

IRISH NEVER QUIT

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EXT. SCHOOL - DAY

The angelic face of TOM PHILLIPS (14). Clear skies behind him. Tom addresses BINU BINGHAVI (14), who holds an ice cream cone. Binu is adorable. Wears thick glasses and a blue turban/patka.

TOM

Binu...when your mom died? The school said it was because of natural causes. But we all knew it wasn't.

(beat)

They only told us that because they thought we were too young to handle the truth. But everyone knows that your mom didn't die of natural causes... She killed herself... I think she did it cuz she was mad at herself for bringing you to America and trying to raise you here. It was probably hard on her, because her son has skin that looks like shit...and smells like shit... Your skin looks like shit in the summer, but in the winter? It looks like yellow...piss.

(beat)

20 bucks on Thursday, or I break your jaw in seven fucking places. And lose the turban. It's creepy.

BINU

I know; I'm trying to. But my dad...

Tom leaves. Binu removes the paper from his cone. Drops both. Emotionless, Binu considers the cone as it lies on the grass.

Next, he retrieves a pen and spiral notepad from his pocket. Binu straightens out the wonky spirals. Flips through pages.

Scans a list of boys who regularly shake him down for money. "Calvin: \$8, Freddy: \$35, Roger: \$6. Now he adds: "Tom: \$20."

Credits roll as Santigold's "The Riot's Gone" leaps forward.

INT./EXT. SUBURBS - DAY

A sports MONTAGE. Binu shoots hoops. Air balls and bricks. He tosses a football, bouncing his throws off a tree tire. A giant helmet wobbles atop his patka. Baseballs whizz by. He picks up his bike. It's too tall for him, so he gets a running start with it and jumps on after gaining momentum.

A PAPERBOY tosses a newspaper from his car. Speeding into the frame from the opposite direction, Binu intercepts it. Binu reaches his house. The tiniest home among tiny homes.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Binu paints at an easel. A wrapped birthday present waits.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Being followed Tom on their way home, Tom knocks him down.

TOM

Tell your dad I want a Slurpee.

Binu stands, hides a limp.

BINU

My dad doesn't work at 7-11.

TOM

I know, he works at a a convenience store, cuz 7-11 won't even hire him.

BINU

My dad's a doctor. He's a physician.

TOM

No, he's not.

BINU

He's a cardiologist. He's an attending physician at Stony Brook.

TOM

Will he give me a Slurpee?

BINU

He doesn't work at a convenience store. He's a pediatric cardiologist.

INT. STORE - DAY

Ding! A cash register drawer FLIES open, SLAMS to a stop.

Binu stands next to his father, BHUPHANDAR BINGHAVI (44). B.B. sports a thick, black beard and thick, black turban.

B.B.

Clean the bathroom. Jaldi karo.

Binu takes off. CUSTOMER steps to the register.

B.B.

How are you, my friend?

CUSTOMER

Hey, B.B. I'm alright.

B.B.

Rain is coming.

CUSTOMER

Hope so.

B.B.

Rosebush needs water?

CUSTOMER

Yeah. She's dying on me.

B.B. offers a tight smile.

B.B.

I know the feeling... The roses
will be beautiful.

CUSTOMER

Your lips to God's ears, brother.

B.B. looks to the bathroom. Binu's cleaning a toilet.

REGISTER

A DRUNK (55) drops bite-sized candies on the counter.

DRUNK

These are value packs from Costco.
You can't break 'em up for resale.

B.B.

I didn't know that.

DRUNK

You can't sell these.

B.B.

What is the problem? You own Costco?

DRUNK

Fuck you.

B.B.

You own stock? Costco stock shares?

DRUNK

You can't break these up for resale.

B.B.

Acha? This is a serious problem.

(innocently)

Maybe you should call your Congressman.

DRUNK

Fuck you.

B.B.

Maybe I should call my Congressman.

Drunk slaps a display.

B.B.

You are drunk. Go home; get rest.

DRUNK

You go home. Go back to Pakistan.

B.B.

I'm Indian. Pakistan? They don't want me there, either. I promise.

Outside the bathroom, holding a mop, Binu watches on.

Drunk hocks up a loogie, then spits upon the counter. B.B. wipes the mess with a napkin, fires it at Drunk.

Drunk grabs B.B. from across the counter. Pounds him.

Handsome and self-assured, REGGIE KENNEDY (28) looks on. He places a lid on his coffee, then heads to the cooler. Reggie gets a bottle of beer, then sets his coffee down.

Reggie approaches Drunk from behind, then casually smashes the bottle against the side of his head. Drunk screams out.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Reggie's out. From the front entrance, Binu watches in awe. Binu disappears. He soon returns, wheels his bike outdoors.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Reggie walks. A police car shows up. Lights on; sirens off. Reggie sees it. On his bike, in the distance, Binu watches.

EXT. BACK ROADS - DAY

Binu speeds down an alley. He pedals through puddles, past dogs and debris. Into the woods, he hops over fallen trees.

EXT. POLICE LOT - DAY

Binu enters the lot. Deploys a kickstand; takes the stairs.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Reggie is on the phone with his dad, MARCUS KENNEDY (60).

REGGIE

You can't get me...? Are you drunk?

(beat)

Well it's never stopped you before.

INT. FRONT DESK - DAY

Binu, at the intake window. A DESK COP peers down at him.

BINU

Hi. I'm looking for the prisoner.

DESK COP

The prisoner?

BINU

The detainee.

DESK COP

... What do you need, doll?

BINU

The guy who just came in probably two minutes ago: White male, 25 to 35, 6'2"/190? I wanna bail him out.

DESK COP

You are precious.

BINU

How much is bail?

DESK COP

Are you his...brother?

BINU

No, I'm his attorney. How much is bail?

DESK COP

... Reginald Kennedy. It's \$604.12

Binu sighs. Walks away. After a moment, he returns to the intake window. Binu produces his wallet and unfastens the Velcro. He then calmly counts off seven, crisp \$100 bills.

LATER

Reggie retrieves his personal effects from a brown envelope.

He's released from the detention area. Walks into the lobby, sees Binu waiting. Reggie approaches, and the pair face off.

Hey. REGGIE

Hey. BINU

What's your name? REGGIE

Binu. BINU

Your dad posted for me? REGGIE

I did. BINU

What do you mean? REGGIE

I wasn't sure you were the right guy. BINU

I don't get it. REGGIE

... They said it's "Reginald Kennedy." BINU

And? REGGIE

Nothing. BINU

What? REGGIE

I wasn't gonna say anything. BINU

Yeah you were. REGGIE

I just... That's really your name?
Reginald Kennedy? BINU

Yeah. REGGIE

... That's a black guy's name. BINU

I actually go by "Reggie" Kennedy. REGGIE

BINU
 That's even more black.
 (beat)
 I can't even imagine a blacker name
 than that... What's your dad's name?

REGGIE
 Marcus.

BINU
 Your dad's name is 'Marcus Kennedy?'"
 What does he do, play clarinet in a
 jazz band?

REGGIE
 How 'bout your dad? What's his name?

BINU
 Bhupandra.

REGGIE
 That's cool.

BINU
 It's actually not.

REGGIE
 It's cool; how's it not cool?

BINU
 This is the United States. Do you
 need a map?

(beat)
 I wish my name was Reginald. I'd
 have people call me "Naldo." But
 they'd probably call me "Regina."

REGGIE
 They'd definitely call you "Regina."

He heads out. Binu watches him. Reggie turns around.

REGGIE
 You coming or what?

EXT. STREET - DAY

Binu and Reggie trudge along. Walking, Binu guides his bike.

BINU
 You don't have friends you can call?

REGGIE
 You can go ahead.

BINU
 I'm a soldier. Leave no man behind.

REGGIE

Oh, you're a soldier?

BINU

Yeah, man. God, Country, Corps.

The multicolored beads on Binu's spokes rise and fall.

REGGIE

I don't really have any friends.

BINU

I have like, three.

REGGIE

That's not bad.

BINU

It's not good, either... I do have the rest of my life to meet people, but you're a grown-ass man. If you don't have friends by now, it's like a socialization problem.

REGGIE

Probably.

BINU

You should talk to someone about that.

REGGIE

I don't have friends. I have hanger-ons.

BINU

I know what that is, but I don't.

REGGIE

It's people who I'm there for when they need me. But they're never there for me when I need them.

BINU

Why aren't they there for you?

REGGIE

Because they're not my friends... You don't know what a hanger-on is, but you know what socialization means?

BINU

Sometimes I realize I've been pronouncing a word wrong. Then I think about the conversations I had when I must've made a fool of myself. Like the word "boutique"? I realized it's "boo-tique" and not "bo-tique." I've been saying "bo-tique" all my life like a village idiot half-wit.

REGGIE

That's rough.

BINU

Oh, it's fucked. My friend Bianca has heard me say bo-tique. I have a thing for her, so now it'll haunt me until we graduate high school in 40 years.

They walk in silence. Reggie looks at the bike. He stops.

REGGIE

You got pegs on that thing?

EXT. SUBURBS - DAY

Reggie now rides the bike, with Binu standing straight up behind him. He's well-balanced on the pegs that stick out from the center of the back wheel. Gracefully, they glide.

EXT. STORE - DAY

Binu and Reggie reach the sidewalk. They hop off the bike.

REGGIE

Where do you live?

BINU

Off Netherwood. We moved here from Wyandanch last year... You know it?

REGGIE

Yeah, I know it. Bullets are scared to be in that neighborhood.

BINU

It's weird how Long Island is so obsessed with MS-13. I just wish the messaging was better. They shouldn't call it 'MS-13,' they should call it what it is: Mara Salvatrucha. "MS-13" sounds like the latest update of Microsoft Paint with all these new features no one asked for. But Mara Salvatrucha is legit terrifying.

A LOCAL (35) pulls up and parks. Approaches the pair.

REGGIE

What's goin' on, Steve?

LOCAL

Not much, man; what are you up to?
I heard you did a deck for Rob Swanson.

REGGIE
Yeah, it took a minute.

LOCAL
Can you do one for me?

REGGIE
I actually can't. Part of the deal with Robbie was that I give him my only deck on the block.

LOCAL
He'll never know. Don't sweat it.

REGGIE
I mean, it's an exclusive.

LOCAL
You're doing "exclusives" for laying a foundation and throwing down wood?
(beat, to Binu)
Hey, big guy. You doin' construction? A little apprenticeship?

REGGIE
Maybe he is. Kid, you think your dad will let you work for twelve an hour?

LOCAL
Reggie, I pay you well.

REGGIE
I don't want your money.

LOCAL
You do want my money. You need it.

REGGIE
He signed me to a really big contract. And I gave him my word.

LOCAL
Oh yeah? Is that what happened?
(beat)
Tell me: How did it work out the last time you signed a really big contract?

Reggie stands down.

LOCAL
Think beggars and choosers, Reggie. Life is about beggars and choosers.
(beat)
You used to be a chooser.

He heads inside. Reggie, still silent. Then...

BINU

We should firebomb his house.

(beat)

We should wait until his wife and kids are gone, and then we should firebomb their house with Molotov cocktails... What was that about?

REGGIE

Nothing. I'm gonna get an Uber. Are you gonna stay here or ride home?

BINU

I dunno. What's shakin' at your place?

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Pit-stop. Binu and Reggie evaluate the colorful cereal aisle.

REGGIE

Let's do Kix. You can't go wrong with Kix... What's your name again?

BINU

Binu. B-I-N-U. I wanna change it to "Bee," like a bumble bee, but I'm not getting much traction with it. The rest of kids aren't buying in.

(beat)

What do you think about Special K?

REGGIE

They cheat you on the freeze-dried strawberries. There's so many less of them than there used to be. And in general, everything here is way too sugary... I just like Kix. It's bland, at least on the surface, but Special K's more sugary than you'd think. It's a Trojan Horse, Beaner.

BINU

On the surface? No. Kix is straight-up bland, and Kix knows it's bland. They're not trying to be someone they're not. That much I can respect.

(beat)

By the way, don't call me "Beaner" in public. I don't care, but your next victim might be sensitive. See... "Binu" is a South Asian name, and "Beaner" is a racial slur, most commonly applied to Mexicans. Being from Long Island, you should know what a "beaner" is by trade.

REGGIE

So I should stay away from "Beaner"?

BINU

Yeah, bro. It's meant for Mexicans, because they love beans. It's ironic, because my favorite meal is rice and rajma, an Indian meal my mom used to make for me. Rice and rajma is just rice and beans... But yeah: "Beaner" is a slur for Mexicans, though it's like the Swiss Army knife of racial slurs for all Latinos. It's actually very inclusive in that regard.

LATER

Reggie pushes shopping a cart. Binu periodically adds items. Reggie, in turn, casually removes them. Binu doesn't notice, and Reggie doesn't care about placing items in random spots.

LATER

The pair stare at lobsters in a tank. American as apple pie. From a kneeling crouch, Reggie rises. Spots KAREN JACK (29).

Reggie taps Binu on the arm. Binu shifts his gaze to Reggie. Reggie tilts his head, signaling that the pair should leave.

Reggie pushes their cart across the back of the supermarket. Peers down aisles, sees Karen again. He spins the cart 180°.

BINU

Who was that?

REGGIE

No one.

BINU

Who was it?

REGGIE

No one.

BINU

Uh, that was super fucking someone.

REGGIE

We went to school together.

BINU

Did you know her?

(beat)

Did she know who you were?

At the deli counter, they watch a BUTCHER (50) chop meat.

BINU
 Were you friends? Did you like her?
 (beat)
 It's not a multiple choice question.
 Were you friends?

REGGIE
 ... We were high school sweethearts.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Reggie carries a shopping bag. Suddenly, a car pulls out.
 It stops short, almost hitting Binu. Karen exits the car.

KAREN
 Oh, my God. I'm so sorry.

BINU
 It's fine. I'm fine.

KAREN
 I didn't look while pulling out.

REGGIE
 Oh. Glad that mystery's solved.

Karen recognizes Reggie.

KAREN
 Hey.

REGGIE
 Hi, Karen.

A moment. Then, Binu breaks the ice.

BINU
 It's nice to meet you, Karen.

KAREN
 Again, I'm so sorry. Running over
 a defenseless boy isn't a good look.

REGGIE
 It's not ideal.

BINU
 It's fine. I should've jumped in front
 of you for the insurance money. My job
 doesn't pay well, and the art career
 isn't exactly taking off.

KAREN
 Oh, your art career isn't taking off?
 That makes two of us.
 (MORE)

KAREN (cont'd)

I'm sorry I forgot my business cards; we could've networked our way all the way to the bottom.

BINU

No worries. Because I. Have. Mine.

He rifles through his wallet. Pauses to look at Reggie.

BINU

By the way: I think I dropped \$600 back there. Maybe you saw it?

He takes a card, flicks it admiringly, hands it to Karen.

KAREN

Not bad. Tasteful. Minimal.

BINU

Again, my career isn't going so hot. Few hundred here, few hundred there. But the galleries want that pretty, young thing. You know the drill.

KAREN

I hear it on the daily. We must have the same agent. Mason Mitchell?

BINU

Uh, I'm 13, so I obviously don't have an agent or career. But I know about Mason Mitchell. He's your agent?

Karen nods.

BINU

Wow... So, he's a real POS, right?

KAREN

Pardon?

BINU

Mason Mitchell. He's known for being a major-league asshole.

KAREN

(Reggie)

Speaking of major-league assholes -- or should I say, "minor league assholes" -- it's nice to see you.

REGGIE

Always a pleasure, Karen.

KAREN

Sarcastic. Still.

(beat)

Haven't lost your fastball there.

REGGIE

... I was being sincere.

BINU

Question: So you're obviously Karen, he's obviously Reggie, and I'm Binu. Now, from what I remember about the discussion we had over at the lobster tank, you and Reggie were like, total high school sweethearts.

(beat)

Am I getting that right?

EXT. DRIVEWAY - DAY

On the bike, Binu and Reggie pull up to a McMansion.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Binu looks at framed pictures of kids playing Little League, high school ball, etc. They span generations. B&W and color.

INT. BATHROOM - DAY

Reggie produces of a vial of cocaine. Taps some onto the sink. He shape into an thick line with a credit card. Vacuums it up.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Armed with chips and soda, Reggie joins Binu and the photos.

BINU

By the way, this is a really nice house.

REGGIE

I dunno. It's growing on me

(beat)

Money doesn't buy happiness, but it sure as hell tries to

BINU

This is your family, obviously? How far back do these go?

REGGIE

So, that's my great-grandfather, the bowler, and...that's my great-grandmother, the volleyball player.

BINU

Oh, that's you. You played baseball? We should have a catch sometime.

(MORE)

BINU (cont'd)

(beat)

I'm not exactly big league material,
but we should have a catch sometime.

Reggie holds on Binu. The color drains from his eyes.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Marcus Kennedy watches Fox News. Cans of beer are on the table.

Marcus manipulates an ice tray, grabs ice cubes, and adds them to his beer. Meekly, Reggie and Binu enter. Reggie sits on the couch, and motions for Binu follow his lead.

MARCUS

So what happened?

REGGIE

Whatever. Dumb shit. Some guy was
messing with little man's father.
I caught him with a twelve ounce.

Marcus turns to Binu.

MARCUS

Hello. I'm Reggie's dad.

BINU

Hi. I'm Binu.

MARCUS

Say it again?

BINU

Binu? Binu Bingham.

MARCUS

God bless you. Do you need a Kleenex?
Nah, I'm just teasing.

BINU

It happens.

MARCUS

No offense, but what happened to normal
names like Johnathan? Michael? Or Rick?
I need a dictionary to live in my own
country these days. Ha!

REGGIE

A'right. First of all, there's no
shortage of dudes named Johnathan and
Michael, so take it down a notch. Also,
I've never met a Rick who wasn't a total
shit-stain of a human being, and dollars
to doughnuts, you haven't either.

MARCUS

Sorry, kid. They're just jokes.

BINU

It's fine. You're being honest.

MARCUS

(to Reggie)

See? But don't worry, Reggie. I'll try to more..."politically correct."

BINU

That's not a bad idea. Because your grandchildren will all be working for guys named Binu.

MARCUS

Probably. My grandkids will be lucky to have jobs in America in 50 years.

BINU

Actually, your grandchildren will be lucky to live in America in 50 years. Get ready to be gentrified and trade places. Hope they like rural India.

Marcus loses his smile.

BINU

Don't drink the water.

Marcus clicks the remote. Finds his prey.

BINU

You like "Shark Tank"?

MARCUS

Best show on television. You can just plop down, tune in during any episode, then it's smooth sailing till bedtime.

BINU

What I like it is that every episode, you watch someone present the sharks their inventions or small businesses. They're way too eager. And then four times in just 30 minutes, you get to see people's dreams get destroyed.

Marcus, impressed by the observation.

MARCUS

They do it on purpose. Because usually, when someone's dreams get destroyed, it's a process.

(MORE)

MARCUS (cont'd)

But in the Tank, some jabroni from Colorado has this anti-gravity thingamabob he's been tooling away on for seven years with his bird-brained brother.

BINU

Yes. And when the sharks reject them, they have to take that walk of shame.

MARCUS

It's a beautiful thing.

On the show, contestants look like nervous young mothers.

REGGIE

What I don't like is when the sharks do want to get into business, but the contestants play hardball. Mark Cuban will be like, "You know what, Bradley? I'm rooting for you, cuz you're a good person, and your wife's having a baby. I want to offer you \$500,000 for a 10% stake in your company." But then, the guy dilly-dallies way too long, fights with Barbara Corcoran, and the offer gets pulled.

BINU

Right? Forget the money. Just take the deal for the partnership alone.

(beat)

What's that smell?

REGGIE

Uh...it is...Irish soda bread, Coors Light, and shame.

(beat)

Mostly shame.

The Shark Tank chat is important, not because it's cute, but because otherwise Marcus is just ripping into Binu, and that alone is unrealistic. Microaggressions are more impactful and hurtful if the person delivering them is also quite friendly.

EXT. C-STORE - DAY

Reggie drives Binu into the lot. He retrieves Binu's bike.

INT. C-STORE - DAY

Minutes later, having made introductions, Binu, Reggies and B.B. wrap up. At the cooler, Reggie grabs yet another beer.

B.B.

Will he come for dinner?

BINU

No. We know their culture, but he will not know ours. The smell of our house?
No. The Sound of our Music? No.

Reggie returns to the counter. Binu and B.B. straighten up.

REGGIE

Are you sure you're okay, boss?

B.B.

I'm okay. Listen: Come to our house for dinner tomorrow. We will have fun.

BINU

Uh, Reggie's a bit of a lone wolf.

REGGIE

Dinner? I would love to.

B.B.

So then you'll come?

BINU

He is extremely booked and busy.

REGGIE

I am currently unemployed.

B.B.

Have you ever tried Indian food?

BINU

Reggie's a steak and potatoes man.

REGGIE

B.B.? Indian food is the only food.

B.B.

Will you eat a yummy steak-potato?

BINU

I don't even know what that means.

REGGIE

Only if you teach me how to make it.

B.B.

Is 8:00 okay?

BINU

Americans eat early, Dad.

REGGIE

Eight...would be great. And Binu, in the meantime, don't be a weirdo if Karen calls you. Don't talk about me.

BINU
Don't worry. I've got a plan.

REGGIE
What's that supposed to mean?

BINU
You're on a need-to-know basis.

REGGIE
(unamused)
It's a Sunday night. Don't you have
to go to school tomorrow?

BINU
I thought about it. We'll see how I
feel in the morning. At this point,
it's looking like a game-time decision.

INT. ENGLISH CLASS - DAY

Binu sits at the back of his Honors English class. An origami star hits him in the face and lands on his desk. Binu regards the star with suspicion. It reads, "Open Me."

He looks left and sees DARNELL JACKSON (14) on the opposite end of the room. Darnell points to the girl in front of him.

She is BIANCA MARTÍNEZ (14), the object of Binu's affection.

Binu unfolds the star. "Want to hang out Friday? Just us?" Below that it reads, "Circle one." Binu flips the star.

"Circle one" refers to one of two choices: "No" and "No."

Binu looks at Darnell, who blows him a kiss. Binu smiles and fires an apple across the class. It misses Darnell, but hits a BIG KID (15). Big Kid looks down at the apple...up at Binu.

Mimicking Darnell's finger point, Binu indicates the BOY (15) sitting in front of him. Teacher MRS. JONES (40) gets started.

MRS. JONES
Alphabetical order: Binu, you're up.

Binu, to the head of the class. Surveys the landscape.

BINU
In the annals of human civilization,
there are a bevy of treasured texts.
The Bible, the Torah; the Quran and
the Vedas. The Tao Te Ching and the
Egyptian Book of the Dead... These
sacred books mean so much to so many.
They lift spirits and warm hearts...
yet rarely do they touch souls. Class,
for that we look to but one great man.
(MORE)

BINU (cont'd)

(beat)

Shakespeare... Granted, it actually might have been three women who did most of the heavy lifting. His cook, a seamstress, and a chambermaid, but that's neither here nor there.

Sitting next to each other across the room, Binu's friends, crush Bianca Martinez and the aforementioned Darnell, grin.

BINU

Shakespeare gifted us a defining text, and it was entitled Macbeth... "Double, double, toil and trouble. Fire burn, cauldron bubble."

He strokes his chin, measures his words.

MR. JONES

Binu, if you haven't read the play, start.

BINU

Sorry. Can I redo this afterwards?

MRS. JONES

You're getting an "F." Be better.

BINU

Macbeth. More like Macdeath.

MRS. JONES

That's not as clever as you think.

BINU

Uh, it wasn't supposed to be clever. It was a private observation that wasn't meant for public consumption.

MRS. HILL

Enough. Guys, break into groups. Your assignment is on the board.

Bianca, Darnell, and SAM FALATKO (14) move desks together. Blackboard: "What's the worst thing that you've ever done?"

MRS. JONES

Binu, this one's right up your alley. It might be a little less challenging. It says, "What's the worst thing that you've ever done?"

BINU

Thanks, I know how to read. I picked it up when the British civilized me.

MRS. HILL

Do you want to stand in the corner?

BINU

I also have opposable thumbs.

Binu heads to the desk with friends Darnell, Bianca, and Sam.

DARNELL

Well, well. The game is afoot.

BINU

What's that supposed to mean?

SAM

It's Shakespeare, you idiot.

BIANCA

It's actually Sherlock Holmes.

DARNELL

Let's do this. Bianca: Worst thing you've ever done.

BIANCA

This is hard... Back in Puerto Rico, Luna and I often went hungry. Y'all know that, but I never told you that I had a brother... His name was Robby. Once, when I was seven and Robby was five, Luna and I were playing outside. Robby came out with a turkey sandwich. Somehow he scraped it together from whatever he could find in the kitchen. It was just a single slice of meat on two squished up pieces of dried bread.

(beat)

No cheese, no condiments, nothing. But yeah, I was seven and Robby was five. When I saw what he had to eat, I got jealous and knocked it out of his tiny fingers and onto the ground... Robby burst into tears and bent down to pick it up. But before he could, the local pack of wild dogs? They pushed my brother over and ate the sandwich... Robby just sat there covered in mud. He cried and kept screaming, "I made that to share it with you, Bianca. I made that to share it with you..." Three years later, Robby passed away.

Silence. Darnell wipes a tear. Bianca perks up, claps her hands.

BIANCA

Your turn, guys -- this is fun!

BINU

A'right, fuck Robby. Last year, we had a paper due, end of quarter.

(MORE)

BINU (cont'd)

I already had a "C," which was bad, cuz the night before it was due? I hadn't started it. Colleges don't want smart, Indian kids who get bad grades and whose dads are cardiologists. They want dumb kids with good grades, and whose dads get to work the sour cream gun at Taco Bell. You know how they dispense sour cream with that like, gun contraption? That's what they want. So, the paper was due, but I didn't do it. Now, we were supposed to drop the paper in Mr. Lee's office mailbox, so the morning it was due? I just walked into the office, scooped up everyone's paper, and walked on out.

SAM

And then he wouldn't know who handed it in and who didn't. Buying you time.

BIANCA

Wait, that was you? I hand wrote mine!

DARNELL

Yikes.

BIANCA

He's the worst.

She taps her pencil, then gets up to sharpen it.

BINU

She's the best.

INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

Binu carries a tray. He looks for a friend. None in sight. He then settles himself all alone at a large, empty table. Soon, Tom -- the bully from page 1 -- sits across from him.

TOM

Tomorrow...? Don't check your locker.

INT. BINU'S HOUSE - NIGHT

B.B. and Binu prep dinner for Reggie. The kitchen looks like an Indian street market. A beautiful disaster.

INT. TRUCK - NIGHT

Reggie, behind the wheel and parked near Binu's house

He taps some cocaine below the joining of his thumb and index finger, then snorts it. Washes it down with vodka.

INT. BINU'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Reggie, through the door. He's greeted by B.B. and Binu.

B.B.

Hello, Mr. Reggie! Welcome!

REGGIE

How are you? I'm excited to be here.

(beat)

Wow, what's that smell?

BINU

Uh, it's Chicken vindaloo, sandalwood, and shame.

(beat)

Mostly chicken vindaloo.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

The three are seated. B.B. heaps food onto Reggie's plate.

B.B.

Reggie, tell me: What do you do?

REGGIE

I build decks. Gazebos, tree houses... I only used to work during the colder months. That's when my boys from the Americas go back home. Winter's when I did best; Summer's when they do best.

B.B.

What did you do in the Summer?

REGGIE

I used to play baseball.

BINU

Really?

REGGIE

Minor League Baseball. I played from 18 to 28, but if you don't make the Majors by then, you probably never will.

BINU

You quit?

REGGIE

My arm quit. Then my heart quit. I figure it's better that I leave the game before the game leaves me. My family isn't happy about it, but...

B.B.

You have brothers and sisters?

REGGIE

I have a brother. How 'bout you? Wife and any other kids to go along with Mister Smarty Pants here?

B.B.

You know, my wife died four years ago, so it's just the men of the house now.

REGGIE

I'm sorry to hear that.

BINU

You would've liked her. Everyone did.

REGGIE

Yeah... Not for nothing, but same team. My mom died, and... Everyone liked her.

BINU

Your mom died?

REGGIE

When I was 19. It wasn't fun.

BINU

What did she died of?

REGGIE

Heart disease. Drugs and alcohol.

(beat)

What about your mom? Can I ask...

B.B.

Depression.

REGGIE

Sorry if...depression meaning what?

B.B.

... Use your imagination.

A silence descends.

BINU

Jesus Christ, dad. At his house we watch "Shark Tank."

B.B.

He asked after baring his soul.

BINU

He didn't "bare his soul." I hit a powerful serve by saying that mom died. He then returned serve by saying that his mom died. That's just volleying, sympathizing, and trust building.

(beat)

Thank you for sharing, Reggie. That was very brave of you. There will be coffee and refreshments afterwards.

Reggie chuckles.

BINU

Hey, do you wanna see my artwork?

REGGIE

Sure. Not really, but sure.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Binu paints in front of his easel. Reggie watches, but notices the wrapped present from page 2. It is literally on a pedestal.

During the scene, Reggie sits, casually tossing a ball against a wall, then effortlessly fielding it like the athlete he is.

REGGIE

Dude, you are incredibly talented. Especially for a kid. Or an adult.

BINU

I'd be a lot better if I could afford the better paints. Ultramarine is my jam. It's from ground-up lapis lazuli.

REGGIE

What's that?

BINU

It's a precious gem stone. I can only get the paint from this one art store. And this kid Tom at the register fucks with me in school. His parents own the store, so I hate going in there.

REGGIE

Do you want me to kill him for you?

BINU

I would, but I know it'd get back to me in about six hours.

Again, Reggie notices the gift.

REGGIE

What's with the present? The pedestal is an interesting choice. Very on brand.

BINU

Yeah... Back to the party theme of "We Both Have Dead Mothers." So, my mom died just before my birthday, and that's the present she had ready for me. We fought a lot before she died, because I didn't want to wear my turban anymore. It's actually called a "patka." But yeah: I haven't opened it, and I never will.

REGGIE

She would've wanted you to.

BINU

I know. But she never gave me a gift I wanted. She'd give me colorful turbans, hoping to change my mind. Like if they match with my shirt, it'll make people stop mocking me. If anything, it made it worse. American moms give their kids things they want: Hockey sticks and video games. Fancy paint tubes.. The sad thing is, my mom loved me so much, and I loved her. And I guess...if I never open the present, she'll always be alive and with me in some way.

REGGIE

That's really sweet, Binu.

BINU

I bet there's Ultramarine paint tubes in there. One for each color of the rainbow, like Roy G. Biv. But like I said, that would be expensive... You know what's embarrassing? Sometimes I sing to it.

REGGIE

That's not embarrassing. Whaddaya sing?

BINU

Do you know Cher?

REGGIE

Yeah.

BINU

You've heard of her?

REGGIE

Sure.

BINU
Like Cher, the singer?

REGGIE
I'm from America, too. Yes.

Binu gets the present. Sits cross-legged with Reggie.

BINU
If I could turn back time / If I could
find a way / I'd take back those words
that've hurt you / And you'd stay / I
don't know why I did the things I did /
I don't know why I said the things I
said / Pride's like a knife, it can cut
deep inside / Words are like weapons,
they wound sometimes / I didn't really
mean to hurt you / I didn't wanna see
you go / I know I made you cry /
But baby if I could turn back time / If
I could find a way / I'd take back those
words that've hurt you / And you'd stay
/ If I could reach the stars I'd give
'em all to you / Then you'd love me,
love me / Like you used to do / My world
was shattered, I was torn apart / Like
someone took a knife and drove it deep
in my heart / When you walked out that
door / I swore that I didn't care / But
I lost everything, darlin', then and
there / Too strong to tell you I was
sorry / Too proud to tell you I was
wrong / I know that I was blind / And
darlin' If I could turn back time / If I
could find a way / I'd take back those
words that hurt you / And you'd stay...
(beat)
Anyway. It goes on from there.

Reggie, silent. Then tosses his ball against the wall.

REGGIE
It couldn't be easy for her to move here.
And no pun intended, but putting American
moms on a pedestal isn't the move. My mom
and dad never bought me anything but beer.

BINU
We're sitting in the basement of a shitty
house. Your dad lives in a mansion.

REGGIE
That's not his house. It's mine.

BINU
But you didn't make the Majors.

REGGIE

I did not... But I was a bonus baby.

BINU

A bonus baby? You were a 1st round pick?

REGGIE

... I was a first-round bust.

(beat)

Six million dollars... New topic.

BINU

Yes, new topic. No more mommy issues.

(beat)

I'd like to hear about more money issues, but well work our up to that.

REGGIE

Hey, listen: We'll obviously talk to your dad about it, but you know Steve, your Molotov cocktail guy? He made that joke about you being my apprentice, and like, I could definitely use some help.

BINU

You could?

REGGIE

Yeah, dude. And not to define you by the the Indian thing, but in the minors, you make friends with great guys from so many foreign cultures: The Dominican Republic, Antigua, Japan...Texas...

BINU

That's cool.

REGGIE

Yeah. You travel together, you stay with host families... But here on Long Island? We're surrounded by water on three sides. Everyone's the same and thinks the same, because they never meet anyone different.

BINU

I'm different.

Reggie smiles. Stops tossing the ball.

REGGIE

You're special.

BINU

You're special, too.

REGGIE

... I used to be.

(MORE)

REGGIE (cont'd)

(beat)

By the way: That whole thing about Karen? If she happens to call? And you having a plan? Again, don't be weird.

BINU

Weird is my default setting. Also, I'm curious why you say..."if" she calls.

REGGIE

Did she call?

BINU

No.

Binu holds on him. As if on cue, his phone rings. No one moves.

REGGIE

Is that her?

It rings again. Still locked in on Reggie, Binu mutes his cell.

REGGIE

What the fuck, bro?

BINU

Silence. It's all part of the plan.

REGGIE

Okay, well what's the plan?

BINU

... We're going to get her back.