spent doing theatre with his group *Awaaz* with the students from Nagpur Medical College, hostel life at FTII, and the horrors of education engineered towards grades were experiences that had left an indelible impression on him. Therefore, the first draft of *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.* had, instead of the lovable Bhai and his sidekick Circuit, three friends living in a medical college. The script and the ideas kept changing and evolving. At the end, the three friends had to wait and give way to the duo that became the Indian equivalent of Batman and Robin: the incorrigible and immensely endearing Munna and Circuit.

But the initial idea that he started with lay latent in Raju’s subconscious for the next six years. Such must have been his desire to make this film one day and so great the need for the world to have this idea translated on screen that the

universe conspired to make it happen. Vidya Balan and the Mumbai deluge of 2005 played significant roles in pulling this blueprint out from the deep recesses of Raju's mind. It was May 2005 and Vidya had just finished shooting for the first schedule of *Lage Raho Munna Bhai*. She and Raju had struck up an instant rapport often recommending interesting films and books to each other. Vidya happened to read *Five Point Someone* during this period. She knew Chetan so she was aware that he was keen to get the book across to Raju as possible material for a film. Vidya immediately lent her copy of the book to Raju saying that this was an idea she felt had legs. But being in the middle of making a film, Raju did not have time to breathe let alone read. The book gathered dust on his bookshelf for sometime. And then in July, Mumbai faced the worst rain-induced floods ever. Life for everyone in Mumbai came to a standstill. Raju's lane was completely flooded and he had no choice but to stay home for a couple of days. That is when he picked up *Five Point Someone* and read it. The story of three friends and their experiences in an engineering college took him by surprise and brought to the fore his first draft of *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S*. He discussed it with Vinod and Abhijat. The rights to adapt the book into a film were bought and the rest as they say is history.

The one-liner (a scene-wise synopsis of the screenplay and its trajectory) of *3 Idiots* was ready in a record nine days and the first draft of the screenplay with dialogues was ready in 18 days from the day Abhijat Joshi, Vidhu Vinod Chopra, and Rajkumar Hirani started working on it (2006). After that, it took the three writers, two-and-a-half years to arrive at a shooting script.

The evolution of the screenplay involved ponderous work on innumerable drafts, multiple scenarios (some retained and many abandoned), copious amounts of green tea, long walks, and several trips around the globe.

The journey was through a labyrinth of possibilities. [In some drafts Pia was Farhan's ex-girlfriend; Chatur and not Suhas was to marry Pia; Farhan was an unhappy corporate honcho in New York; instead of wildlife photography, linguistics was Farhan's passion; Joy and Phunsukh Wangdu were added and deleted frequently.] The key to the screenplay was to find the best way forward that enabled the narrative to be consistently compelling, real, and entertaining.

These interviews with the writers were recorded between January and April 2010, at various locations, in Mumbai.

There is a method to the three of you working together. How does it work?

VC: We have been working together for many years and have immense mutual respect and affection for each other. Abhijat and I go back to the *Kareeb* days and with Raju my writing association started with *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.* I don't sit with them and write continuously. My biggest contribution and challenge is to channelise their passion and energies in a direction. I am their rubbish radar. They do the writing and come to me constantly with material at regular intervals. I either change some things or add new things to it or reject it. My work here is of a good reviewer.

RH: Abhijat and I write constantly while working on the screenplay and once we have a ready draft, we start the sessions with Vinod. He is brilliant at catching the problems, the chinks in the script, the flaws. It is fantastic to get this kind of perspective on one's work as one is going along. It keeps us on the right track.

AJ: The interesting thing about the three of us working together is the diversity in our methods of working which eventually enhances the material we work on. Vinod's method of writing and Raju's and my methods are completely different but our goal is the same: a great story.

Raju and I operate by working on individual scenes and later binding them together which brings the desired unpredictability to our work whereas Vinod likes his character arcs and plot defined. Therefore, when we take the scenes to Vinod, he lends the necessary perspective to them. The principle which has been the guiding metaphor throughout Aristotle's writings has been that the action of a narrative or drama must be presented as "*a complete whole, with its several incidents so closely connected that the transposal [shifting an incident/scene from one point in the narrative to another] or withdrawal of any one of them will disjoin and dislocate the whole.*" This is the principle that Vinod follows. His focus is the whole. Every scene in the film must carry the story forward. It must have a purpose that serves this movement. You cannot narrate a scene to Vinod and tell him that the purpose of the scene is to make people laugh or cry. He will immediately throw it out. Scenes might be luminous on their own but they are useless if they do not light up the whole narrative is Vinod's belief. Raju and I often get carried away by the individual scenes. In the second half of *3 Idiots*, Vinod took out a few dramatic scenes which in hindsight I feel would have weakened our film. He believes that we cannot overload the audience because after a while, they stop caring. There is Fatigue that sets in. You need to have that balance where you don't give in to the

temptation of overdoing things. To give you an example, the speech scene was kept not because it was funny but because it had a purpose beyond making the audience laugh. The speech demonstrated the pitfalls of rote learning and brought the conflicting philosophies in the film, of chasing excellence and blindly chasing success, out in the open.

This is the way in which we work together. Different perspectives enable us to retain quality without losing focus.

The germ of the idea came from Chetan Bhagat's book *Five Point Someone*. What is it that drew you to the book?

RH: I loved the description of hostel life in the book. It instantly held my attention. I had lived in a the hostel, like the boys in the book, so it was very appealing to me. Education and the pressures one faces with regard to education that would result in a 'better life', the one defined by society and not necessarily by the individual, have always been of great interest to me. This gave me a wonderful opportunity to combine these thoughts with a few anecdotes from the book.

It took over two-and-a-half years for the screenplay to come together. What were the challenges that you faced while writing it?

RH: *Five Point Someone*, though immensely enjoyable, was very anecdotal in its treatment. I knew the moment I read the book that we would have to spend considerable time adapting it into a screenplay. There is nothing in the book that binds it together. For a film, a binding thread is critical. The audience has to be taken on a journey through the characters and plot. It has to move towards something to hold the attention of the viewers. For example, in *Lagaan*, one of the things that keeps you hooked till the end is the cricket match. The whole film is moving towards that. I could not find this thread within the book and from there stemmed the desire to create an external story. The idea for the external story came to me in Kenya. The Kenyan Film Board had invited a select group of Indian film directors and cinematographers to explore Kenya as a shooting destination for Indian films. Therefore, Nikhil Advani, Shaad Ali, and I, including a few other directors and cinematographers, travelled to Kenya. Initially, as usual, I was very reluctant to go. What happens with me is that whenever I am invited to some place and if I am working, I start thinking that it is a waste of time, and, therefore, why should I go. This is the reason I decline most of the times and then I regret it. Twice over I passed

up the opportunity to go to Australia thinking that I am working on my script and it would be a waste of time. In both cases, I could have easily gone and come back and my life would not have changed. So when this invitation came, sometime in March 2007, I decided I must go. I went but out of habit carried my laptop with me hoping I would find time to get some work done there. On reaching Kenya, I discovered that they had a packed itinerary planned for us for each day of our stay. Obviously, they wanted to show us the maximum number of locations. The day used to start at 6 am and end at 9 pm. After two days of intense sightseeing, I got anxious about my script. I started getting very edgy. On the third day, I refused to go. Nikhil and everyone else started laughing at me. I realised that if I told them the truth, then I would not be able to escape so I lied and told them that I was not well. They left without me. I took out my laptop and started working on my script. Funnily, one lady who was with the film board, landed up in my room with a doctor. I sheepishly told them that now I was better. Hopefully, when she reads this she shall realise how pivotal this day of work in Kenya was to *3 Idiots*.

That entire day, the one day I managed to work on my script, away from all phone calls and distractions, I sat in my hotel room thinking about the story that I need to introduce to bind the film. That is when this thought about the bet between the rivals struck me. One friend goes away and then the other two search for him. For the audience, the binding factor would then be — do they find this friend or not? If they do find him, then what is the story of the friend? Why did he leave? Where did he go? Does he win the bet or does he lose? At every stage, these questions would be at the back of their minds. This desire and curiosity in the audience to get to the end of the film is the backbone of a screenplay. If I were to remove this entire story from the screenplay, then the film becomes just a story set in a college and you are not really looking forward to anything. I remember I called Abhijat from there and told him this idea and he loved it. The icing on the cake was Abhijat coming up with the imposter idea.

AJ: The imposter idea in the film came from a real-life story. I knew a man (I cannot name him as he is someone from the industry) who actually did what the real Ranchoddas does in the film. A man applies to FTII and gets through. He also applies to an engineering college and gets selected. He gets selected in many places. He is a brilliant guy. Of all the entrance exams he clears, he decides to enrol in the engineering college. This brilliant guy is our imposter's friend. The imposter wants to study cinema so he takes his friend's permission and impersonates him. He studies at FTII for three years posing as the brilliant guy who chose engineering.

The imposter passes out of the Institute, joins the film industry, changes back to his real identity and makes films. This real-life story, which not too many people know about, inspired the whole Rancho-imposter track.

RH: We combined the search and the imposter tracks and got the story of the film. The binding thread which was missing to keep the narrative moving was now in place. This was probably one of the most critical of the challenges we faced in writing *3 Idiots*.

What according to you is the core of *3 Idiots*?

AJ: The first scene that we wrote for *3 Idiots* was the conversation between Boman and Aamir at Joy's funeral. This scene was in a different form and shape the first time we wrote it. On the night of the suicide, Rancho goes up to the tower in the campus, rings the bell, gathers the students and delivers a speech. But in this form, the scene became too dramatic, grim, and preachy. We worked for days to make it more real and yet retain the drama and impact. The scene you see in the film felt more natural so we changed the speech to a conversation at the funeral. We purposely chose to make the boy who commits suicide a Christian so that the funeral is set in a cemetery. The grey of the cemetery and the rain gave the scene the grim and colourless tone that we needed. This scene, according to me, is the core of *3 Idiots*. Why should people be killing themselves? There is something wrong with the system. Why is everyone running after grades and not knowledge? That is what the film addresses and attacks.

VC: I agree with Abhijat. *3 Idiots* questions the system and its pitfalls. The pressure to chase grades leads students to give in to pursuits that might not be the ones of their choice and compels them to take the set and decided path to set and decided goals. This only leads to suicides or mediocrity. Chasing excellence is not encouraged. Excellence over success is a philosophy I have always followed which has led me to take some very irrational decisions that have made no business sense. But because the pursuit was for quality, in the long run, success came in leaps and bounds.

It is a very personal film. Not only does it embody a philosophy that is close to your heart but it heavily borrows from your lives as well. Which portions in the film have been picked from your lives?

RH: There is a lot in the film from the scenes to the quirks added to embellish characters to dialogues that we have taken from our lives. I used to know a guy

called Prasan Jain in FTII who once had a bath at the entrance gate of the campus to make the faculty aware that there was an acute water shortage in the hostel. So Rancho bathing in the garden came from there. “*Jahanpanah tussi great ho*” is also borrowed from the Film Institute. We were ragged for an entire month after we joined. All throughout that month, if we spotted a senior, we had to pull down our pants, bend over, pat our butts, and say, “*Jahanpanah tussi great ho. Tohfa kubool karo.*” This practice was called Farshi. In my days at the Nagpur Medical College with my theatre buddies, I got to know about this guy who used to slip magazines under the doors of other students to distract them during exams. The competition there was so fierce that people resorted to some really desperate things. The conversation between Farhan and his father is again inspired by the conversation I had with my father which I have mentioned in detail in the introduction to this book.

AJ: I have already told you about the impostor story. Apart from the search for the third friend and the imposter track, the third primary element in the story is the bet between Chatur and Rancho. This bet signifies the clash of rival ideologies. We got the idea for this from an anecdote from Vinod’s initial years in the industry. After the trial of one of the films made by a big Bollywood producer, Vinod hitched a ride with him in his posh car to be dropped to the nearest bus stop. The producer asked Vinod what he thought about the film. Vinod launched into shredding the screenplay bit by bit and let the man know without mincing words that the film was utter rubbish. The gentleman turned around and said, “*Jadd vaddi gaadi lenga na tadd dekhanga tu kaisi picture banayenga*” (When you get used to riding in a big car, then we will see the kind of films you make). The producer’s point was simple: when you get used to the luxuries, it is what works at the box office that takes precedence over the quality of cinema. Vinod got out of the car and swore that this is something he would never adhere to. He was clear from the beginning that the ball game was cinema and not money. If you got the former right, then the latter would follow. This clash of philosophies, of thought, money versus good cinema was the trigger for the bet between Rancho and Chatur. The Rancho “definition of books and the machine” scene is my gift to Raju’s son Veer. Raju was helping Veer with his homework. One of the questions in the assignment was: Why do we celebrate Good Friday? Veer’s answer to that was “to commemorate the resurrection of Christ.” Raju wanted to know if Veer knew the meaning of this answer. To his surprise, Veer did not. Raju launched into explaining it to him and then asked Veer to write the answer the way he had understood it. But Veer was adamant that it had to be written only in the manner that he had written it or his teacher would

not be happy. Easy or uncomplicated language and, most importantly, veering away from the expected and accepted form of the answer was not an option. Raju was very baffled and concerned about this. He told me this story over the phone and it became the genesis of the Rancho-Professor 'definition-of-machine' face-off.

The scene where Rancho, Farhan, and Raju go to Farhan's house after the Director sends the warning letter to both Raju and Farhan's parents is also inspired from two different incidents that happened in my life and Raju's. Once, I had met a lady who was furious with her daughter. The daughter was a bright girl but the lady was yelling at her because she had scored 91 per cent instead of 94 per cent. The 3 per cent drop was unacceptable. The insanity of this mad race for marks left me amused and disturbed at the same time. When we were writing this scene, I really wanted to incorporate this. While at FTII, Raju with his Institute friends used to travel to Mumbai often over the weekends. On one such weekend, a friend of his invited them to his house for dinner. They all landed up at his place eager to devour the free food so looked forward to in those money-strapped college days. The friend who invited them and his mother had had a big fight. They sat in silence waiting for the announcement that the food is ready. After two hours, the mother got up and told the boys, "*Beta agli baar aaoge to khaana zaroor kha kar jaana.*" Raju still remembers this because it was close to midnight when they were asked to leave and they were famished with barely over twenty rupees between all of them.

The watch track between Pia and Rancho again came from an anecdote that Vinod had told me about ...

VC: See I told you I cannot remember half the things. Abhijat has been gifted with a photographic memory. A relative of mine was working in the Gulf and was very well off. I was not doing that well then. During one of his visits, he was flaunting his watch which cost a couple of lakhs. I heard him out and then exclaimed that there must be something wrong with his watch. He was taken aback and frantically examined his expensive watch. There was nothing wrong with it according to him so he asked me to explain myself. "*Aapki ghadi itni mehngi hai aur meri sirf do sau rupyaye ki lekin phir bhi time same dikhateen hein*" (your watch is very expensive and mine costs only Rs 200 but both of them tell the same time), was my reply which left him speechless.

Rancho propels the story forward. He illustrates the philosophy of the film. A lot of people felt that his character does not have an arc in the film. Rancho

enters the story, preaches, and then leaves. He is too perfect. How did Rancho as a character evolve and did you have any fears and apprehensions that he might appear to be more fiction than real as he began to take shape?

RH: The backbone of Rancho's character which also separates him from everybody else is his lack of fear. He is a brilliant, free-spirited, and honest boy who is chasing what he is interested in most. Probably a person without fear has become unfathomable today so Rancho might seem unreal to some but to me he is very real. My first thoughts on Rancho were that he is a boy from a village who has had no experience with formal education so he does not know the fear of teachers. He speaks to them as he speaks to everyone. I could have dwelled on his childhood and background a little more in the film to bring this to the fore but I eventually felt that it was not necessary. Rancho lives by his philosophy and his beliefs. He makes choices which are absurd conventionally but he is not here to conform and he does not feel the need to.

VC: Why does he appear superhuman? It was very easy for Raju, Abhijat, and me to flesh out Rancho as we understand him completely. In fact, I see a lot of myself in Rancho. There are just too many similarities. I was always a topper in my school. I remember being thrown out of class because I dared to ask my teacher who Hamlet was. In college, I found BA very boring so I used to attend MA classes and I even studied the books prescribed for MA Economics. In my BA exams, I scored only 55 per cent. I was a consistent topper with scores usually ranging between eighties and nineties. I was sure that there was a mistake in the way I had been marked. I asked for a recheck and realised that the objections to some of the answers stemmed from the fact that I did not follow the pattern of writing the expected answers. I was quoting writers and theories, with all due respect, which were out of the purview of my teacher. Therefore, when I took my final BA exams, I wrote all my references with the page numbers and the titles of the books and the authors. This is how I topped my BA exams. What surprised and baffled me though was the resistance of the educators to reward inventiveness. This reluctance and rigidity is steeped in our education system. You would be surprised to know that FTII had failed me. I was thrown out without a diploma. Then my student film, *Murder At Monkey Hill*, won the National Award and was also nominated for an Oscar. The moment I won the National Award, FTII appointed me as a member of their governing council. In this capacity, I spoke out against the staff as I was aware of everything that goes on there. The staff protested against me and said that I couldn't be on the governing council because I had failed. The

FTII management had to pass me then and I got my diploma. They had failed me because they wanted me to take a lot of exams, some of which I thought were completely ridiculous. For example, they wanted us to submit a feature film script which I never did. The reason for that was simple. I felt we were not yet trained to do this. I protested against these unfair practices. It gives me no pleasure to say this but I did not have any teacher to look up to, and at that stage of your life, a guiding force can be such a boon. These experiences and the lack of guidance became my reason to back talent. I am passionate about doing this because I never had that privilege. I learnt the English language at the age of 16 (as late as that) and what am I doing now? I am making a film in Hollywood. Even now, I have a problem understanding my actors and I ask them to talk slowly because it is tough for me to understand their accents.

I can draw many parallels but the point I am making is that Rancho is not an unbelievable, fictional, larger-than-life character. He is probably someone who is a little tough to understand in this world because he does not conform. We are so happy sitting back and accepting whatever is doled out that anyone who questions, is considered an aberration.

AJ: While writing, we did not look at Rancho as a character in the film but as the hero of the film and he has been written like that, though he is neither superhuman nor a comic book hero. He has the attributes of a hero and it would be dangerous to pretend otherwise. He is an uninhibited free spirit with insatiable curiosity and genuine queries. He does not operate with arrogance or cockiness and Aamir has also played him with that inherent earnestness. But it would be incorrect to say that he does not have an arc in the film or a journey. His journey in the film starts from Joy's suicide. He would not have taken on the system had he not seen that a perfectly wonderful boy was driven to suicide because of the mechanical, unthinking, ruthless system education has been reduced to. This stirs something inside him that he cannot ignore. A clear inspiration and influence here was the film *Deewar* (1975). Amitabh Bachchan is a daily wage worker at the dockyard. All workers there have to pay extortion money to Peter, the local goon. One man refuses to pay this and he is killed by the goons. The death of this innocent person changes Amitabh. He decides to fight back. "*Raheem Chacha ab woh hoga jo 25 saal mein nahin hua. Agle hafte se ek aur coolie inn darindon ko hafta nahin dene wala hai*" (Something that has not happened in 25 years will happen now. Next week one more worker will not pay the extortion money to the goons), goes the famous dialogue. Without this death which changes him, Amitabh would have remained just a worker content

to earn his daily wages. This incident, its futility and cruelty, changes him. While writing *Rancho*, Raju and I had discussed this scene from *Deewar*. Therefore, Joy's suicide is a turning point in Rancho's life. This is his journey. And in the course of his own journey, he changes lives including his own.

Like Rancho, Virus's character must have been a challenge. How did you achieve balance there?

RH: During *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.*, we were shooting a scene where Boman was to deliver a speech to the students. He improvised and added in the speech that a doctor should be dispassionate towards his patients. He must maintain an emotional distance to give him perspective. The exact line was: "*Agar mein apni family par operate karoonga to mere haath kampenge.*" While scripting this, my debate with Boman was that this argument is so logical and valid that it completely justifies Dr. Asthana's character. It makes my hero look weak. Boman looked at me and said that this was my problem and not his. As an antagonist, he must have a point of view and if that point of view weakens the protagonist, then the director has to make the protagonist stronger. This has stayed with me since then. I have consciously applied this while constructing the characters in my films. This helps in creating characters that are real and not one dimensional. Therefore, Virus despite his quirks has a ring of reality. His intention is not to go out there and harm students. He believes that life is a race and if you don't run fast enough, you would be left behind. This is his point of view and he is unwavering in his belief.

The film starts with Farhan abandoning a flight that has already taken off. But it was a long process before you arrived at this opening for the film. In the earlier drafts I read, several approaches were tried including the one where you were even contemplating bringing in Amitabh Bachchan as the narrator. How did you reach this opening scene and why was this scene the most appropriate according to you?

RH: The starting point is always tough. The idea was to set up an extraordinarily large activity which Farhan has to abandon at the very mention of Rancho. This was done to establish the importance of Rancho in Farhan's life.

AJ: Though we went along with the airplane scene to open the film, I do have an alternate scene that happens to be my favourite. Given a chance, I would still do that instead of this. In my favoured beginning, Farhan is a linguist and is in the middle of a conversation between two Heads of State at the UN. He is the interpreter. He

leaves this session to meet Rancho and these two men are left in the lurch. There is a lot of comedy that emerges from linguistics but we did not have enough time to develop it so we went along with the airplane scene. The airplane scene was also more dramatic. But these things are a matter of exploration. One explores multiple possibilities and then chooses the one that best works for the film.

Joy's suicide was a critical point of debate. There are drafts that had it and several that did not. Its inclusion was probably most fiercely debated in the entire screenplay. It was felt that this was too dark an incident for this film or that it might dilute the revelation of Virus's son's death being a suicide. What was the thought behind the suicide scene and the reason for placing it within 20 minutes of getting into the film?

VC: There was a lot of back and forth that happened over this. I had serious doubts about whether we should include this or not. But what convinced me was that this gave motivation to Rancho's character. Raju took it a step further by adding a montage and a voice-over at the editing stage. There is a small montage with Farhan's voice-over talking about Rancho and his quirky personality and from there the voice-over says, "*Ek aur tha bilkul Rancho jaisa.*" And we cut to Joy. This voice-over that Raju introduced at the editing table, integrated the Joy track into the script. Otherwise, it would have been too much of a jump. It also illustrated that a brilliant guy like Rancho can go one way or the other. He can either become Phunsukh Wangdu or become so dejected by seeing mediocrity flourish around him that he gives up on life.

RH: Joy's suicide was thrown out and brought back innumerable times. Abhijat and I were very keen to keep it as we felt that the conflict in the film would start from there, otherwise it would just be a fun film without anything substantial in it. Vinod and Aamir felt that it should not be there. They thought that it was too dark and grim. It was a jarring inclusion in the film. But Abhijat and I were convinced that this had to be there. This went on for a long time. In fact, we only got it back into the script a month before the shoot started (September 2008). But the debate over it continued and then finally the montage and the voice-over during the edit, settled the matter. Earlier, the Rancho montage was not there in the film. We had not even planned to keep it. Nevertheless, I shot it. Simply, so that if I ever felt like reviving it, then it could be done. The feedback after the first screening of the film we organised for a sample audience revealed that Rancho being a mad genius was not coming across. I added the montage then and, linking

it with Joy's introduction by that voice-over, made Joy both integral to the plot and also lent him credibility.

AJ: Joy's suicide is the spine of the film. The second-half revelations are climatic devices. But Joy's suicide is what makes Rancho realise that pressure to perform is the killer and it has to be fought. It is this belief that takes Rancho's character and the story forward. Otherwise, why is he doing the things that he is doing? The first half of the film would become insubstantial if we took out the suicide. The challenge was to put this thing that worries us about the system right on top so that we know what Rancho is fighting, and the film is saved from sinking under the weight of this intense scene.

The interval point is a bit of a shock. The tone of the scene and the treatment are unlike the rest of the film. There were other interval points discussed as well before arriving at this one. How did this come about?

RH: I wanted the fact that Rancho is an imposter to be revealed earlier in the film. I felt if we stretched revealing this till the interval, then it would seem that this very rich kid had come into a college and was having fun. I felt that the audience needed to be told as quickly in the film as possible that he was an imposter because it would get the audience to feel for him. So in the earlier drafts, we came out of the flashback one more time in the first half to reveal that Rancho was not actually Rancho but an imposter. Then we went back into the flashback and there was a different interval point (Farhan and Raju discovering that Pia is getting married being one of the options considered). But after a lot of thought and work on the script, I felt that the interval would be a great point to reveal that Rancho was not Rancho but an imposter. Sometimes, I still feel that it might have been better to reveal this earlier even though what we eventually put in the film is a great interval point. In the end, these are choices that one makes. So once it was settled that this was going to be the interval point, we narrated it to Vinod. He suggested that we add the element of the college photograph having a different face on Rancho. This appealed to me as it enhanced the scene.

VC: Unlike the West, Indian cinema does not follow the three-act structure which is a two-act deal. It is a very unusual way of watching movies. No one else across the world watches films like this — you see one part of the film, break for *samosas* and *chai*, then you watch the rest of the film. This makes the interval point extremely critical. Therefore, one must invest a lot of thought in where the break would happen. In this film, my thought process was focussed on the level of interest of

the audience when they would go and buy their popcorn. Basically, their eagerness to come back to find out what happens next in the film is vital. When I made the suggestion, I did not think that Raju would retain it. It lends a thriller-like quality to the twist. I felt that the audience would enjoy the suspense. The first time I told Raju, he said he liked it but I do not believe anything Raju says in the evening. It is an age-old joke between us that I am the 'in-the moment guy' and he is the 'next morning guy'. He likes to mull over and think over all the options. He makes up his mind only after that. So I always go with what Raju feels about things the next morning and not on the evening that they are suggested. I am happy that he retained it.

The film initially ended with these people finding Rancho teaching in Ladakh in a school, leading a simple happy life doing what he loves doing. Phunsukh Wangdu was not in the film at all. How did the idea of Phunsukh Wangdu fall into place?

RH: Yes, that is true. Phunsukh Wangdu was not in the film earlier. The film ended with Farhan, Raju, and Pia reaching Ladakh and discovering that Rancho teaches in this fascinating little school and that is his success. Whatever he wanted to do, he did it. But we felt that maybe the audience would not understand this. They would probably say that *“yaar khush to hain, lekin paise to kam kamaata hai na”* (He might be happy but he earns very little money). We felt that to make the audience understand, we had to show him to be successful in the conventional way. This is the reason we added the Phunsukh Wangdu, coveted-scientist angle and backtracked to plant him in the film. This is where Chatur's quest emerged. He was shown to be looking for someone in the entire film and at the end the man he is searching for is Rancho. The idea was to show a man living a simple life out of choice. Rancho has the option of signing a deal with anyone and raking in millions but he has chosen to do differently. We felt this would help the audience understand things better.

Another reason was that we kept feeling that the climax was not great. It seemed that our climax was the delivery and then we were just wrapping up the film in Ladakh. It felt weak. We, however, were doing a lot of things in Ladakh. First, we were showing an unusual school. As Farhan, Raju, and Pia enter the school, they see (an entire scene was there initially) that a race is going on, kids are running and one kid falls down. Instead of carrying on, all the kids run back to pick him up and then proceed to finish the rest of the race. These guys look at each

other and say that this can only be Rancho's school. Chatur's electrocution scene initially had Millimeter in it. So all this material was there but these pieces were not coming together to result in a spectacular end to the film. When we found Phunsukh Wangdu, things started falling into place. But to clean this up and to get it all together at the end took us a lot of time. Finally, it evolved to become a big twist at the end.

We solved the Phunsukh Wangdu riddle in our heads in Goa. Abhijat was on a writing visit to Mumbai. I received a call to attend the Film Festival in Goa (IFFI, end 2007). We decided to travel to Goa for two days on this pretext. Any reason to get away from Mumbai and write. We stayed at the same hotel as the one where we had shot the *Lage Raho* song with the old people. Abhijat got very excited about it. He has this fascination for revisiting places that have a context. Except for the chief minister's party the night we had arrived, we did not attend the festival at all. We took a long walk on the beach the day we arrived and Phunsukh Wangdu fell into place. It was quite magical and we were very happy with the climax after that.

Phunsukh Wangdu, the real identity of Rancho, is revealed at the end. The point of revelation that Rancho is actually Phunsukh Wangdu is something you battled with for over a year. What made you decide the final route?

RH: This was a tough one to decide. We were unsure of this right up till the day before we shot the scene. Abhijat and I felt that it should be revealed the moment the friends reunite, before Chatur's arrival. By doing this, we would have revealed this to the audience that Rancho was Phunsukh Wangdu, the man Chatur was chasing and Chatur's dialogues and demeanour with Rancho after this revelation would become even more hilarious to the audience as they would know that he would be in for a real shock when he found out that Rancho is Phunsukh. But both Aamir and Madhavan were of the view that the revelation should happen at the end so that the film ends on a high note. They felt that revealing it earlier would weaken this dramatic twist. This is when the tussle started. Abhijat and I resisted for a long time but Aamir and Madhavan were so vehement and insistent that it became a question in our minds also. When I was in Ladakh for the shoot, I started to feel that maybe their suggestion holds some weight. Maybe the surprise at the end would be a great way to end the film. So I changed it and rewrote it in Ladakh a day before the shoot. Frankly, I still don't know which route was better. Actually, it is a matter of interpretation. Both routes are correct in their own way.

Chatur's speech scene is a complete departure from the Raju Hirani sensibility and the overall VCF sensibility. There were also varied opinions about the *shloka* at the end of the speech. Were there any apprehensions at the time of writing this?

RH: I was aware that what we were doing with this film, we had not done before. There was also complete awareness of the fact that we might be panned for using what people might label as toilet humour. There are ragging scenes with boys in their underwear. The language is of a certain quality and other things as well, but while writing, we realised that the campus world we had created would look completely false if we didn't use the language, the irreverence of youth, and the whole college milieu while creating it. This is the way this world is and, therefore, our job was to stay true to this world. This was the necessity of this world. This scene we cracked when Abhijat and I were in Columbus, Ohio (April 2007). The decision that Rancho will change Chatur's speech was already in place but we had not worked out the details of the scene yet. We decided to make it more challenging for ourselves. It would have been easy to change the entire speech but if only a few words were to be changed, then it would have been tough. Therefore, the challenge was to write a speech that, if kept in its original format, sounded great but if you were to change just a few words in it, then it would become completely different. We struggled for many days to find the right words. We had thought about many words and many ideas but nothing was good enough. We wanted it to rhyme too. One day, we were out for a drive and we hit upon '*chamatkar*' and '*balatkar*'. But after using this a few times, we felt that we needed a change because carrying an entire speech only on a single word change might get monotonous so the hunt for the second word started. I was in Ohio then, visiting Abhijat. We were out for a walk when the second word struck us ('*dhan*' and '*sttan*'). Abhijat's daughter Anoushka (age 12) was also with us. While Abhijat and I were talking, we cracked this and Abhijat almost fell down laughing. We were both in splits but we could not share this with Anoushka.

The *shloka* at the end is another story. It was not there in the scene. While writing the screenplay, we had rented a small farmhouse in Pune where we used to go and write very often. During one of our writing sojourns in this farmhouse, in some other context and not in the context of this speech scene, Abhijat told me this *shloka*. I laughed to the point of tears. I decided there and then that I wanted it in the speech scene and it was incorporated at the end of the scene. Since Chatur already had this trait of farting and is called Silencer by everyone, the *shloka* fitted

in perfectly. But Vinod felt we should take it out. Later, even Abhijat felt the same. But I was very keen to retain it. During the edit, Vinod said that the scene was too long and we should take out the *shloka* but Vir (Vinod's elder brother) who saw the scene was in splits and didn't want me to touch it. I really wanted it to be in the film so I was happy that eventually everyone came around to it.

VC: (Blushing) I was very shocked by that *shloka*. But Vir loved it and I tested it through screenings on other people and they died laughing too. My objection had nothing to do with sensibility because as Raju said, one has to adopt the sensibility of the film and not some general sensibility. Therefore, there were no sensibility issues here. I just felt that the scene was getting too long and might be a bit of a stretch. My biggest concern is always that the audience should not be bored.

AJ: The speech scene was hilarious but I must say that it was not in the script just as a set piece for humour. It is the illustration and the turning point for the clash of the ideologies which is the key element in the film. Rancho protests against rote learning that our education system encourages. He is completely against it. The 'definition of a machine' scene introduces that. The speech scene illustrates the ills of following blindly without understanding the meaning of things. It shows that Chatur is end-oriented whereas Rancho worries about the journey. With the speech, the battle of the philosophies becomes an open battle. Right after this scene, we have the scene where Chatur and Rancho lay a bet to meet after ten years to see who is more successful. The speech scene lent to the progression of this theme in the film.

The *shloka* at the end is another story. I knew that if I told Raju this, he would immediately want it in the film and that is what happened. Later in the edit, I too was unsure about it like Vinod and like he said, it was not because of any sensibility issues. It was because I felt that Rancho probably would not meddle with the speech to this extent. He would change just two words and that would be enough for him to drive the point home. But I am glad that Raju and Vir prevailed in the end because the *shloka* is the *pièce de résistance* of the speech scene (laughing).

The delivery scene has invited a lot of mixed reactions from a section of the audience. I remember you telling me that you began this film by first deciding on the climax because that was a huge challenge you faced while writing *Lage Raho*? Frankly, what were you people thinking when you decided on this as the concluding episode in the film?

RH: The origin of this scene is from *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.* I had thought of this scene where Munna gets admission into medical college. He has only done this to spite Asthana. He has no other motivation to study at a medical college other than his disdain for Asthana. One night, he is roaming the streets with Circuit. They are drunk. Munna is wearing the doctor's white jacket so that he feels like a doctor. There is a '*Mumbai bandh*' that day. Both of them are crossing a *chawl*. A boy comes running out of the *chawl* and is hunting for an auto-rickshaw. His mother is pregnant and her waters just broke. He has to rush her to the hospital or find a doctor. He spots Munna and drags Munna into the *chawl* because he thinks that Munna is a doctor. These guys have no idea what to do but somehow they get through the delivery. The idea behind the scene was to get Munna to realise the value and responsibilities of doctors. The moment he held the newborn, this would have hit him. Now, he would really want to study medicine. The script underwent many changes and this route was abandoned. I had told Abhijat about it. While writing *3 Idiots*, like I told you earlier, we were determined to first decide the climax. Abhijat and I talk a lot when we are writing so this is one of the scenes I mentioned again and Abhijat said, "Why don't we use this here?" Rancho could apply engineering for the delivery. This thought combined with a short story I had read somewhere about a man who used to talk to his baby while he was still in his mother's womb, connected with Pia's sister and 'Aal izz well', our climax, started taking shape. Then, we spent a lot of time with gynaecologists to make it authentic. It became a big joke in office. Whenever Vinod used to come to office and ask for us, he was told that we had gone to the gynaecologist. Everyone teased us endlessly about our visits to gynaecologists. One of my friends had introduced us to Dr. Sejal Desai who became our guide while writing this scene. She told us about the various procedures by which a baby could be delivered. The only procedure which could be combined with engineering was the suction method. A lot of people think that this cannot happen but the scene is totally authentic and it is possible to deliver a baby like this. At every step, we consulted the doctors and, in a way, we wrote the scene with them. A lot of work, a lot of research, and a lot of time were spent on this. Even during the shoot, the doctors were there and constantly monitoring what was happening and how it was being depicted. This is not one of those up in the air, fantasy things that we have put in the film for the sake of a great climax.

You have often referred to the three scenes that constitute this continuous chunk in the film as the soul of *3 Idiots*: Raju's job interview, Farhan's conversation

with his father, and Rancho breaking down when they come and tell him about their triumphs. These scenes had several rewrites before they took the final form in which they are in the film. Why do you feel that this chunk is the essence of *3 idiots*?

RH: These are the moments in the film I am most attached to and they make me very emotional. Even while narrating these scenes, I would often get choked with emotion. In a way, I feel, they are the crux of the film. I have always been fond of an underdog succeeding. I like hope. I see victory in hope. Be happy, go and do whatever you want without fear. This is what one wants to say about life. We had to put a lot of work into these scenes. For example, a lot of back and forth happened in order to elevate the interview scene to the level we aimed to take it to. It was written and rewritten several times. Initially, Raju Rastogi was only saying things about fear, god, and superstition and he used to get the job. I felt that the scene was flat. It lacked punch and impact. Then we hit upon the ‘attitude’ angle which transformed the scene completely.

How this happened is quiet remarkable as well. I had read a chicken soup story about a small boy who is asked by his teacher to write an essay about what he wants to become. The boy writes his essay describing his dream, of owning a ranch one day with thousands of horses. The teacher is not impressed and tells him to alter this unrealistic aim to a more practical one. He tells him to aspire for something more achievable as the boy comes from too poor a background to ever achieve this dream. He also threatens to fail him in the assignment if it is not altered. The boy comes the next day and again submits the same assignment. The teacher is furious now. He tells him that he will surely get an F on this assignment. The boy says, “You can keep your F Sir and I will keep my dream.” I was very moved by this story. I narrated it to Abhijat and was itching to use it somewhere. For a year, the subconscious thought was to apply this somewhere in the script but we could never find the right moment or place for it. In the end, in a different form, it was used in this scene. I think the thought here is of preserving what defines you. Once you are willing to give that up, then that is the first step towards losing your identity and your dreams. Farhan’s confrontation with his father, apart from writing it, was also not an easy scene to execute. Even in the writing of it, initially, I was not entirely satisfied with the trigger that makes the father come around. I felt maybe Farhan has to say more, do more. Something here was not working for me. Also, I was very unsure about executing the father’s change of heart. The tone, the blocking, the pitch, everything had to be perfect for this scene to work. I expressed all of this to

Abhijat. I was very restless about this. He reassured me and said that he would do something. He wrote this entire scene on his own and mailed it to me.

What clicked was this gesture he suggested for Farhan. The father gets very angry during their conversation and comes and sits down on a chair. Farhan goes up to his father and kneels down before him and talks to him. It was this act of deference and total submission that elevated the scene. If you noticed, the tone of the scene is not of rebellion but of persuasion. Farhan is asking for permission; he is not informing his parents. He is appealing to them to let him live his dreams. If they would not have come around, he would have sacrificed his dream.

Lastly, the scene where Rancho breaks down was not there in the film earlier. If you look at it, there was no need for it technically because after these two scenes (Raju's job interview and Farhan's conversation with his father), we could have gone straight to the barber shaving off Virus's moustache as he had lost the bet. But I have always felt that when there is an emotion this potent, it has to play out in full. You need to see the aftermath, otherwise it appears abrupt. The trick to pacing a film is as much in speeding it up as in slowing it down and letting it breathe when the screenplay demands it. I wrote this scene to bring the emotion in the earlier scenes to its rightful conclusion.

But when we shot the scene that in its original form had Raju and Farhan come and hug Rancho and he breaks down, I was not satisfied. I called Abhijat and asked him about what he thought of them taking off their pants and saying, "*Jahanpanah, tussi great ho,*" to Rancho. Earlier this was to happen right at the end when they reunite in Ladakh. Abhijat liked the idea and we changed it on location. We removed it from the climax of the film and brought it up to this point. Instead of these boys, now Chatur takes off his pants at the end and says, "*Jahanpanah, tussi great ho. Tohfa kabool karo.*"

There seems to be a design to the way *3 Idiots* has been written. The drama is carefully balanced with laughter. The audience does not cave in under the weight of any scene. Was this intentional?

RH: This is an inherent trait in all my films. If I had my way, I would package everything with laughter. I believe in the world that I create in my films. One can choose to be cynical or one can choose to look at things differently. If you really analyse the emotional, dramatic scenes, you will notice that they incite tears of happiness and hope and not of despair and loss except for Joy's suicide. I hate

sadness in films. So more than design, this happens because of the way we look at the world: our beliefs, experiences, and ideas.

AJ: I agree with Raju but it is still gratifying to see that after every dramatic scene, we managed to diffuse the tension by making people laugh within minutes. In terms of craft, this is a massive challenge. It can ruin a film if not done seamlessly and effortlessly. Our inspiration for this was *The Lion King*. Mufasa's death is this dark, hard-hitting, unforgettable, and memorable moment but exactly two minutes later you are transported to the world of 'Hakuna Matata'. We shed tears with Simba, we are moved and stirred but two minutes later we are singing 'Hakuna Matata' with joy and hope. Most screenplays would dwell on an event like Mufasa's death for at least ten minutes.

Your (Raju and Abhijat) collaboration began during *Lage Raho Munna Bhai*. It continued through *3 Idiots* and now you are writing another film together. It is a delicate relationship where many things have to come together for it to become productive. How does it work for both of you?

AJ: Raju and I share the same sensibility. Our approaches, our ideas, the path that we want to take, are all the same. When Raju and I write, the path that we follow is completely non-linear. We start with writing the scenes that we value. It is a nightmare later to string them together and beat them into a narrative. But the magic of this method is that once you do this, you have, as writers, followed such an unknown path that the audience has no chance of second guessing the trajectory of the film. So we first follow the magic and pen down what we treasure most and then apply reason and bind it together. It is a rare and wonderful meeting of minds.

RH: I spend more time with him than I do with my wife. I wish he were a woman (laughs). Apart from him being a good writer and our sensibilities being the same (we are both from small towns and we have shared similar experiences; our reference points are the same), the quality I most enjoy and admire in Abhijat is that he does not defend his scenes. Most writers spend a huge chunk of their time defending their scenes. If I want something done differently, he understands my point of view. This does not mean that he is not passionate about what he writes or does not believe in his scene but it simply means that he is ready to explore. He has a positive aura. Secondly, I don't have to walk on eggshells with him. That is a huge relief. In cinema, you waste a lot of time, precious time, dealing with egos because

everyone you are dealing with is an artist. You have to think of ways and means to convey your opinion without hurting people or offending them. This house-keeping I don't have to do with him. I can say what I feel without hesitation and without any sugar-coating. It saves us a tremendous amount of time. And most importantly, Abhijat does not give up. We could have been through a million drafts but he does not get fatigued by the evolving screenplay. He keeps at it. I am the same so I know that this stems from tremendous passion. Even if the shoot is on and things need to be changed, he has that faith in me and I in him that if it makes the film better, we will do whatever it takes. This synergy is rare. Before Abhijat and I started working together, I never thought that I would need a writing partner or I could work with a writing partner but now I feel it is essential to have one.

The process of screenwriting and directing holds such mystery that many find it hard to figure out where to start. What would your suggestions be to students aspiring to write and direct their material?

RH: I believe that formal education in some form is essential to an extent. One does not have to enrol in an institute or course necessarily but other modes of learning like reading, watching theatre and films can help you gather the tools and grammar that will enable you to write and make films. But what is most critical to preserve is the faculty to think from your heart. Once you get into theory which is important, we tend to lose the innocence with which films were watched earlier. We tend to view them only with an eye on the craft: there comes the central conflict; those are the hurdles in the plot; lensing just changed; and a crane was used for this shot, and so on, is what we start focussing on. We start viewing films purely from the perspective of craft. The ability to think from the heart and appreciate a film honestly vanishes. For me, to keep this faculty to think from the heart alive is the biggest battle. This is what leads to honest work. The other thing is to try to bring in fresh ideas. It is very tough to do that these days but the effort should be there to achieve this.

AJ: I feel that novelty of idea is paramount. Anything you are writing or attempting to write should not have the sound of something that has been done a hundred times before. The approach that though it has been done before but I will write it so well that it will work, according to me, does not work. You need to feel strongly about the idea that you choose and you need to believe in it. It must sound unique to you to begin with. Once you have settled on the idea, the element of time comes in. A screenplay demands a lot of time and patience. The writing process, in case

quality is the goal, cannot be rushed. Therefore, you must be prepared to devote that time. At least two to three years. Once these two commitments are made, then for the first two or three months you must not write. You must mull over the idea. Where do I want to go with this thought? What am I trying to say? Who are the characters in my story? Why is what I am saying worth saying? Why should I be writing this at all? These are the questions you should spend time answering in these initial months. Once you have convincingly answered these for yourself, you should start the writing process. A good technique is to keep two screenplays going at the same time. It helps sometimes. You might love some moments but they don't work for a screenplay so you can always put them in the other one you are working on or save them for some other story in the future. So you don't hang on to your darlings. But more than two screenplays at a time is a distraction.

VC: The only process and method I know is consistent, relentless, passionate, and focussed hard work. Let me tell you a secret. Talent, as is the popular belief, is not inborn. It is something you have to work for. If you work hard enough, you can achieve anything. That is the key to it all.

— *Smriti Kiran*



THINGS OF BEAUTY

THINGS OF BEAUTY



A thing of beauty is a joy forever ...

— John Keats

*Praise this world to the Angel ... show him
some simple thing, refashioned by age after age,
till it lives in our hands and eyes as a part of ourselves.*

— Rainer Maria Rilke

Three minutes of cinema time ...

A young lady who hates her father's archenemy and furiously confronts him must within the next three minutes break off her engagement with her fiancé, fall hopelessly in love with the same archenemy, and convincingly fantasise singing a rain-drenched love song with him.

The girl is Pia; the nemesis she must confront is Rancho; the fiancé she must plunk is Suhas, the *Price Tag*; and the song she must sing is 'Zoobi Doobi'.

The question is: *How do we achieve this sea change within three minutes of cinema time?*

Raju and I ponder over this question in New York City over two cups of tea. We know with absolute certainty that we can't spend a single extra minute garnishing the love story. Our screenplay, completed except for this one problem, is already half-an-hour longer than we would ideally want. And the placement of the love song is particularly precarious: around the 75th minute into the film, a time when most people are itching to leave either for the restroom or for some popcorn. If the screenplay sags even for a second before the song, audiences the world over would

end up using the song as a restroom break. And if they did so, they wouldn't return from such a mass exodus in time for the interval point, the *biggest* twist and the most crucial plot-point of the story.

We can't let them go for a break. Which means Pia must fall in love with her archenemy in no time at all. *But how?*

In Shakespeare's *Richard III*, Princess Anne goes to slay her husband's murderer Richard, only to get engaged to him in the same scene, mesmerised by his allure. Richard later boasts: "*Was ever a woman in this humor wooed? Was ever a woman in this humor won?*" I remind Raju of the scene. Raju wryly reminds me that we are not Shakespeare. Point taken. So how do lesser mortals achieve this effect?

Through some mundane, everyday *thing*. Some simple *object*, refashioned age after age. In this case, it's going to be Pia's *watch*.

In their first meeting, Rancho had seen Pia being reprimanded by her brand-obsessed fiancé for wearing a cheap watch at her sister's wedding. When we wrote that scene, we had not seen the potential of the watch as a *leitmotif*. Now, in New York City, where I have followed Raju from Columbus on the last leg of his US trip in the hope that we can crack the *Pia-Rancho* track before his departure to India, we decide to play with the watch and see what happens.

What happens is a little miracle that a screenwriter encounters once in about three or four years.

Opening salvo with the watch: it helps Rancho deflate Pia's fiancé with one swift '*demo*': Rancho hides the expensive watch that the fiancé has just bought for Pia and tells him that she has lost it. This simple ruse brings rushing to the fore all the maniacal materialism, brand-obsession, price-consciousness, and the sheer rudeness of the fiancé. Moments later, stunned and insulted, Pia breaks off the engagement.

Salvo two: Rancho has vanquished Pia's fiancé but not yet won her over. It happens in an instant, through a single innocuous remark. He congratulates Pia for showing the courage in breaking off with her fiancé and points out that "*Ab tum jab chaho apni maa ki ghadi pehan sakti ho*" (Now you are free to wear your mom's watch). This single sentence causes an explosion in Pia's cognitive universe. In a flash, it alters her perception, memory, reasoning, and finally her judgment. *How does Rancho know that the cheap watch she was wearing at her sister's wedding once belonged to her mother?* Because he could reason that the bride's sister, otherwise dressed opulently,

could be wearing one object so humble only for its sentimental value. Ergo he possesses sensitivity and tenderness that she had never suspected he did!

Salvo three: The next time Pia meets Rancho, she holds out her wrist — she is wearing her mother's watch. Without a single word, through the semiotics of that one gesture, she conveys to him that she has forgiven him his ruthless deconstruction and debunking of her father's and her fiancé's philosophies, embraced his values and is now firmly in his camp. In fact, she loves him.

Thus, the watch helps us tide over one of the trickiest plot points that had threatened to derail our screenplay. Even more importantly, it infuses Rancho's character with one quality that sets him apart from almost all characters before him in Indian cinema — authenticity. When Pia's fiancé is ranting about the astronomical price of the lost limited edition watch, Rancho gently retorts, "*Meri to dhai sau ki hai yaar, lekin time wohi batati hai*" (Mine is inexpensive, but shows the same time). [This is an incident that we borrowed almost verbatim from Vidhu Vinod Chopra's life, when as a young and struggling student, he could not ignore the slight about his humble watch from an affluent relative.] This remark by Rancho is emblematic of his authentic nature and the very first overt declaration of one of his many priorities: value over price, passion over pragmatism, excellence over success, understanding over information, communication over jargon, education over training, knowledge over diploma, and a mother's watch over a limited-edition watch!

All we asked of the watch was to save us a few minutes. What it gifted us was the kernel, the essence, the very nucleus of the film.

Strangely, we stumbled on the extraordinary potential of objects through a problem that we faced very early in the screenplay, a problem that is every writer's nightmare: a big cliché.

The scene: The Director's motivational speech to the freshmen on their first day at college.

Audiences around the world have heard and witnessed such spiel a zillion times, ranging from the great bombast in *Patton* and *Full Metal Jacket* to the lamest offerings from the trashiest of campus flicks.

Tom Stoppard, the great English playwright, came to the rescue. Not in person, but in spirit — *boleto Chetana*. Stoppard thrives on introducing bizarre objects into his plays and later providing perfectly plausible explanations for them. One of his

plays begins with a man opening the door of his apartment with shaving foam on his face, a bow and an arrow in one hand and a tortoise in the other to find a policeman carrying a bouquet of flowers standing outside. Soon enough, Stoppard gives us an entirely convincing reason for this outlandish spectacle. Inspired by Stoppard's virtuosity, *the cuckoo's nest*, complete with *the fake bird atop it*, was born. The Director carries this strange object in his hand as he strides down the imposing corridors. The audience wonders about the logic of this peculiar object, till in his speech, the Director links it with competition that abounds in nature: a *koel* kills off its competition by pushing the host bird's eggs out of the nest. As the audience gets involved in the story of the *koel* and ruthless competition, we have successfully negated a big cliché. Later in the same scene, instead of ending the speech with rhetoric or polemics, we take it to its climax with another object: the Director takes out a gleaming *astronaut's pen*, holds it up enticingly as the ultimate trophy for the students. Through Rancho's healthy disrespect for the pen, and his archrival Chatur's salivating regard for it, we were able to immediately and wordlessly set up the clash between two conflicting philosophies: obsession with success versus excellence. Once again, an inanimate object was helping us not merely to scale over a plot hurdle but in intensifying the film as a comedy of ideas.

Since one speech was served so ably by two diverse objects, Raju and I intuitively grasped that inanimate objects would play a seminal role in the story. In fact, as I have lately grown fond of saying, they would form the DNA of the film.

For *Lage Raho Munna Bhai*, we had discovered about halfway through the scripting process that the DNA of the film was '*oolta kar*' or do the opposite — the principal of inversion. For constraints of space, I can only give one quick example of this. When Munna is asked how to deal with a boy who desecrated Gandhi's statue, from behind him Bapu answers: "Give more stones to the lad, tell him to topple all my statues." This is clearly inverse to the answer that the audience is likely to postulate in their heads and therefore highly intriguing because they cannot second guess what will follow. Throughout *Lage Raho Munna Bhai*, whenever in trouble, we had summoned this principal of inversion.

For *Broken Horses*, another screenplay I co-authored with Vinod, the DNA is memory; the childhood memory of a mentally challenged character. Whenever faced with major dilemmas, he summons not his faculty of reasoning but the faculty of reminiscence: what his parents taught him when he was little. In every major dramatic scene, we found ourselves relying utterly on memory for solutions.

For *3 Idiots*, which was being written at the same time as *Broken Horses*, we realised that the DNA was objects. Objects marked the comic and the tragic, the dramatic and the philosophical beats of the film with equal felicity. To chronicle the genesis of each object that served us so valiantly for transfusing red corpuscles into our scenes would fill a book longer than the screenplay. But here is the briefest account of our extended encounter with *things*.

The Comic Objects

The *empty gift envelopes*, the *mounds of food on the plates* of three friends, and most crucially, the *mint chutney* are irreplaceable for the comic flavour of the scene where Rancho gatecrashes Pia's sister's wedding. Of these, the mint chutney proved to be a powerful motif. Rancho first drops it on Suhas's shoes to determine their price. We went on to use it in three more scenes:

- A. In the song 'Zoobi Doobi' where Pia imagines Rancho as a chef eulogising the virtues of the "*ever-useful mint chutney that, apart from being delicious, also reveals a man's character.*"
- B. The scene where a drunken Pia barges into Rancho's room and he, scrupulously small town, offers her *dhokla* with mint chutney to distract her from her amorous advances. This leads to the memorable lines about the menacing names of innocuous Gujarati food items like *dhokla*, *fafda*, *thepla* that sound like missiles to Pia.
- C. The scene of Pia's wedding, when to stop the groom from heading for the altar, Raju Rastogi irons his clothes with an iron drenched in mint chutney. As promised, the chutney reveals the groom's character instantly as Pia hears him scream out the price of his ruined wedding dress.

Our most innovative comic object, however, is *not* the mint chutney. The pride of that place must go to an object so humble, so self-effacing that most people would not even remember it — the *heart-rate monitor* in the hospital where Raju Rastogi lay in a coma after his suicidal 'high jump'. This object served an extraordinary purpose. It saved Reel No. 7 of the film from becoming so grave, heavy, and weighty that it could have sunk the entire film. This, by far, is our favourite reel of the film. It starts with the Director's brutal act of compelling Rastogi to type the letter of his own rustication — an act that drives Rastogi into attempting suicide and culminates, after Rastogi's recovery, in the twin movement of Farhan convincing his father that

he does not want to become an engineer and Rastogi successfully facing a crucial job interview. This reel is clearly the *heart* of *3 Idiots*. The problem was that scene after overwhelmingly moving scene, this was also by far the grimmest, darkest, and the longest (about 20 minutes) reel of the film. We desperately needed to bring some levity, some joy to this beat of the story. Since the searing dramatic scenes allowed no scope for comic maneuvering, we came up with what I consider to be the most daring and audacious tricks of our screenwriting careers — we decided to lace the musical interludes of the song ‘Jaane Nahi Denge Tujhe’ with comedy. But hold on! Swanand Kirkere has written those stanzas so movingly and Sonu Nigam has sung them with such unbridled emotionalism that how the hell can we bring in comedy into the interludes?

Well, with the help of the little heart-rate monitor.

Knowing that Rastogi’s brain responds to voice despite the coma, Rancho begins to tell outrageous and funny lies to him to try and revive him. Though the idea was comic, we realised that it would fall flat since the lies would not elicit a response from the coma-stricken Rastogi. This is where the heart-rate monitor stepped in. Whenever Rastogi responds to anything that is said, his heart rate increases and the graph on the monitor alters. The dance of this graph started drawing laughter from the audience at every screening. The more outrageous the lie or the action, the more vibrant the externalisation of Rastogi’s inner thoughts. When Rancho finally utters the most outrageous lie that poor Farhan would marry Rastogi’s sister without any dowry, the seismic dance of the white graph reaches a frenzied climax. The next moment the coma-stricken patient’s right hand moves. Life returns to his limbs, hope returns to his friends’ hearts and we, the writers, about to lose our comic licenses for non-use, get a fresh lease of life. Thank you, monitor!

Apart from these major objects, there were many minor ones that came fleetingly into the film to help us find chuckles, guffaws, and occasionally, that big explosive theatre-shaking laughter that makes the years of the screenwriter’s toil totally worthwhile: *the spoon at the end of the rod* that Rancho improvises to electrocute the urinating senior; *the single grey hair* that is kneaded into the flour as the friends are eating *rotis* at the Rastogi house; Chatur’s *hand-crafted biscuits from San Francisco* that he so jealously guards for Phunsukh Wangdu, the comic device that enabled us to weave in the Wangdu track without drawing attention to it; the *urn of ashes* that the friends so shockingly and irreverently waylay and through the threat of immersing the ashes in the sewer, blackmail the fake Rancho into revealing the secret

of the real Rancho being an imposter, thus enabling us to make a long exposition dramatic and funny. Pia's *helmet* helped us negate the sentimentality and cliché of Rancho's dream [*"Pia, tum roz dulhan ke costume mein scooter pe baith kar mere sapne mein aati ho. Ghoongat ki jagah apna helmet uthaati ho...."* (Every night you ride into my dreams on your scooter, dressed as a bride. Instead of the veil, you lift your helmet...)] and last but not least, *the two keys to the Director's office* that are flung at Farhan, one by Rancho and the other by the Director, one from a dear friend and the other from a dreaded foe, one stolen and the other legitimate but both thrown at him with the same aim: to save a human life.

The Dramatic Objects

A chopper with a surveillance camera mounted atop, rises in the air and soars. It seems to embody the joy and goodwill of the entire campus in its flight. With the crowd beneath giving it rousing cheers, it continues upwards like Shelley's *Skylark* — "*Soaring doth thou sing, and singing ever soarest.*" Rancho, remote in his hand, guides this invention to the window of its originator, Joy Lobo, hoping to catch his astonishment and euphoria on the mounted camera ... and Joy Lobo hangs from the ceiling fan, a failure in his own eyes. His most brilliant success, the flying camera, hovers outside his window, recoding the inescapable evidence of his flight from this world.

This is the biggest turning point in the film. From this point on, Rancho, though an imposter, living under an alias and hence keen on keeping a low profile, takes off his gloves and takes on the system.

I am ashamed to admit that for one full year, for the first five or six drafts of the screenplay, we had something as lame as sleeping pills as the means of Joy's demise. Peel off a few drafts of the screenplay, and what you stare at is pure mediocrity!

A few rings, a *wheelchair*, a *laptop*, and a *letter*, these simple objects provided us with the bulwark for the most important beat of the story in *3 Idiots* — the twin movement where Raju Rastogi, a changed man after his suicide attempt, fearlessly faces a job interview and Farhan, unyielding but loving, wins his father's blessings for leaving engineering and embracing photography. Without the aid of objects, the scenes would have needed so many lines of dialogue to convey the complex emotions that they would have degenerated into sermons. Objects helped us slash the dialogue and deepen the emotion.

Before facing the job interview, Raju Rastogi takes off his lucky rings that embody all his superstitions and fears and discards them in a *metallic bedpan*. CLANG! Wordlessly, with that mutinous clang, the hitherto weak man has trashed his old fearful self. Later, the *wheelchair* is crucial to the scene when he faces the interview panel. More than what he has lost, the wheelchair represents what he has gained: “*Dono taange tudvaake apne pairon pe khada rahena seekha hai*” (It took two broken legs to get me up on my feet). The same scene, without changing a single line of dialogue, with Rastogi sitting in an ordinary chair would never have had the same impact.

A laptop versus a letter — that is the essence of the encounter between Farhan and his father. The letter is Farhan’s dream, written five years ago to his revered photographer requesting apprenticeship but never posted for fear of breaking his father’s heart. Rancho sends it out without Farhan’s knowledge and lo! the photographer answers, inviting Farhan to the Brazilian rainforest to work with him. Now Farhan stands at two divergent roads, one that leads him to engineering and the other to his passion, photography. Which one will he take? At this very moment, Farhan’s father is proudly showing his mother the brand new laptop, a gift for Farhan, in anticipation of a plush new engineering job. The laptop represents the recompense for all the sacrifices and hardships that the father has undertaken for the education of his son and all his solid and conservative hopes of a good life for his son. In this sense, the laptop is the exact opposite of the sense of adventure, uncertainty and passion that the letter represents. The scene becomes the battleground for two disparate philosophies through two commonplace objects. When Farhan, without an ounce of anger or bitterness, with immense love and respect, makes his father see the validity of his argument, the letter wins. The father tells the mother to return the laptop and buy a professional camera for his son.

Another such scene where two rival philosophies clash appears earlier in the film — the scene of the vital bet between Chatur and Rancho. It is a clash not of individuals but of priorities and values: Chatur’s obsession with success versus Rancho’s respect for excellence. The rivals decide on a date ten years later, when they will meet and compare notes on who won and who lost. While there is no overt use of objects in the scene, we achieved the ‘concretisation’ or the ‘solidification’ effect through getting Chatur to *carve out a date* on the mossy wall of the terrace. By being engraved on the wall, the date became tangible, solid, permanent. It received an import that it lacked when it was merely uttered verbally in earlier drafts. Chatur carves the date not merely on the wall but also on the psyche of the audience.

Perhaps the most telling example of this ‘solidification’ or ‘concretisation’ of a scene is the interval point of the film. Both Raju and I were extremely proud of our twist: *after a long and eventful journey, the friends seem to reach Rancho, but when Farhan puts his hand on the man’s shoulder, the man who turns and looks at them is not their friend. It is a complete stranger. The friends are shocked. INTERMISSION.* When we narrated this scene to Vinod, he didn’t share our enthusiasm. He was uneasy and restless till he realised what he was missing in the scene. A tangible deepening of the mystery. Vinod felt that without solid evidence of some kind, the audience might take the encounter with the wrong man as some minor misunderstanding, a communication gaffe that might soon be sorted out. So he added a few extra seconds to our scene: *After meeting the stranger, Farhan sees on the wall, a group photo of the classmates, featuring all three friends but the place where Rancho sat in the real photo is now occupied by this total stranger. The wrong man. INTERMISSION.* The inanimate photo provides the scene with the final turn of the screw. The nebulous mystery suddenly becomes concrete. The plot thickens.

Am I reading too much into this concept of ‘solidification’ or ‘concretisation’ through objects? Am I zealously overanalysing a moot point? Are there no major scenes in *3 Idiots* that do not rely on objects? Wrong. In fact, the most famous scene of the film, Chatur’s speech that goes outrageously wrong [*chamatkar* versus *balatkar*, *dhan* versus *stun*] relies entirely on wordplay. So does my favorite scene: Rancho’s deliberately obscure, whimsical, and wooly-headed definition of books [*“Instruments that record, analyse, summarise, organise, debate and explain information; that are illustrated, non-illustrated, hard-bound, paperback, jacketed, non-jacketed; with foreword, introduction, table-of-contents, index; that are intended for the enlightenment, understanding, enrichment, enhancement and education of the human brain through the sensory route of vision. Sometimes touch.”*] In both these scenes we relied exclusively on verbal dexterity. In one instance crude, in the other, sophisticated. Do these scenes, then, constitute the antithesis of my argument? Hardly. Because these scenes, if anything, serve to demonstrate the devastating effects of the lack of ‘concrete’ understanding and ‘solid’ conceptual clarity that plague our educational system. The wordplay scenes are meant, as Rancho would put it, to be a ‘demo’ of what obfuscation, empty jargon, hyperbole, pomposity, rote learning bring upon us — nothing but ‘*balatkar pe balatkar*’.

Objects were our closest allies for three years. Like a friend that you can confidently call up in the middle of the night at the time of a crisis, we knocked on the door of objects every time we were in trouble. Every time, they responded generously. Most

times, like good friends, they didn't make a big show of the help they had extended and remained largely inconspicuous. Almost invisible. But every object I listed here is now a part of what Rogers and Hammerstein have famously described as "*a few of my favorite things*." Right from the *official stamp* that seals Farhan's fate at the beginning of the film, to the *astronaut's pen* that with one signature turns Chatur's gloating victory into a humiliating defeat at the very end of the film, *3 Idiots*, could not have been written without dreaming up hundreds of such objects. The most menial of these objects, are for me, things of beauty. They took our hollow scenes and filled them with humor or drama; they took our most abstract concepts and made them accessible.

In Shakespeare's words, they gave "*the airy nothing a local habitation and a name*."

— *Abhijat Joshi*

CASTING A SPELL

CASTING A SPELL



From the suppressed frustration of the hospital sweeper in *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.*, the helplessness of the retired man who breaks into an *impromptu* stripping act to get his pension, to the sparkling purity of *Chhote* in *3 Idiots*, while it may be difficult for us to recall the names of the actors who played these roles, their faces will remain forever etched in our memories; the characters merging into these actors making the on-screen persona inseparable from the one in reality.

Rajkumar Hirani believes that the face maketh the character. If anything comes as a close second to the script in his school of filmmaking, it is casting. Every face visible in a Rajkumar Hirani film has been hand-picked by him. "Casting is half the job done as far as characters in the film are concerned. Sometimes, we find the right people and at times, the right people find us," says the man who drives his ADs (assistant directors) and casting team literally up the wall even for the right junior artists meant to provide the 'background' in a scene.

It took Raju a year to freeze on the actor for Joy Lobo's father in *3 Idiots*, a character that appears for barely two minutes on screen. Over five hundred screen tests later, he exclaimed with frustration, "Maybe honest faces are vanishing from this planet." The brief was to find a face that would be the epitome of selfless love, kindness, and innocence. Every heart in the theatre would break when he mourned his son's untimely death. Raju's associate, Rajesh Mapuskar, came to the rescue and suggested child actor, Madhav Vaze, from the acclaimed Marathi film *Shyamchi Ayee* (Shyam's mother) made in 1953. He would be of the right age now to play the role. The hunt for the actor began and he was finally located in Pune. The only question was: had Madhav's face retained the same stirring innocence it had fifty-six years ago? One look at him and Raju knew he had found Mr. Lobo.

And sometimes, the right actor finds his/her way to the right role. Every project goes through various stages of casting. A single change in the script could have

one consider someone else rather than the actor initially under consideration for a particular role. If one were to imagine anyone other than Aamir Khan as Rancho, Kareena Kapoor as Pia, or Sanjay Dutt as Munna Bhai, the entire perception and tone of these characters would change in our heads.

The principal cast of *3 Idiots* came together with all the serendipitous twists and turns of a commercial potboiler.

■ RANCHO AAMIR KHAN

I never thought of casting Aamir in 3 Idiots. In his case, it is the right man finding his way to the right role. Aamir, in real life, is Rancho.

— Rajkumar Hirani

We had actually not thought of Aamir for 3 Idiots. I happened to call him for Rajesh Mapuskar's film Ferrari ki Sawari. During that time, we were also in the process of casting for 3 Idiots. Aamir asked me if there was anything that Raju was doing because he was keen to work with him. I immediately called him in for a narration of 3 Idiots. And just like that, we found Rancho.

— Vidhu Vinod Chopra

In the twenty-six years that Aamir Khan has spent in the film industry, he and Vidhu Vinod Chopra have met and spoken about several projects. Vinod had offered *1942: A Love Story* to Aamir but that fell through. After that, Aamir became accustomed to Vinod calling him once every few years and invariably asking for his dates for projects that were to begin shooting a month later. Aamir would always hear the script but decline because he needed more time to prepare. Moreover, he reasoned that if Vinod called him barely a month before the principal photography for a project was to begin, then he was anyway not the man Vinod needed for the job.

So when in late 2007, his phone rang with Vinod's name flashing on the display screen, Aamir assumed that it was one of Vinod's regular 'once-in-four-years' calls. Vinod had called to discuss a project still in the process of being written. The conversation went something like this ...

Aamir: “*Yaar tu mujhe yeh sab filmein offer karta rehta hai, why don't you ever offer me a film with Raju?*”
(You keep offering me these films but why don't you ever offer me a film with Raju?)

Vinod: “*Bulaonga to karega tu?*”
(If I call you, will you do it?)

Aamir: “*Script achchi lagegi to zaroor karoonga.*”
(If I like the script, I will definitely do it.)

Vinod: “*To phir aaja kal aur sunn le.*”
(Then come tomorrow and hear it.)

Unaware that Raju had a ready script or was even working on a project, Aamir was stunned by the turn of events. Vinod had managed to stump him yet again.

But this time things did work out.

You had expressed a desire to work with Raju. Both of you had even met and discussed a project. Why did things not work out earlier?

I have very high regard for Raju’s work and for Raju as a person. The first time we met was at the premiere of *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.* I loved the film and thought it was wonderful. A little over six months after that, Raju called me to discuss an idea he had for a film. This was before *Lage Raho*. I was travelling then, but we decided to meet the moment I was back in town. After I returned, Raju came to meet me and told me that things had changed. In fact, the morning of the day we met, he decided that the idea he was to share with me, would now be used to do the second innings of *Munna Bhai*. I was still curious to hear of the idea. When I heard it, I thought it was a fantastic idea and completely suited the *Munna Bhai* genre. And Sanjay would do a great job but at the same time I felt that I had missed out on an opportunity.

What drew me to Raju was his unique style of filmmaking. I had observed in the two *Munna Bhai* films that he views his characters with a lot of warmth. So even if it is a bad guy in his film, his approach to the character is very warm. In his work, there is a certain joy and simplicity which is what appeals to me and to all of us. Also, Raju is a straightforward person who you take to instantly. He has a basic respect and regard for each and every person he deals with, no matter who they are.

After the first narration, what was your reaction to the script?

My first reaction to the script was one of disappointment. It did not work for me and if Raju had still wanted to make it the way it was then, I would have had to

opt out. I felt sad because I really wanted to work with him. The script had a lot of potential but it was not in place as yet. I expressed my reservations to Raju. He heard me out and said that he agreed with quite a few of my points. He told me to give him some time and then he came back after about two months. When I heard the script the second time round, I liked it. A lot of the issues I had raised and he had agreed with, had been addressed.

What were the problems that you had with the first version of the script that was narrated to you?

My basic problem was that Rancho was too heroic in the first draft. He was cocky and belting out one smart line after another. I felt he should behave like a normal guy. For example, in the introduction scene, initially, he was heroic in the way he faced the guys who were ragging him. It was Rancho's attitude and not the scene that was a problem for me. The scene has stayed pretty much the same as it had been earlier. Rancho's attitude did not make sense to me. A young boy who comes into the first year should be scared when he faces his seniors. He cannot be this guy who comes in and churns out smart lines. He came across as too confident and too sure of himself. But as I understood him, he seemed to me a guy who is normal. He does not really know how to face guys who are stronger than him and are bullying him. That is the reason he runs away and hides in his room.

The tone initially was of one-upmanship and I felt that Rancho should not really care about that. I wanted him to be scared in the ragging scene and do things out of fear and not out of knowing how to handle these tough situations. Similarly, in the scene where the Director addresses the first year students and talks to them about the astronaut's pen, had I said my lines in a cocky manner, then the character would have come across differently but when the lines are said with a sense of excitement as though the idea has just occurred to the character, and he thinks it is a damn good one, so he just says it out loud because he wants to share it, that takes on a different colour altogether. Rancho is enthusiastic about his thoughts and shares them spontaneously but he does not know why the others are laughing because he has not said anything meaning to be funny. Yet, it comes across as a joke. Other people find it funny. This is broadly what I had a problem with. It was the crystallisation of the core thought that I was excited about: what the film is trying to say — chase excellence and not success — and this is what I wanted coming through in Rancho.

You were not convinced about playing a 20-year-old student in the film. What made you change your mind?

When I read the script, I did not feel that Rancho is me because Rancho is a naturally brilliant guy and I don't see myself as that. Rancho's philosophy in life all along I have been following but as a personality he is a little quirky. I don't see myself as that. But broadly speaking, how he lives his life is similar to how I live mine but when I was reading the script, I didn't see it that way. Perhaps I don't see myself that way, so I couldn't relate myself to him. However, the interesting thing that happened was that I told Raju what I felt: "Though I love the script, how am I going to fit this role? I am 43 now and by the time we make the film, I will be 44 and I have to play a 20-year-old so I don't think I am the right guy for this film. I personally feel you should cast someone in that age group." I even offered to help him find a younger actor for the role. My fear was that fundamentally if people didn't accept me as a 20-year-old, then the whole film would go for a toss. And that would not be worth it. You are making an entire film. There is too much hard work involved so why should you let the fate of the film hinge on a weak point. Your lead actor is 44 and he is going to play a 20-year-old. Despite not being convinced of it ourselves, if we still went ahead and shot the film, and it looked bad, then what were we going to do? This is when Raju spoke to me at length. I think during our interaction leading up to this conversation, Raju had become increasingly convinced about me playing Rancho. Maybe to start with, he was not totally convinced. I don't know what was going through his mind but I felt that somewhere along the way, he became surer about me doing the film. Perhaps the interaction helped him in his head as well. The first thing he said was that he thought I looked young. Second, he felt that I could pull it off as I have often pulled off things that people have not expected me to. He gave me the example of *Ghajini*. His logic was that if I could pull that off, why not this? I kept countering him by saying that there were limits to what one can do physically. Lastly, he said, "Throughout your career, you have been like Rancho. You have taken paths that are unconventional. You have not followed any rules. Instead you have broken them. You have chased excellence and success has come after that. When you play Rancho, the audience is going to believe you as opposed to some other actor who has been chasing success in reality but spouts these lines on screen. You will bring a lot of credibility to the character and that is why I want you to play it." This is what his opinion was but I kept insisting on finding a younger actor. This discussion went on. What eventually helped me make up my mind was Raju's faith in me. We spent

a lot of time together and discussed many drafts of the script and throughout the process Raju was certain that he wanted me for the role. I instinctively trust Raju as a director. I trust his judgement and instinct. I might not be able to see myself in a particular way but if the director is able to see me that way, and feel enthused and excited about it, then that is important to me.

I am so glad he pushed me. I decided to go with Raju's judgment. His faith in me, my intense desire to work with him and, of course, what he was making convinced me to take on the challenge.

Once you were convinced and you signed the film, what was your approach to Rancho?

I felt Rancho is boyish and transparent. He has a clean heart so most of what he thinks and feels is quite evident to people. Had I actually been 20 years old, I might have played the character differently. I don't know how I would have played it but it would have been different. At this age, I had the additional burden of pulling off playing a guy half my age. I had to approach him differently. I had to work on my mannerisms and the way I look to cut the age. I was really bulked up for *Ghajini* so I lost a lot of muscle. I tried to look as small as possible in order to look boyish. I wore oversized clothes. I had to internalise the mannerisms because if you don't internalise them, they come out totally fake. In my head, when I was constructing him, I felt he is a guy who is constantly moving. His mind is buzzing. So he seldom stays still. He is either scratching his head, shifting from one foot to the other or shaking his head. He is quick. There is so much going on in his head that he has a lot of buzz in him. That is how I saw him. And because he is transparent, all that is going on inside him comes out spontaneously. This trait helped me negotiate the smart lines because the lines are very smart. I felt that if he is so smart, confident, and cocky, then he will become a pain in the neck after a point. To make him likeable, the audience has to feel he is innocent. Let me give you a 'demo' (smiles). One of my toughest scenes in the film was when Rancho confronts the Director after Joy's death. Those are some pretty heavy lines. You might feel those things but to actually go and tell the head of your educational institute all that and to actually provoke him without being asked anything is a rather extreme thing to do. The insinuation of Rancho's words is severe. How does one pull this off? Raju and I even considered at one point to have Rancho drunk in this scene but then we did not go down that route. The best way then to go about it, and which is what I did, would be to play him as emotionally overwrought. He is so grief-stricken that he goes and says what

he feels without thinking of the consequences. And the only way to balance the outspokenness of the earlier scene would be to show a degree of fear when he is in the Director's office the next morning. He is not taking on the Director or playing this like a challenge. He is making a plea. I am saying a lot of harsh things to the Director and, therefore, I cannot come from a position of arrogance.

Basically, I played Rancho with a different attitude. He is just being plain honest because he is innocent enough to be honest. He might be scared but he has to say what he feels because that is who he is. The smart lines, I know, needed to be retained but as an actor, I had to say them in a way that made them palatable.

Farhan and Raju, as characters, were most likely to have the audience behind them because most people would identify either with Farhan or with Raju. Rancho is a man you admire but not someone who evokes sympathy or empathy. Was this a concern for you?

I was aware of this but it was not a concern for me. One of the problems with Rancho, speaking from a purely dramatic point of view, is that he has no flaws. When the character does not have flaws, you may admire the character but you don't emotionally connect with the character because he does not have any problems. He does not need your help. And he is succeeding in whatever he does, therefore, there is no sympathy or empathy for him. As an audience you don't emotionally invest in him. For example, in *Taare Zameen Par*, your heart goes out to Ishaan because you see the trouble he is going through. You are totally behind him as a viewer. It is a very author-backed character. The characters in *3 Idiots* with the potential of a strong emotional connect with the audience are Farhan and Raju. These are the two who have problems. There is a growth in these characters that results in their transformation through the film. In Rancho, there is no growth. He is the same from the beginning to the end. It was a very big challenge for me to play Rancho because emotionally he is not author-backed. His only problem is that he loves Pia but cannot marry her. But that is not the main plot. This was another reason it was essential to not make him oversmart. He would have got on everyone's nerves. I warned Raju about this in the beginning that we would have to be careful with this guy or he would be in danger of going overboard. I told him that he would have to be careful as a director and watch out and not let me slip up anywhere.

And I think somewhere what works for Rancho is the screenplay because the screenplay really supports him. The story is about two friends who are looking for

their friend. It is through their intensity, their warmth, and their love for this guy that the audience emotionally connects with Rancho. Whenever I read the script, I always cried in Farhan's scene with his father and Raju's job interview scene but I never cried for Rancho. I never felt bad for him. It was a task to engage with him emotionally. That came from the bonding and love that Sharman and Maddy brought for Rancho in their performances. The warmth they feel towards Rancho seeps through to the audience. Again, at another level, the screenplay is very clever because throughout the film, you are looking for Rancho and you have only seen flashes of him through Farhan's eyes. We have not met him as yet. You meet him head-on only at the end where he is himself and not a person who is being looked at from someone else's point of view.

The tenderness, love, and warmth the three friends share warms the viewer to Rancho. The emotional high point for Rancho's character is when he sits around waiting nervously for his friends to return from the situations (Farhan confronts his father and Raju goes for a job interview) they have gone to face, and the moment he realises that they have returned triumphant from these situations, he breaks down.

You were not convinced about Joy's suicide being in the film for a long time. You opposed it vehemently. Why was that?

At the script level, I felt that it might not be necessary. The point was coming through in any case. It is accomplished through Virus's character as his son had committed suicide. But the actual reason is a connected thing. If the suicide was retained, then the two scenes that came right after it would be very tough to negotiate for me. I was not convinced that people would buy those scenes because, like we just discussed, Rancho is saying some very provocative and harsh things to the Director. See, either the tone of the film is at such a high pitch that saying all this to the Director is alright because the entire film is like that, but we were not doing that. So this worried me. The graveyard scene and the scene after that were tough. Right after those is the classroom scene where he is challenging the authority of the Director and getting away with it. That line was a very tricky one: "*Nahin Sir, mein aap ko engineering nahin sikha raha, mein to aapko yeh sikha raha tha ke padhate kaise hain.*" (I am not teaching you engineering Sir, I am teaching you how to teach). I thought the audience would beat us for this. I had to really struggle to carry this off. I thought it would be best for Rancho to say this cheekily, pick up his bag, and bolt out of there. If I had said these lines in a heroic way or in

a manner which suggested that I was taking on the Director, then we would have been doomed.

But coming back to Joy's suicide, in hindsight, when I see the film, I think Raju was right about keeping the suicide just like he was right about all the decisions that he took.

The principal photography of the film began in August 2008. The scene in Ladakh, the climax of the film, if not shot in the first schedule would have had to be shot after a year as Ladakh is only accessible for a few months a year. The decision was made to shoot the climax in Ladakh in the first schedule itself. Do you think it would have affected performances had you people shot it at the beginning and not a year later which is what you had to do because of terrible weather?

I was very relieved that we could not shoot the entire climax then even though it was a terrible experience for the entire team. We shot for a day and then bad weather hits. It was scary how we evacuated everyone to safety. But all is well that ends well. Our performances would have suffered because we had not lived those characters as yet. Especially mine. At least Sharman and Madhavan had shot in Bengaluru for the first few scenes of the film and, therefore, had forged some sort of a connect but my first day of shooting for *3 Idiots* was in Ladakh. I told everyone that I was very happy because it would certainly have compromised the credibility we were able to bring in when we shot for it after shooting for the entire film.

You actually drank for your drunken scenes. Method acting?

I actually find it difficult to do drunken scenes without drinking. It helps my performance if I actually drink and perform. I believe in aides. My goal is to give my best performance and if anything helps in achieving this, I am happy to use it. I am not one of those people who shy away from using things that can enhance their performance and eventually the film.

What do you think is the core of *3 Idiots*?

Chase excellence and not success is definitely the core thought. To put it differently, do what you believe in and what makes you happy. What makes you happy may not always be conducive to what we commonly understand as success. Farhan wants to be a wildlife photographer and it may not appear to people that he may

be successful doing that even in the conventional way. For this, first one needs to understand what success is. Doing what makes you happy and doing it well is success. It may get you less monetary benefits. However, it may also get you good monetary benefits and one must not discount that. So you may get success in the conventional way as well by doing what makes you happy but the key is to do what makes you happy, what is fulfilling to you. That is the core thought of the film.

■ PIA SAHASTRABUDDHE: KAREENA KAPOOR

The first thing I did was to ask Kareena to put on weight. Even when she was shooting for other films, I would send her messages saying, “Hope you are eating Kareena.” Pia had to be real and feisty.

— Rajkumar Hirani

I saw her in Omkara and Jab We Met. In my opinion, of all the actresses we have, she is one of the finest. It was a natural choice to go for a fine actress.

— Vidhu Vinod Chopra

On a crisp November morning in 2003, Kareena Kapoor wangled a day off from her hectic schedule and headed for Gaiety Galaxy, one of the oldest single-screen cinema halls in suburban Mumbai, to catch the first show of the latest release that week.

She walked out of the hall mesmerised. A quick call was made to her manager, Zahid, from the parking lot of the hall enquiring about the man who had directed the film she had just seen. Zahid gushed: “He is God! He is God! Don’t know his name but he has directed over 200 advertisements.” He promised to get back with details.

The film Kareena had seen was *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.* and its first-time director was Rajkumar Hirani. His name was immediately scribbled in the wish list of directors in her diary. Kareena’s mother, Babita, told her to play her Sindhi card with him if need be: “Just tell him, ‘My mother is Sindhi just like you and, therefore, you must work with me.’ ”

You had wanted to work with Rajkumar Hirani and Aamir Khan for a long time. *3 Idiots* presented the opportunity to work with both. How did this fall into place for you?

We met at Mukesh Ambani’s party in December 2007. Before I could go and talk to him, he came up to me and told me how much he liked my work in *Jab We Met*.

Then he said the magic words: “I am doing a film with Aamir and I might have a role for you.” I jumped and told him that I am game and he does not even have to narrate it to me. But Raju insisted that I hear it and then let him know how I feel. He was writing at the time and promised to call the moment he was done. When a month passed by without a word, I messaged him. This time, he asked me to wait for a week, and exactly a week later, Raju called and told me that he had finished and I was called in for a narration. I went for the narration with absolute certainty that I would do this film. Nothing was going to change my mind. I heard the script. My first reaction was that this film would create history and I wanted to be a part of it. I knew that the film belonged to the ‘3 Idiots’ and my role in terms of screen-time would be small but this would be a ground-breaking film and only a fool would pass up this opportunity. I have worked in this industry for nearly a decade and this was the most real and evocative screenplay that I had ever heard. Also, it was my chance to work with Raju Hirani. The simplicity and romance in his work are unmatched. He does not have to travel to Paris, New York, London, San Francisco, or build opulent sets or drape actors in designer wear to create magic. He plays with the magic of moments, of silence, and of life. He just moves you and stirs something deep within. I was in and nothing was going to change my mind.

With Raju, you got Aamir as a bonus. It took a decade for you and Aamir to come together. Surely there must have been opportunities before this?

There had been opportunities before this but nothing worked out. I was supposed to do *Ghajini* but when Murgadoss approached me for *Ghajini*, I had already signed Mani Ratnam’s *Lajjo* with Aamir. Aamir called me and said that he could not do two back-to-back films with me. I opted out of *Ghajini* and stayed with *Lajjo*. Unfortunately, *Lajjo* was shelved. Vishal Bharadwaj was also supposed to do a project with us. Aamir and he had creative differences over the script so that got scrapped as well. Basically, every project we were supposed to do didn’t happen. I would often bump into Aamir and complain. He kept assuring me and promised that he would give me one of the best films of his career. And today that has happened. It almost feels like a dream. I am in *3 Idiots* and it is Aamir Khan’s best film ever. He is very lucky for the Kapoor sisters. Both, Karisma and I have given super blockbusters with him. I keep teasing Aamir: “You do one film in three years so I don’t know when another heroine will get a chance to work with you. It will probably be my niece Samaira (laughs).” Aamir is truly a genius. He is a gift to work with.

Pia is very different from the roles you have done so far. What was your approach to Pia?

Pia is real. She is spontaneous and outspoken. I have received more accolades for Pia than I did for Geet from *Jab We Met*. Geet was euphoric, mad, and larger than life. Every girl wanted to be like Geet but Pia's USP is that she is every girl. She touches a cord across all age groups. I was shooting *Kurbaan* around the same time as I was shooting for *3 Idiots*. *Kurbaan* was such an intense role. *3 Idiots*, on the other hand, is very real and these are roles much tougher to play because then a heroine has to break away from her identity and image and reveal a part of herself. This is where Raju's brilliance comes in. On the sets of the film, I became Pia and that's what everybody saw. Kareena vanished for the time that I was shooting for *3 Idiots*. And Pia has made such an impact that it has left me speechless. I knew this would happen and that is why the length of my role was immaterial. No one ever thought of me as Kareena here. Though I was the only actor in the film who was doing multiple projects at the time, I gave priority to *3 Idiots* as it was the first film I was doing with Raju, Vinod, and Aamir.

At the time of the narration, I am sure, you must have looked forward to the confrontation between Pia and her father (Virus). That is the one scene that belonged to you. Was that a part of the extensive rehearsals that were held before the principal photography for the film began?

This is my favourite scene in the film. When I heard this scene, I knew that this would be my big opportunity and the centrepiece of my performance. I was determined to nail it. I had come fully prepared for it. Raju was very keen that I rehearse this scene. I am a spontaneous actress and too much rehearsing does not help me. Raju listened to me which was very nice of him. I requested him to just roll the camera. I felt that the entire scene was set up in such a way that the only way to approach it was to be spontaneous. The scene begins with Pia clearing the table and you can feel by the way she is putting away the plates and the spoons that she is going to explode. This was done in a single take. I don't know what got into me but I did not use glycerin. The moment I finished the shot, I expected to hear some kind of a sound but there was complete silence on the floor. I panicked and thought I had messed up the scene. Raju removed the headphones. He had tears in his eyes and the entire crew gave me a thunderous applause. I was preparing for this scene for a while and I knew if I did not get this right, then there would be trouble.

You did a drunken scene on screen for the first time in your career in *3 Idiots*? What was that experience like?

Raju was really worried about this scene. I have never ever done a drunken scene and I am a teetotaler. This stretched on for fifteen to twenty takes. Drunken scenes are not easy to do. It is very tough to get the consistency of drunkenness and the slurs have to be the same. To make the job at hand tougher, this was a sync-sound film. Aamir helped me a lot in that scene. He told me to look at the centre of my forehead so that my eyes look a little crossed. Raju even told me that I could drink if that helped me perform. These boys had done a drunken scene earlier and they had actually got drunk for it. Aamir kept on telling me to have a glass of wine. I told them that this route would not work for me because if I had any alcohol I would just fall asleep instantly.

There were so many takes we did. Finally, Raju asked us to wrap up. I think he was fed up. He said he would manage something in the edit. I was feeling terrible thinking maybe I could not deliver as per expectations. But then the film released and people went wild about the *dhokla-fafada* scene. Fans messaged me dialogues from the scene and I went crazy with the kind of response I got. Raju was aghast because he had used a 'No-Good' take. Normally, actresses in Hindi films don't get the opportunity to do a drunken scene and when they do, it is a tough one to nail. I am happy that people gave me such an overwhelming response to my first drunken scene.

Saif has worked with Vinod Chopra Films in *Parineeta* and *Eklavya*. He knows everyone well. Any advice he offered before you took on the film?

During the making of *Eklavya*, Raju had spoken to Saif about *3 Idiots* but at that time he was still writing. Shahrukh Khan stepped in later but then eventually Aamir did the film. These changes are common in the industry as things keep changing according to how the script pans out. Maybe *3 Idiots* was not meant to be for Saif but he was so happy when he got to know that I was going to be in it. He was constantly on the sets with me and he saw the film in the office before the first print was out. He was completely floored by it. He kept saying, "What have they made? How are we ever going to surpass this? What have they done? Everything will now fall short of *3 Idiots*." Even though he had just given a huge hit — *Love Aajkal* — the same year, he is one actor who was genuinely happy for our team. He is very close to Vinod, Raju, and Aamir, and was there throughout the making of the film. He is as much a part of the *3 Idiots* team as I am.

■ VIRU SAHASTRABUDDHE: BOMAN IRANI

Boman has to be a part of all my films. After school and college, it is difficult to make lifelong friends. Boman is one such friend I have made. He was the only actor I wanted for this role and he did not have a choice but to agree to play Virus. He is a friend and I can completely take advantage of that friendship.

— Rajkumar Hirani

Raju and your relationship organically developed into one that went beyond films. Your interaction on a film is not restricted to just discussing the character you are playing. You are an integral part of his ideas team and long discussions revolving around the script between you and him are an essential part of Raju's creative process. What was your reaction to the idea and the script of *3 Idiots* the first time you heard it?

Raju told me about buying the rights to *Five Point Someone* when we were in Leeds for IIFA (2007). Raju was there to pick up the best director award for *Lage Raho*. I was very surprised that Raju had bought the rights for this book because my first reaction to it was: "What are you going to do with the book? The novel in itself does not seem like material for a film." Raju told me that he and Abhijat were working on the screenplay. A few months later when Raju and I were on a flight to Nagpur, he narrated the script to me and I loved it. I had my concerns which we discussed over several subsequent sessions but what they had done with it was fantastic.

You were reluctant to play Virus because you thought it would be in broad strokes a repeat of Asthana from *M.B.B.S.* Why were you apprehensive about Virus and what convinced you?

I was offered this role even by the guy who was planning to make *Five Point Someone* earlier but he could not get the project off the ground. The first time I heard the character, I felt Irfan Khan would be very interesting in this role. For me, this seemed a lot like Asthana from *M.B.B.S.* though Raju kept telling me that it is different. Eventually, I realised that I didn't have a choice. I would have to do this. I couldn't say no to Raju. Once that was settled, Raju and I got down to working on the character, fleshing it out and giving it body.

A lot of people felt that Virus was more a caricature than a character. What do you feel about that?

Virus comes across as a caricature because, with all due respect, our teachers who have been teaching for many years do become somewhat caricatures of themselves. I fed on that. I played that up and that is why he seems caricature-ish. Raju and I travelled to Pune for a weekend. While writing *3 Idiots*, they had hired a farmhouse there which was used for writing sessions. For two days we sat and worked out Virus.

I wanted this man to be special. I thought of him as dark and edgy with cussedness being the underlying trait more than anything else. The tone is of sarcasm. He has a mean streak. Then we started padding him up with quirks to embellish his character. The idea was also to take Virus away from Asthana as much as possible. We gave Virus this unruly dense crop of hair on his head. Instead of suits he wore these ill-fitting clothes belonging to another generation. I borrowed a lot from people I know in real life. Interestingly, Virus's daily ritual of the power nap whilst listening to opera and getting his shave done is drawn from Mahatma Gandhi's life. He didn't listen to opera but he was a very busy man. He had told his staff to cut his nails and shave him whilst he took a nap. This way he saved time. This was our reference point for the quirk we added to Virus's character. Then I wanted him to lisp. For that I had to rehearse for months because if it did not look natural, it could go very wrong. Another of my favourites was that Virus has to be ambidextrous. I had called up Abhijat and Raju in America to discuss this with them. They loved it. Being ambidextrous is a mark of genius and my perception of Virus was that he is a genius. He is not an ordinary guy but he has chosen to devote his life to numbers instead of applying himself to greater pursuits. The only thing that we changed was his body language. Earlier, I thought that it might be interesting to have a man who constantly speaks about life being a race and his every habit is geared towards saving time, being laborious and slow in his own movements. He walks and moves slowly, but during the rehearsals this did not work at all so we changed it. All this really helped in uplifting Virus as a character.

This is your first film with Aamir Khan. He is the protagonist and you are the antagonist so to speak in *3 Idiots*. What was the experience like?

This script was narrated to everyone from Hrithik to Shahrukh. I have no idea why Aamir was not considered but eventually he is the one who did it and was a perfect fit for the role. He is amazing to work with in all respects — calibre,

commitment, courtesy. The experience of working with him is special. The defining thing about Aamir is that, the equation is not of two co-stars working together but of two colleagues, two collaborators. No one is working at cross purposes. All of us become a team and our goal — the film.

During the interviews, everyone told me that Raju pampers you more than anyone else on the sets? Is that true?

Who told you that? Tell me? (laughing) Were Sharman, Raju, and Aamir joking about this? I am sure they were. This is just what everyone says. He pampers everyone. No special favours extended to me.

■ RAJU RASTOGI: SHARMAN JOSHI

Sharman was on my radar since the time my wife, Manjeet, and I had seen his work in Style. We had both really liked him and I wanted to work with him whenever the right role came along.

— Rajkumar Hirani

Sharman Joshi would have frequented the theatres more had he known that movie watching would reap such rich benefits. In early 2007, Sharman got out of Globus, a theatre in Bandra (Mumbai) and noticed Raju Hirani with his team in the compound of the cinema hall. Sharman had always wanted to work with Raju. Though tempted to walk up to him and introduce himself, Sharman hesitated thinking that this might not be the right place to approach him. But he was pleasantly surprised when on spotting him, Raju smiled and waved at him. Confidence boosted, Sharman walked up to him.

But bigger surprises were in store for Sharman that night. Raju told him that he had a role for him but since he was still in the process of writing, he would get in touch with him soon.

Sharman went home in a daze.

How did *3 Idiots* come together for you? I believe that the restrooms at various multiplexes have played an important role?

(Smiles) The first time Raju Sir told me he had a role for me was at a chance meeting in the compound of a cinema hall. Though I did not get a call from him for a few months, after that I knew that the offer was for real. The very first time

you meet Raju Sir, you can feel the honesty and sincerity. He is not the *filmi* lingo sweet-talking types. So I was assured in my mind that something would come out of our meeting. But as luck would have it, we bumped into each other once again at a multiplex (PVR in Juhu). We met in the restroom after the film was over. We stood there chatting for 15 minutes. Again, a few months passed by. Uncannily, we bumped into each other in the restroom of the same multiplex yet again but this time during the interval. Raju and I joked that slowly we were inching towards the beginning of the film. Three chance meetings at cinema halls are rather weird.

Finally, we connected and I went and met him at his office. The first meeting was supposed to be a casual one but I think Raju was so excited and happy that he narrated the entire script to me. This would be approximately six months after our first meeting in the compound of a cinema hall.

Shahrukh was doing the film at the time when I was signed on. Then there was an eight-month break where Shahrukh was not doing the film and eventually Aamir came in. Once Aamir came in, I was constantly in touch with Raju but during the in-between period, I did not bother him at all. That's how this whole thing happened.

What was your first reaction to the script?

I loved the script and even though they still had to make the final decision about me, I went out that night and celebrated. I didn't even know which character I would play — Farhan or Raju — if I was doing the film. I honestly loved both characters so it would not have mattered to me which one I would play. Initially, Shahrukh was playing Rancho but later Aamir came in, and once he did, I auditioned for both the parts. I had read *Five Point Someone* so for the first script narration I had come with some pre-conceived notions about the different roles in the film. For example, in the book, Alok's character is rather weak. I was a little worried about that. But once the script was narrated to me, the character was completely different and was not weak. By the time Aamir was finalised, formal meetings happened, script narrations started, and then the auditions. I was comfortable playing either part because I felt both had a lot of scope for an actor in terms of meat and challenge. What is beautiful about working with Raju is that for every little change, Raju involves everyone. His humility is on a different level and he truly and honestly respects every individual. I was pleasantly surprised that Raju gave me a pen and pad and asked me to jot down what I felt about the film and

if I had any inputs, these could be discussed. He likes participation, and, most importantly, that participation is truly appreciated.

I auditioned for the role with the scene in the Director's office after we were caught gate-crashing his daughter Mona's wedding. It is the one with "*Sir aapki per plate cost kya thi*". At that time, Madhavan was not there so I had auditioned with another actor.

I was drawn to the script because it is about finding yourself. The scenes where Farhan confronts his father and his job interview are the core of the film. I loved the human element in the film and the journey of these two friends who find themselves through various experiences.

You said that you auditioned for both Raju and Farhan? Did you seriously like both the roles equally?

Raju Sir being Raju Sir gave me the option of auditioning for whichever role I wanted to play. This he did in the first meeting itself. Like I said, I had gone there with pre-conceived notions so I had my apprehensions. I told him what I felt about Alok's character. He just smiled and narrated the script to me. After the narration, he asked me the same question. My answer this time round was whichever one he would like me to audition for. I had understood that both the characters were solid. He made me audition for Raju. Then, after a few weeks, he made me audition for Farhan.

Eventually, he made me play Raju's character. Frankly, this film is so well etched out that I really didn't have to do much. This script is remarkable and equally remarkable is the way it has been executed. For an actor, half the job was already done.

Before the first schedule began, I read the script many times over. I knew the progression of the entire script from any given point in time. The script was the Bible, therefore, whichever scene we shot for, I played the script back in my head, followed the progression and performed it accordingly. My lifelines on the set were the script, Raju Sir, and my instincts.

For all the drunken scenes in the film, I believe you people actually got drunk. What was that experience like?

We had a blast shooting the water tank scene and the one after that at the Director's house. It was so much fun. The night at the water tank went a little out of hand.

We gave lengthy takes. The production team finally asked us to get on with it as they were running out of stock though I don't think that was the case. I think they just wanted us to pack up (laughs). The night after that, we were at the Director's house. Vinod Chopra was with us that night so he also drank with us in Aamir's trailer. After a few drinks, he said: *"Koi bhi bahar ka dekhenga to kahenga ke kaisa producer hai, khud bhi pee raha hai aur apne actors ko bhi pila raha hai. Shooting late ho gayi to kya hoga?"* (If anyone from outside the unit were to see us like this, he would wonder what kind of a producer I am — not only am I drinking but I am also making my actors drink. What will happen if the shooting gets delayed?)

Not by design but by chance, Aamir, Madhavan, and you were finalised as the '3 Idiots' and you had worked with each other before in *Rang de Basanti*. What was it like on the sets?

I was ecstatic when Aamir came in. We already had an equation. I knew how fabulous life was going to be on the sets and that made me very happy. Then I discovered Raju Sir on the sets and he was a pleasure as well. I was not sure how Raju Sir would be on the sets. I think he was a bit paranoid in the first schedule. There was a lot of responsibility and pressure on him. He needed to be extra careful. I started to feel the pressure too. It was a Raju Hirani film with Aamir Khan and, predictably, there were a lot of expectations. I could feel and realise how important it was for Raju Sir to set the right tone on the sets from the beginning. Once that was done, Raju Sir transformed and everything lightened up. There was a comfort factor with Aamir and Maddy. Also, Raju Sir really pampers his actors. I used to tease him about pampering Boman more and Boman would protest wildly. There is a complete sense of freedom with Raju Sir. You are allowed to perform a scene whichever way you want to and try options if you feel they might lend something to the scene. He is very caring towards every individual on the set and this is what transfers onto the screen.

■ FARHAN QURESHI: MADHAVAN

Madhavan came in because we were looking for a competent actor to play Farhan. I had my doubts about Madhavan only because of his weight, which he promised me he would shed but I caught him eating kulfi once. After the kulfi, the confidence dipped even lower but then I was pleasantly surprised with his competence and he has done exceedingly well.

— Vidhu Vinod Chopra

He watched *Secret*, the screen adaptation of Rhonda Byrne's eponymous bestselling book. Amongst other things, *Secret* talks about quantifying desires by putting them down on paper. He did just that and wrote down the names of all the directors he wanted to work with. Raju Hirani's name topped the list.

Three weeks later he received a message from Raju Hirani.

The next day, Madhavan boarded a flight to Mumbai.

You were approached for *Munna Bhai* at the time Raju was thinking of making it as a television series. What was the meeting like?

I don't remember meeting Raju for the television series. I was approached and we had met but I have no recollection of the meeting. It was only when *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.* released that I came to know that it was this particular film that Raju had wanted to make for television for which he had approached me.

I remember seeing *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.* and saying where had this guy been hiding all this while. It is a sign of greatness to be able to say so many things in the simplest manner. He struck me as a filmmaker and not merely as a director. I desperately wanted to get in touch with him. I remember gushing and raving in the message I sent him after watching the film. He immediately called me back and told me that he likes my work immensely.

We met sporadically after that at award functions and social gatherings. I had even approached Raju to write the screenplay of *Ramji Londonwale* because I thought it was a subject that might appeal to him. He was busy with *Lage Raho* at the time but he was kind enough to suggest Abbas Tyrewala for it. Abbas was also caught up with his own film. Eventually, Sanjay Dayma wrote the film. But I knew the moment I met Raju that our connection was for keeps.

How did *3 Idiots* happen? Your belief is that the process started with you watching the film *Secret*. What happened when you got the phone call?

Sarita, my wife, had been telling me to get in touch with Raju. She had heard that he was making a film that revolved around three engineering students. I reasoned with her that films don't get made that way. If Raju had not already considered me for a role, it wouldn't be right for me and I did not want to put him in a spot by calling him. When I got the message from him, Sarita and I sat staring at it in stunned silence. I don't know how much this has to do with *Secret* but this was such

an amazing coincidence. The message was simple: “Maddy, I need to speak with you.” Even before calling him back, I told Sarita that I was doing a film with Raju.

Then I called up Raju and he politely asked me to meet him whenever I was in Mumbai next. I told him, “I am coming tomorrow.” I remember going to his office and meeting him. He narrated the script to me which made me laugh and cry at the same time.

I immediately offered to give him a screen test. He was aghast but I insisted. I picked out two scenes from the script. One of them was eventually not in the film. This is the scene where one of the puppies I have grown fond of in the hostel dies and I get drunk and react. The other scene was the scene with my father in the film where I tell him that I don't want to pursue engineering. Raju was not going to take a decision right then even though I could see that he was convinced. He said that he would let me know. I did not hear from him for two weeks. Then I received a mail from him saying that Vinod Chopra would call me. This was somewhere in April 2008 and we were supposed to shoot in August. After waiting for some more time, I called Raju and asked him if I could give my dates away as I had not heard from them and my other producers were waiting. Raju was shocked to hear this and said that I absolutely couldn't give away my dates because we were shooting in July. Apparently there was some confusion and I had not been informed. Then Vinod called and things were finalised.

Did you audition for both the roles or was it always Farhan?

Farhan was the only role I related to when I heard the script. I think even Raju had only Farhan in mind as far as I was concerned. When Raju narrated the script to me, I knew that every student and every father in the country would relate to Farhan. If I was able to pull this role off, then that would be my biggest achievement.

What were your first reactions to the script?

The best part about Raju is that he encourages us to think like the characters we are to play. Our feedback is considered and taken very seriously. As an example, for a long time, I felt that I did not have enough of a trigger to go confront my father. Initially, the letter to Andre Istevan was not there in the script. I spoke to Raju several times about this. Two or three weeks later, Raju told me about the idea of the letter to Andre Istevan that Farhan never posted, and that became the trigger. I did not even know that Raju had taken my apprehension seriously

and had been working on it. Raju came up with this idea and then he and Abhijat planted the fact that I am an animal lover with a natural talent and interest in wildlife photography.

The film started its principal photography with your scene in the airplane. What was your approach to Farhan as he is also the narrator of the film?

The first transformation you see on screen is in Farhan. So there was the additional challenge of making that believable. If the audience did not find me convincing, then it would set the wrong tone for the film. I set about working on my look first. Also as a character, I go through maximum transformation. Raju's transformation happens in college after his suicide attempt. He loses his fears and there is a complete change in his attitude evident in the interview scene but Farhan's transformation in terms of his personality was to happen once he left college. There had to be a marked difference between the Farhan the audience would see in the first scene and the one they would see in college. I gave myself a darker, leaner, and rugged look for the portions in the present. I am a wildlife photographer and, therefore, spend time in the sun, wear those jackets with many pockets to hold things that come in handy on a shoot and name an edgier personality. There is an aggressive dimension to Farhan, the wildlife photographer. But as an engineering student, he is mild and innocent. I went completely clean shaven, chubby cheeked with round boyish glasses. It took us a very long time to zero in on the glasses, I remember. So, I worked on the look as well as the personality to make sure that the journey of the character is evident and real.

■ CHATUR RAMALINGAM: OMI VAIDYA

We took a huge gamble by casting Omi. He has a long and important role in the film and we were casting someone for it who did not know Hindi at all. It was a huge chance we took which paid off eventually. Omi is a great find. He brought credibility and believability to Chatur's character which was critical for it to work.

— Rajkumar Hirani

His feet were killing him. The entire day he had spent running from pillar to post taking care of proceedings at a grand Marathi event that he had organised in Los Angeles. A lot of people from the Marathi community in America had flown in to attend the event. Finally, the night was winding down and it was time to let go and have some fun. He hit the dance floor and inadvertently started dancing with

a girl. She was a screenwriter from Michigan and he, a working actor and film director. They exchanged numbers.

Four years later, the actor-director while on a visit to India to find possible buyers for his film, got a call from her — out of the blue. Supriya Kelkar, the screenwriter from Michigan was now working with Vinod Chopra on *Broken Horses* and wanted to give Omi Vaidya a heads-up on a possible role in their production *3 Idiots*.

Omi Vaidya might never have bagged this career-altering role were it not for that random dance four years ago at a Marathi night in Los Angeles.

You have lived in America all your life and are a working actor in LA. Was Hindi Cinema on your agenda?

Both my parents were very supportive of my choice to pursue acting, otherwise it would have been very difficult to do this. Most Indians settled abroad might not have managed to do what I did. I had my family backing me and that is the reason it was possible. My mother had wanted to become an actress but she could never pursue that desire so she made sure that at least I could follow my dreams. Therefore, I did not have to worry about things like rent and food after college and was able to concentrate only on acting. Bollywood, strangely, was never on the radar nor was the sensibility preferred or familiar. I did not know much about Bollywood films. I had seen some of Aamir Khan's films. But three-hour-long films with all the dancing made little sense to me and the sensibility did not hold much appeal for me either. I had seen a bit of *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.* but nothing of *Lage Raho*. All of this, I later realised, was actually a boon. It was an asset to have little knowledge of Bollywood. It helped me when I was shooting with the top-of-the-line actors like Aamir Khan in *3 Idiots*. I was not weighed down by the awe of shooting with the biggest star in Bollywood. I could perform without being hampered.

How did *3 Idiots* happen and what drew you to the material despite no prior plans or inclination to be part of Hindi Cinema?

When I got a call from Supriya, I sent my showreel across and Raju liked it because he felt that I was very boyish and, most importantly, I was not from India. Initially, I was very sceptical. I informed them that I didn't speak the language at all so how would this be feasible. The people scheduled to audition me just refused to listen assuming that I would at least have some knowledge of the language because

everybody who says they don't know the language, do know a little bit. Little did they know that I really did not know the language at all.

I was auditioned on Raju Rastogi's lines from the film and I was terrible. I spent some three hours in the office reading the material. During the screen test, 30 seconds after I started saying the lines, the casting director started correcting me and a minute into the audition, she asked me to stop. I was politely thanked so I knew that they had not been impressed but then I had gone in knowing that I would fail. What worked in my favour was that Raju came into the office while I was meeting his team. He had some work there so I ran into him. We got to chat a bit and therefore a personal connection was established.

A few days later, I received a call from the team asking me to come in again. And this time, they said that they would send me a script for the audition. They sent me a portion from *Munna Bhai*. The brief was that I would have to learn the lines and not speak them. I was not to worry about speaking Hindi correctly: the character was an NRI though he had not been fully fleshed out as yet but I was just to do what Omi would do. I felt much more comfortable with this. The way I did it was that even though I knew what I was saying, I did it like I did not because Omi would not know what he was saying. So I did gestures that were absolutely not in sync with what I was saying. They liked this a lot. After this test, the brief for the character expanded a little bit. I was told that the character is a top honcho of a corporate concern, always in a suit with a whole lot of expensive and fancy stuff. He has come back to India to prove a point to these guys who used to make fun of him. This was what I was given to play with. I was asked again not to worry about the Hindi. If I so wanted, then I could do it all in English. So I did this test even better. I smoked a cigarette and did my thing. All the Hindi words that I knew were the bad words so I sprinkled what I was saying with that. My mother was there with me so she was a bit shocked.

I did the audition well but I was quite sure that I was not right for the role because I did not speak the language at all. I went back to LA after this test and did not hear from the *3 Idiots* team for a month. In LA, if you don't get a call for a week after an audition, it can be safely assumed that you didn't get the job.

But a month later, I got a call from the production team and this time I was told that I would be auditioning with scenes from *3 Idiots*. I knew then that I was in the race and, therefore, being seriously considered. Then I started studying the text. They gave me the now famous *balatkar* speech scene. The other scene they gave

me was the water tank scene where I lose my temper and the bet between Rancho and Chatur is made. I could see that they wanted to gauge whether I could do both comedy and drama. The *Broken Horses* team was in New Mexico so I flew to New Mexico and did the audition. I gave it my best shot. I gave up a role to make it for this audition and I don't regret my decision. Again, I did not get a call from the team for another month. Then Raju called me himself and told me that though I had done a great job someone had taught me how to speak those lines. He was right because my mom had taught me. He told me to stop learning Hindi as this character would know very little Hindi. They were writing him like that, therefore, if I wanted the role, I would have to stop learning Hindi and stop watching Hindi movies. He did not want my interpretation of the character and performance to be affected by such factors.

Things work differently here than in the West. Did you have any apprehensions about being away from the Hollywood scene for the considerable duration *3 Idiots* demanded you to be away?

I had my doubts because I was giving up six months of my life and not being paid much according to Hollywood standards. I worried about whether this was the right choice or not. But the very reason I chose this as my preferred field of work was because I wanted to be able to do new, fun, and exciting things. This would offer all the things I looked for in a job. It was a new system and sensibility I would be operating in. Therefore, I wanted to do this and it was my choice. Also Raju's sincerity and personal emails to me convinced me that I would be taken care of. Once I came down here and saw the level of professional courtesy I was extended, the sincerity and the seriousness, I knew I had taken the right decision.

What were your first reactions to the script?

That it is a very long one (laughs). There were lots of pages. I read through it but I kept my focus on Chatur. I had not thought of the film as a whole. I only focussed on my character. When I saw the full film, that is when I realised what the whole film was all about. I really just kept my mind on Chatur. Also my lack of knowledge of the language kept me from understanding a lot of things.

You were already dealing with language issues. I am sure there were portions in the film that were more challenging than others. Tell us a little about those tough ones you had to get your head around?

It has to be the scene on the water tank where I am angry and drunk. I am a happy person and emotions like anger and jealousy do not come easily to me. Before performing this scene, I had to separate myself from everyone to be able to do a good job. The anger and depression had to be worked on. I had a three-day break before we were to shoot this scene. I requested Raju to let me leave the production for those three days and to just put me up in a small room or club or hotel somewhere away from everyone. Raju agreed and I isolated myself. When I reached the set three days later, I kept to myself and let the isolation gnaw at me. Raju loved my work in that scene. It took me another three days after the scene to come out of the state I had driven myself into though.

What was the experience like for you since this is your first brush with Hindi Cinema?

The whole experience was very different from America. It was very interesting. I really wanted to do this and I am glad I did. This was primarily because I knew that Raju wanted me and it is very rare and different from America where whether the director wants you or does not want you does not matter because the corporate guys make the decision. Here, the director really liked me and wanted me and we had developed a personal connection. Systems-wise, things were completely different from the West. Here make-up and costume trials were done in your hotel room which was a little odd. I got the script five days before we began shooting. Though it took some getting used to, all of this had its own flavour. Also, I am not from here so I don't really have hang ups about chatting and mixing around with the drivers and kitchen staff. So I could absorb a lot and get in touch with the ground realities a lot better as I chatted with these people. These guys have the most interesting stories. The others are more politically correct and talk about show business all the time. The biggest perk of the role was that I was playing a fat balding guy in major chunks of the film for which I had to put on weight. I put on twelve kilograms and had a lot of fun doing that because I could eat whatever I wanted and did not have to exercise.

— *Smriti Kiran*

OPENING CREDITS

OPENING CREDITS



3 IDIOTS
A RAJKUMAR HIRANI FILM
A VIDHU VINOD CHOPRA PRODUCTION

Aamir Khan
Kareena Kapoor
R. Madhavan
Sharman Joshi
Omi
Boman Irani
Mona Singh
Jaaved Jaferi
Pareekshit Sahani
Sanjay Lafont
Rahul Kumar

Story & Screenplay

Abhijat Joshi
Rajkumar Hirani

Screenplay Associate

Vidhu Vinod Chopra

Costumes

Sheena Parikh
Manish Malhotra
Raghuveer Shetty

Make-up

Vikram Gaikwad

Chartered Accountant

Anil Sekhri

Chief Accountant

Ramakant Dubey

Senior Accountant

Kirit Parekh

Dialogue Supervisor

Ranjeet Bahadur

Direction Assistants

Maheep Dhillon

Menaka Nagarajan

Jai Sharma

Rohan Mapuskar

Gaurav Chandelya

Karan Narvekar

Mrunmayee Lagoo

Production Co-ordinator

Dileep Desai

Unit Production Manager

Sarvesh Singh

Production Managers

Salim Qureshi

Sachin Utekar

Bhavin Thakkar

First Assistant Director

Vinay Waikul

Associate Director

Rajesh Mapuskar

Co-Editor

Ranjeet Bahadur

Assistant Editor

Gaurav Chandelya

Action

Sham Kaushal

Visual Effects

(Fable Farm)

Biju D.

Mitul Patel

Amol Thakur

Background Score

Sanjay Wandrekar

Atul Raninga

Shantanu Moitra

Song & Music Recording

Sachin K. Sanghvi

Production Designers

(Acropolis)

Rajnish Hedao

Sumit Basu

Snigdha Basu

Publicity Design

Rahul and Himanshu Nanda (H-one)

Re-recording Engineer

Anup Dev

Choreography

Bosco-Caesar
Avit Dias

Line Producer

Sanjiv Kishinchandani

Production Sound Mixing (Sync)

Nihar Ranjan Samal

Sound Design & Mixing Engineer

Bishwadeep Chatterjee

Executive Producer

Anil Davda

Lyrics

Swanand Kirkire

Music Director

Shantanu Moitra

Dialogues

Rajkumar Hirani
Abhijat Joshi

Director of Photography

Muraleedharan C.K., ISC

Creative Producer

Vir Chopra

Producer

Vidhu Vinod Chopra

Editor & Director

Rajkumar Hirani

END CREDITS

END CREDITS



3 IDIOTS
A RAJKUMAR HIRANI FILM
A VIDHU VINOD CHOPRA PRODUCTION

Cast

Rancho	Aamir Khan
Pia	Kareena Kapoor
Farhan	R. Madhavan
Raju	Sharman Joshi
Chatur	Omi
Viru Sahastrabuddhe	Boman Irani
Mona	Mona Singh
Ranchhoddas Chanchad	Jaaved Jaaferi
Farhan's Father	Pareekshit Sahani
Suhas	Sanjay Lafont
Millimeter	Rahul Kumar
Raju's Mother	Amardeep Jha
Farhan's Mother	Farida Dadi
Raju's Father	Mukund Bhatt
Raju's Sister	Chaitali Bose
Campus Interview Panel Head	Jayant Kriplani
Shamaldas Chanchad	Aron Baali
Chhote	Shoaib Ahmed
Centimeter	Dushyant Wagh

Air Hostess	Pooja Goswami
Pilot	Captain A.S. Duggal
Airline Ground Staff 1	Annapurna Kaul
Airline Ground Staff 2	Chandrashekhar
Doctor at Airport	R.S. Kodange
Airport Cab Driver	Dharmendra Bhurji
Raju's Wife	Meghna Bhalla
Mr. Dhillon	Harvinder Singh
Aunt at Farhan's Birth	Dilshad Edibam
Lead Ragging Senior	Rajeev Ravindranath
Ragging Senior 2	Hitesh Tak
Govind	Rajendra Patwardhan
Machine Class Professor	Achyut Potdar
Joy	Ali Fazal
Joy's Father	Madhav Vaze
Priest at Joy's Funeral	Dileep Desai
Professor in Corridor	Professor Raghunath
Professor Vaidyanathan	Professor Vaidyanathan
Waiter at Mona's Wedding	Kumar Veer Singh
Lady at Mona's Wedding	Shailaja Dhar
Mona's Husband	Dinesh Kumar
ICE Student 1	Pitabhash Tripathi
ICE Student 2	Aakash Dabhade
ICE Student 3	Apul Jaisinghani
ICE Student 4	Trilok Sadhwani
Librarian Dubey	Akhil Mishra
Library Clerk	Sonu
Minister in Auditorium	Atul Tiwari
Doctor Started by Scooter in Hospital	Dr. Praful Kulkarni
Doctor 1 Attending on Raju's Father	Dr. Jalil Parkar
Doctor 2 Attending on Raju's Father	Dr. Debashish Naha
Exam Hall Professor	Michael Joseph
Girl at Notice Board with Chatur	Smriti
Peanut Vendor at Shimla	Sanjay Sood
Caretaker at Shyamaldas' House	Dayal Sharma
Minister at Shyamaldas' Funeral	Rakesh Sharma
Chhote's Teacher (Masterji)	Elihud George

College Security Guard	Sarvanna
Professor in Induction Motor Class	Tanveer Ahmed
Ambulance Driver	Shankar Sachdev
Doctor in Ambulance with Raju	Dr. Kishor Patil
Nurse	Insia Lacewalla
Campus Interview Panelist 1	Keshav Rae
Campus Interview Panelist 2	Mrs. Lata Kurdikar
Campus Interview Panelist 3	Suhas Vaidya
Maid at Pia's House	Nishi Singh
Housekeeping Boy at Pia's Wedding	Saurabh Agnihotri
Manager at Pia's Wedding	Sitaram Sharma
Panditji at Pia's Wedding	Pundit Prayag Raj
Matron in Hospital with Pia	Supriya Shukla
Mona's Baby	Malvika Singh
Kid 1 at Rancho's School	Tsanwal Namgyal
Kid 2 at Rancho's School	Jigmet Dorje
Chief Executive International Operations	Subhash Dhar

Reliance Team

Head of Distribution (India)	Kamal Gianchandani
Head of Distribution (Overseas)	Anil Arjun
Project Head	Rohit Sharma
Project Team	Arun Mehra Deepa Singh

Media Consultant Spice

Stills Zishaan Akbar Latif

Based on the novel *Five Point Someone* by Chetan Bhagat

Special Thanks to

Amitabh Jhunjhunwala
Indu Shekhar Vasisst, CAO, IIM Bangalore
Dia Mirza
Javed Akhtar
Dr. Deskit Dolma & Dr. Rinchen Angmo, Leh
Professor T. Kundu, IIT Bombay

Dr. Sejal Desai
Jitendra Bhargava, Air India
Sunil Bohra
Doctors & Staff of Kulkarni Hospital, Jogeshwari

Making of 3 Idiots

Director Karan Narvekar
Editor Rachit Mehta
Videography Karan Narvekar, Aman Mahajan
Additional Videography Nilip Deb, Ramani Ranjan Das
Background Score Rooshin Dalal, Abhishek Ghag

Cinematography Assistance

Chief Assistants Rajesh Shah
Ramni Ranjan Das
Focus Puller Satish Reddy
Assistants Vinod V.
Sibaprasad Sahoo
Gaffer Deval Samanta
Key Grip Arjun Bhurji
Dharmendra Bhurji
Jimmy Jib Operator Piyush Acharya
Sundaram P.
Nageshwar (Bangalore)
Steadicam Operator Lanhert Pereira
2nd Unit Camera Hiroo Keswani

Art Direction Assistance

Assistant Art Directors Vipin Kumar
Ajay Chodankar
Saikat Bose
Paresh Mistry
Ratheesh U.K.
Assistant Set Dresser Sushmita Jha
Prop Master Jini Dhamande

Playback Singers

Sonu Nigam, Shreya Ghoshal, Shaan, Suraj Jagan,
Swanand Kirkire, Shantanu Moitra

Legal Consultant Ashni Parikh
Legal & Insurance Advisor Amitabh Gupta
Head of Digital Marketing Anand Jaisingh
Marketing & Promotions Insia Lacewalla
Teja Pratap
Thomas T. George
Smriti Kiran
Associates to Producer Aman Mahajan
Hetal Adesara
Assistant to Producer Mustafa Neemuchwala

Promos & Trailors

Promo Design Trigger Happy Entertainment Pvt. Ltd.
Promo Editor Nilesh Kataria
Promo Graphics Gauuri Cheda, Getafixx (I)

Make-up Artists

Aamir Khan Joginder Gupta
Kareena Kapoor Ritesh Nayak
Sharman Joshi Vinod Rathod
Boman Irani Mahendra Pawar
Jaaved Jaferi Avadhoot Wardham

Hair stylists

Aamir Khan Avan Contractor
Kareena Kapoor Hemalata Sawant
R. Madhavan & Sharman Joshi Serina Tixeira

Sound Post Production

Additional Dialogue Recording Jitendra Chaudhary
Dubbing Studio Sri Lakshmi Studio
Recordist Ramesh Paudel

Sound Design Assistant Studio	M. Lakshmi Naidu Q Factor
Re-recording Assistants Studio	Subir Sudhir Kumar Das Jagdish Nachnekar Shree Balaji Studio
Dialogue Cleaning Studio	Kumar Pancham
Foleys	Karnail Singh Rajan Gupta Sajjan Chaudhary
Foley Recordist Studio	Varun Visoi Aradhana Sound Service
Production Assistants	Parshuram Mane Bharat Jha
Production Support	Prakash Kalekar K. S. Ravindran Atishay Dayal Anil More Rajesh Pandey Poonam Wahi Major Harpal Singh Virk
Direction Support	Lakshmipriya Devi Karan Tejpal Shubha M. Ramachandra
Boom Operators	Gyan Mishra Sashi Kashare
Make-up Assistants	Nilesh Patkar Rajendra Sharma Ramesh Sharma Pratap Borade
Hairdressers	Seema Williams Valerian Kini

Suraj Godambe
Slavia Ippalvattage

Wardrobe Assistants Mohammed Shakeel Shaikh
Sejal Jain
Jhanvi Mehta
Suresh Kumar

Additional Costumes Isha Ahluwalia
Darshan Jalan

Action Assistants Paramjeet Singh 'Pamma'
Sanjeev Kumar 'Bitu'

Sincere Thanks To

For Assistance in Ladakh Druk White Lotus School
Delhi Public School, Leh
Tibetan School, Tsomoriri
Maj. Gen. M.S. Buttar
Colonel Manish Bassi
Tashi Namgyal, Dy. Commandante, ITBP
Lt. Col. Mittal
Principal Negi, Rakcham School

For Assistance in Himachal Group Captain Karanjit Singh Dhillon
Shashi Kiran Gupta, Principal,
Dayanand Public School, Simla
Prabhdip Singh Sandhu
Balbeer Kukreja
Ranjana Chand
Rohitashv Gaur
Tikamchand Thakur, Manali

For Assistance in Delhi Pranav Agarwal

For Assistance in Bengaluru Pritpal Singh

For Assistance in Mumbai Jasbir Grewal, Vice President Operations,
Fortis
Rashmi Kaul, Fortis

Madhav Sawant
Dr. Rajiv Punjabi
Professor Amitav De, IIT Bombay
Vaibhava Rele
For Casting Assistance Indrani Singh, Literacy India
Nalini Rathnam, Bangalore
Aporup Acharya, Bangalore
Amita Sehgal
Shankar Sachdev
Vineet Sharma

Inventions Used in the Film

Quadrotor Helicopter Idea Forge Technology Pvt. Ltd.

Scooter Mill Sheikh Jahangir Sheikh Usman
Sheep Shearer Mohammad Idris Chidda
Co-ordinated by Professor Anil Gupta
National Innovation Foundation
Honey Bee Network, SRISTI

English Subtitling Maheep Dhillon

Assistance Abhijat Joshi
Bharati Desai
Aamir Khan
Vir Chopra
Subhash Dhar
Supriya Kelkar
Greta Kaemmer

Subtitling Editor Paramanand Kumar

Processing, Digital Intermediate & Additional Vfx Reliance Mediaworks

Business Head D.I. & Processing Krishna Shetty
Head of Operations Nishit Shetty
Production Head Rajiv Raghunathan
Supervising Colorist Ken Metzker
DI Colorist Makarand Surte

Line Producer	Dilesh Gupta
Vfx Co-ordinator	N.Vinoth Ganesh
Vfx Team	Nilesh R Dubey R. Ravichandran Jignesh Patel R. Mahimairaj Soumen Das Abrez Mohd. Shubham Singh Rathore R. Parthiban S. Muthustalin Parantap Singh Rahul Mandal Georgy Joe Ajith Badarinath Chinimilli Rohan Kothary Mayur D. Parmar Jignesh R. Trivedi Achal Rohit Muchhala
Online Team	Hardeep Singh Sembi Shane Sullivan Pankaj Singh Vinod Durgavle
Telecine Colorist	Liju Prabhakar
Conformist Team Leaders	L. Sampath Kumar Mahesh B. Deshpande
Conformists	Debakriti Kundu Nitin Minz Ganesh Navgane Samir Acharya Chandrakanth P.T. Sivalingam Chitravel Soma Sundaram Krishnan Abhijit Ghadge Balasarvana Perumal
Scanning and Recording Team Leaders	Arup A. Chakravarty

Scanning and Recording Team

Sumeet J. Nabar
Sachin S. Jadhav
Mohammad Habib Khan
Vedant Chawan
Jitendra Kubal
Shravan Patil
Shripad Gore
Ravi Tiwari

Data Managers Team Leader

Data Managers

Shridhar V. Mitke
Kanak Pandya
Dhanpat Maurya

VFX team, Fable Farm

Sameer Saurabh
Parul Dhanapalan
Prashant Sartape
Nishant Jogdand
Bhavesh Patel
Rohan Kharade
Kapil Pandit
Sutanu Mondal
Abhishek Sawant
Prinay Singh
Jignesh Malavia
Amit Maladkar
Faiyaz Choudhari
Shakil Sheikh
Srinivas Rao
Kishor Shetty
Latif Pasha
Gadamalla Nagaraju

Songs & Background Score Orchestration

Background Vocals

Shaan, Shreya Ghoshal

Rhythm Programming

Sriram Iyer

Songs Arranged, Orchestrated &

Conducted by

Daniel B. George

Strings Conducted by

Chandan Singh Jawda

Guitars & Additional Arrangements

Ankur Mukherjee

Bass	Brennon Denfer
Woodwinds	P.M. K. Naveen Kumar
Cello	V.S. Shekar
Solo Violin	Suresh Lalwani
Flute	Paras Nath
Mandolin	Chandrakant Lakshpati
Shehnai	Madhukar Dhumal
Taar Shehnai	Sunil Das
Mouth Organ	Shantanu Moitra
Additional Rhythms	Deepak Borkar Franco Vaz Nikhil Koparde
Strings	Bombay Cine Musicians' Orchestra
Brass	Joseph Monsorate Blasco Monsorate Prem Singh Sodha Kishore Sodha Ivan Muns
Music Coordinators	Ratnakar Gowda John Rodrigues
Studios	Pancham, Media Minds, Empire
Additional Recordists	Chinmay Harshe Harshad Sathe

Choreography Assistants

'Aal is Well'	Sadanand Yadav Pravin Solanki
'Zoobi Doobi'	Gulnaaz Khan Ranju Varghese Hitesh Patel Augustus Pereira Rakesh Sharma Nasreen Shaikh

Outdoor Production Co-ordinators

Ladakh	Odpal D. George, Himalayan Safaris
---------------	---------------------------------------

Bengaluru Ramesh Babu
Ravi Barnebaas

Delhi Ravi Sareen
Navmeet
Devinder

Shimla Vishal Bahl

Special animatronic baby effects
designed and created by **BRIAN WADE**

Artists' Managers

Aamir Khan Binky Mendez
Kareena Kapoor Zahid Khan
R. Madhavan Shobha Sant
Sharman Joshi Kukki Khan
Boman Irani Shailaja Desai

Personal Attendants

Aamir Khan Sudhakar Gowda
Yuvraj Ghorpade
Ganesh Shinde
Kareena Kapoor Bed Prakash
R. Madhavan Alim Basha
Mehboob Basha
Suresh Kumar
Sharman Joshi Ikramuddin Shaikh
Boman Irani Mahendra Chauhan
Rajkumar Hirani Karan Saud
Camera Attendants Rajiv Sharma
Mukesh Sundriyal
Vineet Dwivedi
Mohammed Rafique Shaikh
Ankush Athule
Raju Dobal
Grip Assistants Rinku Kumar

	Babulal Mali Mukesh Waghela
Steadicam Assistants	Vasant Suvarna Yeshwant Suvarna
Jimmy Jib Assistants	Akhtar Ali Shah Sarwar Shaikh Mubarak Ali Mohammad Bakar Easkkimuthu P. Kishor Kamal Mahato Rajaram Jaiswal
Sound Equipment Attendants	Rajesh Kodadi Deepak Sule Dinkar Sontake
Walkie Talkie Attendant	Baljeet Singh
Dressmen	Mohammed Wazir Shaikh Mohammed Salim Shaikh Mohammed Gulzar Shaikh Javed Ali
Set Security Manager	Kamlesh Patel
Stuntmen	Raju, Ramesh, Vipin, Mukha, Deepak, Lakha, Titu
Rig Attendants	Narender Singh Agyapal Singh Bhanwar
Production Boys	
Head Production Boy	Ashok Amre
Production Boys	Kumar Veer Shankar Mooppanar J. S. Negi Akhil Sekh Malang Parmar Gagan Mohanty

Manoj Das
Ganpat Das
Rajesh Mane

Set Boys

Mistry Vilas Panchal
Head Master Kiran Mulukuntla
Head Painter Mohanlal Mahato
Head Tapist Eliyas Ali
Carpenters Virendra Chaurasia
Rajendra Vishwakarma
Yakub Pathan
Assistants Manoj Khanwilkar
Punal Nathanel Kapila
Firoz Khan

Light Boys

Best Boy Vinodu Kesavan
Electricians Jaidev Prajapati
Dawood Khan
Sanjeev Devadiga
Sparks Chandrakant Mohite
Shambhunath Katwa
Shuvhronel Mitra
Sanjay Kalmaste
Javed Qureshi
Prasidhnath Shukla
Shailesh
Ravi
Pramod Pathak
Nandalal Prajapati
Suryamani Pathak
Suleman
Kedar
Salim

Production Office Staff

Reception & Admin	Jane D'souza
Accountant	Asmi Ghanekar
Trainees & Interns	Manini Chadha Yogesh Rawool Kayoze Irani

Office Boys

Mohan Saud
Karan Saud
Mane Singh Saud
Govind Bahadur Kumal
Loha Singh
Gajju
Ravindra Mandekar

Drivers

Shivanand Chinetty
Sanjay Chavan
Shambhu Jha
N. Subbaya
M. Mada Swamy
V. Anand
Kartik Prasad

Equipment & Services

Raw Stock	Kodak
Camera	Prime Focus Ltd.
Lights	Shree Ganesh Movie Lights Lighthouse Stereovision Subhash Light House, Delhi
Generators	Shree Ganesh Movie Lights Mirajbhai Timmy (Chandigarh)
Sound	Anil Girkar & Co

Additional Construction	Pfa Design Firm
Animal Supplier	Shankar
Water Effects	Shiva
	Sungun Murgan (Bangalore)
Wigs	Surendra S. Salvi
Nagra	Santram Bali
Rigs	Amjad
Cars	Sajjad Bhai
Vanity Vans	Anup
	Timmy (Chandigarh)
Transport	Sandhu Transport
Junior Artists	Ravinder Suri
	Girdhar
	Sonu (Simla)
	Sonu / Sujal Associates (Bangalore)
Security	Ace Security & Protection
	Sisa (Bangalore)
Catering	G.L. Sahu
	Sri Swami Caterers
	Natraj Canteen
	Amma Ki Rasoi (Delhi)

Music On



© Vinod Chopra Films Pvt. Ltd., 2009

PROFILES

PROFILES



RAJKUMAR HIRANI

Rajkumar Hirani graduated from the Film and Television Institute of India specialising in editing. He went on to edit films, serials and ad films before starting his own company, Canvas Films, to make ad films.

He produced and directed over 200 ad films before making his feature film debut with the path-breaking *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.* He followed it up with *Lage Raho Munna Bhai*. Both these films won numerous awards including the National Film Award. Raju's third film as writer, editor and director is *3 Idiots*.

FILMOGRAPHY

Director

3 Idiots 2009
Lage Raho Munna Bhai 2006
Munna Bhai M.B.B.S. 2003

Editor

3 Idiots 2009
Lage Raho Munna Bhai 2006
Munna Bhai M.B.B.S. 2003
Mission Kashmir 2000
Tere Liye 1999
Jazbaat 1994

Story & Screenplay

3 Idiots 2009
Lage Raho Munna Bhai 2006
Munna Bhai M.B.B.S. 2003

Dialogue

3 Idiots 2009
Lage Raho Munna Bhai 2006



ABHIJAT JOSHI

Abhijat Joshi is an M.F.A. from the University of Texas, Austin, and a multilingual playwright, screenwriter and Professor of Creative Writing at Otterbein College, Westerville, Ohio. His play, *A Shaft of Sunlight*, which explored sectarian violence in Gujarat, won the BBC World Service Playwriting Contest in 1993, and was published and performed extensively in London. He won the National Film Award in 2007 for the screenplay of *Lage Raho Munna Bhai*. His most recent work as a writer is Rajkumar Hirani's *3 Idiots*.

FILMOGRAPHY

Story & Screenplay

3 Idiots 2009

Eklavya: The Royal Guard 2007

Screenplay

Lage Raho Munna Bhai 2006

Mission Kashmir 2000

Kareeb 1998



SWANAND KIRKIRE

Swanand Kirkire, a graduate of the National School of Drama, Delhi, is a writer, song-writer, actor, singer, playwright and director. He made his debut as a lyricist and singer for *Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi* and followed it up with films like *Parineeta*, *Eklavya: The Royal Guard* and *Lage Raho Munna Bhai*, which fetched him the coveted National Award in 2007 for Best Lyrics. Swanand has written the dialogue for *Eklavya: The Royal Guard*, and the lyrics for *3 Idiots*.

FILMOGRAPHY

Lyricist

3 Idiots 2009
Paa 2009
Welcome to Sajjanpur 2008
Laaga Chunari Mein Daag 2007
Eklavya: The Royal Guard 2007
Khoya Khoya Chand 2007
Lage Raho Munna Bhai 2006
Parineeta 2005
Sehar 2005
Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi 2003

Singer

3 Idiots 2009
Paa 2009
Gulaal 2009
Khoya Khoya Chand 2007
Parineeta 2005
Sehar 2005
Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi 2003

Dialogue Writer

Eklavya: The Royal Guard 2007
Chameli 2003

Actor

Eklavya: The Royal Guard 2007
Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi 2003
Chameli 2003



SHANTANU MOITRA

Shantanu Moitra is the music director of landmark films like *Parineeta*, *Lage Raho Munna Bhai*, *Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi*, *Eklavya: The Royal Guard*, *3 Idiots*, and the Bangla film, *Antaheen*.

Since childhood, he was fascinated with folk music from around the world. After quitting client servicing in an advertising agency, Shantanu started composing jingles. “*Bole mere lips, I love Uncle Chips*” was his first advertisement and he has scored for more than 2000 advertisements. In 2007, he won the Cannes Bronze Lion for scoring the Happydent advertisement.

Shantanu is a keen trekker, avid photographer and an amateur astronomer. In 2006, he won the R.D. Burman Filmfare Award for New Music Talent.

FILMOGRAPHY

Music Director and Composer

3 Idiots 2009

Antaheen 2009

Welcome to Sajjanpur 2008

Khoya Khoya Chand 2007

Laaga Chunari Mein Daag 2007

Eklavya: The Royal Guard 2007

Lage Raho Munna Bhai 2006

Yahaan 2005

Parineeta 2005

Hazaaron Khwaishein Aisi 2003



VIDHU VINOD CHOPRA

Vidhu Vinod Chopra studied filmmaking at the Film & Television Institute of India, Pune. His first documentary, *An Encounter With Faces*, highlighted the plight of India's destitute children. It was nominated for an Oscar in the Documentary Short Subject category in 1979.

Since then, he has directed films like *Khamosh*, *Parinda*, *1942: A Love Story*, *Kareeb*, *Mission Kashmir* and *Eklavya: The Royal Guard*. Of these, *Parinda* and *Eklavya: The Royal Guard* were nominated as India's official entries to the Oscars in the Best Foreign Film category in 1989 and 2007 respectively.

His film company — Vinod Chopra Films — has also produced films like *Munna Bhai M.B.B.S.*, *Parineeta*, *Lage Raho Munna Bhai* and *3 Idiots*. Vinod Chopra Films continues to receive national and international recognition.

FILMOGRAPHY

Director

Eklavya : The Royal Guard 2007
Mission Kashmir 2000
Kareeb 1998
1942: A Love Story 1993
Parinda 1989
Khamosh 1985
Sazaaye Maut 1981
An Encounter with Faces 1978
Murder at Monkey Hill 1976

Story & Screenplay

3 Idiots 2009 (*Screenplay Associate*)
Eklavya: The Royal Guard 2007
Lage Raho Munna Bhai 2006
(*Screenplay Associate*)
Parineeta 2005
Munna Bhai M.B.B.S. 2003 (*Screenplay*)
Mission Kashmir 2000
Kareeb 1998
1942: A Love Story 1993
Parinda 1989
Khamosh 1985
Sazaaye Maut 1981
An Encounter With Faces 1978
(*Screenplay*)
Murder at Monkey Hill 1976

Producer

3 Idiots 2009
Eklavya: The Royal Guard 2007
Lage Raho Munna Bhai 2006
Parineeta 2005
Munna Bhai M.B.B.S. 2003
Mission Kashmir 2000
Kareeb 1998
1942: A Love Story 1993
Parinda 1989
Khamosh 1985
Sazaaye Maut 1981



PUBLISHER'S NOTE

PUBLISHER'S NOTE



A WORD OF THANKS

Within a span of 10 months — between August 2009 and June 2010 — Om Books International has published the original screenplays of two unparalleled blockbusters of Hindi cinema — *Lage Raho Munna Bhai* and now *3 Idiots* — directed by Rajkumar Hirani and produced by Vinod Chopra Films. This would not have been possible without the trust and faith Vidhu Vinod Chopra, Anupama Chopra, Rajkumar Hirani and Abhijat Joshi reposed in Om Books International. For this, not only am I grateful to all of them, I am humbled as well.

Smriti Kiran conceptualised and compiled *3 Idiots: The Original Screenplay*. I thank her for her efforts.

I thank Shraboni Roy, our graphic designer, Sangita Koushik, our editor, Sanjay Gupta and Raj John, for their support.

And last, but not least, I would like to thank Dipa Chaudhuri for not losing sight of our common goal till the very end. Without her inputs and patience, this book would have fallen short of the expectations of those who wrote the original screenplay of *3 Idiots* and turned it into a landmark film and a modern classic.

— *Ajay Mago*



SMRITI KIRAN covered entertainment, particularly the Hindi film industry for over 11 years as a journalist and television producer at NDTV, before joining the industry at Vinod Chopra Films where she worked on a film under development, and briefly on *3 Idiots*.

Her Twitter profile (smritikiran) describes her as a cinema junkie, freelance television producer and journalist, writer, aspiring filmmaker, voracious reader and coffee addict. Her husband agrees with the coffee addict part. In between reading primarily Indian authors and poring over Hindi film scripts, she works on her own script which she hopes to direct into a film one day.

Apart from following her dreams and continuing to learn from the best in the business, she leads the screenplays division at Vinod Chopra Films, a venture which aims to bring screenplays of the greatest Indian classics and more recent films which contribute to the dynamism of Indian cinema, to cinema buffs and readers across the world.

smriti.kiran@gmail.com

