Note: The script in bold plays out in the past, i.e., in the 1920’s British India. The rest plays out in present-day independent India.
A voice emanates from a dark screen with supers in white

VOICE
If yet your blood does not boil, then it is water that flows in your veins. For what is the flush of youth if it is not of service to the motherland.  
—Dushyant Kumar (1933–75)

FADE IN:

INT. FAIZABAD JAIL, ASHFAQULLAH KHAN’S CELL; DECEMBER 1927—DAWN

EXTREME CLOSE-UP: A man’s eye reflected in the glass of a broken mirror. He is applying kajal (kohl) in his eyes.

SUPER: BRITISH INDIA. EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. GORAKHPUR JAIL, RAMPRASAD BISMIL’S CELL; DECEMBER 1927—DAWN

Another cell. We glimpse a man (RAMPRASAD BISMIL) in his 30s, thick set and with very short hair. He is sitting in the lotus position, pouring a bucket of water over his head as he chants a prayer.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. LAHORE JAIL, RAJGURU’S CELL; 23 MARCH 1931—EVENING

A third cell. A young man (RAJGURU) stands facing the shaft of light that shines through the high ventilator in the cell. He turns at the sound in the corridor.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. LAHORE JAIL, CORRIDOR BY CONDEMNED CELLS; MARCH 1931—EVENING

We follow a British Police Officer (JAMES McKinley), as he walks towards an adjacent cell.
He stops by a cell door.

INT. LAHORE JAIL, BHAGAT SINGH’S CELL; 23 MARCH 1931—EVENING

A strikingly handsome young man (BHAGAT SINGH) is reading Lenin's biography. As he hears the cell door unlock, he looks up. The door opens and JAMES McKINLEY walks in.

BHAGAT SINGH
Just a minute, Mr. McKinley. One revolutionary is meeting another!

BHAGAT SINGH
This isn't the end Mr. McKinley. This is just the beginning. There will be others after we're gone, many others.

CLOSE-UP: JAMES McKinley’s eyes turn moist.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LAHORE, JAMES McKinley’s HOUSE, STUDY—NIGHT

Darkness. An oil lamp lights up as JAMES McKinley’s hand opens a leather-bound diary with his name, JAMES McKinley, etched in gold on it, and starts to write in it.

JAMES McKinley (V.O.)
I always believed there were two kinds of men in this world. Men who go to their death in silence, and men who go to their death screaming.
CLOSE-UP: Page of his diary as his pen finishes writing the next line.

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
Then I met a third kind...

FADE TO:

INT. LONDON, BBC OFFICE, SUE McKINLEY’S CABIN—NIGHT

The pages become yellow and worn, the ink fades. We pull back to reveal an attractive 26-year-old British girl. She’s sitting on a couch, her legs folded to her chest, reading McKinley’s diary. This is SUE McKINLEY.

The camera moves around the cluttered room. Hundreds of photographs and a pile of research material [of the British Raj in India] covers every inch of visible space.

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
Sometimes in my dreams I can still see them...taking that last step...they never faltered and never so much as broke their stride...

Through the window we see the main office deserted, except for a cleaning lady.

I/E. LAHORE JAIL, CORRIDOR TO GALLOWS; 23 MARCH 1931—EVENING

SLOW MOTION: BHAGAT SINGH, RAJGURU and SUKHDEV are being lead past JAMES McKINLEY. BHAGAT SINGH looks directly into JAMES McKINLEY’s troubled eyes.

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
But above all, I remember those eyes...how they looked at me...clear, defiant, unwavering...

BACK TO:
INT. LONDON, BBC OFFICE, SUE McKINLEY’S CABIN—NIGHT
SUE reads on.

BACK TO:

EXT. LAHORE JAIL; CORRIDOR TO GALLOWS, 23 MARCH 1931—EVENING

The long corridor leads to a door which opens to reveal the towering gallows outside.

JAMES McKINLEY stares intensely at the gallows as if he is facing his own death. The three young men stand at the gallows fearlessly. They look at each other and smile. Then their faces are covered by black cloth. JAMES McKINLEY looks at his watch.

जेम्स मकिणले वक्त हो गया है...

JAMES McKINLEY
It’s time...

As the trap door under their feet is opened, JAMES McKINLEY shuts his eyes and his pocket watch falls from his hand.

INT. LONDON, BBC OFFICE, SUE McKINLEY’S CABIN—NIGHT

SUE is sleeping on the couch. In extreme slow motion, the diary slips from SUE’s hand and falls. We follow the diary as it spirals down into inky shadows and is lost in the darkness.

I/E. TITLE SEQUENCE

We catch a glimpse of faded photographs and flickering 1920s newsreel footage of the brutal, oppressive British rule of India.

INT. LONDON, BBC OFFICE—MORNING

SUE strides across the busy open plan space.

SUE
Hi, Morning...
INT. LONDON, BBC OFFICE, CONFERENCE ROOM—MORNING

The three executives sit facing SUE at the table. BETH is the only one not smiling.

SUE
Hi...Good Morning...

But none of them seem to want to say anything. SUE, still confident, senses some tension in the air. She decides to break the silence and peels open her production folder to bring out a couple of documents and photographs.

SUE
So Sonia...My contact in Delhi. She’s found a steam train for us to film on.

She passes them a photo which they only politely glance over.

SUE
But we need to wire her some money to secure it. Everything’s cash out there.

No one answers her. SUE suspects something. She looks towards BETH who should be her ally.

SUE
Have I come to the wrong meeting?

The chief programmer and the young executive look at BETH; it’s her job to come clean.

SUE fixes her a hard stare at BETH, wanting her to be direct.

BETH
We’ve had a directive from above...budget cuts...

SUE sits still, eyes searching the faces.

BETH
So we had to take some very tough decisions.

SUE’s face is frozen in disbelief.
BETH
Sorry, Sue. Really sorry.

CHIEF PROGRAMMER
*(stepping in)*
If you were doing an episode on Gandhi, it would work for us.

The young executive nods enthusiastically.

BETH
*(jumping in)*
Gandhi sells, as does Che Guevara, even Robin Hood, but these other revolutionaries, this Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Ali...

SUE
Azad okay...Chandrashekhar Azad. And Azad means freedom.

BETH
Azad...sorry, I know what it means Sue.

SUE
I don’t believe this. You know...everything’s set up! I’ve been working on this for two years. I’ve been going to bloody Hindi night classes.

SUE recomposes herself.

SUE
Look, please their story deserves to be told. Look...this is my grandfather’s diary. He was an eyewitness...

She angrily waves the diary in front of their faces.

SUE
It’s filled with real conversations...their very words. Boys no older than 23, fighting the Empire. Okay that’s an important story, a bloody important...
Her voice trails off, as she realises from the blank expressions that their decision is final.

INT. LONDON, BBC OFFICE, SUE McKinley’s CABIN—DAY

SUE angrily kicks the wastepaper basket across the room. Holding back the tears, she slumps in her chair, surrounded by her research. Among the paperwork and folders is her grandfather’s old pocket-watch with a shattered glass front. SUE picks it up and turns it over in her hand as her mind races. She reaches a decision.

SUE
This is not the end, Ms. McKinley.

INT. LONDON, BBC OFFICE - DAY

SUE walks down the corridor holding some files, the diary and some tapes. BETH calls her from behind.

BETH
Sue...Sue... Can I talk to you?

She catches up with Sue.

BETH
Where are you going?

SUE
To India, to shoot a documentary. I’ll send you a postcard.

BETH
How? With what?

SUE
Tumhari maa ki aankh!
(Shove it!)

EXT. NEW DELHI, INDIRA GANDHI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT—DAY

A beat of silence.
SUE’s POV: She is hounded by cab drivers, hotel touts, travel agents, flower sellers, beggars, peacock feather sellers and other hawkers.

CLOSE ON: SUE walks out of the exit gate.

HOTEL TOUT
Hello Madam hotel arranger Madam. Big room, honeymoon suite is very sweet, Madam.

CARPET SELLER
Carpet Madam, genuine Indian! Drawing room...

PEACOCK FEATHER SELLER
(trying to catch SUE’s attention)
Hello Madam...hello Madam...look...look. Madam, here!

MAP SELLER
(with maps around his neck and hands)
Indian globe. Real, correct map!

TRAVEL AGENT
Taxi Madam? Whole day, very cheap. Famous private travel agent. A/c inside, black window.

SUE is overwhelmed. Everyone is suddenly pushed aside by a burly Sikh cab driver with a booming voice; he shoos everyone away.

CAB DRIVER
Get out of the way. Scoot!

The cab driver reaches out for SUE’s luggage; she is taken aback.
CAB DRIVER
You come India first time, Madam?

SUE
Yes!
*(holding on to her luggage)*
No...no...no!

CAB DRIVER
*(pulling at her luggage)*
First time in India? No worries. Are you married?
Even I and my wife are also married.

SUE is at a loss for words. A voice interjects.

SONIA (O.C.)
Don’t worry, he’s with me.

SUE turns to find herself face-to-face with a young attractive woman of 24, with a warm smile (SONIA). SONIA hugs SUE who is very relieved.

SUE
Sonia, how are you? It’s so great to see you.

SONIA
I can’t believe you are here, that it’s happening at last.

SUE
Of course I am here. But sorry you had to make arrangements at such short notice.

SONIA waves to the cab driver, who without a word loads the luggage in a rundown cab.

SUE
Mindblowing ya. Tumhari hindi to ekdam jubardast hoo gayi hai.

SONIA
Your Hindi has really improved!

SUE
Thank you!
EXT. NEW DELHI, STREETS—DAY

Aerial view of the cab moving through the congested streets of Delhi.

INT. TAXI—DAY

SUE sits in the back. SONIA keeps filling her in. SUE stares out of the window taking in the sights and sounds of India. She looks a bit nervous.

SONIA
Hey Sue, no need to worry. Everything has been taken care of. Posters have been put up everywhere. It’s also been announced on radio. Let’s see how many turn up for the auditions.

SUE is still quiet.

SONIA
What’s wrong?

SUE
I didn’t tell you. The truth is that I’ve come alone. No money, no producer is going to turn up...

SONIA
I know.

SUE
You knew it?

SONIA
After Alice, there was a call from Beth Williams. She informed me of the cancellation of the show and also my services...did you abuse her in Hindi? She wanted to know what it meant. I explained to her in graphic detail.
SUE looks at her. SONIA bursts out laughing. SUE joins her.

स्यू तुम्हारा जवाब नहीं, सोनिया।

SUE
You are amazing, Sonia.

SUE looks out as the cab passes the Red Fort.

SONIA
Look there, that’s the Red Fort.

EXT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, FRONT ENTRANCE—DAY

The cab enters the University campus, blasting its horn to scatter the young boys and girls in its path.

कैब ड्राइवर
लो जी, आ गई तोआँदी दिल्ली यूनिवर्सिटी।

CAB DRIVER
This is Delhi University.

EXT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, CAMPUS—DAY

SONIA carefully counts her money as she pays the cab driver. SUE is checking if all the luggage has been offloaded.

सोनिया कितना हुआ?

SONIA
How much?

कैब ड्राइवर बहनजी, दस्त्या तो था आपको।

CAB DRIVER
Ma’am, I’ve already told you.

A studious-looking young man (RAVI) walks up to the girls and starts picking the luggage.

SUE
No...no...no!

RAVI
I can help?
SONIA taps her hand into SUE’s and leads her towards the main building. RAVI follows carrying all the luggage. A group of youths whistle as SUE passes them. One of them, Prem, is particularly attentive. SUE is rather thrown by the attention, and gives a nervous grin.

PREM
Hello! Which country, Madam?

SUE
(a little confused, looks at SONIA)
India I hope!

The two girls giggle and move in, followed by RAVI.

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, HOSTEL HALLWAY—DAY

SONIA leads SUE along the cluttered, noisy hallway up the staircase and shows SUE her room. RAVI can be seen struggling behind them. As they reach the room, SONIA stops, takes out the key and opens the door.

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, SUE’S HOSTEL ROOM—DAY

SONIA opens the room and the three walk in. RAVI puts the last of the luggage down.

SONIA
This is your room.

SUE
OK.

SONIA
Get some rest now. I’ll see you tomorrow. If you need anything, you have my number.
(to Ravi)
Let’s go Ravi.
SUE
Thanks.

As SONIA leaves, SUE slumps down on the bed. She digs out the old pocket watch from her jacket and holds it up on its thin chain and smiles to herself.

स्यू (V.O.)
दादाजी की बात सही थी। इंडिया से पहली नज़र में ही प्यार हो जाता है।

SUE (V.O.)
Grandpa was right. You fall in love with India at first sight.

FADE TO BLACK:

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, SUE’S HOSTEL ROOM—MORNING

On the dark screen we hear a buzzing sound. The sound become louder as we slowly fade in to SUE’s sleeping face. She wakes with a start, gathers herself and walks to the window.

EXT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, CAMPUS GROUNDS—MORNING

SUE’s POV: The grounds are swarming with students in a highly charged state. SONIA is being hounded by everyone, she is taking down everyone’s names.

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, SUE’S HOSTEL ROOM—MORNING

SUE turns and takes a deep breath.

EXT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, AMPHITHEATRE—DAY

The camera is set up, SUE and SONIA sit side-by-side at a table.

BOY #1, a well-built boy, looks like a boxer.

BOY #1
(flexing his muscles)
This is Daboo speaking. My hobbies are bikes, babes and...

CUT TO:
लड़की #1
(गाते हुए)
नहीं मुन्नेबच्चे तेरी मुट्ठी में क्या है? नहीं मुन्नेबच्चे तेरी मुट्ठी में क्या है?

GIRL #1
(singing)
Little ones, what do you have in your fists?

CUT TO:

लड़की #2 looks very nervous.

GIRL #2
Oh Shit! I can't do it! Listen...

SONIA
Just try once.

लड़की #2
मुझे नहीं आता।

GIRL #2
I can't do this.

The crowd jeers at the girl.

लड़की #3
हमें ऐसे नहीं क्योंकि हमारे गालों के झिंपल बिल्कुल प्रीति जिदंता के जैसे हैं।

GIRL #3
I deserve a role because...I have dimples just like Preity Zinta.

Boy #2 sings a cabaret number in a nasal tone.

लड़का #2
(गाते हुए)
कलियों का चमन जब खिलता है...

BOY #2
(sings)
When flowers bloom in spring...

Boy #3 is wearing a US flag as a bandana; he raps in a very false American accent.

लड़का #3
जन गन मन, वन्दे मातरम। यू कमिंग ऑन बेबी!

BOY #3
Jana Gana Mana, Vande Mataram.

लड़की #4 looks like a feminist.
INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, SUE’S HOSTEL ROOM—NIGHT

On a soft board, SUE pins maps, newspaper cuttings and photos of CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD, BHAGAT SINGH, ASHFAQULLAH KHAN, RAJGURU and DURGA BHABHI.

GIRL #4
(in a staccato authoritative voice)
Because women can make possible impossible... er...impossible possible.

SONIA and SUE look at each other—not much ‘revolution’ here.

CUT TO:

EXT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, AMPHITHEATRE—DAY

Boy #4 brings up a rose.

BOY #4
I love you...

Boy #5 shows his muscles.

BOY #5
Hi. How’s that?

लड़का # 2
(गाते हुए) कलियों का चमन... 

BOY #2
(sings) When flowers boom in spring...

सोनिया
आप गाइए बल | आप ‘वन्दे मातरम’ बोलिए। 

SONIA
Don’t sing. Just recite ‘Vande Mataram’.

लड़का # 2 वन्दे मातरम!

BOY # 2
Vande Mataram!

CUT TO:
Boy #6 melodramatically delivers a Hindi film dialogue.

BOY #6
You dog! If you’ve got mother’s milk running in your veins, confront me!

BOY #4
I am the Don of Bombay...

SUE and SONIA stare back at him from behind the table. Their stunned expressions tell us exactly how they feel.

CUT TO:

SONIA
(all charged up)
Raise your hands and say ‘Vande Mataram’!

SONIA
Say it loudly...‘Vande Mataram’!

CUT TO:

Boy #7 is so thin that it seems a gust of wind can blow him away.
Boy #8 is so casual as if fighting for freedom is like roaming in a park. He seems to be utterly unmotivated.

Boy #9 is trying to act like Dilip Kumar.

Boy #10 has an irritatingly thin voice.

Boy #2 is almost in tears and acts as if he’s actually writing the letter, as he speaks melodramatically.

BOY #7
I have dedicated my life to the freedom of this nation.

BOY #8
I have dedicated my life to the freedom of this nation.

BOY #7
(painfully thin boy)
I know you want me to get married but FREEDOM is my bride.

BOY #9
I know...I know...
(forgets the dialogue)
one minute...
(digs into the script)
I know that...you want me to get married...

BOY #10
...but my bride is FREEDOM.

BOY #2
...but my bride is FREEDOM. Your obedient son, BHAGAT SINGH

BOY #7
(painfully thin boy)
Bhagat Singh.
BOY #9  
(Dilip Kumar style)  
Bhagat Singh.

BOY #10  
Bhagat Singh.

BOY #8  
(too casual)  
My name is Bhagat Singh.

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, CAMPUS—DAY

SUE is sitting on the stairs, exhausted and forlorn. The auditions were clearly a disaster.

SUE attempts a smile and takes the glass from SONIA’s hand.

SUE  
Thanks...

SONIA  
None work, right?

SUE  
One or two of them can be used for minor roles, but no one’s even close for Azad or Bhagat Singh.

SONIA nods apologetically.

SONIA  
You’re right. I guess it’s all my fault

SUE  
No, Sonia, you’re my rock.
Sonia

देखो स्तू, अब दुखी होने से कोई फायदा नहीं है। I think we need a break. चलो कुछ मस्ती मारते हैं।

Sue

नूढ़ नहीं हैं।

SONIA

Sue, there's no point feeling sad. Let's go and have some fun.

SUE

Not in the mood, Sonia.

SONIA

Come on...we are going to the classroom.

SUE

Classroom?

EXT. DUST ROADS—DUSK

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: ‘The Rebel’ fades up. The sun sets behind an old fort ruins. A few cars and motorcycles speed along the dusty dirt track in front of a setting sun, towards the place known as THE CLASSROOM.

SONIA: पाठशाला

सौंप कन्ट्रोल...आई एंड ए रेबेल

ना कोई पढ़ने वाला,

ना कोई सीखने वाला,

अपनी तो पाठशाला

मल्टी की पाठशाला;

SONG: PAATHSHALA

Lose control...I'm a rebel

No students here,

No teachers here,

Here's to our kind of school,

Having fun, breaking rules...

EXT. THE CLASSROOM—NIGHT

The classroom is fort ruins on top of a hill overlooking the city spread below. Passing a water reservoir surrounded by concentric stone steps we reach the high fort wall overlooking the city.

Two bikes ride down the narrow fort wall towards a parapet. A few young boys and girls are hanging out.

SONIA leads SUE along the wall. SUE looks around absorbing her surroundings. A good-looking boy [ASLAM] with long hair is scrawling graffiti on the wall.

SONIA

कविताज...शायर-ए-आजम...क्या हो रहा है?

O poet of poets… what’s up?
ASLAM turns. The first thing SUE notices are his sensitive eyes. His face breaks into a smile as he hugs SONIA.

ASLAM
Hey Sonia...

SONIA
How’re you buddy?

ASLAM
I’m good. What about you?

SONIA
Aslam... Sue McKinley.

SUE
You study at the University?

ASLAM
Wow! Her Hindi is great. We live there, eat there, but no one has ever accused us of studying there... right, Sonia?

EXT. THE CLASSROOM, BONFIRE—NIGHT

SONG: PAATHSHALA
Where every face is a book that we read.
Both your and my face is our mobile library
Friendship is a lesson on equations.
Love teaches us multiplication.
The one who wins hearts is the true alpha and beta.
Lose control...one more time
Lose lose lose control...
I’m a rebel!

The three walk along the wall towards the parapet.

LONG SHOT: A crowd has gathered at the circumference of the pool. A lone girl dances atop a dilapidated wall; a boom box plays nearby. The crowd is cheering for someone.

CROWD
DJ DJ DJ DJ...
CLOSE-UP: SUE’s eyes travel up to the narrow ledge until they land on...

CUT TO:

Two young men [DJ and SUKHI] are balancing precariously on the narrow ledge above the water reservoir. They are deliberately bending backwards and guzzling beer from bottles in a single gulp. They are daring each other—who will bend back further? They could both easily fall into the water!

BACK TO:

स्यू
कौन है यह पागल?
SUE
What are those madcaps upto?

SONIA
That’s DJ.

CUT TO:

HIGH ANGLE: The two young men are arching way back, and the crowd below roars. A group of teenage girls are excitedly waving at the daredevils.

TEENAGE GIRL
DJ, I love you!

SUE looks up, focusing on the young man who seems to have captured the imagination of all the young girls.

SONIA
And that’s Sukhi

CUT TO:

HIGH ANGLE: The crane swoops down towards the young man who is the spectators’ favourite—this is the first time we see his face; this is DJ. He drains the last drop from his bottle and casually tosses it down into the water. The crowd cheers.

DJ then sweeps up two more bottles and opens them with his kada (steel bangle). He throws one to SUKHI who totters as he catches the bottle. The crowd groans. DJ lifts his bottle up and acknowledges the crowd. The two do cheers with their bottles.
A young intense looking boy (KARAN) bends dangerously close to the fire and lights his cigarette.

SUE’s eyes are now locked on DJ, who has stepped closer to the ledge.

KARAN steps up between them breaking SUE’s spell.

DJ gulps another bottle daring his opponent SUKHI to do the same. The crowd roars again.

SUKHI raises his bottle to his lips. An overweight, plump girl screams.

SUKHI is taken aback, loses his balance, totters over the brink and plummets into the water below. The crowd screams and laughs.
The teenage girls cry out as DJ now balances on one leg and gulps down the remaining beer.

DJ
Tim lak lak de. Tim lak lak de...

The crowd applauds.

DJ enjoys the adulation of the crowd. He takes a bow.

ANGLE ON WATER. SUKHI is desperately flapping his limbs and doesn’t seem to be able to swim.

KARAN and ASLAM exchange a look.

CUT TO:

KARAN and ASLAM emerge out of the water pulling a drunk SUKHI behind them. SUE is staring at SUKHI.

SUKHI
Is he OK?
SONIA
That’s his natural state.

SUKHI coughs and splutters. DJ swaggers towards the group like he is a huge movie star. A good-looking girl kisses DJ’s cheek.

YOUNG GIRL
Hi DJ!

DJ
(to Sukhi)
Sukhi, all parts working?

SONIA
DJ...

DJ looks at SONIA and notices SUE.

DJ
Whoa! Whoa! Who is this?
SONIA
Sue...this is DJ. DJ, this is Sue.

SUE
Hi!

DJ
Sue... What kind of a name is this? She’s so pink...her name should be Gulabo (Rose).

SONIA
DJ...

DJ
She’s quite hot...perfect for this cold.

Everyone laughs. SUE and DJ’s eyes lock for a moment. SUKHI gets up unsteadily and hugs KARAN.

SUKHI
Karan, you saved my life! I love you!

KARAN
I love you too, Sukhi.

SUKHI goes to hug ASLAM.

SUKHI
Aslam, you too saved my life. I love you too!

ASLAM
It’s OK...

SUKHI moves towards SUE to hug her. ASLAM catches him by his collar.
ASLAM

No! Sukhi! She didn’t save your life.

SUKHI

No problem. One day she’ll definitely save my life.

SUKHI lunges to hug SUE who moves out of the way. DJ comes in between. SUKHI ends up hugging DJ.

DJ

Relax bro! She is your sister-in-law.

SUE looks on from DJ to SUKHI and then back to DJ. The song on the boom box changes. DJ takes SUE’s hand and leads her to the dance area. Taken aback, at first, by his bold move, SUE goes with the flow.

SONG: PAATHSHALA

Getting tipsy and toppling over taught us gravity.

Doing our practicals in love gave us clarity.

The quietness is a midget.

The noise that looms large is more

Every heart is bubbling over with H2SO4

No one’s learnin’, no one’s teachin’ - 2

Our classroom is just about chillin’ - 2

I’m a rebel!

Lose control...

EXT. THE CLASSROOM, DANCE AREA—NIGHT

DJ is a flamboyant dancer and his *bhangra* (North Indian folk dance) moves are infectious. SUE tries to match his steps. She moves well too. SONIA, dancing nearby, notices the natural chemistry they share.

EXT. THE CLASSROOM, BONFIRE—NIGHT

ASLAM, SUKHI and KARAN are also watching and seeing the connection.

KARAN

Sukhi, you just sit and watch like a dumb-ass...DJ doesn’t waste a second.
Suddenly a hand lands on KARAN’s shoulder. KARAN looks up to face the young and wired RAHUL.

RAHUL
भाई, कैसे हैं सब?

KARAN slaps hands with him.

RAHUL
Hi! How’s everybody?

KARAN
Hi Rahul! What’s up?

RAHUL
Got a few gigs lined up.

ASLAM
How’s your radio thing going?

RAHUL
What radio thing? I’m a radio jockey...

KARAN
Did anything work out?

RAHUL
All India Radio has given me a night slot.

KARAN
Cool.

RAHUL
Not really. When the whole world’s asleep, I’m on air.

ASLAM
But many people stay up late. Lovers, insomniacs, watchmen and idiots!

SUKHI lets out a hoot and laughs.
RAHUL
Have fun at my expense. What to do? It's a trial job with zero income.

This has obviously happened many times before. KARAN fishes out some money from his pocket, and gives it to RAHUL. ASLAM clearly disapproves.

RAHUL
Thanks man...thanks a lot. See you guys. Got a cigarette?

KARAN holds out the whole packet for him. RAHUL takes two cigarettes.

RAHUL
See you, take care. Thanks.

RAHUL heads off to join some friends.

ASLAM
Got fooled again!

KARAN (sarcastically)
Let it be! It's Dad's money. It's lying around gathering dust.

Just then the music abruptly stops. KARAN and ASLAM are startled. DJ and SUE dancing some distance away are equally taken aback. Even those dancing on the main 'dance floor' look around, startled by some aggressive sounds.

EXT. THE CLASSROOM, DANCE AREA—NIGHT

A group of fierce looking young men with saffron bandanas and armed with hockey sticks are pushing the revellers aside and tearing apart couples on the dance floor. A fiery looking youth [LAXMAN PANDEY] picks up the boom box and throws it on the ground.

LAXMAN PANDEY
Stop this obscene dance! How many times do I have to make you understand this? Polluting the culture of this country... Leave this place right now. LEAVE!
He then yanks apart a teenage girl from her boyfriend.

**BOYFRIEND**
Hey, bastard!

He slaps the boyfriend hard. The boy reels back.

SUE can’t believe what she is witnessing.

**LAXMAN PANDEY**
This is your last warning. From now on, no Western music out here. No lewd dancing! Or I’ll break your legs. Is that clear?

**ASLAM and KARAN** rush up the steps onto the dance floor.

**LAXMAN PANDEY**
Shut up! You bloody Pakistani!

**ASLAM**
Who are you to warn us? If you don’t like it, don’t come here.

**LAXMAN PANDEY**
Shut up! You bloody Pakistani!

**LAXMAN PANDEY** rushes towards **ASLAM**, but DJ blocks his path. SUE looks on horrified. Everyone watches in tense silence. DJ and LAXMAN PANDEY glare at each other. LAXMAN PANDEY’s companions pace up to stand beside him. KARAN and ASLAM join DJ.

**KARAN**
Let’s finish it.

**LAXMAN PANDEY** coldly studies the three defiant young men. DJ stands calm and still, KARAN and ASLAM at his shoulder. Just then some sounds are heard; everyone reacts. In the distance, a police sub-inspector and four constables blow their whistles and make a general racket; they can be seen climbing up steps.

**LAXMAN PANDEY** stares in their direction and then turns to glare at DJ, KARAN and ASLAM.

**POLICEMAN**
Come on! Clear out...
He and his men move off in the opposite direction. SUKHI stumbles to his feet.

SUKHI
You touch Aslam and see what I do to you... Even your mother won't recognise you.

Meanwhile the sub-inspector has reached the group. He walks up from behind SUKHI and whacks him on his buttocks with his baton.

SUB-INSPECTOR
Ever seen a baboon's arse? Yours will be as red after I've finished with you. Take them to the police station.

SUKHI looks confused. DJ slides his hand onto the sub-inspector's arm and lowers the baton.

DJ
Sir, I'm sure we can work it out.

SUB-INSPECTOR
Too much hot blood...messing about in a heritage site!

The SUB-INSPECTOR steps aside, with DJ still muttering angrily.

DJ
No, never mind. Keep this...

The SUB-INSPECTOR gives DJ a knowing look, and they move away from everyone.

SUE's point of view: DJ says something and then forcefully shakes hands with the SUB-INSPECTOR. They laugh.

CLOSE ON: We catch a glimpse of a few crumbled 500-rupee notes being pushed into the SUB-INSPECTOR's eager hands.
SUE
Was that a bribe?

KARAN
Welcome to India, Sue.

LONG SHOT: DJ stands alone. Everyone else is in tight groups as they watch the cops leave. DJ turns around and focuses on his friends.

DJ
Anyone hungry? I’m famished...

SUE can’t believe how brazen he is after what has happened.

EXT. THE CLASSROOM, ARCHWAY—NIGHT

DJ sits astride his bike and offers SUE a ride.

DJ
Hey Sue, want a ride?

SONIA drags her away.

SONIA
You’ve got insurance, no?

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Strains of ‘The Rebel’ fades in.

SUE shrugs ‘Sorry’ to DJ. He throws her a cocky look and races off, his wheels kicking up dirt as he turns the bike 360 degrees and then takes off, riding a wheelie.

ANGLE ON JEEP: SUE slumps in the back between SONIA, SUKHI and ASLAM. KARAN is at the wheel.

EXT. HIGHWAY—NIGHT

DJ rides his bike alongside the jeep. SUKHI leans out and holds a beer bottle out for DJ. Just as DJ reaches for it, KARAN swerves. There are roars of laughter from everyone. The entire ride is potent with the rush of adrenaline and youthful passion. SUE is intoxicated by these characters.
She looks at DJ and for a split second sees him as **CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD**, one of the revolutionaries from the past, riding a bike *(the ambience sounds recede).*

**EXT. DIRT TRACK—NIGHT**

They now hit a dirt track. KARAN switches off the headlights. The dust particles dance like fireflies. His passengers shriek as they glide through darkness. SUE looks back and sees DJ’s headlight chasing after them. Then another light brightens behind him so that she can see DJ’s silhouette. The new light speeds past DJ. It’s a second bike and as it roars past the jeep, the rider gives them a thumbs-up sign.

**SONIA**

Love you...!

The rider, AJAY, blows a kiss at SONIA. She blows one back.

**EXT. HIGHWAY—NIGHT**

The jeep thumps back onto the main road, its headlights coming back on so that we can see the two bikes racing each other. The camera following as AJAY lurches back on his bike and overtakes DJ. DJ goes full throttle and catches up. The bikes zoom away, leaving the jeep behind. DJ and AJAY can be heard whooping loudly as they speed off, neck to neck.

**EXT. MITRO’S DHABA—NIGHT**

A typical Punjabi *dhaba* (highway restaurant) with an old house at the rear. Attached to it is a small *gurudwara* (Sikh place of worship). Half the tables are placed close to the road, and the other half, in a makeshift interior. A bike skids to a halt outside. The rider pulls off his helmet—it’s DJ; however he doesn’t look triumphant—and now we see why. AJAY is calmly leaning back on his own parked bike. He easily beat DJ.

**DJ**

Shit!

**AJAY**

Almost...almost!

**DJ** *(giving Ajay a high-five)*

Bloody idiot...
They hug. The jeep drives up, and SONIA jumps out even before it stops. She rushes up to AJAY, who throws open his arms to embrace her.

AJAY
Hey honey, come here you.

But SONIA kicks him in the shins instead.

SONIA
Had something happened to you, I'd have killed you.

AJAY laughs.

AJAY
Is this any way to greet your boyfriend? How are you?

The two lock in an embrace. The others are out of the jeep.

SUKHI
Hey, what's up?

AJAY now greets his friends.

AJAY
Great buddy! And you?

KARAN is waiting.

AJAY
Stop posing. Come here.
KARAN
Sexy jacket bro...

AJAY
That it is!

KARAN throws an arm around AJAY as they all head towards the *dhaba*. SONIA introduces SUE to her boyfriend. He extends his hand to her.

AJAY
Hi! Ajay...

SONIA
Flight Lieutenant Ajay Rathod.

With a twinkle of mischief in his eyes

AJAY
Don’t miss that!

SUE looks at SONIA, approving her choice of men. SONIA playfully punches his arm. ASLAM asks everyone to hurry up.

ASLAM
Hurry guys, I’m famished.

They are stopped in their tracks by a voice.

MITRO (O.C.)
You won’t get any food here.

An earthy woman in her early 50s, MITRO peers out at them from the doorway.

MITRO (O.C.)
You won’t get any food here.

I/E. MITRO’S *DHABA, DHABA AREA—NIGHT*

DJ
Mitro, my sweetheart, how are you?

DJ heads straight into the humble restaurant, with the gang right behind him. He hugs MITRO. She holds her stern expression.
mi\n\n\nMITRO

Stay away! Remembered your mother after two months? I carried you in my stomach for nine months, and washed your bum for years. Now you turn up in these torn clothes, pretending to be a gentleman. Get lost!

She slaps him. The others laugh.

MITRO

Does anyone bother to check if Mitro is alive or dead?

Drunk SUKHI staggers up and oblivious of the situation goes to give MITRO a high five. He gets a slap instead.

MITRO

You’re drunk again.

DJ

First give us food Ma, then yell at us all night.

MITRO

None of you have eaten? What’s with this generation? And Sonia, you’ve lost even more weight.

SONIA

Really...Mitro!

MITRO

The girls of today are more bones than flesh. How will you bear children?

ASLAM, who has been standing in a corner all the while, echoes MITRO in her support.

ASLAM

How will you bear children?

MITRO

Aslam, how are you my son?
MITRO hugs ASLAM.

He is my true son who bothers to check on me.

MITRO gives DJ a slap.

And you useless fellow! Shouldn’t have sent you to the city.

DJ

Come on...

DJ tries to divert MITRO’s anger, he takes SUE’s arm, all confident.

Look ma, what I brought for you. Your daughter-in-law. Her name is Sue.

MITRO

What? A foreigner?

Everyone laughs. SUE looks at DJ.

Brought her specially from London. That’s why I was away for so long.

DJ

(to Sue)

I am telling her from London first trip yours.

SUE decides to get back at DJ. She moves towards MITRO and touches her feet.

Give me your blessings Ma. Your son’s a bit soft in the head.
DJ is blown to discover that SUE not only speaks Hindi, but is also familiar with Indian customs. Everyone laughs at the shocked expression on DJ’s face...except MITRO who is a little confused at first until she realises that the joke is on DJ. DJ is embarrassed.

SUE grins at DJ.

DISSOLVE TO:

I/E. MITRO’S Dhaba; Dhaba Area—Later

The gang is wolfing down the food laid out on the table.

As SUE turns her attention back to the rest of the group, the sounds in the dhaba recede once again. Everything becomes slow motion.

She imagines KARAN, DJ, SUKHI, ASLAM and SONIA turning into BHAGAT SINGH, CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD, RAJGURU, ASHFAQULLAH KHAN and DURGA BHABHI (The characters from the past).

ASLAM snaps his fingers in front of SUE’s face, bringing her back to the present.
Everyone looks up.

SUE
Will you guys act in my film?

You guys are perfect!

All of them burst out laughing at what seems like a ridiculous idea.

SUKHI
Hey, why are you guys laughing? I'm the hero of her film.

More laughter.

AJAY
These guys are champions when it comes to acting.

SUE looks hopeful.

AJAY
Yeah, clowning around as they do all day.

Everyone laughs again.

SUE
Really. The four of you will be perfect as Bhagat Singh, Chandrashekhar Azad, Ashfaqullah Khan and Rajguru. And Sonia will be my Durga Bhabhi.
They all laugh.

Gosh, she really knows Hindi!

Come on... All this talk of patriotism is boring.

Boring? These guys gave their lives for the freedom of your country.

What freedom? Have you seen the state of this country? No one believes this crap.

KARAN is interrupted by a gentle but firm voice with steady conviction.

Excuse me, Karan! I believe in this country, in patriotism. Otherwise, why would I be fighting for it?

Maybe because it's cool being a pilot... Flying expensive planes, wearing sexy jackets...

...and women... Women love men in uniform.

Sure... I love being a pilot. Sure it's cool, but I can give my life for this country... I am proud of this country.

Proud of what? This country's exploding population?
असलम
नहीं... नहीं बेशोज़गारी पर?

करण
कर्षण पर? किस चीज पर सबसे ज्यादा गवर्धन है?

अजय
Hey come on guys! कोई भी देश परफेक्ट नहीं होता है! उसे बेहतर बनाना पड़ता है।

करण
(व्यंग्यपूर्वक)
चल यार तय हुआ तू देश को परफेक्ट बनाना रह। मैं तो जिस दिन दिन की मिली, उसी दिन कट घूमा अमेरिका। मेरा तो कुछ नहीं होने वाला इस कृत्यार्थ में।

सोनिया
तू जा ही नहीं पाएगा हमें छोड़कर।

करण
(sarcasically)
OK, Ajay you make this country perfect. The minute I get my degree, I'm out of this dump to America.

सोनिया
You won't be able to leave us and go.

करण
Wait and see.

डीजे
अरे यार, ये हिंदी बोलती है यार, मैं नू पता हो नहीं सी...
(असलम को मजाक में भारती हुए)
तुम हताया नहीं पहले दे टक्के, गल किया जा रहा हूँ...

EXT. MITRO’S DHALA—PRE DAWN

They are all lying on cots. Some of them are half asleep, the others are just lying in easy silence. AJAY is dozing in SONIA’s arms. SUE sits next to SONIA. SUKHI is snoring loudly. SUE gazes at them all, thinking hard. SUE and SONIA speak in hushed tones.

स्पूर
पर एक बार इनसे पूछो तो सही, प्लीज।

सूई
At least ask them once, please.
SONIA
You don’t give up, do you...

SUE looks SONIA in the eye.

SONIA
OK, but nobody will turn up.

DJ turns over, only half asleep, overhearing the conversation.

DJ
They’ll turn up. I’ll get them. That’s DJ’s promise.

He smiles at SUE who smiles in turn at SONIA, but SONIA is not convinced. The silence is broken by the sound of shuffling feet. DJ gets up to greet the old man who appears.

DJ
Karan, put out your cigarette.

The old man blesses DJ and looks at the entire gang.

DJ
Greetings, Grandpa!

DADAJI
God bless you. When did you come?

DJ
Just last night. With some friends.

The old man nods affectionately, pats DJ on the cheek and moves on. SUE watches the old man shuffle towards a tiny tower-like structure: a small gurudwara. Loudbspeakers attached on either side of the tower, are broadcasting the morning prayers.

SUE
Who is he?

SONIA
DJ’s grandfather.
The old man disappears into the gurudwara.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MITRO’S DHABA—dawn

The old man’s voice fills the early morning air. The bikes and jeep speed off down the road. Flamboyant DJ pulls away MITRO’s dupatta (scarf) as he rides off on his bike. MITRO watches them disappear into the distance and prays for their safety.

MITRO

Lord, watch over him...

MITRO’s DHABA—dawn

EXT. SINGHANIA RESIDENCE—MORNING

KARAN’s jeep drives through the imposing gates. The driveway surrounded by sprawling lawns leads to the portico.

INT. SINGHANIA RESIDENCE; VERANDAH—MORNING

KARAN walks quickly and quietly along the verandah.

RAJNATH SINGHANIA

Good morning Karan. Back so early?

KARAN stubs his cigarette and stops in his tracks. He looks at his father, RAJNATH SINGHANIA. They are not on great terms.

RAJNATH SINGHANIA, a distinguished looking man in his early 50s, is slumped in a chair, nursing a drink. His cell phone is lying on his lap, ready to be answered again; he’s obviously expecting another call. He’s looking tired, jet-lagged, and a little disturbed.

RAJNATH SINGHANIA

Just arrived an hour ago. It was a long flight. Everything ok at college?
Awkward silence. KARAN turns to leave.

RAJNATH SINGHANIA
Have you decided which American university you want to go to next year? Michigan University offers a fine Management programme. Then Carnegie Mellon, Wharton...

KARAN
Everything’s fine, Dad.

RAJNATH SINGHANIA's cell phone rings. He picks it up, irritated.

He disconnects the phone.

I know you know about the lists. But life doesn’t just happen to you. You’ve got to plan it. Every second someone is born in this country. Nobody cares about them. Neither the government, nor their God.

Take it away!

Do something... Or else you will be one of them.

Please, don’t start with your lectures...

KARAN
(cuts in)
I know the list.
RAJNATH SINGHANIA
SMS generation. Any conversation that goes beyond four lines becomes a lecture.

RAJNATH SINGHANIA's mobile rings. He checks the number on the phone and holds it to his ear.

KARAN signs deeply as he watches RAJNATH SINGHANIA walk out of the room and into the balcony. A glass door separates them.

NOTE: The conversation that follows is shot in such a way that we are sometimes near RAJNATH SINGHANIA, and at other times near KARAN. The sum effect of this is that while the viewer hears the complete conversation, KARAN is only able to get snatches of information.

While on the phone, he notices KARAN leave after a while. It disturbs him.

He disconnects the phone.
INT. SINGHANIA RESIDENCE; KARAN’S BEDROOM—DAY

KARAN comes to his room and aimlessly opens a drawer and takes out a photograph. It’s a photo of a young woman who we can guess is KARAN’s mother. He caresses the photo.

EXT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, AMPHITHEATRE—DAY

SUE has the camera set up; she is looking at her watch. SONIA is wrapping up for the day. After a couple of beats.

SÓNIA
एक बार फिर सोच लो, ये लोग ऐसे ही लटकाएंगे।

SUE
I warned you. They won’t turn up.

SÓNIA
(स्यू की नकल करते)
(iseconds)
SÓNIA
(‡mimics S‡ue)
Oh! But DJ promised me!

A figure emerges from the side; it is KARAN.

KARAN
So you really are a filmmaker?

SONIA is at first overjoyed to see him,

SONIA
Karan...

But reminds herself...

SONIA
Why are you so late? And where are the others?

KARAN walks up to the stage area, shrugs, picks up a script and reads the title.
KARAN
‘The Young Guns of India.’ Very dramatic.

He flicks through the script. SUE starts to pack her camera.

SONIA
Where are you going?

SUE
Well, that’s one part cast.

SUE puts the hat on KARAN’s head.

SUE
I am sure Karan would know where his friends are right now.

The two girls stare at him.

EXT. ADDA—DAY

The adda (hangout) is a tea stall at the University square. A small television is showing some fashion channel. The tea stall owner [Kaka] is pumping the stove; a young boy is serving tea, bun and omelettes. DJ, SUKHI and ASLAM are stuffing food in their mouths, checking out the stunning women on TV, rating them on a scale of one to ten.

SUKHI
She’s an eight.

DJ
Wow! Nine!

SUKHI
What a girl...

ASLAM
Hey Chotu, get me a cup of tea...

SUKHI
Two.
सुखी
ओह! दस!

असलम
दूर से दस, पास से बस, वे मी दी.दी.सी की।

ढीजे
ओए होए! काफे यह तो कमाल दा लेग पीस है यार! देख कैसे बल्ली है, लेफ्ट-राइट, लेफ्ट-राइट, लेफ्ट राइट...टिक-टिक...ओह!

DJ looks back and finds SUE and SONIA standing behind them. DJ’s face drops.

SUKHI
Don’t be silly, that’s at least an eight.

SONIA
Thought I’d find you stuffing your faces. You lazy good-for-nothings.

DJ
We were about to come, but we are waiting for Karan actually.

SUKHI
Right!

SONIA
Oh! So you were waiting for Karan? Karan was there on time.

DJ
We are waiting for him here and he was waiting for us there. What confusion...
But we were supposed to meet here.

Can you believe it?

DJ tries to get a laugh but finds that SUE is not amused. She straightaway thrusts the script copies in their hands.

You're Ashfaqullah Khan.

You're Rajguru.

The hero, right?

And do you know who you are?

She shoves the script pages in DJ's hand.

The master of disguise and deception, Chandrashekhar Azad.

Killing me softly!

Learn the lines properly. We'll meet tomorrow.

Eight! Sharp!

Nine!
SONIA
8 a.m. sharp!

SUKHI's attention has totally shifted to the television set by now.

SUKHI
Oh that! Fine...

SONIA
We've already wasted a day.

SONIA thwacks the television and strides off with SUE. The channel changes. SUKHI rushes to the TV and desperately thrashes it several times to get back the fashion channel.

SUKHI
Hey wait...what...

DJ
Aslam, your sister-in-law looks even better when she's angry...

All laugh. DJ melodramatically performs like a lover. DJ sings a popular song.

DJ
Bitten by the bug of love! No hope of surviving.

SUKHI and ASLAM join him. They all dance to the song.

INT. POLITICAL PARTY OFFICE—DAY

LAXMAN PANDEY walks into the party office. He finds the photo of the party chief on the wall is slightly tilted. He straightens it and looks to see if it is perfect. The party chief, MISHRA, walks in and meets him.

MISHRA (O.C.)
What are you doing, Laxman?

LAXMAN folds his hands to MISHRA.

LAXMAN PANDEY
Greetings, Mishraji.
The Party High Command is really happy with your work. These demonstrations that you have started against Western culture, they’ve helped us overshadow other parties.

He puts his arm around LAXMAN and takes him inside. Two young party members are counting money at a table.

**LAXMAN PANDEY**

Er...for what...

**MISHRA**

This is is for your boys, and this is for you Laxman Pandey.

**LAXMAN PANDEY**

That’s not necessary, Mishraji. I’m not doing this for money. I really believe in the principles of my party.

He closes LAXMAN PANDEY’s fist around the second wad of notes. LAXMAN PANDEY accepts the money, but he looks uncomfortable.
EXT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, AMPHITHEATRE—DAY

SUE (V.O.)
March 14th. We started rehearsals.

To say I was nervous would be an understatement.

ANGLE ON: Stage. KARAN, DJ, SUKHI, ASLAM and SONIA are seated in front of SUE. Each of them has a script in their hands.

SUHKA

(reading)
‘There is nothing you can do to break me. Because I have made pain my friend. As I hold Death’s fingers.’

SUKHI looks at DJ, and immediately the two burst out laughing.

SUHKA

DJ you idiot, don’t spoil my concentration.

SUE gives DJ a warning look.

SONIA

Please guys, be serious.

SUKHI

Sorry yaar (friend)...

DJ

Sorry...sorry. Shh...

He holds a finger to his lips. Then suddenly looks at the finger and remembers—

SUHKA

Look...death’s finger.

They all burst out laughing.

JUMP CUT TO:

KARAN starts to read his lines with as much emotion as a robot.
Karan
‘Mann ne apni zindagi desh ki aazadi ke
name karni di hai. Mein jaantaa hoon apne
chahut hain mere shahidi ho, par mere dulhan
ki aazadi hai. Aazakari bete, bhagat singh.’
Kioni
baat karta hai aapka aazakari bete,
aazadii mere dulhan hai...’ What’s his
problem?

Aslam
Yeh laaun to sirf sukhii ke liye hone ki chaahiye
yaar. Waise to ise koii ladkiii milne valli
nahiin. Kama se aazadii valli to uske
liye chhod do, yaare... DJ and KARAN burst out laughing.

Sukhi
Haan lo, saale, haan lo. Bapaa mein lekar
nahiin jaarunga...

Aslam
Aare yaare, tu to sentii ho gya yaar...

DJ looks at SUE who is sad, and starts singing.

Sue
(gaate hura)
Raah...kara mere man ko, kisaa kuna kya shaaaraa...

DJ
(singing)
S(o)ue, what have you done to me?

Aslam and SUKHI also join in.

Suhii
Badala ye maasam lagh phalsa jama saaraa!

DJ
This is the sari round of The Miss
Freedom contest.

ALL
The season has changed and the
world looks so pretty!

JUMP CUT TO:

SONIA appears now wearing a sari over her jeans. The boys clap and cheer.
SONIA ignores them.

Sue
yaa haa pridam koontest da saahi rounj.
SONIA
(to Sue)
Just thought it would help me get into the character. Idiots!

SUE smiles. SONIA's commitment will help inspire the boys.

SUKHI inadvertently burps.

DJ
See, he's got into his character already. You understood the character pretty fast.

The boys crack up.

SONIA
DJ stop it 

More laughter. Then ASLAM looks at SUE and mutters.

ASLAM
DJ, watch it.

DJ
Now she's upset!
As all of them look apologetically at her, SUE at last gives up her stern look and begins to smile.

**DJ**
She’s smiling. She’s mine!

**EXT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, AMPHITHEATRE—DAY**

SUE is with KARAN and ASLAM.

**SUE**
Those are the words of a 23-year-old. That’s how old Bhagat Singh was when he walked to the gallows—23.

**ASLAM**
Those were different times, Sue. Today, if you tell people that you want to give your life for your country, they’ll call you mad.

**KARAN**
Exactly. I don’t think I can relate to this...

**SUE**
That’s it. Don’t think...feel. Just don’t read the words. Feel them. Let’s do it again.

**ASLAM**
Why don’t we try again? Come on...

**KARAN**
(taking a deep breath)
I have committed my life to the freedom of the country...

KARAN looks at SUE.
SUE
Good!

KARAN
I've committed my life to the freedom of this country. A job, a well settled life—these things don't matter anymore. I know you want me to get married, but I have made freedom my bride.

His words continue. ASLAM looks up from the script and glances at the far end of the hall. In the shadows at the far entrance, a figure is standing and watching them—it is LAXMAN PANDEY. As he realises that ASLAM is looking at him, LAXMAN PANDEY backs off into the shadows.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. ADDA—DAY

SUKHI is in RAJGURU's costume. He is practising his lines. He keeps a bottle of tomato ketchup under his palm as a standby for a lit candle.

SUKHI
I swear on Mother India...

Concentrating much too hard, he forgets his lines. He looks into the script and starts again, eyes shut.

SUKHI
I swear on Mother India...

KARAN quietly removes the bottle of ketchup and holds a lighter flame under SUKHI's palm. As SUKHI feels the heat, he opens his eyes with a start.

SUKHI
Damn it!
EXT. ADDA; FOLIAGE BEHIND ADDA—DAY

A close-up of DJ and SUKHI. DJ is whistling a song.

SUHKI
This Aslam is a real stud. Take a look at the packaging—poetry, palmistry... DJ, I'm scared at times that I'll remain a bachelor all my life.

DJ
Trust me I won't let you die a bachelor.

SUHKI
 Promise?

DJ
It's DJ's promise.

SUHKI holds DJ's hand. DJ realises that they have not washed their hands after pissing. Both grimace.

EXT. ADDA—DAY

ASLAM is holding SUE’s hand and reading her palm.

ASLAM
You'll be changing people's destinies...
You'll show them the way...
You know how to change destinies...
Far beyond these lines must you traverse

KARAN
Hey Pappu, change the channel!

KARAN and SONIA are playing with a ball. Just then, DJ and SUKHI walk in. DJ’s and SUE’s eyes meet for a moment, but SUE deliberately looks away. DJ smiles to himself.
DJ, who’s wearing a black T-shirt breaks into a song—

DJ

S(o)ue, what have you done to me?

All laugh.

SUKHI

Do I even have a love line?

KARAN

You must have washed it off in the loo.

The news channel is on.

INT. NDTV STUDIO; NEWSROOM (ON TV)—DAY

NEWSREADER #1

‘There was another walkout in the Parliament today. According to the opposition, the Defence Minister has also received kickbacks in the MiG-21 scandal.’

DEFENCE MINISTER SHASTRI

‘This is a blatant lie, and a ploy by the opposition to bring down the government. I am ordering a probe.’
EXT. ADDA—DUSK

Karan

This really depressing. Come on, let's go...

He thwacks the TV as he gets up and turns to leave.

EXT. INDIA GATE, RAJPATH—NIGHT

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: On the jeep deck ‘Rebel’ is playing. DJ is on the wheel, everybody is enjoying the ride. KARAN takes a big gulp from the beer bottle. The jeep now races down the wide avenues towards India Gate. KARAN stands on the bonnet of the jeep; others follow suit. They all salute the ‘Amar Jawan Jyoti’ (Soldier’s Memorial). SUE grabs the moment on her camera.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The song ‘Be A Rebel’ plays on.

SONG: BE A REBEL

Be a rebel

To the Mahal of the Taj
To the Minar of Qutub
To the Kumari of Kanya (Say hoi oh hoi)
To the Panjim of Goa (Say hoi oh hoi)
To the Kaancheepuram
Zindabad Zindagood
They all have something to say (Say hoi oh hoi)
They all have something to say (2)
Follow me; Follow me; Follow me now!

अपनी लो पाठशाला (Here’s to our kind of school)
सस्ती की पाठशाला, (Having fun, breaking rules...)
Be a rebel

Chorus:

ना कोई पढने वाला, (No students here)
ना कोई सीखने वाला(2) (No teachers here)
अपनी लो पाठशाला (Here’s to our kind of school)
सस्ती की पाठशाला, (2) (Having fun, breaking rules...)
Lose control
EXT. STREET OUTSIDE ASLAM’S HOUSE—NIGHT

All are in a quiet mood as the jeep drives through the narrow lanes of Old Delhi and comes to a halt. SONIA has crashed out on the rear seat. ASLAM climbs out of the jeep.
KARAN and SUKHI, a little unsteady on their feet, walk down the narrow alleys with a perfectly sober ASLAM, singing a merry tune and dropping ASLAM home.

**SUKHI**
Khalbali khalbali talli gali...

**KARAN**
We aren’t so drunk that we have forgotten where you live.

**KARAN**
Talli gali...

**SUKHI**
Talli gali...

**KARAN**
We aren’t so drunk that we have forgotten where you live.

**EXT. JEEP—NIGHT**

DJ is watching them with a huge grin on his face.

**DJ**
Idiots!
SUE
You're very lucky to have friends like them.

DJ
One day, this will all end. We'll all go our separate ways.

SUE
But you can always keep in touch.

DJ
Doesn't happen. Life gets busy. Too many problems—getting a job, a house, money. In college, we are the masters of our destinies. But after college, we have to dance to fate's tune. You know Gulabo, I passed out 5 years ago, but still...

SUE
I don't understand.

DJ
I don't ever want to leave college...

SUE
Why?

There is silence for a while.

DJ
At least in the campus I'm someone. People know me. DJ's a somebody. People expect me to do something big in life. But when I'm out on the streets. I'll just be like the rest of the slobs in this country. Nameless. Faceless. Scared. Just walking the streets...
He turns to SUE and sees that she is looking very intently at him. He realises that his mask has slipped, his vulnerabilities are exposed.

**DJ**
I can’t believe this. It’s all the beer’s fault. Everything came out...

**SUE**
Hmm...

**DJ**
You know what else I’m scared of? Acting in your film.

**SUE**
Don’t worry. You’re in safe hands...

SUE reaches out and holds DJ’s hand. DJ takes a long hard look at her. SUE smiles back.

**DJ**
Tim lak lak te tim lak lak...

DJ smiles and blushes.

**EXT. ASLAM’S LANE—NIGHT**

KARAN and SUKHI, pissed drunk, are still determined to see ASLAM off till his doorstep. They sing along.

**KARAN**
Talli gali...

**SUKHI**
*(singing on)*
My friend is tall but the lane is small...

**KARAN**
*(singing along)*
It’s still Aslam’s lane.
SUKHI
Mind you, watch it, I am Mohammad Ali...

KARAN
Don't be silly...

ASLAM
*(trying to quieten them)*
Shhh...

They have reached the front door of ASLAM’s house. On the door there is a name plate in Urdu and English reading AMANULLAH KHAN. ASLAM reaches out to knock on the door, but before he can touch it, the door opens sharply. A man in his early 50s, dressed in Muslim attire, is at the door [AMANULLAH KHAN].

अमानुल्लाह खान कहाँ थे अब तक?
AMANULLAH KHAN
Where have you been?

Immediately KARAN and SUKHI stand alert.

सुखी हैलो अंकलजी!
SUKHI
Hello Uncle!

AMANULLAH KHAN ignores them.

असलम कल मिलते हैं।
ASLAM
We'll catch up tomorrow.

सुखी असलम...
SUKHI
Aslam...

SUKHI gestures to ASLAM, ‘You are fucked’. KARAN pulls a tipsy SUKHI back.

करण चल ना।
KARAN
Come on.

सुखी टली गली...
SUKHI
Talli gali...

INT. ASLAM’S HOUSE—NIGHT

ASLAM shuts the door as KARAN and SUKHI leave. He turns and faces his father.
AMANULLAH KHAN You’ve been drinking as well?

ASLAM Father, you know I don’t drink.

AMANULLAH KHAN looks in the direction of the door where the others were standing moments ago.

AMANULLAH KHAN Good-for-nothings.

ASLAM starts walking. AMANULLAH KHAN follows him.

ASLAM Whatever, they’re my friends.

AMANULLAH KHAN Friends! They feel no shame standing in front of your father reeking of alcohol. Why can’t you get friends in your own community? Why do you make friends with people who corrupt you...disgrace your religion...

ASLAM What does friendship have to do with religion or community, father?

ASLAM turns. He is face-to-face with his elder brother, a Muslim youth [MOINUDDIN].

MOINUDDIN Shut up! Don’t raise your voice in the presence of your father. He’s right. This country has never accepted Muslims and it never will. How can you be so passive! Do you ever see me friends with a Hindu?
ASLAM
I'm not you and I don't want to be like you, brother. I can't fill myself with so much hate...

MOINUDDIN
Coward. That's what you are.

The two boys square up to each other, but their mother appears.

ASLAM'S MOTHER
Stop it!

ASLAM
I feel suffocated in this house. It's the same old thing every single day...

ASLAM looks at his mother; his eyes well up as he walks away from his family. He takes the stairs, increasing his pace with every step he takes, and reaching the door leading to the terrace, flings it open.

EXT. UTTAR PRADESH, SHAHAJAHANPUR; TERRACE; AUGUST 1925—NIGHT

The door opens and a good-looking, well-built man of about 25 [ASHFAQULLAH KHAN, played by ASLAM] steps onto the terrace with a gas lamp. It is a cold winter night. ASHFAQULLAH KHAN moves to a group of young revolutionaries talking at the far end of the terrace and warming their hands on burning coals in a clay pot.

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN
Carnivals will be held on martyrs' graves every year. That will be the most of those who sacrifice their lives for the country.

The others turn towards ASHFAQULLAH KHAN and smile. One among them is a young robust looking man—a pock-marked face, eyes full of life [CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD, played by DJ].
SOME REVOLUTIONARIES
Well said, Ashfaq sahab...

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD
If only the English were to hear you, they would leave this country immediately.

AZAD hugs ASHFAQ, and leading him to the gathering, seats him.

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN
So what has been decided?

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD looks at the other faces, then back at ASHFAQULLAH KHAN.

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD
In eight days, we’ll steal the Empire’s money from the train that passes through Kakori. And with that money we will buy arms. Bismil sahab will explain everything.

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN
Bismil…where is my Ram?

SUE (V.O.)
Where is my Ram?

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, AUDITORIUM—DAY

SUE is scanning through the auditions on the monitor of her laptop. With the remote she rewinds and forwards, screening the faces from the auditions.

SUE
I just can’t find my Ramprasad Bismil.

SONIA is wrapping up for the day.

SONIA
Relax. We will find him.
SONIA
Very soon. Don’t you wo...

Her voice trails off as she turns to see LAXMAN PANDEY.

SONIA
Oh no...

LAXMAN PANDEY
You won’t get Ramprasad Bismil out here. You need a true Indian. How can you find Indian revolutionaries amongst people who want to be Westerners?

SONIA
Ignore him... Let’s go.

PANDEY raises his voice.

LAXMAN PANDEY
Ramprasad Bismil wished to be reborn a hundred times so that he could give his life for his country a hundred times over.

SONIA
Let’s go, Sue.

SUE ignores SONIA.

SUE
So where do you think I can find my Bismil?

SUE and PANDEY exchange a look. PANDEY stands erect, head up, as if BISMIL himself is standing in front of SUE. SUE hands over an audition sheet to PANDEY.

SONIA
I don’t believe this.
PANDEY glances at the sheet, and returning it to SUE, begins to recite.

Because this day, we walk with death, and laugh at its pale spectre, we will not fear these cruel swords, our courage is far sharper.

Mistake not our silence for submission, for beneath, lies lava, molten.

CLOSE-ON: SUE's face.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. fields; september 1925—DAY

CLOSE-ON: In a blur, a pair of running feet.

ON THE SOUNDMTRACK: Heavy breathing.

CLOSE-ON: In a blur, a horse's legs, galloping through the fields.

CLOSE-ON: The pair of running feet stop. Another pair of feet joins it. Heavy breathing.

CLOSE-ON: The two pairs of feet break into a run in opposite directions.

LAXMAN PANDEY (V.O.)
O martyrs, O men of valour,
I'd give my life for you.
In every lane, even the enemy sings your praise these days.

BACK TO:

EXT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, AMPHITHEATRE—DAY

SUE is transfixed by LAXMAN PANDEY's narration.
LAXMAN PANDEY
We will show our mettle when the moment of truth arrives...
For courage lives in deeds, not boastful claims.

EXT. fields; September 1925—Day

CLOSE-ON: A pair of running feet stop. The man in question [RAMPRASAD BISMIL] stops but doesn’t turn around. We hear his breath coming in ragged gasps. The British Sergeant reins his horse in and stares at his back.

Then he slowly turns, but you do not get to see his face.

EXT. Delhi University, Amphitheatre—Evening

LAXMAN PANDEY turns, his body is heaving with the passion of his narration.

There is deafening silence in the auditorium. SUE looks stunned.

SONIA shakes her head and looks down.

INT. Delhi University, SUE’S Hostel Room—Night

On the soft-board, SUE pins LAXMAN PANDEY’s photograph under RAMPRASAD BISMIL’s.
EXT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, AMPHITHEATRE—DAY

SUE, SONIA, ASLAM, DJ, KARAN and SUKHI are sitting around. The news of LAXMAN’s inclusion has been broken to the team and obviously no one is happy about it.

Sonia

Sue, this isn’t London. You don’t know what kind of scum, men like Laxman Pandey are.

Aslam

Look Sue if he is a part of this, then I can’t do the film.

Laxman Pandey (O.C.)

If you have any problem with me, say it to my face. Don’t stab me in the back like a coward.

Everyone turns to look at LAXMAN PANDEY. The air suddenly becomes tense.

DJ

Pandey, just leave! We don’t want trouble.

Laxman Pandey (to Aslam)

Speak up, you coward.

Aslam looks at Sue who is non-committal. Aslam gets up and starts walking towards the exit.

DJ

Aslam, sit...where are you going?

Laxman Pandey

You coward, what were you saying?

LAXMAN PANDEY steps in front of ASLAM and pushes him to dare him.
LAXMAN PANDEY
Go on...speak up...

SUKHI
Hey you! How dare you hit Aslam?

DJ rushes towards LAXMAN PANDEY. A violent fight erupts between DJ and LAXMAN PANDEY.

SUE
Stop it! Please!

SUE
Stop it guys! Please stop this!

SUE
Karan, stop them!

KARAN lights a cigarette and calmly looks on.

SUKHI
Thrash him!

SUE
Aslam, do something...

No one reacts.

SUE
Stop it! For Christ’s sake, stop it!

Her hysterical screaming grabs DJ’s attention...who stops fighting. LAXMAN PANDEY continues to fight, then stops a moment later as DJ offers no resistance. Everyone stops in their tracks. A deathly silence falls over the hall.
I am sorry ok I am sorry. मैं तुम लोगों को अपनी फिल्म में लिया। पता नहीं, क्या सोच कर मैं यहाँ चली आई। I was so stupid to pack my bags and come to a place where people are just looking for an excuse to kill each other. Well...at least now you have one less excuse...

She storms out of the amphitheater, her eyes welling with tears. There is pin drop silence.

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, SUE’S HOSTEL ROOM - DAY

SUE rips out the photographs of the group from the board. She then sits on her bed very still and breaks down. The diary of her grandfather is sitting silently on the bed. She looks at it for a long time, picks it up and starts crying. Just then there is a knock on the door.

DJ (O.S.)
Sue...

The door is unlocked. DJ enters.

DJ looks around the room. He sees the photographs that have been ripped off the board.

SUE turns around and looks at DJ. She can read between his words. She is touched by his admission of affection, yet unsure.
SUE
I am scared...

DJ
I'm with you now. You're in safe hands. Come on...get up.

DJ holds SUE by the shoulders and turns her towards the window. The rest of the gang are standing below, waiting expectantly. LAXMAN PANDEY is among them. As DJ whistles, SUKHI puts his arms around LAXMAN PANDEY, even kisses his cheek. SUE can't suppress her smile.

As SUE turns, her eyes fall on the soft board; DJ has started to clear up the mess.

DJ
She smiles, she's mine!
(raises his voice for them)
She's not going anywhere. Now just chill.

The next four weeks were the happiest four weeks of my entire life...and the hardest four weeks of my entire life...and the happiest.

EXT. Amritsar, GOLDEN TEMPLE—DAY

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: ‘Ek Omkaar’ (a traditional Sikh prayer) plays.

MITRO takes the gang to the Golden Temple. All are completely overwhelmed by the imposing structure and the environment.

MITRO, SUE and SONIA visit the inner sanctum of the Golden Temple. The boys take a holy dip at the reservoir. Later, all eat at the langar (community dining hall).
PRAYER: **EK OMKAAR**
(There is) One God, eternal—true
his name, creative his personage,
fearless, with malice towards none,
form beyond time and death, unborn,
self-emanated; (can be realised by)
Guru’s grace. Meditate (on Him).
Before time (started ticking), He was
‘The Truth’ (Everlasting);
When (cycle of) Ages started, He was
‘The Truth’. Even now He is ‘The
Truth’; True, O, Nanak, He Will
Ever Be. (One) cannot achieve purity
(and hence piety of mind, by simply)
washing (body) clean, even hundred
thousand times. By remaining mute
(ever moving mind) stills not,
(even if body seemingly) poses deep
concentration. Hunger (lust and
greed) of the hungry, ceases not, even
if loads of world’s (choicest gifts) are
tied to us and piled (around him).
In fact, with meeting demands of
mind, its craving goes on increasing.
(One) may have a thousand, nay a
kindred thousand worldly wisdoms,
not even one will be of any avail (to
him in the divine court). How then
to become ‘Truthful’ and how veil of
falsehood torn? (The answer is), by
submitting O, Nanak, to the Pre-
ordained Written Command of the
Lord of Will—God.

**MİTRÖ**
May victory be with the followers
of the Almighty.

EXT. PUNJAB, COUNTRYSIDE LANES—DAY

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The first notes of the Song ‘Rang De Basanti’
fade in.
Preparations for the shoot begin. A lone motorcycle cuts through the fields. SUE is hunting for locations for the shoot, DJ escorts her on his bike.

EXT. PUNJAB, VILLAGE FAIR—DAY

The ‘Nihang’ faction of the Sikhs display the traditional arts of horsemanship and swordsmanship. DJ rides a horse in the Nihang style. Friends cheer.

SONG: RANG DE BASANTI

Take some soil of my land, the scent of this gypsy air
Add the breath of my being, the drumming of my heart
And the passion, that races through every bead of my blood
Take all these, and stir it
Then watch as it brings out the colour
Watch as it brings out the colour of sacrifice, my friend

EXT. MITRO’S DHABA, COWSHED—DAY

DJ is rehearsing his lines with a buffalo.

DJ
Bismil’s sent a message that the Lucknow train carrying the Empire’s money will be looted by us in Kakori while eating Kakori kababs. And we will buy bombs with that money.

MITRO
Leave her alone. She will stop giving milk.

EXT. PUNJAB, VILLAGE FAIR—DAY

The group reaches an old village where time stands still. The village is celebrating Baisakhi (North Indian harvest festival). Traditionally all men wear *basanti* (yellow) turbans and the women wear *basanti* clothes. The group joins the dancers.
SUE tries to pull LAXMAN along but he’s shy. He admires a traditional sword and enjoys the village fair atmosphere. The gang is dancing. One Punjabi Bhangra dancer comes too close to SUE while dancing. DJ promptly comes between the two and starts to dance.

The gang clicks a group photo with the dancers at the fair.

**SONG: RANG DE BASANTI**

*Give colour to your dreams*
*And those who are your own*
*Give colour to your happiness*
*And your sadness too*
*Give colour to the coming generations*
*And to the fields*
*Give colour to the beat of your heart*
*And to its melody*
*Give colour to your face*
*And to the mirror*
*And watch as it brings out the colour of sacrifice, my friend.*

**EXT. ADDA—DAY**

DJ is still rehearsing, and decides to have some fun with the young boy who serves tea, CHOTU.

DJ

Hey Shortstuff! Did you get Bismil’s message? No?... Then Listen... The train that’s going to Lucknow will be looted in Kakori in 8 days. It’s loaded with the Empire’s money. Will you loot it?

The young boy has no clue what DJ is talking about.
EXT. PUNJAB, VILLAGE—DAY

The gang attends a Punjabi wedding. DJ plays cards with the village oldies. SUE shoots the card game on her camera.

The rustic beauty of the Indian countryside affects SUE deeply. And her being a foreigner, her sense of dressing (shorts and vests), her sensuality and her body language affects the Indian villagers equally deeply. DJ is caught between the two.

DJ is rolling his bike. SUE is walking ahead. Some village women walk past with stacks of grass on their head. DJ gestures to them to put a stack on SUE’s head. They do it. SUE finds it very amusing.

SONG: RANG DE BASANTI
Slowly on the fire, won’t you, put this passion to cook
Then as it simmers, add a babbling brook
Add a river, and an ocean
And maybe a little water from an earthen pot
Then sprinkle a bit of it all, stir it up
And watch as it brings out the colour of sacrifice, my friend.

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, AUDITORIUM—DAY

DJ stands in front of a projection. He’s more serious and closer to AZAD in his body language.

DJ
Bismil has sent a message. The Lucknow train which carries the Empire’s money will be looted by us in seven days, in Kakori. And we will buy bombs with that money.
EXT. PUNJAB, VILLAGE FAIR, WRESTLING PIT—DAY

At the wrestling pit, a giant of a wrestler who has just knocked out his opponent challenges the crowd, DJ finds his hand involuntarily raised by SUE. The giant lifts DJ up in the air like a mere toy and spins him around before throwing him back to the crowd. DJ lands on his friends. It takes the combined strength of DJ, KARAN, ASLAM and SUKHI to pin down the giant wrestler.

SONG: RANG DE BASANTI
Now paint the whole town with it
Paint your very being
Paint your every vein with it
Paint it with a smile
Paint those childhood years, won’t you
Paint the flush of youth
Don’t hesitate, for we have to master the art of dying
Paint your sacrifice over everything
Watch as it brings out the colour of sacrifice, my friend

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, SUE’S ROOM—DAY

The make-up and dress trials are going on. Wigs and fake moustaches are tried on by the boys.

KARAN tries on a Sikh turban. SUE and SONIA help him. They jokingly tie the turban all around his face.

SONIA ties her hair in a bun and applies a vermilion bindi on her forehead. DJ tries some obnoxious moustaches.

SUKHI wears RAJGURU’s cap, checks himself in the mirror and smiles like a kid.

SONG: RANG DE BASANTI
Watch as it brings out the colour of sacrifice, my friend
Then watch as it brings out the colour...
EXT. RAILWAY TRACKS—DAY

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The Song ‘Rang De Basanti’ fades out.

SUE, her hair flying, is taking a ride on the cart that runs on the railway tracks. She is reading out from her grandfather’s diary, oblivious to her surroundings. DJ, ASLAM and LAXMAN PANDEY in their costumes, sit with their legs dangling, eating sugarcane. The camera travels over them and back to SUE and tilts down on the tracks. The movement turns into a blur.

जेम्स मकिनले (V.O.)
1925 की काकोरी उड़केंद्र! वहीं से शुरू हुआ था सब कुछ।

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
The Kakori Robbery of 1925, that’s where it all started.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. KAKORI, RAILWAY TRACKS—DAY

On the blur of the tracks CAPTION: 9 August 1925

जेम्स मकिनले (V.O.)
उसके बाद कुछ भी पहले जैसा नहीं रहा।

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
Nothing would ever be the same after that.

EXT. KAKORI, STEAM TRAIN; 9 AUGUST 1925—DAY

A passenger train, pulled by a steam locomotive passes through the Indian countryside. CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD is hanging upside down; holding on to his legs is BISMIL.

INT. STEAM TRAIN, COMPARTMENT; 9 AUGUST 1925—DAY

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD’s upside-down point of view of the compartment. To his alarm, a platoon of British officers are on board.
The storyboard along with the corresponding final images.
EXT. KAKORI, STEAM TRAIN; 9 AUGUST 1925—DAY

The camera pulls out of the coach in a single motion and moves into an aerial shot of a steam train, with CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD hanging upside down and BISMIL holding him. BISMIL pulls CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD up from the awkward position.

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD
British Officers...around 20 to 25 of them.

RAMPRASAD BISMIL
We have to call it off...We've nearly reached Kakori. Stop Ashfaq, quick.

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD leans over the edge and signals to another revolutionary BANWARILAL, hanging out of the door, with a slashing gesture across his throat.

INT. STEAM TRAIN, SECOND CLASS COMPARTMENT; 9 AUGUST 1925—DAY

BANWARILAL rushes towards ASHFAQULLAH KHAN, but is late by a fraction of a second.

BANWARILAL
Ashaq, stop!

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN has already pulled the chain by then. The train screeches to a halt.

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN
It's too late to back out now. Come on, move!

EXT. KAKORI, STEAM TRAIN; 9 AUGUST 1925—DAY

Sparks fly off the wheels as they grind to a halt.
INT. STEAM TRAIN, SECOND CLASS COMPARTMENT; 9 AUGUST 1925—DAY

Passengers are thrown around, they all look around confused.

EXT. KAKORI, STEAM TRAIN; 9 AUGUST 1925—DAY

SLOW MOTION: CHANDRASHEKHKAR AZAD and BISMIL jump to the ground from the top of the coach.

INT. STEAM TRAIN, SECOND CLASS COMPARTMENT; 9 AUGUST 1925—DAY

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN whips out his Mauser pistol. The ticket checker opens his mouth to scream but ASHFAQULLAH KHAN is faster, he shoves the barrel into his mouth.

पार्श्वफ़ुटफ़ुट पत्ता खान अंदर चलिए। ASHFAQULLAH KHAN Get inside.

EXT. KAKORI, STEAM TRAIN; 9 AUGUST 1925—DAY

The revolutionaries jump out of the train, and take up positions at either end of the train and begin firing warning shots.

रामप्रसाद बिस्मिल घबराए मत, किसी को कुछ नहीं होगा! हिन्दुस्तानी को कुछ नहीं होगा! हमारी लड़ाई अंग्रेज़ी है! हम अपना काम करने चले जाएँगे। RAMPRASAD BISMIL Keep the windows shut. No Indian will be hurt. We have a score to settle with the British, and we'll leave after that.

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN immobilises the Engine Driver. BANWARILAL peers into the GUARD’s cabin, but waits for his comrades to go in first. The British officers try to get out of the compartment but the barrage of bullets from the revolutionaries prevent them from doing so.
INT. KAKORI, STEAM TRAIN, GUARD’S CABIN; 9 AUGUST 1925—DAY

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD levels the gun at the GUARD’s face. The GUARD looks back at him sternly. The iron safe is behind the GUARD.

चंद्रशेखर आजाद चाबी दो।

चंद्रशेखर आजाद

GUARD

तुम बच नहीं पाओगे।

GUARD

तुम बच नहीं पाओगे।

You won’t get away with this.

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD shoots a bullet inches from his head. The GUARD’s stubbornness has miraculously vanished.

चंद्रशेखर आजाद चाबी दो।

चंद्रशेखर आजाद

GUARD

कसम से, मेरे पास नहीं है।

I swear I don’t have it.

AZAD yanks the GUARD off his feet, and out. CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD helped by BANWARI pushes the iron safe out of the GUARD’s cabin onto the tracks.

EXT. KAKORI, STEAM TRAIN; 9 AUGUST 1925—DAY

चंद्रशेखर आजाद हटो... बनवारी औजार निकालो...

चंद्रशेखर आजाद

GUARD

Banwari... get the weapon...

रामप्रसाद बिस्मिल बनवारी औजार निकालो...

RAMPRAASAD BISMIL (to ASHFAQULLAH KHAN)

I’ll handle them. You go get the money... hurry.

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN and CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD, with a weapon bludgeon the safe with all their might.

The iron safe breaks open. Sacks of money tumble out, scattering coins.

INT. JAMES McKINLEY’S QUARTERS—DAY

JAMES McKinley is getting ready, wearing his uniform.
Kakori had sent shock waves throughout the establishment. But we had no one to blame but ourselves. What we were hearing were the echoes of our own guns booming.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Machine-gun firing.

EXT. AMRITSAR, JALLIANWALA BAGH; 13 APRIL 1919 (DREAM)—DAY

Images: In a stylised treatment of audio and visuals, we see shots of people being mowed down by gunfire in Jallianwala Bagh. Hundreds of men, women and children drop dead. We see the barrels of guns booming under General Dyer's command.

INT. LAHORE, BHAGAT SINGH'S HOUSE, BHAGAT SINGH'S BEDROOM; 1924—NIGHT

[Note: BHAGAT SINGH's house is recreated in Mitro's dhaba]

A young Sikh boy [BHAGAT SINGH, played by KARAN] wakes up with a start, from a nightmare. Covered in perspiration, he reaches under his pillow and takes out a bottle with mud in it. He looks at it for some time.

Jallianwala Bagh had made an essentially non-violent people consider taking up arms.

EXT. AMRITSAR, JALLIANWALA BAGH; 13 APRIL 1919 (DREAM)—DAY

Among the dead and wounded, a 12-year-old Sikh boy [BHAGAT SINGH] scoops blood-soaked mud into a bottle.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The sound from his dream still reverberating.
INT. LAHORE, BHAGAT SINGH’S HOUSE, BHAGAT SINGH’S BEDROOM; 1924—NIGHT

BHAGAT SINGH puts down the bottle filled with mud soaked in blood, lights a lamp and begins writing a letter in Urdu.

BHAGAT SINGH (V.O.)
I’ve committed my life to the freedom of this country. Comfort, and other worldly desires do not attract me. I know you want me to get married and settle down, like all parents do. But freedom is my bride. I hope you’ll forgive me. Your most obedient son, Bhagat Singh.

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
This was when Bhagat Singh stepped out of the shadows to claim his destiny.

INT. LAHORE, BHAGAT SINGH’S HOUSE, BHAGAT SINGH’S PARENT’S BEDROOM; 1924—NIGHT

BHAGAT SINGH enters his parents’s room, touches their feet and keeps the note under his father’s pillow.

SUE (O.C.)
Let’s take a break.

Immediately the sleeping actors get up, the lights come on in the darkened room. The illusion is broken. But it still echoes on KARAN’s face till it is broken by MITRO.

MITRO
Breakfast?

Everyone laughs.
INT. MITRO’S DHABA, MAKE-UP ROOM—DAY

KARAN, still shaken, is taking off the Sikh turban, in a makeshift make-up room. His cell phone rings, the display shows ‘Dad’. He picks up the bottle filled with mud kept next to the phone and stares at it, and disconnects the call.

EXT. MITRO’S DHABA, DHABA AREA—DAY

All except SUE and ASLAM are at the table.

KARAN
General Dyer... How can one even think of doing something like this?

SONIA
I can’t believe that he actually killed over 400 people at Jallianwala Bagh.

LAXMAN PANDEY
389... That was the official figure. Actually nearly 1000 people were butchered.

SUE, is learning to make parathas (Indian bread) under MITRO’s watchful eyes, with a little help from ASLAM. SUE notices that two of MITRO’s fingers are tied together with a black thread. MITRO finds SUE looking at it and says—

MITRO
Last year at the tomb of Peer Sai, I prayed for Daljeet’s well-being.

SUE
Who’s Daljeet?

MITRO looks at her in utter surprise that she does not know DJ’s real name is DALJEET.

DJ
We were champions of tolerance. So they really went for us.
SUKHI
Even an ant bites back. But we are conditioned to take everything lying down...

MITRO
Rubbish! It's today's generation which lacks the will to do anything. Have you ever heard of Shaheed Uddham Singh?

Everyone looks at her blankly.

MITRO
Shaheed Udam Singh ne vilayat jakar uss dayar ko goli se jagah diya tha.

SONIA looks at the butter dripping from the *parantha*. MITRO sees her expression.

MITRO
He went all the way to London and killed that Dyer.

SONIA looks at the butter dripping from the *parantha*. MITRO sees her expression.

MITRO
Eat it Sonia. The butter will strengthen your bones. In Punjab every mother sends at least one son to the army. Why should we retreat? Sacrifice runs in our blood. Only idiots like DJ retreat.

DJ
Why does it always come back to me?

MITRO
Shut up and eat your *parantha*.

ASLAM now walks to the table with a platter of food.

MITRO
Oye Bholu, get some buttermilk.

ASLAM
What is the most used word in this country? *Adjust!* Six people sitting on a seat for four, yet a seventh one will squeeze in and say, 'Please adjust.'
ASLAM sits down next to LAXMAN PANDEY, who stops eating, then gets up and sits at the next table. Everyone reacts.

DJ
Hey! Why are you adjusting? Come on, sit down...

EXT. VILLAGE, DESERTED HOUSE, COURTYARD; SEPTEMBER 1925—DAY

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN and RAMPRASAD BISMIL are eating from the same plate. They are on the run, unkempt, unshaven and hungry.

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN
Strange, isn’t it? We are being hunted like animals in our own country by foreigners.

RAMPRASAD BISMIL
Ashfaq you should cross the border and get to Afghanistan. We have many Muslim friends there. You will be safe with them. After all, you’re one of their own.

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN
One of their own? Why? Do not you think me as one of your own?

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN gets up and walks away angrily.

RAMPRASAD BISMIL
Ashfaq...I didn’t mean to hurt you.

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN washes his hands.

Silence.

RAMPRASAD BISMIL
Ashfaq, that’s not what I meant. This is as much your country as it is mine. You have a right to fight and die for it too. Forgive me.
ASHFAQULLAH KHAN holds RAMPRASAD BISMIL’s hand.

Ram, let us not talk of dying. I pray that we all live to see our grandchildren live in a free country.

RAMPRASAD BISMIL smiles. They embrace each other.

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN, sensing somebody’s presence, looks up towards the door. There is no one there.

Ram, run!

Just then the police break down the door and rush in on horses. ASHFAQULLAH KHAN and RAMPRASAD BISMIL run.

EXT. VILLAGE, FIELDS; SEPTEMBER 1925—DAY

The police chase them through the village, the fields and the river bed, led by the British sergeant on horseback. ASHFAQULLAH KHAN suddenly stops running and turns towards the posse. He urges RAMPRASAD BISMIL to run. Like a wall, he stands between the posse and RAMPRASAD BISMIL. Holding on to the reins of the running horse, he brings it to a halt, and with all his might, brings the horse and the rider down, making him stumble in the process, buying time for RAMPRASAD BISMIL.

Run Ram, run!

RAMPRASAD BISMIL is surrounded by an advance team already waiting for him. There is nowhere to run. The British sergeant approaches him with his baton raised.

Where are your other friends? Where’s Azad?
RAMPRASAD BISMIL turns. He stands his ground. He scoops some water in his hand, and lets it flow through his fingers (gesture of the ritual of your own last rite). He smiles, looking straight into the eyes of the sergeant. The British sergeant clobbers him with his baton.

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
Azad was not a man who would easily play into our hands.

EXT. AGRA, NEAR THE TAJ MAHAL, RAMLILA GROUNDS—DAY

BANWARILAL, the traitor with shifty eyes, scans the crowd for CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD.

Crowds throng the Ramlila ground where the triumph of good over evil, the triumph of Lord Rama over Demon Ravana are being celebrated. There are huge 100-feet effigies of the Demon Ravana, his brother Kumbhakaran and son Meghnad. As faces, young and old, look up in wonder, policemen led by a British officer pretend to be tourists and await BANWARILAL's signal.

In the crowd, disguised as a police officer, CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD checks the bullets in his Mauser pistol. Then he spots BANWARILAL; with steely eyes he begins advancing towards him. When he is merely a few feet from BANWARILAL, he raises his Mauser pistol to go in for the kill, only to find himself looking into the barrels of many British guns.

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD
Banwari...
An arrow with a sparkler hits Ravan's effigy.

BANWARI is happy with his own smartness, but the smile fades as he finds AZAD glance above his head and smile. Following his gaze BANWARI looks up and is horrified. The effigy explodes into flames. Ravan's burning head is falling towards BANWARI. The crowd breaks into a mighty roar and moves back. There is a wave in the sea of people which crashes into the police surrounding AZAD.

Finding the perfect diversion, AZAD dives into the crowd just before the burning effigy falls on him. The British officers chase him through the fields.

AZAD manages to whisk away one of the motorcycles of the police. The policemen get on their bikes and chase him.

Note: (It is the same shot that SUE imagined when she saw DJ riding alongside KARAN's jeep enroute to the CLASSROOM.) AZAD dives off the cliff on his motorcycle into the river and makes his getaway.

**EXT. MOVIE THEATRE, EXIT—DAY**

The door of the theatre opens. The gang is part of the crowd that steps out. SUKHI hums a song from the film.

**SUKHI**
(*singing a Hindi film song*)

Look into my eyes...

**SUE**

I loved those songs and dances.

**KARAN**

That's the reason we grow trees in this country...to dance around them.

**AJAY**

Right, Mr. Hollywood.

The gang comes down the stairs of the theatre.
* The storyboard along with the corresponding final images.
So...where are we going?

Yes...where are we going?

Hello...where?

Special day...special place...

Everyone wonders where...

Special day?

EXT. MOVIE THEATRE, PARKING LOT—DAY

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: FM music builds up.

AJAY kick starts his bike. SONIA sits pillion.

DJ with SUE as pillion, does a wheelie. SUE screams as they exit down the road.

KARAN burns the wheels, ASLAM and SUKHI jump into the jeep.

EXT. FORT RUINS, ROADS—DAY

POV from the racing jeep: fort ruins among paddy fields. The three vehicles race through paddy fields towards fort ruins. The fields extend inside the fort as well. All vehicles skid to a halt.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: FM music builds up.

EXT. FORT RUINS, AIR FORCE BASE—DAY

AJAY, holding SONIA's hand, leading her and SUE up broken stone steps to the fort wall. They find themselves looking down on an air-force runway. A gush of wind hits them; it is really windy.
SUE
It’s amazing!

AJAY
Isn’t that? Ever since I was a kid, I used to come here to watch planes take off. And watch them till they disappeared in the sky.

Just then, the three see a fighter plane taxiing down the runway. As if on cue, they hear loud whooping sounds. They look down to see DJ, KARAN, ASLAM and SUKHI emerge from below, running towards the barbed wire of the runway.

SUE
What the hell are they doing?

AJAY
Oye...hey...rowdies.

The boys break through the wire. Tearing their shirts off, they run through the tall grass towards the runway, shouting at the top of their lungs, waving their shirts in the air. There is a moment when the fighter plane looks like it is merely a few feet away from the boys, then it takes off above them. The boys shout at the top of their lungs, like a war cry, competing with the drone of the jet engines.

SUE
I don’t believe them.

SONIA
Men!

AJAY
Come on, face it. You’d love to do that as well.

SONIA
What? Take my shirt off and howl at planes.

AJAY
I won’t mind if you do.
SONIA
Dream on, buddy.

SONIA and SUE laugh. The boys come back panting, their faces flushed.

AJAY
Boys and girls and Sukhi who is running after girls...

SUKHI
Why me all the time?

AJAY
A very special announcement...

All look at AJAY, not knowing what to expect. He reaches into his jacket and takes out a little box, and gets down on his knees in front of SONIA. The rest watch with widening grins.

SONIA
I don't believe this.

AJAY
I was wondering if you'd like to spend the rest of your life with me.

SONIA is stunned, she doesn't know what to say. And then she lets out a loud shriek and hugs AJAY. The others rush at AJAY in joy and jump on him like a rugby pile. SUE joins the boys too. All dance around them.

DJ
Bloody idiots... AJAY's life's made...

BOYS
...Life is made...life is made...

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The Song ‘Tu Bin Bataye...’ begins.

SONIA’s eyes get moist. AJAY hugs her. Everyone is happy.
AJAY and SONIA are sitting huddled together. The gang quietly peeps from the fort above them and showers neem leaves on the couple.

EXT. FORT RUINS, AIR FORCE BASE—DAY

AJAY and SONIA see fighter planes making tri-colour lines in the air. The two spend intimate moments with each other.

SUE captures these delightful moments shared by the friends on her camera.

SUE and DJ sit together, discussing a book. SUE feels a little cold. DJ puts his jacket around her.
SONG: TU BIN BATAYE
Wander through the streets of my mind, like a gentle spring
Walk through the corridors of my heart, fill the caravan of my dreams
Whatever you sing, that is my tune
Without saying a word
You steal my heart
I'll find happiness by your side
I can't stay apart.

DISSOLVE TO:

All are lost in their own thoughts. SUE puts her arm around DJ’s shoulder. SUKHI notices this and stealthily draws the gang’s attention to this. DJ realises what is happening. He slaps SUKHI and puts his arms around SUE. Everyone laughs. It is a self-conscious moment for DJ who is slowly, but surely, falling in love with SUE.

EXT. FORT RUINS, AIR FORCE BASE—MAGIC HOUR

The gang looks inseparable as they walk, hands around each others’ shoulders, away from the camera. The shot goes out of focus.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The song fades out.

FADE TO BLACK.
intermission
INT. GORAKHPUR JAIL, CORRIDORS TO CELLS—DAY

The Jail Superintendent leads JAMES McGINLEY down the corridor. JAMES McGINLEY looks through the bars. He sees a figure [BISMIL] sitting still in the lotus position, chanting.

JAMES McGINLEY
The first thing that hit me about this man was his voice. A voice without fear. I knew then, my job was not going to be easy.

JAMES McGINLEY enters the cell. BISMIL, however, does not miss a beat. He does not turn to acknowledge JAMES McGINLEY, nor does he stop chanting.

JAMES McGINLEY
I'll come back later.

RAMPRASAD BISMIL
My prayers won't stop till my country gets its freedom. I don't think you can wait till then.

JAMES McGINLEY
My name is James McGINLEY. I'm here to find out from you where Chandrashekhar Azad and the other terrorists are hiding.

RAMPRASAD BISMIL
Not terrorists. Revolutionaries.

BISMIL resumes chanting.

INT. CHURCH, ALTAR—DUSK

JAMES McGINLEY is standing at the altar. A church organ plays.

JAMES McGINLEY (V.O.)
Breaking a man, bit by bit—they said it would get easier each time. It never did for me.
He looks up at the crucifix, reaches for a candle, and strikes a match.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: A scream.

INT. GORAKHPUR JAIL, TORTURE CHAMBER—DAY

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The organ continues to play, the scream dies down. A steel boot leads us to a spread-eagled BISMIL, racked out and being tortured. BISMIL turns and looks into JAMES McKinley's eyes. JAMES McKinley nods to the torturer, and a finger is broken.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Screams.

INT. CHURCH, ALTAR—DUSK

JAMES McKinley lights the candle and bows his head.

INT. GORAKHPUR JAIL, CORRIDORS—EVENING

RAMPRASAD BISMIL's screams echo down the long dark corridors. JAMES McKinley comes out of the torture chamber sweating, tired and dishevelled. Behind him, RAMPRASAD BISMIL's limp body is dragged out. In the dim light emanating from one of the prison cells, we see RAMPRASAD BISMIL tortured beyond recognition. It is a sight one would never forget.

INT. CHURCH, ALTAR—DUSK

Shot of Christ on the crucifix.

जेम्स मकिनले (V.O.)
हम जुल्म करते रहे, लेकिन बिस्मिल नहीं
दूटा और ना ही असफ़िल।

JAMES McKinley (V.O.)
The torture went on for some time, but Bismil didn't break, nor did Asfaq.

Over JAMES McKinley's face, we travel into darkness, and then into another torture chamber.
INT. FAIZABAD JAIL, TORTURE CHAMBER—DAY

ASHFAQULLAH is being mercilessly beaten by the Jail Superintendent [TASSADUK KHAN] and his two assistants. The beating is brutal and continuous, coming from all directions; there is no respite, even to breathe.

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
Both men had made pain their friend. They didn’t break. Instead, they did something I had never seen any prisoner do before.

INT. GORAKHPUR JAIL, RAMPRASAD BISMIL’S CELL—DUSK

RAMPRASAD BISMIL, with broken fingers, manages to engrave the lines of a poem with a stone on the walls of his cell.

RAMPRASAD BISMIL
On this day, we walk with death and laugh at its pale spectre...

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. FAIZABAD JAIL, TORTURE CELL—NIGHT

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN lies naked on a slab of ice, hands and feet bound behind him. His body has numerous marks of torture on it. His lips have turned blue as he murmurs deliriously.

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN
Death cannot take you Ashfaq, when you live in people’s hearts and minds.

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
I think it was the poetry that held their souls together as the torture tore their bodies apart. The torture didn’t work, so we thought of other ways.
INT. FAIZABAD JAIL, ASHFAQULLAH KHAN’S CELL—NIGHT

The Holy Quran wrapped up in green cloth is placed in ASHFAQULLAH KHAN’s hands by a Qazi (Muslim priest). TASSADUK KHAN, a Muslim officer in the jail, is also present.

QAZI
This is the Holy Quran.

TASSADUK KHAN
Hindus like Bismil will create a country for themselves. What will a Muslim like you get out of it? They’re just using you.

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN
(kissing the Holy Quran)
He’s not fighting for Hindu freedom, he’s fighting for Hindustan’s freedom. But you won’t be able to understand this. You’ve been licking the British boots for so long, you’ve begun to like the taste of it.

ASHFAQULLAH is hit on the head with an iron rod.

EXT. GORAKHPUR JAIL, GALLOWS—EVENING

The hangman pulls the lever, the sack hurtles down into the pit and hangs from the noose. The sack dangles in front of RAMPRASAD BISMIL’s face. JAMES McKINLEY is standing behind him. BISMIL looks on and smiles.

JAMES McKINLEY
Tell us where Azad and the other terrorists are. You can still save yourself.

RAMPRASAD BISMIL looks into the eyes of JAMES McKINLEY with so much fire in his own that McKINLEY looks away.
JAMES McKinley walks away.

Ramprasad Bismil

It's not your fault. You're only doing your duty.

JAMES McKinley stops for a brief moment, his face betraying his inner turmoil.

INT. CHURCH, ALTAR—DUSK

The instrumental version of 'Abide With Me' plays. JAMES McKinley kneels before the altar, his eyes filled with tears. He's angry...with his government...with himself...with his God.

JAMES McKinley

How can this be your will, tell me... Tell me...

Tell me... How can this be the will of God?

A teardrop escapes JAMES McKinley's eyes. JAMES McKinley begins to recite the Lord's Prayer.

INT. GORAKHPUR JAIL, RAMPRASAD BISMIL'S CELL; DECEMBER 1927—DAWN

JAMES McKinley's recitation blends with the words of RAMPRASAD BISMIL reciting from the Bhagvad Gita (holy book of the Hindus) as he takes a bath.

INT. FAIZABAD JAIL, ASHFAQULLAH KHAN'S CELL; DECEMBER 1927—DAWN

ASHFAQULLAH KHAN applies kajal (kohl) to his eyes. On the soundtrack we hear verses being recited from the Holy Quran.

DISOLVE TO:
INT. GORAKHPUR JAIL, CORRIDORS TO GALLOWS; DECEMBER 1927—DAWN

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Recitation of the three scriptures—Bhagvad Gita, Holy Quran, Lord’s Prayer overlap one another.

RAMPRASAD BISMIL looks out of the high ventilator washed in a shaft of light as he holds the Bhagvad Gita in his hands.

INT. FAIZABAD JAIL, CORRIDORS TO GALLOWS; DECEMBER 1927—DAWN

Ashfaqullah Khan is offering namaz (prayers).

INT. CHURCH; ALTAR—DUSK

JAMES McKINLEY kneels before the crucifix and prays.

INT. GORAKHPUR AND FAIZABAD JAIL, CORRIDORS TO GALLOW; 19 DECEMBER 1927—DAWN

Images: The long corridors lead to a door.

INT. CHURCH, ALTAR—DUSK

Image: Of the Crucifix from various angles

EXT. GORAKHPUR JAIL, GALLOWS; 19 DECEMBER 1927—DAWN

JAMES McKINLEY stares at the hanging noose.

INT. GORAKHPUR AND FAIZABAD JAIL, CORRIDORS TO GALLOWS; 19 DECEMBER 1927—DAWN

The door opens and the corridors are filled with light. RAMPRASAD BISMIL and ASHFAQULLAH KHAN reach the end of their respective corridors and burn out in the bright light.
INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, SUE’S HOSTEL ROOM—NIGHT

In a seamless transition, we are in SUE’s hostel room.

The last shot from the previous scene is playing, projected on the wall through SUE’s laptop, which is attached to a projector. The entire group is watching. The reel runs out now. The blank white screen stares back at them. They do not move.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Recitation of the three scriptures—Bhagvad Gita, Holy Quran, Lord’s Prayer—fades away.

A blanket of silence hangs over them. Only the resonance of what they just saw and heard remains. In the dark room, ASLAM and LAXMAN look at each other. SUE slowly gets up to put on the light. As the light comes on, for a moment, the two catch themselves staring at each other, then immediately look away. Just then AJAY opens the door.

AJAY
Hey guys! What’s up?

He sees them looking zapped. They barely react to him.

AJAY
Did someone die?

EXT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, PARKING LOT—NIGHT

All walk to their own vehicles in silence.

AJAY
Sue, I haven’t seen these guys so serious. What are you doing to my friends?

SUE
It’s not me... it’s them.

Just then AJAY sees LAXMAN PANDEY going his own way.

AJAY
Hey Laxman, aren’t you coming along?
LAXMAN PANDEY looks at the rest of the group uncertainly.

LAXMAN PANDEY

I'm not really hungry.

KARAN

Watch us eat then. Come on.

AJAY

Come...

INT. PUB—NIGHT

The pub is almost empty. The group sits at a large table. The boys are in a solemn mood. SUE tries to cheer them up; she raises a toast.

SUE

To two lovebirds with the most insanely romantic engagement in the whole wide world...

SONIA and AJAY cuddle up and smile. But the mood is sombre.

SUE

I said, ‘Cheers’, guys.

The mood is somewhat revived as all of them clink glasses.

ALL

Cheers... Cheers...
AJAY
I'm insane only about two things in my life—Sonia and flying.

DJ
(sings a Hindi film song drunkenly)
What is a mere heart? Take my life instead...

SUKHI gives a chorus support to DJ.

ASLAM
You're lucky to feel so passionately about something.

DJ does a bottom's up.

AJAY
You have your poetry.

ASLAM
(sarcastically)
Just like DJ has his singing.

Everyone has passion for something, they just have to find this 'thing'.

SUE
Just like our revolutionaries... Their passion for freedom was greater than their love for their own lives.

KARAN
There's nothing in this world worth giving your life for. Do you hear me? Nothing!

DJ
Agreed, except a beautiful woman!
SUKHI
*(singing)*
‘Just this once...’

DJ
*(calls the steward)*
Repeat...my drink.

SONIA
Easy DJ...

DJ
Yes, mama.

AJAY
There are things worth giving your life for, Karan.

KARAN
Like what? Look at Bhagat Singh, Azad, Bismil and Ashfaq. They gave their lives for this country. All for nothing. It’s a shit-hole today. And who cares a shit about them now?

SONIA is offended.

SONIA
I give a shit. People like Ajay who fight for their country, give a shit. So that people like you can sleep peacefully.

DJ/SUKHI
*(singing drunkenly)*
Take my life instead.

KARAN
Sonia get real.

SUE
Sonia’s right.
ASLAM
Sue, it's all fine for a foreigner like you to say all this. Out here, we're fighting for the basics—food, clothing and shelter.

KARAN
Out here you try to change things you'll get even more screwed. Corruption is in our fucking DNA. There is no future for this country.

DJ (drunkenly)
She's talking about the past, you're thinking about the future. One foot in the past and one foot in the future, that's why we're pissing on the present.

Sonia
DJ just shut up! For once in life, get serious.

AJAY
Karan, it's easy to be an arm-chair critic. Blaming others is even easier. If there are problems, why don't you go out there and change things? Take a stand. Join politics, the police force, government and clean it up. But you won't! I'll tell you why. Because you don't want to dirty your hands sticking it into the shit-hole.

KARAN
Nothing's going to change. You can go to your grave trying, it won't make any difference.

DJ (a little more drunk now)
Correct...the only difference will be how you go to your grave.
SONIA
DJ, relax.

DJ (slurring)
I’m not drunk. Am I drunk Sue?

SUE
No.

DJ
See, the director’s word is final. Cut it!... Where were we?

SUKHI (slurring)
On the way to our graves.

DJ
All our ‘THE END’s’ will be the same, wrapped in white shrouds. Only Ajay will be wrapped in the national flag.

SONIA
DJ stop it...

DJ
Karan, you can say whatever you want, not even the street dogs will bark when we die. But Ajay will get a 21 gun salute.

DJ laughs and then stands up and salutes AJAY. Then he play-acts like he has a rifle in his hand, and shoots off imaginary rounds into the air. The group breaks into laughter as DJ gets up and begins to carry AJAY on his shoulder.

AJAY
Hey DJ...what the...

The boys join DJ for AJAY’s mock funeral, lifting him on their shoulders and performing a slow march. LAXMAN PANDEY sits and watches, seems a new side to the boys.
INT. AIR FORCE COLONY, AJAY'S RESIDENCE, HALL—DAY

AJAY, dressed in an Indian Air Force Squadron Leader's uniform, walks in from the bedroom carrying one large suitcase. He then flings his bomber jacket to KARAN.

अजय
करण, ये ले।

AJAY
Karan, this is for you.

KARAN
For me? Thanks dude.

KARAN tries it on. He hugs AJAY. The whole gang, including LAXMAN PANDEY, has come to see AJAY off to his base.

SUKHI
The girls fall for Karan anyway. If anyone deserves the jacket, it’s me.

AJAY’s MOTHER applies a tika (vermilion mark, as a symbol of being victorious) on AJAY’s forehead. AJAY touches her feet as she blesses him. AJAY’s MOTHER distributes prasad (offering made to God) to the group. SONIA too touches her feet.

DJ
Wow! What a dutiful daughter-in-law. Now show what a dutiful wife you will be too.

KARAN, ASLAM and SUKHI nod as though a pearl of wisdom had been cast by DJ. AJAY extends his feet.

SONIA kicks AJAY’s feet playfully.

SONIA
(to SUE)
See what women in this country have to put up with?

With a hint of mischief in her voice, SUE says—
SUE
I think DJ’s right. You should respect your traditions.

DJ
Wow, Gulabo...

AJAY
See, even Sue agrees, a woman’s place is at her husband’s feet.

SONIA
Really?

SONIA picks up a stick to beat AJAY. AJAY runs around the hall to get away from her. The two run out of the room.

AJAY’S MOTHER
These two can be such children. They spend half their time fighting, the other half making up.

INT. AIR FORCE COLONY, AJAY’S RESIDENCE, CORRIDOR—DAY

SONIA
Sweetie-pie, can’t you stay a while longer?

AJAY
No, I have to go...

The boys catch the two.

SUKHI
(mocking them)
SWEETIE-PIE!
(singing a sad Hindi film song)
O beloved, don't leave my arms.
I promise, I will break down and cry...

INT. AIR FORCE COLONY, AJAY’S RESIDENCE, HALL—DAY

SUE comes to AJAY’s MOTHER.

SUE
I know how Sonia must be feeling right now. My father was also in the army.

AJAY’s MOTHER goes near AJAY’s father’s photograph.

AJAY’s MOTHER
I used to think that way too, when Ajay’s father and I got married. But then you realise something about being an Air Force pilot’s wife. You realise that your husband has pledged his life for the country. The least you can do for him, is control your emotions. Not be weak.

There is dead silence in the room. SONIA and AJAY come back to the hall. SONIA holds AJAY’s MOTHER’s hand, breaking her reverie.

AJAY’S MOTHER
I’m so happy Ajay’s chosen a girl like you. Now I can die in peace.

SONIA
Don’t talk this way, Ma.

AJAY
You’ll have to tell stories of valour to a dozen grandchildren too.
EXT. FEROZESHAH KOTLA RUINS; 8 AUGUST 1928—DAY

Another candle comes into focus.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The oath ‘Lalkaar (The Call)’ fades in.

Inside a massive stepwell, CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD administers the oath to serve the motherland until death.

BHAGAT SINGH, DURGA BHABHI, RAJGURU, SUKHDEV and the others follow CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD by holding their palms over the flame of burning candles while the oath is recited.

आज़ाद (V.O.)

Their oath recited like a pledge reverberates off the empty broken walls of the ruins.

In a top angle shot the camera spirals up to a wide shot revealing more and more revolutionaries taking the oath.
AZAD (V.O.)
We will not fear those cruel swords, our courage is far sharper.
The hands of men filled with passion can never be slashed with swords.
We will not lower, in the face of threats, a hand raised to its mother.
For let them know, their cowardly deeds, just serve to fuel our fires.
Because this day, we walk with death, and laugh at its pale spectre.

Later, denouncing religion, BHAGAT SINGH cuts off his hair.

ARCHIVAL FOOTAGE

British Movietone newsreel plays the nationwide protest against the visiting Simon Commission. The Empire strikes back, and the demonstrations are dispersed with severe measures. However, the people come back on the streets in thousands. In a seamless transition, we are now at a live protest at a railway platform.

EXT. LAHORE RAILWAY STATION, 30 OCTOBER 1928—DAY

A Superintendent of Police, J.A. SCOTT, is standing along the railway track on horseback. A large contingent of policemen led by a nervous Assistant Superintendent of Police [J.P. SAUNDERS] is cordoning the crowd.

The protestors are led by a 63 year old leader [LALA LAJPAT RAI]. The protestors are carrying black banners painted in white reading ‘Simon Go Home’ and raising slogans.

A young lady [DURGA BHABHI played by SONIA] leads a contingent of women. They are shouting slogans as well.

LALAJPAT RAI
Simon! Go back!

CROWD
Go home, Simon!
The train chugs into the station. The crowd become even more spirited. Some of them jump on the tracks to cross over.

As Sir John Allsbrook Simon and the other six members of the Commission get down from the train, LALA LAJPAT RAI and the crowd start to move towards them slowly and peacefully. Pushing back the cordon, which is now insufficient to contain the crowd, J.P. SAUNDERS begins to retreat on his horse. The crowd is now all over the tracks getting out of control when J.A. SCOTT barks his orders.

SCOTT
Lathi charge!

The police force led by J.P. SAUNDERS and SCOTT mercilessly rain blows on the crowd. BHAGAT SINGH and other revolutionaries (SUKHDEV, DURGA BHABHI, RAJGURU, BHAGWATICCHARAN VOHRA, JAIGOPAL) encircle LALA LAJPAT RAI and form a human shield.

BHAGAT SINGH gets a blow on his head. He looks at the British officer with fire in his eyes and cries out—

BHAGAT SINGH
Long live the revolution!

The brutal lathi-charge continues.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The oath poem ‘Lalkaar’ echoes, making the scene appear almost surreal.
CHORUS (V.O.)
In our hearts we have a horde of storms, and the spirit of revolution in our veins.
We will unleash this and more, and upon them we will rain.
The destination dare not defy us, when passion is our beacon.
Because this day, we walk with death, and laugh at its pale spectre.

The protesters brave the blows without resistance; they stand their ground displaying great resilience, facing one blow after another.

One by one, BHAGAT SINGH, RAJGURU and SUKHDEV fall to the blows. DURGA BHABHI shields LALA LAJPAT RAI with her body and suffers blows. Gathering all her strength, she tries to protect LALA LAJPAT RAI but in vain, the next blow in the mayhem catches LALA LAJPAT RAI on the forehead and he collapses.

Superimposed: Newspaper headlines proclaiming the death of LALA LAJPAT RAI, the Lion of Punjab.

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
The entire country is in a state of mourning over Lala Lajpat Rai's death. Just before his death, Lalaji had said this...

INT. LAHORE, JAMES McKINLEY'S BUNGALOW, BEDROOM; DECEMBER 1928—DAY

JAMES McKINLEY is writing in his diary as the radio plays the same news.

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
‘Every blow aimed at me is a nail in the coffin of British Imperialism’. It was the calm before the storm.
EXT. AMRITSAR, TERRACE; DECEMBER 1928—DAY

On a terrace overlooking the famous Golden Temple, BHAGAT SINGH, AZAD, SUKHDEV, MANMATHNATH, RAJGURU, BHAGWATICHARAN VOHRA, JAIGOPAL are lost in their thoughts, sad, angry and helpless.

बंदरसेकर आजाद
हमें कुछ ऐसा करना होगा जो उन्हें ज़रूर से हिला दे।

सुखदेव
मतलब क्या?

BHAGAT SINGH and RAJGURU are silent; CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD appears contemplative. DURGA BHABHI walks in with tea. She says softly.

दुर्गा भाभी
नार जलो उसे।

The revolutionaries look at her and then look at each other. A smile spreads across CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD’s face.

EXT. LAHORE, PUNJAB CIVIL SECRETARIAT; 17 DECEMBER—DAY

CLOSE UP: Spinning bicycle wheel.

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD, BHAGAT SINGH and RAJGURU are hiding behind pillars of the college building facing the police station, clutching guns in their sweaty hands.

The spinning bicycle wheel stops and through the spokes we see: J.P. SAUNDERS rides out of the gate, on his red motorcycle, and passes the man mending his bicycle. The man signals to the boys in hiding.

Suddenly RAJGURU steps out on the road in the path of the approaching motorcycle and shoots SAUNDERS at point blank range. SAUNDERS is hit on the head. He falls down. BHAGAT SINGH pumps more bullets into SAUNDER’s body.

Close-up of the gun barrel firing. CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD runs up and hurries them away.
* The storyboard along with the corresponding final images.
Some police guards chase them. AZAD holds the policemen with a gun aimed at them.

One policeman chucks his baton at AZAD, who shoots in return. The revolutionaries scale the wall and disappear.

EXT. DUST ROADS—NIGHT

The jeep with the gang is on the road. ASLAM is at the wheel and SONIA is beside him. DJ, KARAN and SUKHI share a beer in the backseat. They are all lost in their thoughts. SUKHI raises his fingers and shoots into the air with an imaginary gun. All break into smiles.

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, SUE’S HOSTEL ROOM—NIGHT

It is raining. Sitting at the window, sipping a hot cup of coffee, SUE is engrossed in reading her grandfather’s diary. Raindrops fall on the glass window pane which holds her reflection.

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
In the days that followed Chandrashekhar Azad, Bhagat Singh and the others went missing. This was the period when they all coined the two words...

BACK TO

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, SUE’S HOSTEL ROOM—NIGHT

SUE turns a page. Close on the letters on the page ‘Inquilab Zindabad’.
INT. LAHORE, JAMES McKINLEY’S BUNGALOW, BEDROOM; DECEMBER 1928—NIGHT

JAMES McKINLEY writes the words, loving the sound of it.

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, SUE’S HOSTEL ROOM—NIGHT

SUE is reading out from the diary to the boys.

EXT. STEAM TRAIN—DAY

A train passes with the slogan ‘Inquilab Zindabad, Inquilab Zindabad’ painted on it.

INT. AGRA, HIDEOUT, HING KI MANDI; JANUARY 1929—DAY

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD
Great idea! But Bhagat, escaping will be impossible.

BHAGAT SINGH
Our mission is to get caught, not escape.
BHAGAT SINGH
If we get caught, there will be a trial, we’ll get a chance to speak. We’ll be heard by all Indians.

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD turns away, contemplating.

BHAGAT SINGH holds him by the shoulders.

BHAGAT SINGH
I know. But it takes a loud noise to open deaf ears.

INT. CENTRAL ASSEMBLY HALL; APRIL 1929—DAY
BHAGAT SINGH hurls a bomb. It explodes with a bang. The hall is filled with smoke. People scatter in terror.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Shrieks.

BHAGAT SINGH
Long live the revolution!

BATUKESHWAR DUTT
Long live the revolution!

BATUKESHWAR DUTT hurls another bomb. A thick smoke engulfs the hall. BHAGAT SINGH throws a sheaf of leaflets into the hall.

BHAGAT SINGH
Long live the revolution!

The revolutionaries then lay down their arms and give themselves up.

SLOW MOTION: The pink leaflets flutter down from the gallery like a shower of leaves in the smoke.
JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
They were mere smoke bombs intended to awaken England from her slumber. Bhagat Singh had more than achieved his task.

EXT. THE CLASSROOM—DAY

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The song ‘Khalbi’ fades in. KARAN is sitting on the high wall looking at the city.

SONG: KHALBALI
There is an unrest sweeping through the land
The embers are swaying
The tide, it's turning
You can feel the winds of change
You can feel the unrest
Feel the unrest sweep through the land.

SONIA and DJ dance in wild abandon next to the water reservoir. ASLAM is painting graffiti on the wall. SUE relaxes nearby. As SUKHI tries to kid with ASLAM, ASLAM pushes SUKHI away.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. CELL—DAY

RAJGURU is thrown into a cell. BHAGAT SINGH and SUKHDEV are already there. Breaking into laughter, they embrace each other.

INT. MIANWALI JAIL, CELL; JUNE 1929—DAY

While other prisoners eat, BHAGAT SINGH, RAJGURU and SUKHDEV use their plates for percussion. JAMES McKINLEY walks up with the jailer. RAJGURU comes near them and bangs his plate harder. The jailer raps RAJGURU with his baton.
INT. MIANWALI JAIL, COMPOUND; JUNE 1929—DAY

When it is their turn to be served, BHAGAT SINGH, RAJGURU, SUKHDEV and some others do not take the food. Instead, they start banging their plates with their cups as a mark of protest.

EXT. MIANWALI JAIL, COMPOUND; JUNE 1929—DAY

BHAGAT SINGH
We are political prisoners. We should be allowed books, writing material and at least one daily newspaper.

RAJGURU
We will not eat till then. The hunger strike will continue.

RAJGURU gets hit on his face. He looks up defiant.

INT. LAHORE CENTRAL JAIL, CELL; JULY 1929—NIGHT

JAMES McKINLEY looks on as police struggle to hold down the revolutionaries. Funnels and tubes are thrust down to pour milk down their throats. They resist all attempts at force-feeding and throw up the milk.

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
The fasting and the torture went on for 114 days...114 days. Never before in the history of any revolution anywhere in the world had anyone lasted so long in such inhuman conditions... We could crush these young boys, but we could not crush their spirit.
EXT. THE CLASSROOM—DAY

Finally SUE joins the rest. The dancing is getting wild.

EXT. THE CLASSROOM—DAY

One by one, they all jump into the water and rejoice.

EXT. THE CLASSROOM—DAY

The gang is lying on the steps, breathing heavily.
The camera moves to the wall—a newly painted graffiti reads ‘Inquilab Zindabad’ (Long live the revolution).

EXT. ADDA—DAY

The gang is hanging out. The television is blaring. SONIA is trying green bangles from the hawker.

SUE
Pretty huh?

SONIA
I like these ones. I think I'll buy them. Very pretty.

SUE
Nice huh?

SUKHI plays around hitting the TV, as the music channel changes from the cartoon network...to a news channel.

INT. NDTV STUDIOS, NEWSROOM (ON TV)/EXT. ADDA—DAY

The caption reads ‘BREAKING NEWS’.

NEWSREADER #2
In breaking news today, a MiG-21 fighter plane has just crashed. This is the second such crash in the past six months. The Defence Ministry has ordered an investigation into the crash...

The gang is all ears. SONIA, now tense, moves towards the television.
SONIA
(whispering)
No...please...please...no...

She holds her breath. The NEWSREADER reads on.

समाचारवाचक #2
सूर्यो से पता चला है कि इस लड़ाकू विमान के पायलट फ्लाइट लेफ्टीनेंट अजय राठौड़ की दुर्घटना में मृत्यु हो गई है।

NEWSREADER #2
We have just received news that the pilot, Flight Lieutenant Ajay Rathod, has died in the crash.

A deathly silence falls over the group. Then as AJAY’s smiling face flashes on the screen, SONIA collapses. DJ reaches out and holds her, she pushes him away.

EXT. CRASH SITE (ON TV)/EXT. ADDA—DAY

The fire brigade at the crash location, the debris being cleared, etc.

समाचारवाचक #2
फ्लाइट लेफ्टीनेंट अजय राठौड़ ने काफी सुझाव से काम लिया और नियंत्रण खो चुके मिन को एक खाली मैदान में खून कराया जिससे आवादी वाले इलाकों पर कोई आतंक ना आए। हमारे पास जो आया है, उसके नुस्खा, अब तक एक से तिरस्त मिन-21 लड़ाकू विमान दुर्घटनाग्रस्त हो चुके हैं, जिसमें एयरफोर्स के सड़क उपयोग पायलट अपनी जान गंवा चुके हैं।

NEWSREADER #2
Ft. Lt. Rathod apparently did not eject from the burning plane. Instead he steered it away from Ambala city and crashed it in an open field. thus saving many lives. Viewers may recall that until now, 163 MiG-21 of IAF have crashed and 66 Air Force pilots have lost their lives in these accidents.

SONIA screams like a wounded animal, a long blood-curdling scream. SUE hugs her, holding her still as she thrashes about in pain. The boys just stand around helplessly.

EXT. FUNERAL GROUND—DAY

A coffin enshrouded in the Indian Flag is borne by Air Force personnel. AJAY’s MOTHER tries hard to maintain her composure. SUE is holding her. SONIA tries hard to hold back her tears. The boys stare blankly at the proceedings.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: AJAY’S MOTHER’s lullaby ‘Luka Chuppi’ fades in.
SONG: LUKA CHUPPI
This game of hide-and-seek has gone on too long, son.
Come home now, won’t you.
I’ve searched high and low,
These old eyes are weary so,
Come home now, won’t you.
Dusk is spreading like the ache in my heart...

The bugle is blown by the soldiers; inverting their guns, they then carry out the coffin in the traditional slow march (gun salute, etc.)

DJ’s eyes are brimming with tears. He remembers their playful slow march with AJAY on their shoulders at the pub. (Flash)

The tri-colour flag covering AJAY’s body is folded and handed over to AJAY’S MOTHER.

SONG: LUKA CHUPPI
I’m in a place you wouldn’t believe Ma. Endless skies I can soar.
Just like your fairy tales, it’s filled with dreams.
A sea of hope with no shore.
My soul flies here, like a kite without fear
No one to cut my strings, no more.

DJ gives fire to AJAY’s pyre. SUKHI salutes with brimming eyes. SONIA breaks down. AJAY’S MOTHER looks at her with vacant eyes. LAXMAN PANDEY walks up and puts his hand on KARAN’s shoulder. KARAN looks at LAXMAN PANDEY, tears streaking down his cheeks.

SONG: LUKA CHUPPI
Dusk is spreading like the ache in my heart and fear now blurs my vision.
Come home now, son, won’t you...

DISSOLVE TO:

The funeral pyre burns reflecting the fire on the faces of everyone.
NDTV Correspondent from the funeral ground, reports.

**CORRESPONDENT**

Ft. Lt. Ajay Rathod stayed in the plane until the very end and steered it clear of Ambala city, thereby saving many lives, while laying down his own.

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**INT. NDTV STUDIO, WE THE PEOPLE—DAY**

A heated debate is in progress in a programme similar to ‘We the People’, conducted by celebrated news journalist PANKAJ PACHAURI. Experts voice their opinions, the IAF, the Ministry of Defence, the Russian makers of MiG aircraft, pilots who have been part of crashes and survived, families of dead pilots.

**PANKAJ PACHAURI**

In the last 10 years, over 100 MiG-21s of the IAF have crashed, in which over 30 pilots have lost their lives. Defence Minister Shastri, the CAG report states that old and defective Russian spare parts were procured by the government. Isn't this a case of high-level corruption?

**SUPER: DEFENCE MINISTER SHASTRI**

Not at all. I've personally clarified the issue in parliament. It's is a downright lie. The youngsters of today are brash and irresponsible when it comes to flying planes.

An old gentleman, a RETIRED AIR FORCE OFFICER, at the studio speaks out.
No! I don't agree. Flt. Lt. Ajay Rathod was an ace pilot whom I trained. He was a gold medalist, the youngest to clear night sorties with over 1000 flying hours. This can't be the record of an irresponsible pilot.

The group is watching the NDTV debate.

Mr. Minister, how many more pilots will you send to their graves, before you stem the rot in the system?

The man gets some support.

The doorbell rings. AJAY’s MOTHER goes up to open the door. KARAN is behind her.

AJAY’s MOTHER opens the door. An airman delivers a trunk containing AJAY’s belongings. He salutes her. AJAY’s MOTHER looks at the man…the box. She’s too proud to cry. But she knows this is it. She loses her strength and is about to fall. KARAN holds her for support.

SONG: LUKA CHUPPI
If only I could show you this place, Ma
Here waterfalls are made of rainbows
INT. AIR FORCE COLONY, AJAY’S RESIDENCE, HALL—DAY

SONG: LUKA CHUPPI

There are no roses, just bouquets of dreams Ma
Their scent no flower can hope for
Here sunlight and shadow walk hand in hand
Everything seems bright and new
But what is heaven, and all of its wonders,
when Ma, I don’t have you...

The trunk with AJAY’s name on it is opened. AJAY’s belongings are revealed. His uniform, his cap, his racket, his diary, from which a picture of AJAY and SONIA falls out. She hands over the diary to SONIA who takes it in her hands with tearful eyes. Everyone in the room is sad and silent. The TV plays on.

DEFENCE MINISTER SHASTRI (ON TV)

From now on, the government will make sure that only experienced pilots are given access to these machines and not to rash pilots like Ajay Rathod. I welcome any investigation. I have nothing to hide.

There is an awkward silence in the room.

ASLAM
What the hell is he talking about?

All exchange silent looks.

INT. CAR—DAY

DEFENCE MINISTER SHASTRI and RAJNATH SINGHANIA are in the car, MISHRA is seated behind them.
DEFENCE MINISTER
SHASTRI
This damn MiG investigation shouldn't take us down.

RAJNATH SINGHANIA
Relax Sir. Public memory is short. Besides, we'll handle things.

DEFENCE MINISTER
SHASTRI
Dead pilots live long lives in the media.

RAJNATH SINGHANIA
But then they join the forces to sacrifice their lives, don't they?

EXT. INDIA GATE, SOLDIERS MEMORIAL—DAY

Hundreds of flickering flames come into focus; they are lit candles floating up the road that leads to India Gate. AJAY’s bereaved family members, friends and relatives are accompanied by common middle-class people who have come out on the streets, and are peacefully marching towards the SOLDIER’S MEMORIAL with lit candles.

The procession is led by AJAY’s MOTHER and the rest follow.

Upon reaching India Gate, they place the candles and AJAY’s medals of honour along with a photograph of him respectfully on the ground. Then they sit around his photograph and the candles, in protest. Old people, young people, even children have come to India Gate with candles in their hands. It is a moving sight.

NDTV CORRESPONDENT reports from the site—

The situation is tense at the moment. There is growing anger and discontent directed largely towards the government, especially the Defence Minister.
INT. DEFENCE MINISTER’S RESIDENCE—DAY

As the NDTV CORRESPONDENT reports from the site, DEFENCE MINISTER SHASTRI watches it all on TV.

EXT. INDIA GATE, SOLDIER’S MEMORIAL—DAY

CORRESPONDENT
Ajay Rathore’s mother is with us.

The CORRESPONDENT holds the mike in front of AJAY’s MOTHER.

AJAY’S MOTHER
The government can’t wash its hand off the issue like this. They are answerable to the public. If the MiG spare parts were of doubtful quality, why were they bought in the first place? For what? Money? Money won’t bring our children back.

ASLAM
The Defence Minister is morally responsible. He has to resign.

INT. SOUTH BLOCK, MINISTRY OF DEFENCE, DEFENCE MINISTER’S OFFICE—EVENING

DEFENCE MINISTER SHASTRI looks peeved. He picks up his cell phone to make a call.

DEFENCE MINISTER
Mishra, what’s happening?
EXT. INDIA GATE—DAY

The crowd has multiplied manifold as youth from the colleges have joined in. The media presence has built up as well. LAXMAN PANDEY is making an impromptu speech.

LAXMAN PANDEY
Ajay Rathod was not a novice. He didn’t let his plane crash into the town. When it developed a snag he didn’t try to save his life. He steered it clear of Ambala, saving thousands of civilians. Yet the Defence Minister calls him irresponsible. Right that’s enough now. We would like to know how many ministers in this country have sons are in the forces.

The sound of engines and police sirens fills the India Gate premises, drowning out the protesting voices. LAXMAN PANDEY does not give up. He raises his voice over the sound. A row of special police force (SPF) trucks drives up the slopes. SPF soldiers jump out even before the trucks come to a halt. They are dressed for riot control. Shields, batons and tear gas guns are offloaded as well. The crowd gets into a closer huddle.

EXT. INDIA GATE, SOLDIER’S MEMORIAL—DAY

A few jeeps and cars arrive and we see party workers from LAXMAN PANDEY’s group step out.

MISHRA is in one of the cars. He observes LAXMAN PANDEY. Then he instructs his party workers. The party workers move towards the speech makers and spread out among them. They start heckling the speakers and begin disrupting the proceedings. A scuffle begins to erupt between the party workers and the protestors. The SPF step in. They start to break up the protest.

SPECIAL POLICE FORCE INSPECTOR
Move on. We don’t want any trouble here. Time to go home.

AJAY’S MOTHER
I’m not moving. This is for Ajay.
Without warning, the SPF start a lathi-charge. There is pandemonium as they carry out the lathi-charge indiscriminately, sparing no one from their blows.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The song ‘Khoon Chala’ fades in.

SONG: KHOON CHALA
Our blood is boiling
It's flowing through the streets.
To seep into the mirror of our eyes.
Dripping from our bodies,
Caressing the earth.
Meandering through the streets and alleys
Surging and sweeping.
To paint a new world.

To SUKHI’s horror the SPF Inspector slaps him hard on the face. A few SPF soldiers keep slapping him.

People are beaten up ruthlessly. SUE and DJ find two kids looking around in the chaos helplessly and crying. They can, be a stampede at any moment. The two rush to pick up the children and bring them to safety.

The boys are beaten mercilessly. AJAY’s MOTHER shields SONIA in her embrace. Even AJAY’s photograph is not spared: it is trampled upon.

SONG: KHOON CHALA
From gaping wounds, and gashes large, it oozed, slowly and steadily. If the finger is but to point, the calling of the fist is to respond. Blood knows this and surges... Our blood is boiling, It's flowing through the streets.
LAXMAN PANDEY looks in dismay at the mayhem around him. He looks at his party members raining blows on the protesters. He sees his respected Mishraji sitting in his air-conditioned car and watching all this.

KARAN is brutally hit on the head, he falls. SUKHI is dragged on the road by his collar. SONIA is trying with all her might to protect AJAY’s MOTHER. LAXMAN PANDEY watches all this, numb with anger.

Some police officers and party workers are hitting ASLAM with lathis. They beat him mercilessly. Something snaps in LAXMAN PANDEY; he rushes towards ASLAM and snatches the baton from the cop and in blind rage beats the cop unconscious. Then he turns and repeatedly smashes the baton into the party workers. He then picks up the semi-conscious ASLAM and tries to take him to safety.

DJ tries to reach SONIA and AJAY’s MOTHER in vain, helplessly struggling against the crowd that separates them. As a gap clears in the seething crowd, DJ sees SONIA wailing as she cradles the limp body of AJAY’s MOTHER in her arms. A brutal cop has cracked a baton on AJAY’s MOTHER’s head.

Time slows down as SUE and DJ look on helplessly.

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**INT. HOSPITAL, EMERGENCY—DAY**

DJ rushes into the hospital carrying AJAY’s MOTHER in his arms. Her head is bleeding profusely. She is unconscious. A doctor and some attendants rush to them with a stretcher.

**DJ**

Doctor, it’s a head injury... Doctor

AJAY’s MOTHER is rushed down the corridor, accompanied by medics and a young doctor. DJ, KARAN and SONIA follow.

**डॉक्टर**

इन्हें जल्दी इमरजेंसी में ले चलो! Hurry up!  

**DOCTOR**

Take her to the emergency room! Quick!
DJ, KARAN and SONIA try to accompany AJAY’s MOTHER. The doctor stops them.

Doctor
आप प्लीज़...आप प्लीज़ यहाँ पर रुकिए! हमें पेंसेंट को बेचने दीजिए...

They helplessly look at the departing stretcher.

INT. POLITICAL PARTY OFFICE—DAY

MISHRA enters the party office. LAXMAN PANDEY is waiting for him. They exchange a look. LAXMAN PANDEY looks straight into MISHRA’s eyes.

Laxman Pandey
वहीं पर इतने मजबूर लोग कुचले जा रहे थे और आप... आपने इन सबको रोका क्यों नहीं मिश्राजी?

Mishra
तुमने अपनी सरकार के खिलाफ मोर्चा निकाला। यह नहीं हो सकता।

Laxman Pandey
मोर्चा सरकार के खिलाफ नहीं था, यह तो सच्चाई के पक्ष में था। हमारे नौजवान सेना ने भर्ती होते हीं...देश के लिए अपनी जान तक दे देते...और यह ब्रांच मंत्री उन फीलियों की जान की कोशिश पर अपनी तिजोरियाँ भरते हैं? और हमारा पार्टी ऑफिस कुछ नहीं करता।

A boy gets a cup of tea, MISHRA pushes the cup towards LAXMAN PANDEY.

Mishra
बैठो... चाय पीयो।

Laxman Pandey sits still.

Mishra
व्यादर इमोशनल होने की कोई जरूरत नहीं है। राजनीति में मानना का कोई स्थान नहीं है। पार्टी तुम्हारे बारे में बहुत कुछ सोच रही है। बहुत आगे जाना है तुम्हें...

Mishra
You protested against the government, our own party. That’s unacceptable.

Laxman Pandey
They were beating up innocent people. Why didn’t you stop them?

Mishra
You protested against the government, it was for the truth. So many pilots have died...young innocent boys who were fighting for our country, killed so that someone in the government could make money. And our party office doesn’t do a thing about it.

Mishra
Sit down... Have some tea.

Mishra
Don’t be so emotional. In politics there’s no place for emotions. The party has big plans for you...
LAXMAN PANDEY erupts emotionally.

LAXMAN PANDEY

कहीं नहीं जाना है मुझे। कोई मतलब नहीं है मुझे आपकी पारी से मी और आप से मी क्योंकि आप मी बिक चुके हैं।

LAXMAN PANDEY

Big plans! I don’t care either for your party or you since you have sold your soul.

MISHRA throws the hot tea on LAXMAN PANDEY’s face. Party workers rush forward and a free-for-all fist fight begins. They beat LAXMAN PANDEY up.

EXT. HOSPITAL—NIGHT

A rickshaw stops outside the hospital. LAXMAN PANDEY, his face covered with cuts and bruises, gets out of the rickshaw and walks in. He sits on the hospital steps next to KARAN.

LAXMAN PANDEY

How’s Aunty?

KARAN

They’re doing an MRI.

KARAN offers LAXMAN PANDEY the cigarette. PANDEY takes a long drag. There is a moment of silence. DJ walks out of the emergency ward; he has a grave expression on his face.

INT. HOSPITAL, CORRIDORS, ICU—NIGHT

We move through the glass partition into the ICU. AJAY’s MOTHER is lying on the bed, fighting for her life.

SONIA is sitting alone on the bench. The boys are in conference with the DOCTOR.

DOCTOR

She’s slipped into a coma. Severe skull damage, coupled with the shock of her son’s death.
The DOCTOR looks at LAXMAN PANDEY. SONIA starts sobbing silently. KARAN walks up to her and comforts her.

DOCTOR
That's an ugly gash. Nurse, she needs stitches. In case you need anything, I am there.

SONIA
Aslam... How's he?

INT. ASLAM'S HOUSE—NIGHT

MOINUDDIN opens the door. As DJ, SONIA and KARAN get in, they find ASLAM's FATHER facing them.

AMANULLAH KHAN
What have you come for? Haven't you done enough damage?

DJ
Uncle, it isn't what you think...

AMANULLAH KHAN
I'm not interested in what you think, in what you want to do. I'm just going to say this once. Aslam doesn't know what's good for him. He's an emotional boy, always has been. He listens to his heart, not his head. These are bad times for people like us. Don't take him down with you.

He chokes.
INT. ASLAM'S HOUSE, ASLAM'S ROOM—NIGHT

They all troop into the room to find SUE with ASLAM's MOTHER and sister. ASLAM, a mass of bruises, is in bed. SUKHI is standing nearby, staring blankly in front of him.

ASLAM
Guddu, go outside.

DJ
All parts working?

ASLAM smiles instinctively, but the pain in his jaw makes the smile falter.

ASLAM
Don't make me laugh, idiot. It hurts. How's Aunty?

SUKHI
How can this be happening to us?

KARAN
She's in a coma.

SUE
Oh God!

SUKHI
How can this be happening to us?

Silence.

ASLAM'S MOTHER walks in.

ASLAM'S MOTHER
Dinner?
Karan

नहीं आन्दोली, रहने दीजिए! असलम को देखने आए थे बस! असपताल वापस जाना है।
(असलम को)
टेक केरर यार।

KARAN
No, don’t worry Aunty. We just came to see Aslam. We’ve got to get back to the hospital.
(to Aslam)
Take care...

They all file out. LAXMAN PANDEY remains in the room. He tries to speak but only manages a choked whisper.

Laxman Pandey

मैं... मैं हमेशा साथ... मैं हमेशा हमेशा... साँसी...

LAXMAN PANDEY
I... I’m sorry.

He just walks away. ASLAM’s eyes well up.

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, SUE’S HOSTEL ROOM—NIGHT

SUE and DJ come in exhausted. They are both silent. SUE lays food on the table. DJ sits down. He looks lost.

स्यू
कुछ खा लो...

SUE
Eat something...

DJ quietly tries to eat, but he seems unable to swallow any food. He almost chokes, then breaks down.

Дीजे
हर तरफ सब कुछ बिखर रहा है, और मैं खड़ा तमाशा देख रहा हूँ। हम जैसे कोई औकात ही नहीं यार! अजय जैसे लोगों भर जाएं ना, फिर भी कोई फर्क नहीं पड़ेगा। कुछ नहीं बदलेगा।

DJ
Everything’s falling apart and all I can do is stand and watch. People like us don’t count out here. Thousands like Ajay can die. It will make no difference. Nothing will change.

Tears course down DJ’s cheek. His body is wracked by sobs. SUE caresses his face and wipes away the tears. SUE holds him and consoles him silently.
This system is so messed up, a hundred more Ajay’s can die and nothing will change... Ajay did everything right all his life. He was a good pilot, a good friend, a good son. He never harmed a soul... he didn’t deserve this. Sonia didn’t deserve this.

INT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, SUE’S HOSTEL ROOM—NIGHT

DJ is lying asleep with his head in SUE’s lap. SUE runs her fingers through his hair, staring at the ceiling. She looks at the sleeping form of DJ.

SUE (V.O.)
As I watched DJ sleep that night, a strange thought occurred to me. Maybe DJ wasn’t sleeping, maybe none of them were. Maybe they were all waking up.

EXT. AMRITSAR, JALLIANWALA BAGH; 13 APRIL 1919 (DREAM)—DAY

Once again, we see the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. People being mowed down, General Dyer shouting commands, troops firing indiscriminately at unarmed men, women and children. The visuals have a dream-like abstract quality. We see a young BHAGAT SINGH, scooping blood-soaked mud into a bottle.

Suddenly the troops are no longer British troops but they are Indians, all firing under the command of Defence Minister Shastri. Indians are killing Indians.

Just then the falling crowd parts to reveal AJAY in his Air Force uniform.

DEFENCE MINISTER SHASTRI
Fire!

He points towards AJAY. The troops fire. A bullet punctures his jacket.
AJAY
Hey Karan, they've spoilt your jacket.

Blood oozes from the jacket...

DEFENCE MINISTER
SHASTRI
Long live India!

A MiG-21 plane bursts into flames in the sky.

INT. SINGHANIA RESIDENCE, KARAN'S BEDROOM—NIGHT

KARAN wakes up with a start; he is sweating profusely.

EXT. FORT RUINS—DAY

The boys and SONIA are sitting on the ledge.

ASLAM
The scoundrel got away with it again.

SUHAK
There's nothing can we do when the law of the land protects people like the Defence Minister.

MATCH CUT TO:

We now intercut between the revolutionaries in the past and our gang in the present.

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD
We have to take drastic measures.

SUHAK
What do you mean? Do what?

DJ, ASLAM, KARAN, and LAXMAN PANDEY, all remain silent.
BHAGAT SINGH, AZAD and RAJGURU are silent. DURGA BHABHI walks in.

SONIA breaks the silence.

सोनिया
मार डालो उसे।

सुखी
क्या? डिफेंस मिनिस्टर को मार डाले? पागल हो गयी है क्या तू?

असलम
हम लोग कोई हत्यारे नहीं हैं, सोनिया।

करण
पर वे लोग हैं।

सुखी
करण, तू जानता भी है इसका मतलब?

SONIA
Kill him!

SUKHI
What? Kill the Defence Minister! Are you crazy?

ASLAM
We aren’t killers, Sonia.

KARAN
But they are.

SUKHI
Have you lost it, Karan?

FLASHBACK

भगत सिंह
हम किसी के स्थल के प्यासे नहीं पर सवाल इलाक़ा का है।

PRESENT

लक्ष्मण पाण्डेय
बंडूक का इंतजाम में कर दूंगा।

सुखी
बड़े बड़े मत, घायल। जरा सी बात पर तेरे लिए मार-पीट शोक की बात है। लेकिन हमारे लिए...

करण
जरा सी बात पर? अजय की मीठ जरा सी बात है? मैं के साथ जो हुआ, वह जरा सी बात है?

असलम
करण, बात वो नहीं है यार। समझा कर।

BHAGAT SINGH
It's not blood lust. It's a matter of justice.

PRESENT

LAXMAN PANDEY
I’ll get the gun.

SUKHI
Don't fuel things, Pandey. We can't start killing people for just about any reason...

KARAN
You think Ajay’s death is a small reason? What happened with Ajay’s mother is a small reason?

ASLAM
Be reasonable Karan.
FLASH BACK

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD
Lala Lajpat Rai’s death has to be avenged. Scott has to be killed.

PRESENT

ASLAM
But... I always thought we didn’t believe in anything.

KARAN
So did I. Until now.

The camera slowly dollies over the faces of ASHFAQULLAH KHAN, LAXMAN PANDEY, RAJGURU, SONIA, BHAGAT SINGH, ASLAM, RAMPRASAD BISMIL, DJ, DURGA BHABHI, and to CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD.

Seamlessly the camera now circles between the faces in the past and present and comes to rest.

SUKHI
Have we all gone crazy?

LAXMAN PANDEY
He takes a morning walk at 8 a.m. everyday. We can kill him then.

SUKHI
Who’s ‘we’?... Who’s going to pull the trigger?

DJ (O.C.)
I will.

DJ does not look helpless anymore.
EXT. DEFENCE MINISTER SHASTRI’s BUNGALOW—MORNING

Close-up, spinning bicycle wheel. The boys stage the exact replica of the killing of Saunders; the shots and action mirror the previous killing.

Even though the morning security is relaxed, there is still the danger of getting caught.

There is no looking back now!

DEFENCE MINISTER SHASTRI walks out of the driveway of his house for his morning walk, followed by two bodyguards.

Outside the gate, ASLAM is mending a bicycle. Through the spokes of the bicycle, we see DEFENCE MINISTER SHASTRI walking towards the gate, closely followed by his bodyguards.

FAST CAMERA PAN: KARAN kick-starts the bike; DJ is riding pillion. DJ pulls out a pistol.

LAXMAN PANDEY, putting on an act of a newspaper man on a cycle, engages the security guards in conversation.

KARAN and DJ ride towards DEFENCE MINISTER SHASTRI. DJ shoots at DEFENCE MINISTER SHASTRI once...twice...three times... and then KARAN speeds away on the bike before the bodyguards realise what has happened. As the guards run behind the bike in vain, the ‘innocent newspaper man’ disappears.

CAMERA TILTS DOWN: The Defence Minister lies dead on the road with gunshot wounds gaping on his chest, blood oozing out, spreading over his clean white kurta (long shirt).

INT. HOSPITAL, RECEPTION—DAY

SUE enters the waiting area, pausing for a moment to look at the TV blaring the breaking news of the Defence Minister’s assassination. There is a crowd of doctors, nurses, etc., watching the story unfold.
The Defence Minister was on his usual morning walk when two unidentified gunmen opened fire. He was hit by three bullets in his chest, and was declared dead after being brought to the hospital. No group has yet claimed responsibility for this incident...

SUE feels a little uncomfortable on hearing this. She rushes up the stairs.

INT. HOSPITAL, AJAY’S MOTHER’S ROOM—DAY

SUE rushes into the room. On the bed, AJAY’s MOTHER lies motionless... alone. SUE rushes out.

EXT. ADDA—DAY

The boys are watching TV.

Caption: Breaking News, Defence Minister assassinated.

Government spokespersons believe that this is an attempt to destabilise the government.

The country has lost a great leader because of the cowardly act of some terrorists. He was a true soldier, a true patriot. His contribution to the country cannot be described in words.

SUKHI cannot take it any more. He hits the TV and the channel changes.

LAXMAN PANDEY tries to get back to the news channel using the knob. At last, he hits the TV to get it back.
Meanwhile our sources have discovered a telephonic conversation involving middleman Rajnath Singhania in an arms deal. This conversation took place just a few days before the Defence Minister's assassination.

On a split screen, photographs of RAJNATH SINGHANIA (KARAN's father) and the DEFENCE MINISTER pop up side-by-side. The recorded conversation between them is played back.

RAJNATH SINGHANIA (V.O.)
The Russians want us to reduce our commission.

DEFENCE MINISTER SHASTRI (V.O.)
Didn't you tell them, it's not a defense deal, but our deal?

RAJNATH SINGHANIA (V.O.)
That's why I told them, 'Take it or leave it.'

KARAN is in shock as are the rest. DJ switches off the TV.

DJ
Let's go.

We stay on KARAN.

EXT. ADDA—DAY

SUE comes looking for the boys but does not find them.

SUE
Paaji, where's DJ?

PAAJI
They just left.
She rushes by the TV. A small crowd has gathered there.

Caption: Breaking News, Defence Minister assassinated.

EXT. ASLAM’S HOUSE—DAY

CLOSE ON: Moinuddin looks on. SUE and AMANULLAH KHAN are at the door. ASLAM’s MOTHER is standing behind AMANULLAH in the shadows.

अमानुल्लाह खान वह कल रात से घर ही नहीं लौटा।

AMANULLAH KHAN He hasn’t come home all night.

SUE looks worried.

अमानुल्लाह खान सब कुछ ठीक तो है?

AMANULLAH KHAN Is everything alright.

सी छो…

SUE Yes...

सलम की माँ वह कह रहा था शायद रात डीजे के घर ही रहेगा…

ASLAM’S MOTHER He said he’d be spending the night at DJ’s...

SUE Thank you.

I/E. MITRO’S DHABA—DAY

Mitro is trying to light the tandoor (clay oven). Embers rise as she fans the fire. She looks up to find SUE standing at the door and looking around along with RAVI.

Spotting Mitro, SUE’s eyes turn moist. She runs to MITRO. MITRO greets her with a warm smile, which changes to concern.

सी डीजे यहाँ है क्या?

SUE Have you seen DJ?
MITRO
Is everything alright?

SUE
I can't find him, I can't find SONIA or anyone or ASLAM.
I don't know where they are.

Her suppressed anxiety comes out. She trembles all over. MITRO holds her
reassuringly and makes her sit on the charpai (wood-and-rope cot)

SUE
But DJ...

SUE’s eyes turn moist. MITRO holds her.

MITRO
Daljeet has always been a brat, he used to disappear on his bike for
days... He's my only child. If I had more, I wouldn't worry so much.

SUE
I'm scared.

MITRO
Don’t be afraid. God watches over
the people we love.

MITRO hugs SUE. From the expression on her face, however, we can see
that MITRO is worried too.
EXT. FORT, CLASSROOM—DAY

It is a very windy day. In the cluster of broken walls, the gang is huddled together. SUKHI and ASLAM are looking at a newspaper. SUKHI reads from the newspaper.

SUKHI
Defence Minister...the martyr, one of India's precious sons...scoundrel...

SUKHI starts clapping. ASLAM reads on.

ASLAM
Next they will honour him with the Bharat Ratna.

LAXMAN PANDEY
What a waste.

DJ
People need to know the truth...

ASLAM
And who is going to tell it to them.

DJ
We will...by surrendering ourselves.

ASLAM extends his hands to be handcuffed.

ASLAM
(sarcastically)
What?... Terrific!... You want us to walk right in, give ourselves up and expect them to understand! Why?

SONIA
And who should we surrender to? The police are mere puppets.

LAXMAN PANDEY
Then what should we do? Just sit back? Let them make him a hero?
सुखी

(सार्कस्टिक)

नहीं, नहीं, उनको भी खत्म कर देंगे हैं ना।
सबको उड़ा देंगे हैं। क्यों पाड़े?
(हवाई फायर करते हुए)
टीश... टीश... टीश...

लक्ष्मण पाणडे
अरे कोई चुप कराओ इसे...

SUKHI

(sarcastic)
No! Let’s kill them all! Right Pandey?

(shoots in air)
Tish...Tish...Tish...

LAXMAN PANDEY
Someone make him shut up...

SUKHI is laughing nervously. He snatches the newspaper from DJ’s hand and holds it in front of KARAN’s face. RAJNATH SINGHANIA’s photograph stares back at KARAN.

SUKHI

तुम्हे मालूम था, तेरा बाप भी शामिल है।
सब पता था तुझे।

KARAN is taken aback by this reaction.

KARAN

No, Sukhi...

SUKHI

You knew your father was involved. You knew all along.

SUKHI

You knew your father was involved.

KARAN

No, Sukhi...

SUKHI

You are lying!... You always wanted to take revenge on your father...

SUKHI

You're lying!... You always wanted to take revenge on your father...

DJ

Sukhi, shut up!

SUKHI

Who am I to say anything?

DJ

Oye Sukhi...

SUKHI

DJ, he’s used you...

DJ

That’s enough, Sukhi.
SUKHI weeps hysterically. KARAN tries to light a cigarette, his hands shake. DJ reaches out for SUKHI. SUKHI loses it; he starts screaming.

DJ finally slaps SUKHI to bring him to his senses. Then he holds SUKHI in a vice-like hug. SONIA pats SUKHI on the back.

KARAN is staring at his father’s photograph. LAXMAN PANDEY consoles him.

The gang huddles together, scared, vulnerable in DJ’s embrace.

EXT. SINGHANIA RESIDENCE, DRIVEWAY—NIGHT

DJ and KARAN are in the jeep, with DJ at the wheel. The jeep comes to a halt outside the gate of the Singhania Mansion.

KARAN steps out of the jeep.
DJ
I'm not worried. Just don't be late.

KARAN walks towards the building. DJ watches him go.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: FM radio is playing.

RAHUL (RADIO V.O.)
The night is still young. The name of the show is ‘Raat Baki Baat Baki’, I’m Rahul and let’s rock the party tonight... Great DJ remixes coming up for you people...

DJ starts the car.

INT. SINGHANIA RESIDENCE; STUDY—NIGHT

RAJNATH SINGHANIA has a worried look on his face.

RAJNATH SINGHANIA
Nothing will happen to you Karan. That’s a promise. Just give me the names of the others. I’ll get you the best lawyers, pull all the strings possible. You were forced into it, do you understand? You were forced by your friends. Then you are out of this country.

KARAN just looks at him silently.

RAJNATH SINGHANIA
Do you get me?

RAJNATH SINGHANIA
Say something, God damn it. Your father’s reputation, his life’s work are at stake.
RAJNATH SINGHANIA
Why did you do it?

KARAN
Why did you do it, Dad?

RAJNATH SINGHANIA
What did I do?

KARAN
Ajay always said, ‘I’ll give my life for this country’, ‘I’m not afraid of death.’ Ajay was burnt alive... and all you can think of is sending me out of the country. You killed him! You made a joke of his death...

KARAN chokes, tears brim up.

RAJNATH SINGHANIA
I know you’re very disturbed. Relax! Let me handle things.

KARAN
Really Dad? Is there a way out?

RAJNATH SINGHANIA
I’ll find a way out.

RAJNATH SINGHANIA hugs KARAN.

KARAN looks up, his eyes are distant.

You will be out of this trouble. Yes, you will go away from this country tonight.
EXT. JAMA MASJID, COURTYARD—DAWN

AMANULLAH KHAN performs the ritual of cleansing himself by washing his hands and feet.

EXT. MITRO’S DHABA—DAWN

MITRO is sleeping with SUE on the charpai. SUE is restless. She gets up and quietly moves out.

EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE MITRO’S DHABA—DAWN

The cab with SUE leaves from MITRO’s dhaba.

EXT. MITRO’S DHABA—DAWN

MITRO wakes up to find SUE gone. She feels unsettled. She prays silently. She suddenly realises that the knot of black thread (tied for DJ’s well-being) on her fingers has opened.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE ALL INDIA RADIO STATION—DAWN

In the jeep DJ, SUKHI, ASLAM and LAXMAN PANDEY are looking at the imposing structure of the All India Radio building. The car radio is playing ‘The Awakening’.

KARAN gets out of an auto-rickshaw.

Everyone gets out of the jeep except SUKHI. He is staring at his own reflection in the rear-view mirror. He seems to be getting cold feet.

DJ You don’t have to do this.

SUKHI No man...

The others are all waiting.
INT. HOSPITAL, ICU—DAWN

AJAY’s MOTHER is lying in a coma. SONIA places AJAY’s framed photograph on the table, then takes AJAY’s MOTHER’s hands in hers.

SONIA
Ajay’s death won’t be in vain, Ma. I promise you.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE ALL INDIA RADIO STATION—DAWN

The picture slowly starts losing colour, bleaching into monochrome. Time stretches itself (SLOW MOTION) as the boys cross the street.

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
What is it about these boys that makes them so fearless?

MATCH CUT TO:

The boys from the past—BHAGAT SINGH, CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD, RAMPRASAD BISMIL, RAJGURU, ASHFAQULLAH KHAN cross the street in today’s time.

The heroes from the past change into the present gang of boys—DJ, KARAN, ASLAM, SUKHI and LAXMAN.
JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
I think sometimes a person can be pushed so far that one reaches a place beyond fear, a place where one find a strange peace.


MATCH CUT TO:

The boys in the present.

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
Where you free yourself to do the right thing... Because sometimes, that’s the hardest thing to do and the simplest too.

INT. CAB 2—DAWN

SUE is reading her diary.

SUE
(reads)
I prayed for them...I prayed for their well-being...

She turns the last page, shuts the diary and closes her eyes. The radio is playing in the cab.

RAHUL (V.O. ON FM)
This is Rahul, and you've tuned in to your favourite radio show. We have some great music lined up tonight, so let's begin with R.D. Burman...

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, RECEPTION—DAWN

Inside, it is still the colonial edifice it was created to be. Only now, the dull ambience of a government organisation permeates the air. The dullness is echoed in the guard's eye. He tears out a visitor's pass and points them towards the staircase. They look up at the staircase.
ON THE SOUNDTRACK: ‘The Awakening’ builds up as the gravity of what they are about to do slowly begins to sink in.

CLOSE ON: Faces of DJ, KARAN, SUKHI, LAXMAN PANDEY and ASLAM.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, STAIRCASE—DAWN

They walk up the staircase and reach the main reception, where they present their visitor’s pass to the receptionist.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION; FINAL LEVEL—DAWN

DJ and KARAN, led by the receptionist, reach the final level. It’s almost deserted. At the end of this level is a recording room encased in soundproof glass. The lady gestures to them to be quiet and wait for a while. She peeps into the recording room to inform Rahul. KARAN catches RAHUL’s eye behind the glass. RAHUL sees them, waves and comes out to meet them.

हे करण? What a surprise man! तुम लोग यहाँ कैसे?

KARAN

करण
tuṃsa kām thā, rahul...

RAHUL

Sure.

डीजे
hem rekhīyō par jāna hai.

RAHUL

Put you on air?

हाँ, मैं समझा नहीं, यार, मतलब तुम रेखियो
par jāna chahta hō?

RAHUL

Put you on air?

KARAN

Yes, right now! Live!

RAHUL

Hey Karan! What’re you doing here?

We need a favour.
RAHUL
That's impossible man. I'll lose my job. As it is, they don't pay me.

DJ pulls out his gun and looks RAHUL straight in the eye.

DJ
It's payback time.

RAHUL
(eyes widening with panic)
Hey! Whatever you say DJ! It's your station.

The receptionist comes in and sees the gun, drops her file and starts screaming.

LADY
Gun... He's got a gun!

She runs out.

DJ
Karan you go in. I'll handle it.
(to Rahul)
Keep the show going. Don't mess with us.

KARAN nods and goes in with RAHUL.

DJ starts pulling out people in and around the silent zone and moves them out of the studio. People come out of the recording room with musical instruments in their hands. Everyone is really scared to see the gun in DJ's hands.

DJ
Come on... leave. No need to panic. Everything's alright.
(to a turbaned Sikh)
Paaji, is anyone inside?

The turbaned Sikh helplessly nods.
DJ
Uncleji, run... Don't stop...

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, RECEPTION—DAWN

Lady
Gun... Security...gun!

The frightened female assistant runs out to the reception hysterically. The security guard rushes in with his gun raised. LAXMAN PANDEY intercepts him and yanks the gun from his hands. The guard tries to rush past him. LAXMAN PANDEY shoots close to his ears into a wall.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: Gunfire echoes and booms.

SUKHI moves people out of the corridor.

SUKHI
Everybody, out! Move!

ASLAM breaks the key-holder and takes the keys to all the hatch doors and proceeds to latch them.

LAXMAN PANDEY
Don't be a wise, guys. Don't panic. We won't harm anyone. Just vacate the building.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION—DAWN

ASLAM
Come on, move...move.

Now the production staff on night shift clamber over one another to escape.

DJ
Hurry up, quick!

The security guard backs away with his arms in the air. LAXMAN PANDEY keeps the gun trained on him. ASLAM slides the shutters close.
DJ has almost cleared the silent zone. Reassuring the staff again, he sends the last person out and shuts the main door from inside.

How so very amateur, but the boys manage to take over the radio station.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO, BROADCASTING BOOTH—DAWN

RAHUL lowers the faders and takes the mike. He's shaking with fear.

RAHUL

(trembling)
The time is 6:05 a.m. And you’re listening to ‘The night is still young’. Today I have a surprise guest for you—an old friend of mine, Karan Singhania who just dropped in to say something to all of you...

KARAN takes a deep breath, bends forward and begins.

KARAN

My name is Karan Singhania. My friends and I, we killed the Defence Minister.

RAHUL is visibly shocked.

KARAN

I repeat we killed the Defence Minister.

INT. CAB 2—DAWN

SUE sits anxiously in the back, listening to the radio.

SUE

(to Ravi)
Ravi, take me to the radio station quickly. Hurry up!
INT. ALL INDIA RADIO, ATRIUM—DAWN

DJ, Laxman, ASLAM and SUKHI listen to KARAN’s voice emanating from the speakers.

KARAN (V.O.)
We are not terrorists. We aren’t backed by any foreign organisation. We don’t even belong to any political group. We’re just five students from Delhi University. We killed the Defence Minister because he murdered our friend Flt. Lt. Ajay Rathod and many other Air Force pilots...

I/E. VARIOUS LOCATIONS—DAWN

Dawn’s just broken. At various locations, like the newspaper stall on the road, the milk shop, everyone is shell-shocked to hear KARAN.

KARAN (V.O.)
We killed him because after he murdered Ajay, he sullied his reputation. Ajay’s mother...who not only saw her son, but also her husband lay down his life for his country, is right now in a coma... fighting for her life.

We intercut the city waking up to KARAN’s words.
करण (V.O.)
डिफेंस मिनिस्टर देश की सख्त के लिए होता है। उसने देश को बेच दिया। कौन रोकेगा इसमें, कौनून? कौनून को तो लोग तोड़-मरोड़ के हमारे ही शिलाफ इस्तेमाल करते हैं। हमने डिफेंस मिनिस्टर शास्त्री को इसलिए मार डाला क्योंकि इतना बड़ा गुनाह करने के बाद भी हमारी आँखों के सामने वह साफ-साफ बच निकल रहा था। यदि हमने गलत किया। किसी की जान लेना गुनाह है। पर हमसे यह सब देखा नहीं गया। आज हम अपना गुनाह करार करने आए हैं। आज हम यहाँ आए हैं, सबसे यह कहने कि कुछ तो करना होगा। हम सबको कुछ करना होगा।

Images: Milkman on a cycle with his transistor.
Roadside tea stalls.
Delhi University students crowding outside the college building, listening to a radio.
Police vans rushing to All India Radio.
Press van rushing.
The radio is on in a car. As the man drives, he is making frantic calls.
The images end with a sage offering prayers to the Sun God.

I/E. NDTV STUDIOS—DAY

समाचारवाचक #2 और अभी-अभी खबर मिली है कि राजनीति
शास्त्री के हमलावर ऑल इंडिया रेडियो में
छुपे हुए हैं।

NEWSREADER #2
We've just received news that the Defence Minister's assassins are
hiding in All India Radio building.

EXT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION—DAY

TOP-ANGLE SHOT [time lapse]: The streets outside the radio station get
crowded. Paramilitary forces, TV crews and hundreds of bystanders converge
around the building.
INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, FINAL LEVEL—DAY

DJ, SUKHI, ASLAM and LAXMAN PANDEY look out of the window. RAHUL’s voice can be heard over the in-house speakers.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, RECORDING ROOM—DAY

RAHUL
Karan Singania and his friends are still with us. Listeners can call in on 3291777, if you wish to speak to them. Till then, here is...

RAHUL fades out the mike and fades up the song.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: The opening notes of the song ‘Ru Ba Ru’ plays.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, RECEPTION—DAY

DJ, SUKHI, ASLAM and LAXMAN PANDEY look out of the window. The song can be heard over the in-house speakers. KARAN walks out of the broadcasting booth. All look at him.

KARAN
It’s done.

DJ chucks his pistol into the dustbin. So does LAXMAN PANDEY, throwing the gun he had earlier snatched from the guards. They all embrace each other one by one. The morning sun streams in through the open window.

All the boys feel the tension of the past few days drain away.
**SONG: RU BA RU**

Hey, dude!

I just realised

There's a fire burning within me

It's a new dawn, I can feel its light

So bright, it could consume the sun

Cause I'm face-to-face with the light

The dream I once lost,

I've found it, it's blooming,

It's melting,

Notes arranging

into a whole new melody

Cause I'm face-to-face with the light

The boys get into a huddle.

**SUKHI**

Will they give us good food in jail?

**DJ**

Food? Next he'll want beer. Idiot...

They all laugh.

**SONG: RU BA RU**

The mist has cleared, I can see the sky

A new road, a new journey lies before me

If only you could stand by my side,

Like a duet sharing a symphony.

**ANGLE ON: Corridor. RAHUL rushes out of the broadcasting booth.**

**RAHUL**

You guys have become famous.

Calls are pouring in from all over the country...

**RAHUL**

Come on! They want to talk to you. The fire you lit is spreading.

We hear the police siren.

**ASLAM**

Police.
RAHUL
Police! This is unreal man! यह कैसा हो गया यार? वह कहाँ से आ गई? मेरा कंरियर ख़रब हो जाएगा यार...

DJ
ओए, चुप ओए, चल तू निकल। काफ़ी इसको बाहर निकाल। करण, तू माइक पर जा! ज्यादा बक्क कहीं है अपने पास...जो 15-20 मिनट में अंदर घुसके हमें पकड़ लेंगे। जो कुछ बोलना है बोल दे जा...

KARAN
OK.

EXT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION—DAY
The reporter speaks from outside the cordoned area at AIR building.

NDTV REPORTER
The Delhi police have reached the spot and are rescuing people trapped in the building.

EXT. MITRO’S DHABA—DAY
MITRO prays facing the gurdwara. She is reading the Guru Granth Sahib. The TV is on.

INT. NDTV STUDIOS, NEWSROOM (ON MULTIPLE SCREENS)—DAY

CORRESPONDENT #1
The responsibility of the minister’s murder has just reached Kolkata.

CORRESPONDENT #2
Reporting from Bangalore and as you can see, the students here are very excited...

CORRESPONDENT #3
Reporting from Mumbai’s Churchgate area...
CORRESPONDENT #4
Reporting from Cotton College in Guwahati...

CORRESPONDENT #5
Reporting from S.P. College, Srinagar...

CORRESPONDENT #6
Reporting from Lucknow University, and we are getting many reactions.

EXT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION—DAY
The crowd is growing. The paramilitary forces are taking up positions.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, BROADCAST STUDIO—DAY
People in Chandni Chowk, in ASLAM’s lane, crowd near a radio in a shop. SUE hears KARAN as the cab hurtles towards the AIR building.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, BROADCAST STUDIO—DAY
CALLER #1
Hi, my name is Prakash. And I want to congratulate you. You did the right thing by killing him. All our ministers should be lined up and shot.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, RECEPTION—DAY
ASLAM and others can hear KARAN on the radio.

CUT AWAY:
As KARAN speaks on the radio, the entire country listens, including SUE in the cab.
KARAN
Prakash, who all will you shoot? These corrupt ministers are a reflection of our society. We’ve chosen them. We need to change ourselves to bring about a change.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, RECEPTION—DAY

ASLAM, SUKHI, LAXMAN, DJ, all listen on.

CALLER #2
Hello this is Principal Sharma from Indore. You have set a terrible example by taking law into your own hands.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, BROADCAST STUDIO—DAY

KARAN
You’re right sir. But give us the name of a politician who has gone to jail for his crimes.

CALLER #3
Who else is on your hitlist?

KARAN
We have no hit list.

CALLER #4
How do you feel after killing the Defence Minister?

KARAN
We did not kill him out of any blood lust...or personal enmity...
EXT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION—DAY

The crowd is growing. The paramilitary forces now advance towards the building. The television crews are all over. A posse of police reinforcement drives in followed by an ambulance.

CALLER #5
If you get caught you'll be hanged. Aren't you afraid?

KARAN
No.

EXT. CHANDNI CHOWK, ASLAM’S LANE—DAY

People crowd around radios and listen silently. They are tense. ASLAM’s brother MOINUDDIN breaks through the crowd.

EXT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, BROADCASTING BOOTH—DAY

The paramilitary forces arrive. Their vans come and stop outside the building. Black Cat Commandos jump out of the jeep and within seconds surround the building.

CORRESPONDANT
As you can see... Black Cat Commandos have surrounded the All India Radio building...

NDTV REPORTER
...the college students who have claimed responsibility are still inside.

EXT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, OPPOSITE TERRACE—DAY

CLOSE ON: Boots of paramilitary forces pounding on the terrace as they take up positions.
INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, FINAL LEVEL—DAY

Aired voices can be heard over the in-house speakers. DJ, SUKHI, ASLAM and LAXMAN PANDEY hang on, sipping coffee.

CALLER #7
Karan, while we applaud your courage, do you think you’ll manage to escape from here?

KARAN
If we wanted to escape, we wouldn’t have come in the first place.

EXT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, OPPOSITE TERRACE—DAY

The commandos climb up to the terrace of a nearby building and take positions. They get orders...

VOICE (V.O.)
None of them should escape.

I/E. VARIOUS LOCATIONS—DAY

MONTAGE: Quick cuts of TV playing at various locations, and reactions of the people.

EXT. ADDA—DAY

At Paaji’s tea-stall, there is a crowd listening to the radio.

EXT. DELHI UNIVERSITY, CANTEEN—DAY

Students from the university are crowded around a small radio set.

EXT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION—DAY

The crowd is growing. Paramilitary forces are taking up positions.
INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, ATRIUM—DAY

ANGLE ON: Corridor.

DJ, ASLAM, SUKHI and PANDEY are sipping coffee. Suddenly a teargas bomb thumps down the window. The boys gasp for breath as the air becomes dense and darkness engulfs them. They run out into the corridor for fresh air.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, FINAL LEVEL—DAY

We see the windows of the AIR building through the sniper’s telescopes. They go out of focus and then come sharply back into focus with SUKHI in sight. Fingers tighten around the trigger. DJ notices this.

DJ
Sukhi...

DJ yanks SUKHI to the floor as bullets punctuate the air and glass and wood splinters fly about. A hail of bullets punctuate the air around the boys, catching them unawares.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION—DAY

एनडीटीवी संवाददाता
जैसा कि आप सुन सकते हैं, ऑल इंडिया रेडियो बिल्डिंग से गोलियों की आवाज आ रही है।

NDTV REPORTER
We can hear the sound of gunshots in the All India Radio building.

EXT. DELHI STREETS—DAY

A cab battles to move through the congested street. SUE sits anxiously in the back, listening to the radio.

SUE
Ravi, please make him go more quickly.

CUT BACK TO:

SILENCE.

Then a second round of bullets blow holes into everything.
SUKHI
Shit! They’re shooting at us DJ! They’re shooting at us!

DJ
Shut up for a second! They’re mistaking us for terrorists. They think we’re armed. Wait a minute! I’ll try to handle it.

DJ raises his arms to show that they are ready to surrender and comes out in the open, slowly. The moment he’s in sight, another round of bullets is fired, this time dangerously close. One hits DJ in his arm. He falls down.

SUKHI
Shut up for a second!

They’re mistaking us for terrorists. They think we’re armed. Wait a minute! I’ll try to handle it.

DJ
Sukhi... No! Don’t...

A hail of bullets catch SUKHI as he stands up, and he falls to the floor riddled with them. DJ drags him slowly to a corner. SUKHI is coughing blood.

SUKHI
Shit DJ! I will die a virgin!

DJ
No kiddo...

SUKHI slumps over. DJ holds SUKHI’s lifeless body to his chest.
INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, BROADCASTING BOOTH—DAY

Inside the broadcasting booth, KARAN is listening as Caller #8 is making her point.

कालर #8 (O.C.)
Hello, My name is Indra. क्या फर्क है आप लोगों में और टेरिस्ट में?

CALLER #8 (O.C.)
What’s the difference between you and terrorists?

फर्क हैं, मिस इंदिरा...टेरिस्ट्स सुप के बार करते हैं, कभी भी सामने नहीं आते। बेकसूर लोगों को मारते हैं। हम में और उनमें भीत हुए।

KARAN
There’s a big difference...terrorists kill innocent people, we didn’t...

EXT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, TERRACE—DAY

The commando force has reached the terrace of the All India Radio building. They take position.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, ATRIUM—DAY

ASLAM and LAXMAN PANDEY take the steps, two at a time, towards the hatch door at the top, before the paramilitary forces can come in.

लक्ष्मण पाण्डेय बन्द कर पहले!

ASLAM
We are not terrorists. Why don’t they...

असलम ये लोग समझ क्यों नहीं रहे? हम लोग बोझ ही ना...

LAXMAN PANDEY
Aslam, close the door. Quick!

ASLAM and LAXMAN PANDEY secure the hatch door in the nick of time. Just as they lean back and let out a sigh of relief, the door explodes in a rain of wooden splinters, smoke and fire. The impact throws them to the floor.

Both are bleeding profusely, their bodies covered with fatal wounds. They look up at the yawning gap where the door once was. It is filled with smoke.

Through the smoke they see two figures appearing. They aren’t members of the paramilitary forces, but ASHFAQULLAH KHAN and RAMPRASAD BISMIL. The two figures smile at the dying ASLAM and LAXMAN PANDEY, who smile back instinctively.
The figures then get engulfed in smoke and disappear.

ASLAM and LAXMAN PANDEY look at each other, trying hard to reach out and hold hands.

ASLAM and LAXMAN PANDEY lie dead, hand in hand.

EXT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, BROADCASTING BOOTH—DAY

KARAN

It’s not a lust for blood. It’s a matter of justice!

EXT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION—DAY

Karan

हम किसी के खून के पासे नहीं हैं। सवाल इसाफ का है।

NDTV CORRESPONDENT

Why are bullets being used when its clear that these are college students? From All India Radio, this is Somu Bose for NDTV.

Armed forces rushing into the All India Radio building over the walls.

EXT. ALLAHABAD, ALFRED PARK; 27 FEBRUARY 1931—DAY

British police forces rush through the cold winter fog. They begin firing. CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD is surrounded. All alone, he fights a losing battle. He takes shelter, disappearing behind a tree.

He keeps on firing bullets at the British Police Force.

A bullet gets CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD in the gut.

MATCH CUT TO:

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, FINAL LEVEL—DAY

DJ is holding his stomach; blood is oozing through his fingers. He bolts a door and slumps against the wall of the broadcasting booth.
Split screen, with DJ and CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD looking at one another. AZAD finds that there is only one bullet left in his Mauser pistol. He smiles at DJ, who smiles back.

CHANDRASHEKHAR AZAD holds the pistol to his head fearlessly, and shoots. DJ looks at him.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, FINAL LEVEL—DAY
Black Cat Commandos shoot at the lock and open the gate. They are pouring inside.

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, BROADCASTING BOOTH—DAY
KARAN is at the mike.

कालर #9
अरे! आप सब कुछ भी कर लीजिए...कुछ बदलने वाला नहीं। कुछ नहीं होगा इस देश का। ये इंडिया है, इंडिया! नहीं ऐसा ही होता आया है, ऐसा होता रहेगा।

A beat.

करण
कोई भी देश परफेक्ट नहीं होता! उसे परफेक्ट बनाना पड़ता है। पुलिस में भरी होगे, मिलिट्री ज्वाइन करेंगे, आई.ए.एस. बनेंगे, पॉलिटिकल का हिस्सा बनकर इस देश की सरकार बनाएंगे। यह देश बदलेगा, हम बदलेगे इसे।

कालर #10
यो सब तो ठीक है करण साहब, लेकिन आपके बाप का क्या? हमने तो सुना है, राजनाथ सिंहानिया का नाम भी शामिल है विमानों की दलाली में?

KARAN
No country is perfect. You've got to make it perfect. We will join the police, military, IAS. Become a part of the political system. This country will change. We will change it!

CALLER #10
If you believed the Defence Minister deserved to be punished, then what about the allegations against your father? Why such double standards?

EXT. CAB—DAY
SUE hears KARAN speak in numb silence.
INT. ALL INDIA RADIO—DAY
CLOSE ON: KARAN’s eyes.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. SINGHANIA RESIDENCE, STUDY—DAY
FLASHBACK
KARAN is still in his father’s embrace. He is weeping.

राजनाथ सिंहानिया  
Don’t worry, don’t worry. कुछ करते हैं, रास्ता निकालते हैं।

RAJNATH SINGHANIA  
We’ll find a way to fix this.

KARAN looks up; his eyes are distant.

करण  कोई रास्ता हैं, पा?

KARAN  
Is there a way, Pa?

RAJNATH SINGHANIA  
Of course, don’t worry. I’ll handle everything.

We hear a gunshot. RAJNATH SINGHANIA’s body slides down. KARAN is holding a smoking gun.

करण  
I’m sorry, Dad.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, BROADCAST STUDIO—DAY
PULL BACK: KARAN’s eyes. He is sitting in front of the mike in the broadcast booth.

A bleeding DJ is standing at the door looking at him, understanding the sacrifice KARAN has made. DJ limps to the mike.
DJ
My name is Daljeet Singh. There are only two primary choices in life, one is to accept things the way they are. The second is to accept responsibility to change them. Karan Singhania killed his father before coming here.

DJ caresses KARAN’s hair.

DJ
Ouch...

The effort is too much for DJ. He collapses.

INT. CAB 2—DAY

The cab reaches the radio station.

KARAN (V.O.)
Shit DJ! You’re bleeding badly!

SUE
Oh God, no! No DJ!

INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, BROADCAST STUDIO—DAY

Relax! The blood got tired of flowing in my veins. It just wanted to be free.

KARAN
Aslam? Laxman? Sukhi?

DJ
All finished.

KARAN fights back the tears.
Karan, I think I’m in love. Never told you. I can’t stop thinking about her.

I know, she’s something else. You two’ll make a great couple.

There’s just one problem though. I don’t know whether the kids will be brown or white.

SUE breaks down.

SUE jumps out of the cab and runs along the road, darting around the gridlocked cars. She pushes through the crowd staring up at the radio station. Press cameras and NDTV cameras are trained on the top floor. SUE is stopped by the sea of people at the entrance.

They’re just students, damn it!

As she tries to go further, two paramilitary officers grab her and pull her back. SUE struggles, but to no avail. Her screams are drowned.
INT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION, BROADCAST STUDIO—DAY

The two boys forget their grief and wounds and laugh. They forget the death approaching their door. Fearlessly they laugh.

POINT OF VIEW OF COMMANDOS APPROACHING THE DOOR. The door opens. Just then, they both look into the camera, laughing. The picture freezes.

Sounds of gunfire and the laughter of the two boys echo, mocking death.

ON THE SOUNDTRACK: A beat, the boys’ laughter echoes.

JAMES McKINLEY (V.O.)
I always believed there were two kinds of men in this world. Men who go to their death in silence, and men who go to their death screaming... But then I met the third kind...

EXT. ALL INDIA RADIO STATION—DAY

SLOW MOTION: SUE screams.

INT. HOSPITAL, ICU—DAY

SILENCE

AJAY’s MOTHER’s fingers move. Her eyes slowly open. She seems to have seen something in her deep sleep...a single teardrop rolls from her eye.

EXT. JAMA MASJID—DAY

SILENCE

Hundreds of wide red sandstone steps lead to the entrance of the mosque. A lone and frail figure, AMANULLAH KHAN, slowly climbs down the steps.
EXT. MITRO’S Dhaba—DAY

Silence

A tear rolls down MITRO’s face.

I/E. VARIOUS LOCATIONS—DAY

Silence

TV Newsroom and other people—all silent.

Montage of various locations where the TV/Radio was playing. The entire nation is in shock.

INT. NEWSROOM, VARIOUS SCREENS—DAY

Everyone in the newsroom stares blankly in shocked silence.

Then sound fades in. Students from various parts of the country speak as the camera moves to each screen.

STUDENT #1
Sending commandos is the death of democracy.
Today is a sad day in the history of Indian politics.

STUDENT #2
We will turn this spark into a raging fire.

STUDENT #3
This will swell like a wave and will bring an end to corruption.

STUDENT #4
The truth has to come out in some way, and if it has to come out in this way, then we are all for it.
STUDENT #5
If we want to shake the entire population out of their slumber then we need an explosion like this.

How long are we just going to sit and talk about these things? We have got to take some steps. And they have done it. They have taken the right step.

When we grow out of this, we'll be a remarkable nation, free of corruption.

The fire that you have ignited in our minds and hearts, that's not gonna fizzle out very soon, and we will see that your dream goes to an end.

We will do it.

DJ's grandfather consoles MITRO and prays.

Lord, accept the sacrifices of our children.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MUSTARD FIELDS—DAY

CLOSE ON: yellow mustard fields.

EXT. MUSTARD FIELDS, FORT RUINS—SUNSET

The camera cranes up the fort wall.
SUE and SONIA are staring at the tarmac.

**SUE (V.O.)**
Even today, I come here with Sonia, like before. And sometimes, the breeze carries words...sounds of laughter...

**EXT. MUSTARD FIELDS, FORT RUINS—DAY**

*Lush yellow mustard fields.*

**POV:** The camera caresses the vibrant yellow mustard flowers as it moves over them, and stops in a clearing.

*A Sikh farmer (BHAGAT SINGH’s father) is planting a mango sapling.*

**KISHAN SINGH**
Come Bhagat Singh...

*A young 4 year-old Sikh boy [little BHAGAT SINGH].*

**LITTLE BHAGAT SINGH**
Dad, what are you doing?

**KISHAN SINGH**
I’m sowing mango seeds. If I plant one, a thousand will grow.

*Little BHAGAT SINGH starts planting as well.*

*Shadows fall over little BHAGAT SINGH. He looks up. It’s DJ, ASLAM, LAXMAN PANDEY, KARAN and SUKHI smiling down at him. DJ bends and ruffles little BHAGAT SINGH’s hair.*

*The boys then walk away merrily, breaking into a playful run.*

**ON THE SOUNDTRACK:** The song ‘Ru Ba Ru’ fades on. The young BHAGAT SINGH looks on.
The storyboard along with the corresponding final images.

* The storyboard along with the corresponding final images.
SONG: RU BA RU

Hey, dude!
I just realised
There's a fire burning within me
It's a new dawn, I can feel its light
So bright it could consume the sun
Cause I'm face to face with the light
This fire is ready to face any storm
The flames burn brighter and stronger
Whether I leave my mark,
Whether I stay the path
Today I've tasted the light
Like a torch, I'm burning bright
Why must be keep bearing
Cause I'm face to face with the light

POV: The camera rushes towards the boys who are running away into a bright light.

BURN OUT:

END CREDITS ROLL AS ‘RU BA RU’ PLAYS ON THE SOUNDTRACK.

THE END