

# *Beyond Paradise*

Written by

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DGA + WGAE

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*"When nothing existed, Love  
existed; and when nothing shall  
remain, Love shall remain;  
It is the first and the last."  
- Princess Shéhérazade, One  
Thousand and One Nights.*

BLACK SCREEN. SILENCE... RISING SOUND OF HEART BEATS...

In total darkness, NOISE and vague VOICES. Rising SOUNDS of hurried people walking and running; and movement of things and wheels. Echoing ANNOUNCEMENTS chaotically mixing into each other in English, French and Persian, announcing the imminent departure of various flights.

CAPTION: TEHRAN AIRPORT, TEHRAN AIRPORT... In Persian and English, dissolving into each other.

FEMALE ANNOUNCER (O.S.)  
Attention! Final boarding call. All  
passengers of Air France flight 101  
to Paris...

SOUNDS of Women and a Little Girl crying. Emotional words in Persian with English subtitles: "*Khoda Hafez = God be with you*", "*Take care*", "*Goodbye*"... SOUND of tender kisses.

SOUND of an Airplane taking off.

FADE IN:

Stock footage of a PLANE landing.

CAPTION: Paris, Charles de Gaulle Airport.

1 INT. CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT / BATHROOM - DAY 1

VOICES announce the arrival and departure of flights...

A chicly dressed FRENCH GIRL, 25, walks into the bathroom and becomes somewhat cautious when she sees:

A girl in IRANIAN MUSLIM DRESS, covered from the neck down to her jeans, just above her knees. She wears a rose and black-COLORED HEADSCARF. This is SHAHRZAD, 22, a striking beauty.

She takes off her headscarf and puts it in her handbag. Then, she takes off her Muslim garb and throws it in the TRASH CAN, revealing herself in fashionable jeans and a French SILKY BORDEAUX blouse, with an open neck.

ON Shahrzad: a SIGH of relief and calm joy. She arranges her hair. The French Girl, who is refreshing her makeup, smiles.

Shahrzad adjusts her bra. She puts on lipstick and makeup. She checks herself in the mirror: stunning and exotic.

2 INT. THE PUNCHLINE / SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT 2

On stage is SEAN ALANI, 32, a good looking, caustic American stand-up comedian of Iranian origin. He's popular with the American white and mixed ethnic melting pot audiences. Hilarious on stage, in private Sean is serious and graceful.

SEAN

...San Francisco, Yes! You know my American wife dumped me! She found out I'm too *ethnic*. *Ethnic!*? I didn't know I was *ethnic* until I came to this country!

(laughter)

Oh my God, I've got a bad case of *ethnic!*

He tries desperately to shake off the 'disease' from himself.

SEAN (CONT'D)

(points to a Hispanic guy)

Hey you! Mr. San Franciscan! You definitely got *ethnic!* *HELP!* IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE?

(laughter, No, NO")

NO! So, guess what I did? I married an *ethnic* girl I fancied back home. My mom is arranging it all. Yeah, mothers know best, right? This time, I'm not buying NADA, not even a *freaking candle!*

(laughter)

Yep, as I speak, my bride is flying on Iran Air to Paris, then she jumps on Air France, direct to me in LOS ANGELES! The City of *ETHNIC ANGELS!*

3 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - DAY 3

CAPTION: Malibu, Los Angeles.

BIRDS fly above. An ORANGE KITE floats in the blue sky.

SEBASTIAN, 24, a 'hot', handsome and athletic Caucasian American in a black tank-top controls the line up to the Orange Kite in the sky, high above the shimmering sea below.

4 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / STREET - DAY 4

RAY, 18-20, mysterious, 'to-die-for' looks. He helps his attractive mother, PARISA, 49, get into the passenger seat of a WHITE LEXUS SUV. She puts a WHITE ROSE BOUQUET on the back seat. Ray glances up and sees the ORANGE KITE in the sky.

5 INT. WHITE LEXUS - CONTINUOUS 5

Ray jumps in the driver seat. He starts the engine. Parisa's cell rings. She taps 'Talk' on the Car's Multi-Media. Everyone is anxious and excited. [In Persian and English.]

SEAN (O.S.)

Mama jan, I'm stuck here... All flights cancelled. Yes. Still in San Francisco.

PARISA

Oh dear.

SEAN (O.S.)

I'll call you as soon as I get a flight. Please explain to Shahrzad. Hey Ray janam! Drive carefully. I want my Bride in one piece!

Ray nods "Yeah" and drives away.

PARISA

Azizam, don't worry. Just come home...

6 INT. LEXUS ON HIGHWAY - DAY 6

The White Lexus drives along the highway. SIGNS: PACIFIC COAST HIGHWAY, LOS ANGELES, LAX - Los Angeles International Airport.

7 EXT. SKY - DAY 7

A PLANE in the Sky. The Plane descends.

8 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - SAME TIME 8

Sebastian pulls the Orange Kite down on the beach. He folds the Kite and walks towards the cliff path.

9 EXT. LAX AIRPORT / STREETS - SAME TIME 9

The white Lexus drives past Airport Terminals...

10 INT. WHITE LEXUS - AFTERNOON 10

Sitting alone in the back seat, the White Roses Bouquet on her lap, Shahrzad in makeup and nail polish, dressed romantically, exposing her long hair.

ON SHAHRZAD'S FACE: She reacts to assorted images of Los Angeles that fly by through the car window. Parisa in the front seat. \*

PARISA \*

Janam. It's better we speak \*  
English. Then, we learn fast. \*

Parisa taps on the car's multi-media phone system. Ray glances at Shahrzad in the rear mirror. \*

PARISA (CONT'D)

Yes. Her flight was on time. We are driving home. Here's Shahrzad. \*

SEAN (O.S.)

Salam Shahrzad. Welcome. \*

SHAHRZAD

Salaam. \*

SEAN (O.S.)

I'm so sorry. I'm on the next flight. I see you soon... \*

11 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / STREET - LATE AFTERNOON 11

Sebastian walks back from the cliff and sees:

Thru the White Lexus's passenger glass window, a slow-revealing view of a girl's face of astonishing beauty.

Ray struggles to take Shahrzad's large suitcase out of the car.

Sebastian runs over. He puts his Kite down and pulls out Shahrzad's huge bag. Thru the back glass, he glances at Shahrzad arranging her hair, exposing her tender neck.

SEBASTIAN

Hey Ray. Let me help.

Sebastian sees Shahrzad's legs come out of the car. *She glances at Sebastian, then at his Kite. He smiles. She gives him a serious look and turns away.*

She pulls her handbag out of the passenger side. A used BOOK slips out of the pocket and drops to the ground, releasing several ROSE PETALS used as book marks. INSERT: Book Title in Persian "Divani MOWLANA RUMI". Subtitle: RUMI - Collection of Poems.

Sebastian rushes to the book. Ray gets to it first and gives it back to her. She tenderly collects the rose petals.

SHAHRZAD

Thank you.

Ray looks at Sebastian's disappointed face.

Parisa leads Shahrzad towards Sean's home.

Sebastian helps Ray carry the luggage to the gate.

SMOKE. Parisa lights up a CIGARETTE. They enter the home.

RAY (O.S.)

(stammers a little)

Mmmum nno, no smoking!

PARISA (O.S.)

Just a puff. I'll quit, InshaAlah.

ON Sebastian: He wonders about the mysterious Shahrzad. He walks down the street. Faint CLASSICAL PIANO MUSIC rises.

12 EXT. ELANA'S HOUSE / GARDEN / GUEST COTTAGE - EVENING 12

CLASSICAL PIANO MUSIC. The Orange Kite is on the floor by the entry door of a small guest cottage in the back garden.

Sebastian walks out of the cottage. He strolls through the garden and tends to some plants.

He walks in the direction of the rising CLASSICAL PIANO MUSIC and enters the main house.

13 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME 13

ELANA, 36-39, plays on a used BABY GRAND PIANO. Poetically-dressed, she is sensual, shapely and fit.

An artistic MENORAH is in the background and a vase of RED ROSES is atop the piano. PHOTOS and POSTERS of Elana's past movies, like KISS, adorn the walls and bookshelf. \*

A CRYSTAL GLASS, a reclining BUDDHA, and the sound of a hanging CHIME outside, evoke a haven of spirituality.

Sebastian enters. Elana continues to play. Then,...

ELANA

Hi Honey, anything exciting?

SEBASTIAN

(sifting her mail)

Damn junk. And fan letters!

ELANA

Oh! Some one is jealous?

She smiles and returns to play. He goes to her and tenderly kisses her neck. She caresses his hand. Despite a bit of an age gap, evidently these two are ardent lovers.

14 INT. SEAN'S HOME / TV ROOM - SAME NIGHT , LATER 14

Sean enters, wheeling in his overnight bag. Parisa and Ray joyfully greet him.

SEAN

Salam. I'm here!

PARISA

Salam! Welcome janam. \*

SEAN

Where's Shahrzad?

PARISA

Shsh...Janam, she's upstairs. Let's let her sleep.

Ray goes to hug Sean and whispers.

RAY

She's beautiful. \*

PARISA

She's afraid of flying. Poor thing, she hasn't slept since she left Tehran.

15 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / WEDDING / GARDEN - DAY

15

At the garden's end, Shahrzad in a gorgeous Wedding dress with a PERSIAN HAT, and the suavely dressed Sean have their photos taken. FLASH LIGHTS randomly lit the happy couple.

A well-dressed WAITER crosses the scene, carrying a tray of a CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE and CHAMPAGNE GLASSES.

A PHOTOGRAPHER takes photos. A stylishly-dressed YOUNG COUPLE re-enters the house from the garden party.

FEMALE PERSIAN SINGER (O.S)

(in Persian)

I'm so honored to dedicate this poem by Mowlana RUMI to the lovely couple: *"Let us fall in Love again, and scatter gold dust all over the world. Let us carve gems out of our stony hearts, and let them light our path to Love. The glance of Love is crystal clear. We are blessed by its Light."*

The spiritual song brings sadness and joy to Shahrzad's eyes. Sean embraces her. They kiss tenderly. APPLAUSE.

Off screen joyous noise and loud Persian Wedding dancing music from the garden cause Shahrzad and Sebastian to dance.

More photos and camera flashes. Freeze on a WEDDING PHOTO of Sean and Shahrzad, the happy couple. The couple dances away towards the Music and Applause of the party and exits frame.

16 INT. SEAN'S HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

16

In semi-light, Shahrzad and Sean, still dressed in wedding attire, sensitively look at each other across the bed. She lowers her eyes, avoiding his gaze.

Sean takes his shirt off.

She takes off her dress then her top, leaving her VIOLET BRA on. Her bra is EXTRA LARGE, covering not just her breasts but also her chest just above her breasts.

They slip into bed. He tries to lower her bra. She resists.

SEAN

Azizam, so beautiful. What's wrong?

She breaks into quiet tears. He embraces her.



17 INT. SEAN'S HOME / BATHROOM - NEXT MORNING 17

Shahrzad lets down her violet bra. Reflected in the steamy mirror in soft focus, camera moves from a young, round breast to a RED ROSE covering her right breast. She lowers the rose: unsightly scars around the upper parts of her breast.

She gazes at it. Then, she looks away.

18 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / BEDROOM - SAME TIME 18

Wearing a sensual SAFFRON NIGHTGOWN, Elana checks herself in the mirror. She is graced with round and full breasts. She scans the happy PHOTOS of her younger life: filming scenes and at award ceremonies.

Soft KNOCKS on her door. *She touches her bosom*, and resists dark thoughts. Louder knocks on the door...

SEBASTIAN (O.S.)  
(behind the door)  
Elana. Are you up? Elana!

She goes and opens the door.

It's Sebastian in a DARK TANK TOP. They kiss passionately. She pulls him inside.

19 INT. SEAN'S HOME / KITCHEN - SAME TIME 19

WHISTLING SOUND of the steaming KETTLE. Parisa and Sean at the Dining Table. Tea pot, Yogurt, Feta cheese, Honey, Walnuts, Naan bread, Black tea served in CLEAR GLASSES. Ray eats breakfast while he's standing nearby.

PARISA  
Even at the Wedding, she didn't eat. Why doesn't she eat?

SEAN  
Mama, she's homesick.

Shahrzad walks in. Ray pulls out a chair for her.

SHAHRZAD  
Sobh beh kheyr. [Good Morning.]

RAY SEAN  
(stutters) Sobh beh kheyr.  
Sssobh bbeh

PARISA

Sobh beh kheyr. Azizam, try this yogurt. I made it.

SHAHRZAD

Delicious. Thank you mom.

Shahrzad eats one spoon. She stops eating and sips her tea. Ray also stops eating and gazes at her.

PARISA

Azizam. Shall we call your mom?

She nods 'yes.' Sean taps a number on the home phone.

SEAN

Hello. Khanoum jan. This is Sean.  
Sean. Yes, your son-in-law, how are you? Merci. Did you receive the package? No, no, please, it's nothing. Kheily Mamnoon. Yes... Shahrzad is well. Here she is.  
(passes the phone and points to the TV room)  
*You can talk in there.*

20 INT. SEAN'S HOME / TV ROOM - CONTINUOUS 20

Sitting on the sofa, bravely not crying, Shahrzad whispers.

SHAHRZAD

...InshaAlah. mom, please don't cry. Yes, as soon as I settle, we get you the Visa. I miss you, I love you. Kisses to Tara joon...

21 INT. SEAN'S HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT 21

In semi darkness, Shahrzad and Sean look at each other across the bed. They undress gradually from the top. She keeps her bra on. They slip into bed.

He starts to caress and kiss her. Shyly, she responds.

SEAN

You're so pretty.

He tries to lower her RED BRA. Again, she resists. Gently, he pulls her bra off and prepares to make love to her.

Sean reacts: he (*not we, the audience*) just saw the disturbing scarred right breast. He shrinks back. SILENCE.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
What...what happened?

SHAHRZAD  
(pause)  
I... Didn't they tell you?

He indicates 'No.'

22

EXT. TEHRAN STREETS / ALLEYS - DAY , FLASHBACK

22

Walking toward her apartment building, dressed in Muslim-code school uniform, SHAHRZAD, 18, holds a *small* artistic CAGE with a NIGHTINGALE inside. Via EARBUDS on her iPod, she listens to the classic '*Sheherazade*' symphonic suite by Rimsky-Korsakov (composed in 1888, inspired by the '1001 Nights') evoking the fairy tale fantasies of the Orient. She pushes a button on the INTERCOM SYSTEM of her building.

Suddenly, disturbing SOUNDS of crowds and GUN SHOTS. She hides her long dark hair under her school's HEAD SCARF

STOCK FOOTAGE. Fast cuts of surrealistic images of Protestors in Tehran being chased and beaten by Basijis. A police van runs over a few protestors. A woman gets beaten and falls...

Back to Shahrzad: She turns and sees ZARA, 18, her best friend, wearing the same school uniform, being chased by TWO BASIJIS, waving long WOODEN STICKS. Holding a RED ROSE stem, Zara runs fast for her life. As she passes Shahrzad, she exchanges a quick glance with Shahrzad, and throws her the Red Rose.

Shahrzad cringes, her eyes widen, and her hand shakes. She picks up the Rose, leaving a few ROSE PETALS on the ground.

Zara's terrifying SCREAM. Inserting the Rose's stem in the Cage, Shahrzad hauls the cage, and runs towards the scream.

RED BLOOD DROPS on the ground. At the end of a cul-de-sac, she sees screaming and BLOODIED Zara surrounded by TWO AGENTS and the two Basijis. The Basijis beat her with the Batons, while the Agents kick her. [In Persian, English subtitles.]

ZARA  
AH! OH!...STOP, STOP...

The STRONG BASIJI rips the GREEN BAND from Zara's forehead and steps on it. Using both her feet, Zara kicks the Strong Basiji in the groin, toppling him over.

SHAHRZAD  
HELP! PLEASE STOP!

Shahrzad drops the cage and breaks through the circle.

*The Strong Basiji drags Zara by her arms on the ground. A glimpse of her western, sexy RED UNDERWEAR gets exposed.*

The men get madder, shouting, "PROSTITUTE, PROSTITUTE..."

The Nightingale flutters in the cage. SOUNDS of heartbeats grow faster and louder.

SHAHZRAD (CONT'D)  
STOP! PLEASE STOP. GOD'S MERCY...

In the chaos, Shahrzad's own head scarf and blouse get pulled down, exposing her hair and the upper part of her PINK BRA.

Quicker, louder heartbeat SOUNDS.

The Strong Basiji raises his baton high.

Zara looks up. Her mouth tries to say something to Shahrzad.

He strikes the baton across Zara's CHEST.

SHAHZRAD (CONT'D)  
NO! NO!...

Heartbeat sounds stop. BLACK screen. Silence.

FADE IN: Back to the present.

23 INT. SEAN'S HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT , PRESENT 23

Shahrzad's face. Sean dries her eyes.

SEAN  
Oh God! You were there! On the  
Internet. I couldn't watch it. Sick  
Animals.

He tenderly embraces her.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
Couldn't they... do something?

SHAHZRAD  
No. I don't know...

Sean's face: shock and confusion. ON Shahrzad's eyes.

24 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / GUEST COTTAGE - NIGHT

24

ON Sebastian's eyes. He's on his cell.

SEBASTIAN

Mama, sorry, can't hear you. Louder  
por favor. Have you... been  
drinking?

ESTRELLA (O.S.)

(Spanish accent, tipsy)  
I'm sick... bad. Come home...

SEBASTIAN

I will Mama. As soon as I get my  
papers. You shouldn't drink so  
much.

\*

ESTRELLA (O.S.)

I'm afraid...

SEBASTIAN

Mama. Don't, please don't speak  
like that. Please don't cry.  
Tomorrow I'll see the Lawyer. I...

ESTRELLA (O.S.)

(coughs)  
Come. We...I love you. I miss you.

SEBASTIAN

I miss you, I love you, too. Mama?  
Hello. HELLO...

He drops the cell on a SMALL BOOK with a striking red and  
black Spanish art cover. INSERT: Poems by Federico García  
LORCA.

25 INT. SEAN'S HOME / BATHROOM - NEXT MORNING

25

Shahzad adjusts her large bra. She takes off the thin gold  
wedding ring. *She looks at it and sighs.* She takes off her  
ethnic rings. She puts the white gold wedding ring back,  
surrounding it with bigger, colorful ethnic rings *so the thin  
wedding ring becomes almost invisible.*

26 INT. SEAN'S HOME / TV ROOM - SAME TIME

26

Shahzad walks down the staircase. She stops when she  
overhears snatches of the following Sean and Parisa's  
conversation.

27

INT. SEAN'S HOME / TV ROOM - SAME TIME

27

[The following is intercut with Shahrzad's reactions.] Lying on the Sofa, Parisa takes her pills. Sean gives her water. They whisper. Persian TV is on in the background.

PARISA

(whispers)

Isn't she wonderful?

SEAN

Yes.

(beat)

Mama jan, How come no one told me about her...accident?

PARISA

Oh! Is it really bad? Poor Shahrzad. Listen, son. No one is perfect. Except God.

SEAN

I know. It's just...

PARISA

Azizam, no one will ever see it. You love her. She loves you.

SEAN

I... I wasn't expecting this.

PARISA

Sean janam, who cares about some small, hidden scars? Everyone says how gorgeous she is. Nicer than your ex wife. More beautiful than all those fake Gucci girls. With their annual plastic surgeries!

SEAN

Ha! You're right.

PARISA

We should thank God. She's an angel. It's *Ghesmat!* [Destiny.]

SEAN

Ghesmat? OK, Mama jan. We'll take her to the best plastic surgeon. Please go for a walk. Fresh air. No smoking. Promise?

ON Shahrzad: pensive expression.

28

EXT. SEAN'S HOME / GARDEN / STREET - DAY

28

Artistically dressed Shahrzad is reading a book in the garden. She looks up and sees a small bird-shaped RED KITE in the sky. The Kite jumps around as if moved by a gusty wind.

Nostalgically and anxiously, Shahrzad follows the Kite's movements as if she were watching a real Bird. Then, she returns to her book.

Outside in the STREET, unseen by Shahrzad, FEET move forward and backwards and HANDS go up and down trying to control something up in the air: It's Sebastian manoeuvring his new Bird Kite, trying to ensure it doesn't fall down.

Suddenly, it drops down in Sean's garden.

In the Garden: Shahrzad is startled when she sees the Bird Kite fall near her.

SEBASTIAN

(under his breath)

Oh Shit!

He goes to Sean's home and rings the bell. No one answers. To the side, he sees the partially-open garden door. He goes in. Through tree branches, he sees a partial view of Shahrzad reading her book. She doesn't see him. Under her spell, he moves to see more and gazes at her. After a few beats...

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Ahmm, Hi. Sorry, I...I'm the Gardner. My Bird. Could you please give him back to me...

Shahrzad looks at him but doesn't move.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

YOU SPEAK ENGLISH? MY BIRD KITE.  
SHE DOESN'T BITE. COULD YOU PLEASE  
GIVE HER BACK TO ME?

(gesturing with his arms)

She can't fly up. I've to help her.

29

INT. SEAN'S HOME / RAY'S BEDROOM / WINDOW - SAME TIME

29

Up in his room, Ray turns his binoculars from the distant SAILING BOATS to Shahrzad and Sebastian below.

30 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / GARDEN - SAME TIME

30

Shahrzad walks towards the Kite and puts her book down. Bending, she COOS to the kite. She tenderly picks up the Kite as if it were a live Bird. [*During this scene, Shahrzad is graceful and polite but does not smile.*]

SEBASTIAN

That's it. Thanks. She likes you. I'm *Sebastian*. Hey Parakita, say thank you to... What's your name?

SHAHRZAD

I... I had a bird.

She gently hands him the Kite Bird.

Up in Ray's room.

Ray's Binocular P.O.V: Shahrzad and Sebastian's FINGERS accidentally touch.

Playing along, Sebastian playfully caresses Parakita, as if it were a bird.

SEBASTIAN

Yeah! You had a bird, too? Awesome. Where?

SHAHRZAD

Back home. He used to sing.

SEBASTIAN

Wow! What happened?  
(she doesn't want to explain)  
Your English is cute. Good.

SHAHRZAD

Thank you. Not so good.

31 INT. SEAN'S HOME / RAY'S BEDROOM / WINDOW - SAME TIME

31

Ray continues to observe Shahrzad and Sebastian through his binocular. But he cannot hear dialog, so he's a bit anxious.

32 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / GARDEN - SAME TIME

32

Shahrzad picks up her book and hastily walks away.

SEBASTIAN

Please wait. What are you reading?



SHAHZRAD

Poems.

SEBASTIAN

Poetry. Who by?

SHAHZRAD

*Rumi.*

SEBASTIAN

Rumi? Oh yeah, Rumi. Elana has *her* book...

SHAHZRAD

Rumi was a *man*.

He smiles.

Parisa comes onto the Porch with a small ASHTRAY in hand. Using a silver LIGHTER, she lights up a cigarette.

PARISA

Shahrzad joon!

Shahrzad rushes to the Porch, without looking back.

33 INT. SEAN'S HOME / RAY'S BEDROOM / WINDOW - SAME TIME 33

Ray drops his binoculars.

34 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / PORCH - SAME TIME 34

PARISA

Ay Khoda! [Oh, God!] Life and its  
One Thousand Joys and...Pains!  
Azizam, some water.

Shahrzad hands her a glass of water. Shahrzad eats some snacks from the Table. Parisa goes to the kitchen.

PARISA (CONT'D)

Oh good! You're eating. I just made  
some Lentil soup.

SHAHZRAD

Oh, I can get it.

PARISA

No, no. You sit, Azizam.

Parisa returns with a bowl of soup. She eats.

SHAHZRAD

Mmm. Reminds me of home. Kheily  
Mamnoon. [Thank you much.]

PARISA

To your sweet health. What happened  
to your wedding ring?

(then she sees it among  
the big rings)

Oh, there it is. Hmmm...

SHAHRZAD

"Good luck" rings. From my mom. She  
told me to surround it with these  
old rings. To protect us from the  
*Evil Eye*.

PARISA

Ah, yes. The Evil Eye is  
everywhere! Your mom is right.

SHAHRZAD

Yes, Sean likes it, too. Oh, sorry  
mom, Sean said to remind you: *The  
Doctor- 'No smoking.'*

PARISA

I don't inhale it much. I'll give  
it up. When our homeland is free.  
*What did he want?*

SHAHRZAD

His Parakita. She flew down.

PARISA

What?

SHAHRZAD

His Bird Kite. He asked many  
questions.

PARISA

Oh, Americans are like that. My  
dear, this country is wonderful.  
People, nice, friendly. But some  
guys are strange. And dangerous!

(coughs)

Azizam, better not talk to any man  
unless I or one of the boys are  
around.

Sexy KIRA is improvising jokes. [*Kira's jokes are from the  
stand-up comedian KIRA SOLTANOVICH.*]

KIRA

By the way, I'm Jewish Russian. I hope that's OK!? Any Persians here? Ha! My name is Kira *Soltan-ovich*. So we are related! You know what 'Kira' means in Persian, right?  
 (points to her groin)  
 "LOOK AT MY CUCUMBER!"

Laughter.

KIRA (CONT'D)

That's it for me. Now please help me welcome, my hilarious friend from Comedy Central, featured on the networks- ABC, NBC, CNN... The Jet Setter, the internationally-famous, SEAN ALANI.

Sean rushes on stage. Kira gives Sean a hug and exits.

SEAN

Hi! Thank you! What a crowd? *I love you all!* Except for the Losers over there on their iPhones. Texting other Losers? "*OMG! What am I doing here?*" *HEY!* DID YOU PAY TO GET IN HERE?

(laughter)

*Hello dear.*

(points to Shahrzad in front row)

My wife, you know she's a new *ethnic* arrival. But she's fast becoming one of the richest female immigrants in America!

(to an ethnic female)

You wanna get rich quick, too? Yeah? You just copy my wife. Every store we pass, she looks at the window: "*Honey Janam, let's buy that too, we save another 40%!*" 40% SAVINGS! Genius! Except, the richer she gets, the poorer I get!

Laughter. Shahrzad shifts somewhat uneasily in her chair.

36

INT. PLASTIC SURGEON CLINIC - DAY

36

Behind a screen, Shahrzad's scarred breast is being examined by DR. RICHARDS, 45. Having never been touched by a man who wasn't her immediate relative, she is shy and uncomfortable.

\*

DR. RICHARDS

They look like Keloid scars. But they are really hypertrophic scars. You didn't have any scarring anywhere before the acid attack?

SHAHRZAD

No.

DR. RICHARDS

They seem to be dormant. Do they itch or give you any needle pains?

SHAHRZAD

Yes, before. Not any more.

She quickly pulls her bra up to cover her breast. The doctor pulls the screen back.

DR. RICHARDS

Of course, we can do reconstructive work, and make it look perfect. But there's a risk hypertrophic scars might develop again...

SHAHRZAD

Scars!?

SEAN

What..what are the chances?

DR. RICHARDS

We don't have her family's complete history. The skin tests we did are inconclusive. There's a risk, some scar tissues might develop. In which case, there will be some itching and needle pains...

They look at her. Shahrzad turns to look out at the window.

37 INT./ EXT. WHITE LEXUS S.U.V / CAR PARK - DAY

37

Shahrzad looks out of the passenger window.

SEAN

He was just being extra careful. Because of their insurance liability. These guys are like God. They can fix anything.

SHAHRZAD

I don't want to do it.

SEAN

Why?

She turns to gaze at him.

SHAHRZAD

Why do I have to do it?

SEAN

Why!? I thought you wanted to.  
Doesn't every woman want to  
look...more pretty?

She stares at him to say "Am I not pretty enough for you?"  
Tense SILENCE.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Let's think about it. OK?

He starts the car and drives...

38

EXT. SEAN'S HOME / ENTRY GATE / STREET - DAY

38

Shahrzad comes out of her home. Pensive, she stands and looks to the left towards Elana/Sebastian's home: she sees no one. She turns to the right and walks towards the ocean.

Faint sound of CLASSICAL PIANO MUSIC. The music stops. She stops. The music is replayed again. More repetitions... The notes now sound tender, more moving...

She turns back and walks towards the rising, classic music.

She arrives at Elana's house where the music is LOUDEST. Across the fence, she spots Sebastian tending to the garden.

She moves to turn back when Sebastian sees Shahrzad. He waves and goes over to her.

SEBASTIAN

Hey, what's up? You wanna come in?  
(beat)  
Are you OK?

SHAHRZAD

Yes. I... Who is playing the Piano?

SEBASTIAN

Oh, that's Elana. She gives piano lessons.

SHAHZRAD  
 (gets an idea)  
 Piano teacher?  
 (he nods 'yes')  
 Thank you.

She leaves.

SEBASTIAN  
 Hey...

She hastens back towards her home.

39 INT. SEAN'S HOME / KITCHEN - NIGHT

39

Parisa is showing Shahrzad how to cook Basmati rice with Saffron, and how to make Tadik, the crispy bottom layer.

PARISA  
 Azizam. Sometimes a man and a woman-  
 it takes time. You know Sean always  
 loved you.  
 (points to the rice pot)  
 Oh no. Less, just a little Saffron.  
 Or, you will turn our skins to  
*yellow!*  
 (they laugh)  
 He is a good man.

SHAHZRAD  
 I know he is a good man. It is my  
 fault. My accident...

PARISA  
 My dear. Sean and I, we spoke about  
 it. *It's Ghesmat*. He will get used  
 to it. Look at you. Even the full  
 moon is jealous!

SHAHZRAD  
 Merci. Maybe I'm not experienced  
 enough.

PARISA  
 Nonsense! Many girls marry older  
 men, much older than Sean.  
 Americans, too. They are happy.  
 With lovely children...

SOUND of a door opening, then footsteps. Sean walks in,  
 wheeling in his CARRY-ON BAG. He gently kisses Shahrzad and  
 his mother on the cheeks.

SEAN

Salaam.

PARISA

Salam.

SHAHRZAD

Welcome back. How was it?

SEAN (CONT'D)

Cold, foggy, San Francisco. Always beautiful. Next time, come with me. Mmmm, that smells good.

He washes his hands at the kitchen sink and sits down at the Dining Table. Shahrzad serves him the appetizers.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Thanks.

PARISA

Sean jan. We have an idea. What if Shahrzad takes a few piano lessons from the woman, the piano teacher?

40

INT. SEAN'S HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

40

Dressed in seductive, thin layers of silk, Shahrzad listens to the music of Rumi's ecstatic poems.

FAST MONTAGE: She re-decorates the Californian designed bedroom into 'East meets West' style, mixing in warm colors - PERSIAN RUGS, MINIATURES, LAMP SHADES, KILIMS, ARTIFACTS...

SEAN

Beh, beh, Tehrangeles! Beautiful.

He returns to writing and re-writing on his desk in the corner of the room. Suddenly he yells, laughing out loud.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Yeah, YES! Wait till you hear these new jokes! Off the f-ing charts!

SHAHRZAD

Off the f-ing charts?

SEAN

Means 'Killer' jokes!

He dances around Shahrzad.

SHAHRZAD

How about the piano? Just a small one. Maybe later, I could teach children?

SEAN

OK, janam. Piano. Piano!

He switches off the light. In semi-darkness, Shahrzad and Sean play around. She laughs and embraces him. He kisses her tenderly, undresses her and makes love to her. She responds dutifully. After heavy breathing, Sean reaches satisfaction.

She turns away. A TEAR streams down her cheek. He embraces her.

41

INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM / KITCHEN - DAY

41

Elana's head is partly covered by a scarf, revealing only some of her lovely hair. She puts the Record Player needle on a VINYL ALBUM. A 2-minute track from Tchaikovsky's music begins to play.

ELANA

Darling, now!

Sebastian drops four brown EGGS into a pot of boiling water. He comes out of the kitchen and helps Elana set the Table.

Looking at Sebastian, Elana listens attentively.

ELANA (CONT'D)

Our new neighbor. She wants to take Piano lessons? What's she like?

SEBASTIAN

Smart. Pretty. A little uptight.

Elana gives him an "Aha!" look. He averts her gaze.

INSERT: Brown Eggs boil.

DOOR BELL chimes. Sebastian opens the door. Shahrzad walks in, holding a RED ROSE. She's dressed poetically in 'East-meets-West' personal style, adorned with ethnic jewelry and finger rings. [During the following, Sebastian and Shahrzad exchange a few discrete looks.]

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Hi. Come in. This is Elana.  
Shahr...

SHAHRZAD

*Shahrzad.* Hello.

Elana gazes at Shahrzad from head to her *red toe nails*.



ELANA

*Shéhérazade!* One of my favorite ballets. Princess *Shéhérazade*. Welcome.

SHAHRZAD

(she hands her the rose)  
Thank you. You know the *Shéhérazade* music?

ELANA

(smells the rose)  
Of course. The Russian. Rimsky-Korsakov's symphony. Come sit. Would you like some breakfast?

SHAHRZAD

No, thank you.

ELANA

Please have some breakfast with us.

SHAHRZAD

No, no, thanks. I just ate.

ELANA

You must have something.

SEBASTIAN

Maybe she's not hungry?

ELANA

Persian politesse. You must ask three times. How about some tea? This stuff is supposed to cure cancer!

SHAHRZAD

OK. Maybe with that sesame...roll?

Sebastian passes her a SESAME BAGEL. ELANA pours her tea.

SEBASTIAN

Bagel. With sesame seeds.

SHAHRZAD

Bay-gal. I like sesames.

ELANA

You remind me of Hanna. A Persian Jewish student. She had to flee Iran with her parents when she was 8. She cried, when they told her she couldn't bring her piano.

Tchaikovsky music ends.

ELANA (CONT'D)  
 Sebastian. Time! The eggs!  
 (to Shahrzad)  
 We like our eggs soft-boiled to  
 Tchaikovsky.

SHAHRZAD  
 Boiling eggs to Tchaikovsky?  
 Beautiful.

ELANA  
 So, you just arrived? What's going  
 on over there?

SHAHRZAD  
 Bad. A big open prison. Everything  
 is controlled by the Government.  
 Everybody has to speak, behave, the  
 same way. \*

ELANA  
 Really? That's crazy.  
 (pours her more coffee)  
 You know the Purim story in the  
 Book of Esther? I always wanted to  
 visit old Persia.

SHAHRZAD  
 Sorry, Iran is not Persia anymore,  
 If you are an artist you cannot  
 live there. A woman must wear  
 Hijab. Every day you have to lie to  
 yourself, lie to everyone... I  
 could not even sing in public.  
 Forgive me. I spoke too much.

42 INT. SEAN'S HOME / RAY'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME 42

Ray plays Shahrzad's wedding video on his digital camera. He  
 gazes at Shahrzad dancing...

43 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME 43

Shahrzad is playing a melody on the piano.

ELANA  
 You had a good teacher.

SHAHRZAD  
 I could learn more.

ELANA

Well, you are rushing through it.  
Just take your time.

SHAHRZAD

I am better if I sing also.

ELANA

You can sing, *also*? Go on.

Elana notices Shahrzad is shyly looking at Sebastian.

ELANA (CONT'D)

(to Sebastian)

Hey handsome, could you please go  
water some plants?

Reluctantly, Sebastian exits.

Shahrzad takes a deep breath. She sings deeply from the beats of her heart, spiritually in a pure, echoing, uplifting voice, with vibrato and glissando, like the longings of a Nightingale.

SHAHRZAD

(sings, English subtitle)

*"Advice does not help Lovers! They  
are not a mountain stream you could  
stop by building a dam across. A  
scholar does not understand what a  
drunk is feeling! Don't try to  
guess or figure out what Lovers  
drunk with love might do next."*

44 EXT. ELANA'S HOUSE / GARDEN - SAME TIME 44

Listening to Shahrzad's 'out of this world' voice, Sebastian remembers something. He goes to the front of his cottage and picks up a SMALL PHOTO BOX.

45 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME 45

ELANA

Wow! What was that about?

SHAHRZAD

A poem. By Rumi.

ELANA

Oh Rumi, I love Rumi! Hanna turned  
me on to him.

(she searches)

(MORE)

ELANA (CONT'D)

Where's it? Where is it.. Sebastian must have it. What does the song say?

ON Shahrzad's face: reacting to '*Sebastian's reading Rumi.*'

SHAHRZAD

I don't know how to translate it. They say translating poetry is like kissing behind a glass window. It's ...about how being in love is crazy... No one can explain it.

\*

ELANA

Isn't that the truth?  
(plays music)  
Maybe only music can explain love.

\*

SHAHRZAD

Yes, Music...I was wondering... Until we get a piano, maybe you could please teach me? Classical music.

ELANA

Hmmm...Right now I'm...not sure I have time.

SHAHRZAD

I like the Russians.

ELANA

(plays the famous classic)  
Here's yours, princess *Shéhérazade!*

FLASH: The music evokes a few images of the murder of Zara.

SHAHRZAD

(deeply moved)  
Beautiful. But...sad. I,...I like Tchaikovsky.

ELANA

Tchaikovsky? Good. Hmm...The children come after school. Maybe you could come *in the mornings?*

She nods 'Yes, thank you.' Elana leads her out.

46

EXT. ELANA'S HOUSE / GARDEN - CONTINUOUS

46

On her way out, Shahrzad sees Sebastian bathing under the garden shower. He's naked except for BLACK BOXER SHORTS, and a SILVER CHAIN holding a small CROSS around his neck.

Moved by his athletic symmetry, she lowers her eyes and looks away. She quickens her pace.

Sebastian sees Shahrzad. He looks towards Elana's gate to ensure that she isn't looking for him. He grabs a towel, covers himself, and runs to her, still somewhat wet.

SEBASTIAN

How did it go?

SHAHRZAD

Good.

SEBASTIAN

Could I show you something? That song, the one you just sang. It reminded me of Kurdistan.

SHAHRZAD

Kurdistan?

He gently pulls her under the light and shadow of the big tree. Now and then he looks to the house, making sure Elana is not watching. He opens the small photo box and shows Shahrzad some family PHOTOS.

SEBASTIAN

My parents. That's my mom, Estrella. In Spain. She wanted me to be born in Barcelona.

SHAHRZAD

Barcelona? What are you doing here?

SEBASTIAN

My dad, he was American, from here. He worked for the U.N. World Agriculture. He...he was killed.

SHAHRZAD

Sorry. Kil...!

SEBASTIAN

On a U.N. Mission. Up north in Iraq. Helping the farmers, near your country. A roadside bomb hit their car.

He sees Shahrzad's eyes become pensively sad.

SHAHRZAD

I...I'm sorry.

SEBASTIAN

I was small. Long ago. Sorry, I shouldn't have...

SHAHRZAD

It's OK. My Dad was also...killed. Iran-Iraq war. Poison-gassed.

SEBASTIAN

Poison gas! That's horrible.

INSERT FLASH: A lovely PHOTO of a YOUNG PERSIAN MAN, WIFE and a BABY. Then, IMAGES of hundreds of poison-gassed men lying in a dusty war zone, as if asleep.

SHAHRZAD

I was small. I never knew him.

SEBASTIAN

I'm sorry.

He points her to the SECOND PHOTO.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

You recognize the landscape? Iran Kurdish border. My Dad. That's Sherko, his driver. And that funny boy holding the kite? Me. The last time I saw them.

SILENCE. So close to Shahrzad, Sebastian is touched, but tries to hide his emotions.

He caresses her hair around her face. She opens her eyes, pushes his hand away, and rushes out.

47 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / GARDEN - NEXT DAY

47

Shahrzad and Parisa trim and water the roses.

Ray comes out on the Porch. He aims his mini digital camera to take videos of Shahrzad.

Shahrzad glances back and sees Ray stare at her. They keep their voices down.

SHAHRZAD

Oh, these smell so good.

(whispers)

*Sorry mom, but Ray keeps staring at me...*

PARISA

Oh, he is harmless. He admires you. Even I can't take my eyes off you!  
*Be careful of the thorns!*

(sighs)

He and his best friend were in a accident. Racing their bikes. His best friend fell and died. Ray's head hit a rock. In a coma for a long time. We thought we lost him.

SHAHRZAD

Oh God. Is that why he stammers?

PARISA

(she nods, "yes")

Thank God, he came back to us. He's smart. He works on Internet things from his room. He's shy. Gets depressed.

SHAHRZAD

Poor Ray.

PARISA

*Let us cut these beauties before they fall off.*

She holds Shahrzad hand.

PARISA (CONT'D)

Goli-man, be patient with our Ray. First his best friend died. Then, his Dad...

(restrains tears)

God bless his soul, his Dad passed away. His war wounds never healed. Ray adores Sean, like he's his dad. He will get used to you.

48

INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - MORNING

48

Shahrzad's piano lesson: sharing difficult and joyful moments with Elana, her teacher. Sometimes Elana plays to illustrate the graceful art of playing with heart-felt passion.

Shahrzad plays Tchaikovsky Valse Sentimentale (@ 1:45.)

ELANA

Honey, this is a Waltz! It needs to sound like a dance!

(gesturing)

1,2,3, 1,2,3 - much lighter on the upbeats!

Shahrzad plays it again. Elana listens, showing some approval. She indicates she should play it again.

Somewhat distressed, Shahrzad repeats it, earnestly.

Finally, she embraces Shahrzad 'Bravo' and leads her out.

ELANA (CONT'D)

It's coming along. I'm curious. A pretty girl like you, have you met someone special?

SHAHRZAD

I...

Sebastian appears. Shahrzad and Sebastian exchange quick glances.

Door CHIMES. Elana goes and opens the door. RACHEL, 30, an attractive woman arrives, bringing a large BASKET OF FRUITS.

ELANA

Oh, perfect timing!

(she hugs Rachel)

Shahrzad, my ace student. Rachel- the best sister in the world!

RACHEL

Hi Shah... Shahrzad. Thank you guys for all those roses.

49

INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / GUEST COTTAGE - NIGHT

49

Sebastian is in bed, reading RUMI'S POEMS. A well-used LORCA BOOK is on the night stand next to him. He SIGHS and reads.

He hears the SOUND of foot steps outside. He switches the light off, leaving the Rumi book on his pillow.

Soft KNOCKS on the door. Sebastian pretends to be asleep.

Louder knocks. SILENCE. A key turns in the door KNOB.

Elana in sexy lingerie walks in and goes over to his bed. She caresses him. He just lies there...



50 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / STREET - DAY 50

Wearing a SKIRT down to her knees, Shahrzad exits and is perplexed to see Sebastian in front of Elana's home. A BLONDE WOMAN kisses him on the mouth through a VOLVO passenger's window.

He gets into the car and drives off with the Blonde.

Shahrzad rushes towards the path down to the sea.

51 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON 51

Shahrzad takes off her flowing pale pink KANGA and flies it in the wind above her head. Using Ipod/EARBUDS, she hears Persian spiritual passionate dancing music. Close to the waves, she dances freely and walks with bare feet. Then, she sets the Kanga on the beach, with a water bottle, book, etc.

She watches an attractive HISPANIC BOY and a pretty BLOND GIRL, both her age, undress to their sexy swimming suits and play FRISBEE or BEACH BALL. \*

She takes off her top, revealing her large but stylish BLACK BRA. Sadly, she looks at the blond girl, sporting a sexy bikini: *a care-free life she cannot have.*

The beach ball (or frisbee) lands near her. She returns the ball(or frisbee) to the Players. \*

She gazes at the sea and walks towards the waves. She runs faster into the waves, lifting her skirt up to her thighs. Now up to her hips in the sea, she stares pensively at the horizon.

*She SINGS vocals in Persian louder and louder, till she runs out of breath.* SEAGULLS fly about.

52 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON , SAME DAY 52

SEAGULLS fly to and from the cliff.

Holding a BOOK, Sebastian jogs down the cliff's winding path to the beach.

On the beach, he looks up in awe of the dramatic cliff above, dotted with small SEA CAVES and flying birds.

Passing striking rock formations, he hears faint WEeping SOUNDS. He sees A SHAPE in silhouette, sitting near the waves, facing the Sun.

Cautiously, he walks towards the shape. Rising sound of a woman WEEPING, mixed with the 'ebb and flow' SOUNDS of the waves.

It's Shahrzad, wearing the same clothes as earlier sitting on her Kanga. He approaches slowly. She turns to him, looks away, and wipes her tears.

He drifts near her, keeping a respectful distance.

SEBASTIAN

Hi. Sorry. Didn't mean to surprise you. I... the other day, I shouldn't have... Your eyes. They made me drunk... Could you forgive me?

\*

SHAHRZAD

You don't know me. Why you touch me?

SEBASTIAN

Don't know. I...you're right. I'm truly sorry. I shouldn't have.

He sees a WRITING etched in the Sand. INSERT: Persian Calligraphy.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Beautiful. What does it say?

SHAHRZAD

Ghesmat. Destiny.

SEBASTIAN

Destiny? Many Spanish songs are about *El Destino*.

SHAHRZAD

Why they named you Sebastian?

SEBASTIAN

My dad. He loved Sebastian Bach. Listening to Bach's music was the only way he could sleep.

SHAHRZAD

Bach's music. So fatal.

(beat)

Who was that...woman?

SEBASTIAN

Huh! What woman?

SHAHRZAD

The blonde you drove in the car.

SEBASTIAN

Oh. Elana. Your piano teacher. She had a wig on.

SHAHRZAD

Oh! Why were you kissing her... I thought she was your boss?

SEBASTIAN

Huh! Ahh. Yes, she is my boss. Once a week I take her to the clinic.

(sadly)

She... She has breast cancer. Bad *Ghes..Ghesmat?*

SHAHRZAD

Breast cancer. Oh, sorry. But why you...

SEBASTIAN

(changing the subject)

She was a famous actress. In movies like SALOME'S KISS. Maybe you saw it?

SHAHRZAD

No. Sorry, I must go back.

She leaves. He quickly follows her, trying to engage her

SEBASTIAN

*Hey! Ahmm... "In your eyes I see the heavens. In the heavens I see your eyes."*

She turns back. Pleasantly surprised, she look at him.

He shows her the book. They pass the rock formations...

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Is this the guy? Rumi- Hidden Music of Love?

SHAHRZAD

Yes.

SEBASTIAN

Elana's book. I just read a few poems.

(points to the sun)

(MORE)

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)  
 About the Sun, Roses, Wine,  
 Love...very different from the Iran  
 we see on TV.

SHAHRZAD  
 He wrote those 800 years ago.

SEBASTIAN  
 800!

He picks up a SEASHELL, dries it out, and gives it to her.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)  
 Here. Hold it against your ear.  
 Listen  
 (she listens)  
 "A single Rose can be my garden; a  
 single Friend, my world." Gandhi.  
 (she smiles)  
 Why were you...may I ask, why you  
 were crying?

SHAHRZAD  
 I...something happened...back home.  
 (silence)  
 I wish you could read Rumi in  
 Persian. Then, maybe you understand  
 why sometimes I cry. *Translating  
 poetry...*

SEBASTIAN  
 ...is like kissing behind a glass  
 window.

SHAHRZAD  
 Who told you that?

SEBASTIAN  
 Elana. You told her that?  
 (she nods)  
 You were named after Sheherazade,  
 the story teller of 1001 Nights.  
 Wasn't she the young princess who  
 charmed the King and *saved all the  
 virgins from being beheaded?*

SHAHRZAD  
 I don't deserve to be called  
*Sheherazade.*

SEBASTIAN  
 Why? Why do you say that?

She looks away. He takes her hand. She pulls it away.

Again, he gently takes her hand and tenderly kisses her fingers, her arm up to her shoulder, kissing locks of her long hair, her neck,...

Eyes shut, she is about to fall into his arms, the shell drops out of her hand...

\*

She opens her eyes and gazes at him. She picks up the shell and rushes up the cliff path.

53 EXT. CLIFF OVERLOOKING THE OCEAN - DUSK 53

Shahzrad arranges her hair and walks towards her home.

A Man in a BLACK HELMET on a RED BIKE emerges from the shadows: *It's Ray. He watches Shahzrad enter their home.*

54 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - DUSK 54

Using a tiny Flash light, Sebastian recites Rumi to himself.

SEBASTIAN

*"The words of the greatest poet  
cannot capture the spell your eyes  
cast upon my heart."*

(he sighs)

*"The day your Love conquers me, I  
will become so mad, the lunatics  
will run away from me."*

He runs along the shore, playfully courting the waves.

55 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / GARDEN - DAY 55

Shahzrad is reading a book.

Sebastian, in a dark CHOCOLATE T-SHIRT, trims the branches of a tree in Sean's garden, using a tree LOPPER.

He glances at Shahzrad. She ignores him. He takes out a small RED PAPER AIRPLANE from his tool bag.

SEBASTIAN

Shahzrad!

She puts her finger to her lips and with her hand anxiously indicates to him not to speak to her.

He looks around and sees no one. He throws the paper airplane towards her. The airplane lands near Shahzrad.

From the side, Sean walks into the garden. He looks up the tree that Sebastian just trimmed.

SEAN  
Hi Sebastian. Good job.

SEBASTIAN  
Thanks.

SEAN  
Maybe take some roses for Elana?

Sebastian nods and goes to cut some roses.

*Shahrzad rushes to the airplane and picks it up and hides it.*

Sebastian leaves with the WHITE ROSES.

56 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / BEDROOM - DAY

56

WHITE ROSES. Elana finishes arranging the roses in a vase. PHOTOS of Elana's starring roles in movies on her dresser. She and Sebastian put new sheets on her bed. Sebastian's heart is elsewhere. He fumbles with the sheets.

ELANA  
No, no! Honey, *pull both ends right under*. Darling, you don't need to do this. With this damn economy, you know I would even do a reality show. No calls! I can't pay you any more.

\*  
\*  
\*

SEBASTIAN  
I can manage. My mother is helping. Until I get my green card.

Elana looks at Sebastian, "Honey, what's the matter?"

57 INT. SEAN'S HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT

57

Shahrzad listens to the seashell. She puts the seashell on the night stand and plays a Rumi poem, sung by a Persian singer, on her iPhone.

PERSIAN FEMALE SINGER (O.S.)  
*"When Love comes suddenly  
tapping on your window,  
run and let it in, but first  
shut the door of your reason."*

She cautiously re-reads the writing on Sebastian's paper airplane, unfurled.

INSERT: *"I slept well last night,  
But I woke up drunk. I must have dreamt about you."*

Her lips shape "RUMI!" She hears foot steps. She hides the paper plane under the bed. Sean enters.

58

INT. SEAN'S HOME / TV ROOM - DAY

58

Parisa finishes a cigarette, exhaling the smoke out the window. She sits. Shahrzad massages her back.

PARISA

Janam, bless your sweet hands.  
Please hand me those devils.

She hands her the pills with a glass of water. But Parisa swallows them with a glass of black tea.

Ray walks in and smells the smoke. He sprays the room with a ROSE AIR FRESHENER and plays with his iPhone.

SHAHRZAD

Mom. Sean is coming back any  
minute. No black tea...

RAY

No tea except in the morning.

PARISA

Well, it's morning in Tehran.

Ray breaks into innocent laughter.

Sean walks in. He sniffs the lingering smoke. He rushes to Parisa, lovingly kisses her on the cheek, takes away the tea and gives her the glass of water.

SEAN

(to Shahrzad)  
Didn't we say absolutely no  
cigarettes? And no tea except in  
the morning?

RAY

Well it's morning in Tehran.

SEAN

SHUT UP RAY!

Embarrassed in front of Shahrzad, Ray rushes upstairs.

PARISA  
By God, what's with you son?

SEAN  
Mama Jan. No smoking. And no black  
tea. Please. Remember the Doctor?

He warmly embraces and kisses his mother again, then starts  
to go upstairs.

SEAN (CONT'D)  
(nicely to Shahrzad)  
Azizam, when you finish, could you  
come upstairs?

59 INT. SEAN'S HOME / RAY'S BEDROOM - SAME DAY 59

KNOCK. Knock on the door.

SEAN (O.S.)  
Please open the door.

More knocks. No reply.

SEAN (O.) (CONT'D)  
Wanna come tomorrow?  
(silence)  
Maybe play the guitar? \*

Ray is lying on his bed, face down. He gets up.

He opens the door and hugs Sean as if he were his father.

60 INT. SEAN'S HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER 60

Sean is showing Shahrzad a combination SAFE LOCK.

SEAN  
Sorry. I lost it. My mom, she  
worries me. She already had a heart  
attack.

SHAHRZAD  
Oh God.

SEAN  
Here, push 1.9.7.9. 1979. The year  
of our Islamic revolution! Pop-it  
opens!



61

INT. SEAN'S HOME / UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR - SAME TIME

61

Ray passes Sean's bedroom. He hears Sean and Shahrzad's voices. Ray catches glimpses of the following:

Shahrzad sees JEWELRY, a WAD of \$100 BILLS and a small shiny SILVER GUN inside the SAFE.

SEAN

Mama's jewelry. You can keep yours here, too.

SHAHRZAD

Is that real?

SEAN

The gun? Yes. And this chain with the big KEY is my Dad's.

(He holds her hand)

You know, they gave these Keys to the soldiers in the Iran-Iraq war to wear around their necks. The key to enter *Paradise* if they got killed. We managed to escape. *That's how with this key, we entered California!*

They smile.

SHAHRZAD

Do we really need the gun?

SEAN

You're gonna love this country. But my Dad was right: this country is too damn free! Some guys go crazy, stealing and shooting people.

(tenderly holds her hand)

Azizam, I love you. This is our home. I just want you to be safe.

SHAHRZAD

(embraces him)

Thank you.

He closes and locks the safe.

SEAN

Next show in New York. You wanna come and see New York? The city that never sleeps!

SHAHRZAD

Yes, one day. I should stay to look  
after your mother.

SEAN

OK.

(serious)

You've been talking to Sebastian. I  
know it's innocent. He may  
misunderstand. Please stop. OK?

ON Shahrzad's face: pensively, she nods "OK."

62 INT. SEAN'S HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - NIGHT , FEW DAYS LATER 62 \*

In semi light, Shahrzad is asleep, alone in bed, the opened  
RUMI BOOK beside her, marked with a dried ROSE PETAL. She  
awakens and looks at the Clock. It's 3:10 am.

She closes her eyes and sleeps. The room turns dark.

She turns and shakes... *Rimsky's Sheherazade music fades in  
faintly.*

63 EXT. TEHRAN STREETS / ALLEYS - DAY , FLASHBACK 63

In blue nightmarish colors, chased by the STRONG BASIJI and  
the SECRET AGENT, Shahrzad runs...

STRONG BASIJI

Immoral! Prostitute!

She runs faster and faster, leaving the men behind. The gusty  
wind blows her hair and headscarf...

She stumbles and falls, hanging onto the bird cage.

The men get closer, shouting: *PROSTITUTE...*

*The men close in.* Shahrzad's desperate face...

SCREAMING, Shahrzad awakens, bolting into the screen,  
covering her right breast with her hand.

63A INT. SEAN'S HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - PRESENT 63A \*

Parisa rushes in to hold Shahrzad. Shahrzad's bra has  
slipped. \*

PARISA  
 Azizam, OK, Janam, OK...  
 (shocked to see the scar)  
 Oh! May they burn in Jehanem.

She embraces Shahrzad who buries her face in her bosom.

Sean walks in holding a SMALL SUITCASE. He looks at Parisa.

PARISA (CONT'D)  
 It's OK. She had a bad dream.

64 INT. SEAN'S HOME / RAY'S BEDROOM / WINDOW - DAY 64

Ray's binocular P.O.V: Shahrzad hangs up her lingerie, including her red bra, on a LINE to dry.

65 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY 65

Shahrzad plays a Tchaikovsky piece.

ELANA  
 No! Honey, anyone can teach you  
 that. Show me more!

Elana motions as if she's trying to draw out more feeling from Shahrzad's performance.

SHAHRZAD  
 OK. I try.

ELANA  
 There's so much to it- there's  
 sadness, there's passion. Just  
 think about it: if you were  
 listening, would you want to hear  
 this?

Elana plays accurately but stiffly.

ELANA (CONT'D)  
 All the notes are there. Rhythm's  
 correct. But what about this?

Elana plays the same passage with feeling. Shahrzad's expression shows that she understands.

ELANA (CONT'D)  
 Now, I need you try it again. And  
 this time, imagine there's nobody  
 else around you. I'm not here. No  
 one's here. It's just you.

Shahrzad closes her eyes, takes a deep breath to relieve her inhibitions, and plays again. Elana looks at her, admiring both her beauty and her passion.

ELANA (CONT'D)

Yes, YES!  
(getting excited)  
That's Tchaikovsky!

Elana joins to play.

ELANA (CONT'D)

And if you were Beethoven...

ELANA plays the opening bars of Hammerklavier.

Shahrzad applauds 'Bravo.' Elana kisses her on the cheek.

ELANA (CONT'D)

Bravo! I think you're getting it.

SHAHRZAD

Thank you, thank you. Oh, do you want to hear the music I told you about?

She taps on her iPhone. PERSIAN MUSIC. Playfully, she shows Elana Persian, graceful dancing, with arms and hands.

ELANA

Your eyes are sparkling. You found a young man!

Shahrzad shrugs her shoulder and continues to dance. They dance. Elana *gets a little aroused by her sensual dance*. She tries Shahrzad's feminine hand movements.

Suddenly, Elana stops. Dizzily, she sits on the nearest chair.

SHAHRZAD

You're OK?

ELANA

Just a little nauseated. My right arm bugs me. Can't move it freely. Go on. I wanna see more.

She continues dancing while keeping an eye on Elana. *Elana bends over and vomits. Shahrzad runs to help her.*

SHAHRZAD

Oh God.

She rushes to the kitchen and brings PAPER TOWELS and cleans her mouth, then wipes the floor. She embraces Elana.

ELANA

Sorry. Damn Chemo! Did you know I'm sick?

SHAHRZAD

Yes. I'm sorry. I pray it goes away. I'm sure it will go away...

ELANA

I've been fighting it for so long... It won't go away.

SHAHRZAD

I... I've a big scar. It will... never go away.

She looks at Shahrzad. She shows Elana her scarred breast.

ELANA

What!?!... Oh, honey...

They fall into each other's embrace.

66 EXT. ELANA'S HOUSE / GARDEN / ENTRY GATE - SAME TIME 66

Sebastian arrives; walks across the garden; puts several shopping bags on the floor; uses his key and enters.

67 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS 67

Sebastian walks in. He sees Elana and Shahrzad embracing. He notes the wet floor and the paper towels. He rushes over and takes out a JOINT from a BOX on the Coffee Table. He lights it and hands it to Elana. She inhales it.

SEBASTIAN

(to Elana)

Relax. Breathe.

(to Shahrzad)

Helps to stop the nausea.

He embraces Elana. *His hand touches Shahrzad's hand behind Elana's back. They glance at each other. They quietly withdraw their hands.*

ON Elana: Oh! She thinks there may be something going on between Sebastian and Shahrzad...

68

INT. SEAN'S HOME / TV ROOM - NIGHT

68

Watching the basketball game on TV...

SHAHRZAD

Mom. Did you pick up my red bra I  
hang on the line?

PARISA

No. Good night dear.

She kisses Parisa good night. Parisa exits.

Sean comes back in with a BOWL of POPCORN and BEER BOTTLES.  
He sits down and hugs Shahrzad. Eating popcorn; drinking  
beer.

She is amused to see Sean act like an all American boy.  
Watching the end of the basketball game, Sean YELLS out the  
names of his favorite players. He kisses Shahrzad and jumps  
up and down, celebrating victory.

Shahrzad clicks the REMOTE to another channel- a *replay* of  
NEDA SOLTAN, the young music student shot to death in the  
Tehran street protests after Ahmadinejad's fraudulent  
election. CHRISTINE AMANPOUR appears on TV. \*

SEAN

Oh, I love this woman.

CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR ON TV

Today is the Anniversary of the  
assassination of NEDA SOLTAN in  
Tehran. Around the world people are  
commemorating the tragic murder of  
this young music student.

Shahrzad cringes in the sofa, covering her head with her  
hands, looking at the replay of footage she's seen on  
YouTube.

Sean embraces her.

SEAN

You knew her?

SHAHRZAD

No, oh God, no. I studied with her  
music teacher.

CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR ON TV  
 You may recall this amateur video taken of Neda Soltan shot to death, June 20, 2009, by a Basiji-a Revolutionary Guard. Today Amnesty International again urged Iran to bring to justice, *Abbas Kargar Javid*, the self-confessed murderer of Neda.

SEAN  
 May she Rest in Peace.

CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR ON TV  
 Iran initially accused the CIA for Neda's murder. But Abbas was caught in this video saying in Persian "*I didn't mean to kill her...*" Here's his ID photo stripped from him by witnesses at the time of the murder. Abbas has since *disappeared*, probably hidden and protected by his employers- the government.

69 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / GARDEN / STREET - DAY 69

Through the side garden door, Sebastian sees a partial view of Shahrzad watering the rose bushes.

He kisses "Parakita", the Kite, flies her up, and discretely brings her down into Shahrzad's garden.

SEBASTIAN  
 Oh, not again! Sorry. Please...

70 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / PORCH - SAME TIME 70

Parisa appears on the Porch.

PARISA  
 Azizam, go on. Give him some roses for the poor woman. Tell him to be careful with his *Bird*. Next time the cat might eat it!

She lights a cigarette, enjoying puffing away in private.

71

INT. SEAN'S HOME / RAY'S BEDROOM / GARDEN - SAME TIME

71

Ray secretly points a small RADAR REFLECTOR at Shahrzad and Sebastian. Wearing HEADPHONES with pointed tiny ANTENNAS, he eavesdrops on them, capturing snatches of their dialog.

Ray's Binocular P.O.V: Shahrzad rushes to the Parakita, stuck in the bushes. Making cooing sounds, she retrieves Parakita and hands her to Sebastian. [*Again, during this exchange, she does not smile. Attentively she listens and politely responds with her serious eyes. They whisper, trying not to be heard by Parisa.*]

SHAHRZAD

You must train her to behave.

SEBASTIAN

(playfully, to charm her)

*"When Love steals into your alley,  
he has no choice. He longs to kiss  
every lock of your hair, he has no  
choice..."*

SHAHRZAD

Oh, you taught Rumi to Parakita,  
too!

She picks a few red roses and hands them to him.

SHAHRZAD (CONT'D)

For Elana.

SEBASTIAN

(addressing the rose)

*"You are the Rose. I'm the Thorn.  
Don't show your beauty without me."*

SHAHRZAD

Hmm! Rumi sounds strange in  
English.

(whispers)

Seriously, my family doesn't like  
it I talk to men...

Distant SOUND of a phone ringing.

PARISA (O.S.)

Shahrzad jan. The phone, the phone!

SEBASTIAN

Could you maybe meet me tomorrow at  
the cliff? We're gonna fly up her  
friend...

\*



She rushes towards Parisa, without looking back.

72 INT. SEAN'S HOME / RAY'S BEDROOM / WINDOW - SAME TIME 72

Satisfied, Ray touches END on his iPhone.

He goes to his bed and pulls Shahrzad's red bra from under the pillow. Tenderly, he places it on the pillow. He scrolls down on his iPhone and taps. Upbeat Persian dancing music from the wedding plays. He dances around as if he were dancing with his beloved.

73 EXT. HOLLYWOOD / STREET - DAY 73 \*

Sean and Shahrzad eat gelato ice cream, looking at shop windows with 40% SALES SIGNS. She enters a shop. Sean reluctantly follows.

74 INT. VOLVO / STREET NEAR SEAN'S HOME - DAY 74

Shahrzad drives. Sean is in the passenger seat. She parks her 2-Door VOLVO in front of their home. The back seats are packed with all the STUFF she bought on sale.

SEAN

Shahrzad jan, Aafareen, excellent.  
Except you nearly ran over the cop!

\*

SHAHRZAD

He was illegal- John walking.  
Didn't you see how he stared at me?

SEAN

That's why he didn't give you a  
ticket. Azizam, it's 'J' walking,  
not John walking!

She laughs. They carry the STUFF and enter their home.

75 INT. SEAN'S HOME / PIANO ROOM - DAY 75

A SMALL UPRIGHT PIANO is now against the wall to the side of the Garden French window that opens to the garden. To the side, there is a MacBook Pro on a desk, with a chair. Sean signs a DELIVERY RECEIPT and hands it to a DELIVERY MAN holding a CLIPBOARD, along with a tip. He leaves.

\*

\*

Shahrzad moves the STOOL in front of the piano. She checks some MUSIC SHEETS, exercises her hands and plays Tchaikovsky. Parisa, Sean and Ray listen. She stops. They applaud.

SEAN  
 Bravo!

PARISA  
 Afarin!

SHAHRZAD  
 Thank you. I'll get better. Once I  
 get used to my new friend.

Sean shows some *jealousy when he sees her caressing and kissing the piano as if it were a lover*. She goes and gratefully embraces Sean.

75A INT. RECORDING MUSIC STUDIO - DAY (OR NIGHT) 75A

Music Producers Paul, 35, African American, and JENNY, 33, a Caucasian at a recording bench. They record and watch Shahrzad, with headphones, singing in Persian.

PAUL  
 OK. Cool. Beautiful. Sh...Shahrzad,  
 could you try something in English?  
 (Shahrzad indicates "NO")  
 Hmm. How about Spanish?

Shahrzad shakes here head. The producers look at each other.

76 INT. SEAN'S HOME / TV ROOM - DAY 76

Lightly snoring, Parisa is asleep on the Sofa. Sean opens the window drapes. He touches her forehead. A Persian TV satellite talk show flickers in the background.

PARISA  
 Oh, God. I had a nightmare. How's  
 Shahrzad?

SEAN  
 She's coming down.

They hear FOOTSTEPS from the staircase. *They whisper.*

PARISA  
 I mean, how are you two doing?

SEAN  
 Mama jan. Take your pills.

PARISA  
 Janam, I'm worried. Not knowing if  
 you two are happy. If I'll ever see  
 any Grandchildren...

SEAN  
Don't worry. You know who takes  
good care of all of us?

PARISA  
Who?

SEAN  
*Ghesmat.*

Shahrzad hears "Ghesmat" as she enters with a breakfast TRAY.

77 INT. SEAN'S HOME / UPSTAIRS CORRIDOR - DAY 77

Shahrzad comes out of her bedroom into the corridor.

As usual, he tries not to stutter, with some success. \*

RAY SHAHRZAD  
Hi Hi.

RAY  
May I.. shshow you my guitar? \*

78 INT. SEAN'S HOME / RAY'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 78

APPLE computers and a couple of MONITORS on a desk.

Shahrzad looks at a cute PHOTO of Younger Ray and a Blond Boy  
on their bikes, both laughing, their teeth in braces.

SHAHRZAD  
Is that your friend...the accident?

He cannot bear to say it so he just nods "Yeah."

SHAHRZAD (CONT'D)  
So sorry.

She sees a POSTER of herself blown up in her bridal gown,  
wearing the Persian hat, embracing Sean at the wedding.

SHAHRZAD (CONT'D)  
You took that?

RAY  
Ya.

SHAHRZAD  
*Afarieen.* Sean says you play well.

Shyly, he starts to play a hot riff. Abruptly, he stops. \*

RAY  
Not as well as you pplay the piano.

SHAHRZAD  
Play more. I like it.

He enthusiastically plays a bit more, then he stops.

RAY  
You like my bbrother?

SHAHRZAD  
Yes, of course! My husband.

PARISA (O.S.)  
Shahrzad! Ray! Come down.

RAY  
You llove him?

PARISA (O.S.)  
Lunch is ready.

SHAHRZAD  
We're coming down.

79 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON 79

Flying a GREEN KITE, Sebastian looks behind but sees no one.

80 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / STREET - SAME TIME 80

Shahrzad looks up to the sky. In the distance, she sees the GREEN KITE in the sky. She runs away from the cliff, trying to lose Ray, who is stealthily following her on his bike.

She veers across the street, barely missing a PASSING CAR. Hidden by the PARKED CARS, she ducks down a side street.

Ray loses sight of Shahrzad.

Shahrzad cautiously sticks her head out from a corner street way behind Ray. She glances at the Green Kite in the sky and runs towards its direction.

81 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - SAME TIME 81

Shahrzad jogs down the path to the beach and sees the Green Kite up in the sky, floating above the ocean.

SEBASTIAN  
HEY, SHAHRZAD!

She turns and looks at him. She checks to make sure she's not being followed. She goes to him.

With Sean and Elana on their minds, both are emotionally conflicted. Their body language is of increasing attraction while they speak about other things. Now and then, they get closer but stay silent...

SHAHRZAD  
How come you like flying kites? Not very American.

SEBASTIAN  
When I visited my Dad in Kurdistan. Sherko, he taught me about kites. He gave me that one at the airport, the day I left.

He hands her the Kite handle. Their hands touch and linger.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)  
Feel it. Give it more, only when it asks for more. Otherwise, she fights you. You lose her.

He goes closer to her body and guides her hands.

SHAHRZAD  
Oh, if *it* fights, it must be a *she*!

SEBASTIAN  
All beautiful, moving things are she's. Sail boats, flowers, the moon...your hair...

He caresses her hair. Nervously, she accepts his touch. They silently look at each other.

82 INT. SEAN'S HOME / TV ROOM - SAME TIME

82

Parisa finishes smoking her cigarette out the window, into the garden. She goes and sits on the sofa, takes a MINT from the Table, and reluctantly sprays the AIR FRESHENER in the room. She starts to knit on her EMBROIDERY. Her SEWING BASKET is nearby on the Table.

Upset and anxious, Ray walks in, helmet in hand.

PARISA

There you are. Ray jan, are you OK?  
 (he nods)  
 Play me that Rumi song Shahrzad  
 likes. Calms my heart.

He scrolls down iTunes on his iPhone. He finds the Rumi poem sung by a Persian spiritual singer. He raises the volume and puts the iPhone close to Parisa. She holds his hands.

PARISA (CONT'D)

Ay Goli-man, this is divine. But,  
 much better with a little tea.

83

EXT. MALIBU BEACH - DUSK

83

SEBASTIAN

Yeah...music is also a *She*. *MUSIC:*  
*The art of the Muses?*

SHAHRZAD

Muses? The Three Women, The Three  
 Graces?

SEBASTIAN

Yep. Except they say there were  
 Nine Goddesses. Nine Muses. Song,  
 Poetry, Theater, Writing, Music,  
 Dance,.. Forgot the others.

SHAHRZAD

I wish our Imams knew all this! *Oh,*  
*the wind! I have to give her more.*  
 When I was small, I used to fly  
 these without thinking. The kites  
 were much smaller. I guess they  
 were just little girls!

SEBASTIAN

*Touché!*

SHAHRZAD

You know green is the color of our  
 Freedom Movement?

SEBASTIAN

Yep. But Garcia Lorca was first.

SHAHRZAD

Garcia! Lorca?

SEBASTIAN

Lorca, the Spanish poet. He wrote,  
*"Verde que te quiero verde."*  
*"Green, how I love you green."*

Shahzad looks back to ensure Ray is not watching. He moves closer to her. Despite herself, she enjoys his closeness. In silence, they look up at the Kite dancing in the sky...

84

INT. SEAN'S HOME / KITCHEN / TV ROOM - SAME TIME

84

INSERT: Tea Pot atop the boiling Kettle on the stove. STEAM is struggling to whistle out of the Kettle. The Rumi spiritual music continues. Parisa COUGHS.

RAY

Mama. Wwill you ever give up smoking?

PARISA

Insha'Allah! [God Willing!]

RAY

(laughs)  
 Ththat mmeans...*Not likely!*

PARISA

Bad boy! Azizam- where's the tea?

RAY

Kkettle hasn't yet wwhistled.

PARISA

Oh, for God's sake, bring the tea.  
 I will WHISTLE for you!

RAY

(he hugs his mom)  
 I llove you, Mom. Shs...Shahzad...

PARISA

What? Where is she?

Ray takes Shahzad/Sebastian's crumpled RED PAPER AIRPLANE out of his pocket and hands it to her. She reads Rumi's love poem. In shock, she shakes her head...

85

EXT. MALIBU BEACH - SAME TIME

85

Sebastian shows a well-used LORCA BOOK to Shahzad. INSERT: Poems by Federico Garcia Lorca.

SEBASTIAN

His mother was a Pianist. He also played the piano.

SHAHRZAD

Lorca was a man?

SEBASTIAN

Yeah.

Shahrzad looks behind. He hands her the Lorca book. They tentatively hold hands. He gently embraces her.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Why are your folks so...? I don't know, so suspicious? Is Sean your uncle?

SHAHRZAD

(beat)

No.

Her iPhone rings. She looks at the screen, picks up the call, indicates "Hush" to Sebastian, and hands him the Kite handle.

SHAHRZAD (CONT'D)

OK. I'm on my way.

(to Sebastian)

Sorry. Mom is bad, sick. Thanks.

She puts the Lorca book in her bag, lowers her eyes, touches his hand, and runs back.

86

INT. SEAN'S HOME / TV ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

86

Shahrzad rushes some PILLS and a GLASS OF WATER to Parisa, who's holding her chest, trying to breathe.

SHAHRZAD

Mom. Quick. Please take these.

PARISA

Ray jan. Go upstairs. Shahrzad and I, we have women's talk.

Glancing at them, Ray leaves reluctantly. They whisper.

PARISA (CONT'D)

Goli-man! Didn't we talk? Not to speak to any man without one of us? What's with you and Sebastian?



SHAHRZAD

Nothing.

PARISA

NOTHING! You're risking your life and all this for a *gardener*? You're going to shame us all!? Oh! And your poor mother!?

SHAHRZAD

Just someone to talk to. About poetry. Music.

PARISA

Azizam, don't fool yourself. Or, us! What if Sean finds out you are still talking to *that guy*?

SHAHRZAD

Mama jan, please calm down. Drink, please drink. Nothing will happen.

In the shadows, Ray eavesdrops. Parisa starts to cough. Ray becomes anxious and agitated about his mother's health.

PARISA

What will happen if you run off with this...*Sebastian*, then he drops you? Who do you turn to? Who will take you, huh? Especially if they find out about your *damage*...

Freeze! Shahrzad lowers her eyes. Parisa embraces her.

PARISA (CONT'D)

Oh! My dear, sorry. Goli-man, I mean you know our men. Who would marry a *divorced woman*? Let alone a woman with an *accident*?

(more coughing)

Azizam,... Precious as my own daughter. Promise...promise me...

Shahrzad hugs her.

SHAHRZAD

I promise Mom. I promise.  
(shouts up to Ray)

RAY JAN. Come down. COME. HELP!

Ray runs to help his Mom.

Shahrzad runs with the tea glass and the tea pot towards the kitchen. SOUNDS of the main gate being opened. The GLASS drops and shatters on the floor.

Sean enters. He sees Shahrzad on her knees, picking up the broken tea glass, black tea streaming on the floor. He sniffs the smell of tobacco and rushes to his mom.

BLOOD. One of Shahrzad's fingers bleeds.

Parisa is hyperventilating, her hand on her heart.

SEAN

Damn it. Not again! Mama jan. Mama jan.

(to Shahrzad)

HOW MANY FREAKING TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU?

Parisa tries to say something but she breaks into a coughing fit.. Ray runs upstairs.

SHAHRZAD

I didn't...

SEAN

Call *AMBULANCE*. 911. Mama jan, mama jan. Breathe, breathe. Here, drink...

\*

Shahrzad calls 911. Ray races back with an INHALER.

Desperately, Sean pounds her heart...

Eyes popping, Parisa is still trying to say something.

Ray and Sean put the Inhaler on her mouth...

Suddenly, her EYES FREEZE. Parisa is no more. In tears, Sean collapses on her chest. Ray weeps and embraces Sean...

FADE TO BLACK.

87

INT. SEAN'S HOME / PIANO ROOM - DAY

87

Sean, Shahrzad, Ray, Elana, Sebastian and FIVE CLOSE RELATIVES in black attire, mourn Parisa's death. Sean and Ray are devastated.

-- Next to Sebastian is Elana, her head covered with a head scarf.

-- Shahrzad passes HALVA sweets and light brown tea to guests. She offers Halva first to Elana who takes one and touches Shahrzad hand in sympathy. Then, she offers the Halva to Sebastian.

-- ON Elana: she notices a special *glance* between Shahrzad and Sebastian. She thinks and wears her DARK GLASSES.

-- Pari and Roxanne discretely glance at the shy Ray whose eyes are moist with tears. \*

-- *Sean gives Sebastian a cold, stony look.*

-- Sean whispers something to Ray. Ray takes out his iPhone, scrolls down and taps.

-- The upbeat Shahrzad's "RAPTURE" music plays LOUDLY!

-- Surprise! Some of the relatives and the weeping women break into smiles which they try to control...

RAY  
(innocently)  
Ssorry... I change it. \*

-- Ray quickly changes the music to the same Rumi spiritual chanting that Parisa loved.

-- Some of the women return to crying or at least try to...

-- *Beneath her dark glasses, a tear streams down Elana's cheek.*

88

EXT. SEAN'S HOME / STREET / GARDEN - DAY

88

*Shahrzad appears at the window and secretly witnesses the following:*

Sebastian stands near the garden of Sean's home with the Red Parakita (the Kite) in his hand. He searches for Shahrzad but sees no one. He gently throws Parakita into Sean's garden.

SEBASTIAN  
Oh! Not again! Hello. Anyone?

From the side, Sean appears. He grabs the Kite.

ON Shahrzad: she flinches, worried about 'Parakita.'

SEAN  
Hey man! What're you doing?

SEBASTIAN  
Please don't hurt her.

SEAN  
SHOW SOME RESPECT!

SEBASTIAN  
Sorry, sometimes she flies off.  
It's a *Chinese Bird*...

SEAN  
Chinese! Next time it will be a  
*dead Bird*! Here!  
(throws him a \$100 bill)  
Your last freaking pay. Don't ever  
come near this house, again. Go!  
GO!

89 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY

89

PHONE RINGING. Sebastian enters and sees Elana by the Piano, staring at the ringing phone to her side. He walks over and picks up the phone.

SEBASTIAN  
Hello...

Elana looks at him. His face shows that he's trying to hide 'bad news.' He hangs up and looks at Elana.

ELANA  
No?

She plays a tender composition of her own, with pathos pouring out her emotions about her love of music, her hopeful spirituality, and her tumultuous journey through life.

She finishes and lowers her head.

He goes over to her. She speaks with a broken voice, without sentimentality...

ELANA (CONT'D)  
Am I just a ticking time bomb?  
(silence)  
You're not feeling sorry for me!  
Are you!?

SEBASTIAN  
No... I...

ELANA  
I know about you and Shahrzad!

SEBASTIAN

No, no...

ELANA

Don't 'no, no' me, okay? I'm sick,  
but I'm still here, I'm still me.  
We don't lie...

SEBASTIAN

I didn't...

ELANA

*DIDN'T?* You think I don't recognize  
falling in love? Or out?

SEBASTIAN

I didn't, I didn't know how  
or...what to tell you. I was going  
to... I'm sorry.

He gently embraces her. Staying calm, she doesn't respond.

ELANA

It's okay. You, do what you need.  
Just don't hang around here because  
you pity me.

Sorrowful, he gazes at her, bends down, and kisses her HANDS.

90

EXT. MALIBU CLIFF STREET - LATE AFTERNOON

90

Coming up from the cliff path, Shahrzad sees Sebastian walk towards her, the red Parakita Bird in his hand. Both calm on the surface, but conflicted inside. Knowing they mustn't be seen together, they speak in undertones as they slowly pass each other. They steal a glance at each other.

SEBASTIAN

Hi.

SHAHRZAD

Is Parakita OK?

SEBASTIAN

Yeah.

She smiles a little and moves on. He walks towards the cliff.

KIRA

Yeah, first time ever an American of Iranian origin is invited to perform at this shrine of comedy.

(applause)

Please help me welcome, the incomparable SEAN ALANI!

Sean and Ray run in. Kira hugs and kisses both and exits. Ray goes to his guitar at the back. Sean takes the microphone. \*

Shahzad sits in the front row in a reserved seat.

SEAN

Thank you! Ladies and Gentlemen. Friends! As some of you know, last week my mother

(turns to Ray)

*Our mother...passed away. Thank you for all your kind wishes. We almost cancelled tonight. My mother, my...*

SILENCE. This is tough and touching. Sean resists tears. The audience freezes, not expecting this.

Tears swell in Shahzad's eyes and in those of A FEW FANS.

SEAN (CONT'D)

May she rest in peace, my mother is the reason I'm here with you. It was my mother who encouraged me to choose comedy as a way of life. She taught me comedy and tragedy are the twin elements, the yin and yang of life. There's too much tragedy in life. That I must never, never stop to laugh and to cause laughter, no matter what!

(applause)

Life goes on. So will this show!

Huge applause. He nods to Ray. Ray plays his guitar wildly. Shahzad laughs with the audience- all loving Sean's sexy dancing to the rhythm of Ray's guitar. \*

Her iPhone vibrates. She reads: INSERT:

***"Like the shadow of a rose, I must live close to the Rose. If I were separated from You, I would turn entirely to Thorn."***

Sean freezes in a sexual pose in synch with Ray's stopped guitar. Laughter and applause. \*

SEAN (CONT'D)

My brother!

Ray shyly bows and exits the stage. Sean shifts to his engaging, upbeat, and speedy delivery. \*

SEAN (CONT'D)

So I take my Persian wife to Costco. You know, for a bit of culture. Persians, they don't buy food at Costco. They've their own Jewish Kosher and Muslim Halal shops! They go to Costco just to buy toilet paper. 40% savings! That's how they get rich.

(laughter)

They themselves don't even need Toilet Paper. Toilet Paper is for their American guests. Persians have invented their own 'nuclear' cooling version of the French bidet: A garden water hose in the toilet! Yes! Sometimes our American guests ask: "Hey guys, are you planning to grow vegetables in the bathroom?"

Laughter. Shahrzad signals Sean "*I will be back*", and leaves.

92

INT. COMEDY STORE / ENTRY HALL - MOMENTS LATER

92

Shahrzad comes out of the WOMEN'S BATHROOM. She's about to re-enter the club when...she sees Sebastian. Her heart jumps up to her throat.

SHAHRZAD

What...? I thought you were joking?

SEBASTIAN

*"O Rose, the Thorn has no choice."*

She shakes her head.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

I thought I show you something.  
Just outside.

(he takes her hand)

Come.

SHAHRZAD

I can't. I have to tell you something.

SEBASTIAN

Come! You can tell me after.

93 EXT. COMEDY STORE / STREET - CONTINUOUS

93

Sebastian pulls Shahrzad out. He points to a RED SIGN above a building next door.

SEBASTIAN

You see that Red Sign? A surprise inside. You will love it.

SHAHRZAD

I can't.

She heads back into the Comedy Store. He pulls her hands.

SEBASTIAN

Please.

SHAHRZAD

Thanks. I can't.

SEBASTIAN

I swear by Rumi's and Lorca's poems we'll be back here in no time.

94 INT. FLAMENCO CLUB - NIGHT

94

A MALE FLAMENCO DANCER, 38, practices dancing sensually to upbeat FLAMENCO MUSIC on stage. There are only a couple clients by the Bar. The rest of the club is empty.

At the bar, Shahrzad looks at Sebastian as if to say "where's the big surprise?"

SEBASTIAN

Kinda of early. You should see this place at midnight. They even jump on the tables. Dance?

SHAHRZAD

No. I...

He pulls her to the dance area. He starts by dancing out of rhythm. Suddenly, he starts to dance well, proudly. Conflicted, Shahrzad reluctantly tries to dance.



95 INT. COMEDY STORE / LOS ANGELES - SAME TIME

95

SEAN

Don't we all love our AMERICA?  
 Everything is transparent. They  
 tell us the whole truth. We get to  
 choose, right? Where else in the  
 world, could you buy pills where  
 the description lists more serious  
 side effects than the defect the  
 pill is supposed to cure?! Any guys  
 take FIAPRA? Only one!

(bald guy raises hand)

Is that how you lost hair?

He unfolds a SMALL PAMPHLET that grows into a large paper.  
 Using a MAGNIFYING GLASS, he reads.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Yeah, you also get a free  
 newspaper! Fiapra's Side Effects:  
 Loss of vision- *means you go blind!*  
 Vomiting, Diarrhea- *how romantic!*  
 Loss of Memory. *Hmmm...Oh yes!*  
 Stroke, Heart Attack. OK! A 6-hour  
 boner. SIX HOUR BONER! AH HA!

(points to bald guy)

What are you doing here!? Oh, wait.  
 Death! Says right here: DEATH could  
 be a *Side Effect!* HELLO! We know if  
 you go to War, Death is a probable  
 side effect. But this Fiapra is  
 freaking FDA-approved as *safe!!*

*TWO well-dressed TV EXECUTIVES at a VIP Table smile and nod.*

ON Sean's face: puzzled to see Shahrzad's empty seat.

96 INT. FLAMENCO CLUB - SAME TIME

96

Despite herself, Shahrzad gets into the flamenco dance,  
 mixing her feminine Persian hand gestures with flamenco's  
 passionate foot, arm, and upper body's proud movements. The  
 Flamenco Dancer steps down and engages Sebastian in a rivalry  
 dance to woo Shahrzad.

97 INT. COMEDY STORE / LOS ANGELES - SAME TIME

97

SEAN

How many saw the article in the  
 latest issue of the American  
 Medical Journal?

(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)  
 (some raise their hands)  
 Yes! You, you read it? YES! The  
 feature about the healthy benefits  
 of Masturbation? The "M" word! No,  
 no I'm not joking. No, the "M"  
 doesn't weaken your eyes. It  
 doesn't make your teeth crooked. It  
 doesn't make you lose memory.  
*Hmmm..?* Yeah, the "M" is actually  
 very healthy, organic, fantastic  
 for your heart.  
 (laughter)  
 Except, except it has one tiny  
 DISADVANTAGE. It makes you a bit  
 (garbles his voice)  
 Deavmm...?

What? AUDIENCE MAN AUNDIENCE WOMAN  
 WHAT!

SEAN (CONT'D)  
 DEAF! It makes you DEAF!

Laughter. Sean anxiously looks at Shahrzad's empty seat.

*The TWO TV EXECUTIVES smile and look at each other.*

98 INT. FLAMENCO CLUB - SAME TIME 98

Sebastian and the Flamenco dancer intensify their duel dance for Shahrzad. The Flamenco Dancer is too good! Sebastian does a final fancy dance move, leaves the puzzled dancer behind and jumps to land close to Shahrzad.

SEBASTIAN  
 Tus ojos son magicos.

SHAHRZAD  
 What?

SEBASTIAN  
 You eyes... magical.

She gazes at him. Tears spring to eyes. She turns and runs out of the club.

99 EXT. FLAMENCO CLUB / STREET - MOMENTS LATER 99

Outside the club. Sebastian catches up with Shahrzad, and jumps in front of her.

SEBASTIAN

Hey! You OK? What...what happened?

In tears, she looks at him and hurries past him towards the entrance of the Comedy Store.

ON Sebastian: shock and confusion.

100 INT. COMEDY STORE / ENTRY HALL - CONTINUOUS 100

Shahrzad wipes her tears and quickly enters. She sees Ray.

RAY

Wwhat...Whwhere were you?

SHAHRZAD

Outside. I've a headache.

RAY

Did you ssee me...pplay?

SHAHRZAD

Yea. Great.

They enter into the laughter and applause...

101 INT. COMEDY STORE / LOS ANGELES - MOMENTS LATER 101

Sean notices Shahrzad and Ray sitting up front. He makes an eye contact with Shahrzad. He continues at a fast clip, gesturing ferociously with his hands.

SEAN

How many of you are divorced?  
Divorcees?

(a few men raise hands)

Wow! Only men! Man gets divorced  
and moves to a motel! Not woman.  
She occupies the house and becomes  
single! Or, a single mother!

(laughter)

*Can you imagine my humiliation?*  
Most guys lose their wives to  
another guy. Right? Or to a  
lesbian! I'm losing mine to a  
piano! *A piano I paid for!* She's  
all over that freaking piano,  
loving it more than me! With that  
damn piano, she does fortissimos,  
allegrissimos, appassionatos,  
amorosos, *Kamasutros!* You name it,  
she does it with that f-ing piano.

(MORE)

SEAN (CONT'D)

Yes! Using her hands, her fingers,  
even her feet! Caressing, singing  
and crying with the piano, while  
I'm waiting, lying in bed, watching  
the weather channel, sucking my  
thumb!

Laughter. ON Shahrzad: uneasy smile.

102

INT. SEAN'S HOME / TV ROOM - NIGHT

102

Drinking champagne, Sean clinks his glass with Shahrzad's.  
He's still overly excited from his show but tries to remain  
calm.

SEAN

TV execs were in the audience. My  
manager thinks we're gonna get the  
TV Series.

SHAHRZAD

Wonderful.

SEAN

Wonderful!? AZIZAM, MY BIGGEST  
NIGHT! DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT  
I'VE BEEN THROUGH TO GET UP THERE?  
You were supposed to stay with me.  
Where the H...? Where were you?

SHAHRZAD

Sorry. I still have a big headache.

SEAN

What's the matter!? You don't care  
about me, my work...OR, US?

SHAHRZAD

I support your work. But you always  
come home late. And sleep late. The  
times we are together, you never  
talk to me about what I like. My  
singing... music. *You make jokes  
about my piano. In public!*

SEAN

UNBELIEVABLE! Shahrzad jan, that's  
just a freaking comedy. I don't  
even wanna go there...

SHAHRZAD

I'm not going back there, either.  
Ever!

SEAN

WHAT!

'Lost in Translation!' She rushes upstairs.

103 INT. SEAN'S HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - SAME NIGHT , LATER 103

SEAN

What's wrong?

Torn between Sebastian in her heart and Sean on her mind, Shahrzad tries to stop weeping.

SHAHRZAD

Don't know. My accident...

SEAN

Azizam, it's OK. I love you.

SHAHRZAD

Love! Oh God, What am I doing here?

SEAN

What? What do you mean?

SHAHRZAD

Back home, I was not allowed to sing. Here, who wants to listen to me singing in Persian!?

SEAN

Azizam, you just arrived. It takes time.

SHAHRZAD

You already have your career. You don't care.

\*  
\*

SEAN

Of course, I care.

He embraces her.

104 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY 104

Sebastian watches Elana play the piano, her head wrapped in a scarf. She stops and massages her right arm. She tries to play again. She can't control her right hand. She stops in fear. Sebastian goes over to caress and massage her.

105 INT. SEAN'S HOME / PIANO ROOM - DAY

105

Shahrzad practices classical music on the piano. To her side is Lorca's ear-marked book. INSERT: Poems by Federico Garcia Lorca. Through the wooden shutters, she looks out across the garden, searching for Sebastian: sees no one. \*

Wearing a JERSEY, Ray enters, carrying a red rose. \*

RAY  
You like red.

SHAHRZAD  
Nice. How do you know I like red...  
Never mind.

RAY  
You want Sskype?

SHAHRZAD  
Yes.

He taps away on the MacBook and shows Shahrzad how to use the internet to phone for free.

He steals quick looks at Shahrzad's legs and hands.

RAY  
Iff you lose your iIPhone, this  
iCloud ggenerates a Google map.  
Shshows where you lost your Phone. \*

SHAHRZAD  
Awesome.

RAY  
Aaawesome! Wwwhere you learn that?

Sean walks in, wearing a SPORTS HAT.

SEAN  
Let's go buddy.  
(to Shahrzad)  
We should be back before it gets  
dark. If you need anything, just  
call us.

She gets up and dutifully embraces Sean. Ray looks away.

106 EXT. MALIBU CLIFF STREET - DAY 106

On a side street, Sebastian on a MOTOR CYCLE, wearing a black leather jacket and HELMET. He sees Sean and Ray in the white Lexus drive past him. He starts the motor...

\*

106A OMITTED 106A

108 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / ENTRY GATE / STREET - LATER, DAY 108

Shahrzad walks outside to check the mailbox. She looks towards Elana's house: no one.

Suddenly, she hears the LOUD SOUND of a MOTOR CYCLE. Sebastian, on his motor cycle, screeches to a halt close to her.

Awkwardly, they look at each other. Still upset about being abandoned at the club, he controls his anger.

SHAHRZAD

Hi.

(silence)

I never saw this.

SEBASTIAN

It was in the shop. Where did they go?

SHAHRZAD

Basketball game.

He checks his cell phone. He hands her the helmet.

SEBASTIAN

Hop on.

SHAHRZAD

No. You are crazy!

SEBASTIAN

I'm crazy!? Didn't you want to tell me something?

SHAHRZAD

They will kill us!

SEBASTIAN

Then, according to Rumi, we land in Paradise!

She looks at him for a beat. Then, he helps her put on the helmet and she jumps on. *She holds on to his shoulders.*

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Hold onto my waist. We're gonna fly.

She hesitates. Then, she holds onto his waist. They take off.

109 EXT. CENTURY LAKE / MALIBU- DAY 109

They drive along a scenic dirt road through a forest of trees. Shahrzad's head is resting on Sebastian's shoulder. Beneath her helmet, her hair blows in the wind.

They stop on a side road at the opening of a forest.

110 EXT. ELANA'S HOUSE / STREET - DAY 110

Elana turns the KEY to the entry gate. She cannot. She tries harder. She fails. She's shocked: her right arm feels numb. She tries her left hand. She can't turn the key.

She taps on her iPhone. No one answers. She tries again. No response.

*She falls to her knees. She weeps.*

She stands up, breathes deeply, and forcing her left hand, she finally turns the key.

111 EXT. CENTURY LAKE / MALIBU - DAY 111

Sebastian carries a small BACKPACK. They walk down a narrow path in the forest. He goes behind some bushes.

Hiding something in his hands, he returns and whispers for her to close her eyes. She covers her eyes. He opens his hands and touches her. She opens her eyes and sees a CRICKET inside his cupped hands. She holds her ear close to the cricket and listens.

SHAHRZAD

He sings!

SEBASTIAN

What can you not touch or see, yet it hits you like a light and lifts you up to heaven?



SHAHRZAD

God.

SEBASTIAN

No!

They arrive under the dappled light of trees by the lake. He pulls out a light BLANKET from his backpack and lays it on the ground.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

It can leap from heart to heart,  
and make us dance, laugh or weep?

SHAHRZAD

Rumi...  
(he shakes his head)  
Love?

SEBASTIAN

Close. But, no! It's MUSIC!

SHAHRZAD

Music. You tricked me!

He takes out a HARMONICA and plays some short melodies.

SHAHRZAD (CONT'D)

I didn't know you play? Where did  
you learn those. From our...

SEBASTIAN

Some Kurdish tunes Sherko taught  
me. My dad's driver. I should have  
taken some lessons.

He takes off his jacket. From his backpack, he pulls out a SHIRAZ WINE BOTTLE and TWO WINE GLASSES. He gives her a glass of wine. They clink glasses and drink.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Here's Shiraz for *Sheherazade*! The  
young princess of 1001 Nights,. The  
seductive story-teller. Telling  
stories, night after night, so the  
angry King would not behead her the  
next day. Like he did with all the  
other virgins he slept with. Hell  
of a King...

SHAHRZAD

(torn with guilt)  
Only because his wife deceived him.  
(MORE)

SHAHRZAD (CONT'D)

(beat)

I must tell yo...

SEBASTIAN

Every night at dawn, Sheherazade ends on a cliffhanger, right? So the King saves her to hear the end of the story the following night...

(sips wine)

*Sheherazade* not only saved herself but all the other virgins too!

SHAHRZAD

I wish I could also save some girls from the Imams. I have to tell you...

He takes his shirt off; drops his Jeans. Shahrzad looks away.

In his shorts, he runs to the edge of the lake. Shahrzad is relieved. He's about to dive in. Instead, he returns to Shahrzad *who's pensively fiddling with her marriage ring.*

SEBASTIAN

Come on in. Come...

SHAHRZAD

No. Must be cold. We must go back!

He carries her toward the lake, about to throw her in.

SHAHRZAD (CONT'D)

(screams, beating him)

NO! NO! PLEASE DON'T. WAIT!

He puts her down and tries playfully to take her top off.

SHAHRZAD (CONT'D)

No! Don't. I can't swim. I can't...

SEBASTIAN

You can swim, on my back.

SHAHRZAD

No! NO! Please Wait. I...I

He brings her down and rolls with her on the blanket. He embraces her, trying tenderly to make love to her. Swept away, she begins to enjoy his caresses and kisses. Suddenly, she disengages and sits up.

SHAHRZAD (CONT'D)

I... I am married.

SEBASTIAN  
Wha...WHAT?

112 EXT. MALIBU CLIFF STREET - SAME TIME 112

Sean and Ray in the Lexus, driving quickly towards home.

113 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / ENTRY GATE / STREET - LATE AFTERNOON 113

Arriving on the motor cycle, Sebastian drops off Shahrzad.

He is disgruntled and confused: torn between being betrayed by his beloved Shahrzad and by his own secret affair with Elana. Shahrzad rushes away...

SEBASTIAN  
(he points to her helmet)  
Hey!

She rushes back and hands him the helmet. *Their hands touch and depart quickly.* She hurries inside.

114 INT. SEAN'S HOME / KITCHEN - DAY 114

Shahrzad hurriedly finishes setting the Dining Table. She checks her look in the mirror.

115 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY 115

Sebastian enters. He sees Elana playing softly, with only one arm. She looks paler, her head covered by a scarf.

*She whispers,* trying to suppress her fury.

ELANA  
Where were you? You don't pick up  
your cell? My right arm is dead! I  
couldn't turn the key. I had to use  
my left to get in. I couldn't  
cook...

SEBASTIAN  
I'm sorry. Let's go to the clinic.

ELANA  
In a minute.

She returns to SARA, 10-11, a cute and bright girl at the piano. She caresses Sara as if she were her own daughter.

\*

ELANA (CONT'D)  
 (weakly)  
 Sweetheart. Spread your fingers.  
 Wide. And go...

SARA  
 OK.

ELANA  
 OK. Good. Nice. Now feel the music  
 in your fingers... Good. Bravo. Let  
 the music flow to your heart...  
 Very good. Now slow... gently... A  
 little bird flying...high and  
 low...

Elana collapses on the keyboard, producing a LOUD DRAMATIC  
 SOUND. Sara SCREAMS. Sebastian rushes to Elana.

116 INT. SEAN'S HOME / KITCHEN - SAME TIME 116

Sean and Ray walk in. Ray carries a large covered SHAPE.

SHAHRZAD  
 What's it?

SEAN  
 Go on.

She lifts the cloth: two little LOVEBIRDS in a nice Cage.

SHAHRZAD  
 Lovebirds! Beautiful. Kheily  
 Mamnoon.

She embraces Sean. She bends down to the Lovebirds.

SEAN  
 We couldn't find a Bolbol that  
 could sing in Persian!

SHAHRZAD  
 CooCoo. *Birds of Paradise!* What do  
 they eat?

SEAN  
 Here. Instructions, seeds,  
 vitamins...

AMBULANCE SIREN sound approaches, getting louder... FREEZE!

117 EXT. ELANA'S HOUSE / STREET - SAME TIME 117

Sebastian exits carrying Elana towards the AMBULANCE.

118 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / STREET - SAME TIME 118

Sean, Ray and Shahrzad run out of their house. They see the the Ambulance speed past them, siren and lights blazing...

FADE OUT.

119 INT. SEAN'S HOME / PIANO ROOM - DAY 119

CAPTION: FEW DAYS LATER

Shahrzad taps on her iPhone. No answer. She sends a text message. No reply.

She sighs sadly, goes to the Piano, and plays a few bars.

120 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / STREET - DAY 120

Wearing jeans, Shahrzad unloads shopping bags from the back of her Volvo, parked in front of her home. Her P.O.V:

Sebastian pulls in and parks Elana's VOLVO. He opens the passenger back door and carefully carries pale Elana into a WHEEL CHAIR. He wheels her towards her home.

121 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / DOORWAY - DAY 121

Sebastian opens the door. Shahrzad appears, holding a RED ROSE. They gaze at each other. They embrace and *whisper*.

SHAHRZAD

How is she?

SEBASTIAN

OK.

(he gently disengages)

I must take care of her. She...she might not live. I couldn't. I can't... Anyway, you are married...

SHAHRZAD

Yes...

She goes past him towards Elana's bedroom.

122

INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

122

Elana's chest is now flat, her head covered fully by a scarf.

Sebastian lights a JOINT and hands it to Elana who inhales deeply. He tries to stay calm and plays Tchaikovsky on the gramophone. He misplaces the needle, making a SCRATCHY SOUND.

*Sebastian and Shahrzad cannot help but exchange poignant glances at each other.*

ELANA

(to Sebastian)

Sweetheart. Shh... take it easy

(passes the joint)

Here.

He indicates "No Thanks."

SHAHRZAD

I... I missed you. So much...

ELANA

(playfully)

Come closer. You can't catch anything from me. I'm already dead.

Shahrzad breaks into involuntary tears. Controlling her emotions, she smiles and moves her chair closer. She hands her the rose and hugs her tightly.

Elana holds the rose with her left hand, her right arm resting numbly beside her. Shahrzad returns to her chair.

High on pot, Elana muses randomly on diverse thoughts.

ELANA (CONT'D)

Thank you. I love roses. Tiny buds. They open up and blossom... Like Tchaikovsky.

(closes eyes and listens)

Music is the source.

(takes a deeper drag)

You know...if you are blessed with a gift, then anything you create with your heart is art!

SHAHRZAD

Beautiful. Thank you. Rumi says: *"Whoever plays music with joy is moved by Divine inspiration, but doesn't know it."* That's how I always think of you.

ELANA

Oh, that's lovely.

Door Bell CHIMES. *Sebastian looks at Shahrzad and exits.*

ELANA (CONT'D)

That's sweet.

(beat)

Thank god for children. I love teaching kids, listening to them. I mean they can be a pain in the butt, but they get it. They are in the moment. Happy or sad, they are like music- pure...

SHAHRZAD

You are a great teacher.

ELANA

(inhales more smoke)

Thank you. Once, I sat here for a week, and you know I did nothing but focus on my breath...Who knew... no distractions, no music. Imagine that...just watching, listening, seeing...In my dreams I don't have cancer! By the end I could feel my heart beating in my chest and I swear, the blood moving in my veins. Out there on the cliff I watched the sun go down, then the stars come out one by one, they're so sneaky. The breeze.. the waves.. its enough. It was all enough. Pure. Life.

(she points to pictures of her career) )

All this...bpfftt! Your breath, that is where the love is...like Rumi says, '*the ecstasy of the Divine.*'

SHAHRZAD

Beautiful. The other day I was watching how the ocean waves embrace the shore, over and over. I thought of Rumi...

Elana coughs. Shahrzad gives her a glass of water. She drinks.

ELANA

How old are you?

\*

SHAHRZAD

I'll be twenty three in February.

ELANA

Twenty Three. Life is a gift. But honey, youth...YOUTH is MAGIC!

(chuckles)

I had my magic. Even cancer can't wipe that out! Don't waste your youth. Come here.

(whispers)

You and Sebastian. You should be together.

SHAHRZAD

I... I'm already married.

ELANA

...I know.

ON Shahrzad: surprise and relief.

Suddenly, Shahrzad and Elana hear: JARROD, 35, African American Immigration Officer. \*

JARROD (O.S.) \*

Sir! Pack your things.

123

INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / DOORWAY - CONTINUOUS

123

SEBASTIAN

My papers just got approved. I swear. Let's call my lawyer.

JARROD \*

Sir. SIR!

(shows him the warrant)

You can tell that to the Immigration Judge.

SEBASTIAN

I gotta say goodbye to my boss.

(whispers)

Cancer. She's dying!

JARROD \*

Sorry. We have to come in with you.

Shahrzad comes out to the Doorway.

SHAHRZAD

What is happening?



SEBASTIAN

Some kind of mistake. Immigration!  
Tell Elana not too worry. I'll be  
back. Call Rachel.

She gives him a desperate look and returns to Elana.

124 EXT. ELANA'S HOUSE / STREET - CONTINUOUS 124

Under Jarrod's supervision, Sebastian is HANDCUFFED by MARCO, \*  
30, a male Hispanic IMMIGRATION OFFICER.

Shahrzad runs out and sees Sebastian in HANDCUFFS being  
pushed politely into an unmarked car by Marco.

She looks to the side and sees Sean, his arms crossed.

As the car moves away, she secretly waves a tiny farewell to  
Sebastian. She rushes to Sean.

SEAN

What were you doing? \*

SHAHRZAD

She wouldn't accept money. For the  
lessons. She's dying. \*

SEAN

Oh!

SHAHRZAD

Poor Elana. She needs him. Why did  
they arrest him?

SEAN

Who knows? Maybe he's an illegal  
immigrant. \*

*Questioningly, she looks at him. He avoids her gaze. They* \*  
*walk toward their home.* \*

125 INT. SEAN'S HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - DAY 125

SEAN

You didn't miss much. Las Vegas  
should be renamed Las Losers!

He disappears into the bathroom.

She unpacks Sean's valise, putting away his clothes. FREEZE!  
*She spots a YELLOW BRA, tucked between his stuff. She dangles*  
*it as if picking up a dead rat.*

She thinks for a moment. She pulls a drawer and hides the bra towards the bottom... STOP! She spots

INSERT: a FRAMED WEDDING PHOTO of Sean and his previous blond wife.

She shuts the drawer. Picking up her sweater and her handbag, she rushes out.

126

EXT. MALIBU BEACH - DAY

126

Shahrzad comes down the cliff path to the beach. She sees A SILHOUETTE. WHITE ROSES float back and forth in the waves.

Approaching the silhouette, she hears a man WEEPING.

It's Sebastian. He crosses himself and whisper prayers before throwing THREE WHITE roses, one by one, into the ocean. He kneels. \*

SEBASTIAN  
(in Spanish)  
Dear Mama. Forgive. \*

Shahrzad walks behind him and puts her hand on his shoulder. Startled, he turns away.

SHAHRZAD  
They set you free. Why are you crying?  
(silence)  
What happened?  
(silence)  
Speak to me.  
(silence)  
Are you upset with me?  
(silence)  
You want me to leave?  
(silence)  
Oh God, blood! What did they do to your arm?

SEBASTIAN  
It's... It's nothing... I fell...

SHAHRZAD  
Let me look. Oh, sorry. It hurts?

She rushes to the sea and fetches water in her cupped hands. She sprinkles it on his arm, cleaning the cut. She repeats this. Then, she dries the arm with tissues from her purse.

SEBASTIAN

Ah! Thanks. My lawyer got me out.  
Someone reported me.

SHAHRZAD

Oh... I'm sorry.

(beat)

Why..why were you ...crying?

(silence)

You're upset I'm married. I thought  
you wanted to stop?

SEBASTIAN

(broken voice)

My mother. She... she passed away.

SHAHRZAD

Oh God. Sorry. I'm sorry. When?

SEBASTIAN

Last night. I called her.

SHAHRZAD

May she rest in peace. How?

SEBASTIAN

(in halting emotions)

She started to drink more... After  
my Dad was killed... she couldn't  
sleep. She went back. She wanted  
to...

She hugs him tenderly. Slowly, he falls into her embrace.

127 EXT. CLIFF OVERLOOKING THE OCEAN - SAME TIME 127

Atop the cliff, a FOOT menacingly kicks small rocks down to  
the beach.

128 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - SAME TIME 128

To get Sebastian's mind off his mother, Shahrzad takes the  
stem of a white rose and writes TWO WORDS in the sand.  
INSERT: two Words in artistic Persian calligraphy.

SHAHRZAD

Your name. And mine. You remember  
Rumi? *"Do you love yourself more  
than you love me?"*

<p>SEBASTIAN (broken, tender voice) "I died to myself so I live...only for you. I love you. I love myself."</p>	<p>SHAHRZAD (joins him) "...so I live only for you. I love you. I love myself."</p>	*
---	---	---

SHAHRZAD (CONT'D)  
But I'm married and you have to  
take care of dear Elana. Our  
Ghesmat is not to be...

A FEW SMALL ROCKS fall down the cliff. They stand up and look  
at the rocks. SOUNDS of heartbeats. *They whisper.*

SEBASTIAN  
Someone is watching us. Why didn't  
you tell me sooner?

SHAHRZAD  
You never noticed my wedding ring?

SEBASTIAN  
You have so many rings... I was  
blind!

SHAHRZAD  
I wanted to tell you. You...and  
Elana... Everything, going so fast.  
Maybe it's my fate.

SEBASTIAN  
Arranged marriage!

SHAHRZAD  
NO! We knew each other. I was  
younger. Then, I saw him on  
YouTube...I had to get out of Iran.

SEBASTIAN  
Oh! *A Convenient Marriage.* I  
understand!

SHAHRZAD  
No! You don't understand. I'm not  
perfect...I have a prob...

BIGGER ROCKS roll down the cliff. Fearfully, she looks at the  
rocks, one lands close by. Rising SOUNDS of heartbeats.

Sebastian turns away from her.

He turns around. Shahrzad is gone. He looks to the right. She  
is rushing up the path.

129 EXT. CLIFF OVERLOOKING THE OCEAN - SAME TIME 129

Ray emerges from behind a rock. He pedals his red bike, secretly following Shahrzad home.

130 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / BEDROOM - DUSK 130

Rachel places a WATER BOTTLE next to Elana's PAIN-KILLER PILLS JAR. Feeling sharp pains in her chest, Elana grabs the jar, and tries to swallow 2 or 3 pills. Rachel stops her.

ELANA

Ah! Oh! When will these damn pains go away!?

RACHEL

Oh no, my darling, Only 1 pill, every 6 hours. If you need anything, just shout. I'll be right over.

ELANA

Honey, I'm so drugged up, I'll pass out.

131 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - DUSK 131

Sebastian broods over Shahrzad's Persian writing in the sand. He tenderly moves his fingers around the calligraphy of her name. He stands up. With his feet he kicks the sand, turning the Persian calligraphy into DUST.

132 INT. SEAN'S HOME / TV ROOM - SAME TIME 132

Sean on his Blackberry, pacing around. Shahrzad walks in.

SEAN

Why the hell don't you answer your phone? What were you doing?

SHAHRZAD

Why do you even care!? You don't even know me. You don't talk to me, or encourage...

SEAN

*Encourage?* Freaking Unbelievable! Did I *encourage you to run around* with that damn Sebastian? Behind my back!?

SHAHRZAD  
Did you report him to Immigration?

SEAN  
You...YOU...WILL HONOR OUR  
MARRIAGE. You will not make a fool  
out of me! YOU UNDERSTAND? If you  
ever speak to him again, you will  
both be... very sorry!

He SLAPS her.

SHAHRZAD  
AY! YOU ANIMAL!

SEAN  
DON'T EVER LIE TO ME.

SHAHRZAD  
Don't ever hit me again. Or...

SEAN  
Or what!? You ungrateful woman!  
Didn't we save you from the Imams!?  
Didn't I get you your own car, your  
piano? Didn't I...

SHAHRZAD  
If you hit me again, I swear I'm  
going to call the police.

SEAN  
Maybe we should send you back to  
your mother! You are not to leave  
this damn house again, without one  
of us...

SHAHRZAD  
You want me to live here like I'm  
back home in a prison!? I'll call  
the police... then I, I will...  
jump out of the window!

She runs upstairs.

SEAN  
You're crazy!  
(beat)  
Please wait. Shahrzad. I'm sorry...

He pleads at the bottom of the stairs.

YELLOW BRA. Sean is hit in the face by the Yellow Bra, hurled  
down by Shahrzad.

Ray walks in. He looks at Sean holding the Yellow Bra.

132A INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / BEDROOM - NIGHT 132A

Sebastian is crying quietly, his head buried in Elana's embrace. They whisper, trying not to awaken Rachel.

SEBASTIAN

I'm so stupid \*

ELANA

Baby, everything happens for a reason. Look at me! \*

(beat)

What are you gonna do?

SEBASTIAN

Gotta go to my mother's funeral. I fly back home. Tomorrow. \*

132B EXT. SEAN'S HOME / BALCONY - DAY 132B

She looks out searching for Sebastian. But no sign of him

133 INT. SEAN'S HOME / PIANO ROOM - DAY 133

She plays a few piano bars tenderly. She sings softly. "Hmm, not bad." She plays and sings again, louder and more emotive.

SHAHRZAD

(in Persian)

*[Ruler of my Heart, Wherever you go, Don't go without me.]*

She goes over to the Cage, coos to the Lovebirds, and takes the Cage down.

134 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / PORCH - MOMENTS LATER 134

Shahrzad cautiously puts her hand inside the Cage to clean it ... When two ARMS lovingly embrace her from behind. She turns around. It's Ray! She screams and frees herself.

SHAHRZAD

You crazy?

RAY

Sssorry.

*One of the lovebirds has disappeared: Only one Lovebird remains in the Cage.* She quickly shuts the cage door. She looks around and up the sky. No sign of the Lovebird.

SHAHRZAD

Look what you did! If you dare to touch me again, I'll tell Sean.

He looks at her ferocious expression and runs upstairs.

She gazes at the lonely bird inside Cage. She opens the cage door and gently extends her hand to catch the bird inside...

She throws her arm towards the sky. She looks sadly to the sky, following the flying of the second Love Bird.

135 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / BEDROOM - SAME TIME 135

Elana tries to eat breakfast served by Rachel.

RACHEL

Please eat something.

ELANA

Thanks honey!

(sips green tea)

I don't taste anything anymore.

Could you call this number?

RACHEL

Sure.

She taps the number and hands the phone to Elana. Rachel takes the BREAKFAST TRAY out.

136 INT. SEAN'S HOME / PIANO ROOM - SAME TIME 136

[The following dialog is intercut between Elana and Shahrzad's locations.]

With tears in her eyes, Shahrzad puts the Cage in the same place as before. She gazes at the empty Cage.

She sits by the Piano. Her iPhone chimes.

SHAHRZAD

Oh, Hi Elana. You OK?... Sorry can't now. Unless you need something?



ELANA

...I'm good. Honey, Sebastian went to Barcelona.

SHAHRZAD

(shocked, whispers)  
When? I thought he was free.

ELANA

... his mother's funeral.

SHAHRZAD

Oh...When...is he coming back?

ELANA

I... I don't know...  
(silence)  
Sweetheart, be patient. Farewell.

SHAHRZAD

(undertone)  
Farewell...

*Shahrzad faints and slides off the piano stool, onto the floor.*

137 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / BEDROOM - SAME TIME

137

Rachel places a WATER BOTTLE next to Elana.

\*

ELANA

Thanks Honey. Could you put on that Tchaikovsky? No, the other... that one.

RACHEL

Sure.

She plays Tchaikovsky on the gramophone.

ELANA

Come, come here. Give me a hug.

They embrace, Elana using her left arm.

ELANA (CONT'D)

Oh, oh! Not so close, sweetheart.

RACHEL

Please don't take any more pain killers. Promise?

ELANA

Promised! You are the light in my  
heart. Honey, dim that light...

They hold each other. Rachel can't resist breaking into quiet tears. Rachel tucks her in bed. Making sure Elana doesn't see her face, she dims the light and leaves.

Listening to Tchaikovsky, Elana scans the memorabilia of her acting career around her room: PHOTOS, AWARDS, HANDSOME MEN, and ATTRACTIVE WOMEN.

She turns and feels excruciating pains. Glancing at the Pain-killer jar, she rests her head on the pillow, and smiles slightly, her eyes content and soulful.

Slowly, Tchaikovsky's music fades out.

138 INT. SEAN'S HOME / PIANO ROOM - SAME TIME 138

Shahrzad opens her EYES. She struggles up and sits by the piano. She drinks water and tries to practice Tchaikovsky's 'Romeo and Juliet' music.

INSERT: IMAGES of Sebastian's Bird Kite flying in the sky...

SHAHRZAD

(undertone)

*"Good night. Parting is such sweet  
sorrow. Farewell, Fare..."*

Stop! She remembers something.

139 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / DOORWAY - MOMENTS LATER 139

Rachel opens the door. Out of breath, Shahrzad appears.

RACHEL

(whispers)

Come in. Are you OK?

SHAHRZAD

Yes. Just a headache.

They run to Elana's bedroom.

140 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS 140

Pain Killer jar and pills lie flat on the Night Stand. Rachel and Shahrzad try desperately to revive Elana. Rachel taps on Elana's heart.

RACHEL

Oh my God! Ela...Elana! Wake up,  
Ela, Ela wake up. *Call 911.*

Shahrzad taps on her iPhone and rushes out. She returns with a PLASTIC CONTAINER. Rachel is tapping on Elana's heart.

SHAHRZAD

They're coming. Please let me try?  
Hold her neck up. Open her mouth...

They pull her up against the pillow. Shahrzad holds the container under Elana's mouth and sticks her index finger down her throat.

RACHEL

Careful. Don't choke her.

SHAHRZAD

No.

No movement.

Shahrzad pulls her finger out and sticks it in again, this time deeper.

Again, nothing. Shahrzad, pushes her finger down further...

Elana moves slightly. She quickly pulls her finger out.

Elana jolts, coughs, vomits... and opens her eyes. More coughing and vomiting...

Finally, Elana quietens down and opens her eyes.

141 INT. SEAN'S HOME / TV ROOM / KITCHEN - SAME DAY , LATER 141

Looking shattered, Shahrzad enters.

SEAN

Ah! Where were you?

SHAHRZAD

She nearly died.

SEAN

God! Sorry. Who?

SHAHRZAD

ELANA.

She hurries into the kitchen. He follows her.

SEAN

What are you doing?

SHAHRZAD  
Making soup. For Elana.

142 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DAY 142

Elana is lying on the sofa. She exercises her right arm up and down. Shahrzad spoon feeds soup to her.

ELANA  
I feel like a damn marionette.  
Mmmm. Delicious. What's it?

SHAHRZAD  
Red lentil soup.

RACHEL  
Persia- Purim times! With cumin and  
lemon.

Door bell CHIMES. Rachel opens the door. A MAID delivers little Sara. She goes to Elana who hugs and kisses her.

ELANA  
Hey, my little sweetheart. \*

RACHEL  
Honey. Today, Shahrzad is gonna  
give you the lesson!

SARA  
'K. Cool.

SHAHRZAD  
Hi Sara joon!

Shahrzad takes Sara's hands and takes her to the piano. She starts to teach Sara.

Elana watches listens attentively. She smiles hopefully.

143 INT. SEAN'S HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - LATE AFTERNOON 143

Shahrzad arrives at the doorway, and sees Sean and Ray check the gun. She looks at Sean questioningly.

SEAN  
Gotta clean, oil and check out the  
gun now and then. Otherwise, it  
gets jammed.

SHAHRZAD

I've a headache. I'm going down to  
the beach

SEAN

OK. Ray jan go with her.

Ray stands up.

SHAHRZAD

Sorry, I need to be alone.

Tense silence.

144 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - LATE AFTERNOON

144

Beneath the cliff, away from the waves, Shahrzad is surrounded by RED ROSES. She looks around the beach, the cliff and the sky, hoping to see a kite or any sign of Sebastian: nothing.

Suddenly a small RED KITE appears in the sky above the Cliff.

Excited, she runs towards it, faster and faster...

A BOY, 16, appears handling the Red Kite. Shattered, she turns back to the roses.

She places the RUMI and LORCA BOOKS next to each other.

Using a pebble, she writes Sebastian and her name in Farsi calligraphy in the sand beneath the books.

DREAM-LIKE, slow-motion, impressionistic images: *She drops the RED ROSE PETALS on and around the books. She takes off her RINGS, dropping each on the sand.*

She gazes at the constant waves kissing the shore. She hums:

SHAHRZAD

*["In the abattoir of Love,  
they only kill the best, not the  
weak. Don't run away from such  
dying. Whoever is not killed for  
Love is dead meat."]*

She stands up and starts to run... faster and faster into the waves. She cups her ears. Dead SILENCE. Rising heartbeats.

145 EXT. SEAN'S HOME / STREET - SAME TIME 145

Sebastian, carrying a BACKPACK, at a distance opposite Shahrzad's home. Stealthily, he searches around for Shahrzad and her car: nothing. He runs towards the cliff. A TOURIST with a FOLDING MAP stops him asking for directions. \*

146 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - SAME TIME 146

SILENCE, except rising HEARTBEATS... Shahrzad stops in the waves. Then, she runs deeper into the roaring waves...

Sebastian appears at the top of the cliff. He spots Shahrzad, getting deeper into the waves. Remembering she can't swim:

SEBASTIAN  
Shahrzad! SHAHRZAD!...

She can't hear. Sebastian charges down the cliff path, shouting her name...

She gets deeper into the ocean... He runs onto the beach...

The water is now above her waist... He runs faster... She is up to her shoulders... He drops his backpack, takes off his outer clothes and jumps into the ocean.

She is up to her neck, water rising into her mouth... He swims faster... Shahrzad sinks beneath the water...

He swims faster... and finally catches her, bringing her up for air... Spouting out water, she opens her eyes: startled, in utter disbelief...

She coughs more water out... then falls into his arms.

147 INT. SEAN'S HOME / PIANO ROOM - SAME TIME 147

Silent piano. Sean looks at the empty Cage. He taps dramatically on the piano keys.

148 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - SUNSET 148

Sebastian is naked except for his shorts. Shahrzad is wearing his clothes under which is her wet, large PINK BRA and underwear. They sit around a small makeshift FIRE. Her dress and top are hanging to dry on sticks rising out of the sand.

She reads from Lorca's book as if it were a "love poem" to Sebastian.

SHAHRZAD

You will catch cold. Come closer.  
God, I thought I'd never see you  
again... *"Green wind. Green  
branches. She dreams on her  
balcony, with eyes of cold silver.  
Green, how I love you green."*

SEBASTIAN

Awesome! You like Lorca?

SHAHRZAD

Mysterious. *"The Rose was not  
looking for wisdom, or for shadow:  
the edge of flesh and dreaming..."*  
(she stops)  
Are we dreaming?

SEBASTIAN

Don't know. But I do know you smell  
like a rose and taste like wine.  
Maybe now, with a little sea salt!  
(she smiles)  
Close your eyes.

She closes her eyes. He takes out an antique SPANISH LEATHER  
PURSE from his backpack and places it in her hand.

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Open! My mother's. For you.

She opens it and is amazed to see a DIAMOND NECKLACE, with  
star-shaped diamonds.

SHAHRZAD

Wow! So beautiful. Too much. Thank  
you. God, I am dreaming!

\*

She embraces him. He puts the necklace around her neck.

SEBASTIAN

You're like the Moon, adored by  
these stars.

\*

SHAHRZAD

Thank you.

148A EXT. CLIFF OVERLOOKING THE OCEAN - SUNSET

148A

Elana meditates at the cliff's edge. She looks down and sees  
Sebastian and Shahrzad on the beach. Then, she gazes at the  
sunset: serene, in the moment, and at one with Life.

148B EXT. MALIBU BEACH - SUNSET 148B

Shahrzad SNEEZES. He starts to gently take off her bra...

SEBASTIAN

You will catch cold in these wet things.

SHAHRZAD

Wait. I...I've tell you...back home...

149 EXT. TEHRAN STREETS / ALLEYS - DAY , FLASHBACK 149

SIRENS. FLASH of Zara's death. Shahrzad gets up and sprints even faster. The Strong Basiji chases her, getting closer. \*

He catches up with her and throws a BOTTLE of ACID.

She jumps back, just in time to miss the liquid acid hitting her face. Acid splashes onto her BOSOM, and onto the Cage.

Fallen on its side in the cage, the Nightingale is in its final throes, dying from the acid burns, among ROSE PETALS.

SCREAMING, Shahrzad looks at the BURNING SMOKE coming from her shirt around her right bosom...

150 EXT. MALIBU BEACH - SUNSET , PRESENT 150

Sebastian gently pulls down Shahrzad's bra. He calmly looks at the scarred breast as if it were a sacred shrine that had been burned down. We don't see the breast- we only imagine the unspeakable tragedy from Sebastian's teary-eyes...

He tenderly gazes at her pensive eyes.

SHAHRZAD

I... I couldn't... I didn't even save one girl. My best friend.

(weeps)

I... I don't deserve to be called *Sheherazade*.

SEBASTIAN

You do. You tried. You did your best. Those guys...ignorant savages! Even beasts don't behave that way.

(whispers tenderly)

*You are a Sheherazade. Sheherazade, I love you, I love you...*



He caresses the scarred area with soft kisses. He stares into her soulful eyes. He kisses her eyes.

*They shower each other with soft, tiny, tender kisses.*

151 EXT. MALIBU CLIFF STREET - NIGHT 151

Sebastian stops at a safe corner, away from Sean's home. Shahrzad is back in her own cloths. He quickly shows her a slide show of PHOTOS of Barcelona on his phone.

SEBASTIAN

(whispers)

Tomorrow, Barcelona! By the ocean.  
Art Galleries. Music. Dance. Huge  
farmers' market. See? Our house.  
You're gonna love it.

She takes the Necklace off her neck and hands it to him.

SHAHRZAD

Keep this for me.

ON their hands: Tenderly entwined, they don't wish to part.

152 INT. ELANA'S HOUSE / GUEST COTTAGE - NIGHT 152

Sebastian packs his stuff and his HARMONICA into a BACKPACK. He picks up Elana's RUMI book, kisses it, and exits...

153 INT. SEAN'S HOME / PIANO ROOM - NIGHT 153

Through the light and shadow of the empty Cage's bars, Shahrzad at the MacBook, wearing EARBUDS. As she looks at a PHOTO of her MOTHER and FATHER, she whispers on Skype. Now and then she looks behind to ensure no one is listening. Seen through the wooden bars of the Cage, she whispers in Persian.

SHAHRZAD

(in Persian)

Mama, I know. No... Yes, I tried, I  
tried, Mama, please... It's  
me...I...

\*

Sean walks in.

SEAN

We must talk.

SHAHRZAD

Could I finish speaking to my mom?

SEAN

OK. Come upstairs.

She nods 'OK.' He exits.

SHAHRZAD

(whispers in Persian)

I can't. I can't live here anymore.  
He knows. Yes, Sebastian. We'll be  
closer. We call you soon. I love  
you.

\*  
\*

She looks at the empty Bird Cage. She quietly takes out a BACKPACK from underneath the desk. She packs the RUMI and LORCA BOOKS, and her FAMILY PHOTO, in the side pocket and puts Backpack on her back.

154 INT. SEAN'S HOME / MASTER BEDROOM - SAME TIME 154

In jeans, lying on the bed, Sean scribbles on a NOTE PAD. He tries out the new jokes to himself. Nothing works. He chucks away the crumbled sheets.

He thinks. He looks at the SAFE CASE where the gun is kept. He jumps out of bed.

154A EXT. ELANA'S HOUSE / GARDEN - SAME TIME 154A \*

Elana appears and sees Sebastian. They gaze at each other. He goes and returns the Rumi book to her as if to say "Thank you." He embraces her. They warmly hold each other.

155 INT. SEAN'S HOME / PIANO ROOM - SAME TIME 155

Shahrzad runs her fingers across the piano, without making any sound. She kisses the piano "farewell."

She quickly writes a Note. INSERT:

*"Dear Sean: Sorry, our Ghesmat is not to be together. You will be happier without..."*

FREEZE! She hears a 'NOISE' from upstairs. She places the unfinished NOTE on the piano. She struggles, forcing her WEDDING RING off. It drops to the floor. She rushes out.

156 INT. SEAN'S HOME / STAIRCASE - NIGHT 156

Sean runs downstairs.

157 INT. SEAN'S HOME / PIANO ROOM - CONTINUOUS 157

Sean steps on the RING. He notices the Note on the piano. He reads it... He turns to the MacBook Pro screen and sees a Google MAP. He runs out.

158 EXT. CLIFF OVERLOOKING THE OCEAN - NIGHT 158

Sebastian in WHITE NIKE SHOES and Shahrzad in RED NIKE SHOES. They joyfully run hand-in-hand, past trees and bushes, carrying their backpacks. She wears the DIAMOND NECKLACE. *She runs as fast as Sebastian, sometimes getting ahead of him.*

Breathing heavily, now and then they stop to look behind. Then, they hug and kiss.

Suddenly, they think they hear something, they look behind. A glimpse of a RED STOP SIGN thru the wind-swept trees.

Blurry, shaky images of a hand holding the SILVER GUN pointing down to the ground.

They see a SHADOWY FIGURE move among the bushes.

Hand-in-hand, Shahrzad and Sebastian take off. Now and then they look fearfully behind them.

GUN IN HAND, the Shadowy Figure chases them.

Finally, they stop at a small opening between rocks, trees and bushes, close to the edge of the sea cliff.

Sebastian carefully listens and looks around. It feels safe. He opens a sleeping bag. They lie down, embrace, and look up at the shimmering stars.

SEBASTIAN

(sees a shooting star)

Wow! You saw that?

(caressing her lips)

Tomorrow we'll be up there among  
the stars!

SHAHRZAD

(whispers)

I'm afraid of flying.

Seeing her worried eyes, he caresses her eyebrows.

SEBASTIAN

*"In our hearts, tears and laughter  
live side by side." LORCA.*

(MORE)

SEBASTIAN (CONT'D)

Up there you can sleep all the way.  
Otherwise, I'll tickle you!

He tickles her. She laughs. They embrace passionately.

159

EXT. CLIFF OVERLOOKING THE OCEAN - DAWN

159

Dark blue sky of pre-dawn, speckled here and there by dreamy clouds. In the misty semi-light, two sleeping beauties: Shahrzad and Sebastian.

She awakens and WHISTLES softly in his ear.

A BLACK CROW flies above, SQUAWKING! Shahrzad looks up.

SOUNDS of bushes rustling near by.

THE HAND cocks the gun and aims.

Shahrzad and Sebastian stand up and anxiously look around. They see Sean rush towards them. In semi darkness, they have no choice but to run to the cliff overlooking the ocean.

Sean gives chase.

They reach the edge. They run to the left, looking for a path down the steep cliff. There is no path.

They run to the right, stumbling in semi-darkness They reach the end. They can't see any path, only a sheer drop.

Sebastian spots a narrow path. He carefully pulls her down...

ON their feet on the dirt path down the cliff's edge. They look at the waves crashing on the rocks way down below.

They look at each other: romantic, poignant, scared faces.

Suddenly the MAN'S HAND shoots the gun.

SEAN

NO!

Sebastian turns to protect Shahrzad. His foot slips. He falls and disappears down the cliff. Shahrzad lets out a spine-chilling scream.

SHAHRZAD

NOOOOO...!

She shuts her eyes and vanishes down the cliff.

Behind in the distance, Sean jumps into the bush.

160

EXT. CLIFF BY THE OCEAN / BEHIND A BUSH - CONTINUOUS

160

Sean sees Ray with his helmet on, his bike on the ground. He's pointing the silver gun into his own heart.

He recoils, finger on the trigger, his hand shakes.

RAY

Ddd Didn't mean...to hhhurt anyone.

SEAN

I know.

Sean approaches him. Ray tightens his finger on the trigger.

RAY

I shshot up...in the sky. Tto  
ffrighten them. I didn't...

SEAN

I know you buddy. You wouldn't hurt  
a fly.

RAY

Nno! No!

Again, he points the gun into his heart, about to...

SEAN

Ray, Ray jan! Let's not do anything  
bad to upset our mother, OK? OK,  
buddy...

Ray thinks, shakes his head; hesitates; finally sort of nods 'Ya.' Sean cautiously approaches him. Ray loosens his finger and slowly lowers the gun.

Sean grabs the gun and pushes him away.

SEAN (CONT'D)

Idiot! Didn't I tell you? Never,  
ever fool around with the gun.

Ray is devastated: Crying, he slowly kneels down...

Sean runs to the cliff's edge. He looks down. He sees nothing. *He collapses, weeping, burying his head between his knees. In the background, Ray, too, lowers his head between his knees.*

Sean stands up and gazes at the horizon across the vast ocean. *He hurls the gun into the ocean and walks away.*

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EXT. BEACH ROCKS DOWN THE CLIFF - CONTINUOUS

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Camera flies, chasing the gun down the cliff. It sweeps over the rocks, searching for Shahrzad and Sebastian's bodies.

Nothing is seen or heard except the sound of the wind and the sight of the ocean endlessly returning to embrace the shore over and over, as if nothing happened...

FADE OUT.

In the misty blue light, Camera glides back up from the ocean waves towards the top of the cliff... until we see: Shahrzad's iPHONE broken, against a stone.

Torn bits of Sebastian's white attire, then red bits of Shahrzad's dress caught by the branches of a short TREE sticking out of the cliff. Some tree branches are bent or broken. Bits of their clothing blow in the wind.

SOUNDS of heartbeats: a few STONES tumble down, then... a PAIR of FEET pushing hard against the tree's base. Moving from the feet up the slope, gradually we see: a man's legs and a woman's thighs, then their bodies...

It's Sebastian desperately holding onto Shahrzad, in a hidden sea cave, not far from the top of the cliff.

They are bruised and shaken, reaching out to each other, hanging onto life. They struggle to be face to face, his feet pushing harder against the shaky tree.

He pulls her up. More STONES roll down, some tumble behind Shahrzad's head. Finally, they make it, almost eye to eye.

They embrace tightly, kissing tenderly as if to be intertwined together for eternity.

Embracing... Small rocks roll down...

BIRDS fly about... Camera tilts up to the blue sky.

SOUND of heartbeats.

FADE TO BLACK.

*"Let us be like the birds of paradise that fly about..."*  
- Rumi, 13th C.