

City of Joy

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Early Draft

**FOR EDUCATIONAL  
PURPOSES ONLY**

**CITY OF JOY**

**FADE IN:**

**TITLE SEQUENCE.**

**EXT. BIHAR - DAY (DAWN, SUMMER, MID-1980)**

Heat that has mass. That rises off the parched earth in shimmering waves. After a moment, we see what appear to be figures coming out of the haze, one by one. A family with their few belongings: HASARI PAL, 33, his wife, ALOKA, 28, and their children, daughter, AMRITA, 13, sons MANOOJ and SHAMBU, 11 and 9; HASARI'S MOTHER and FATHER. They embark toward the night, the rising sun behind them.

**EXT. ROADSIDE - BUS STOP - DAY (DAWN)**

Hasari's Father passes a gourd of precious water. Hasari serves the children first. Shambu gulps entirely too much, the others forcing him to stop by a unified force of will. Embarrassed, he passes the cup to his brother, who sips, as does his sister. Aloka barely wets her lips, insisting on leaving the last drops for Hasari. And now, a rooster tail of dust rises up behind the approaching bus and the old parents bid farewell to their son's family. There is an intense sadness at leaving the land and Hasari's Mother clings to him...

**HASARI**

I'll send money soon.

His Mother nods, as Hasari erupts in a small cough which, by habit, he suppresses. His Mother crushes Aloka to her.

**HASARI'S MOTHER**

Don't let the children out of your  
sight. Not for a moment.

Now the children. She wants to keep them here even as the old man touches her, reminding her she must let them

go.

**HASARI'S MOTHER**

Help your parents. Don't fight  
with each other. And, Manooj,  
stay away from the cinema, do you  
hear?

Shambu, his eyes big as saucers, whispers to his  
grandma...

(CONTINUED)

2.

CONTINUED:

**SHAMBU**

I don't want to go. There are bad  
men with long knives who steal  
children.

That does it: Hasari's Mother dissolves in tears, but  
the old man nevertheless unlooses her insistently from  
the children. Aloka and the children get on the bus as  
the old man embraces his son.

**HASARI'S FATHER**

A man's journey to the end of his  
obligations is a very long road.  
Yours begins here.

**EXT. ROADSIDE/INT. BUS - DAY**

There's not an empty inch inside the little vehicle or  
on top. The passengers are silent. A woman breast feeds  
a baby. Several passengers fan themselves. Many sleep.  
The Pals squeeze wearily into the rear seat.

**MANOOJ**

(to his neighbor)

Our farm has died, so we are  
moving to Calcutta to become rich!

Hasari and Aloka look at each other: If only it were the  
pursuit of wealth and not survival. The woman under-  
stands. And now the BUS GRINDS forward and the Pals look  
back. Hasari coughs, suppresses it... as silence falls.  
The elder Pals stand huddled together in the dust and we  
see, nestled behind a boulder at the roadside, a tiny,  
blue flower -- beautiful and fragile, but like all things  
alive, determined to live... and we hear the sound of a  
DOZEN VOICES CHANTING a quiet mantra in unison as we --

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**INT. ASHRAM - ANOTHER FLOWER - DAY**

This flower floats gently in a bowl of water. The TITLES  
END as we PULL BACK SLOWLY to reveal a dozen Anglos,  
several Indians, and one Kenyan seated cross-legged  
before an aging Yogi, who's quietly urging the suppli-  
cants to find "their light, allow your white light to

fill your spirit's eye." Above, ceiling fans move the air.

(CONTINUED)

3.

**CONTINUED:**

As we PAN the group, we see that everyone has his/her eyes closed in earnest meditation... until we COME TO an American, MAX LOEB, 29, who pops open first his right eye -- looks to his right and left -- closes his right eye and opens his left eye -- looks left and right... and then, instead of continuing the mantra and the search for his white light, expels a stream of air through his pursed lips, making a vibrating, flatulent sound, one indicative of sizeable frustration and dismissal.

**MAX**

Get serious.

Around him, other single eyes pop open, searching for the source of this unmeditative sound. Max nods and smiles a wry smile as if to say: This just ain't doin' it for me, folks.

**INT. SPARTAN ROOM - TRUMPET - DAY**

Max closes the trumpet case and starts chucking his clothes and books in a knapsack and a small valise. We notice the Hebrew letter chai on a gold chain around his neck. His girl friend, BETSY KAHN, overdressed somewhat in an Indian style, endeavors to exercise the inner peace she's been pursuing...

**BETSY**

I swear to God, you never give anything enough time! What did you expect in five days, Max?

**MAX**

Only what they promise in the brochure: Inner peace, serenity, and a nice chant that gets rid of this rock in my gut. E.S.T., they do you in a weekend.

**BETSY**

I would really appreciate it if you wouldn't be terribly glib just now, Max.

That's okay with Max, who's willing to eschew communication of all kinds and just finish heaving his stuff in the valise.

**BETSY**

Am I to assume you'll be at the airport in Calcutta a week from tomorrow?

(CONTINUED)

**CONTINUED:**

**MAX**

Impossible to predict, Betsy Ilene Kahn. Maybe you better give me my ticket.

**BETSY**

Screw you, Max -- I paid for it! How many times am I going to let you walk out on me and come back?

**MAX**

I think only you can answer that, Betsy Ilene Kahn.

She slaps him.

**MAX**

Do you really think that's an appropriate way to get rid of your Western rage, Bets?

She swings at him again. He catches her hand hard in his fist.

**MAX**

One slap is romantic. Two would call for retaliation... Lend me a hundred dollars.

She yanks free, begins to chant her mantra as he grabs his knapsack and valise and goes out the door. Now, she's silent and, in the simplest sense, deeply hurt. She can't help herself; she cares. We STAY WITH her a moment as we --

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. COUNTRY AIRPORT (ASSAM) - WINDING ROAD - DAY**

Cool, lush hills. A little pack of single-engine two- and four-seaters. Max, in shorts and University of Miami T-shirt, hot, sweaty, appears around a bend in the approach road.

**INT. AIRPORT - WAITING ROOM**

A small service desk. A CLERK, who doubles as Ground Control on the microphone, passing on the prevailing wind and the active runway. We hear the STATIC-BACKED VOICE of a PILOT, giving his call numbers, then announcing he's clear for immediate takeoff on the active runway. The Clerk CLICKS off and finds Max.

**(CONTINUED)**

**CONTINUED:**

**MAX**

How you doin'?

The Clerk gives Max a warm smile.

**CLERK**

Hello.

**MAX**

I've always wanted to walk into a little airport just about like this one and ask the guy at the counter the following question. Ready?

The Clerk nods; he's at Max's service.

**MAX**

When's the next flight to anywhere?

**CLERK**

To Bombay. Tomorrow, at one o'clock in the afternoon.

A beat --- the Clerk with his smile, Max with his, one simply warm, the other giving off simmering heat.

**EXT. AIRPORT - LOW ANGLE - DAY**

Max sits on the ground, up against the building, playing a jazz line quietly and rather well on his trumpet. A pair of well-shod feet ENTER the FRAME. Max looks up.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

The rubicund face of VEEJAY CHATTERGEE, 50, and more British than Churchill. Behind him, his cherubic wife, RAVI... and making her way toward the enclave of small planes, their daughter, MANUBAI, 26.

**VEEJAY**

I say, are you looking for a way out of here? We have an extra seat. Where are you wanting to go?

Max's eyes flick from Veejay to the back view of Manubai as she continues on and back to Veejay.

**MAX**

I'm wanting to go wherever you're wanting to take me.

6.

**INT. 180 FOUR-SEATER - DAY**

Max is crammed into the back seat with the plump Ravi.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

We see now that, contrary to our assumption that Veejay would be in the left seat, it's Manubai who's flying the plane. The NOISE of the ENGINE forces them to speak somewhat loudly.

**VEEJAY**

We were among the fortunate back

in '48. We got out of East Bengal  
before partition destroyed so many.  
We make mattresses. The Rajah  
Double Spring.

Veejay has an old flask out.

**VEEJAY**

We don't have a flight attendant  
on this flight...

(passing the flask)

Are you a musician, Mr. Loeb?

**MAX**

Unattached trumpet player and  
recently-certified associate guru.

As he takes a hit on the flask, Max's eye focuses on the  
little mirror on the dash. In it he can see Manubai's  
eyes. If we were to judge by what he sees in them, she  
doesn't find him the least bit amusing. He smiles his  
smile at her.

**EXT. HOWRAH STATION (CALCUTTA) - DAY (EARLY MORNING)**

A huge bridge dominates the skyline. The train trundles  
to a stop, its WHISTLE clearing the way. People hang on  
its sides, sit on the roof... and now flood the platform,  
flowing into the station, clearing a view for us of the  
Pals, clinging to their baggage in the middle of this  
human anthill.

**CLOSE ON THEM (MOVING)**

Hands reach out with sweets to sell, with tea, asking for  
money.

**MANOOJ**

Daddy, I'm scared.

(CONTINUED)

7.

**CONTINUED:**

**HASARI**

Scared? No -- why? This is very  
exciting. As soon as we get to  
our friend's house, everything  
will be fine.

But, despite Hasari's charade of confidence, they (and  
we) are overwhelmed by the size of the station and the  
desperate energy of the humanity around them. As they  
press on, a small beggar woman huddled on the platform  
turns her eyes eerily on Manooj... as a deformed hand  
stretches INTO the FRAME. Aloka senses someone: A  
beggar, face half-hidden and eaten away by leprosy. This  
terrifying image presses the boys tightly to their  
mother and moves Hasari to encircle Armita with one hand  
and attempt to wrap the other three inside the embrace of

his other hand. It does not seem possible that he can protect all of them against the predatory eyes watching them. He moves them quickly to a wall...

**HASARI**

Wait right here. Don't move.

**WITH HASARI**

He moves to a line of VENDORS, shows a piece of paper to one, as he digs out his precious screw of money to make a purchase of sweets from the Vendor.

**HASARI**

Please, can you direct me to my friend at this address? We are to stay with him.

The Vendor gives the address a look, shows it to the Vendor next to him. Both look at Hasari.

**VENDOR #1**

There's no such address as this in Calcutta.

**HASARI**

But that's not possible.

**VENDOR #1**

Of course it is possible! I have lived here all my life. You are new. Who would know if a place exists or does not?

**VENDOR #2**

Bombay, perhaps. Delhi. Look there.

(CONTINUED)

8.

**CONTINUED:**

Dear God, what now? Stunned, Hasari hands Vendor #1 a rupee and, with the sweets, turns back to his family, his face going through a magical transformation as he prepares to suggest to the family that all is well.

**EXT. CHOWRINGHEE LANE - DAY (MIDDAY SUN)**

A few clean and cared-for Ambassador cars sweep into the gateway of the Grand Hotel, past a gateman.

**RACK FOCUS TO:**

**FEET - MAIDAN**

Feet tramping the pulsating tarmac, sending up dust.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

The Pals, scared, dispirited, weary, consumed by the crowd. They've been walking a long time. Shambu cries; Aloka tries to ease his fear. They stop numbly at the edge of the park, put their bundles down against a long

wall.

Across the way, a thin policeman shares a cigarette with a group of traders. There is a deeply fearful look in Hasari's eyes, a look he is having difficulty controlling now. He needs to revive the family's confidence. He takes out his precious bundle of rupees and gives one to Manooj. Manooj, though, is fixed on the cinema across the street. Hasari indicates a stall just across the main road.

**HASARI**

Manooj, go and get some fruit.

Come straight back.

Delighted with his task, Manooj sets off, his eyes on the marquee of the theater with its huge cardboard cutout of Kumar Kapur, starring in Hot Gun. Hasari calls out to him to watch where he's going; the mere crossing of the street is a potential parental nightmare. A hand ruffles Manooj's head and a TALL MAN with dark eyes and a sweet smile comes at the boy's anxious parents.

**GANGOOLY (TALL MAN)**

Yes, hello, brother. Bihar, am I correct?

**HASARI**

Yes, how did you know?

(CONTINUED)

9.

**CONTINUED:**

Hasari is torn between speaking to the man and watching his son's incredible journey across the street.

**GANGOOLY**

Let me say only that the terrible malevolence that has visited your part of the country affects us all.

**HASARI**

Three years without rain. Nothing came out of the earth but debts.

**GANGOOLY**

Terrible. And now, the family on the street. It is not acceptable.

(smile widens)

And if I can't help, my name is not Mr. Gangooly... Which, blessedly, it is.

And now a smile as full as the sky above.

**EXT. SMALL BUILDING IN BACK STREET - DAY**

A brick slides out of the wall.

We're BEHIND the brick and see Gangooly's soft face as he reaches in and pulls out a key.

The street is small and empty. Though the houses are



nothing much, to the Pals, they look like palaces. Manooj and Shambu run about in delight. Gangooly motions for quiet. With a flourish, he opens the door.

**INT. SMALL ROOM - DAY**

Gangooly enters, glances around, waves the Pals in. They're amazed. There's a cage occupied by two parrots. In one corner, a small altar dedicated to the goddess Lakshmi is decorated with some flowers and, behind a torn, plastic curtain in a corner, part kitchen, part wash place, containing a tap with running water.

**GANGOOLY**

Be free -- look around.

On the faces of the family is one thought: Is it possible? Amrita goes right to the parrots.

**GANGOOLY**

They'll need feeding. Give them seed. But don't spoil them.

**(CONTINUED)**

10.

**CONTINUED:**

He bows briefly before the altar as he moves to the washing area.

**GANGOOLY**

And now, one of the miracles of life in the city. One and two...

He turns on the tap and a stream of brown WATER GURGLES out. The Pals are hypnotized, the fists around their hearts begin to ease.

**GANGOOLY**

Holy water from the Ganges! Flows out forever. Come -- touch it.

Manooj and Shambu put their hands under the tap.

**GANGOOLY**

Drink! It's as pure as the dew on Shiva's lips.

They drink. Gangooly claps in delight... and beckons Hasari aside.

**FAVORING GANGOOLY AND HASARI**

**GANGOOLY**

Now, this place is yours for two weeks. My cousin, Moti, is away, traveling. Normally, the rent takes fifty rupees for a week, but for a brother, forty. No, don't thank me.

Hasari pulls out his little screw of money.

**HASARI**

I have only seventy-five, but as soon as I have work...

**GANGOOLY**

Give me the fifty, pay the rest next week. You'll find work, I trust you. Aren't I from Bihar, too? Yes.

And the money is in his hand. He joins his hands together.

**GANGOOLY**

You are pleased? Then Mr. Gangooly is pleased. It's how I am.

(CONTINUED)

11.

**CONTINUED:**

He turns on his heel and he's gone. For a moment, the Pals are still, swept from the brink of catastrophe to salvation... and now, as one, they release their sheer and utter joy.

**INT. CHATTERGEE STAIRCASE - DAY**

Ravi and Veejay leading Max up the grand staircase, Manubai in the foyer, looking after them.

**INT. GUEST ROOM - DAY**

Ravi leads the way into a lovely guest bedroom.

**RAVI**

I hope this is all right. The room hasn't been aired or the bed turned, but --

**VEEJAY**

Oh, he doesn't care about that, do you, Max? Here, look here.

Veejay opens a little cupboard, stocked with liquor.

**VEEJAY**

Help yourself. Be comfortable. Ravi, come on, go, go, let's leave the young man to himself.

Obediently, Ravi goes. Veejay follows. Max goes to the window.

**HIS POV**

The beautiful Manubai in the garden.

**MAX**

He lies down on the bed. He's found Nirvana.

**INT. MAIN ROOM - DAY**

It's Hasari who watches now. There's LAUGHTER from Aloka and Amrita. Joyful SHOUTS from the boys. Hasari is alone in the main room, on his knees, in front of the pile of their baggage and bundles. He turns his attention from the laughter to a just-opened, old suitcase. He takes out a small tea box. Opens it delicately.

(CONTINUED)

12.

**CONTINUED:**

It's full of something brown. He pushes his fingers in and feels this bit of earth with a tenderness that's almost religious, puts a pinch to his nose and breathes it in. The LAUGHTER and SHOUTING from the bathing area is GROWING.

**INT. BATHING AREA**

Shambu is paddling near the tap. Aloka is bending over the drain and Amrita is rinsing her heavy, dark hair with a pot. Manooj is nearby, rubbing himself with an old towel. Hasari enters unnoticed and looks at the group with tenderness... and with gratitude for their good fortune.

A MAN, red with anger, yanks the curtain aside, stares. The family freezes. Aloka's hair drips unnoticed on her sari.

**MAN**

What are you doing here? Who are you?

**HASARI**

My name is Pal, Hasari. Mr. Gangooly rented this space to --

**MAN**

Mr. Who?

**HASARI**

Gangooly. You must be his cousin, Mr. Moti.

**MAN**

I don't know any Gangooly and my name is Binal and this is my home -- get out!

The furious Binal, followed by the Pals, goes into the main part of the room. A small crowd has been attracted by the noise.

**HASARI**

But this is true. We paid him a deposit of fifty --

**BINAL**

A man goes out because he has to work, and some beggar tries to move in while his back is turned.

(CONTINUED)

13.

**CONTINUED:**

This while Binal has begun to throw things out onto the street, though this cleansing of his home doesn't stop him from picking up a stick. The odd sympathizer meets with...

**BINAL**

So, should I suffer if they are  
so stupid to jump into the first  
mouth that wants to eat them?

He turns with the stick on Hasari.

**BINAL**

You're lucky I don't kill you!

Hasari looks at Manooj, who drops his eyes. They collect the remainder of their possessions and hurry out the door.

**EXT. SMALL STREET - DAY**

Full of neighbors. There's a suppressed violence in the air. A man pushes Aloka. Sweat streaming down his face, Hasari confronts the man. A WOMAN pushes the men apart.

**WOMAN**

Go to the river. Try to squeeze  
in there.

**EXT. VICTORIA MONUMENT - STREET - NIGHT (DUSK)**

Calcutta broiling: Buses, vendors, carts, rickshaws, children beg at car windows. The Pals stand, uncertain, and for the first time a rickshaw fills Hasari's eye, carrying two passengers. But now he shoulders his burden and leads the family toward the river. We HOLD until they grow small against the setting sun, gleaming red against the white domes of the Victoria Monument.

**INT. CHATTERGEE'S LIBRARY - TORSO - NIGHT**

Moving through the dark, a figure, touching things, looking at photographs of the Chattergees. We hear a MUFFLED DIALOGUE mixed with the SINGING a la Dean Martin of "Everybody Loves Somebody Sometime":  
"Goddamn it, boy, what's the matter with you? --  
"Everybody loves somebody sometime" -- "Go for it, son!" -- "Sure, Dad, whatever you say, Dad." --  
"Everybody falls in love somehow" -- "You're the dad, Dad." Now, a humidor. Max opens it, takes out a cigar, takes two. Takes five. Senses someone. Turns.

14.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Ravi in her bathrobe.

**MAX**

I'm starving.  
He gives her his best saint's smile.

**RAVI**

Well, you don't want to eat those  
awful cigars. Come with me, we'll  
wake up the cook, she'll fix you  
something proper.

**EXT. KITCHEN - WINDOW - NIGHT**

THROUGH the window, we see the bleary-eyed cook laying  
out food as Ravi chatters away at Max, he with a beatific  
grin on his face as he feeds himself.

**EXT. RIVER BANK - HOWRAH BRIDGE - DAY**

The bridge etched against the dawn sky. The corpse of  
an indigent is collected and put on a cart.

**MANOOJ**

With his eyes open, watching the dead man being removed.

**FAMILY**

After their humiliating flight, they found refuge here.  
Tiny figures huddled together with their baggage and  
bundles, near a tree, not far from the steps that dip  
down to the smooth water. Hasari's eyes, too, are on  
the dead man, that warning. He kneels beside Manooj,  
strokes him. The boy's eyes turns to the man's,  
wondering if the man can provide for them.

**HASARI**

Don't let it frighten you. You  
have to be brave. I know we'll  
find work today.  
Fear and doubt fill Manooj's eyes. He nods.

**EXT. DOCKS - DAY**

Hasari at the gates, the family huddled together in  
the b.g. The man behind the gate shakes his head,  
points.

15.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

A line of a hundred men stretches from a door. Hasari  
is on the edge of panic, but when he turns to the family,  
he's wearing his confident smile. As before, he gathers  
the family into the protectorate of his arms and guides  
them onward. As he pushes off into the sea of humanity,  
we PULL BACK AND UP, FILLING the FRAME WITH street upon  
street, disappearing Hasari.

**FROM STREET - INTO WORKSHOP - HASARI AND OWNER**

Two plump men in shirt sleeves look coolly at Hasari. The elder shakes his head. The younger shows Hasari the door.

Outside, an increasingly desperate Hasari finds Aloka before a small shrine, saying a prayer.

**EXT. BARA BAZAR - DAY**

Aloka huddled with Manooj and Amrita. Hasari talking to the owner of a small market stall. Shambu is peering into a shop with male mannequins in the window.

**INT. MEN'S SHOP - MOVING MIRROR**

In the moving mirror we see counters and shelves of men's clothing.

The mirror stops at Max slipping into a kurta before an audience of Ravi, Manubai, and a salesman.

**RAVI**

It's not extravagant at all. You can't go around all week in your tribal garb.

Max sees a boy's face pressed to the glass: he indicates the shirt, for the boy's approval. The boy smiles a wonderful smile.

**RAVI**

Now he looks civilized, doesn't he, Manubai?

**MANUBAI**

Almost.

Max looks at her. She at him.

16.

**EXT. MEN'S SHOP - DAY**

Man leans down, whispers to the smiling boy...

**MAX**

You sure I look all right?

The little boy nods. Max slips him several rupees... and he, Manubai, and Ravi fold themselves into her tiny car as --

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Shambu runs to his dejected family.

**SHAMBU**

Look! A man gave me these many moneys!

**HASARI**

What man? Why -- did you ask him for money?

**SHAMBU**

He just gave it to me.

**HASARI**

Where is he?

Shambu looks, but the car's gone.

**HASARI**

Don't do that. We're not beggars.  
Shambu is devastated. Out of his own desperation,  
Hasari feels he's been a little rough on the boy. He  
holds him close.

**HASARI**

Go back to the river. Wait for me  
by the tree. Don't go anywhere.  
Do you understand?  
Aloka, the boys nod. We WATCH them as Hasari heads  
off, quickly becoming a small figure disappearing into  
the sea.

**EXT. JUTE MILL DAY - LATE AFTERNOON SUN**

Starting to sink. We PAN DOWN TO Hasari stepping to  
a grilled window as the man ahead moves out.

17.

**INT. JUTE MILL - DAY**

A flaking gray wall, half-obscurd with moldering files.  
The grilled window lets in a little light and the quiet  
supplications of those outside.  
An old CLERK at a desk. A voice calls out. The Clerk  
looks up, crosses to the grill.  
Hasari's tense face through the bars. A TRUCK RUMBLES  
past, drowning out the words... except these: "...trade  
union." The Clerk shakes his head sadly. On the verge  
of panic, Hasari hangs onto the window...

**CLERK**

Do you have family?

**HASARI**

Yes, yes of course. But I'm  
three days without work. I'll  
take anything.

The Clerk digs in his pocket, presses two rupees on  
Hasari.

**CLERK**

Here, now go away.

**HASARI**

No, I don't want you to give me --  
The next man in line forcibly moves Hasari out of the  
way.

**CLERK**

In this city, a man with a family  
can't be proud. Take it!

The Clerk waves him away, turns his attention to the  
next man.

**INT. CHATTERGEE RECEPTION ROOM - DAY (LATE AFTERNOON)**

Manubai's face. Then Max's. Then hers. Then his.  
Looking at each other. Five days. Kiss. Ravi.

**MAX**

I said you have three days to  
get me into bed, and I'm betting  
you can't do it.

(CONTINUED)

18.

CONTINUED:

**MANUBAI**

It's all right for you to use my  
mother as your tour guide and  
meal ticket, because she'll get  
something nice out of it. But  
what would I get?

He stares at her a moment, then gets up, goes around the  
table.

**MAX**

Well, gee, I don't know. Maybe I  
could say something so amusing  
that you'd laugh so hard it would  
break that hot poker you have up  
your ass.

She stares at him. He bends to kiss her. She doesn't  
pull away... but after a moment he realizes she isn't  
responding. He continues the kiss, but he opens his  
eyes... to find her staring at him. He pulls back.  
They stare at each other another moment, then Max  
senses someone in the doorway.

**RAVI**

Staring at them, disappointment filling her eyes.

**MAX**

The same sound of frustration and ennui he made in the  
ashram.

**EXT. CHATTERGEE HOME - DAY**

His arm around Max, Veejay guides the young man toward  
a waiting taxi.

**VEEJAY**

Believe me, I understand, but you  
know how women are. Do you have  
enough money?

Max gives him a non-committal shrug. Veejay winks,  
stuffs the money into Max's pocket.

**EXT. GREEN ACRES COURTYARD - COW - DAY (LATE AFTERNOON)**

Bare feet... and then sneakered feet step over the sleep-



ing bovine, who turns a disinterested eye up.

19.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Max is guided by a grumpy hall PORTER wearing an off-white shirt and bellbottoms through the walled and well planted courtyard of an inexpensive hotel. Max gives the cow a bemused eye...

**INT. HOTEL ROOM - DAY**

The room is utterly utilitarian. The Porter turns on a ceiling fan, sending an army of cockroaches scurrying for calmer terrain. Max clearly doesn't care for cockroaches.

**PORTER**

It pleases you?

**MAX**

No fruit basket? No mini bar?

Max hands the Porter several rupees.

**PORTER**

Bar? Of course -- many, many.  
But make care, Sahib. Please,  
for me. If it is lady you like  
to know -- yes? -- you let me.  
Huh? Very sweet girl, good  
nature, very sweet. Or boy, very  
good...

Max puts a finger on the Porter's head, turns him for the door.

**PORTER**

No like boy? Something then for  
smoke -- mmmh, very good for smoke!

**AT DOOR**

Max eases the Porter out. As the door is closing...

**PORTER**

Maybe you like two girls -- look  
a little Chinese, but very great  
pleasure.

Max smiles his smile and disappears the Porter behind the closed door. The smile disappears and the FAN gets his attention; it has an annoying rhythm and sound. He flicks the switch, but the fan continues to snap around.

**(CONTINUED)**

20.

**CONTINUED:**

He stares at it... and startles us by suddenly flicking out a hand and grabbing the blade, stopping the fan. He lets go. The fan is still. He carries his knapsack

to the tub; it has brown stains along the middle and the water has a brown tinge as it flows out of the tap. He sits on the edge of the tub, dumps his knapsack on the floor, picks up a half-dozen pamphlets from the ashram.

**CLOSE ON PAMPHLETS**

Guides to inner peace.

**RESUME**

He wings the pamphlets at the trashcan.

**EXT. RIVERBANK - HOWRAH BRIDGE - DAY (EARLY EVENING)**

Hasari comes around the corner of a warehouse, a smile on his face, clutching some bananas and dried grain. His relief -- and ours -- is short-lived.

**TREE AND BANK**

The space where he left the family has been cleared and taken over by trucks. He's lost his family.

**HOWRAH BRIDGE ROAD**

A group of Hindus are celebrating a puja, the women singing canticles at the top of their lungs; the men tossing a little boy happily back and forth... as the panic-stricken Hasari rushes up.

**HASARI**

My wife, my children...

Hasari rushes on. Suddenly we --

**CUT TO:**

**UNDER BRIDGE - DAY**

His head turns and his eyes look this way, that way... until out of the near silence, we hear a distant, extraordinary word...

**(CONTINUED)**

21.

**CONTINUED:**

**CHILD (O.S.)**

Daaaaaadddddyyyyy!

The word catches Hasari's ear. He looks into the sea of people along the river bank under the bridge.

**CHILD (O.S.)**

Daaaaaadddddyyyyy!

As in a dream, Shambu rises up out of the sea of bodies ... and runs to his father.

**SHAMBU**

Daaaaaadddddyyyyy!

Now, Aloka, Amrita, Manooj appear, rising up out of the

sea, ending Hasari's nightmare.  
A warrior returning from battle, Hasari engulfs the  
little boy.

**HASARI**

I told you to remain where I left  
you! I told you to stay there!

**MANOOJ**

The police came!

**SHAMBU**

We said we had to meet you, but  
they didn't care! They were  
mean!

As before, Hasari tries to engulf the rest of his family  
in the protectorate of his arms. In the b.g., Arun and  
his family.

**ALOKA**

These friends have found space.  
They will share with us.

Hasari looks at the tiny space. The roof is cardboard  
and cloth and half an old movie poster featuring the  
actor Kumar Kapur. Hasari looks at his tiny bit of  
food, debates a moment... then puts his hands together,  
addresses these generous people.

**HASARI**

I would be proud if you would  
share our food with us.

Everyone looks at the food; there is no disguising their  
hunger.

22.

**EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT**

Distant transistor MUSIC as we PAN DOWN: The Pal  
children sleep despite the QUIET MOANS and nightmare  
CRIES around them, the two boys huddled together, Amrita  
close to her mother.

Hasari comes out of the dark. Aloka looks at him. He  
shakes his head. He slumps beside her. Aloka strokes  
Hasari, looking lovingly at him.

**ALOKA**

I remember the first time I saw  
you, on the day of our marriage.  
Wearing a bright yellow turban.  
You asked me my name and you said,  
'You are a very beautiful girl  
and I am wondering whether you  
will find me appealing.'

He strokes her tenderly in return... but now, overwhelmed  
with despair, she begins to weep.

**HASARI**

What?

She doesn't want to say it, doesn't want to wake the

children.

**HASARI**

It's all right -- what?

**ALOKA**

I miss the village. There I  
could help.

Hasari pulls Aloka close, strokes her.

**EXT. GREEN ACRES - NIGHT**

The sky turns red. The Porter looks up, shakes his head:  
Poor young man, stuck with only a trumpet for company.

**INT. MAX'S ROOM**

Max sits on the floor in a corner and plays as we hear  
the sound of a fierce WHISTLE and a SCREAMING ENGINE.

**EXT. SETTLEMENT - CLOSE ON BULLDOZER - DAWN**

A gigantic earthmover lurches into position.

23.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Swarming police.

**PALS**

Awaken -- startled, disoriented. Aloka gentles the  
children as Hasari moves instinctively toward the threat.

**SCENE**

A black ambassadorial car pulls up, out of which steps  
a BABU. A microphone and speaker has been set up.  
Another car unloads several politicians with party banners.  
A minion hands the Babu the mike; he wants to get on with  
it before this turns into a political rally. Hasari is  
close to him, as is Arun.

**BABU**

The municipality has directed us  
to carry out the destruction of  
this settlement. All of you must  
go -- now!

For a moment there is a babble of fear and frustration.  
Then from Hasari's side, Arun confronts the Babu.

**ARUN**

For what reason?  
The Babue appears disconcerted. He's not accustomed to  
the poor asking questions.

**BABU**

Because this settlement is  
impeding construction work.

**ARUN**

We're not moving! Why should

we move? Who is the municipality?  
We are! This is our home!

**BABU**

I have my orders.

**ARUN**

If we're driven from here, where  
should we go?

**BABU**

I'll give you five minutes to  
gather your things. Then, the  
settlement comes down.

(CONTINUED)

24.

**CONTINUED:**

**ARUN**

Why should you alone be burdened  
with such a task? Let me help!

Arun begins to tear his shelter apart, and to heave the  
pieces at the Babu, who retreats. Others soon take up  
the call to vent their frustration, hurling things at  
the police and at the driver of the tractor. Quickly  
we've got a full-scale riot. The police wade into the  
crowd, pounding people with their sticks, Arun one of  
the first to get hit. He staggers into Hasari's arms.

#### **FAVORING PALS/ARUN AND HIS FAMILY**

Unbelievable! Panic-stricken, Hasari and Aloka gather  
the children and their few belongings... as beside them  
a woman goes down from a stick to the head; Aloka stops  
instinctively to help the woman, but Hasari grabs her,  
trying to shelter her and the children as well as Arun's  
wife and children, clutching Arun to him as in the chaos  
they manage to escape.

#### **EXT. CHURCH - CLOSE ON BILLBOARD - DAY**

On the billboard: A maharajah sleeping snugly on a thick  
mattress. From his dreamland he inquires solicitously:  
"Have you ever thought of a Rajah Double Spring as a  
present?" We PAN DOWN and FIND the Pals and Arun and his  
family, panting, terrified, beneath the sign.

**SHAMBU**

Daddy, are we going to die here?  
Hasari can see on everyone's face this question.

**HASARI**

No! Today, I'm just a mangy dog  
on the street, but soon, I swear,  
I'll look other men in the eye!

(a beat)

I swear.

Yet on his face we see the extraordinary pressure to make this promise reality.

**EXT. SIDE OF RESTAURANT**

Hasari reaches the head of a line and receives a small handout. Turning away, he studies the morsel of food. His head aches, his belly screams with hunger... but he takes only a single bite, then carefully wraps the rest in a cloth and knots it.

(CONTINUED)

25.

**CONTINUED:**

He feels a tug at his elbow. It's a 15-year-old BOY with thick, scholarly spectacles.

**RAFIK (BOY)**

Why live like a beggar when you  
can live like a maharajah?

Hasari stares at the boy.

**INT. BLOOD DISPENSARY - CLOSE ON HASARI'S ARM - DAY**

A needle injected, blood flowing into a bottle.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Hasari seated on a stool, watching his blood leave his body, his face broken out in perspiration.

**HASARI**

I thought you were only taking a  
little.

**ATTENDANT**

We pay more, we take more.

**HASARI**

I'm feeling a little dizzy.

**ATTENDANT**

It'll pass.

**HIS POV**

Rafik and a thin man chatting easily and exchanging cigarettes with another attendant. His vision BLURS.

**HASARI AND NURSE**

With his free hand, he begins to grapple for the Attendant to keep his balance, starts to fall... and the  
**SCREEN GOES BLACK.**

**FADE IN:**

**EXT. DISPENSARY - DAY**

A woozy Hasari gives Rafik his share; Rafik in turn gives the thin man his share. The thin man bows his farewell.

(CONTINUED)

**CONTINUED:**

**RAFIK**

Blood is the oil well of the poor,  
brother. Now, give me another  
three and I'll give you these.

He opens his hand with its dirty nails. In it lie a  
little group of pills, like highly-colored sweets.

**HASARI**

What are those?

**RAFIK**

Vitamins. Take these and you can  
give again in a week.

While Hasari considers, Rafik pours the pills into  
Hasari's hand, takes the three rupees. Hasari downs the  
pills.

**RAFIK**

One week. Here. The same time.

And he's gone, leaving Hasari, woozy but at least, for  
the moment, blessed to count his money.

**INT. MAX'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Max lies on his messed bed, contorted, with his feet up  
over his head against the wall. A book lies open beside  
him. A half-eaten room service meal, many hours old,  
moulders on the bedside table. Max is babbling a mock  
sports case into his fist...

**MAX**

They're in the shotgun. There's  
the snap from center, the clock is  
running -- five, four, three -- he  
has an open man at the Notre Dame  
twenty for the victory... and he  
freezes. He freezes! Mr. Choke  
chokes. The fans go --

A KNOCK at the door. Max shuts up, falls off the wall.  
He crosses to the door. Opens it. POOMINA is 16,  
beautiful and exotic-looking behind her excessive makeup.

**ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING MAX**

The porter pushes the girl gently into the room, smiling  
at Max, nodding. The door is closed.

**MAX AND POOMINA**

He may have been receptive to a "sweet, young girl," but  
not a kid in her teens.

**MAX**

Got an I.D. on you?  
(she doesn't get it)  
How old are you?

**POOMINA**

Twenty, sahib.

**MAX**

I buy that.

She approaches him seductively.

**POOMINA**

I can do anything you want, sahib.

She fingers the Hebrew letter at Max's throat, on its gold chain. For a moment, Max is mesmerized by this child; but then, as she begins more serious ministrations, he pulls back.

**MAX**

Hold it, time out. Time, there's time out on the field.

**POOMINA**

Is problems, sahib?

**MAX**

Is problems, yeah, just a couple.

**POOMINA**

No, please, yes, I can --

There's something desperate in her that makes him put a finger to her lips and say...

**MAX**

How 'bout some chow?

(she doesn't get it)

I was just about to order some room service. Food. I call, they come, we eat.

She stares at him.

**INT. MAX'S ROOM - NIGHT (HALF HOUR LATER)**

Max smokes a Monte Cristo and watches Poomina, like a frightened little animal, devour the last of a Green Acres room service meal and then wrap a small piece of fish in the paper napkin.

**(CONTINUED)**

**28.**

**CONTINUED:**

She looks up at him, delivers a small burp. Covers her mouth in charming embarrassment.

**POOMINA**

Now, you are ready for great pleasure, yes?

**MAX**

Watching you eat was my great pleasure. Now you go home.

As he escorts her toward the door, Poomina is distressed. Max realizes she can't leave empty-handed. He pulls out some notes.



**MAX**

For you.

She hasn't given up, though, and as he takes the money, she stands on tiptoe and kisses him. Torn, Max begins to respond. He stops himself, his grip on her causing her discomfort. His breath comes in little bursts.

**MAX**

You're a very wet kisser. Work on it, get in touch in five years.

He leads her toward the door. Like some lunatic comedy, she resists. He pushes. She locks her knees. He opens the door.

**MAX**

Goddamn it, cut it out! Now, good night.

He muscles her out the door, closes it, wipes his lips. He stares at a parade of cockroaches gliding along the wall as he listens to her CRYING quietly on the other side of the door. He debates... and he loses. Opens the door. Poomina stands there; the tears stop and a lip-twitching smile lights her face.

**MAX**

Five years already? Gee, time really flies when you have no moral conviction.

She slides into his arms, pressing against him. With his shoulder, he closes the door, leaving us outside.

**INT. BACK ALLEY - BAR - FLAMING LIGHT - NIGHT**

A bare light bulb; a SCRATCHY vinyl RECORD on a turntable.

**(CONTINUED)**

**29.**

**CONTINUED:**

Poomina watches Max do a sleight-of-hand trick with a coin. He tosses it up, brings his hands past each other, then holds out his fists; she picks on... but the other holds the penny. Fooled, she laughs. He does it again; she points to one fist -- empty -- then other -- also empty. Max reaches behind her ear and... produces the coin. She loves it, her laughter escalating. But then she seems to read something in the b.g. where we see four thugs, two of whom will become known to us as THE GOONDA, a capo to the local "mafia" chieftan, and ASHOKA, son of the local Godfather. Ashoka works on a pimple on his chin. The Goonda meticulously cleans a spot of mud with spit from one of his expensive new running shoes. Max eyes the thugs eyeing him.

**MAX**

Short guys! Quit lookin' at us!

This remark goes over big with the thugs. Max doesn't care. He knocks off the last of the beer in his bottle. The bartender brings them two shots of something in two unmatched glasses.

**POOMINA**

Special drink for you, sahib.  
Only the most man can drink it.  
You make try. For me.

**MAX**

For you, I would drink battery  
acid.

**POOMINA**

Who that finish first. I bet!  
She puts her glass to her lips and, in a childish, exaggerated way, mimes waiting for him to commence a drinking race with her. The two of them toss off what's in their glasses. The bangla in Max's glass is stronger than battery acid. He does an elaborate routine involving the pain, the surprise, the sheer awfulness of the drink. But puts it down with mock machismo.

**POOMINA**

I beat!

**MAX**

I really don't think so -- oh no,  
nay, nay! I never lose the truly  
irrelevant contest.

**POOMINA**

We have fun some more. I bet  
again!

(CONTINUED)

30.

**CONTINUED:**

She turns to the bartender, calls for two more. All the while, in the b.g., The Goonda and his two thugs watch emotionlessly and Ashoka works on his acne.

**EXT. BAR - NIGHT**

Max sings "Take It to the Limit" with enormous inebriated sincerity as Poomina helps him out of the bar. There's a big black motorcycle parked outside. Max glances at it as they start down the alley. As he looks back to the road ahead, he finds The Goonda in front of him. Max isn't so drunk that he doesn't sense what this is about. He looks behind him. Indeed, the other two goons are there. Ashoka straddles the big cycle.

**MAX**

Well well. Seek punishment and ye  
shall find.

Knowing what's coming, Max nevertheless unleashes a beautiful howl and tries to trample The Goonda off-

tackle. From behind, he's hit with a length of stick. He goes down, looks up through blasted eyes at Ashoka as two sticks now land against his shoulder and his head...

**EXT. MAHARAJAH SIGN - NIGHT**

The Pals sleep beneath the sign. Hasari awakens from restive sleep to the sound of a FIGHT. He gets up. The others awaken.

**ARUN**

Don't go -- what are you doing?

**HASARI**

It sounds like someone needs help.  
Hasari bolts for the corner.

**ALLEYWAY**

As Hasari turns into the head of the alley, he can see three men beating someone, a fourth man standing off to the side, watching.

**HASARI**

What are you doing?  
(calling back)

A man's being beaten here!

As Hasari runs down the alley, the MOTORCYCLE FIRES UP and SCREAMS OFF and the three goons take flight.

31.

**HASARI AND MAX**

Hasari runs up, reaches out to Max, who's barely on his feet. As Hasari touches Max, Max turns and belts Hasari in the nose, nailing Hasari to the wall as Max collapses at Hasari's feet. Hasari grabs his nose with one hand and kneels beside the fallen Max... as a shadow moves and startles Hasari. He peers into the dark... and Poomina steps into the light.

**INT. CLINIC/SCHOOL (CITY OF JOY) - MAX'S POV - CRUCIFIX - DAY**

The crucifix sways. Now Max's eyes RACK FOCUS TO the cherubic face of JOAN BETHAL, peering AT the CAMERA without sympathy.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Max on a cot in a tiny, spare room, a butterfly bandage under one eye. Joan, Irish, short, stout, hovers over him. Behind her, Hasari Pal.

**JOAN**

Good morning, junior, welcome to  
our country.

Max manages to sit up. Wishes he hadn't.

**MAX**

Oh, I like the way the room moves  
in circles.

(checking out his  
accommodations)

I suppose I should inquire where I  
am.

**JOAN**

You're in the City of Joy.

**MAX**

Is that geographic or spiritual?

**JOAN**

Oh, now we require that each  
visitor decide that for himself.  
This gentleman and a young lady  
brought you here.

**MAX**

Did I do that to your nose?

(as Hasari nods)

I'm sorry.

(CONTINUED)

32.

**CONTINUED:**

Hasari shrugs, smiles... and a gigantic rat drops in  
Max's lap. He leaps to his feet and against the wall.  
The rat scurries away.

**MAX**

What was that -- a Shetland pony?

**JOAN**

I would have to inspect it more  
closely, but I believe that was  
one of our economy-size rats.

Max clambers for the door. Too late, Joan thinks to  
say...

**JOAN**

Watch your --

Max cracks his head on the door frame.

**MAX**

Thanks -- got it.

He ducks outside for some air.

**EXT. CLINIC/SCHOOL - NIZAMUDHIN LANE - MAX'S FACE**

Stunned.

**SQUARE**

In the dawn light, he finds himself in a small square in  
a slum, an open sewer running before him. He's repulsed.

**MAX**

Pardon the expression, but Jesus

H. Christ.

From the tea shop, SURYA, a stout old Hindu man dressed in Western clothes, raises a hand in greeting to Joan. On the door Max and Joan have come through: "City of Joy Self Help School & Clinic." Across the way, a young man is dandling a baby on his knee, rubbing its back and sniffing at its neck. Small group of children around a blackboard with a teacher, MARGARETA, doing numbers. RAM CHANDAR, the rickshaw puller, readies to go out to work. Trying to orient himself, Max turns...

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

... to find perhaps fifty people, largely women and children, staring at him.

(CONTINUED)

33.

**CONTINUED:**

He knows them by type: patients. He looks at the sign on the door.

**MAX**

You a doctor?

**JOAN**

Oh no, I'm a corporate executive. Doctor arrives at half seven, but only three days a week.

**MAX**

This is obviously one of those three days.

**JOAN**

Indeed. What brings you to our country?

**MAX**

I came to find my white light.

**JOAN**

Ah, yes. I take it you didn't find it.

**MAX**

Kept opening the doors and windows of my spirit, but couldn't see a goddamn thing.

**JOAN**

What do you do in America?

Max is slow to answer. Discreetly, Hasari hangs back, listens.

**JOAN**

Oh, how exciting. Must be something illegal. Are you a criminal of some sort?

**MAX**

I suppose that depends how you define the word: I'm a doctor.

**JOAN**

I see. How long are you here? Perhaps I could recruit you for --

**MAX**

Forget it. You've got your non-practicing Catholics. I'm a non-practicing doctor.

(CONTINUED)

34.

CONTINUED:

**JOAN**

How very distressing. Why's that?

**MAX**

Found out I just really don't like sick people. Well, I'm outta here. I owe you one.

**JOAN**

I can't imagine ever divining how to collect, but there are a few of us Indians, you know, who believe the tourist trade ought to be encouraged.

Max turns to Hasari. Hasari is incredibly shy, can barely meet Max's eyes.

**MAX**

Thank you very much. Let me...  
He goes for his money.

**HASARI**

No, please.

Max finds his pockets empty. Then reaches for his wrist -- his watch is gone -- and then his throat -- his chai is gone, too.

**JOAN**

I'm afraid they cleaned you out.  
Ram, here's your first rider.  
(to Max)  
Take this.

She holds out several rupees toward him. All eyes on them.

**JOAN**

Go on, it's all right. You'll owe me two.

**EXT. STREET - FLYING FEET - DAY**

Max in the rickshaw, Hasari running alongside Ram, an exuberant smile slashed across his face.

**HASARI**

You see, I can keep up.

(CONTINUED)

35.

CONTINUED:

**RAM**

Keep up, of course. Anyone can run at this pace. But you think it's easy to run and to pull?

**HASARI**

I can do it. I could pull it.

**MAX**

Come on, give him a shot. He's as fast as you and looks twice as strong.

**RAM**

Will you still pay me when he runs you into a ditch?

**MAX**

Absolutely. I trust the man.

Suddenly, Ram comes to a stop.

**RAM**

All right, you, come, step in here.

Hasari looks on Max with enormous gratitude. Ram puts the shafts down, has a short coughing fit, spits some phlegm, looks at Max.

**MAX**

I hope you're taking something for that.

Ram waves him off as Hasari lifts the shafts to his hips.

**RAM**

Now, fine, pull, go.

Hasari tries to pull, but the center of gravity isn't easy to find. This is enormously difficult and Hasari's very clumsy at it. The street is crowded. The traffic is beginning to back up behind them. The driver and conductor of the tram let fly a tirade of insults.

**RAM**

See, mister! What did I tell you? Come on! What do you think this is -- some village street? You've got to move quickly.

He turns to Max.

**RAM**

You see, it takes a gift.

(CONTINUED)

36.

CONTINUED:

**MAX**

I say he can do it. I'll bet you the fare he can do it.

(play by play)

What do you think, rickshaw fans,  
can he do it?

The crowd isn't in for fun. Hasari strains forward. The rickshaw moves with him. Ram moves alongside, shouting instructions and oaths. A cop comes on the run, screaming at Hasari... which makes Ram importune more strongly and Max joke more vociferously. Even under this incredible pressure, Hasari gains confidence and begins to move quicker, earning shouts of approval from Max and Ram, who now has trouble keeping up as they make their way through the maelstrom, an avalanche of oaths following them.

**INT. GODFATHER'S HOUSE - DAY**

At first all we see are feet on a marble floor. The Goonda's in his running shoes, then Ram and Hasari's bare feet.

This is the partitioned splendor of an old house sprinkled with the relics of a grand colonial past. Everything is baroque, rotting and somehow impressive. Hasari has never been anywhere like this, and is caught between curiosity and fear of breathing.

**INT. "THRONE ROOM"**

The three men enter a large room shuttered from the sunlight -- dusty and packed with a ramshackle assortment of furniture. Two fat blue titmice perch in a cage next to ambitious plaster portrait of Napoleon.

Sitting behind a desk is Ashoka, leaning over a mirror, squeezing a balky pimple.

Near a large window, his 60-year-old father, GHATAK, in a European jacket and dhoti, works with intense concentration at repairing a pair of broken glasses with a twist of fine wire.

The three new arrivals stand silent and respectful before the desk. At last, without raising his head...

**ASHOKA**

Not a tongue between you then?

**(CONTINUED)**

37.

**CONTINUED:**

**RAM**

Yes, yes, I am wondering, sir,  
we are, is it possible you might  
have something for my friend?

Ram indicates Hasari, as if there might be some question to whom he's referring. Ashoka attacks the pimple.

**RAM**

Let me explain it for your ears,  
sir. My cousin from Bihar has



just arrived in our city --

**GOONDA**

They've brought a small present  
-- of respect.

The Goonda places a small bundle of rupees on the desk.  
Ashoka allows himself a disinterested glance at  
Hasari.

**ASHOKA**

So, you want to be a human horse?

**RAM**

Oh yes! I have personally witnessed  
his excellence -- yes.

**ASHOKA**

He doesn't talk? Can he neigh at  
least?

(to Hasari)

You -- do your ears function?

**HASARI**

Oh yes, Babu. Can I... uhm...?

**ASHOKA**

Neigh! Like a horse.

Ashoka pulls back his lips, shows his teeth and imitates  
a neigh: "Ne-igh! Ne-igh!"

**HASARI**

Well, yes, Babu, I can do that.  
Would you like me to imitate a  
horse?

Finished with the pimple, Ashoka wipes a finger on his  
shirt and takes a helping off a plate of sweetcakes  
as...

38.

#### **ANOTHER ANGLE**

Behind him, The Godfather walks up to the desk, putting  
his glasses on. He barely glances at his son, but  
waves him out of the chair.

Ashoka doesn't like it, but he steps aside. As he does,  
he turns a look of hatred on Hasari. Through no fault of  
his own, Hasari has made an enemy. Ghatak chews on a pan  
and casts a benevolent eye on Hasari.

**GHATAK**

Lift your longhi.

Hasari does. The Godfather looks at his legs and thighs.

**GHATAK**

The wise men of our nation say that  
nirvana is the attainment of a  
state of supreme detachment. For  
me, nirvana is counting each  
evening, one by one, the rupees  
earned by my two thousand and  
forty-six rickshaws.

Hasari doesn't know whether to respond. A glance at Ram tells him not to. Ghatak gestures for Hasari to lower his longhi.

**GHATAK**

You are with family?

**HASARI**

I have a wife and three children,  
Babu.

**GHATAK**

And they must eat, heh. The  
world is full of open mouths.

He chews on this a moment, then opens a drawer... and holds a small, tinkling rickshaw bell toward Hasari. Hasari understands that, incredibly, he has a job. His breath is so shallow, he can barely utter his gratitude. He takes the bell.

**HASARI**

I shall be eternally grateful to  
you. From now on, I shall be as  
the youngest of your brothers.

**GHATAK**

Stay loyal. These days, it's a  
crop nobody plants.

The Godfather turns his beatific and Godlike smile on Hasari Pal.

**(CONTINUED)**

**39.**

**EXT. MATTRESS SIGN - DAY (EARLY EVENING)**

Transitor MUSIC. The Pals load the rickshaw that stands at the road with Ram in it. There are embraces with the bruised Arun and his family.

**EXT. SQUARE - NIGHT (EARLY EVENING)**

We hear the BELL TINKLING as the rickshaw, pulled by Hasari, carrying Ram and Alok (holding Shambu) arrives (Amrita and Manooj trotting beside their father). Surya, Selima, other neighbors greet them as they come. The Pals glance into the school at Joan, who's teaching an evening class.

**WITH PALS**

Reverentially, they follow Ram inside as Joan watches.

**INT. RAM'S HUT - NIGHT**

A door opens. Moonlight. Faces peer through the door. Ram lights an oil lamp. In the glow, the family looks around their tiny space. Hardly able to suppress smiles.

**HASARI**

Someone has blessed us. A job, a  
roof, a school. Soon I'll be able

to send money home...  
                  (looking at Amrita)  
... and put away a little bit for  
your dowry.

In their excitement, the boys run.

**OUTSIDE**

and up to the roof, under the stars. We LOOK UP WITH  
them and:

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. GREEN ACRES - ON SKY - NIGHT**

PAN DOWN TO Max on his balcony playing his trumpet as we  
continue to

**DISSOLVE TO BLACK.**

40.

**FADE IN:**

**EXT. SQUARE AND STREET (CITY OF JOY) - DAY**

About twenty tattered street kids faces shining with en-  
joyment. They run and shout as they pursue something  
just out of frame.

**WIDE SHOT**

The cause of the excitement is Hasari running TOWARD us,  
feet flying, as he pulls the rickshaw, loaded with a huge  
sack. Manooj and Shambu are clinging to the sides of the  
machine.

Ram stands in the center of the square. He shouts a  
command and Hasari struggles to bring the rickshaw to a  
stop. It's not easy and Sunil -- who's arriving -- has to  
jump out of the way to the accompaniment of apologies from  
Hasari and Ram and hoots of laughter from the children.  
Outside the clinic, a line of perhaps seventy-five wait  
patiently, watching as Hasari takes off again. The wheels  
of the rickshaw hit a rut. Hasari loses control, the sack  
tips back and Hasari is lifted into the air, feet kicking  
as he tries to regain his balance. Aloka and Amrita,  
sitting near the bawling Ram, can't hold back their  
laughter.

**EXT. SQUARE - HIGH ANGLE - DAY**

The square is set with obstacles. As Ram shouts instruc-  
tion, we see Hasari negotiate them with much increased  
skill. He stops in front of a small group. It's his  
family, plus Joan and Surya. With an exhausted smile, he  
signs to Aloka and Amrita to get in. They do, and Hasari  
takes them triumphantly around the circuit.

**HIGH ANGLE**

Hasari's triumphant ride continues and we:

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. PARK STREET - DAY**

Hasari rubs the moonstone in his ring on the shafts, then touches his heart and his forehead. A SCHOOL GIRL in uniform, approaches the rickshaw stand. We also see several other pullers, Rassoul, Chomotkar, Ramatullah.

**SCHOOL GIRL**

Rickshaw wallah!

**(CONTINUED)**

**41.**

**CONTINUED:**

**RAM**

Let Hasari go!

The line of rickshaw pullers turns to Hasari. The other pullers wish him well as he comes forward. His heart pounds; ever so politely, he helps the School Girl into his carriage. She gives him the address of the St. Pius School.

**HASARI**

I'm sorry, I don't know where that is. You're my very first passenger.

**SCHOOL GIRL**

Really. Well, I hope I bring you luck.

She gives him a sweet smile.

**SCHOOL GIRL**

That way, and then to the right.

His moment has arrived. He looks at Ram... and thrusts his hips forward, setting off into the insanity of the traffic, eyes flicking left and right. A HORN RAILS at him and a taxi tries to run him down, calling and laughing as Hasari jumps in terror.

**RAM**

(calling)

Feed the police!

Other pullers laugh, call after Hasari... and as he approaches the first corner, he manages to pull out a rupee and deposit it into the hand of the impassive traffic policeman and then turn right.

**EXT. ST. PIUS - DAY**

The School Girl hands him a slip of paper.

**SCHOOL GIRL**

This is my home address. Pick me up promptly at seven each morning.

**HASARI**

Yes, thank you, you can depend on me.

The girl runs into the school yard, met immediately by

friends. Hasari looks around at the clean, bustling school, at all the children in their crisp uniforms and a look of great yearning comes over his face.

42.

**INT. SMALL RESTAURANT - DAY**

Max is trying to explain to the waiter what he wants.

**MAX**

Beef. You know -- cow? Minced,  
little salt, pepper, slap it flat  
like this, throw it on the grill,  
flip it.

Now, though, he just glimpses the shiny gas tank and engine of a motorcycle around the hip of the waiter. He leans out.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Ashoka, astride his motorcycle, GUNNING the ENGINE as a boy runs out of a store with an armload of cassettes.

**WITH MAX AND WAITER**

**MAX**

Put it on the grill, I'll be right  
back.

**WITH ASHOKA**

He pulls the boy's ear, REVS the ENGINE to go... and senses someone close. He turns to find an American hovering at his shoulder.

**MAX**

You know, I have to say you  
really don't look Jewish. I  
believe that's mine.

He reaches for the necklace with the Hebrew letter. Ashoka recognizes Max. Looks around for help. There is none.

**ASHOKA**

Don't touch me. No one touches me.

**MAX**

Really?

Max grabs Ashoka... who breaks free, and GUNS the CYCLE down a side street. Max gives chase, his aching ribs slowing him a bit.

43.

**SEVERAL CUTS**

Ashoka, glancing back, begins to open up some distance. Yet, Max hangs tough, weaving like a broken field runner through the mass of bodies and vehicles. Now, suddenly, he loses Ashoka. He has to make a choice about this

corner or that one. He chooses.

**EXT. CITY OF JOY - AROUND CORNER - DAY (EARLY EVENING)**

A COP steps into his path. He sees Ashoka up ahead. He's hopelessly out of breath.

**MAX**

Oh... great... good...good timing  
...him!

He can't talk and breathe. He points desperately. The Cop glances where Max points, but he makes no move to give chase.

**COP**

May I see your passport?

**MAX**

Passport? I'm in the middle of a high speed chase. That guy --

**COP**

Passport please.

A crowd has begun to form. In the distance, we see a group of girls carrying cricket equipment COMING AT us.

**MAX**

It's in my hotel room.

**COP**

Passport, please, now.

**MAX**

Ready my lips: I do not have my passport with me at this...

(he gets it)

Ah, I see, said the blind man.

The Cop obviously is doing this at Ashoka's behest. Max starts around the Cop. The Cop, however, sticks his club in Max's face; there's fire in Max's eyes... but a hand takes the Cop's stick before Max can make a big mistake.

44.

**ANOTHER ANGLE - FAVORING OWNER OF HAND**

The girls with the cricket equipment (and Margareta, the teacher). The hand belongs to Joan Bethel.

**JOAN**

Well, all right, junior, so you'll owe me three.

**EXT. POST OFFICE - DAY**

A scribe finishes writing a note home for Hasari. The scribe hands it to Hasari.

**INSERT - NOTE AND MONEY ORDER**

"We are well. Manooj does not go in the cinema. I am earning my living as a rickshaw wallah. It is my

honor to send you this."

**RESUME**

With great pride, Hasari pays the scribe, seals the money order with the message in an envelope, licks the flap, and puts the envelope into the mail slot.

**EXT. SQUARE (CITY OF JOY) - TEA SHOP - DAY (DUSK)**

Surya plays his zither. Max and Joan sit at a table. Max pops little boiled candies into his mouth from a dish on the table.

**JOAN**

Oh, it was just a whim in the beginning really -- to try to convince them not to be so bloody passive, that they could pull themselves up on their own. I get a little money from a Swiss organization. Now it's become a bit more than I can manage.

**MAX**

It's got to be like trying to drill a hole in water, though.

**JOAN**

We just need a few more hands on this little life raft we've set afloat here.

(CONTINUED)

45.

**CONTINUED:**

They stare at each other. Shambu has become one of Surya's tea boys and refills their tea.

**JOAN**

You know what I've come to think in my middle age, Max?

**MAX**

Nope, no, earthly idea. You're pretty much outta my league, thought-wise.

**JOAN**

There are really only three actions open to a person.

**MAX**

Only three -- okay. And what are they?

**JOAN**

To run, to spectate, to commit.  
Max peers at her a moment, then around the square.

**MAX**

Has it occurred to you that this

obsession with charity is really a  
flaw in your character?

**JOAN**

Charity! It's not charity, dear  
child, it's love. You're very  
badly twisted around, aren't you?

**MAX**

One of us sure as hell is.  
The clinic's part-time doctor, SUNIL DASGUPTA, comes out  
of the clinic after a very long day.

**SUNIL**

I'm off for home, Sister Joan. A  
pleasure to meet you, Dr. Loeb.

**MAX**

The same.

**SUNIL**

See you day after tomorrow.

**JOAN**

Good night, God bless, Doctor.  
(a beat)

Generous young man.

(CONTINUED)

46.

**CONTINUED:**

As he watches Sunil head away, Max senses something coming at him from the side. A soccer ball almost hits him; he jumps up, handles the ball athletically.

**SQUARE**

He begins to play with Manooj and several other children. Shambu leaves his post in the tea shop to join them.

**MANOOJ**

Are you the American doctor? Are  
you coming here to help us.

**MAX**

No, I'm the visiting American  
soccer star, El Max.

**MANOOJ**

Do you go to the cinema in  
America, El Max?

**MAX**

When I was your age -- two movies,  
plus cartoons every Saturday.

Aloka and Amrita are cooking on an open fire bucket. Max almost knocks the fire over. Aloka looks at him, apologetic, shy... as Manooj knocks Shambu down at Max's feet. Max scoops the little boy up...

**MAX**

There you go, little guy. Ut --  
what's this?

Reaching behind Shambu's ear, Max produces a boiled sweet.



Aloka watches this with a smile; their eyes touch again...  
as Manooj lets out a cry at the sight of their father.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Ram and Hasari return home. Hasari can hardly walk.  
Shambu runs to his father, explaining excitedly...

**SHAMBU**

Daddy, there is the doctor from  
America. He saw two movies every  
Saturday. What's in your fist?  
Open, Daddy!

Shambu pries his father's fist open: seeds.

(CONTINUED)

47.

CONTINUED:

**SHAMBU**

Seeds? Why?

**HASARI**

So we can watch something grow.

**EXT. RAM'S HUNT NIGHT - UPSTAIRS**

Children leaning down as smoke wafts up. We FOLLOW the  
smoke DOWN TO Max's cigar. Aloka and Amrita laying the  
food out. Shambu rubbing his father's aching legs as  
Hasari and Manooj plant the seeds in Hasari's little tea  
caddy full of earth from home. Max is watching this  
"family" huddled around the father.

**RAM**

Another few months, I'll be able  
to pay off the moneylender in my  
village and go home and open a  
grocery shop. All around me sacks  
overflowing with all kinds of dal  
and rice, aromatic spices, piles  
of vegetables... and at night, I'll  
lie on my back beneath the trees  
sniffing fresh aubergines.

This beautiful picture burrows into Hasari's mind. For  
a moment, he goes there -- home, to the village...

**RAM**

If my wife will let me come within  
a hundred miles of the place where  
she herself resides.

Ram laughs, Hasari smiles...

**HASARI**

Amrita, I saw a beautiful wedding  
sari today.

Amrita is terribly embarrassed.

**RAM**

It was six hundred rupees only.  
He laughs at the impossibility of the price.

**MAX**

That's only 40 dollars, isn't it?

**HASARI**

If you have it.

(CONTINUED)

48.

CONTINUED:

**MAX**

I'll send it to you from America  
when I get home tomorrow.

**HASARI**

That's very generous but no,  
thank you.

**MAX**

Repayment for punching you in the  
nose.

**HASARI**

You have repaid me by sharing our  
supper.

Joan indicates that Max should let it go. Hasari ever  
so carefully waters the tea box.

**RAM**

Doctor Big Brother, I myself would  
be willing to accept a gift. Could  
you give me five rupees in a note --  
ten, perhaps. My ankle is badly  
swelled; the higher the number the  
more the swelling sinks.

Max has to laugh.

**MAX**

I don't have a cent on me. I'll  
owe you.

**RAM**

How much?

Now everyone's attentions is taken by a CRY from Shambu,  
who expels his breath, his terrified eyes directing our  
attention to...

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

It's an amazing sight. Two lepers: ANOUAR, bearded with  
a sharp intelligent, unmarked face, makes his way along  
on a small wheeled board, at an amazingly fast pace,  
ahead of SAID, a huge, mute leper. They stop some feet  
away. Lepers aren't often welcome. Out from behind Said  
steps Poomina.

**POOMINA**

Joan Di, my sister!

(CONTINUED)

49.

**CONTINUED:**

She sees Max, gasps, throws herself behind Said. Joan looks at Max -- he starts to speak, she points a finger that silences him...

**JOAN**

It was Poomina who brought you to us. She has herself and her sister to support. It's all right, Poomina. Anouar, what is it?

She moves to them. They're all three badly out of breath.

**WITH JOAN AND LEPERS**

**ANOUAR**

It's Meeta! It's her time. But something is wrong. The midwives don't know what to do! Dr. Sunil, could he help, perhaps?

**JOAN**

Dr. Sunil isn't here.

**POOMINA**

Meeta will die.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Joan turns to Max, who hasn't heard the exchange.

**JOAN**

Max, I wouldn't ask, but it's an emergency. A pregnancy gone awry. It's a leper. Could you have a look?

Max is clearly thrown by the sight of the lepers.

**MAX**

I don't have any experience with leprosy.

**JOAN**

Good Christ, son, because she's a leper doesn't mean she's not built like a woman!

**HASARI**

I can run and get Dr. Sunil.

**JOAN**

It's too far.

(CONTINUED)

50.

**CONTINUED:**

Suddenly, impulsively...

**ALOKA**

I could help. I've had three

babies.

**RAM**

You can't do that. They're  
outcasts, they're unclean.

There are murmurs of assent from the others.

**JOAN**

Oh nonsense! It's not contagious!

A beat -- everyone fixed on Max.

**HASARI**

You're a doctor, how can you not  
help?

**EXT. PATH-NIGHT**

The moon reflects off the dark puddles of muddy water that line the side of the railway tracks. Anouar propels his board with astonishing agility along the path, Said and Poomina running with him. Max, Joan, carrying a first aid bag, Aloka and Hasari following, slipping and sliding on the rough ground with its puddles and sewage.

**EXT. RAILWAY LINE - LEPER HUTS - NIGHT**

The little procession arrives outside the three rough huts, made of bamboo, plastic sheeting, cloth, wood and cardboard. A few shadows materialize. Lepers -- staring silently. Anouar points into a hut. Joan and Aloka precede Max inside. Max forgets to bend and bumps his head.

**INT. HUT - NIGHT**

The only light is the feeble waver from a candle. The blind Meeta lies on a rough mattress on the ground. Her ragged sari is pulled up to her middle. Her face runs with sweat, her hair is plastered to her face. A girl with black eyes is fanning her with a piece of wood. Meeta sends up a SOFT, uninterrupted MOAN. A wedge of blood-soaked cloth is between her legs.

(CONTINUED)

51.

**CONTINUED:**

A middle-age leper is leaning over her -- a midwife, encouraging Meeta with a string of commands in their own language.

Max kneels, Aloka at his side. His breathing becomes shallow... but then he pulls off the blood-soaked bandages. Between Meeta's legs he can just make out the bottom of a foot. The child is breached. Maybe already dead.

**ALOKA**

Will she die?

Max goes into reflex actions. Joan has opened the first aid kit. There's a flashlight among the medicine, alcohol, compresses, scissors, etc. He hands the flashlight to Aloka as...

**MAX**

(to Joan)

Pull me two c.c.'s of Coramine.

He nods at Aloka; she illuminates the scene.

**MAX**

Uh-oh, uh-oh, who's this coming'  
down the lane? Why it's -- is it  
possible -- way over here, in  
India -- yes, it's Mr. Choke.

He comes to a stop. Everyone stares at him. Meeta moans. For a moment, he stays frozen. Aloka reaches out instinctively, wipes the sweat from his eyes. This gesture seems to free him; he looks at her, looks at the room and its expectant, trusting faces...

**MAX**

I'm going to have to turn it --  
the baby. Tell her she has to  
relax these muscles as much as  
she can.

He doesn't finish the sentence. Aloka speaks softly to Meeta as Max takes Meeta's arm, makes a tourniquet. Joan hands him the syringe and he injects. Hands the syringe back to Joan and begins to work at turning the baby.

Aloka takes Meeta's hand and it's a moment before we realize Aloka, with her fine hand, is holding Meeta's fingerless palm.

52.

#### **OUTSIDE**

A small group waits, trying to determine from the sounds what's happening inside. Anouar pours tea from a pot on the small fire, offers the cup to Hasari. Hasari stares at the cup, doesn't want to be impolite, but more than that, doesn't want to touch the cup. He shakes his head, smiles. Anouar drinks off the tea.

#### **INSIDE**

Sweat pours down Max's face into his eyes. He shakes it out. Aloka leans forward and, with her new sari, wipes the sweat away again. Max nods thanks.

**MAX**

Tell her again to breathe in short  
little bursts now.

He demonstrates. Aloka does the same to Meeta. Meeta tries to cooperate. And suddenly Max has the baby turned.

**MAX**

All right! Now, tell her to push.  
Aloka translates. Meeta pushes. The midwife, the little girl, Aloka lean forward.

**MAX**

Again. Yes! Again. It's coming.

**OUTSIDE**

No one is sitting now. Everyone hangs close to the door. Only Hasari remains apart, seated on a tree stump in the middle of the quad. He coughs; suppresses it.

**INSIDE**

**MAX**

I've got the head. Come on,  
little baby, come on, little  
baby. Be alive, be alive, be  
alive.

Aloka wipes the sweat away again. He looks at her, his voice squeezed out through his teeth.

**MAX**

We've got it, we've got it. Yeah!

**(CONTINUED)**

53.

**CONTINUED:**

He seems as released as Meeta. Then he gives a last gentle tug and a CRY squeezes out of the little piece of life in his hands. Max is fairly overwhelmed by the life in his hands. Poomina steps close, a smile on her lovely face, and touches the baby in Max's hands.

**EXT. LANE - NIGHT**

Max, Joan, Aloka and Hasari walk in silence down Nizamudhin Lane. There is only the mingled sound of COUGHING, MOANING, and a TRANSISTOR RADIO nearby playing a popular song. Outside the clinic, they stop. She takes his hand.

**JOAN**

For a non-practicing doctor, that was pretty practiced.

**MAX**

Never been so scared in my life.

It's a warm, open moment between them. But now there's the ongoing desperation of her needs.

**JOAN**

Max, please, won't you change your mind? We desperately need another doctor. Full-time. Think about it -- just give us a couple of months.

**MAX**

Can't do it. Maybe you've got it

in you to be a saint. I just don't.

**JOAN**

Then what do you want? What are you going to be when you grow up?  
Good night, Aloka, Hasari.

Joan goes inside, leaving Max, Aloka, and a very uncomfortable Hasari alone a moment.

**ALOKA**

Thank you for allowing me to go with you.

**MAX**

You could make a helluva nurse.  
A little smile comes over her face; no one's ever paid her that kind of compliment. She goes into Ram's hut, leaving Max and Hasari now.

(CONTINUED)

54.

CONTINUED:

**HASARI**

I think perhaps you are a good man.

Hasari brings his hands together and goes inside.

**EXT./INT. JOAN'S AND THE PAL'S (ALTERNATE) - NIGHT**

Max hears Joan praying inside.

**JOAN (O.S.)**

Jesus, my brother, you who I am trying to believe are the light and salvation of the puking world

...

**THE PALS**

Aloka sits huddled with her husband while their children sleep; they listen...

**JOAN (O.S.)**

Please see that we are living in madness and darkness here...

**MAX**

listens.

**JOAN (O.S.)**

... and we need help. Om, Jesus, om and amen.

Suddenly, he hurtles into motion. He runs down the alley, his stride stretching out, swallowing up the distance between here and the world beyond the City of Joy in great gulps.

**EXT. CALCUTTA AIRPORT - ESTABLISHING - DAY**

A busy, urban airport as opposed to the small country airport in which we saw Max earlier. V.O. we hear...

**BETSY (V.O.)**

Yes, yes, yes, that's right, yes!  
I turned in your ticket!

55.

**INT. AIRPORT - DAY**

It's a small place; it's sweltering, and it's packed with hundreds of families shoulder to shoulder. Though Betsy's trying to be discreet, it's not a very private place, as we see by the number of people watching Max and Betsy.

**BETSY**

I bought it, I got a refund!

**MAX**

But I want to go home with you.

**BETSY**

You want to go home with me?

**MAX**

Yes.

**BETSY**

Then prove it.

**MAX**

Good -- how -- name it.

**BETSY**

Buy yourself a ticket.

**MAX**

I would love to do that, Betsy  
Ilene, boy would I love to do  
just that, but I'm financially  
embarrassed at the --

**BETSY**

Use your credit cards.

**MAX**

What credit cards? You know I  
maxed them before we left. Just  
lend me --

**BETSY**

No! You won't pay me back; you  
never have. Oh, Max!

**MAX**

They're calling our flight. I  
want to go home with you, Betsy  
Ilene Kahn. Because I have a  
vision. It's...

He's trying to woo and charm her. He mimes a kind of  
house shape.

(CONTINUED)

56.



**CONTINUED:**

**MAX**

I see you and me, Betsy Ilene Kahn, nibbling toward each other through a quarter pounder with cheese, chugalugging a frosty light beer -- great taste! Less filling! Bowling! I want to go bowling, Besty Ilene Kahn!

He fires a strike through the watching crowd.

**MAX**

I want... Oh, my Lord Amighty, I want so many American things --

**BETSY**

Oh, stop it! You have no earthly idea what you want, Max! And stop calling me Betsy Ilene Kahn.

**MAX**

Isn't that your name?

**BETSY**

You call me Betsy Ilene Kahn like you just met me yesterday.

**MAX**

What should I call you? My girl, my significant other --

**BETSY**

Don't get cute! You get cute and I swear to God --- you told me once I look like my mother!

**MAX**

You do -- so what?

**BETSY**

See -- you don't understand!

**MAX**

How could I possibly not understand a conversation as easy as this one, Betsy Ilene.

**BETSY**

I hate you!

**MAX**

Na ya don't.

**(CONTINUED)**

57.

**CONTINUED:**

**BETSY**

I stood by you for three years!

**MAX**

I know.

**BETSY**

I supported you through your internship!

**MAX**

You did.

**BETSY**

Why? It was never working. What have I been thinking all these years -- that you'd change? You're the most self-pitying, self-destructive, self...

She can't find anything fierce enough, so she abates, tries to get it together to make a dignified exit.

**BETSY**

But you've taught me something, Max. You never finish anything. Well, I quit. I've found my light and I'm free of you.

She heads for the gate, people parting to give her a wide berth.

**MOVING SHOT - TOWARD THE GATE**

**MAX**

Will you at least call my mother and ask her to empty my savings account and wire --

**BETSY**

Do it yourself, Max. Call her collect. You should have called her weeks ago anyway just because she's your mother!

(to herself)

White light, white light...!

She hands her ticket and boarding pass over and she's through the gate. Max turns to find the audience fixed on him.

**(CONTINUED)**

58.

**CONTINUED:**

**MAX**

Guerilla theater, folks. 'All the world's a stage.' Don't know if that word reached you here yet. If you'd care to show your appreciation by a small donation...

Many smiles... and several instant offers of rupees. A beat, then...

**MAX**

Aw, what the hell.

... Swallowing his incredible embarrassment, Max takes the money.

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

The line is long. At this moment, Joan is checking a child's throat with a tongue-depressor. Aloka is walking beside her with a fistful of depressors and a bag for disposal. Hasari and Ram are getting ready to leave. Anouar appears at Joan's waist.

**ANOUAR**

Good morning, Joan Di. Dr. Loeb said many of us could be helped; that all it would take is money for medication.

Anouar hands Joan some newspaper in which something is wrapped. Joan opens the paper. Inside is a good deal of money.

**ANOUAR**

Please buy the medication for us. If we cannot come here to receive it, perhaps Dr. Loeb would come to us.

**JOAN**

I'll be happy to buy the medication, but Dr. Loeb is not part of this endeavor, Anouar; there is only his cherished memory.

**ANOUAR**

Then perhaps I am having visions. Anouar's focus is up the lane. Joan follows his focus to:

59.

**THEIR POV**

Max approaches. A buzz about Max's heroics; hands coming together. Max raises a hand in benediction, makes the sign of the cross. Max claps Hasari on the shoulder; Hasari brings his hands together and gives Max a genuinely pleased smile. Children circle and touch him, Manooj and Shambu among them.

**BACK TO SCENE**

**MAX**

Good morning! Good morning! Heckuva morning! Getting ready to practice medicine without a license, Sister Joan? You don't see me soliciting conversions, do you?

**JOAN**

Well, well, well, I do so love to be surprised.

**MAX**

Okay, for starters, pick me out

someone with something easy I can  
heal, make me look good.

(to Aloka)

Aloka, you're my assistant, let's  
go.

Aloka smiles, she nods, she accepts.

**JOAN**

Max, knock it off, give us a bit  
of hush.

(as he does)

What happened?

**MAX**

I changed my mind.

**JOAN**

And I'm a bloody bathing beauty.

**MAX**

Okay, so I got left.

**JOAN**

Smart girl... So how long am I  
stuck with you?

**MAX**

Two weeks -- or until Mom sends me  
a ticket.

(CONTINUED)

60.

CONTINUED:

**JOAN**

Not worth the aggravation of your  
prattle every day. Six months --  
and not a day less.

**MAX**

No way. Six weeks -- and that's  
my best offer.

**JOAN**

Two months -- and that's my final  
offer.

**MAX**

(a beat)

Done.

**JOAN**

Jesus and Mary. The Lone Ranger  
rides again.

And now smiles creep onto all their faces as Max goes  
inside, followed by Joan... and then Aloka -- after she  
looks at Hasari, gets his nod of encouragement. Too late,  
Joan says...

**JOAN**

Watch your --

Thud!

**MAX**

Thanks -- got it.

The children titter. The teacher, Margareta, admonishes them to pay attention and be polite... as we --

**FADE OUT.**

**FADE IN:**

**EXT. SCHOOL GIRL'S HOUSE - HASARI'S WHEELS - DAY (TWO WEEKS LATER)**

The wheels spinning furiously and then stopping abruptly. Hasari, dripping with sweat, panting. The School Girl comes running toward him. After her, in the b.g., her **MOTHER.**

**SCHOOL GIRL**

Hasari, where have you been? I've been waiting almost five minutes.

**(CONTINUED)**

**61.**

**CONTINUED:**

**HASARI**

I'm sorry, forgive me. It won't happen again.

**SCHOOL GIRL**

We're not going to school today. You're taking my mother and me to the Bara Bazar. I'm getting married!

**HASARI**

Oh, I am so pleased for you!  
Panting helplessly, Hasari smiles... as he helps the School Girl's Mother into the rickshaw.

**MOTHER**

Good morning, Hasari.

**HASARI**

Good morning, missus.  
Briskly, he takes up the shafts and sets off.

**MOTHER**

Turn right at that corner, Hasari.

**HASARI**

It's farther that way, missus.

**MOTHER**

No, not really. Turn there, please.

Obediently, Hasari turns (as Ramatullah, heading the other way, passes; they wave) and Hasari pulls AWAY FROM us.

**EXT. SECOND WEDDING SHOP - DAY**

He helps them out of the rickshaw in front of an expensive-looking bridal shop.

**SCHOOL GIRL**

You must remember this shop,

Hasari, when it's your daughter's time. This is the nicest in the city.

The Mother gives the School Girl a withering look and hustles her into the shop. Hasari can just barely hear...

(CONTINUED)

62.

CONTINUED:

**MOTHER (O.S.)**

Don't say things like that. He's never going to be able to buy anything here.

**ON HASARI**

He watches from outside, a look of determination coming over his face. Suddenly a pair of fingers takes hold of his ear, twisting his face painfully.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Ashoka, with The Goonda and two henchmen, in the b.g.

**ASHOKA**

Not working? How will my father eat this evening?

**HASARI**

I was just...

**ASHOKA**

You have a daughter?

**HASARI**

Yes, Babu.

**MARWARI (O.S.)**

Rickshaw wallah!

Called to work, Hasari starts for his rickshaw, but Ashoka hangs on to his ear for another uncomfortable moment... as he slips a rupee into Hasari's shirt pocket.

**ASHOKA**

Keep working. Give this to Sister Joan and your friend the doctor when you go home.

Now he hands Hasari a sealed envelope and turns his ear loose. Hasari springs toward his passenger.

**INT. EXAMINING ROOM - DAY**

Max with his stethoscope to Meeta's baby. Meeta in a brightly-colored sari and a lot of bracelets and Aloka looks on. Poomina clings to the wall.

(CONTINUED)

63.

**CONTINUED:**

**MAX**

He's just malnourished. Is she giving him the milk we gave her or selling it?

Aloka asks Meeta in Hindi. Meeta clearly swears she's giving the baby the milk. Aloka pushes her.

**ALOKA**

Not all. Most.

**MAX**

Tell her to give all the milk to the baby.

Aloka does so as Max bounces the baby, coos to it playfully. The baby pees all over him. Aloka translates quickly. Meeta starts apologizing. Poomina can't help laughing. Max reminds Meeta that that's once for each of the two weeks of the baby's life. Aloka soothes Meeta as she hustles her, Poomina, and the baby out, then quickly begins to wipe Max's face with a clean rag. This isn't something she's accustomed to doing, but she's doing it before she has time to think. Max finds himself conscious of her closeness to him... and then she becomes suddenly self-conscious and she backs off, ducks her head. He peeks up under.

**MAX**

Psst.

She looks at him.

**MAX**

It's okay.

He smiles. So does she.

**EXT. SQUARE - DAY (EARLY EVENING)**

Sunil stands outside the clinic, rolling his sleeves down. Anouar waits at a polite distance. Exhausted but exhilarated, Max and Aloka emerge with an elderly woman patient, Max singing Chuck Berry to the woman's embarrassed delight: "They're really rockin' in Boston, in Philadelphia, P.A..." Sunil looks at his American colleague, smiles a small smile.

**SUNIL**

Good night, I'll see you day after tomorrow.

**MAX**

Good night, Sunil.

**(CONTINUED)**

**64.**

**CONTINUED:**

"... Deep in the heart of Texas, around the Frisco Bay..." Manooj and Shambu come charging at Max with the

soccer ball, hoping to engage him as a playmate. Hasari returns home with his rickshaw. Selima waves at Max, indicates she's cooking dinner. Joan wanders out of the school as the kids are released and go charging through the square. Joan has the Pal kids in hand.

**SELIMA**

Very special supper for you tonight, Doctor Big Brother! Will you stay?

**MAX**

Wish I could, Selima, because I'm sure hungry! Sixteen hours of pestilence and misery always make me famished. I have to go with my man Anouar tonight. I've got lepers to heal!

**ANOUAR**

No, no, you know how patient we are. Eat, eat.

**MAX**

(to Aloka)

You're not tired, are you?

**ALOKA**

Not if you're not.

Between Hasari and Aloka, there's just a flicker of tension; evidently, this has become Max's (and her) normal day. But he's also worried about the note from Ashoka. Joan joins them with the Pal children.

**JOAN**

Well, I think we've got three very good potential scholars here. Behind the children's backs, she points at Manooj and indicates the kid's really got a head.

**JOAN**

Given him some time here, he'll be good enough for a proper school.

**HASARI**

It's more than a father could hope.

(CONTINUED)

65.

CONTINUED:

**MAX**

Fifteen years from now: Miami, Florida, Dr. Manooj Pal, in association with Dr. Maxwell Loeb. For a moment, Hasari is swept up in this little reverie, then remembers reality.

**HASARI**

(giving her the note)



From the godfather's son. For you  
and the doctor.

Amidst instant concern, Joan opens the envelope. Looks  
at Max. We hear the sound of BANGLADESH MUSIC.

**INT. GODFATHER'S "THRONE ROOM" - OLD RADIO - DAY**

The MUSIC is of days gone by, playing on an old RADIO.  
Sticks of burning incense send off trails of smoke. The  
godfather, MR. GHATAK, Looking infirm, wipes a tear from  
his eye.

**GHATAK**

Acha!

Now we see Max and Joan seated on cushions before the  
godfather, tea in hand. Max catches a glimpse in an  
anteroom of several thugs with several young girls, one  
of whom is Poomina. She catches a glimpse of Max as she  
disappears past a door. A moment later, her head peeks  
around the door frame. She brings her hands together.

**ASHOKA (O.S.)**

You!

Poomina quickly disappears. Max's attention is pulled  
back to the godfather...

**GHATAK**

I understand that you're interested  
in expanding your clinic and free  
school, and that you intend to  
start treating lepers in the City  
of Joy.

**JOAN**

We'd like to better serve the  
entire community, Mr. Ghatak.

**(CONTINUED)**

**66.**

**CONTINUED:**

**GHATAK**

Of course. That's very good.  
Admirable. And we'd be pleased to  
rent you suitable space. But you  
must understand that certain  
payments will go up.

**JOAN**

I understand the rent would have  
to go up if we rent larger  
quarters from you, Mr. Ghatak, but  
why should we have to pay more  
protection?

**GHATAK**

More people, more potential  
trouble. Strangers. If I don't

charge you, what will I tell others?

**JOAN**

But we can't afford it!

**GHATAK**

Surely if you can expand, you can pay more.

Joan throws up her hands -- how do you reason with this man?

**MAX**

Am I stupid, but isn't this protection money money we're paying you to protect us from you?

**GHATAK**

We live in chaotic times, Miss Bethel, Doctor. I control the City of Joy and maintain it as a model of harmony. It's a miracle, but a very fragile miracle.

**MAX**

And how are we threatening your miracle?

**GHATAK**

I admire your courage in choosing to work in such a violent place, Miss Bethel.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

67.

**CONTINUED:**

**GHATAK (CONT'D)**

Your neighbors in the City of Joy, they're not educated, they're given to violence, to meanness, I can promise you they won't like having lepers among them, but because they know you're under my protection...

He dispatches a globule of spit into the copper urn next to his right toe... and tries to get to his feet. The Goonda hurries forward to help him.

**GHATAK**

Doctor, do you like our music?

**MAX**

Well, I can't say I've developed a craving for it yet.

**GHATAK**

It's difficult to appreciate what we don't understand, isn't it? Let me put it another way: The

world is a terrible place. Only  
the ruthless prevail. My son will  
make the arrangements with you.

One of the thugs helps the godfather outside, where, in  
the b.g., we see him listening to his music and pottering  
in his garden. As Max and Joan turn, Max finds himself  
face to face with Ashoka, who wears Max's necklace and  
chai. There's a long pause as the two of them take the  
other's measure.

**MAX**

(to Ashoka)

I like your taste in neckwear.

Joan puts a cautioning hand on Max's arm. Ashoka seems  
just the slight bit uneasy dealing with Max and so keeps  
trying to direct himself to Joan. He smokes a long  
Indian cigarette.

**ASHOKA**

The entire package we're proposing  
will cost you three thousand rupees  
a month.

Joan is taken aback by the sum.

**JOAN**

If we pay you that, we won't have  
any money for supplies.

(CONTINUED)

68.

**CONTINUED:**

**ASHOKA**

I'm told you're very resourceful.

**MAX**

I think I see a solution. May I?  
What if we were to work out a  
profit-sharing arrangement? We  
give you a share of our net profit.

**ASHOKA**

How do you expect to make a profit  
off of lepers and the poor, Doctor?

**MAX**

Beats the hell outta me, asshole.

But you've obviously found a way.

The question would seem to be whether Ashoka will have  
Max killed here or outside the house. His eyes on Max,  
Ashoka puts the cigarette out against the back of his  
hand... and smiles at Max.

**EXT. GODFATHER'S HOUSE - DAY**

Joan is furious.

**JOAN**

Have you gone right off your  
rocker!? These people don't have  
a sense of humor. Are you trying

to get yourself killed?

**MAX**

I don't think so... but with me,  
any duplicity is possible.

He tickles her; she knocks his hands away; he tickles her again.

**JOAN**

Stop it, you... you... you nudnick!  
He doesn't stop, and as she storms off down the street,  
he stays right on her, tickling away.

**INT. METAL PIECEWORK SHOP - DAY**

It's dark and claustrophobic. The air vibrates with the SQUEAL and CLATTER of METAL. About twenty kids sit in a line, back to back, manipulating a series of lethal and unprotected lathes and polishers. No one can hear his neighbor.

69.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Hasari, with Shambu in the rickshaw, arrives to take the children home. As he looks inside, he notices...

**HASARI'S POV**

Not far from Amrita sits a handsome boy (Subash). He catches Amrita's eyes. Amrita is sweetly embarrassed to find her father staring at her.

**ON HASARI**

But he can't help but smile. At the same time he's reminded moment to moment of his various obligations.

**EXT. SIDE STREET - DAY**

The three kids in the rickshaw. An ambassador car swerves in front of Hasari, forcing him to jam to a stop, jolting the kids. The Goonda sits in the back seat with Ashoka, who carves his fingernails with a switchblade knife. He crooks a finger at Hasari. Hasari leans close and Ashoka takes him by the ear.

**ASHOKA**

Who gave you your rickshaw?

**HASARI**

The Godfather.

**ASHOKA**

Who provides the food you eat?

**HASARI**

The Godfather.

**ASHOKA**

Remember: Loyalty.

He gives Hasari's ear a last tug... and the car continues

on, leaving Hasari. He looks at his children, ashamed to have been cowed. Manooj fixes his father with a hard look.

**EXT. JOAN'S ROOM - KIDS - ABOVE - NIGHT**

Leaning over, listening, taking in the aroma of...

70.

**INT. JOAN'S ROOM**

Max's cigar. He sits slightly apart from Joan, Sunil, Aloka, Ram, Hasari, Selima, Margareta, Surya, SALADDIN, ASHISH and Shanta, Aristotle John, MEHBOUB, Anouar, and Said.

Hasari is stretched out, Aloka rubbing his screaming legs. Throughout the following, their eyes meet and deflect...

**SALADDIN**

The Godfather is at least civilized. The son is vicious. Remember the last elections -- the Molotov cocktails, the blows with iron bars. They'll throw us out. We won't be able to find anyone else to rent to us. We'll just have to agree to pay what he wants.

**MEHBOUB**

Saladdin's right. Neither nature nor the people with the power have any conscience. We have to pay.

A sigh escapes Surya. He shakes his head. Eyes flick at him.

**ASHISH**

What do you say, Doctor Big Brother?

**SUNIL**

I think we must try to break the Godfather's hold on us.

This is startling and is met with a babble of cautious agreement and dispute.

**SUNIL**

Please, hear me out. But I think we have to be very cautious.

**MAX**

How the hell do you proceed with caution against these people? You can't. You have to risk everything.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

**CONTINUED:**

**MAX (CONT'D)**

You try to negotiate with these people, you make compromises with them, they'll eat you alive. Stand up against them now and they'll fold. I guarantee it. Underneath, they're cowards, they got no guts. We show them we're strong and they'll just move on to easier pickings.

**ASHISH**

We? You have an airplane ticket. Still, he's clearly piqued a lot of support.

**SUNIL**

You know, Max, this is not American gangster television.

**SALADDIN**

Yes, if you're wrong, you don't have to be here.

**MAX**

I'm not wrong. You bow your heads, you plead with your Gods to do what you won't do yourselves. You put up with this nightmare as if there were no choice. I'm telling you, if you don't stand up to that little pimple face now, he'll own you for the rest of your lives.

Everyone stares at him. Many of them want to buy his commitment. There's another large sigh from Surya. Aloka and Hasari's eyes bang off of each other, she silently urging him to speak. He's deeply conflicted and deeply frightened.

**ANOUAR**

Even though I am invisible to some of you and I don't have a complete set of legs to stand on, I stand with the Doctor Big Brother. Maybe nature doesn't have a conscience or those with the power, but don't we?

Said, the giant mute, makes an unintelligible sound in his throat, but clearly he's agreeing with Anouar.

**(CONTINUED)**

**CONTINUED:**

**MARGARETA**

I agree with Anouar and Max Daddah.

I think it's worth the chance.

Silence... until Aloka and Hasari's meet again and, out of his terrible fear and conflict, he says very shyly...

**HASARI**

Is it permitted to speak?

There are quick nods around the room. With great difficulty, Hasari says his piece.

**HASARI**

I want my children to be educated and cared for; this is our home, we have never had such friends.

But many of us owe a great debt to the Godfather. He is strong and could kill us... But we must choose. I trust my Big Brother.

I say we must stand up.

There's still dissension, but somewhat more support. Said makes a fierce, unintelligible supportive sound. Surya sighs again. Eyes flick at the old man.

**SUNIL**

Sister Joan, what do you think, really?

**JOAN**

Well, I think Max has hit on the heart of what we're trying to build here: a self-help society. Each of us has to decide for himself. As for me, I suppose I think, really, that if the bastards are going to suck us dry, I'd like to get in a couple of good left-handers before I turn the other cheek.

**SALLADIN**

But who will rent to us!

Surya clucks his tongue and shakes his head; everyone assumes he is preparing a heated refutation of the resisters. His sighs, though, have been a building commitment.

(CONTINUED)

73.

CONTINUED:

**SURYA**

I have a property I will rent you  
for two hundred rupees a month,  
and not a rupee less. As for  
protection... you are on your own.

Many of the faces are uncertain -- Hasari's notable among them.

**MONTAGE - INT./EXT. COWSHEDS - DAY**

- A) Two cows are shooed out of the ramshackle building as bustling activity on the new clinic begins. Cleaning the place. Debris being torn out, hurled into a pile in the street.
- B) Said, with the strength of three men, holds up a heavy beam while Hasari tries to secure it. Max, hot, smelly, and hating the place, stands in the middle of the room, wishing he were elsewhere. The beams starts to slip. Max leaps to Hasari's side.
- C) We see that Max and Hasari are thrown together again in some carpentering task in uneasy camaraderie. A finger pokes Max on the back. He turns to find Poomina holding out two cups of tea.
- D) The whole group shares a meal, prepared under the direction of Selima, though the lepers remain separate from the normals. Anouar leads the lepers in singing a song. Joan and Margareta pick it up, as do several other of the normals.
- E) Equipment from the old school/clinic being moved from the square down here.
- F) Max and Aloka do one of those dances where two people with arms loaded try to go around each other. Finally he says he'll stand still and she should go around him. They both laugh. Hasari watches.
- G) As Max puts medicine into a cabinet, Ram peeks in, nods his approval, "helpfully" passes Max something Max can reach just fine himself, shows Max an enormous hole in his shorts and hits Max for ten rupees.
- H) A small truck carrying a charitable organization's logo on the side is being unloaded of powdered milk and various other things.

**(CONTINUED)**

**74.**

**CONTINUED:**

**I) UPSTAIRS AND STAIRWELL**

Hasari and Max move the last cot upstairs and into place beside a window that will come into play at the end (It looks down on the street). Hasari nods to Max, indicating he should look.

**J) THEIR POV**

Everyone gathered as Shanta and Ashish put a banner above the door: "You are invited to the festival of this world and your life is blessed." The assemblage applauds and embraces.

**K) UPSTAIRS**

Hasari smiles at Max, brings his hands together, but doesn't embrace the doctor.



**EXT. CLINIC - NIGHT**

Everyone lingers, adults and children. Max plays his trumpet, accompanying Surya on his zither. Manooj hovers over Max.

**MANOOJ**

Doctor Big Brother, aren't you going to smoke your evening cigar?  
Max points at his trumpet, continues playing.

**MANOOJ**

Please.

Max indicates his pocket. Manooj takes out a cigar and a clip. Clips the cigar, holds it out to Max, who indicates Manooj should light it, and keeps playing. Manooj looks at Hasari, who nods. Shambu holds a match to it. Everyone watches as if this were a major event. Manooj takes a puff, chokes, offers the cigar to Mehboub, who takes it, puffs, passes it. Everyone relaxes, enjoys the peacefulness of the smoking and the aroma wafting upward. Ram taps at Max's elbow.

**RAM**

It has come to me tonight to write a letter to my wife.  
Ram produces a mangled one piece letter -- envelope.

**RAM**

Please.

**(CONTINUED)**

**75.**

**CONTINUED:**

He thrusts the paper at Max. Max takes a pen from his pocket.

**MAX**

Okay -- shott.

**RAM**

Yes -- what is the word -- that word -- when land is watered... with canals?

**MAX**

"Irrigation"?

**RAM**

Yes, yes, that word, I want that word in the letter.

Max looks at him, nods, waits. Ram stares at Max; waits.

**MAX**

Well?

**RAM**

Well?

**MAX**

What would you like to say to your wife?

**RAM**

I don't know, Max Daddah. If I  
knew what to say to my wife, I'd  
never have left home.

Everybody laughs, though Ram's remark hits Max on a  
deeper level. Manooj slides in beside him.

**MANOOJ**

Why do you have to go home, Doctor  
Babu?

**ALOKA**

Because he doesn't live here,  
Manooj. This is not his home.

A look between Max and Alok; Hasari's eyes flicking at  
both of them... as Alok's eyes come to Hasari. The  
cigar reaches Ram. As Max starts to write, Ram takes  
a large puff and blows a huge ring out of his mouth. We  
FOLLOW it.

76.

**ABOVE**

A whole row of faces on rooftops enjoying the cigar.  
This as we:

**DISSOLVE TO:**

**EXT. GREEN ACRES - THROUGH RICKSHAW WHEELS - DAY**

THROUGH the WHEELS we see Max come briskly out of the  
hotel carrying his doctor's bag. He's met by the sight  
of Hasari between the shafts of his rickshaw and Anouar  
and Meeta perched on the seat.

**MAX**

On no! Lepers! Lepers in my  
neighborhood!

**ANOUAR**

Sshh! Doctor Big Brother,  
please, we are pretending not  
to be lepers.

**MAX**

Oh, oh, I didn't get the concept  
-- of course, not lepers. I think  
you're going to fool a lot of  
people. I have only one question:  
Why are you here?

**ANOUAR**

We've come to take you to the  
dispensary in grand style on this  
special day, haven't we, Hasari?

**HASARI**

Yes.

**MAX**

Na, I'll just trot alongside Hasari.

**HASARI**

No, please, get in.

Max climbs into the rickshaw beside the two lepers and Hasari pulls away.

**ANOUAR**

Meeta's very excited by this ride through Calcutta. You see, she's never been sightseeing before.

Meeta, of course, is blind. Max, Hasari, Anouar laugh.

**MAX**

You're incorrigible, Anouar.

(CONTINUED)

77.

**CONTINUED:**

**ANOUAR**

Yes, yes, I know, thank you very much.

As the rickshaw disappears into the sea of people and vehicles, we hear Anouar and Max LAUGHING.

**EXT. SIDE STREET - DAY**

Margareta, Manooj, Shambu, Shoba, several other kids and, at the end of the line, Poomina, all carrying water on their heads toward the City of Joy. Suddenly, someone whispers to Poomina. One of Ashoka's thugs. She glances after Margareta and the other kids who are turning a corner and steps into:

**ALLEYWAY**

Where Ashoka waits.

**ASHOKA**

You taking that to the clinic?

(as she nods)

You like it there?

(as she nods)

And they love your smile, don't they?

She's fearful now and doesn't respond. He grabs her, the water pitcher crashes to the ground, he puts his knife into her mouth and lays her face open on both side with his knife.

**EXT. CITY OF JOY - DAY**

Aloka comes TOWARD us leading a group of lepers. And stops. Her hand goes to her mouth.

**THEIR POV - CLINIC - FROM DISTANCE**

Two hundred normal people lined up outside the gaily be-decked dispensary -- many mothers with small children in their arms. Shanta sees Aloka, gestures to indicate the incredible turn-out. The normals at the end of the line turn to look at the approaching LEPERS.

**LEPER WOMAN**

It is too beautiful to believe.

(CONTINUED)

78.

**CONTINUED:**

As if indeed she were right, their path is suddenly cut off by the Goonda and a commando of thugs, armed with sticks and iron bars, backed up by a group carrying banners with slogans proclaiming in Hindi, Urdu, English: "We Don't Want Lepers Here!" There's a sudden uneasy silence. Behind the thugs a short distance is the policeman who harassed Max earlier and another cop. Joan hurries forward.

**GOONDA**

Good morning, Sister to the poor.

**JOAN**

Yes, Mr. Bhose?

**GOONDA**

Those people aren't coming into this neighborhood.

**JOAN**

They are going to be treated at the dispensary. You have no right to stop them.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Hasari arrives with Max, Anouar, and Meeta.

**JOAN**

Go ahead, Aloka, take them inside.

The Goonda puts his hand on Aloka. The policeman in the b.g. keep their distance.

**JOAN**

Take your hands off her, you waster!

Joan is seized by a sudden fury and grabs the Goonda. He grabs her much harder. Said growls and pushes forward. Several thugs turn, step in to neutralize him. Joan elbows the Goonda and tires to wrestle free of him. As a reflex he raises his hand. And as he does, it's seized.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Max (with Hasari in the b.g., confused, conflicted). Max slings the Goonda against the side of a truck.

**GOONDA**

That was a mistake, Doctor.

(CONTINUED)

79.

**CONTINUED:**

**MAX**

The mistake's yours, putz.  
(to Aloka)

Get these people inside.

Aloka starts forward, leading the lepers. She's stopped by a sudden blow from the Goonda's stick across her shoulders, knocking her to the ground, bleeding from the neck.

Hasari bolts for his wife, gets caught up in the melee. Max swings around on the Goonda and for the first time we realize how strong he is, and that he knows how to box. The Goonda goes down and violence erupts. Anouar is chopping at the legs of one of the thugs working on Said. The massive Said tears free and starts to beat the crap out of the two thugs holding him.

The noise brings everyone out of the square, those lined up at the clinic, the children from the school.

Sunil comes flying out of the clinic.

A stampede of those waiting outside the dispensary and those normally in the crowded alley ensues. Shanta runs inside for help. Shopkeepers barricade their shop windows.

One of the thugs pours gasoline over Anouar and lights a match. Hasari kneels beside Aloka when he sees the match ignite the tiny leper. Without thinking, Hasari hurls himself on top of Anouar, rolling him in the dirt and against his own body to put out the flames.

Joan shouts, demanding the violence stop. She's hit from behind; she decides talk isn't going to do it. She grabs a piece of lumber and starts to fight.

#### **ANGLE ON DISPENSARY**

An EXPLOSION in the doorway, scattering anyone who remains in the area of the dispensary doorway, badly wounding Mehboub.

More people with sticks. Hasari goes down under several bodies. Max reaches Aloka, helps her up, sends her toward the clinic. He tears an attacker off of Hasari and they fight back to back a moment. A SECOND EXPLOSION near them... and through the smoke Max sees...

80.

#### **ANOTHER ANGLE**

Ashoka astride his motorcycle, behind his dark glasses, with more thugs, these with Molotov cocktails and pick-axes, ready to raze the clinic and school and the surrounding neighborhood.

Sunil drags Mehboub inside.

People chant: "White Monkeys, go home! White Monkeys, go home! No lepers here! No lepers here!" The thugs cock their iron bars and bricks and Molotov cocktails. Max picks up an iron bar of his own and starts for Ashoka. Suddenly, there's a DETONATION followed by a

BLAST of air so fierce, Max is thrown to the ground. A bottle of GASOLINE has EXPLODED just behind him. He's enveloped in smoke.

An assailant bears down on Joan with a cutlass. As the assailant is about to strike, Hasari seizes the attacker and hurls him backward. Ashish steps in and slashes the assailant with his own weapon, startling, even repelling Hasari.

From all over the lane, young fighters have come and joined the fray, not bothering to choose sides but merely enjoying the release. Hasari lunges for a woman under attack by a boy, arriving too late to stop the boy from plunging his knife into the woman's belly. Hasari fights his way to the woman, but she staggers into the mob.

Max knocks down one of the thugs only to have another hand grasp his shoulder. He turns, fist cocked to find Poomina, her hands holding her face together. Slowly, she takes hands away. The sides of her face have been laid open. Max sweeps her up in his arms, heads for the clinic.

**MAX**

Oh, little girl, little girl...

Joan is suddenly beside Ashoka.

**JOAN**

We'll pay! All right then, so by all means, protect us!

Ashoka raises a hand, The Goonda blows a whistle, and the fighting stops as suddenly as it began. The combatants are breathing heavily. There is silence but for the groans and cries of the wounded and grieving.

**ASHOKA**

In a world such as ours, everyone needs protection. For the fee we discussed, from this day forward, I can assure you nothing like this will happen again.

(CONTINUED)

81.

**CONTINUED:**

A beat... Saladdin is at Joan's shoulder. Ashoka points a finger at Hasari.

**ASHOKA**

You. I warned you about the company you keep.

He REVS his MOTORCYCLE and SCREECHES away, leaving Hasari staring after him in his dust.

**INT. COURTYARD - DAY**

People peer in through every opening. Mehboub's chest is bandaged. Sunil squeezes through the packed courtyard and hallway, Ashish carrying a wounded woman behind him.

Hasari steps into a doorway, us WITH him.

**INT. EXAMINING ROOM - MAX, ALOKA, POOMINA**

Max, blood crusted on her face, sutures Poomina's awful facial wound as Aloka prepares a compress.

**ALOKA**

Will she... Her face, will it...

**MAX**

If she's very careful and doesn't do anything to open the wound, the scarring will be minimal.

(to Poomina)

Do you understand? You can't...

You have to stay here.

(to Joan)

You make her stay here.

**JOAN**

I'll try.

**MAX**

Don't goddamn try, Joan! Goddamn do it!

Poomina peers through her pain at Max, his hands putting her back together.

**MAX**

(a litany)

I hate this place, I hate this place, I hate this place.

Max looks at the doorway and he locks eyes with Hasari. Max breaks the contact. Hasari stares at him as we hear the godfather's MUSIC on the RADIO.

82.

**EXT. GODFATHER'S COURTYARD - HAND AND PENCIL - DAY**

A hand tap, tap, taps against a ledger.

**COURTYARD**

Ashoka sits behind a little table, picking absently at his face. The Goonda is slouched near the table, smoking a cigarette and fiddling with a thin switch. (It's difficult for him to show Ashoka the respect his inherited position gives him.) The Goonda has a bruise under one eye from his altercation in the City of Joy yesterday. The air is filled with the MUFFLED SOUNDS OF the STREET. FROM here, we can see the evermore enfeebled godfather in his "throne room," wrapped in a cashmere, listening to the radio. Ashoka looks up, stares impassively at someone.

**ASHOKA**

Well. What have you got to say?

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

For the first time, we see who Ashoka's speaking to.

**HASARI**

I told them that your father  
provides us with a great deal and  
that --

Ashoka slams his hand on the register.

**ASHOKA**

From this minute, you are off the  
list! You will leave your rickshaw  
here... where it will be reserved  
for a man who deserves our trust.

He stands up. Hasari is near tears.

**HASARI**

Please, Babu, this is as if the  
ground has opened up. I have to  
speak to Mr. Ghatak!

Hasari starts for the house. The Goonda stops him and,  
quickly, has Hasari on his knees, his arm twisted pain-  
fully behind his back. Ashoka jumps at Hasari, grabs  
his ear.

**ASHOKA**

My father's ill! You are speaking  
to me!

(CONTINUED)

83.

**CONTINUED:**

**HASARI**

I have a family!

**ASHOKA**

The decision is made. I have made  
it. Now get out before I have Mr.  
Bhose break your legs.

He gives Hasari's ear a vicious twist and slams his head  
against the table.

**EXT. GODFATHER'S HOUSE - DAY**

The side gate opens and Hasari is shoved out. Stumbling,  
he runs to the fence, peers through. Two men are pulling  
his rickshaw into the courtyard. Hasari watches as a  
steel shutter is pulled down, cutting his livelihood from  
sight.

**ANGLE THROUGH BAR - HASARI**

Numb, compromised, defeated. Perhaps the low point of  
his life.

**INT. CLINIC - JOAN'S ROOM - "RAFT OF MEDUSA" - NIGHT**

Flickering candlelight illuminates the "Raft of Medusa."  
Max rails at Joan.

**MAX**

I just don't... I don't want to...



I don't want to care! I don't want to care this much! I just don't want to be invested in you people. In people! I became a goddamn doctor because my goddamn father wanted me to be a goddamn doctor because he was a goddamn doctor! He was the goddamn king of doctors! It's too goddamn hard!

Out of breath, out of words, Joan reaches out and takes Max to her, brings him beside her on the cot. Beneath the "Raft of Medusa," she sits with an arm around Max, as if he were her son.

**JOAN**

Not everyone's cut out for this. You did the best you could. Better than many. It's all right.

**(CONTINUED)**

**84.**

**CONTINUED:**

**MAX**

I didn't do the best I could! I did what I always do! I shot my big mouth off and did a half-assed job. And what I want to do now is I want to go back to America and make money and live a life without entanglements and demands and people hanging on me.

**JOAN**

(a beat)

You know, the fact is from the minute we're born we're shipwrecked. Some see that as a lifetime of drowning, of fear, others only to endure, but to triumph. It's all in the individual spirit, isn't it?

**MAX**

Got it: To run, to spectate, to commit.

(raises his hand)

Running spectator.

**JOAN**

Then, by all means, go home, Max, and go with my blessing and my eternal friendship.

The candlelight flickers against them as they sit side by side. Neither speaks.

**EXT. RAM'S HUT - TEA SHOP - NIGHT**

At the tea shop, a group relive the day's events. The children sleep. Aloka sits outside, worried about Hasari.

Max comes out, meets Aloka's eyes and looks away. She's heard the conversation.

Hasari, drunk, comes down the slope. Face to face with Max.

**HASARI**

They took away my rickshaw.

Aloka's hand flies to her mouth. Hasari peers at Max with his drunken gaze. It's a terrible moment for Max, but...

(CONTINUED)

85.

CONTINUED:

**MAX**

So what do you want me to do about it -- get it back for you?

Max takes away a step. Stops.

**MAX**

I'm sorry. I'm going home. Because this isn't my fight. I got one person to look after -- me.

Hasari stares at Max. On the roof, the children listen. At the tea shop, the late-night talkers listen.

**MAX**

All right, I'm running out, okay? Because I'm a coward, this is me, this is what I do, I get in over my head, I let people down, I run.

**HASARI**

But I trusted you.

**MAX**

Well, that was your goddamn mistake!

Max walks away, leaving Hasari desolate. Aloka comes to him.

**HASARI**

I don't know how I'm going to pay the rent, how we're going to eat.

**ALOKA**

We have what is saved for Amrita's dowry.

The thought of using the dowry is yet another awful blow to Hasari's hopes.

**HASARI**

The children must leave the school; they'll have to work. And

you will not have anything to do  
with the clinic or those people  
anymore.

Ram joins them.

**RAM**

What I earn is yours, too.

(CONTINUED)

86.

CONTINUED:

**HASARI**

You can't support all of us. You  
have a family in your village, too.

Hasari touches his friend and goes into:

**INT. RAM'S HUT**

Alone in his pain, he spots his tea caddy in which he  
planted his seeds over a month ago. He bends over to  
tenderly touch the growing shoot and water the earth.  
He looks up and the three children are staring at him.  
What will their father do now to keep them alive?

**INT. BLOOD DISPENSARY - CLOSE ON HASARI'S ARM - DAY**

The needle injected, Hasari's blood flowing into a  
bottle.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Hasari seated on the stool, watching his blood leave his  
body, his face again broken out in perspiration.

**HIS POV - RAFIK**

Waiting.

**BACK TO SCENE - HASARI**

His face immobile, his thoughts distant. The Attendant  
starts to pull the needle out. Hasari stops his hand.

**HASARI**

Take more.

The Attendant shakes his head.

**HASARI**

Take more.

The Attendant looks at Rafik, who shrugs, nods... and  
allows the blood to flow on out of Hasari's body.

**EXT. BLOOD BANK - DAY**

Barely ambulatory, Hasari starts down the street, but has  
to stop, lean against a wall. Through his woozy haze, he  
thinks he sees an apparition.

87.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

There, in the entrance to a building, is Gangooly. Seeing a potential victim, he swoops in.

**GANGOOLY**

Not well, brother?

**HASARI**

Still stealing from refugees?  
Gangooly looks at Hasari, recognizes him, and gives him an amazing smile.

**GANGOOLY**

Well, yes, I remember you, of course -- hello! I am delighted to see you -- yes. And tell me immediately, please -- your little family, your beautiful children, everyone eats, yes. Come, have a cup of tea or a little something stronger, we must celebrate.

Gangooly starts to move, to position himself for a get-away. Hasari blocks his egress, unsmiling.

**GANGOOLY**

Ah, well, you're angry at me, yes,  
I wondered if that was still on  
your mind -- I am full of regret  
about that, yes, even a little  
tormented. What can I say? I have  
the spirit of an eagle trapped in  
the body of a crow.

**HASARI**

I'm touched.

**GANGOOLY**

My friend, I am lame and I am poor.  
Does that mean that I shouldn't  
survive? Huh? When a man is  
struggling in a rough sea, he  
clutches onto what he can or he  
drowns. You don't look so well.

**HASARI**

I lost my rickshaw.

Gangooly gives Hasari an appraising look for a moment, then...

(CONTINUED)

88.

CONTINUED:

**GANGOOLY**

Ach! I have an offer. No, listen! Shiva be my witness, you must at least think about this. Please, I can help... Or my name is not Mr. Gangooly.

**HASARI**

Which, fortunately, it is.

**EXT. STREET - MOVING SHOT - DAY**

Gangooly guiding Hasari onward.

**GANGOOLY**

Remove the children from the school  
-- no, why? When you, the father,  
can make a small sacrifice. Nature  
has foreseen your plight. For she  
has given you two eyes, yes, and  
two kidneys. But. To live, you  
have need of one only. I have a  
friend who sold his kidney -- this  
one -- and now -- believe me, this  
is the truth -- he lives in a brick  
home... which he owns.

That smile.

**EXT. SKELETON WAREHOUSE (MITRA & CO. EXPORTERS) - JUDAS  
DOOR - DAY**

A forbidding face appears at the grill, stares out.

**INT. SKELETON WAREHOUSE - DAY**

Hasari and Gangooly enter. A repulsive smell almost  
makes Hasari gag. Gangooly takes Hasari's arm and steers  
him through the gloom. Hasari discovers the origin of  
the smell.

A line of skeletons arranged along the walls. Tables  
stacked with bones: skulls, spines, rib cages, hands  
and feet. Each skeleton sports a label with a price in  
U.S. dollars.

Crouched among the bones and packing crates are men work-  
ing. Some smoke, some have masks over their faces. They  
scrape and clean and decorticate. They skillfully  
assemble their grisly creations, emotionless but like  
artists.

89.

**POV - MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY**

THROUGH a dusty, glass, interior window, we see, almost  
in mime, the manager examining Hasari.

**INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE**

With a smile, the manager produces some papers. Hasari  
shakes his head, starts for the door. Gangooly stops  
him.

**GANGOOLY**

Of course, take some time, think  
about it. People all over the  
world, anxiously waiting, willing

to pay. 15,000 rupees for a  
kidney. 25,000 for an eye.  
Gangooly winks, peers at Hasari with a single eye, and  
smiles.

**INT./EXT. TAXI - ROAD TO AIRPORT - DAY**

Heat haze on the road. As we FOCUS, we FIND Max, Joan,  
Aloka, also with their thoughts. Joan gazes out the  
window of the taxi. Max looks at the back of Joan's head  
a moment, then looks at Aloka, who sits between them.  
She deflects his eyes forward.

**JOAN**

Hasari has forbid her to have  
anything more to do with us. He'd  
be very angry if he knew she was  
seeing you off.

Max looks at Joan. Looks out the window.

**INT. AIRPORT - DEPARTURE AREA - WIDE SHOT - DAY**

First we see joyous people greeting arriving passengers;  
parents greet a young man returning from college abroad.  
The way clears and we CLOSE IN ON Max, Joan, and Aloka, a  
tiny island in this sea of people at the moment of their  
parting. Max empties all the money out of his pockets.

**MAX**

This is for Poomina. When I get  
home...

He thrusts the money on Joan and Max offers his hand;  
she goes through the hand to embrace Max. Then Max and  
Aloka look at each other.

**(CONTINUED)**

90.

**CONTINUED:**

**ALOKA**

You did good things.  
(chokes up, but  
manages)

Thank you for coming to our  
country.

And now Max heads out the door.

**INT. CAFETERIA - ALOKA AND JOAN - DAY**

Sparsely populated. They sit in isolation at a table  
over a cup of tea.

**JOAN**

It's not like he's royalty or  
anything, so I'm not persuaded we  
have to wait for the plane to  
actually take off.

**ALOKA**

No. We should go.  
Yet, they remain another moment... then get up. Joan puts her arm around Aloka and they turn to go. The looks on their faces suggest they've come face to face with something startling.

**ANGLE ON DOOR**

Max. Standing inside the departure doorway.

**MAX**

What were those three choices again?  
Their faces. And his with just a wistful version of his old grin... and we --

**FADE OUT.**

**FADE IN:**

**EXT. COMPOUND - DAY**

Hasari returns. Goes into Ram's hut.

**INT. RAM'S HUT - DAY**

He finds his family... and Max. The two men stare at each other.

**(CONTINUED)**

**91.**

**CONTINUED:**

**MAX**

I need Aloka at the clinic.  
(as Hasari stares)  
All right, they, the patients, need her. She's a good nurse.  
(as Hasari stares)  
Come on, man, this is between you and me. Why take the kids out of school, why punish your wife?  
Hasari holds his anger in; he moves to a mat and lies down, his back to Max. But Max doesn't go.

**MAX**

I have a little money, I can get it from the States...

**HASARI**

It's not a question of money. We'll survive on our own.  
That's it. Hasari lies with his back to Max. After some moments of silence, Aloka indicates Max should go. And he does. After another moment...

**ALOKA**

Maybe he's right. The clinic is for everyone and if I am needed --  
Hasari bolts up, a look of anger on his face we've never seen.

**HASARI**

No! I'm your husband and you'll do as I say! Unless, of course, you've become an American wife and then you'll do as you please!

**HASARI**

Stay away from them. They are not part of us. They will only be good to you as long as you please them.

The children, Aloka are frozen, she very close to tears. Hasari lies back down, again turns his back on them.

**EXT. LEPER COLONY (DAWN) - DAY**

The small colony alive; a line of patients outside a door.

92.

**INT. ROOM - DAY**

Max unwraps a bandage from a leper's partial limb. Looks around for Aloka. She's not there. Said is acting as his nurse. Points at his instruments.

**MAX**

Hand me the scissors, please.

Helpfully Said hands him the tweezers.

**MAX**

Scissors, scissors.

He demonstrates. Said fumbles through the instruments, picking up the scissors by the ends.

**MAX**

Not that end -- No, that's fine, thanks, I've got it.

**EXT. LEPER COLONY - DAY**

Max comes out with his last patient. Anouar waits.

**ANOUAR**

Max Daddah, you are finished?

(Max nods)

Follow me.

Anouar takes off down the lane and disappears quickly into a little building, Max following.

**INT. TANNERY - DAY**

Max follows Anouar past bubbling cauldrons and heaps of animal skins. The place stinks fiercely. Anouar and Max exit into...

**A SMALL YARD**

Two young men (the two pullers Chomotkar and Ramatullah) ... and something covered with a tarp.

**MAX**

You didn't steal this.

**RAMATULLAH**

The police, Sahib, they stole it.



We stole it from them.

(CONTINUED)

93.

**CONTINUED:**

The pullers whip the tarp off. A battered rickshaw, the springs poking out of the seat, the broken wheels lying in the body, the finish scarred and gouged, one shaft broken.

**MAX**

How much?

**EXT. SQUARE - DAY**

Max comes into the square. Aloka and Selima are preparing meals. Manooj, Shambu, and three other boys playing. Ram is trying to jolly Hasari, who's deep in his own reverie. Max stands in front of Hasari.

**MAX**

I'd like to show you something.

Just take a minute.

A beat as Hasari fixes Max with an empty stare and the family waits to see if Hasari will respond.

**MAX**

Go ahead. Go on.

**EXT. COURTYARD AND STORAGE SHED - CLINIC**

The sound of a PADLOCK being UNLOCKED. DARK SCREEN. Light flashes. Max and Hasari appear in the doorway. Surprised by the light, a few rats scurry off. Somewhere a dog BARKS. Slated, shafted light. He indicates a corner.

**THE RICKSHAW**

Piled up in its ruin.

**MAX**

I'm good with my hands. You're good with yours. What do you say?

Hasari looks at Max, part resentful, part touched.

**HASARI**

If I were to go on the street with this machine, I would end up in a gutter with my throat cut.

(CONTINUED)

94.

**CONTINUED:**

**MAX**

Well, it's yours if you want it. You know the license, the cops, all that can be fixed. You'll

own this -- it'll have nothing to do with the Godfather.

**HASARI**

Doctor Daddah, I'm just a small man. Don't try to tempt me again with big thoughts.

Hasari starts to leave. Max blocks his way.

**MAX**

You didn't want me to quit. Well, I came back.

**HASARI**

But can you be trusted?

**MAX**

I hope so.

Hasari can see the hope and desire in Max's face. After a moment, Max steps aside. Hasari bends his head and makes off. Leaving Max and a small sigh of disappointment.

**EXT. LATRINES - FOUNTAIN - ALOKA - DAY (DAWN)**

She takes her morning absolutions, bathing in the fountain. The process is extremely sensual, though there is not even a glimpse of her nakedness as she moves her clothing around, cleansing this area, then that. She glances up to see...

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Max, in an Indian shirt, heading for the square; rather naturally, he brings his hands together in the Indian salutation. He carries several bottles of distilled water, a large value pack of bar soap, and a carton of medical supplies. As he passes, his eyes hook on Aloka's. He lifts a hand in greeting. After a moment, she ducks her head. He turns and continues on coming face to face with Ram, an enormous smile on his face. With him, Hasari. He glances at his wife in the water.

**MAX**

(to Hasari)

Going to look for work?

**(CONTINUED)**

95.

**CONTINUED:**

When Hasari doesn't answer...

**RAM**

Yes, he is.

Ram has a small coughing fit.

**MAX**

Are you taking your medicine?

**RAM**

Yes, yes, but look at this.

He points at the wheel of his rickshaw; the rim is

cracked. Scornfully, Hasari walks on. Max and Ram glance after him. Max digs out several rupees. Ram takes them and goes. Max looks after the two men as they disappear. When he turns...

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

...he finds himself face to face with Aloka. Without a word, they start walking side by side toward the square. It's several seconds before she says...

**ALOKA**

He's very proud.  
They walk on in silence -- two friends, separated by a gulf.

**EXT. DOCKS - FROM THE GATE - DAY**

Men moving like ants into the bow of the ship. Hasari is locked out, turned away without work.

**EXT. METRO CONSTRUCTION SITE - DAY**

A huge gouge in the black mud, sunlight streaming through steel girders across it. Hasari emerges from the ground, looking for someone. Stops him. The foreman shakes his head, no, before Hasari even has the chance to ask for work.

**EXT. SKELETON WAREHOUSE - EXTREME CLOSEUP - HASARI'S FACE - DAY**

Then we see he's standing outside Mitra & Co., staring at it, wondering if it's time to sell part of himself. No! We see on his face a look that tells us he will not be beaten.

96.

**EXT. CLINIC - COURTYARD - DAY**

The street children's school now takes up two rooms. Children peer out of one room now as, to the accompaniment of Surya's zither, twenty or so girls are doing some Indian classical dancing, under the eye of a young Indian teacher.

Across the way, in the other room, some children are translating Bengali words into English. A boy is writing on the board. It's Manooj. We see that Shambu is in the same class.

**INT. EXAMINING ROOM**

FROM BEHIND, we watch Max take a wrapping off of Poomina's wound, Joan assisting him. Indeed, Ashoka extended Poomina's smile on either side of her mouth. The scars are healing as nicely as could be expected. Max did a fine job.

**MAX**

You must have had a good doctor.

Still no running, jumping, picking up anything heavy. And you stay here. You're going to help Sister Joan and you're going to school. Do you understand?

A beat, Poomina nods. But now a look of abject fear comes over her face.

The Goonda stands in the doorway. Max begins singing "Sweet Little Sixteen." The Goonda stares impassively at Max.

#### **THE GOONDA**

Time to collect the rent, Sister.

#### **JOAN**

Of course. Come with me, please.

Joan leaves, followed by The Goonda. Max works carefully at the fine line of scabbing on Poomina's scar... but then something takes his attention.

#### **ACROSS THE COURTYARD**

Manooj, with a small tin of food, looks this way and that... and then sneaks into the shed.

#### **EXT. SHED - DAY**

We hear a, TAP, TAP, TAP. The door is half open. The padlock is hanging on its chain. Max opens the door.

97.

#### **INT. STORAGE ROOM**

Startled, frightened, Hasari presses himself against the wall, as does Manooj. Hasari is wearing a wet dhoti, caught in the middle of straightening the wheel rim of the old rickshaw.

#### **HASARI**

Close the door!

Max is very surprised but, needless to say, pleased. He looks at the rickshaw, looks at Hasari.

#### **HASARI**

Close the door. The Godfather has more eyes than a pineapple.

Max quickly closes the door. The half light is broken by thin beams of light that dance with dust. Hasari studies Max a moment, then moves to put the first wheel on. Instinctively, Manooj moves to his side, takes hold of the rickshaw so Hasari can slip the wheel on. Hasari nods and goes for the other wheel. Manooj moves around to the other side, hefts the carcass. Hasari slips on the second wheel. Hasari looks at Max. Max brings his hands together and starts to go.

#### **HASARI**

I was saying to Manooj that if a

man bows down too many times,  
there will come a day when he will  
no longer be able to stand upright.  
The two men look at each other... and then Hasari gets  
on with his work.

**MAX**

I promised Manooj and Shambu I'd  
take them to the movies. Is it  
all right?

**HASARI**

(a beat)

If a man makes a promise...  
Max brings his hands together and starts for the door.  
Hasari picks up one of the worn seat boards.

**INT. MOVIE THEATER - NIGHT**

We're TRACKING WITH a moving bag of peanuts behind a row  
of boy's heads. On the screen in front of them, a "medi-  
eval era" sword battle between the great Kumar Kapur and  
a legion of bad guys.

(CONTINUED)

98.

**CONTINUED:**

We hear the sound of CRACKING NUTS as we MOVE FROM Manooj  
to three kids we've seen in the neighborhood (two boys  
Manooj's age and Shoba, who's Shambu's age) and then to  
Shambu, each kid dipping into the bag in his turn.  
Finally: Max's (and on the other side of him, Amrita  
and Poomina.) The bag arrives... empty.

**MAX**

(whispering)

Thanks, guys. Who wants to go for  
more peanuts?

No one. We're talking about rapt attention. We hear  
NUTS CRACKING. Max smiles.

**EXT. STREET - NEAR CITY OF JOY - NIGHT**

Max and the boys walking home after the movie, the boys  
dancing around each other, acting out the fight sequences,  
all of the sword-fighting against Max, who battles them  
all over the street, in and around cars, Poomina and Amrita  
looking on shyly, as El Max fights to save their honor.

**MANOOJ**

I can't decide if I want to be  
Kumar Kapur or a doctor.

**MAX**

Ha ha! You can be both! Manooj  
Pal, swashbuckling physician!

**MANOOJ**

You're so much fun, El Max. I

wish my daddy were as much fun as  
you.

Max stops the fight, takes Manooj by the shoulders.

**MAX**

I wish my father loved me like  
your father loves you. Your dad's  
a very special man. And now, en  
garde!

As the battle continues, the bright beams of a truck  
come at them.

**MAX**

Time out, men. Off the street  
till this truck passes.

**(CONTINUED)**

**99.**

**CONTINUED:**

The kids move toward the wall of the building they're  
passing, but the truck seems to turn toward them, seem-  
ing not to intend to pass, but to hit them.

The look on Max's face lets us know he senses something  
terrible is in the offing here. He shouts for the kids  
to get out of the way, shoving the kids closest to him  
into a doorway. He turns to Shambu, who's behind him,  
calls to him.

But in a panic, Shambu doesn't move into the shelter of  
the building on his right... but tries to run across the  
street. Max leaps for the little boy too late... as the  
truck just misses Max and clips Shambu hard, sending the  
little boy flying.

**EXT. SQUARE - NIGHT**

Manooj runs ahead of everyone as he charges into Ram's  
hut, crying for his father. Behind Manooj come the  
others, Max carrying Shambu in his arms. Hasari and  
Aloka, Ram, Joan, others in the square hurtle out of  
their huts.

**MAX**

I can't do anything here. He's  
got a compound fracture, he  
hemorrhaging. We've got to get  
to a hospital -- now!

**JOAN**

You'll never get a taxi at this  
hour.

**EXT STREET - HASARI'S FEET - DAY (EARLY EVENING)**

He pounds along, the wheels wobbling and squeaking,  
urging people out of his way. Max runs alongside Hasari.

Aloka sits on the seat with Shambu, whose quiet moaning fills her ears. Blood drips down the rickshaw.

**EXT. PARK STREET - FROM THE RICKSHAW - DAY**

Several taxis waiting for clients outside a row of restaurants. Hasari and Aloka watch as Max argues with the drivers. They won't take a bleeding passenger.

**SAME STREET - MOMENTS LATER**

The race to the hospital continues.

100.

**EXT. MEDWAR PINE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT**

The arrive at the gates of the huge, Victorian hospital. People sleep outside the gates.

**INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - SIDE ROOM - DAY**

The wards are full, as are the corridors. Patients on beds and stretchers everywhere. Most have at least one member of their family to look over them. In a side room, Max is arguing with a porter who tells him he can't help him. Max slaps some rupees into the porter's hand, tells him to take him to the person in charge. Shambu is fading. Aloka smooths the sweat from his brow, trying to keep Shambu alive by force of will and love. Then Max is back, standing over her with another man. It may take a moment before we recognize the ATTENDANT from the Blood Bank.

**MAX**

They'll admit him, but we have to pay for the blood. I gave him all I had. He wants more. Do you have anything?

**ALOKA**

Sister Joan gave me this. Aloka holds out a fistful of rupees. The Attendant blows through his lips, indicating it's a paltry sum. Max grabs the money and shoves it at the Attendant.

**MAX**

We haven't got any more! The Attendant doesn't move... until he sees Max is about to explode.

**MAX**

If this child dies while you stand here, I'll kill you. The Attendant is smart enough not to push any further.

**MAX**

Now, I need an X-ray room and I need an O.R. nurse.

**ATTENDANT**

Not possible. You can't give care, you're an American. You

must be an Indian doctor.

(CONTINUED)

101.

CONTINUED:

**MAX**

Then take me to one!

As Max takes flight with the Attendant, Aloka strokes Shambu and Hasari hovers. We CLOSE IN ON Shambu's inanimate face and HOLD a moment.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Max hurtles down the corridor with a young INTERN in tow. Almost a kid, he's been up for days. But he's going to help.

**INTERN**

This way, please.

Max scoops Shambu up and rushes down the corridor behind the Intern, leaving Hasari and Aloka looking after him. His arm comes around her shoulders.

**EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY (DAWN)**

Hasari and Aloka wait. People are starting to move about.

**HASARI**

You're my wife, Aloka, you and my children are all my wealth. But if Max Daddah and Big Sister Joan have need of you, you may go to them.

Max comes out of the hospital. The two Pals stare at him.

**MAX**

We pinned his leg. Couple of months, he'll be better than ever. They want to keep him today. We're a good team. Gimme five.

He smiles, holds out a palm for them to slap. They look at the palm, unsure what this means. Yet, each takes Max's hand.

**EXT. CLINIC - COURTYARD - DAY**

The whole community is here, around the tree.

(CONTINUED)

102.

CONTINUED:

**JOAN**

I don't think it was an accident. I think they were aiming for Max. So, what we have to ask ourselves is whether his presence is



endangering all of us.

**ANOUAR**

Even from my low vantage point, I know this: It's the son. He's mad.

**HASARI**

Max Daddah is our friend. If they're trying to harm him, then they're trying to harm all of us. We must stand by him as one.

**INT. SHED - CLOSE ON TWO PAINTBRUSHES - NIGHT**

dip into a little box of paints. The boys look on as the two men paint an intricate design on the shafts. Shambu sits in the rickshaw seat. He wears an ankle to hip cast. Manooj is spelling words and urging Shambu to follow suit. Aloka is putting out a tray of food. Ram, Ramatullah, and Chomotkar slip in, quickly close the door. The two pullers focus on the rickshaw, Ram on Max.

**RAM**

Doctor Daddah, please, very important, only one moment.

**MAX**

This is going to cost me every rupee I didn't make today.

Ram thrusts an envelope into Max's hand.

**MAX**

A letter from your wife.

Ram nods nervously. Max looks at the postmark as he slices it open with a finger.

**MAX**

This is postmarked six weeks ago.

**RAM**

So?

**(CONTINUED)**

103.

**CONTINUED:**

**MAX**

So, what have you been doing -- incubating it?

**RAM**

I was afraid.

Ram waits, his hands twisting each other.

**MAX**

'My dear husband...'

**RAM**

Oh that's very hopeful so far!

**MAX**

'Your words brought tears of joy

to my arid eyes.'

**RAM**

Oh, I'm in love! My words  
brought tears to her arid eyes!

(then fearful)

What does that mean -- arid?

Manooj throws his hand up.

**MANOOJ**

I know! Dry.

**MAX**

Correct. Her eyes were dry, your  
letter irrigated them.

**RAM**

Aaah!

He snatches the letter, crushes it to his heart. Notices  
the finish work on the rickshaw.

**CHOMOTKAR**

This is a puka nasgar. What a  
curse that you can't use it.

**HASARI**

I'm going on the streets tomorrow.

This gets everyone's attention. The pullers shake their  
heads, they're worried for him.

**MAX**

Listen. I don't want you to think  
I'm crazy, but I don't think that  
truck was an accident.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

**104.**

**CONTINUED:**

**MAX CONT'D)**

I think Ashoka was after me. You  
can bet he'll be after you too.

**HASARI**

I'm going to speak to his father.

**MAX**

Can I go with you? I'll go with  
you. Can I go with you if I shut  
up?

A beat... and Hasari gives him a small nod.

**EXT. GODFATHER'S HOUSE - DAY**

Ghatak is literally carried out of the house by an  
orderly and placed into his car. There's a driver  
and there is the Goonda. They start down the street.  
We're WITH the car. Suddenly, the driver slams on the  
brakes and from:

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

We see Hasari and Max blocking the street with the new rickshaw. The Goonda jumps out of the car, comes threateningly at Hasari.

**HASARI**

Babu, please, I beg you, hear  
my words!

As the Goonda is about to land on Hasari we hear a feeble...

**GHATAK**

Wait.

The Goonda backs off. The Godfather waves Hasari and Max close. Hasari brings his gleaming rickshaw to the window of the car, Max at his shoulder.

**HASARI**

May I say first, Babu, I wish you  
long life and good health.

**GHATAK**

Acha! They take me now to the  
scientists. They stick needles in  
me, take pictures of my insides,  
study them, and then tell me what  
I know.

(CONTINUED)

105.

**CONTINUED:**

The Godfather stares at Hasari, flicks his eyes at Max. Waits.

**HASARI**

When you gave me work, I swore I  
would be as your youngest brother.  
Your son thinks I have been  
disloyal. He took my rickshaw.  
With my friend, I have remade this  
one. I beg you to let me go again  
onto the streets. I have my family.

The old man looks at the rickshaw, at the obvious care that went into its renovation, at this unlikely team of refurbishers. He reaches a shaking hand out toward a shaft. Hasari brings it close. The old man rubs the shaft.

**GHATAK**

It is very beautiful.

**HASARI**

Thank you, Babu.

**GHATAK**

If I may say, it has an allure.

**HASARI**

An allure, Babu -- thank you.

The Godfather stares at Hasari, then at Max.

**GHATAK**

The world is chaos. We struggle  
to build something permanent,  
then our bodies betray us, our sons  
betray us.

(to Hasari now)

Yes, you may take your rickshaw  
out. If you can face up to my son.

The Goonda gets back into the car and the car pulls away  
and we are left with Hasari and Max as moment.

**EXT. SKELETON WAREHOUSE (MITRA & CO) - DAY**

Hasari enters.

**INT. MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY**

The manager stares at Hasari, as he consumes a pot of  
rice and vegetable curry. Gangooly hovers like a crow.  
Hasari stares at the contract before him.

(CONTINUED)

106.

**CONTINUED:**

**HASARI**

If a man dies and he's not burned,  
what do you think becomes of his  
soul?

The manager turns his palms up, continues chewing.  
Hasari stares through the window at the row of skeletons.

**HASARI**

I must provide for my family.

**GANGOOLY**

Oh, it's a noble fate. If indeed  
your wheel ceases to turn, you will  
help educate somewhere in this  
great world a fine doctor.

Hasari bends to the contract and laboriously signs his  
name.

**EXT. GODFATHER'S HOUSE - DAY**

Hasari arrives to an outcry of anger. There are several  
dozen rickshaws. Among the passersby, we see umbrellas,  
as the people on the street try to combat the incredible  
heat.

**HASARI**

What's going on?

**CHOMOTKAR**

The Godfather ill! The son is  
raising the rent!

Ashoka is on his front steps with a loudspeaker before a  
growing crowd of pullers. He's backed up by the Goonda  
and a dozen of his thugs. The loudspeaker lifts  
Ashoka's voice above the anger.

**ASHOKA**

Do you know how much it costs to  
change the spoke in a wheel? Or  
how much baksheesh I have to pay  
the police?

Impulsively, Hasari moves forward. Cries from pullers:  
"Who will be the victims of this madness? You?" "Hell  
no!" "You don't need the six rupees each old crate  
brings you per day to fill your belly! For us, it means  
death!" The street is so packed with rickshaw and  
pullers now that cars can't get through. A chorus  
of HORNS HONK; drivers scream.

(CONTINUED)

107.

**CONTINUED :**

**RAMATULLAH**

We haven't been breaking our  
backs between the shafts of our  
rickshaws in order to weep for  
you!

Hasari continues forward, his eyes on Ashoka.

**CHOMOTKAR**

The only thing that matters is the  
bundle of rupees we take to the  
munshi each month to feed and to  
answer the daily needs of our  
children!

RASSOUL steps up on a telagarhi with a loudspeaker.

**RASSOUL**

Listen to me! Listen now! Listen  
to me!

(when the pullers  
quiet)

Friends! I ask you to vote for an  
unlimited strike. Inkalabad  
zindabad! Long live the  
revolution! Rickshaw Workers Union  
zindabad!

A strike? No income at all? The slogan is taken up  
by a small percentage of the assemblage. Fear and  
doubt on many faces.

**ASHOKA**

That's what I thought. All  
right, get to work! Customers  
are waiting!

**ON HASARI**

Something detonates in him and he jumps onto the tela-  
garhi and grabs the microphone from Ashoka. Police

arrive in vans.

**HASARI**

Friends! The Godfather at least  
is a caring man! This one,  
though, the son --

A signal from Ashoka and one of the thugs knocks Hasari  
down.

**(CONTINUED)**

108.

**CONTINUED:**

**ASHOKA**

We helped this man! We gave him  
a job, a place to live! This is  
how he shows his gratitude. Get  
on the streets now! Or turn in  
your machines!

Hasari gets up and tries to speak.

**HASARI**

Friends -- don't! If we stand --  
He gets hit again. A number of the pullers come forward  
and a riot starts. The police move in, beat and arrest  
many of the demonstrators. Ramatullah and Chomotkar  
try to help Hasari, but they are descended on by cops  
who hurl them aside and beat Hasari senseless until  
the:

**SCREEN GOES BLACK.**

**FADE IN:**

**INT. BONSAI COURT - DAY**

Birds flying below ceiling. The room has a barred cage  
running all around its edge; the cage is filled to near  
overflowing. Hasari stands before the JUDGE, his face  
covered with blood, his body a mass of aches and welts.  
At the back of the room, Max and Aloka; elsewhere,  
Ashoka, the Goonda, and several of his thugs.

**HASARI**

The life of a rickshaw puller is  
not one a man would choose if he  
had a choice. Our feet blister  
and burn up from the boiling  
asphalt, our noses burn from the  
fumes of countless motor cars and  
buses, our backs curve permanently  
from the loads we carry hour after  
hour, day after day. But I am  
proud to be one of the human horses  
who carry my countryman from place  
to place and I am thankful for the  
opportunity to make a living. But  
I will not keep silent anymore and  
I will not be cheated and

threatened anymore. Life is hard  
enough. No more.  
Ramatullah starts to applaud. Rassoul follows suit.  
The Judge bangs his gavel.

(CONTINUED)

109.

CONTINUED:

**JUDGE**

Silence!

(when it's silent)

This man will be permitted to  
use his rickshaw without let or  
hindrance. And I will make a  
restraining order against Mr.  
Ghatak.

Cheers from the pullers. The Judge bangs his gavel.

**JUDGE**

I haven't finished these  
proceedings. For his part in this  
disturbance, I fine the defendant  
50 rupees.

**HASARI**

Fifty rupees, Your Honor?  
That's --

**JUDGE**

Pay at this time or spend seven  
days in jail!

Seven days in jail will cost him far more than fifty  
rupees. As he reaches into his pocket for his screw  
of money, a hand suddenly protrudes into the cage through  
the bars.

**RAMATULLAH**

Hasari!

And now another hand with several rupees reaches through.

**RASSOUL**

Hasari!

Now a dozen voices call his name and a dozen hands reach  
through the bars with rupees clutched in their fists and  
press the money into Hasari's hands. The Judge, Max and  
Aloka, and certainly Ashoka watch this in amazement. The  
Judge bangs his gavel.

Max turns, shoots a little finger gun and winks at Ashoka.

**CLOSE ON ASHOKA**

ON his face, we see pure hatred for these two men.

110.

**EXT. CITY OF JOY - DAY**

Amrita, Manooj, and Shambu. With them, Subash flirting  
with Amrita, incurring the wrath and admiration of her  
brothers, causing her to flush.

THUNDER sounds. They all look up. Rain starts to fall. People run outside of workshops and huts, crying, "The rains, the rains." Suddenly, a THUNDERCLAP shakes the earth and rain begins to bombard them. The rain falls, the WIND HOWLS, and people in the lane are dancing, praising the beginning of the monsoon season. Men tear off their shirts, women rush out fully clothed, singing. Swarms of naked children run about. The kids run toward the clinic/school.

**EXT. CLINIC COURTYARD - DAY**

Hasari is locking his rickshaw into the shed. Staff and several patients come out of the examining rooms -- Joan, Aloka, Sunil, Anouar, Poomina. Margareta and her students, a new teacher, Bandona, her students come out of the classrooms... They're all swept up in dancing, Joan's metal cross jumping about as if it were beating out time. From his balcony, Max emerges with his trumpet and plays the first bars of "Singin' In the Rain." Everyone looks his way; he begins to hum and sing as he jumps over the balcony to the ground and takes off in a wild, improvised, but damn good version of Gene Kelly's dance in the rain, bringing Anouar on his cart in as his dancing partner. Everyone in the courtyard crowds around them, laughing and encouraging the dancer/singers on. The number builds to an extraordinary climax with Max sliding through mud to an exquisite finish at Joan's feet. There's thunderous applause.

**INT. CLINIC - NIGHT**

Rain. Max, The Pals, Ram, Joan, Anouar, Meeta and the Baby, Poomina, Saladdin, Mehboub, Ashish, Shanta, Margareta, Bandona, and the other members of the committee sharing a meal.

**HASARI**

Really -- a boyfriend, Amrita?

**AMRITA**

No!

Amrita whacks Manooj.

**(CONTINUED)**

**111.**

**CONTINUED:**

**MANOOJ**

Yes, she does. His name is Subash Ghosh. His father owns the workshop.

**HASARI**

Is there someone you care about?

The look in Amrita's eyes tells us indeed there is. Hasari smiles at Amrita and then at Aloka.



**HASARI**

Then I must speak to his father  
and I must complete your dowry.  
Amrita squeezes close to her mother. This is serious  
and joyous.

**HASARI**

You will make people sigh at how  
beautiful you are. And I shall  
drop tears of joy.

**RAM**

At my wedding I became so  
frightened, my father gave me  
things to drink to calm me down.  
I went out to piss and fell asleep  
under the village tree. When I  
woke I thought it was the tree I'd  
married. I still love that tree.  
The laugh. But Hasari's attention is on his daughter.  
He reaches a loving hand to her.

**INT. GREEN ACRES - MAX'S BATHROOM - TUB FAUCET - NIGHT**

A rag has been wrapped around the faucet and water runs  
slowly and silently down into the nearly filled tub. The  
scene is illuminated dimly by a flashlight with fingers  
over the beam.

**ON MAX**

He sleeps. Suddenly he's grabbed, his eyes spring open  
in fear. Hands yank him out of bed, slam him up against  
the wall, then hurtle him across the room and into:

**BATHROOM**

Where the tub has been filled. His head is slammed down  
underwater and he's held there struggling.

**(CONTINUED)**

**112.**

**CONTINUED:**

His head is yanked up and through bleary eyes he sees a  
knife at his throat and the Hewbrew letter chai dangling  
from the knife - wielder's neck, illuminated by a  
flashlight.

**ASHOKA**

Go home, Doctor.  
Before he can respond, he's slammed down into the tub of  
water again and held there until it seems his lungs will  
explode. Then he's dumped backward, gasping for breath.

**EXT. CITY OF JOY - SQUARE - NIGHT**

Max on the run through the rain, carrying his belongings.

**CLINIC**

He pounds through the puddles, past a sleepy old watchman, and through the gate.

**INT. COURTYARD - NIGHT**

He bangs on Joan's door. She opens the door in her Indian pajamas. One look at him...

**JOAN**

What's happened?

**MAX**

Ashoka ordered me to go home.

Well, I've come home.

A beat. She steps aside, he steps in, and the door closes him safely inside.

**EXT. PARK CIRCUS - DAY**

The rickshaw station. The rain pours down. People clamor for rickshaws. The line moves forward as fast as the pullers can take on passengers. Hasari, Ram, Ramatullah, Chomotkar look at the stalled buses, the streetcars, the taxis, the private cars.

**CHOMOTKAR**

What a joy it is to survey this disaster! We will all make a fortune!

(CONTINUED)

113.

**CONTINUED:**

**HASARI**

The monsoon is the great Durga's gift to the human horse!

Hasari glances at Ram, who isn't a part of the joking.

**HASARI**

What's the matter?

**RAM**

I'm wet and I'm cold. Your daughter is getting married. Time is passing. I want to go home to my wife.

Chomotkar touches Hasari, nods across the street. There, we see the Goonda and two thugs.

**RAMATULLAH**

Hasari!

It's Hasari's turn. He can't stay to talk with Ram now. He has to go.

**MARWARI #4**

How much to the market?

**HASARI**

Eight rupees.

**MARWARI #4**

What! I won't pay it!

**HASARI**

Who else needs a ride? I am  
available at a price!

Several others crowd and shove toward him.

**MARWARI #4**

No! Take me -- I'll pay, let's  
go!

**HASARI**

The price just went up! Ten  
rupees! In advance.

The Marwari hesitates only as long as it takes him to dig in his soaking wet pants and to slap the bills into Hasari's hand and climb aboard. Hasari sets out with great difficulty -- and greater determination -- through the floodwaters, flicking his eyes at the Goonda as he goes.

**114.**

**EXT. WEDDING SHOP - DAY**

Water pours down. FROM HERE we see Hasari inside, putting money down in front of the shop owner and then hustling back into the rain and taking up his shafts. We WATCH the owner look after him with a touch of disdain as he comes into the window and takes down the beautiful green and gold sari.

**EXT. CLINIC - GUTTERS - NIGHT**

Water pouring from above; the gutters overflow with refuse. We PAN UP to the clinic.

**INT. CLINIC COURTYARD**

Water pouring off the room into the courtyard. Hasari locks his rickshaw into the shed and turns out, attention to Max, Aloka, Joan, Poomina, Margareta, Mehboub, several others trying to patch leaking roof tiles and keep supplies high and dry.

**INT. CLINIC ROOM**

Hasari enters. Max looks at him, doesn't like the look of the obviously exhausted man.

**HASARI**

How can I help?

**EXT. CIRCULAR ROAD - FISTFUL OF RUPEES (RUNNING MONTAGE)  
- DAY**

An Anglo couple jockeying for preference. Hasari selects them from a crowd. This is the beginning of RUNNING

**MONTAGE.**

- A) He runs AT us from different directions with riders -- pushing, pushing -- the water getting higher, our FOCUS VARIOUSLY IN NORMAL AND SLOW MOTION ON his feet, his tensed muscles; for a moment, we hear only his breathing, the sound of his feet on the pavement, the RAIN AGAINST the CANOPY of the rickshaw.
- B) He drags up with an entire, well-to-do family of six, packed into the rickshaw.
- C) He stumbles to a stop outside the emergency entrance to the hospital, carrying a mother and her sick child.

(CONTINUED)

115.

**CONTINUED:**

- D) An upper-crust Brahmin dressed in crisp white, an umbrella protecting him against the harsh elements.
- E) Four uniformed school children huddled, laughing together under the rickshaw's canopy.

**INT. LEPER COLONY - MEETA'S ROOM - DAY**

The rain continues, as does the work in the clinic. Max is working on Anouar, Aloka assisting. Meeta and the baby (now 6 months old) in the b.g.

**ANOUAR**

I think Aloka would have a gentler touch than you, Max Daddah. Maybe she should perform this surgery on her own.

Aloka ducks her eyes, embarrassed.

**MAX**

Last time you told me you were more than two women could manage.

**ANOUAR**

Yes, but given a choice between one and none, I will accept the one.

Max lifts Anouar off the table and places him on his cart.

**MAX**

Okay, you ought to be good for another few days. Send in the next patient.

Anouar scoots out. Max and Aloka both turn to the instruments lying on the table and knock a pair of scissors to the floor. Simultaneously, they bend to pick it up and bang heads.

**LOW ANGLE**

The first impulse of each is to touch the other's head. But almost simultaneously, their hands freeze short of

touching. Several months ago, Max might have tried to kiss her; now, though, there is friendship and affection. FROM here, we see a pair of bare feet. We COME WITH Max and Aloka UP.

116.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Shoba, a deeply concerned look on his face. Slowly his hands come forward, holding his parrot, with a broken wing. He puts the parrot on the examining table.

**INT. POST OFFICE - DAY**

Hasari seals a letter and a money order into an envelope, seals, and puts it into the slot. He is clearly exhausted. Outside he can see two Sikh merchants at his rickshaw, looking around in the rain for him. He hurries toward the door.

**HASARI**

Here! I'm here!

**INT. SUBASH'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

Aloka and three women huddled beside a window, Amrita half hidden behind them. We PAN ACROSS a staircase TO another window, THROUGH which we see a doorway. In the doorway, Subash turns to smile a shy smile at Amrita; he shrugs. PAST him now, we see Hasari facing SUBASH'S FATHER and three UNCLES, surly men with hair matted with mustard oil. The Ghoshes are all seated on low chairs and stools. Hasari is standing.

**INT. ROOM - NIGHT**

Mr. Ghosh and the Uncles stare at Hasari, who stands politely and hopefully before them.

**MR. GHOSH (SUBASH'S FATHER)**

You're a rickshaw puller, am I correct?

**HASARI**

Yes, that's correct.

He looks at his brothers, on either side. They look at him.

**MR. GHOSH**

And I a partner in the workshop where your daughter is employed. Were you aware of that?

**HASARI**

Yes, yes, I was, my daughter told me, thank you.

(CONTINUED)

117.

CONTINUED:

**MR. GHOSH**

Yes, well then, perhaps you can  
tell me why I would permit my son  
to marry your daughter.

Mr. Ghosh raises his palms. It's all over as far as  
he's concerned.

**UNCLE #1**

Just a moment, please.

The brothers huddle, whisper just loudly enough for  
Hasari to hear.

**UNCLE #1**

Are you saying there's no way  
you'd consider this match?

Mr. Ghosh shakes his head, shrugs his palms.

**UNCLE #1**

Perhaps some inducement? Would  
that be of any help?

**MR. GHOSH**

(considering this)

What could he possibly offer?

**UNCLE #1**

Probably nothing. But perhaps,  
in fairness, we should find out.

Mr. Ghosh shrugs. The huddle breaks. All five men  
stare at Hasari.

**EXT. STREETS - DAY**

Hasari, mouth half open, flecked with spume, pulls a  
huge Marwari. He's pouring sweat, his eyes are blood-  
shot. He has never looked more like a horse.

They arrive at a cross street. The Marwari gets down  
and pays Hasari. Hasari slumps against the rickshaw  
and, while he awaits his next rider, counts his crum-  
pled pile of notes and coins.

**EXT. CLINIC - DAY**

Max, Joan, Aristotle John, Margareta, Mehboub, perhaps  
a dozen others trying to raise the level of the low  
wall at the entrance with bricks. The wall caves in.  
Other people in the neighborhood rush to rebuild it.

(CONTINUED)

118.

CONTINUED:

**MAX**

(shouting to the  
others)

My dear friends, it's just  
occurred to me what inspired me  
to stay here.

Thinking he's about to make some cogent remark about

this unified effort...

**MARGARETA**

What's that, Doctor Big Brother?

**MAX**

The opportunity to acquire waterfront property at a reasonable price.

Joan begins to laugh; the others don't get it, query each other as to what's funny about that.

**JOAN**

I hate to admit it, junior, but that was actually quite witty.

She whacks him on the shoulder with a wet, muddy paw.

**JOAN**

Ut-nobody laugh; it's a natural disaster -- we have guests.

Everyone turns to...

#### **ANOTHER ANGLE**

Manubai and Ravi, their car parked at the entryway to the clinic. A big puddle separates them.

**MAX**

I'd throw my cape down, but I'm all out of dry capes.

He slobes through the water to them, wiping his muddy hands on his pants. He offers a semi-clean hand to each in turn.

**MAX**

It's very nice to see you. Both of you.

**RAVI**

We heard you were still here. Vijay wanted to send some things.

(CONTINUED)

119.

#### **CONTINUED:**

She indicates the car, which is packed with dry food and such.

**MAX**

Shall we unload the car?

**RAVI**

Yes, yes, by all means.

Max whistles, indicates the car. People come and start unloading it, Ravi showing the way, leaving Max and Manubai alone a moment, Aloka flicking her eyes at the two of them.

**MANUBAI**

I'm surprised. I really didn't think you'd stick it out.

**MAX**

People grow older; sometimes they  
even grow up.

He smiles a sweet smile at her. She smiles back at him.

**EXT. MUD BANK - WIDE SHOT - DAY**

Anouar on Said's shoulders. The big mute runs, followed by Hasari and a phalanx of rickshaw pullers: Chomotkar, Rassoul, Ramatullah-Joan, Aloka, Manooj, several others in the rickshaws, Max and Sunil, each with his doctor bag -- all of them running in silhouette along the embankment in the rain.

**ARISTOTLE JOHN**

Where can we take them? We can't  
take them back to the clinic. No  
one will put up with it.

**SALADDIN**

We can't let them drown, can we?  
Eh, Max Daddah?

**EXT. LEPER COLONY - DAY**

The leper colony is submerged. The parents have put their children on the roofs and the relatively able-bodied lepers are piling charpoys one on top of another to protect the sick and the infirm. Meeta and her baby are on a roof. The mud bank is too slippery to get the rickshaws down and back up.

**HASARI**

It's too deep!

(CONTINUED)

120.

**CONTINUED:**

A beat.

**EXT. LEPER COLONY - PAIR MUDDY, PARTIAL HANDS - SAME  
DAY - SOME MINUTES LATER**

A leper clings to a rope as several of the human horses pull him and others up the mud bank.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Max, Hasari, Rassoul, and Chomotkar up to their necks in water; Hasari and Rassoul have a door on their shoulders; on top of the door, a sick leper woman. Max is lifting one child, then another onto the door. The two pullers make their way slowly toward the mud bank.

**ON MUD BANK**

Aloka, Joan, helping lepers into rickshaw.

**MEETA**

Anouar!

**ANOUAR**

Max Daddah!



**ON MEETA AND BABY**

The hut starts to come apart under them. Max and Chomotkar quickly move to the house with another door.

**MAX**

We're here! We're here!

Chomotkar holds the door up as Meeta holds the baby out in the direction of Max's voice. Max catches the baby as the house slips down, then grabs Meeta, who clings to him.

**EXT. MUD BANK - DAY**

Hasari pulling the lead rickshaw. Anouar on Max's shoulders, the two of them leading a terrible ensemble version of "Hound Dog." An air of festivity among lepers and rescuers.

They come to a bridge made of two planks over rushing water.

**(CONTINUED)**

121.

**CONTINUED:**

Several rickshaws go across but as Max and Anouar start over, suddenly the ground gives way beneath Max's feet. Anouar falls free; someone grabs him; but a blackish stream rushes into Max's mouth and in an instant he's swept beneath the gurgling filth. The density of the filth makes his effort to surface ineffective. It looks for all the world like he's going to drown.

**ON OTHERS**

Max has disappeared. Instinctively, Hasari dives into the maelstrom. He, too, disappears. After some moments, Hasari surfaces, spitting the filth out of his mouth. He dives again, comes up somewhere else. Dives a third time. Is down. Is down. Is down. Then suddenly bursts out of the filth, dragging the unconscious form of Max Loeb into the air. More people have gathered. Cries of:

**OTHERS**

It's the doctor. Save Doctor Big  
Brother!

Aloka passes a baby to someone and helps Hasari push Max up onto the bank. But now Hasari doesn't know what to do and turns to his wife.

Aloka quickly clears Max's mouth and begins to administer mouth-to-mouth resuscitation. She blows, she breathes; she blows, she breathes. People crowd in. Aloka blows, she breathes. It seems, though, that by his stillness and by the looks on people's faces that Max is dead. Yet, more determined still, Aloka goes on; blows, breathes...

**CLOSE ON ALOKA AND MAX**

And now Max gags, his body erupts in spasm, and he explodes a stream of black liquid out of his lungs. Aloka supports his forehead as Max retches again and then comes still. A beat.

**INT. CLASSROOM - NIGHT**

We PAN ACROSS members of our group -- lepers and normals -- passing bowls of rice in a simple communal meal, singing a religious song quietly. On the floor in the b.g., Anouar is writing something on a slightly damp stretch of cloth with a child's crayon. Said takes the cloth and tacks it to the wall. What Anouar has written is this, "All that is not given is lost." Everyone in the room stares at the words.

122.

**INT. CLINIC - MAX'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Max opens his eyes to find Joan, Hasari, Aloka, and the children keeping a vigil.

**MAX**

Oh, Jesus, the guy went to sleep  
when he was supposed to be working?  
I gotta get up --

He tries to get up. Joan pushes him back down.

**JOAN**

Sssh, sshh, sshh! No heroics,  
junior. Lay back. You're all  
right.

**MAX**

All right.

(a distant laugh)

Yeah, I am, I'm all right.

He is a little delirious. The boys come close, kneel at his side, instinctively reach out to him.

**MAX**

Want you guys to know something.  
About me. Wanted to be the  
world's greatest heart surgeon,  
just one better than my dad. Just  
one. First time I'm the lead  
surgeon on a case, the main guy, I  
choke. Froze. The chief made me  
step aside. My teacher. Had to  
take over for me. Went into  
radiology. Photography. Had to  
have somethin' easy. No pressure.  
Wasn't too nuts about myself.  
Quit.

Hasari reaches out and touches Max, telling him with a touch that it's all right. He stares up through bleary eyes at all of them with utterly open love. Amrita holds out a small gift to him: It's a banana leaf, holding a small scoop of rice and surrounded by little decorative leaves.

**MAX**

You people... You...

(a beat)

I love you guys.

**EXT. RAM'S HUT - TWO MONTHS LATER - DAY**

A group gathered on a dry, sunny afternoon, peering into the hut. We FOCUS on the growing flower in the tea caddy in the window and then go THROUGH the window into:

123.

**INT. PALS' ROOM - DAY**

Hasari, Max (dressed quite India), the local Hara Giri, Mr. Ghosh and the four Ghosh uncles crammed into the tiny room. Members of our group jam the doorway, spectating. The air is close.

**HASARI**

I can offer no more than I've  
offered! No more! All right,  
I'll add two dhotis, two vests,  
and a punjabi. But that's all.

Mr. Ghosh lights up a bidi, looks at his brothers, wrinkles his brows at Hasari.

**MR. GHOSH**

That's all? Did he say that's  
all?

**HASARI**

My daughter's qualities will make  
up for what is lacking.

**SUBASH'S FATHER**

Well, it won't do! I am firm in  
requiring for my exceptional son  
the bicycle, 1000 repees... and  
one ounce of gold.

**HASARI**

That's robbery! The child of a  
rajah might be worth that, and  
I'm not even sure of that!  
Impossible!

We linger on Shambu a moment.

**INT. ST. PIUS SCHOOL - HEADMISTRESSES' OFFICE - DAY**

Sister Cecilia, in full habit, looks over a sheaf of test scores.

Then she peers up at...

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Manooj, seated between Hasari and Max.

**SISTER CECILIA**

Well, indeed I think Sister Joan  
is right -- we've got a prospect  
here. We'll start you off with a  
few classes; if that works out,  
we'll make a proper student of you.

(CONTINUED)

124.

**CONTINUED:**

Hasari can't believe his ears. Manooj sits frozen. Max  
grins.

**EXT. NARROW LANE - NEAR CITY OF JOY - DAY**

Amrita, Subash, and Shambu heading home from the work-  
shop. Shambu's cast is gone. Subash flirts with  
Amrita. They see Hasari, Max, and Manooj coming toward  
them. Manooj runs to them, shouting that he's going to  
the school; Amrita, Subash, Shambu congratulate him...

**HASARI AND MAX**

Suddenly the rickshaw wheels jam. They turn to find  
two men, one of whom has slammed a stick into Hasari's  
spokes. Retribution, it would seem, has arrived.  
The kids stop, huddle instinctively together in fear.  
Our policeman disappears into a doorway as shutters  
close up and down this little street. There are thugs  
at both ends. No one else is visible on the street.  
The two men stare at Hasari a moment, smiling. Then  
one gets into the rickshaw, crosses his legs as if he  
might want transport. But now he whips out a narrow  
bladed knife, and still staring at Hasari, begins to  
slice up the newly covered seats of the rickshaw. Max  
looks around, trying to cool things.

**MAX**

Hey, come on, don't do this.

**VOICE**

Well, what's the problem here?

They turn, Ashoka. Behind him, the Goonda.

**ASHOKA**

You've become very brave of late,  
haven't you?

**MAX**

Don't do this.

**ASHOKA**

Oh, I do what I please. You see,  
my father's dead, I'm in charge  
now. So you will get off my

streets, you will leave my  
country, and that clinic and  
school will close.

(CONTINUED)

125.

CONTINUED:

**MAX**

Why?

**ASHOKA**

My father was weak. He let you  
and your European friend give  
these little people ideas. It's  
over.

**MAX**

You can't do this!

He takes no more than a step at Ashoka, a hand coming up,  
when he's hit hard from behind. Goes to his knees.

**MAX**

Jesus Christ.

His hand comes away from the back of his head with blood.  
He tries to rise and is hit again.

**HASARI**

(to the kids)

Get back! Stay back!

**ASHOKA**

No, no, come forward. Come.

Ashoka glides toward the petrified Amrita. The Goonda  
remains unmoving, watchful. Ashoka puts out his hand  
with its rings, and strokes Amrita's cheek.

**ASHOKA**

What a little woman already, hey?

**HASARI**

Please, don't touch her, Babu.

**ASHOKA**

What did you say?

**HASARI**

I said, Please, don't touch her.

Hasari glances over his shoulder, his eyes bouncing off  
the Goonda's impassive face. Now, the knife comes out of  
Ashoka's pocket, snaps open, glints in the light.

**ASHOKA**

She's going to give someone a lot  
of enjoyment. Yes.

(CONTINUED)

126.

CONTINUED:

There's a moment of unbearable tension as everyone, in-  
cluding the Goonda, realizes this man is out of control.

**ASHOKA**

(to the Goonda)

He said 'please' didn't he?

'Please, don't touch her?'

The Goonda stares at Ashoka... And now Ashoka reaches out and we FOLLOW CLOSE on his hand as it moves ever so slowly through space to settle on Amrita's breast. And now Hasari explodes. He hits Ashoka. A hard punch to the chest. Ashoka stumbles and falls to one knee.

The Two Thugs make a move to come to his rescue... but a curious thing stops them: the Goonda's arm, outstretched across their path, his eyes alerting them not to proceed. Max lurches to his feet unsteadily.

**ASHOKA**

Bhose, help me!

Hasari unloads a punch into Ashoka's face; Ashoka's nose pours blood; he starts to whimper. He clutches Hasari hard to him. Holds him. Hasari struggles, slams his palm into Ashoka's chin, sending Ashoka to the ground, sending the knife skidding across the ground. Hasari grabs the knife, straddles Ashoka, about to kill. But he can't do it.

**HASARI**

Life is hard enough. No more.

Leave us alone.

Hasari backs off, leans against a wall, stares down at Ashoka, his hands in tight against his body. Manooj and Shambu stare at their father in awe. Shambu sees something on the ground where the first blow was delivered to Ashoka's chest. Everyone has moved slightly to one side. He bends and closes his fist around something. The Goonda steps between Ashoka and Max and Hasari.

**GOONDA**

You won't be bothered again.

A look from the Goonda and the Thugs vanish, leaving Ashoka cowering in a doorway on his knees.

(CONTINUED)

127.

**CONTINUED:**

Shutters start to open, people begin to appear again in doorways and windows.

Fearing for his life, Ashoka suddenly bolts. Max is fixed on Hasari. He lets up a scream of exultation, his hand going out for a "five" from Hasari. The kids charge toward Hasari.

Then everyone freezes.

Hasari lists to his right side and blood starts to pour from the knife wound in his abdomen under his pressing arm.

**EXT. MAX'S ROOM - UPSTAIRS BALCONY - NIGHT**

From here we can see Hasari on Max's cot under "The Raft of the Medusa" in the little room overlooking the street. Out here, the two doctors are alone.

**MAX**

Why don't you go on home. I'll stay with him.

Sunil nods. Max grips Sunil's hand strongly. Sunil goes down the steps. Max moves to Hasari's bedside. He watches Hasari breathing. He looks up at "The Raft of the Medusa."

**INT. MAX'S ROOM - NIGHT (SEVERAL HOURS LATER)**

A thin stream of dawn light coming through the half-closed shutters.

**FROM HERE - THE BALCONY**

Through the open door, we can just see Joan, praying quietly. Close around her, Anouar, Meeta, Surya, Margareta, Poomina...

**THE ROOM**

Beneath "The Raft of the Medusa," Hasari Pal speaks to his family and Max, Aloka sitting close to the bed, the Children on the bed beside their father, and Max standing close.

**(CONTINUED)**

**128.**

**CONTINUED:**

**HASARI**

A man's journey to the end of his obligations is a very long road. And you have to remember that you can never give up. We pray that life will bless us, that we will be kings, with possessions and money that we can rule over all around us. But it's a mist; the only thing that makes it possible to endure life is our love, one for the other.

A beat, the family and Max tightly bound together. And now we hear the dim sounds of RICKSHAW BELLS.

**HASARI**

I was dreaming the sound of rickshaw bells, and now I hear them.

Max opens the windows. Manooj helps his father sit up.

**COURTYARD - THEIR POV**

Outside, there are rickshaw pullers filling the courtyard and spilling out into the street. When the window opens, all the Pullers start ringing their bells and the room is full of their music.

**HASARI**

Are they here for me?  
Unquestionably, they are.

**HASARI**

A city so big. When we arrived,  
we didn't have a place to live, a  
friend.  
He smiles.

**OUTSIDE**

The many hands with their ringing bells.

**CLOSE ON WINDOW**

The tiny figure of Shambu joins Max in the window. Max bends close.

**(CONTINUED)**

**129.**

**CONTINUED:**

**SHAMBU**

(whispering)

Is my father going to die?  
Max makes the same sound he made in the ashram at the beginning of the movie, though this sound of dismissal different.

**MAX**

Get serious.

**INT. RAM'S HUT - HASARI'S FACE - DAY**

Hasari mirrors Max's expression of dismissal!

**HASARI**

Get serious! I've agreed to the  
bicycle, I've agreed to the 1000  
rupees! I can go no further. I  
have nothing more to give!

**OUTSIDE THE HUT**

Everyone crowded around the door. From within, we DIMLY HEAR the negotiations continue. Max approaches from the clinic. Shambu slips down the steps from above as...

**MAX**

How's it going?

**RAM**

All that stands between them now



is the ounce of gold. Max  
Daddah, Joan Di -- is she a good  
reader?

**MAX**

What do you mean?

**RAM**

She read this letter to me.

( he shows Max)

But I think she must have read it  
wrong. She said my wife writes  
that irrigation has come to our  
village.

**MAX**

But that's great.

(CONTINUED)

130.

**CONTINUED :**

**RAM**

But it means I should go home to  
my wife.

**MAX**

I thought that's why we've been  
writing all these letters.

**RAM**

Yes, of course, I love her from  
here, yes; but, what if I go home  
and find I don't love her from  
there.

Shambu takes him by the hand and tugs him quickly to the  
edge of the tea shop. The little boy indicates Max  
should bend close. Max leans down.

**SHAMBU**

Daddy needs gold, right?

Max nods. And Shambu brings his fist up from under the  
table.

**CLOSE ON SHAMBU'S HAND**

He opens his hand to disclose what he scooped off the  
ground during the fight: Max's necklace and Hebrew  
letter.

**SHAMBU**

Do you think this is pretend gold  
or real?

**MAX AND SHAMBU**

Max stares at the little boy's hopeful face.

**INT. PAL'S ROOM - FLOWER**

We see the fully blossomed flower in the tea caddy and  
then Hasari's fingers come INTO THE FRAME. He carefully

snips the flower free of its stalk.

**ANOTHER ANGLE**

Amrita is dressed in the beautiful sari her father bought her. Father and daughter are alone. He hands her the flower and adjusts her veil tenderly.

(CONTINUED)

131.

CONTINUED:

**HASARI**

You never did belong to me. You  
were only lent to me by God until  
you marry and continue the wheel  
of life.

Amrita stares at her loving father and slowly her arms come up around his neck, the flower against his curved back. Tears fill Hasari's eyes, but a smile graces his lips.

**EXT. SQUARE - DAY - EARLY EVENING**

The procession to the courtyard begins when a BRASS BAND strikes up, accompanied by singing and shouting. Tiny lights have been strung over the street. We see Max and Manubai. Margareta and a group of children. Joan with Poomina. Anour, Meeta, Said. Everyone who's become part of the family is present.

**EXT. CLINIC COURTYARD - DAY (DUSK)**

The procession arrives and enters. Smoke from the chulas. Light from a half dozen lamps. Subash and his procession make their entrance. A ritual veil is fixed to Subash's face. The Pujari waves for Hasari to come to his place. Hasari turns to Max.

**HASARI**

I would be pleased if you would  
stand with me in the place of  
honor to the right of my daughter.

Deeply touched, Max nods... and the two men step forward... as Subash is motioned forward by the Pujari. Subash sits beside Amrita.

**THE CEREMONY**

A flame. The shyness of bride and groom as the ceremony proceeds with the winding of the red thread. Hasari looks on with unspeakable pride, Max beside him. We see the faces of all our family again: Aloka, Manooj and Shambu, Joan, Poomina, Surya, Selima, Aristotle John, etc.

132.

**THE WHEEL**

Turning. As Amrita and Subash, joined by the thread, circle the flame... as we PULL BACK AND UP. Now we see the clinic and school and the surrounding area, the alleys full of people and activity. As we continue to PULL BACK, we see the entirety of the City of Joy and then beyond -- Calcutta, its teeming streets -- life continuing as the sun sets against an infinite sky and we **ROLL END CREDITS.**

**FADE OUT.**

**THE END**