EXT. SMALL TOWN STREET- DAY

A red, dusty road in a mining town.

A POLITICIAN (55) in a white shirt and pants who looks more like a local hood, travels on top of a Jeep which has been designed to look like a mythological chariot. The jeep moves through the market place.

His 40 supporters are on 15 motorcycles bearing bandannas and flags in his party color, yellow. They ride slowly in front of the chariot shouting slogans.

CHORUS
Humara neta kaisa ho? Mangal Netam jaisa ho! Mangal Netam Zindabad!

A couple of his supporters climb on the Jeep and garland him. He is already laden with a dozen garlands— all yellow marigolds.

His supporters gesture at everyone to listen to him speak.

He addresses the crowd on a microphone.

POLITICIAN
(in mock anger)
Mangal Netam aapke beech vote maangne nahi aaya hai. Mat do mujhe vote! Mat do!

His supporters are silent.

POLITICIAN (CONT’D)
Woh log mujhe thekedar kehte hai. Mujhe?
(calms down)
Mujhe iss kshetra ka vikaas chahiye. Mera sapna hai ki har bacche ke daaye haath mein laptop aur baayein haath mein mobile ho. Aur woh log aapke aur vikaas ke beech ka kaanta hai.

His supporters start cheering him to not give up.

POLITICIAN (CONT’D)
(thumps his chest)
Magar yeh dharti ka poot aapke liye khada hai. Agar woh laal hai toh main kamaal hoon. Agar woh teer hai toh main top hoon. Isiliye main kehta hoon ki agar aap iss chetra ka vikaas chahte ho toh aapko pata hai ki aapko kya karna hai.
EXT. HIGHWAY- DAY

The Politician and his cronies travel in a car. He talks on his cellphone.

In front of them, the road is blocked by a fallen tree. As soon as the driver realizes it, everyone in the car panics as he tries to frantically turn the car.

As the driver tries to take a sharp U turn, eight uniformed naxals(4 men, 4 women), their faces covered come out of the woods with guns, mostly 303s.

The driver and bodyguard run out of the car begging them to spare him.

Mangal is frozen. When he turns back he sees both the driver and his bodyguard running away.

A naxal woman opens the car door. A man pulls Mangal out of the car, on the ground below.

The woman pumps two bullets into him with her 303. Very economical.

PROLOGUE: IN POST (Give background of the situation)

INT. COLLEGE CLASSROOM- DAY

An ELECTION COMMISSION OFFICER, P K MISHRA (50) is conducting a workshop for 40 men and women. There’s an EVM on the table.

MISHRA
India ka election duniya hairan hokar dekhti hai. Tees hazar karod ka kharcha, chaurasi karod voter, nabbe lakh polling booth. Har baar Guinness Book mein hum apna pichla world record tod ke ek naya record banate hai. Humne saabit kar diya hai ki hamari sansad mein goonde bhale hi chun ke aa jaaye magar chunaav mein goonda gardi nahi kar sakte. Kyun? Kyunki hum aur aap, Election commission ke chunav adhikaari, aisa hone nahi dete...

VOICE
Chunav tak zinda rahenge tab na.

Mishra looks stunned. Some people laugh.

MISHRA
Kaun bola? Saamne aaiye?

Silence.
MISHRA (CONT’D)  
Murga nahi banayenge bhai...

Laughter. Mishra regains his composure.

MISHRA (CONT’D)  
Dekhiye kal ki ghatna ke baad darr lagna swabhawik hai... It is human nature. Yeh pradesh Maowaad se grast hai. Kal ki ghatna se unhone chunav boycott ka elan kiya hai. Boycott!  
(pause)  
Naksaliyon ko koi hathiyaar agar mita sakta hai to woh hathiyaar hai yeh VOTING MACHINE. Samjhe?

A lady officer raises her hand with trepidation.

Mishra looks at her.

MISHRA (CONT’D)  
Kya samjhe?

LADY OFFICER  
Sir, chunavi hinsa hui to?

Mishra is getting a bit exasperated.

MISHRA  
Awwaal to hogi nahi. Hui bhi to hum aapko kuch nahi hone denge. Har polling booth sensitive nahi hota. Jo log samvedansheel ilaako mein jayenge, jaise Dandkaranya jungle, unko poora security cover milega. Aap sirf free and fair election pe focus kare. Chaliye bataiye Chapter 1 point number 1.2 kya hai?

A KEEN TYPE PROBATIONER, KTP, raises his hand. Mishra points to him.

KTP  
Sir, Presiding officer ka polling booth ke 200 metre ke radius mein poora control hoga. Sabko uska aadesh man-na hoga.

Mishra lifts the manual.
MISHRA

An officer raises her hand.

OFFICER 1
Sir, agar polling booth pe Maowadiyon ka hamla hua to hum kya kare?

MISHRA

OFFICER 2
Sir, agar re election mein bhi upadrav hua to?

MISHRA
To phir re election.

NEWTON
Aur sir, agar re election ke re election mein bhi gadbad hui to?

Mishra is not impressed.

MISHRA
Kya naam hai aapka?

NEWTON
Ji, Newton Kumar.

MISHRA
Newton?

NEWTON
Newton.

MISHRA
Woh apple wala Newton?

NEWTON
Ji.

Officers in the audience laugh.

MISHRA
Huh. Do ke baad kya aata hai?

NEWTON
Jee teen.
MISHRA
Teen ke baad?

NEWTON
Jee char.

MISHRA
Good boy. Baith jao.

The group laughs again.

EXT. RESTAURANT/ CANTEEN– DAY
P.K. Mishra sits alone at a table eating.

Newton enters the restaurant/ canteen. When he spots Mishra, he walks to him.

NEWTON

MISHRA
Sawaal aise poochogey toh jawaab bhi aise hi milege. Accha chhodo. Newton tumhara asli naam hai?

NEWTON
Ji.

MISHRA
Pitaji Physics padate hai?

Newton looks at him askance.

MISHRA (CONT’D)
Mera poochne se matlab tha ki ‘Newton’ naam kisne rakha.

NEWTON
Ji, khud maine.

Mishra looks surprised.

MISHRA
Kyun?

NEWTON

MISHRA
NEWTON
Kyun?

MISHRA
Beta Newton naam bada bhari hai.
(quoting Shakespeare)
Greatness has been thrust upon you.

NEWTON
Kya sir... aap meri class le rahe ho?

MISHRA
Len-den se bhi upar ki baatein hoti hain. Suno ab. Pata hai Newton ne duniya kaise badli?

NEWTON

MISHRA
Itne saalon se aap Newton hain, asli baat toh pakad hi nahi paaye. Beta ek jhatke mein dharti aasmaan baraabar kar diya tha usne. Ab poochho kaise?

NEWTON
Kaise?

MISHRA
Hota kya tha ki purane zamane mein dharti ke alag aur aasman ke alag kanoon hotey the. Ek rule hota tha rajaon ke liye, ek rule hota tha hum jaison ke liye. Pata hai na?

NEWTON
Ji sir.

MISHRA

NEWTON
(thinking deeply)
Hmmm.

MISHRA
Kaunse department mein ho.
NEWTON
Abhi tak allocate nahi hua hoon.
Probation par DM daftar mein hoon.

MISHRA
Phir election duty pe kaise ho?

NEWTON
Reserve mein hoon sir.

MISHRA
Twelfth man bhi zaroori hai. Jaise cricket-football mein. Maaza aa raha hai naukri mein?

NEWTON
Jee.

MISHRA
Bade bhari mann se Jee bol rahe ho.

NEWTON
Ajeeb sa mahoul hai saare daftar ka. Koi nakhooon kat-ta hai, koi patte khelta hai, koi din bhar oonghta rehta hai... bina rishwat koi file khiskaane ko raazi nahi hai... Gharwale aur rishteydaar alag pareshaan karte hai. Jab bhi milte hain upar ki kamai kitni hai poochte hain...

MISHRA
Dekho naya naya josh hai tum bhi seekh jaoge saal bhar mein. Shuru shuru mein sabko aise hi lagta hai.

NEWTON
Sir, sirf paise kamane thhe toh call centre mein naukri karta. I want to make a difference.

MISHRA
Tumhara problem pata hai kya hai?

NEWTON
(confrontational)
Meri imaandaari?

MISHRA
Yeh imaandari ka ghamand. Dekho Newton babu aap imaandaar hokar desh samaj kissi pe ehsaan nahi kar rahe hai. It is expected of you. Samjhe?

Newton listens.
MISHRA (CONT’D)
Imaandaari se mann halka hota hai
bandhu, bhaari nahi. Mat lo duniya
ka load, sirf apna kaam karo. Desh
ki pragati apne aap ho jaegi.

Newton nods. Thinking deeply. Mishra waits for Newton to resurface.

Newton gets up to leave.

MISHRA (CONT’D)
Bhains aur bureaucrat main kya
farak hai jaante ho?

Newton looks askance.

MISHRA (CONT’D)
Bhains gobar karne ki tankha nahi
leti. Ab chalo.

They laugh.

MISHRA (CONT’D)
Itna saara gyan diya, paaon nahi
chuogey?

Newton smiles politely.

NEWTON
Sir, main paaon nahi choota.

MISHRA
Aajkal ke launde toh humare jaise
hi hai!

Mishra laughs. Newton forces a smile.

MISHRA (CONT’D)
Suno. Shaadi hui hai?

NEWTON
Nahi sir.

MISHRA
Soch samajh ke karna. Yeh bhi ek
prakaar ka seb hai.

EXT. TOWN SCAPE- DAY
A bird’s eye view of the town.

INT. LILA’S HOUSE- EVENING
Traditional “Arranged Marriage” match making scenario.
Newton’s parents have taken him to see a girl.
They sit on a wooden sofa with cushions. In front of them sit the girl’s father, brother and a 90 year old grandmother with thick glasses.

There’s some noticeable disparity between his family and hers—his are far simpler.

GIRL’S FATHER
Bhopal ke aage to yeh kasba sa lagta hoga nai?

NEWTON’S FATHER
Jahan bachha khush rahe apne liye to wahi Bhopal hai.

GIRL’S FATHER
Yeh sahi kahi aapne. Retirement ka sukh to baccho ke saath hi hai. Waise bhaisahab aap lagte nahi saath ke.

NEWTON’S FATHER
Abhi to siraf tireppan poore hue hai. Naukri lagte hi yeh ladne laga, Karwa diya retire!

GIRL’S FATHER
Sakshat Shravan Kumar hai apna Nutan.

NEWTON
Jee Newton.

Her Grandma passes a framed cloth that has a bulbous rose embroidered on it. Newton’s mother looks at the embroidery with interest.

GIRL’S GRANDMA
Bachpan se hi shauk hai.

GIRL’S FATHER
Beta ab tumhare roomal kabhi nahi khoyenge. Na koi chori kar paega. Sab par yeh tumhare woh initials kar degi.

NEWTON’S MOTHER
Haan, rumaal toh iske bade khotey hai.

Newton doesn’t know how to react. Newton’s parents begin to admire the embroidery.

Newton’s attention is drawn towards the stairs where he can see some movement. The girl, LILA, nubile and demure enters. Draped in a nice saree, she is escorted by her mother, sister in law and older sister as she holds a tray of tea cups and pakodas.
She places the food before Newton and his family and sits down quietly next to her mother. Her head is bowed.

**GIRL’S FATHER**  
Pakode khao, beta Nootan.

**NEWTON**  
Newton.

**GIRL’S FATHER**  
Beta itni English to mujhe aati nahi.

Newton is about to say something when—

**GIRL’S MOTHER**  
Chai lo beta. Makhi baith jaegi.

She signals Lila with her eyes. Lila picks up the cup of tea around which a fly is hovering and hands it to Newton. When Newton takes a sip, a film of cream sticks to his lips.

He cleans it awkwardly.

Newton looks at Lila who looks uncomfortable.

**GIRL’S FATHER**  
Beta kuch poochna hai bitiya se? ya sab shaadi ke baad?

The parents laugh. Newton nervously keeps the cup on the table.

**NEWTON’S FATHER**  
Kadai dekh li, pakode kha liye ab baat karne ko hai kya?

Newton angrily looks at his father. His mother catches on.

**GIRL’S FATHER**  

Newton clears his throat. He looks at Lila who is looking at the ground.

**NEWTON**  
Kya shauk rakhti hain aap?

**LILA**  
Jee pichhur jaane ka shauk hai.

**NEWTON**  
Sabse favourite kaunsi hai?

**LILA**  
Jee Hum Aapke Hain Kaun.
Her parents nod with approval.

NEWTON
College mein ho?

Lila shakes her head.

GIRL’S FATHER
Badmasho ke adde mein apni beti ko main to nahi bhejunga. Naam padhai ka kaam saara number do ka.

NEWTON
To aapne twelveth ke baad kya kiya?

LILA
Jee woh nauvi tak kiya.

Newton looks at her father. He glares back.

NEWTON
Kab?

LILA
Jee teen saal pehle?

Newton looks like he is doing a mental calculation.

NEWTON
Uss hisaab se to matlab aap matlab... Aapki age kya hui?

LEELA
Jee. Saade solah.

Newton gets up, frightfully.

NEWTON
Ladki nabaalig hai.

GIRL’S FATHER
Beta ladki sasuraal mein badi ho yehi aacha hai.

Newton looks at his father with anger as if asking: what have you gotten me involved in?

EXT. SMALL TOWN, ROAD- DAY

Two cycle rickshaws- on one, sits Newton, and on the other, sit his parents.

Whenever Newton’s rickshaw goes slightly ahead, his father tells his rider to buck up.
NEWTON’S FATHER
To ek-ded saal mein ho jaegi baalig. Tab kar lena shaadi. Sasur contractor, damad afsar. Retirement tak ghee mein dooba rahega.

NEWTON
Mujhe nahi doobna ghee mein.

NEWTON’S MOTHER
Aise nahi bolte babu. Motorcycle aur paanch lakh nagdi denge.

NEWTON
Main nahi loonga.

NEWTON’S FATHER
Tujhe de kaun raha hai. Main loonga. Saala baap pe masteri jhaadta hai.
(to rider)
Tez chala!

NEWTON’S MOTHER
Chhodo na aap bhi.

NEWTON
Mujhe graduate ladki chahiye.

NEWTON’S FATHER
Apni degree kam hai kya chaatne ko jo uski bhi chaatega?

NEWTON
Graduate mein kya burai hai?

NEWTON’S FATHER

Newton’s rickshaw driver suddenly speeds up.

NEWTON
Main kabhi shaadi nahi karunga.

NEWTON’S FATHER
Beta yeh Dilip Kumar wala lehja daftar mein chaprasi pe chalana. Woh darega. Main tera baap hoon.

INT. NEWTON’S HOME- NIGHT

THEME MUSIC. Marimba plays.
Modest government quarters. Freshly white washed two room apartment. The whole colony is asleep.

Newton stands in the balcony and looks out. He looks disturbed.

**EXT. MAIDAN- DAY (EARLY MORNING)**

THEME MUSIC CONTINUES.

Newton is running, early in the morning. He’s dressed in a white T-shirt, tracks and wears simple sports shoes. He stops and does stretches.

**INT. GOVERNMENT OFFICE- DAY**

THEME MUSIC CONTINUES.

Newton diligently does his work at his office, which is full of dusty files.

His colleagues are huddled around a table and are watching a cricket match on a cell phone.

**INT. NEWTON’S HOME- NIGHT**

THEME MUSIC CONTINUES.

Newton’s father and mother are watching a soap outside on an older TV set. They look slightly out of place even in this modest setting.

His bookshelf- books like “You Can Win”, “Humara Samvidhan”, “My experiments with truth”, books by Premchand, Ghalib, Republic by Plato, Principia Mathematica (or TYBSc Maths and Physics textbooks).

On his table lies the “Manual of Protocols for Presiding Officers of Polling Booth”. He opens it.

He bites into a crisp apple and chews slowly as he studies diagrams of how the Electronic Voting Machine is operated.

**INT. NEWTON’S HOME- DAY**

Newton is in front of a small mirror that’s placed on his table. He combs his hair neatly. Once it looks neat and orderly, he shakes his head and gets the hair do he sports.

THEME MUSIC ends.
Around 150 men and women are huddled in groups of 3-4, checking their polling materials. They are all carrying handbags.

Presiding officers huddle around two large white-clothed tables with Table 1 officials giving them the EVMs and going over instructions and at Table 2, the Collector informing them about their polling booth. KTP stands in queue at Table 1.

Newton and a few other 'Reserve' officers are sitting a few feet away on a long bench. Some officers are on their phones, some stare at the proceedings vacantly.

Newton watches with the concentration of a benched player.

Table 1:

VOICE
Kamal Kishore!
KTP
Yes sir!

The COLLECTOR's ASSOCIATE (local man in his 50's) looks at KTP and ticks his name in his list.

He opens a plastic briefcase with the EVM.

He hands over some papers in a file.

COLLECTOR'S ASSOCIATE
Check kariye.
KTP
Yes sir.

COLLECTOR'S ASSOCIATE
Control Unit aur Balloting Unit.

He points to a smaller envelope.

COLLECTOR'S ASSOCIATE (CONT'D)
Isme kya hai jaante hain?
KTP
Yes sir. Iss mein hai hari seal, strip seal, stamp pad, form 17A, Form 17 C, statutory forms, aur syahi vagerah.

The officer is impressed.

COLLECTOR'S ASSOCIATE
Very good. Ab EVM check kare.
KTP connects the Control Unit and the Balloting Unit. He switches on the machine and checks whether it is working.

COLLECTOR’S ASSOCIATE (CONT’D)
Jaiye assign ho jaiye.

KTP
Sir!

KTP walks to the other table where the collector sits with her assistant.

COLLECTOR’S PA
(looking into the file)
Kamal Kishore? Aapka booth 237 hai.

KTP
Jee Madam.

Collector looks up.

COLLECTOR
Chhota booth hai. Sirf 76 voters.

KTP
Madam Gir jungle mein to ek voter ke liye bhi booth bana tha.

COLLECTOR

KTP’s face turns pale. His countenance betrays fright.

KTP
Jee Jungle mein?

On a map the Collector points to the booth.

COLLECTOR

KTP moves closer to the Collector and speaks softly.

KTP
Mujhe toh City Hall bataya gaya tha.

COLLECTOR
Kisne?
Newton is suddenly paying complete attention to what is happening at the collector’s table.

Back to table:

KTP (CONT’D)
Suspend kar dijiye. FIR kar dijiye.
Magar wahan mat bhejiye. Please.

The collector looks at KTP with disdain.

COLLECTOR
Medical certificate hai?

KTP
Ek ghante mein le aunga.

Collector waves him away with utter disdain. He darts off. She looks at her PA.

COLLECTOR
Reserve mein se koi jaega?

14 INT. HELICOPTER- DAY
The jungle is seen from the helicopter pilot’s cockpit. From the window, Newton watches the terrain below.

15 OMITTED

16 EXT. CRPF HELIPAD- DAY
LOUD SOUND of a helicopter landing on a helipad on a forest hillock. Dust-storm is created as the fan settles.

The door is opened. Newton comes out. Behind him, LOKNATH (57) alights, followed by SHAMBHU (30). Between the three, they hold the EVM boxes, files and polling material.
Newton squints his eyes in the dust and looks around.

Unmarked vehicles belonging to the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) are waiting for them. There are about a dozen CRPF constables with guns.

The Sub Inspector, KRISHNA SINGH (32) comes towards Newton.

Newton shakes his hand.

**KRISHNA**

We can’t hear their voices because of the helicopter’s noise.

**KRISHNA (CONT’D)**
Election party ke baki log kahan hai?

**NEWTON**
Sirf hum teen hai.

**LOKNATH**
Vanvaas pe.

Krishna smiles and nods his head.

**LOKNATH (CONT’D)**
Ab yahan se kitna?

**KRISHNA**
Ghante bhar mein pahuch jayenge. Sir, yeh laga lijiye.

He passes a tube of mosquito repellent.

**KRISHNA (CONT’D)**
Theek se mal lijiye. Iss ilaake mey log goliyon se kum aur malaria se zyada marte hai.

Newton, Shambhu, and Loknath rub it on to their hands and faces as they approach their parked jeep.

**KRISHNA (CONT’D)**
ROP kaam pe hai.

**NEWTON**
Aropi? Aropi kaun hai?

**KRISHNA**
LOKNATH
Kitna kam?

KRISHNA
Dus percent.

Loknath gets a coughing fit on hearing it.
Shambhu looks like he doing some mental calculation.

KRISHNA (CONT’D)
(laughs)
Ghabrao nahi! Iss area ke hisaab se
dus percent kuch nahi hai.

As they get into the jeep, Newton asks.

NEWTON
Yeh ‘dus percent’ calculate kaise
karte hai?

EXT. STATE HIGHWAY (JUNGLE)- DAY

Four jeeps go in a straight file on the highway that passes through the jungle.

INT. JEEP ON STATE HIGHWAY (JUNGLE)- DAY

ROP is seen from the windshield.
The police radio buzzes constantly- reporting from various outposts in the jungle. The sounds are muffled.

LOKNATH
Picchle chunav mein yahan kehte hai
unnees log mare the.

KRISHNA
Figure sahi hai. Magar sirf yahan
nahi. Poore pradesh mein. Yahan to
matdaan kendra aaj kai saal baad
laga hai. Yahan ki casualty figure
aaj shaam pata chalegi.

Newton, Loknath and Shambhu look perturbed.

EXT. STATE HIGHWAY (JUNGLE)- DUSK

The sun is setting behind the hills in the distance.

INT. JEEP ON STATE HIGHWAY (JUNGLE)- DUSK

An orange plastic flying Hanuman hangs on the rear view mirror.
KRISHNA
(points in the distance)
Sir, woh pahad dekh rahe hai?

A hillock in the distance glistens like a ghost.

NEWTON
Kya hai wahan?

KRISHNA
Pakistan!

Newton looks at him with disbelief.

DRIVER
Pichle August tak wahan lal jhande
ko salaami di jaati thi.

KRISHNA
(laughing)
Meri toh abhi tak jahan bhi posting
hui hai na, log alag alag jhandon
ko salaami dete hai.

LOKNATH
Jhande aur dande se hi toh desh
banta hai!

NEWTON
Yeh naxali area ko Pakistan kyon
kehte hai?

KRISHNA
Bhagwan jaane sahab. Mere aane se
pehle se kehte hai. Dushman meaning
Pakistan.

NEWTON
Yeh saara area unke paas tha?

KRISHNA
Ab humare control mein hai. Phir
bhi khatra toh hota hi hai. Jageh
jageh mines bichi milti hai.
(laughing)
Aap log yahan wahan pishaab karte
samay savdhaan rehna. Galat jageh
moot diya to kaand ho jaega.

EXT. HIGHWAY- NIGHT

Four jeeps travel. Car headlights are on.
EXT. HIGHWAY- NIGHT

The four jeeps turn. The light falls on a BLOWN UP JEEP, off the road.

    DRIVER (VOICE)
    Isi spot pe ambush hua tha. Sau dedh-sau honge unki toli mein.
    Aadmi aurat sab saath mein chaaron taraf se firing kar rahe the. Aur
dus minute mein sab ke sab jungle mein gaayab.

INT. JEEP ON STATE HIGHWAY (JUNGLE)- NIGHT

Newton and Loknath look at the blown up jeep.

    NEWTON
    Yahan?

The driver shows his left arm as he continues driving. Very little is seen in that light.

    DRIVER
    Choo ke dekho. Bum ka tukda abhi tak andar dhasa hua hai.

Loknath touches it reluctantly.

    DRIVER (CONT’D)
    Feel kar sakte ho na?
    (to Newton)
    Aap bhi dekho.

Newton touches the hand.

    NEWTON
    Tagda ghaav hai.

KRISHNA
Commandant sahab ko to yeh kharoch lagti hai. Medal ke liye NDE
maangte hai.

    NEWTON
    NDE matlab?

KRISHNA
Near Death Experience.

EXT. CRPF CAMP- NIGHT

The convoy enters the CRPF camp. Barbed wire at the wall. Sandbags with gunners behind it. A sentry opens the gate.
KRISHNA
Aa gaya London.

LOKNATH
Bhaiya mujhe to neend aane se rahi.

KRISHNA
Dariye mat. Yahan ekdum safe hai.

LOKNATH
Kitna percent safe?

Krishna laughs.

EXT. CRPF CAMP - NIGHT
A small group is huddled outside a tent playing carrom.
Newton, Loknath and Shambhu watch this from their tent door.

INT. TENT, CRPF CAMP- NIGHT
Newton sleeps. Suddenly, there’s light on Newton’s face.
Newton opens his eyes and sits up. A Gondi man is shining the light. He is LAKHMA.
Torch light on Newton’s face. His eyes open and he sits up.
Lakhma puts the torch light on his own face.

LAKHMA
Ghabrao nahi, main Lakhma hoon...

NEWTON
Kya time hua? Sab log kahan hai.

He checks his watch for the time.

NEWTON (CONT’D)
Sade paanch baje gaye. Hum late ho jayenge.

LAKHMA
So jaiye Sirji. Sahab abhi abhi aaye hai.

NEWTON
Aa gaye? Loknath! Shambhu!

EXT. CRPF CAMP- OUTSIDE MESS TENT- NIGHT
Newton, Loknath and Shambhu walk towards Atma Singh who is scolding a constable. They wait till he is done.
Atma Singh turns and offers his hand to Loknath.

**ATMA SINGH**
Jai Hind Kumar Sir. Atma Singh
Assistant Commandant.

Loknath, who looks taken by Atma Singh’s personality merely shakes his head.

**NEWTON**
Ji, main hoon.
(takes his hand)
Newton Kumar, Upper Division Clerk,
Collector Office. Yeh Loknath hai.

Atma Singh checks Newton out from top to bottom as if re-checking if the EC had indeed sent such a young officer.

**ATMA SINGH**
Naam bahut abhut hai hai aapka.
Newton. Kisne diya?

**NEWTON**
(stern, no nonsense)
Ji maine.

Atma Singh gets the hint and stops smiling.

**ATMA SINGH**
Yehi hai aapki polling party?

**NEWTON**
Ek BLO yahen join karega.

**ATMA SINGH**
BLO? Bhai, yahen local logon ka koi bharosa nahi hai.

**NEWTON**
Nahi mujhe Collector madam ne khud bola tha ki...

**ATMA SINGH**
(cuts in)
Anda khate ho?

Newton is startled.

**ATMA SINGH (CONT’D)**
Egg.

**INT. MESS TENT, CRPF CAMP- NIGHT**

A table is set with breakfast of boiled eggs and bread. They are sitting around the table.

Loknath picks one up an egg and checks it out.
Laughter from everyone.

Lakhma pours red tea in three chai glasses.

Atma takes out a small bottle and pours some whiskey in his tea.

**ATMA SINGH (CONT’D)**

Lenge? Himmat ki dawai hai.

Newton shakes his head. Loknath looks at the booze with desire.

Newton starts eating.

Atma Singh doesn’t like Newton’s attitude.

**NEWTON**

Polling booth kitni door hai?

**ATMA SINGH**

(politely)


**NEWTON**

Madam ne to bataya tha ki yahan cheh mahine se kuch nahi hua hai.

**ATMA SINGH**

To hum yahan chor police kyon khel rahe hain? Dekho disturbed area mein chunav aise hi hota hai. Kashmir aur Manipur mein maine khud karaya hain.

**NEWTON**

Lekin yahan presiding officer main hoon.

Newton pulls out his map.

**NEWTON (CONT’D)**

Jis school mein booth hai woh kuch aath kilometer door hai.

**ATMA SINGH**

Ekdum correct information hai aapki. Wahi se mere aadmi vote layenge.
LOKNATH
Aapka ilaaka hai. Jaise aap kahe.

Newton cuts Loknath.

NEWTON
Loknath ji. Please.
(to Atma)
Humein apni duty karni hai.

ATMA SINGH
Newton ji, inn logon ko kuch nahi padi election ki. Upar se boycott ka elan hua hai. Main likh ke deta hoon koi nahi ayega.

NEWTON
Theek hai phir likh ke dijiye.

ATMA SINGH
Kya?

NEWTON
Aap jo bhi keh rahe ho, writing mey dijiye. Main usse apne collector ko forward kar doonga.

Atma Singh is stunned. Long silence. Atma Singh stares into Newton eyes. Newton looks here and there, not wanting to stare back.

Finally Atma Singh turns.

ATMA SINGH
Rajendra! BP jacket nikalo!

Newton and Loknath look at each other.

EXT. CRPF CAMP- NIGHT

Lights from torches.

Newton, Loknath and Shambhu are being helped into their vests by constables. Atma Singh comes to Newton and tightens his vest like a corset. Newton gasps for breath.

ATMA SINGH
(under his breath)
Sarkari maal hai. Kaske na baandho to goli paar nikal hi jaati hai.

He barks instructions on the walkie.
ATMA SINGH (CONT’D)
Alpha to Alpha 4.

VOICE ON WALKIE
Alpha 4 here. Aadesh kare.

ATMA SINGH
Point 44 pe area domination kar ke khabar karo.

VOICE ON WALKIE
Janaab. Jai hind.

30A  EXT. BUSHY JUNGLE PLAIN- NIGHT
In a wide shot, forty men are walking. Only their torch lights are seen. Murmurs are heard.
One by one, torches are switched off.

VOICE
Ab ullu bano ullu! Zinda rehna hai toh andhere mein dekhna seekho.

Others hush him.

30B  EXT. JUNGLE- DAWN
The first rays of the rising sun. The jungle wakes up.

31  EXT. BUSHY JUNGLE PLAIN- DAY
The group walks in a V formation.
As they walk towards the jungle, they see a lady walking towards them.
The men get alarmed.
Rajendra and two constables walk in her direction.

RAJENDRA
Ruko! Kaun ho?

PRIYA
Main Priya hoon. BLO.
Newton wants to go to her but Atma Singh stops him.

ATMA SINGH
ID dekho.
She fishes it out of her bag. Atma Singh walks towards her. Newton follows him. Rajendra checks it.
ATMA SINGH (CONT’D)
Aap nahi chal sakti. Safe nahi hai.

Priya looks confused. She looks at Newton askance.

NEWTON
Kyun?

ATMA SINGH
(mumbles to Newton)
Local logon se thoda bach ke rehna chahiye.

NEWTON
Yeh election team main hai. Yeh jayengi.

Atma Singh sizes up Newton.

ATMA SINGH
Rajendra, bullet proof.

PRIYA
Nahi chahiye. Main local hoon. Yeh pehnungi toh zyada khatra hai.

Newton is alarmed with her tone.

NEWTON
Mujhe bhi nahi chahiye yeh bulletproof.

ATMA SINGH
Aap pehne raho. Aap local nahi ho.

Priya walks to Newton.

LOKNATH
Voter list hai aapke paas?

PRIYA
Hai.

NEWTON
Updated hai na?

PRIYA
Jo hai wahi hai.

EXT. ENTERING THE JUNGLE FROM THE PLAIN— MORNING

Loknath walks with Lakhma.

LOKNATH
Aaj baarish hogi?
LAKHMA
Ho sakti hai.

LOKNATH
Magar aasmaan mein to ek bhi badal nahi hai.

LAKHMA
Phir nahi hogi.

Loknath looks at Lakhma strangely.

LOKNATH
Ajeeb ho tum.

After walking for some more time.

LAKHMA
Yeh Shahrukh ka jo agla filam aa raha hai woh hit hogi kya?

LOKNATH
Ho sakti hai.

LAKHMA
Par uske pehle wali filam toh pitt gayi thi.

LOKNATH
Phir nahi hogi.

Lakhma’s cronies laugh at Loknath.

32B  EXT. JUNGLE - MORNING  32B

PBS # 1 starts.

Caravan of 40 men and Priya walk in the jungle in a formation. They are led by a local head constable and the six SPOs who carry guns. Two men with mine detectors are in the front. Some men are carrying foldable tables, chairs, tent material. Newton and Priya hold a files. Loknath clutches the EVM box. Shambhu is taking a selfie as he walks.

32C  EXT. JUNGLE- MORNING  32C

MID SHOTS of Newton, Priya, Atma Singh, Loknath, SPO Lakhma, Krishna, Rajendra, constables walking through the path which is flanked by thick bushes on both sides.

32D  EXT. RIVER BED- DAY  32D

The group crosses a dried up river bed.
EXT. SAL FOREST– DAY

Group walks up a hill. Krishna points out to an old tattered red rag– on the tree. It’s an old Maoist flag. Beneath it is a graffiti written on the tree.

EXT. SAL FOREST– DAY

Atma Singh walks a few paces behind Newton, observing him.

Suddenly a snap is heard and a branch falls a few meters ahead of them. PBS # 1 stops abruptly.

All guns are pointed in different directions.

Eerie silence. Atma Singh gestures at the polling officers to duck.

LOKNATH
(whispers)
Yeh–

ATMA SINGH
Shhhhh.... neeche neeche!

Newton, Loknath and Priya sit down. They watch how Atma Singh and his party approach the branch. They check if it’s a booby trap and then when they are sure, they cross the path and move ahead.

PBS # 1 starts again.

The group begins to walk ahead.

EXT. SAL FOREST– DAY

They exit the thicker forest and come on a bushy plain.

The group walks through another part of the thick jungle. A couple of constables lip sync the song for a few seconds.

PBS # 1 fades out.

As the group walks, Loknath stops.

LOKNATH
Sir. Jaana padega.

NEWTON
Kahan?

LOKNATH
Deerghshanka.

Loknath gestures that he needs to answer nature’s call.
ATMA SINGH
Wahan camp mein kyun nahi gaye?

LOKNATH
Sir, mere karam phoote hai. Bina mehnat ki toh mujhe tatti bhi nahi aati.

ATMA SINGH (mumbles)
Yeh election party hai ya Ramleela mandali, sab saale kalaakar jungle mein prakat hotey hai.

KRISHNA
Halt!

Krishna and others are gentle.

KRISHNA (CONT’D)
Chaliye, hum karwa dete hai.

Everyone stops.

CUT TO:

32H LATER:

Everyone waits.

Loknath is escorted by two constables and another one with a mine detector scans a bush and then gestures at Loknath to sit. He is mumbling a prayer under his breath.

Loknath sits and then gestures at the men to give him privacy.

The men stand on guard.

Loknath starts singing.

As they wait, Newton is silently contemplating. Atma Singh is watching him. Loknath’s song is heard faintly. Priya drinks water.

Shambhu whispers to a constable.

SHAMBHU
Yeh bandook kaunsi hai?

RAJENDRA
Yeh bandook nahi hai.

Shambhu has a goofy smile.

SHAMBHU
Phir kya hai yeh?
RAJENDRA
Isse hum kabz ka ilaaj karte hai.
Aap kahe toh aapka kara de?

Shambhu stops smiling.

Suddenly, four Gondi boys and girls in their late teens appear in the distance through the fog. They are covered in black woolen blankets.

They are stopped by SPOs.

SPO JOGA
(questions them in Gondi)

GONDI YOUTH 1
(replies in Gondi)

Two other SPOs check them for arms.

KRISHNA
Kya bata rahe hai?

SPO Lakhma
Tendu patta laane jaa rahe hai.

ATMA SINGH
Sabke vote abhi le lo.

Newton walks to them.

NEWTON

ATMA SINGH
Poocho hai ki nahi.

SPO Joga and local constable DINU (35) SPEAK to the Gondi youth in Gondi.

DINU/ SPO JOGA
(speaks in Gondi)

GONDI YOUTH 2
(replies in Gondi)

Priya and Newton are in earshot.

Lakhma lets the four Gondi youngsters go and then turns to Atma Singh.

LAKHMA
Ghar pe hai card inka. Kaam se ghar hokar card le ke phir aayenge.
ATMA SINGH
(Looking at Newton)
Good.

Newton feels assured. Priya looks uncomfortable.

Loknath walks back towards them, feeling jubilant.

LOKNATH
Chalo sattar mein se char voter to aa gaye. Kam se kam paanch per cent turnout to hoga.

ATMA SINGH
Aapka kitna percent turnout hua?

Priya speaks up hesitantly.

PRIYA
Sir woh... woh shayad yeh log nahi aayenge. Unhe bola gaya hai ki matdaan kewal barah baje tak hoga.

Newton looks at Atma Singh.

NEWTON
Atma Singh ji!

Atma Singh turns.

NEWTON (CONT’D)
Atma Singh ji aapke aadmi barah baje ka time bata rahe hai....

Newton looks in the distance towards the Gondi youth and calls out to them.

NEWTON (CONT’D)
Aye aye! Ruko. Priya jao aur batao hum yahan teen baje tak rehne wale hai. Aaram se kaam karke aa sakte hain.

Priya walks towards the Gondis.

PRIYA
(tells him in Gondi-
“Please come by three in the afternoon.”)

EXT. JUNGLE- DAY

They have walked a little ahead. After eyeing him for a while, Atma Singh turns to Newton.

ATMA SINGH
Cricket khelte thhe bachpan mein?
ATMA SINGH
Batsman the ya Bowler?

NEWTON
Umpire.

ATMA SINGH
Laga mujhe... yeh Naxaliyon ke baare mein aapke kya vichaar hai?

NEWTON
Mera koi vichaar nahi hai Sir, tabhi toh humein election karaane bheja hai.

Atma Singh takes it as an affront.

ATMA SINGH
Aap itne intelligent ho, IAS ki pareeksha kyun nahi di?

NEWTON
Di thi. Fail ho gaya.

ATMA SINGH
Lagaa mujhe.

Silence for some seconds.

ATMA SINGH (CONT'D)
Nagaland ka capital jaante ho?

NEWTON
Kohima.

ATMA SINGH
Manipur ka?

NEWTON
Imphal.

ATMA SINGH
Aur Kashmir ka?

NEWTON
Srinagar.

ATMA SINGH
Kabhi gaye ho?

NEWTON
Nahi.

ATMA SINGH
Main gaya hoon.
He takes off his gun and hands it to Newton.

Newton is pretty awkward with the gun.

**ATMA SINGH (CONT’D)**

Bhari hai na?

**NEWTON**

Haan.

**ATMA SINGH**

Yeh desh ka bhar hai. Aur yeh mere kandho pe hai.

He takes the gun back.

Walks silence.

Newton to lighten mood, as he understands at some level Atma’s pain.

**NEWTON**

Accha sir yeh batao...

**ATMA SINGH**

Jungle mein sawal sirf main poochta hoon.

(changes mood)

Yeh lo, supari khao.

---

**EXT. JUNGLE—DAY**

Newton walks with Priya and Loknath.

**LOKNATH**

Sir, aapka koi rishteydaar mantri hai kya? Ya koi aur tagdi backing?

Newton glares at Loknath.

**NEWTON**

Kyon Loknath ji?

**LOKNATH**

Sir, bina backing yahan CRP ke afsaro se aise pesh koi aa hi nahi sakta.

Priya smiles at Newton.

---

**EXT. GHOST VILLAGE—MORNING**

The group reaches a ghost village in a jungle clearing: all around are broken down, damaged houses (about 8), with not a soul in sight.
They walk past a broken down hand pump.

NEWTON
Yahan sab ghar toote kyion hai? Aur log kahan hai?

ATMA SINGH
Maowadiyon se bacha kar unhe campo mein bhej diya hai.

As they walk through the ghost village.

NEWTON
Ghar naksaliyon ne tode hai?

ATMA SINGH
Nahi humne. Taki naksali kabza na kar sake.

NEWTON
Logon ko gaon se bhaga kar unke ghar tod diye? Yeh kiska idea tha?

ATMA SINGH
Har sawaal ka jawaab nahi hota.

Newton looks around, feels sad and asks Krishna.

NEWTON
Yeh ghar todna aapne kiss training school mein seekha?

EXT. SCHOOL- DAY

They reach the two room school which is at the far end of the Ghost Village. An advance party is waiting for them.

ATMA SINGH
Lijiye. School aa gaya. Chaliye bataiye kahan booth banega?

Newton walks around the building examining the situation. The wooden door is broken and a couple of windows of the school have been removed. There are a dozen bullet holes on the school walls.

He walks around the corner and looks startled and signals the others to come.

There is Maoist graffiti scrawled on the wall. It looks old.

INT. SCHOOL- DAY

They enter the two room school room and examine it.
NEWTON
Teacher vagerah kahan gaye?

ATMA SINGH
(to Lakhma)
Batao beta.

LAKHMA

EXT. CLEARING, OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL– DAY
The Polling Team huddles.

NEWTON
Priya ji, iss booth ka survey kisne kiya?

PRIYA
Maine.

NEWTON
Phir yeh?

PRIYA
(mumbles)
Jo hai wahi likha tha report mein.

EXT. CLEARING, BEHIND THE SCHOOL– DAY
Newton keeps staring at the graffiti on the wall of the school. He looks disturbed.

EXT. JUNGLE/ PLAIN NEAR GHOST VILLAGE– DAY
The sound of constables talking is heard faintly in the distance.

38A  A) Tall and thick Sal trees sway in the cool morning breeze.
38C  C) A caterpillar/ insect stuck in a spider web/ hanging on the tree.
38D  D) A honeycomb. Bees buzz.
38E  E) An ancient ant hill.

39  OMITTED
Newton, his three polling officers set up the place. Newton looks at the diagram of an ideal polling booth in his handbook. The difference is alarming.

They place the foldable tables as per the directives, make space for the polling booth, enclose it with cardboard.

Priya takes out the register of voters and places it on her table.

Newton and Shambhu arrange the booth.

Loknath takes out a bottle of indelible ink and places it on his table.

Newton takes out the EVM and connects the two units. He ensures that the seal is intact.


Newton presses the ON button of the EVM. BGM stops. SILENCE.

The three polling officers are sitting next to each other at the table.

They wait.

Wait.

CU of Newton—studying the list of voters.

CU of Priya—looks outside.

CU of Loknath—suppresses a yawn.

CU of Shambhu—he looks dazed.

A) An armed constable stands guard at the door of the school.

B) At a distance under a tree, Krishna stands with Rajendra who fixes him some tobacco.

C) 3 SPOs and the police head constable are huddled around a stove that they are setting up to make tea. They are gossipping in Gondi in whispers.
D) Atma Singh in his Aviator sunglasses, dozes off on a chair outside the hut. His transistor is on. Playing BBC Hindi news.

**EXT. JUNGLE (AROUND THE GHOST VILLAGE) – DAY (MONTAGE)**

CRPF constables are on patrolling duty in batches of two.

At least 6 different batches are shown walking in the forest or on sentry duty in the periphery.

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Constable hums a song in the tune of “Ek din bik jayega maati ke mol” as he keeps watch.

SINGING CONSTABLE

Hmmm hmmm hmmm hmmm hmmm... hmmm
hmmm hmmm hmmm...

Another constable comes in front of them and ‘shoots’ him with his finger (shaped like a gun). He pretends to be shot by ‘bullets’ and falls down slowly, gasping for breath like in an 80’s film.

**INT. SCHOOL – DAY**

Newton looks eagerly at the door of the School. Priya is still doodling. Loknath shifts his position as he naps with his head resting on the table.

**NEWTON**

Priya, aap teacher ho?

**PRIYA**

Hau.

**NEWTON**

Kya padati ho?

**PRIYA**

Chhote bacche hote hain to sab padhana hota hai.

**NEWTON**

Aapko accha lagta hai padhana?
PRIYA

Newton nods.

Loknath is suddenly alerted from his slumber.

LOKNATH
Hindi mein kuch nahi rakha. MA hoon Hindi sahiya mein, dekho aaj kahan hoon. English padao baccho ko. Aajkal to kutte bhi English samajhte hain.

Newton and Priya look at him. He has woken up and looks fresh.

PRIYA
Aap bolte ho English?

LOKNATH
Seekh raha hoon.

NEWTON
Adult education?

LOKNATH
Nahi sir. Adult...Matlab english film dekh ke. Aapko shauq hai? Dhero hain phone mein.. Return of Dracula, Bride of Chucky, Seed of Chucky...

NEWTON
Bada gyaan hai aapke phone mein?

LOKNATH
Chinese maal mein aisa hi hota hai.

They chuckle.

LOKNATH (CONT’D)
Sir, aap shadi shuda hai?

Newton
Nahi.

LOKNATH
Aur aap madam?

PRIYA
Nahi.
Awkward silence.

Newton
Aur aap?

LOKNATH
83 mein love marriage honi thi. Uska baap utpaat na machata to aaj teen teen bacche hotey. Tab kahan fashion tha love marriage ka? Ek seth Budau se byah diya Kamla ko.

NEWTON
(taking his trip)
Yeh to bahut bura hua.

LOKNATH
Kyon? Vidhwa Sethani hai aaj meri Kamla. Hame nahi poochti yeh aur baat hai. Humne bhi kaha chalo jo hai so hai. Ab lekhak ko kasht nahi hoga to kahani kaise phootegi?

PRIYA
Aap lekhak hai Loknath ji?

He nods proudly.

NEWTON
Kya likh rahe ho aajkal?

LOKNATH
Kahani ek election party ki hai jo jungle mein voting karane jaati hai magar laut ke nahi aati.

Silence.

NEWTON
Laut ke kyon nahi aati?

LOKNATH
Kyonki gaon wale aadivaasi kai baras pehle mar chuke hain. Unki laashein Jombie ban chuki hai.

NEWTON
Jombie?

LOKNATH
Khoon ki pyaasi zinda laash. Ekdum sadi gali. Kaisa laga plot?

NEWTON
Ekdukm wahiyaat. English picturen dekh dekh ke aapka dimaag kharab ho gaya hai.
Loknath looks in disbelief. Priya laughs.

Loknath pulls out a pack of cards defiantly. He starts shuffling. He looks at Priya.

Newton is amused.

**NEWTON (CONT’D)**

Taash khelna mana hai Loknathji. Andar rakh do.

Loknath freezes.

**LOKNATH**

Sirji booth mein taash khelne ki purani parampara hai.

**NEWTON**

Department mein bhi suspend hone ki purani Parampara hai.

Loknath keeps the playing cards in his pocket.

Loknath comes towards Newton.

**LOKNATH**

Sabse purani parampara to bhavishyawaani ki hai. Kar doon?

Newton is confused as to what is going on.

Loknath taking advantage of the situation shuffles the cards and spread them on the table. Then he takes three cards and puts them in a line.

**LOKNATH (CONT’D)**

Ab inhe bina dekhe indhar udhar kare.

Newton does it.

**LOKNATH (CONT’D)**

Ab jo pehla card hai woh aap kal thhe, jo card beech mein hai woh aap ab ho, aur teesra card kal!

Newton for a minute is perplexed genuinely.

**LOKNATH (CONT’D)**

Please Sir, itna toh kijiye.

He picks three cards and places them—facing down on the table.

Loknath unfolds card 1: 2 of Hearts.

**LOKNATH (CONT’D)**

Kal aap thhe duggi magar dilwale.
He unfolds Card 2: Joker

LOKNATH (CONT’D)
Aaj aap joker hain kyunki chunav mein presiding officer hain.

He is about to pick the third card.

NEWTON
Tameez se Loknathji. Iss bakwaas mein mujhe vishwas nahi.

LOKNATH
Bhavisyawani sunke bade bade darr jate hain. Chaliye nahi utaenye teesra patta...

Saying this, he keeps the card in his front shirt pocket.

EXT. JUNGLE- DAY

46
Peepul trees. Leaves sway in the breeze. Patterns of sun light are formed.

46A
A dense grove. Monkeys play on branches high up. Scores of them. There is a battle between two alpha males.

46B
A little baby monkey, stuck to his mother’s bosom looks happy.

46C
EXT. SCHOOL/ GHOST VILLAGE- DAY

47
Newton walks out of the School and looks for Atma Singh. SPO Lakhma is outside.

NEWTON
 Sahab kahan hai?

LAKHMA
 Field exercise pe.

EXT. JUNGLE, MANGO TREE- DAY

48
Atma Singh is barking instructions.

ATMA SINGH
Aur upar jao! Haan!

He is standing under the tree with two armed constables. He watches SPOs JOGA and KOSA (20’s) who have climbed up on the tree and are choosing the mangoes from the branches.

Newton and Lakhma enter. Newton looks irritated and observes.
JOGA
Yeh wala paka nahi hai.

ATMA SINGH
Woh dekho daayein... Abe baayein nahin daayein. Abe mera daayaan, tera baayaaan.

Joga looks confused as he scampers on the tree branch. He throws a couple of raw mangoes down which Raju catches.

Newton stands next to Atma Singh and clears his throat.

NEWTON
Yahan se bastiyan kitni door hai?

ATMA SINGH
Raju, Newton sahab ki madad karo.

SPO RAJU
Ek basti poorab mein khaai ke taraf ded kilometer andar hai aur doosri uss taraf pahad ke taraf do kilometer.

NEWTON
Dekhiye boycott ki wajeh se logon ka na aana swabhavik hai. Toh iss situation mein main chahta hun ki kuch constables ko unki basti mein bhejkar unhe yahan surakshit le aate hai.

Atma Singh spits a seed.

ATMA SINGH
Sorry. Woh nahi ho sakta.
(to Joga)
Catch do!

NEWTON

Atma Singh catches a mango. As he rubs it against his shirt and bites it, he talks.

ATMA SINGH
Aapka hukum polling booth ke 200 metre ki range mein hai. Uske aage mera order chalta. Aur main kewal apne superiors ke nirdesh maanta hoon. Aapki tarah hamara bhi procedure hota hai.

He offers Newton a raw mango. Newton shakes his head.
ATMA SINGH (CONT’D)
Kha lo na? Aapse kuch personal thodi hai. Aapko zero voting ka darr hai na? Nahi hone doonga. Mere aadmi de denge vote. Chutti nahi milti vote kaise denge?

Newton is astounded.

NEWTON
Main yeh sab jaalsaazi nahi hone doonga.

ATMA SINGH
Lagbhag sattar voter hai. Polling agent to chhodiye, ek neta nahi dikha. Na laptop wala, na muft ke chawal wala. Aur aap hame jaalsaaz kehte hain?

NEWTON
Main apni duty kar raha hoon.

Atma Singh takes another piece.

ATMA SINGH
Kya age kya hai aapki?

Kya?

NEWTON
Main chalees ka hoon. Aap?

Age ka iss sab se kya lena-dena?

ATMA SINGH
Topic change kar raha hoon. Age ko chhodo... accha yeh batao: what is two plus two divided by two?

NEWTON
Two.

Atma Singh is delighted. Chewing the mango piece he nods.

ATMA SINGH
Three. Rule Rule karte ho aur basic rule bhool gaye? Addition se pehle division karna padta hai.

EXT. JUNGLE, WALK TOWARDS GHOST VILLAGE- DAY

As Newton walks to the school, Lakhma hesitantly asks.
LAKHMA
Newton sir aapke paas motorcycle hai?

NEWTON
Nahi.

LAKHMA
Main agle mahine lene wala hoon. Handa. Sir ek baat poocho aap bura to nahi manoge?

NEWTON
Bolo.

LAKHMA
Sir aap socho ki aap jitna kaam karte ho utna hi karte roho magar aapki tankha dugni ho jaye?

NEWTON
Main rishwat nahi leta.

LAKHMA
Waise nahi sir.

NEWTON
To tankha kaise dugni hogi?

LAKHMA

Newton is irritated at Lakhma’s pyramid scheme and quips in a childish accent.

NEWTON
Jab tum lakhpati ban jao to apne bangle par khaane pe bulana. Tab baat karenga.

He walks towards the school.
INT. SCHOOL—DAY

Newton enters the booth to see sits deep in thought with a worried expression on his face. A writing pad lies open before him.

Loknath, Priya and Shambhu are watching an English film on his cell phone.

Music of an action scene. The hero seems to have saved the heroine.

NEWTON
Phone allowed nahi hai...

LOKNATH
Yahan network kahan hai? Tower hi nahi hai jungle mein...

Newton looks away.

The actors in the movie get close and start making out.

The woman starts moaning. Loknath, Priya and Shambhu are embarrassed.

Priya looks away while Loknath fumbles with the phone trying to shut it down. Shambhu simply smiles at Newton sheepishly.

EXT. GHOST VILLAGE—DAY

Rajendra walks with some jawans carrying the raw mangoes.

JAWAN
Kuch bhi kaho. Chunav ka apna maza hai. Tyohaar jaisa lagta hai. Service mein aane se pehle hum raajneeti mein jaana chahte the...desh ka sochte the...

Atma Singh, who’s walking a few paces behind, kicks him on his butt in jest.

ATMA SINGH

INT. SCHOOL—DAY

A mosquito buzzes.
LOKNATH
Sab apni duty hi to kar rahe hai. Commandent sahab ne aise hi chunav dekhe honge.

NEWTON
Yeh nakli election nahi hai.

LOKNATH
Main samajhta hoon sir. Mera kewal itna kehna hai ki yeh log bina hilaye hilte nahi, aur hilte hain to rukte nahi hai. Ek prakar ke jombie ban chuke hai yeh log.

NEWTON
(confrontational)
Toh kya main kuch nahi karu?

LOKNATH
Aap akele nahi hai sir. Hum sab milkar kuch nahi karenge... bas yeh saale...

Saying this Loknath swats a mosquito on his forearm.

LOKNATH (CONT’D)
Cream ki adhi tube mal di, tab bhi khoon choos rahe hai. Mujhe thodi sarsarahat si bhi ho rahi hai.

PRIYA

She looks at Newton. Loknath looks doubtful.

NEWTON
Try kar lo Loknathji. By chance kuch hua, waise hoga to nahi, phir bhi hua to Cerebral malaria bhi ho sakta hai.

Loknath looks frightened for real.

Priya walks out of the school.

LOKNATH
Shubh shubh bolo sir. Jadi booti hai kya?

EXT. SCHOOL- DAY

Newton and Loknath are standing in front of the school next to the sentry.
Priya is looking for something in the bushes outside the school.

She breaks a stem and comes out, holding it. Red Ants have made a nest from 3 leaves and the branch is laden with them.

LOKNATH
Yeh kya hai?

NEWTON
Patta chabana hai.

PRIYA
Nahi chintiyon se katwana hai. Aap shirt utaro main chinti chodti hoon. Cheentiyaan kaategi toh Aap paseena paseena ho jaogey. Aur do teen ghante mein malaria gayab!

Newton laughs.

PRIYA (CONT’D)
Main mazak nahi kar rahi. Chinti se hi katwana hai.

NEWTON
Accha? Yeh treatment hai? Ok.

LOKNATH
Sir main ekdum theek mehsoos kar raha hoon. Dekhiye fast chal bhi paa raha hoon.

He walks around and goes into the room.

LOKNATH (CONT’D)
Bus, thank you...

Priya eats an ant and throws the branch away.

PRIYA
Aap bhi khaa ke dekho.

She gives him one. Newton hesitates and takes it and puts it in his mouth.

NEWTON
Khatta hai. Acidic.

PRIYA
Iski chutney banti hai. Badi tasty hoti hai.

NEWTON
Interesting.
PRIYA
Interesting yeh hai ki yahan se kuch hi ghante door rehne ke bawajood aapko yahan ka kuch nahi pata.

NEWTON
(mulls)
Baat aapki sahi hai...

PRIYA
Aap itne padhe likhe ho, mujhe ek baat poochni thi jo kabhi samajh mein nahi aayi.

NEWTON
Kya?

PRIYA
Yeh rule kisne banaya ki ek insaan doosre insaan pe hukum kaise chala sakta hai?

Newton is struck by that question.

Just then loud voice of two boys singing a song comes. Newton gives a puzzled look at Priya.

NEWTON
(pleasantly)
Koi gaa raha hai?

EXT. GHOST VILLAGE- DAY

Newton and Priya follow the voice and see that two Gondi children not older than 13 surrounded by CRPF jawans are singing a Gondi song. Atma Singh sits on a ledge and listens to them.

NEWTON
Kya ho raha hai yeh sab?

The two children become quiet upon hearing Newton’s voice. The CRPF men are also alarmed.

Atma Singh’s voice is heard.

ATMA SINGH
Interrogation.

Newton
Kis baat ki interrogation?

Priya talks to the children in Gondi and hears their version.

Atma Singh is perturbed.
Newton to Priya.

NEWTON (CONT’D)
Kya hua?

PRIYA
Kuch nahi. Ped pe chad ke khel rahe the.

KRISHNA
Khabri hai sab. Ped pe chad ke booth mein jhank rahe the ki kitne aadmi they.

NEWTON
Kitne aadmi they? Yeh Kalia hai jo yahan dekhke Gabbar ko khabar dene jayenge, ain?

ATMA SINGH
Bade harami hai yeh bacche. Isse bhi chhote hote hai unki fauj mein.

PRIYA
Jee nahi.

ATMA SINGH
Tere se kaun baat kar raha hai? Tere to sage wale hai yeh.

NEWTON
Aap inse aise baat nahi kar sakte. (Beat) Agar yeh khabri hai to inse gaana kyon gawa rahe the?

ATMA SINGH
To aap chahte hain main baccho pe haath uthaun? Unhe peetu?
(to Lakhma)
Poocho, koi movement thi kya?

The child replies.

BOY
Nahi.

ATMA SINGH
Dekha kaise fatt kar ke “nahi” bola? Aye Mowgli, aaja idhar.

The child comes to him, eyeing his AK 47 which hands on his shoulder.

ATMA SINGH (CONT’D)
Dekho aa gaya. Saala Hindi to jaanta hai. Natak karta hai mere saath?
The child nods his head.

ATMA SINGH (CONT’D)

Bol!

Atma Singh looks deeply into his eyes. The boy looks back. Puppy eyes. Atma Singh takes out his cell phone and directs the camera side towards the boy and clicks a picture.

ATMA SINGH (CONT’D)

Apne gaon ja aur sab ko yahan lekar aa. Bolo voting honi hai. Samjhha?

The boy looks at Lakhma. Lakhma translates what Atma Singh said in Gondi. The boy nods ‘yes’.

Newton and Priya watch in horror.

RAJENDRA

Chal bhaag...

Atma Singh looks pleased with himself and keeps his cell phone back into his pocket. When he turns back, he sees Newton, who looks furious but is very polite and respectful in his tone.

Kids run away.

ATMA SINGH

Aapke benefit ke liye hi ho raha hai bandobast.

NEWTON

Aap aise hi vardi ke dum pe jisse chahe dhamka rahe hai?

ATMA SINGH

Vardi mein vinti dhamki hi lagti hai.

Lakhma repeats this line softly, nodding his head, highly amused at the word play.

The constables laugh.

NEWTON

Yeh log apke ghulam nahi hai!

Atma Singh glares at Newton.

ATMA SINGH

Newton ho Newton hi raho. Einstein ban-ne ki koshish mat karo. Samajhte ho na main kya keh raha hoon, Newton babu?

Atma Singh straightens Newton’s collar.
Ek-aadh ghante mein hum bhi nikal lenge. Attack shaam ko jyaada hote hai. Jaaiye, tambu mein duty kariye.

INT. SCHOOL- DAY
Newton is at his table. He’s writing furiously.

NEWTON
Loknathji hum Atma Singh ke paas exactly kitne baja pahuche the?

LOKNATH
Jee yahi koi paune cheh baja honge?

Newton notes it down.

NEWTON
Aur wahan se savva cheh- sade cheh chale the. Hai na?

LOKNATH
Aisa hi kuch hoga.

NEWTON
Theek theek batao.

PRIYA
Main cheh bees pe aayi thi.

NEWTON
Hmm.

He keeps writing.

LOKNATH
Aap complaint likh rahe ho?

Newton ignores him. Priya and Loknath look at each other. Loknath gestures at her to do something.

LOKNATH (CONT’D)
Aap kyon apna BP bada rahe ho. Hum sab ko pata hai aap kitne chintit hai Chunav ko lekar... Dekhiye Chunav ke baad sirf ek badlaw aata hai.

He looks around.

SHAMBHU
Kya?

LOKNATH
Netao ke photo badalte hai.
Newton is at his wit’s end.

LOKNATH (CONT’D)
Aur nahi toh kya, logon ko do waqt ka khana naseeb ho ya na ho, unhe har election mey vote zaroor karna chahiye.

Newton looks at Priya.

NEWTON
Aap bhi inki hi tarah nirashawadi hai?

Priya looks hesitant.

PRIYA
Nahin, main aadivaasi hoon.

EXT. JUNGLE CLEARING- DAY

Constables off sentry duty are resting outside a broken down hut.

CONSTABLE
Yaar meri galti thodi hai ki mere dadaji ne azaadi ke jung mein hissa nahi liya. Freedom fighter hotey toh kamse kam quota mein gas agency toh mil jaati.

INT. SCHOOL- DAY

Newton is studying his manual silently, Priya is reading a newspaper and Loknath is watching an 80’s Hindi film on his cell phone.

Shambhu takes a selfie with the sentry’s gun.

SENTRY
Aap jungle mein kyun aaye? Koi approach nahin tha kya mana karneka?

SHAMBHU
Mujhe helicopter mein baithna tha.

Newton is irritated by the dialogues from the film. But Loknath is too immersed to notice or care.

The sentry at the door calls out.

SENTRY
Newton ji... Polcent line pe hai.
EXT. GHOST VILLAGE—DAY

Newton is outside. He picks up the wireless.

NEWTON
Hello?

EXT. HIGHWAY (JUNGLE)—DAY

A convoy of jeeps is heading deeper in a convoy of three Scorpions.

Seated in a jeep is a tough looking man in uniform, IG VERMA, (late 40’s). Next to him, sit two white journalists from CNN—DEBBIE (30, in salwar kameez) and ADAM (30’s).

Verma barks on his wireless.

VERMA
Newton?

INTERCUT WITH:

NEWTON
Yes Sir?

VERMA
Kitne percent vote gire?

NEWTON
Zero. Sir, yahan toh kuch theek nahi ho raha, yeh order nahin maan rahe—

Verma softens his tone, cups his hands around his wireless.

VERMA

NEWTON
Sir.

Verma hangs up.
Newton looks jubilantly at Atma Singh. Taking cue, he directs his men, Krishna and Rajendra. He draws a rough map on the ground below with a stick.

**ATMA SINGH**

Newton ji voter laane ke liye bees bees jawano ki do tukdiya jaengi. Ek khaai wale gaon mey aur doosra pahad wale. Main bhi jaunga. Aap aagya de to hum chale?

**NEWTON**


**ATMA SINGH**

(sarcastic)

Jabardasti aur hum? Kya keh rahe hain Newton babu? Aap kahe to bandook yahi chhod jaye?

The constables betray subdued laughter. Newton looks a bit apprehensive.

**INTERVAL**

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**EXT. JUNGLE PATH 1- DAY (Jungle near Ghost Village)**

Atma Singh, SPOs Lakhma, Joga and a dozen constables, armed with guns walk the forest path downwards towards Hamlet 1.

**EXT. JUNGLE PATH 2- DAY (Jungle near Ghost Village)**

Krishna and Rajendra are moving towards Hamlet 2 on the hillock with a dozen troops armed with AK47s. SPO Kosa, Dinu are with them.

The monkeys on the trees are alerted by their presence and scream.

**EXT. JUNGLE, HILLOCK- DAY (Jungle near Hamlet 2)**

Krishna and his troops walk downhill. They cross some graves.

**EXT. JUNGLE, STREAM- DAY (Jungle near Hamlet 1)**

Atma Singh and his troops cross a dry stream.
EXT. JUNGLE CLEARING- DAY

Newton, Priya and Loknath are sipping tea at the door of the school.

Loknath muses.

LOKNATH
Iss jageh ka itihas pata hai
kisiko? Bahut pracheen hai...

They look at him.

LOKNATH (CONT’D)
Dandkaranya yaani veh jageh jahan
daand diya jaaye. Ramji aur Sitaji
yahin aaye the vanvaas kaatne.
Surpanakha ki naak yahin kati thi,
yahin Sitaji ne Lakshmanrekha
laanghi, aur yehi se Ravan unka
apharan karke Sri Lanka le gaya
tha...Itihaas bahut hai yahan.

They nod disinterestedly.

LOKNATH (CONT’D)
Aap log bacche rahe honge jab
Ramanand Sagar ka serial
doordarshan par aaya tha. India ka
pehla plane Pushpak bhi yahin uda
tha pehli baar.

EXT. HAMLET 1- DAY (Achanakpur)

(Take shots of mundane life before raid)

Atma Singh’s party enters the hamlet.

SPO Joga shouts in his megaphone in Gondi.

JOGA
(Shouts instructions in Gondi to
come out with their cards for
voting)

EXT HAMLET 2- DAY (Rampur)

(Take shots mundane of life before raid)

Krishna and Rajendra and their men enter the hamlet. Dinu
shouts in his megaphone.

DINU
(instructs in Gondi to
come and fall in with
their ID cards)
EXT. HAMLET 1- DAY

Two Constables and an SPO enter a house. Women are working on beedis in their courtyard look alarmed.

CONSTABLE 1
Sabko line up karo.

SPO JOGA
(tells them in Gondi to come to vote)

EXT. HAMLET 2- DAY

Rajendra and some constables round up older men and women who are sitting and making mahua. A couple of men are drinking it in leaves.

RAJENDRA
Bolo sab ko card laneko.

DINU
(translates)

EXT. HAMLET 1- DAY

Some constables tell two men sitting in their yard to come out with their cards. There is communication gap. “Vayo Vayo”.

EXT. HAMLET 2- DAY

SPOs are explaining in Gondi to a bunch of people who have assembled. Mostly kids.

EXT. HAMLET 1- DAY

In the distance, an old man runs into the jungle.

ROMESH
Woh dekh bhag gaya... usko roko!

Two constables run behind the man.

EXT. HAMLET 2- DAY

Rajendra is getting his Mahua bottle filled.

EXT. HAMLET 1- DAY

Gondi folk are made to sit down with their cards in their hands.
Atma Singh cleans his sunglasses with his breath, wipes it with a kerchief and wears it.

SPO Joga gives them instructions. They all raise their cards.

**SPO JOGA**
(instructions in Gondi)

72A **EXT. HAMLET 1- DAY**

Two constables chase the running man in the rice fields. One of stops and aims at him.

**FASTER CONSTABLE**
Ruko nahin toh goli maroonga!

The man stops with his hands up. They seize him.

72B **EXT. HAMLET 1- DAY**

Constables search a hut. A sick man is sleeping. They make him to come out.

73A **EXT. HAMLET 2- DAY**

Constables open a pig sty, a large pig runs out.

73B **EXT. HAMLET 2- DAY**

Constables stand on guard with their guns. A group of women are talking to Rajendra in Gondi.

**RAJENDRA**
Sab buddhe dikh rahe hai. Ladke ladkiyan kab lautenge?

Old woman points at 60 degrees.

**OLD WOMAN**
(Speaks in Gondi)

**RAJENDRA**
Kya?

**DINU**
Jab sooraj wahan hoga. Do dhai baje.

74 **EXT. HAMLET 1- DAY**

Meanwhile, Constable Romesh walks towards a stack of hay and begin to carelessly stomp on it and disheveling it.
EXT. HAMLET 2- DAY

Krishna is talking to some people. He’s polite.

MIDDLEAGED WOMAN
(Speaks in Gondi.)

KOSA
Dadalog ne vote dene se mana kiya hai.

KRISHNA
Kab aaye the kitne aaye the? Poocho usko.

KOSA
(Speaks in Gondi)

The woman shakes her head.

Krishna pulls out a folded b/w print-out with four mug shots.

KRISHNA
Isme se koi tha kya?

The woman shakes her head.

EXT. HAMLET 1- DAY

Constables get an old man (Pistak) to vote. He comes with his grand kid.

Behind him, three constables are bringing a couple out of their hut.

EXT. HAMLET 2- DAY

Krishna and Rajendra are trying to control the chaotic situation. The Gondis are arguing with them.

One of them is a bit vehement. Rajendra slaps him.

The man stares at him.

RAJENDRA
Ghoorta hai?

He gives him another slap. Krishna calms him down.

EXT. HAMLET 1- DAY

Atma Singh studies a printout with faces of wanted guerrillas. He looks at the men and women who are sitting Indian style on the ground.
In the background, SPO Joga questions the sick man. The man looks scared and pleads innocence.

75B **EXT. HAMLET 2- DAY**

An unattended infant watches. Wide eyed.

Adults are all sitting in front of a hut in a straight line with their IDs.

75C **EXT. HAMLET 2- DAY**

A petrified man is hiding on a tree. A constable is standing under the tree.

**CONSTABLE**

O Haddi Pehelwan! Neecha aao bhai.
Vote karna hai.

**PETRIFIED MAN**

(speaks no in Gondi.)

Constable shakes the tree. The man holds tight.

**CONSTABLE**

Aajao bhai... tumhara adhikaar hai.

77 **EXT. HAMLET 1- DAY**

A constable is examining the ID cards of the villagers. Not all villagers have it. They separate the ones who have cards.

Two villagers, extremely drunk, are in their own world creating commotion.

One has an old key tied to a black thread around his neck. Atma Singh grabs the key and pulls the man.

**ATMA SINGH**

Yeh chabi kiski hai?

Drunk points to the ground.

**DRUNKARD**

Mere baap ke lohe ke khazane ki chabi hai. Zameen mey arab arab arab gade hai.

Atma Singh snatches the key and throws it away.

78 **INT. SCHOOL- DAY**

Newton, Priya and Loknath are waiting at their tables.
Silence.

EXT. HAMLET 1-  DAY

Atma Singh listens as a constable speaks on his walkie.

CONSTABLE
Alpha calling Alpha 1. SitRep do.
Over.

EXT. HAMLET 2-  DAY

Krishna answers on his walkie.

KRISHNA
Alpha, this is Alpha 1. Situation normal. Over.

A LITTLE AWAY:

Rajendra is talking to a middle aged woman.

RAJENDRA
Bada wala kaato. Masale tej hone chahiye samjhe?

He forks out a fifty rupee note.

Her husband (or she) walks to the rooster, trying to catch it. Very calculatingly, he hovers around the rooster making placating noises and with one swoop catches him by his neck and wrings it.

He takes out his iron jack knife which is tied to his waist and raises it!

JUMP CUT TO:

Silence.

A rooster’s feather floats in the air.

EXT. SCHOOL-  DAY

Newton is at the door of the school, looking at the crowd that has assembled. Most of them are older folk. There are also a lot of children.

NEWTON
Youth kahan hai?

DINU
Thhe nahi. Kaam pe gaye hai.
NEWTON
Par aa jayenge na?

DINU
Bol ke rakha hai.

NEWTON
Theek time bataya hai na, subeh ki
tarah toh nahi kiya?

DINU
Nahi nahi!

The Lakhma, the SPOs and Dinu direct them in Gondi to stand in a line.

NEWTON
Aadmi saare uss taraf. Mahilayein
iss taraf.

INT. SCHOOL- DAY

Newton is at his table with the control unit.

NEWTON
Chaliye ab ek ek karke sabko andar
bhejiye. Aap log ready hai?

PRIYA
Haan ready.

NEWTON
Loknath ji?

He holds out his ink bottle like a trophy.

LOKNATH
Aadesh kare.

PRIYA
(gestures at the first
woman)
Aa jao...

An old woman comes to Priya.

PRIYA (CONT’D)
Card?

She shows her card. Priya finds her name on the list and
ticks it. She puts her thumb impression next to her name on
the list. Priya directs her to Loknath.

The old woman walks to Loknath. He signals her to show her
index finger and puts an ink mark on it.
Newton directs the woman to the booth. He goes and holds the control unit, which has a button which needs to be pressed at the time someone is voting.

**NEWTON**

Wahan par button daba ke vote de.

The next person in the queue is let in and he goes to Priya with his card held out.

The old woman stands in front of the EVM. Newton is watching her from afar, waiting for her to press a button.

**LOKNATH**

Arre wahan khade mat raho. Vote do aur fatafat niklo.

She looks at the Electronic Voting Machine and nervously looks at everyone who is anticipating some magic to happen from her end.

**NEWTON**

Samasya kya hai inki?

Newton looks at Priya, searching for answers.

**PRIYA**

Sir, yahan toh election pehli baar hua hai na.

**LOKNATH**

Matlab inhone voting machine pehli baar dekh rahin hain!

Newton looks open mouthedly.

**EXT. JUNGLE PATH—DAY**

There are 30 CRPF constables accompanying the journalists. All the 8 journalists are wearing bullet proof jackets and helmets.

Verma CHATS with Debbie. Adam shoots them.

A Zee News reporter walks backwards as the cameraman moves towards him with a video camera. He talks very softly, huffing and puffing as if there is grave danger.

**ZEE NEWS REPORTER**

Yeh jungle jitna khoobsoorat hai usse zyada khatarnaak. Ambush kahin bhi laag sakta hai, IEDs aur surang kahin bhi phat sakte hai. Iss dehshatmand ilaake mein maut baatne wale naxali aur zehreele cobra kabhi bhi mil sakte hai!
The villagers are sitting on the ground, Indian style. Newton addresses them, holding the polystyrene model of the voting machine.

NEWTON
Sab log dhyan se suno. Aap sab log ek ek karke apna apna vote denge. Yeh machine aapka vote legi.

PRIYA
(translates)

Newton gives a firm but benevolent look.

The Drunkard asks a question in broken Hindi.

DRUNKARD
Kitna paisa milega?

NEWTON
Paisa?

SPOs and Krishna scold him together.

KRISHNA
Aye baith neeche!

Newton signals Krishna to not meddle.

DRUNKARD
(trailing off)
Logon ko to milta hai vote dene ka paisa?

NEWTON
Vote dena aapka adhikaar hai. Na koi aapko paisa dega aur na hi koi zor zabardasti hogi. Priya batao na inhe.

Priya nods.

PRIYA
(translates)

Silence. Blank faces.

NEWTON
Sab samajh gaye? Kissi ko kuch poochna hai? Daro mat! Poocho.

He senses some hesitation in a middle aged woman and encourages her to speak up.

NEWTON (CONT’D)
Aap... haan... poochiye...
MIDDLE AGED WOMAN
(speaks in Gondi)

Newton looks at Priya.

PRIYA
Poochti hai inhe kya fayda hoga?

NEWTON
Yeh desh ka sabse bada chunav hai. Lok Sabha ka. Aap sab ko sadak, bijli, paani, samajik nyay vagerah chahiye na? Aap jise vote doge woh aapke liye yeh sab karega.

She MUMBLES something in Gondi to her companions.

NEWTON (CONT’D)
Kya hua?

PRIYA
Yeh pooch raahi hai Lok sabha kya hai?

Newton gathers himself.

NEWTON
Lok Sabha matlab jahan desh ke sabse bade kanoon bante hai.

PRIYA
Hamare apne kanoon hai sir. Hazaron saal purane.

Newton is annoyed.

NEWTON
Aaap kewal anuwwad kare. Please co-operate. Inhe bataiye inka neta dilli jaega.

PRIYA
(Translation- the leader you choose with go to Delhi.)

They all nod. They mumble amongst themselves. Some of the Adivasis point to an old bearded man with gray locks. He smiles and stands up. They speak to Newton who doesn’t understand.

PRIYA (CONT’D)
Yeh keh rahe hai yehi inka neta hai. Isse inki taraf se Dilli bheja ja sakta hai.

They nod. Newton is at his wits end.
Newton looks at PRIYA and prompts her to translate this. She translates and then reads out the list.

PRIYA
Meena Kumari (Indian National Party)
Lingaram Netam (Bharatiya Vikas Party)
Lalsingh Tekam (Lok Seva Dal)
Budhri Patel (Independent)
Gladstone Usendi (Independent)
Dr. Joga Chaudhary (Independent)
Muttaka Masram (Krishi Party)
Bedu Ram Kashyap (People's Front)
Satter Netam (Independent)
Nelawati Devi (Independent)
Binod Kumar (Rashtriya Dal)
Comrade Bhim Kumar (Kisan Party)
Jhitku Ram (Janata Sangh)
Maheshwar Baghel (Adarsh Bharat Party)

At each candidate’s name, we cut to a unique visual of the candidate or his/her poster. The visuals are all set in the town:

(A) T-shirt
(B) Newspaper advertisement
(C) Painting on Wall
(D) Posters on Wall
(E) Cut Out being transported by hand.
(F) Printed on bags which are hung in a shop.
(G) writing on a Gandhi cap worn by a supporter who’s distributing pamphlets.
(H) Cycle rickshaw with loudspeakers
(I) Party Office with cut out and posters.
(J) Umbrella
(K) Parked Bike with flag and sticker
(L) Poster on wall
(M) Children with masks of the candidate’s face
We cut back to the scene:

The Adivasis are looking at Priya blankly.

**NEWTON**

Iss soochi mein se kissi ko bhi vote de sakte ho.

They shake their heads and murmur. Newton looks at Priya for translation.

**PRIYA**

Yeh naam aaj yeh pehli baar sun rahe hai.

The old man asks a question in Gondi.

**OLD MAN**

(asks question in Gondi)

Newton looks at Priya for translation.

Atma Singh checks his watch and looks at Krishna. Krishna shakes his head as he is listening to the walkie.

**PRIYA**

Sir inko sirf yeh pata karna hai ki in netaon mey se kaunsa neta tendu patta ka sahi bhaav dilwaega?

Newton has no answer. A woman asks something to Priya.

**PRIYA (CONT’D)**

Sir yeh kehti hai ki vote diya toh dadalog pareshan karenge, nahi diya toh police. Koi inhe poochta nahi hai inhe kya chahiye.

**NEWTON**

Kya chahiye hai inhe?

**PRIYA**

Inhe donon se chutkara chahiye.

**NEWTON**

Aisa inhone kaha?

Priya’s doesn’t make eye contact.

An exasperated Atma Singh, his arms folded across his chest, is standing at a distance. His eyes meet Loknath’s.

Loknath shrugs. He says to Newton softly.

**LOKNATH**

Sir, main handle karoon?
Newton dismisses him with a gesture.

**NEWTON**

Sochne do yaar!

Loknath sulkily looks towards Atma Singh and gestures at him to do something.

Atma Singh comes and takes over.

**ATMA SINGH**

Newton babu, aap ke bas ki lag nahi rahi hai. Now let me take over.

(shouts at the Adivasis)

Sharam aani chahiye aap logon ko.

SPO Joga translates in real time.

**JOGA**

(Translation)

**ATMA SINGH**

Dekhiye, sirf aap logon ke liye yeh babulog apni jaan jokhim mein daal kar shehar se jungle aye hai.

(Translation)

**NEWTON**

Yeh kya bol rahe ho!


**ATMA SINGH**

Mehmaano ke saath aap log aise pesh aate hai? Unhe pareshaan karte hai?

(Translation)

**ATMA SINGH**

Dekhiye voting machine ke khilone jaisa hai...

**NEWTON**

Kya bakwaas kar rahe ho aap?

**ATMA SINGH**

Aapka pehla election hai, itna uddo mat. Khudse to kuch ho nahi raha hai, aur jo kar sakte hain unko obstruct karte ho.

Newton loses it and screams.
NEWTON
Obstruct main nahi aap kar rahe ho.
Yeh sab jaega meri report main. Ek
ek point likhunga. Dikhaunga!

ATMA SINGH
Rajendra!
(to the Adivasis)
Haan to main keh raha tha ki iss
khilone se khelna bahut aasan hai.

Rajendra takes Newton away.

RAJENDRA
Aaiye sir..Aaiye na..idhar...

ATMA SINGH
Isme seb hai, anar hai, chashma
hai, phool hai, motorcycle hai,
bansuri hai, ghoda hai, hawai jahaz
hai, lota hai, nota hai- aapko jo
cheez acchi lagti hai uss par
button daba do. Bas.

JOGA
(Translates)

As Joga translates, a voice is heard.

DRUNKARD
Humein chotta baccha samjhta hai
kya?

ATMA SINGH
(shouts)
Kaun bola!!?

Cold silence. He searches the crowd for the miscreant. Timid
faces stare back.

Newton comes back.

NEWTON
Sahi bol raha hai. Aap inse aise
baat nahi kar sakte.

ATMA SINGH
Aapse poocha maine? Lakhma! Khada
kar do inhe line mein.

NEWTON
Atma Singh aap power ka misuse kar
rahe hain. Main dekh loonga.

Atma Singh faces Newton and walks, Newton retreats.

ATMA SINGH
Abhi dekh lo jo dekhna hai.
The old bearded Gondi man with grey locks comes to them and says something very forcefully.

**ATMA SINGH (CONT’D)**

*Kya bol raha hai yeh?*

**SPO LAKHMA**

*Gaon ka majhi hai. Kehta hai aap logon ka faisla yeh kar sakta hai.*

**ATMA SINGH**

*Yeh inn sab ka mukhiya hai?*

The Headman nods.

**SPO LAKHMA**

*Haan.*

Atma Singh does a Namaste with mock reverence and the headman reciprocates sincerely.

**ATMA SINGH**

*Pehle kyon nahi bataya mahashay? Aapko kandhe pe bitha ke laata yahan.*

---

85 **INT. SCHOOL- DAY**

Inside the School, Priya checks the register, Loknath puts the indelible ink on the left forefinger of the voter and the voters go and randomly press any button.

Newton sulks, showing his extreme unhappiness over the proceedings. He squirms every time he hears a “beep” of the EVM and chooses to look away.

86 **EXT. SCHOOL- DAY**

The TV crews are shooting the voters queue.

87 **EXT. GHOST VILLAGE, NEXT TO A BROKEN HUT- DAY**

With the backdrop of a broken hut, Debbie gives a piece to camera as she walks sideways.

**DEBBIE**

This ghost village is a by product of its insurgent past. With most villagers still in camps, a booth has been set up here for just seventy voters from two neighboring villages. Despite such stark contrasts, Democracy truly runs deep in India.
INT. SCHOOL- DAY

Slow Motion.

The old head man who was in the queue, walks towards Priya and shows her his ID. She looks for his name in her register and ticks it.

Loknath applies ink on the old headman’s forefinger and he walks to the booth.

All eyes are on him.

He looks nervously at the cameras. He goes to the booth and stands there for a while. Debbie takes a video on her iPhone. Camera flashes and sun gun lights. Press persons are poised like vultures on a dying prey.

Finally, a beep is heard and Newton looks helpless.

EXT. SCHOOL- DAY

A) The Zee News reporter interviews some voters who are looking into the camera.

ZEE NEWS REPORTER
Kissi ne aapko darane ki koshish to nahi ki?

The young man whom the question is asked to merely stares into the camera. He shifts his mic to other people who are in the frame. His cameraman says:

CAMERAMAN
Inhe Hindi kahan aati hai?

ZEE NEWS REPORTER
Oho... toh ek kaam karo ek accha sa long shot le lo. Baaki main P2C mein dekh loonga.

He walks a few paces.

ZEE NEWS CAMERAMAN
Rolling!

Huffing and puffing, in his feeble voice, he speaks forcefully as he moves around the school.

ZEE NEWS REPORTER
Jaise ki aap ne abhi dekha, log nidar ho kar vote dene aaye hai. Dehshat failane walon ko mooh-tod jawab deneka yeh ek hi tareeqa hai. Aaj Democracy ki jeet hui hai!
B) Debbie is gearing to interview Atma Singh.

Atma Singh is about to wear his sunglasses when he looks in the direction of Verma. Verma has identical pair of sunglasses and they share a moment when they both recognize that fact. Verma wears his sunglasses. Atma Singh sheepishly smiles and doesn’t wear his.

DEBBIE
So Atma Singh, a package of almost $35 million dollars has been given by the center to fight Naxalism. Do you think that’s enough?

He has a strange smile plastered on his face.

DEBBIE (CONT’D)
Please don’t look into the camera, look at me.

Debbie waits. Gestures at him to elaborate.

DEBBIE (CONT’D)
Why?

ATMA SINGH
Why?

DEBBIE
Why is it not enough?

ATMA SINGH
It is less.

DEBBIE
Ok. But what do you need?

ATMA SINGH
Better weapons, night vision goggles, thermal imaging, laser range finders.

DEBBIE
Ok. Thank you.

Debbie is creeped out and looks at her cameraman.

ATMA SINGH
Thank you.

C) IG Verma speaks into a number of mikes thrust at him.

He’s wearing his aviators.

DAINIK JOURNALIST (O.S.)
Kuch logon ka kehna hai ki iss darr ke mahoul se kewal mining companiyon ko labh hota hai.

(MORE)
DAINIK JOURNALIST (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Gaon khali karke jungle unko de
diya jaega?

VERMA
Jin logon ka aisa kehna hai woh
naxal sympathiser hai. Adhi samasya
ji jad wahi hai.

DAINIK JOURNALIST (O.S.)
Aapki personal rai kya hai iss
saare masle par?

VERMA
Retirement ke baad kitaab mein
likhunga. Aap khareed ke padhna!
Chalo, thank you.

89D D) Debbie’s cameraman Adam shoots SPOs Lakhma, Joga and their
group who pose. Debbie is whispering to him.

DEBBIE
Gimme children! Gimme children!

Krishna and Constable who are standing nearby tease the SPOs.

CONSTABLE
Tum log ab Amrika mey dikhogey!

KRISHNA
Lakhma, mem ki tujhpe hi nazar hai.
Le jayegi tujhe apne saath.

Lakhma grins.

DEBBIE
(in Hindi)
Haan kyun nahin, tumhe bhi le
jaungi.

Krishna is embarrassed.

89E E) Constables are teasing the Hindi news cameramen who are wrapping up.

CONSTABLE 1
Humara bhi photo kheencho.

CONSTABLE 2
Yeh TV pe aega ya cable pe?

89F F) Atma Singh mumbles to Krishna and Rajendra as they watch press persons interviewing a voter.

ATMA SINGH
Baraatiyon ke nikalte hi hamari bhi
bidai ho jaegi.

Krishna nods.
Verma huddles with Newton and Atma Singh at the door of the school.

VERMA
Kitna vote gira?

NEWTON
70 mein se 39.

VERMA
Very Good. Hame aur booth dekhne jaana hai. Aapka kya karyakram hai? Kab tak hain yahan?

NEWTON
Ji teen baje tak. Abhi toh asli voter... ‘youth’ toh aye nahi hai...

VERMA
Aayenge bhi nahi.

NEWTON
Par wait to karna hai na sir. Chahe koi na aaye. Agar ek bhi voter reh gaya to fair nahi hoga sir.

VERMA
Hmmmm...

NEWTON
Aapko pata nahin yahan kya kya hua hai-

VERMA
Kya hua, chunavi dhandli hui? Booth capturing? Naqli vote?

NEWTON
Nahi...

Verma looks at Atma Singh.

VERMA
Then it’s fine.

EXT. HAMLET 2- DAY

Close up shot of a pot of Chicken Curry being cooked. A female hand adds salt on the top.
Two young boys (14-15 year olds) carry the clay pot covered with leaves.

A wide shot of the clearing. The press has left. Silence.

Newton is fuming at his table. Loknath stretches and yawns.

LOKNATH
Election ki raunak alag hi hoti hai. Chalo, apna toh yeh last election tha!

Newton glares at him.

NEWTON
Yeh election tha? Koi bhi button daba do!

Loknath is taken aback by Newton’s angry retort.

LOKNATH
To hone kyoun diya? Rok dete. Aapko pata hai sab procedure se hua hai. Subah se aapki netagiri dekh raha hoon. Inn logon ko civics padha rahe the? Hain?

NEWTON
Aap jaayiye!

Loknath leaves.

LOKNATH
Tees saal naukri mein hamare bhi ho gaye hain, aap jaisa ajooba nahi dekha.

Priya stays on.

Newton looks at her and gestures, “Do you also want to say something?”

PRIYA
Newton sir, aap sab samajhte hai, jaante hai, phir bhi ek baat bolu?

Newton stares at her.
PRIYA (CONT’D)
Humne bhi ek Newton ki kahani suni hai. Humari kahani mein Newton ke sar pe seb girne pe kahi saal lage the. Aur jab seb gira toh uski aankhein khul gayi thi.

NEWTON
Haan haan, woh maine suna hai... point kya hai aapka?

PRIYA

She exits.

Shambhu is left alone at his table. He is watching the drama with wide eyes.

NEWTON
Ab aap bhi kuch bol ke jaao!

Shambhu shakes his head and darts out of the room.

Newton is alone.

EXT. GHOST VILLAGE- DAY

In the far corner by a broken hut, Dinu is opening a pot of chicken that has been covered by leaves. Two teenage Gondi boys are with him who have brought the food. The non vegetarian food is for a small clique of Atma Singh’s cronies- Krishna, Romesh, Lakhma, Loknath who wait patiently for their turn. Atma Singh is wearing his sunglasses.

Someone passes salad made of tomatoes and beet.

CONSTABLE
Laal salaad!

EVERYONE
Laal salaad! Laal salaad!

Loknath is talking to Atma Singh.

LOKNATH
Yahan pe jo anyaay ho raha hai isko kaabu mein laane ka solution mere paas hai.

ATMA SINGH
Kya?
LOKNATH
TV. Har ghar mein TV laga do.

ATMA SINGH
TV?

LOKNATH
Haan TV! Do saal mein sabko Coco Cola aur washing machine ki lat lag jayegi aur kranti bhool kar line pe aa jayenge.

ATMA SINGH
Aap bhi bahut bade gyani nikle.

LOKNATH
Kya kare, majboor hai. Suraj na chahte hue bhi prakash baat hi deta hai.

Atma Singh picks his plate.

ATMA SINGH
(referring to the boys)
Laundo ne vote diya?

RAJENDRA
Yeh? Abhi to solah ke bhi nahi hai yeh.

KRISHNA
Maine to chaudah saal mein pehli baar vote diya tha. Solah saal mein to hamare jile ke launde chunav lad jaate the.

ATMA SINGH
(Laughs. Sniffs the pot)
Aaye haaye!

KRISHNA
Virender kitna accha bhuna chicken banata tha. Yaad hai?

Atma Singh gives Krishna a furious look.

KRISHNA (CONT’D)
Sorry Sir.

Loknath is waiting with his plate.

Dinu serves generous amounts of the curry. The chicken looks delicious.

Rajendra has a sip of mahua from his water bottle.

The boys look eagerly for payment.
ATMA SINGH

Dinu!

Dinu fishes out a 50 Rupee note and gives it to them. It’s too less and they wait for more.

DINU
(tells them rudely in Gondi to go home)

The boys walk away.

Priya sits by herself on a plastic chair and digs a plastic fork into green pea pilaf and cold tomato curry. She is observing this. Atma Singh glares at her.

ATMA SINGH

PRIYA
Jee main theek hoon.

In another corner, the general constabulary are collecting their packed food plate which is cold and vegetarian.

INT. SCHOOL- DAY

Newton looks defeated. He slumps in his chair and sighs.

PBS # 2 plays.

EXT. GHOST VILLAGE- DAY

Atma Singh and his cronies are enjoying the food.

EXT. JUNGLE- DAY

Slow Motion Jib shots of the wind swept jungle. Leaves. Dew. Fog on the hills.

CLOSE UP MONTAGE OF FACES (LOCATION: HAMLET 1 & 2)

Close Up Shots of all the forty-odd men and women who have voted looking into the camera lens with their index fingers stuck out, showing their indelible ink mark.

Their expressions are stern almost like they are showing the camera “the” finger.
**EXT. JUNGLE- DAY**

Children are playing Chor-Police (Naxal-Police) in the jungle. High speed shots. They have sticks and twigs that look like guns.

**INT. SCHOOL- DAY**

Tight Close Up of Newton. Camera tracks back. He’s sitting on a chair expressionless.

PBS # 2 ends.

Few moments later.

Atma Singh comes to the door with a plate of food.

**ATMA SINGH**

Rule book ke mutabik main andar nahin aa sakta, magar aapko aise dekh kar bura lag raha hai.

Newton looks at him. Awkward.

**ATMA SINGH (CONT’D)**

Situation pe na to aapka control hai na hi mera. Hum dono ko to apni duty karni hai. Aap khaana nahin khaenge to mujhe bahut guilty feel hoga.

Long silence. Newton looks at Atma Singh when—

Gun shots are heard. Atma Singh is alarmed.

**ATMA SINGH (CONT’D)**

Aap yahan se hilna mat.

He rushes out. More Gunshots. Atma Singh is shouting instructions. Newton tries to rush out when Priya and Loknath rush into the school followed by an armed constable.

**CONSTABLE 1**

Bahar mat aiyie! Ambush ho gaya hai!

They all huddle in one corner.

Suddenly Atma Singh carrying his AK-47 reappears with SPO Lakhma.

**ATMA SINGH**

Aap log apna saman sameto aur niklo.

Priya and Loknath start wrapping up.
Newton responds well to the situation. He hesitates for a moment and puts the control unit and balloting unit into a bag and rushes out.

Atma Singh is facing Newton.

Atma Singh nods and rushes out.

Newton feels sentimental. The men share a moment. He holds Atma Singh’s hands. Atma Singh nods and rushes out.

Lakhma
Jaldi chalo.

Newton, Priya and Loknath rush out.

As soon as they come out:

Lakhma
Mere peeche peeche aao. Jaldi.

Krishna is a hundred meters away with a band of ten armed SPOs/constables. He gestures them to rush. They all begin to run.

Gunshots are heard sporadically.

Newton, Priya, Loknath, Shambhu, Krishna, Lakhma and others run down the path.

As they descend from the slope, they have slowed down and the firing has stopped.

Newton walks by himself, thoughtful.
Priya, Lakhma, Shambhu are walking behind him.

Krishna is walking a bit ahead with Loknath and two constables. They are followed by two. (Loknath is telling some story we cannot hear).

They stop at a point from where a path cuts to the left and leads into the thicket.

**KRISHNA**
Aap to chali jayengi yahan se.

**PRIYA**
Jee.
(to Newton)
Accha sir. Dhanyawaad.

**NEWTON**
Akele kaise jayengi yeh? Attack hua hai.

**PRIYA**
Main chali jaungi.

**NEWTON**
Nahi nahi aise kaise?

**KRISHNA**
Inko kuch nahi hoga... agar aap kaho toh kisiko-

**PRIYA**
Nahi nahi... main chali jaungi.
(to Newton)
Kabhi iss taraf aana hua toh mil lijiyega. Maspur gaon hai mera.

Newton smiles.

Krishna and Lakhma look on, naughtily.

**LOKNATH**
Priyaji kalam to leti jaiye baccho ko sher kaise banayengi?

Handing the pen to her, Loknath finds the card in his pocket.

**LOKNATH (CONT’D)**
Ah Lo! Newton babu ke patte khul gaye.

**PRIYA**
Kaun sa hai? Duggi Joker to tha ab kya hai?

Loknath shows it- 5. He looks at Newton who’s disinterested.
LOKNATH
Paanch. Kuch kaam ka nahi hai. Ikka baadshah begum hoti to maza aata.

PRIYA
Nahin Sir, yeh hota hai paanch.

She shows him her hand and makes it into a fist.

PRIYA (CONT’D)
(tapping her temple)
Aur yeh hota hai chhe.

Newton absorbs it but doesn’t acknowledge.

LOKNATH
Chhati indri ki baat kar rahi hai Sir. Sixth sense.

Priya smiles and walks away.

She walks into the distance and disappears into the thicket without ever turning back.

EXT. BUSHY JUNGLE PATH—DAY

Newton walks with the group. They resume walking. He is feeling uneasy.

After walking a few meters. Lakhma is talking about a Salman Khan film to Krishna. Newton listens to them and starts thinking.

NEWTON
Loknath ji, aapko filmein dekhna pasand hai na?

LOKNATH
Ji.

NEWTON
Aap agar wapis jaakar aaj ki kahani kisiko sunaogey toh aapko nahn lagta woh bada khush hoga, woh kahega ‘arre wah, iss kahani mein toh sab kuch hai—shuru mein kuch hota hi nahin hai aur aakhir mein goliyan chalne lagti hai.’ Kyun?

Loknath nods and laughs. Krishna and Lakhma silently listen to Newton.

NEWTON (CONT’D)
Yeh bahut badiya kissa nahi hua humare saath? Ab kissa kahan hota hai, Loknath ji? Kissa hota hai theater mein, parde pe.

(MORE)
Subah se shanti thi, jaise hi voting khatam hua, achanak se twist aa gaya.

**KRISHNA**
Sir ji, kya bol rahe ho aap?

**NEWTON**
Atma Singh ko bata do ki kalaai khul gaya hai.

Newton turns and walks back.

**KRISHNA**
Sir, aap aise jaa nahi sakte.

Newton ignores him and keeps walking.

**KRISHNA (CONT’D)**
Sir! Aise mat jaiye.

Newton keeps walking briskly. Krishna and others walk behind him.

Loknath, Shambhu and a constable stay back.

Krishna talks on the walkie.

**KRISHNA (CONT’D)**
Tango calling cheetah.

---

**EXT. BUSHY SLOPE- DAY**

Atma Singh and his platoon of constables are walking through the jungle. Rajendra passes him a walkie.

**KRISHNA (O.S.)**
Janab, lagta hai yeh Newton ji wapas booth jaa raha hai.

**ATMA SINGH**
Huh? Kya bak rahe ho?

---

**105B INTERCUT:**

**KRISHNA**
Ruk nahi rahe hai. Lagta hai inko pata chal gaya hai...

**ATMA SINGH**
(scolds)
Useless hai sab ke sab. Ek kaam theek se nahi kar sakte. Pakdo usse!
EXT. BUSHY JUNGLE PATH- DAY

As they walk back, Krishna and Lakhma try to reason with Newton in their own way.

LAKHMA
Sir, kyun humare naukri ko khatre mein daal rahe ho.

Krishna and Lakhma run behind him. Newton begins to run with the EVM in his hand.

It soon turns into a CHASE, Newton has a good lead.

EXT. BUSHY SLOPE- DAY

Newton runs ahead. From the distance, he sees Atma Singh and his troops coming downhill- around 200 meters away.

Newton freezes for a second.

ATMA SINGH
Pakdo usse!

The men run downhill towards Newton. Behind him, Krishna and Lakhma are waiting with some constables.

Newton turns in the third direction and runs towards the deep jungle. The men chase him.

30 men run behind Newton. In a wide shot- we see Newton running towards the deep forest full of Sal trees. The men follow him.

EXT. SAL FOREST- DAY

Newton runs into the Sal forest with the men following him.

Finally after a formidable chase, he is nabbed by Rajendra and another constable.

Scolding him, they drag him out of the forest towards the Barren Jungle Path.

Newton is completely exhausted, he is holding the EVM tight. A constable grabs it from his hands.

EXT. BUSHY SLOPE- DAY

Newton is brought to Atma Singh and his cronies who wait.

NEWTON
Aap logon ne fraud kiya hai!

Atma Singh comes close to Newton. Looks him in the eye.
ATMA SINGH
Bahar mat bolna. Log hasenge.
Chaliye chalte hain.

NEWTON
Main sab likhoonga apne report mein.

ATMA SINGH
Likho! Kaun gawahi dega?

They walk towards the bushy jungle path.

EX. BUSHY JUNGLE PATH

Loknath, Shambhu and a couple of constables are waiting for them. As soon as they see Atma Singh and his platoon bringing Newton—dragging him by his arms, they stand up, shocked.

EX. JUNGLE PATH

They all walk down the path—silently.

In the distance, the four Gondi youth who they encountered in the morning are seen, coming back with baskets full of tendu leaves.

They stop and raise their ID cards.

YOUNG MAN 1
Vote dena?

ATMA SINGH
Kya vote? Bhaggg!

The young Adivasis turn and walk away.

NEWTON
Ruko!!! Ruko!!!

They stop and look back.

Newton tries to free himself. They violently pin him down. In the scuffle that ensues, Newton pounces on Romesh and grabs his gun.

He points the gun at Atma Singh.

Shock.

ATMA SINGH
Mental jaisi harkat mat karo

NEWTON
Sab bandooke neeche karo.
All guns are pointing at Newton. Everyone is talking SIMULTANEOUSLY.

ATMA SINGH
Trigger se ungli hatao!

LOKNATH
Newton sir!!!

NEWTON
Bandook neeche. Unko yahan bulao!

ATMA SINGH
Bandook neeche.

His men obey him.

NEWTON
Koi chalaki nahi! Unko bulao yahan!

ATMARAM
Newton babu hosh mein aa jao...Sab neeche rakh do bhai bandook. Batcheet se sab hal ho sakta hai. Dekhiye hamari aapki koi personal dushmani thodi hai.

KRISHNA
(calls the tribal youth) Aao bhai... aao!

LOKNATH
Aao bhailog!!

The Gondis come with their hands up.

NEWTON
Aap log haath neeche... Shambhu wahan machine lagao!

Shambhu is so nervous, he’s shaking and does as told.

Atma Singh is in reconciliatory mode.

ATMA SINGH

NEWTON
(screams)
Haath upar mooh band.

The Gondi youth turn to run away.

NEWTON (CONT’D)
Tum nahi. Tum yahan aao. Dinu! Bolo inhe.
Dinu tells them to stop in Gondi and tells them to vote.

NEWTON (CONT’D)
Jaldi aao! Loknath, ID check karo aur voting karao.

LOKNATH
Sir aap jaante ho na aap kya kar rahe ho?

Newton gives him a look, Loknath does as he is told. He sets up the polling booth behind a bush.

ATMA SINGH
Election officer ke haath mein bandook shobha nahi deti.

Newton ignores them, Shambhu is checking their cards, marking the names in the book and getting them to put their thumb impressions.

Atma Singh and his men look at Newton.

ATMA SINGH (CONT’D)
Aagya ho main baith jaaun?

NEWTON
Bandook se door.

He sits.

NEWTON (CONT’D)
Kyon ki nakli firing?

ATMA SINGH
Aap seedhe seedhe maan kaha rahe the? Subah se bol raha hoon ilaka safe nahi hai. Do saal se night vision googles maang rahe hai...Bahadur ladke faltu mein marte hai accha nahi lagta. Aapke election picnic ke chakkar mein main apne aadmiyon ki jaan jokham mein nahi daal sakta.

NEWTON
Justify karne ki koshish mat kijiye. Loknath!

Newton signals him to start.

Loknath talks to a voter as he applies indelible ink on the voter’s forefinger.

LOKNATH
Kisko vote doge?
The young man stares at Loknath and presses his button by covering the EVM with his body. The man knows whom to vote for.

The first beep of the voting machine is heard.

Newton’s brow is beaded with sweat.

Atma Singh looks like a miffed school boy sitting in one corner.

Another beep is heard.

One of the voters steals a glance at Atma Singh who glares back at him. The voter lowers his eyes and goes to vote.

Another beep is heard.

LOKNATH (CONT’D)
Sir, aapka sign chahiye.

NEWTON
Sab theek se hua?

LOKNATH
Jee.

NEWTON
Kya time hua?

LOKNATH
2.55

NEWTON
Paanch minute hai. Ruk jao.

SILENCE FOR FIVE MINUTES AS EVERYONE WAITS. Mid shots and Close ups of all characters.

THE WATCH HITS THREE. AND...

Newton signs on the paper. Loknath brings him the EVM. Newton switches off the button. Big beep.

ATMA SINGH
Ho gaya?

Newton nods.

Atma Singh is assisted to get up by Krishna. He brushes his pants and stands up.

NEWTON
Mujhe pata hai aap arrest karo. Kar lo.

Newton keeps the gun on the ground.
As soon as he does that—ALL THE MEN POUNCE ON NEWTON. FREEZE FRAME.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

EXT. MINING SHOTS—DAY

Over shots of Iron Ore mining. SUPER: “Six Months Later”

INT. HALL—DAY

Banner on the stage reads “EKTA MANCH—a forum for democracy”. A middle aged woman is reading out from a paper.

EMCEE

Aap Dandkaranya jungle mein
election duty par the jahan achanak
naxali hamla ho gaya. Chunav ko
prajatantra ka sabse prabhavshaali
chinh maante hue apne naxaliyon ke
hamle ka mooh tod jawab diya. Gaur
talab hai ki hamle ke waqt chunav
adhikari ka mansik santulan bigad
gaya aur veh mat daan machine lekar
jungle me bhaag gaye. Atma Singh ne
soojbhooj aur bahaduri ka praman
dete hue na sirf uss chunav
adhikari aur matdaan machine ko
surakshit vapas pahuchaya balki
chaar khatarnaak naxaliyon ko bhi
aatma samarpan karne ke liye vivash
dar kar diya. Assistant Commandent Atma
Singh ko yeh puraskar dene ke liye
main swatantra senani Radhyeshyam
ji ko maanch par aamanratit karna
chahungi.

Atma Singh walks to the stage and accepts an award from an 90 year old man. Audience claps.

INT. HAMLET—DAY

A little boy of 8 rushes out of his hut. He is carrying a slate. He runs into the woods. He sits sext to some children who have gathered. We reveal that Newton is teaching children who were seen in the Chor-Police sequence. A little away, Priya is teaching kids.

THE END.