

BECOMING WE

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FADE IN:

EXT. BUS STATION - NIGHT

SUPER "Austin, Texas. Christmas Break"

Two buses appear ready to depart from the Greyhound Bus Station in Austin, Texas. Christmas decorations abound. One bus reads, "New Orleans." One bus reads, "Denver." Dr. RUFA KALKHAN (29), a beautiful Middle Eastern Muslim woman in loose-fitting clothes and wearing a hijab (head scarf) stares at one bus, then the other in a moment of indecision.

RUFA (V.O.)

Once upon a time, there was a competent, single, happy, medical doctor, who was heading to New Orleans to marry a man she had only met once at a formal dinner party.

She carries an old leather medical bag and drags a small, wheeled suitcase back and forth between the two buses with growing frustration. She stares up into the camera.

RUFA (V.O.)

Who am I kidding?! I'm not happy!

She clutches the medical bag like it is her baby.

RUFA (V.O.)

My grandfather was a doctor. He wanted my father and me to be doctors. My father became a wealthy divorce attorney in New Orleans, and left me to become a doctor!

She stares at the bus to New Orleans.

RUFA (V.O.)

Why not fly home over the holiday? Have you seen the way people and security officers in a crowded airport view a Muslim woman wearing hijab? Going through med school and residency in Texas was hard enough, thank you!

She glances at the bus to Denver.

RUFA (V.O.)

New Orleans and Austin! All I've ever known.

(MORE)

RUFA (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Four years of prep school, four at university, three years of med school, three years of residency, no years for me.

She looks back at the bus to New Orleans.

RUFA (V.O.)

All I have to do is get on that bus to claim a dream life!

She looks back at the bus to Denver and smiles.

RUFA

But these are my parents' dreams!  
I'm twenty-nine years old, I've never lived my dream, and  
(beat)  
I've never seen snow!

Rufa picks the Denver bus and boards. The bus has tiny red and green lights inside. A gray-haired, Bus Driver (50) carefully scrutinizes her suitcase and her medical bag. He lets her pass, but he watches her suspiciously in the rearview mirror. There are seven other passengers widely distributed on the bus. An elderly woman (70) sits near the driver. Two College men (20s) sit together a few rows back. A young farmer/snowboarder, SAMMY GREENLEY (23) looks like a cowboy, but he's reading *Snowboarder* magazine about three-quarters down the bus. A middle-aged Redneck (50; man) in a baseball cap and chewing tobacco sits in the second to last row.

Rufa struggles to put her suitcase in the overhead storage bin and fails to see a shadowy man (MOHAMMED BAYANI; 40) board the bus, nudge past her, and take a back seat in the darkest corner of the bus. He slumps down.

Rufa sits sadly in an aisle seat, one-third of the way back. Her old medical bag extends into the aisle a bit.

The bus pulls out slowly. The bus driver keeps looking at Rufa with suspicion in the rearview mirror.

The elderly woman, college students, and redneck GLARE at Rufa in her hijab, and STARE at her medical bag.

The bus takes a sharp turn, and Rufa's medical bag tips over, but doesn't open. Everyone hears metal CLANG when it falls over, and when Rufa sets it upright again.

The redneck passenger near the back RACES up and LUNGES at the medical bag. The Bus Driver slams on the brakes.

REDNECK  
She's gotta bomb!

Everyone but Rufa, Sammy, and Mohammed scream, as the redneck lands on the medical bag. It opens, and medical equipment spills out across the floor.

Rufa is drawn to tears as she returns her equipment one piece at a time.

Sammy looks up from his magazine.

SAMMY  
She's a medical doctor. Y'all are  
idiots!

The redneck returns to his seat without a word. Sammy gets up to help Rufa collect equipment. Rufa is still in tears but tries to hide her face.

SAMMY (CONT'D)  
Y'all gonna be okay, Ma'am?

Rufa manages a fleeting smile with her tear-stained face.

RUFA  
Thanks.

SAMMY  
(whispers)  
Don't y'all just feel like kickin'  
him in the balls, Ma'am?

RUFA  
I will pray for him at Isha'a.

SAMMY  
Isha'a?

RUFA  
Nightly prayers.

SAMMY  
Want me to kick his ass, Ma'am?

Sammy holds out a hand to shake.

SAMMY (CONT'D)  
I get along well with everyone,  
'cept Mexicans. Just the illegals.  
Not much into that 'Remember the  
Alamo' stuff after being a history  
major, but border security is a  
real issue.

Rufa does not extend her hand. The Bus Driver and the other passengers see this and glare.

RUFA

Please accept my humble apology.

Rufa bows to Sammy, who drops his hand.

SAMMY

No apology needed, Ma'am. It's a long drive to Denver. I got snacks and water if you need any.

Rufa nods, but she tears up again and hides her face.

RUFA

Are history major's always this cheerful?

SAMMY

I know my crew is having the time of their lives, and I'll be joining 'em tomorrow.

RUFA

Your crew?

SAMMY

(excited)

My roomies on the hill. Should have seen us two weeks ago on an epic powder day.

CUT TO:

EXT. SKI SLOPES - DAY

While Sammy describes her, we see a strong female freestyle skier, OLIVIA "OLLIE" LEE (34) riding a rail, taking a short ramp, speeding up, then jumping a huge ramp, spinning, and turning to a beautiful landing.

SAMMY (V.O.)

There's Olivia, but everyone calls her Ollie. She's my hero. One of the oldest freestyle skiers in the Olympics, but she never ages.

(beat)

You've seen her on every X-Games for the past eighteen years!

We see JACOB "BURNER" BRUNER (28), a ruggedly handsome snowboarder carving down a dangerous snow-shoot, hitting a ramp and doing a grab, and flipping a three-sixty before speeding down a mountain of powder.

SAMMY (V.O.)

Then, there's Jake, really Jacob, but everyone calls him Burner: the most fearless shredder ever born. I do my best to keep up with him.

We see Sammy following Burner, but missing the jump, and wiping out big time before slowly proceeding down the hill.

SAMMY (V.O.)

We're best bro's 'cause we're so much alike. And Catherine Ford, but everybody calls her "Soccer," short for Socrates. She doesn't shred or ski. Philosopher and novelist, which is to say she tends bar.

(beat)

Scary smart. Never went to college!

BACK TO:

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Rufa glances up at Sammy, who has a genuine smile.

RUFA

They sound charming. Do they celebrate Christmas? Because...

Sammy interrupts reassuringly as he points to the little red and green lights on the bus.

SAMMY

Christmas to us isn't about decorations, presents, or church.

(motions with his hands)

It's about coming together.

(beat)

Simple!

Rufa looks away as Sammy returns to his seat and picks up his snowboard magazine. He looks over the top of it toward Rufa.

LATER

INT./EXT. BUS - NIGHT

The bus stops at a gas station. The two College Men run to the small convenience store. Sammy stops at Rufa's seat.

SAMMY

Sorry for those y'all's. Few days back home and I slip into old habits. They'll be gone soon. I'm getting coffee. You want any?

Rufa shakes her head 'no.' Sammy heads to the store.

The shadowy passenger in the back, Mohammed, acts like a private investigator in a black business suit and a small briefcase. He creeps forward through the bus. Rufa hadn't noticed him. No one had. He glances at each passenger, before stepping out of the bus to smoke.

He takes two puffs, and re-enters the bus, hiding his face from Rufa. He takes the seat vacated by Sammy.

The Bus Driver glares in the rearview mirror at Rufa and the strange passenger in the dark suit. When Sammy returns with coffee and a bottled water, he sees that his seat is taken. He sits across from Rufa and hands her the water.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Denver is a mile high. You'll need to stay hydrated, Doc.

Rufa resists, then reaches out for the bottle, careful not to touch Sammy's hand. Mohammed snaps a photo on his phone.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Don't talk much, do you?

RUFA

Thanks for the water. I should know better. Haven't been thinking lately.

SAMMY

Find that hard to believe.

RUFA

Believe it, Mr...

SAMMY

Greenley. Samuel Greenley, but my crew calls me Sammy.

RUFA

Your crew again, Samuel?

SAMMY

My boys, except there are girls,  
too. Up in Breck.

RUFA

Breck?

SAMMY

Breckenridge! The mountain! Thirty-  
five lifts, thirteen-K summit, best  
snowboardin' in the world!

RUFA

What's it like?

SAMMY

What's what like?

RUFA

Snow?

SAMMY

What? You've never seen snow?

RUFA

Pictures. Movies. On the web.

SAMMY

May see some soon! Why you goin' to  
Denver?

RUFA

To not go to New Orleans.

SAMMY

I never went anywhere not to go to  
someplace else! What's in New  
Orleans you're not goin' there for?

Oddly, Rufa followed his question.

RUFA

Not important.

She sips her water, and turns away, trying to end the  
conversation by faking she's sleepy.

SAMMY

Lots of hours to Denver, and I had  
coffee. Come on, spill your guts.

Rufa takes a deep breath and surrenders.



RUFA  
Arranged marriage.

SAMMY  
People still do that?

RUFA  
Common in many cultures. My parents researched many eligible men of faith before selecting one. Amar is a few years older than me.

SAMMY  
How old?

RUFA  
Forty-two.

SAMMY  
Forty-two? Middle-aged! On the downslope!

Mohammed sneers at Sammy and takes notes.

RUFA  
Accomplished. Has his own firm, many partners, a big house, and no one to share it with.

SAMMY  
Your parents arranged a marriage?

RUFA  
His parents too. Happens all the time. Most have loving relationships and are more financially sound than other marriages.

SAMMY  
And you? Gotta a job waiting in New Orleans?

RUFA  
Yes. At a women's health clinic. Great hours and pay, but...

SAMMY  
You got cold feet.

RUFA  
Took the wrong bus.

SAMMY

You bought the ticket to Denver,  
Doc! Cost a hundred and twenty  
bucks?

RUFA

Two hundred thousand dollars!

SAMMY

What?

RUFA

My new husband would have paid off  
my med school loans the day after  
we were married.

Mohammed's head drops.

SAMMY

Aren't you the idiot, then?

RUFA

Never fit in with the others in med  
school. I was making one bad  
decision after another...

SAMMY

Wait! You didn't fit in med school?  
You're so smart!

RUFA

When you wear hijab and elect not  
to shake hands with everyone, and  
stop for salah...

SAMMY

Salah?

RUFA

Prayers. Five times a day. It's  
what we do.

SAMMY

(chuckles)

More than a lifestyle, it's a  
hijab?

Rufa's head drops.

Mohammed sneers at Sammy again and takes more notes.

RUFA

Here, when others see a Catholic nun in her habit, they think 'What a pious woman, a servant of God.'

SAMMY

When they see a hijab?

RUFA

Extremist or terrorist.

Sammy leans over to hug Rufa, but she moves away.

SAMMY

Soccer says people can't be intolerant when they're hugging.

Rufa looks Sammy in the eyes.

RUFA

We hug and love so naturally from the time we are born. Infants know no other way. But we are taught as children to distrust others who are different.

SAMMY

You sound like Soccer.

Sammy looks out his window.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Your parents must be pissed that you're not going to New Orleans.

RUFA

Angry, disappointed, and worried  
I'll be kidnapped or killed.  
(sadly)  
I'd better text them from Amarillo.

SAMMY

Haven't told them yet?

RUFA

Didn't know how.

SAMMY

What'll you text?

RUFA

Not getting married. I'm safe. On the bus to Denver. Forgive me.

SAMMY

Deep shit!

RUFA

Father will take it as a personal insult bringing shame to the entire family for generations to come.

SAMMY

Your mother?

RUFA

Will worry about losing the deposits for the country club, caterers, the cake, the dress, the band, and the decorations. Thirteen-thousand dollars in fresh flowers.

SAMMY

Deep, deep shit, man. What about your fiancé?

RUFA

Afraid to talk to him, too.

Sammy shakes his head, chuckling in disbelief.

SAMMY

Never heard anything like that ever happening in San Antone.

Rufa fights back tears.

RUFA

No plan, nowhere to go, one small suitcase and my grandfather's medical bag. Lost my marriage, a job, and my parents by getting on this bus!

Sammy looks at Rufa with a sad look.

SAMMY

Sorry, dude.

RUFA

I'll text them all now. Probably all wondering why I had my phone turned off.

Rufa turns on her phone, as Mohammed returns to a seat in the back corner of the bus. Her phone lights up with messages.

Rufa shields the phone from Sammy. She reads it until her hands shake in anger. She shuts off her phone, buries it in her purse, and prays in silence.

Sammy looks away, afraid to speak.

Mohammed, in the back seat, smiles. He leans back to sleep.

EXT. DENVER BUS STATION - NIGHT

The bus rolls into the station. Christmas decorations abound. It's cold, but not snowing.

Sammy helps Rufa with her overhead luggage.

SAMMY

Y'all gonna be okay?

RUFA

I'll be fine.

SAMMY

What ya gonna do?

RUFA

Don't know. Stay a few days until the heat blows over, then go home to apologize to everyone.

SAMMY

That sucks.

RUFA

Know a good hotel?

SAMMY

Brown Palace. Like a damn museum. Seventeenth and Broadway. But Christmas vacation, it'll be full.

Mohammed writes "Brown Palace" in a notebook.

RUFA

And, you?

SAMMY

Burner and Ollie are picking me up and taking me back up the hill.

RUFA

Yes, to your ski resort.

Mohammed takes another photo with his phone.

The Bus Driver opens the door to a cold gust of winter air.

RUFA (CONT'D)  
Freezing.

SAMMY  
Where's your jacket?

RUFA  
Wouldn't need one in New Orleans.

Sammy hands her his winter parka.

SAMMY  
Take this. I'll get one from the  
Lost and Found on the hill.

Rufa reluctantly hands the coat back.

RUFA  
Can't wear it. Men's clothing.

Sammy puts it on and shakes his head in disbelief.

SAMMY  
If you say so. Come meet my crew.

Sammy smiles. Mohammed snaps another photo and sneaks away.

Sammy fetches his duffel bag and helps Rufa out of the bus. Burner and Ollie are across the street in an old dark-green Subaru Forester with a ski rack with a snowboard and skis. Burner honks and yells from an open driver's-side window.

BURNER  
Sammy! Move it. Bar's waitin'.

SAMMY  
We're coming.

Burner and Ollie exit the car to meet Sammy's new friend. Burner has stunning good looks and deep dark eyes. He wears a plaid shirt and black snowboard pants. Ollie wears a white ski jacket and matching pants. Sammy shields Rufa from the wind as they cross the street. Ollie races to hug Sammy and Rufa. Ollie acts like a TV announcer.

OLLIE  
There he is, ladies and gentlemen;  
our roommate is home!  
(beat)  
Sammy, welcome back.

BURNER

Who's this? Laurie of Arabia?

Ollie hugs Rufa. Rufa does not hug back.

Burner glares at Rufa for not hugging Ollie back.

SAMMY

She's a medical doctor. Name's Rufa Kalkhan.

OLLIE

Hi, Doc. I'm Ollie.

RUFA

Hello, Ollie. There's a cut on your neck. I have some Vaseline in my bag for it.

OLLIE

Thanks, Doc. This is Jake, but everyone calls him Burner.

RUFA

Samuel told me all about you.

Burner extends a hand to shake with Rufa. She makes eye contact with his deep dark eyes but doesn't shake his hand.

Burner smirks, mildly annoyed.

BURNER

Okay, sorry about the Laurie of Arabia joke, but we're not afraid to hug or shake hands.

SAMMY

Doc's had a tough night with a redneck jerk on the bus.

Burner puts his hand down, and he hugs Sammy.

RUFA

Sorry.

SAMMY

Burner, think Rufa can hang with us for few days before she catches a plane or a bus to New Orleans? She's never seen snow!

Burner smirks again, this time in disbelief.

BURNER  
Never seen snow? Right!

Rufa glares at Burner.

RUFA  
Never!

Burner relaxes and smiles at Rufa.

BURNER  
Then your chariot awaits, Doc.

Ollie scrambles for the seat behind the driver.

OLLIE  
I gotta spare hoodie for the Doc.  
I'll take the Windy Shitty.

SAMMY  
That's the seat behind Burner.  
Ain't got his window fixed yet.  
I'll take the back too.

INT./EXT. CAR - NIGHT

Sammy grabs the other backseat, while Burner tosses Sammy's duffel bag and Rufa's suitcase in the back.

Rufa buckles in the front seat with her medical bag. The car is filthy with coffee cups, energy drink cans, beef jerky wrappers, and donut wrappers. Burner hops in.

BURNER  
Better put on Ollie's hoodie, Doc.

SAMMY  
Where'd you get the hoodie, Ollie?  
It's a women's hoodie, right?

OLLIE  
Women's hoodie. Lost and found.  
Somebody lost it. I found it!

RUFA  
(snickers)  
Allah provides. I'll mail it back  
from New Orleans.

They all chuckle. Rufa puts on the hoodie.



OLLIE

We can always use a doctor around  
the place.

Burner turns up the radio, and races away.

Along Highway 70, it starts to SNOW. The speakers are  
blasting tunes, and no one seems to notice, except for Rufa.

RUFA

It's snow!

BURNER

Frozen crystals of H-2-O. What?

SAMMY

She's never seen snow.

BURNER

I thought she was kidding!

Burner swerves onto an off-ramp, pulls over, and lets Rufa  
get out. She swings her arms, catches snowflakes on her  
tongue, and stomps in patches of snow on the side of the  
road, while others stare in disbelief.

OLLIE

Yes, folks, she's gonna freeze to  
death before we get her home, where  
she'll really be cold.

Sammy exits to rescue Rufa, who is playing, smiling, and  
laughing. Burner curiously watches Rufa, as Sammy guides her  
back to the car.

SAMMY

Need snow boots, ski pants, and a  
jacket to last any longer!

RUFA

Yes, Samuel. Sorry.

SAMMY

Nothing to be sorry about, Doc.

They get back in the car, and Burner races off.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Rufa shivers in the cold car.

OLLIE

We'll scrounge up some snow gear  
for ya tomorrow.

BURNER

You could freeze out there, Doc.  
Or, in here, for that matter.

RUFA

It's all so new to me. What do you  
people do?

(beat)

For work, I mean?

SAMMY

I work the kitchen at the resort  
and shovel snow for extra dough.

OLLIE

I'm a freestyle skier with a few  
endorsements, and I clean rooms at  
the resort.

BURNER

Work in the deli at the market,  
Shovel snow in winter, tree-cutter  
and landscaper in summer.

SAMMY

My Pops has some health issues, so,  
in summer, I help out on the farm  
back in San Antone.

BURNER AND OLLIE

San Antonio!

SAMMY

San Antone to us locals!

OLLIE

Our other roomie is a bartender.  
She's working tonight.

SAMMY

Soccer's chill.

RUFA

Samuel told me about you all.

BURNER

Smartest novelist that you'll ever  
meet.

OLLIE  
 'Cept all she has is her title.

BURNER  
 You really a doc, Doc?

RUFA  
 Completed residency last June.  
 Working at a women's clinic now,  
 but I passed up a better job in New  
 Orleans by getting on that wrong  
 bus to Denver.

Burner pulls out a flask and takes a swig.

BURNER  
 You're in good company, Doc. I make  
 wrong choices every day.

Burner offers the flask to Rufa who refuses it abruptly.

RUFA  
 Muslims don't drink.

Burner smirks and flips the flask to the back seat.

BURNER  
 Geez! Talk about wrong choices.

Ollie, Sammy, and Rufa look sadly at Burner.

Burner turns up the music as they race along up the mountain.

EXT./INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Burner, Ollie, Sammy, and Rufa enter a dilapidated, grungy,  
 dark two-bedroom house. Dirty dishes fill the sink, pizza  
 boxes litter the tables, and beer bottles abound. A small  
 Christmas tree with a Santa Hat on it in a corner. There are  
 no other decorations in the house. Everyone ignores the tree.

SAMMY  
 Welcome to Chateau Sewer-flow, the  
 Ghetto on the Meadow.

RUFA  
 Chateau Sewer-flow?

Rufa looks for a clean place to sit but doesn't find one,  
 while Sammy pulls out his phone.

SAMMY

Calling Ma to tell her I made it.  
Guess nobody cleaned up while I was  
in Texas.

RUFA

Were you gone ten years?

SAMMY

Few days, just to help my Daddy  
order supplies for plantin' season.  
(into the phone)  
Hi, Ma. Made it back safe and  
sound. I'll call tomorrow. Bye.

Ollie acts like a TV announcer again.

OLLIE

Yes, folks, and all the manure he  
needed was right here! I blame  
Burner!

BURNER

Me? You and Soccer been bringing in  
all the strays?

RUFA

Stray what? Cows? Apes? Rhinos?

The others laugh. Burner grabs a can of cheap beer. It sprays  
out a bit as he opens it.

BURNER

Stray friends from the flatlands  
who need a place to crash for a  
night or two, so they can shred.

RUFA

Everything looks shredded.

They all laugh again.

SAMMY

We'll get this place cleaned up  
tomorrow. I'm exhausted. Rufa, you  
take the couch.

OLLIE

And if a crazed philosopher busts  
down the front door after two A.M.,  
it's just Soccer, our other roomie.

Rufa stares at them, bewildered.

BURNER

She'll talk your ears off, which nobody can see anyway.

OLLIE

Geez, Burner, cut her slack.

Sammy stands at his bedroom door.

SAMMY

*Becoming We.* Soccer's title. Love story, I think.

OLLIE

Help yourself to the egg or water in the fridge. Eat anything you find.

BURNER

Except the stuff that was green, and has turned brown.

SAMMY

And the stuff that was brown, and has turned green.

Burner and Sammy laugh.

OLLIE

I'll take us shopping tomorrow.

Burner points as he talks.

BURNER

Sammy and me are in this room. Ollie and Soccer are in that one. Bathroom's in the middle. Sammy's turn to clean it next month.

Rufa rolls her eyes in disgust.

OLLIE

Strays get the couch. Don't think we have any more strays tonight.

Burner and Sammy shake their head 'no.'

BURNER

We never lock the door.

Burner toasts with his can of beer and follows Sammy into one bedroom, while Ollie trudges off to the other.

OLLIE  
Night, everyone.

Rufa kneels on the floor, faces northeast, bows, and prays. Then, she heads to the kitchen and begins to wash dishes.

LATER

Rufa is fully dressed, but asleep on the couch, when a light-skinned Creole bartender from Belize, Catherine "SOCCER" Ford (30), bursts through the front door. Rufa jumps up startled, which startles Soccer, who races to the kitchen to turn on the lights.

SOCCER  
Who are you? What you done with my roommates?

RUFA  
I'm Rufa Kalkhan, a doctor. Samuel, Olivia, and Jacob invited me to stay a few days. You must be the philosopher-novelist.

Soccer sounds profound.

SOCCER  
She who laughs, laughs, laughs best.

RUFA  
Not sure it goes like that.

Soccer looks around at the clean kitchen.

SOCCER  
You'll learn.  
(laughs)  
They call me Soccer. Real name's Catherine Ford. What's that you wearing?

RUFA  
Hijab. I'm Muslim.

Soccer steps in close to Rufa and examines her hijab.

SOCCER  
Takes courage to be different.

Rufa takes a step back.

SOCCKER (CONT'D)

It's okay, man. Not gonna bite ya.  
You in some kinda trouble?

RUFA

Not with the law. Trouble with my  
parents. Big time.

Soccer laughs.

SOCCKER

Who isn't, man? My parents haven't  
called me in three months. Belize.  
Long distance.

Rufa falls back on the couch and pouts.

RUFA

Three months? That would kill me.

Soccer looks away.

SOCCKER

Killin' me, too. I don't let on  
though. I gotta get me shut-eye,  
Reefer. See you in the morning, ya?

RUFA

It's Rufa. Rufa Kalkhan. And you're  
Catherine?

SOCCKER

Call me Soccer. They all do.

Soccer exits to her bedroom.

RUFA

Good night, Soccer.

SOCCKER

Good night, Reefer.

Soccer giggles, and shuts her door.

RUFA

What is this "Reefer"?

Rufa falls back, exhausted, but her eyes are wide open.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Rufa drags her suitcase from lodge to lodge, getting turned  
away at each one. Christmas decorations abound.

Her borrowed sweatshirt helps, but her legs and feet are freezing. She trudges on, amazed by the ski town. She pretends not to see the dirty looks she's getting from some of the Drivers (3 SUVs and trucks) and Pedestrians (5) in full ski outfits, thick coats, and snow boots; but most townies smile weakly or ignore her.

Two Young Men (15) walk by Rufa, smile, and give her a thumbs-up sign and a Hawaiian hang-loose sign.

INT./EXT. HOUSE - DAY

Ollie enters the bathroom. She SCREAMS. Sammy RACES out to the family room in flannel pajama pants and a country music T-shirt. He sees that Rufa is gone. Ollie races out of the bathroom to the family room wearing sweatpants and a bra.

OLLIE

Hold onto your toilet seats, ladies and gentlemen, somebody cleaned the bathroom!

SAMMY

She's gone!

Ollie sees the kitchen is clean too. She SCREAMS again. Next, Soccer stumbles into the family room, wearing a sweatshirt and gym shorts.

SOCCER

Who's gone? The stray? Reefer?

SAMMY

Rufa.

OLLIE

We gotta get her back. Place never looked this good.

SAMMY

They'll eat her alive! Quick! We gotta find her!

OLLIE AND SOCCER

*And Donuts!*

SAMMY

I'm serious! She hasn't got snow boots or snow pants.

OLLIE

I'm not waking Burner.



SAMMY

I will. We need his car!

EXT. STREET - DAY

It's snowing, windy, and cold. Christmas decorations abound. Rufa exits another lodge with a disappointed look. She crosses the street at a pedestrian crossing, but an SUV full of skiers, races around her, HONKING as they pass. Ollie (driving), Sammy, and Soccer are driving up the other side of the street and see it all. Ollie yells through the open window at the SUV.

OLLIE

Damn touristas! Watch where you're driving!

Sammy hops out to assist Rufa who is not phased, as Soccer hops out to open the hatchback for Rufa's suitcase.

SAMMY

Rufa, are you okay?

RUFA

Little cold. Can't find a hotel room.

SOCCER

Busiest season.

OLLIE

Christmas Break!

Rufa smiles.

RUFA

I get it. No room at the inn for a Middle Eastern woman in traditional dress. Happens all the time!

Everyone laughs, even Rufa.

SAMMY

You need donuts!

RUFA

No, I need snow boots and warm clothes, and a place to stay.

OLLIE

After donuts. We owe you for cleaning the Chateau Sewer-flow.

RUFA

You people are very strange. You know that, don't you?

Soccer shakes her head in disbelief.

SOCCKER

You think we're strange?

They load in the car and speed away.

INT. DONUT SHOP - DAY

Rufa, Ollie, Soccer, and Sammy eat donuts and drink coffee in the far corner of the coffee shop. Christmas decorations abound. Twenty Patrons (18-30), mostly young snowboarders and skiers, are having a great time. For once, Rufa is warm, and no one is staring at her.

RUFA

I like this place.

SAMMY

Everybody does.

OLLIE

Everyone loves gluten-free health food, but us.

SOCCKER

Heaven is a donut store.

Suddenly, Mohammed Bayani, the man from the Greyhound bus, storms in from the front door and stomps down to Rufa.

MOHAMMED

Dr. Rufaida Kalkhan, I am Mohammed Bayani, a private investigator hired to find you and keep you safe until your parents get here.

RUFA

My parents?!

Sammy stands ready to fight.

SAMMY

This joker botherin' you, Rufa?

RUFA

No, no. Sit down, Samuel. Mr. Bayani will go and leave us alone.

MOHAMMED

No, Ma'am. It took me all night to find you. I've reported your location to your parents and told them you were shackled up with four infidels, two of whom were adult males. Strictly forbidden!

SOCCER

What's this infidels bullshit?

OLLIE

Leave us alone, dude. She's free to do what she wants.

Rufa looks down in disgust.

MOHAMMED

Your mother has called you twenty times. Worried sick about you.

RUFA

I have no excuse.

Sammy rests his hand on Rufa's shoulder to show his support.

SAMMY

You don't need no excuse.

Mohammed knocks Sammy's hand off of Rufa's shoulder, and punches him in the face, sending him flying back, as Burner enters the donut shop, and sees everything.

Ollie and Soccer see Burner come in.

OLLIE AND SOCCER

Uh oh!

The owner in an apron, PETE (30) behind the counter yells.

PETE

Burner!

Pete tosses Burner an apple fritter, which he catches with his left hand.

BURNER

Thanks, Pete.

Burner takes a bite, as he approaches Mohammed, who turns toward Burner. Burner decks Mohammed with a right cross. He's out cold, as Burner stands proudly, eating his apple fritter.

BURNER (CONT'D)  
Did I miss much?

Rufa gives Burner an evil look, as she attends to Sammy.

RUFA  
That man works for my parents! My  
father will never forgive me! My  
life is doomed!

They hear a SIREN approaching.

BURNER  
Uh oh! I'm on probation! I'm really  
screwed!

Everyone looks sad.

Rufa opens her old leather doctor's bag and takes out a package of gauze for Sammy's bleeding eyelid and presses on it. A local policewoman, CINDY (35, cute, in uniform) enters the donut shop. Pete yells:

PETE  
Cindy!

As he tosses her a glazed donut, which she catches in her right hand.

CINDY  
Thanks, Pete.

Cindy rushes to the two men on the floor, while Rufa pulls out an eye-light to examine Sammy's eyes and Mohammed's eyes.

BURNER  
Good morning, Cindy.

Cindy angrily takes a bite of her donut.

CINDY  
Is it, Jake? Looks like six months  
in jail for you! What happened?

OLLIE  
Long story, Cindy.

CINDY  
I got an assault call.

Pete turns away.

SOCCER  
Pete?

PETE

The Middle Eastern guy looked like trouble. And he decked Sammy.

BURNER

So, I decked him. End of story.

Cindy points at Rufa, then at Mohammed, who is slowly getting up. Sammy's eyes open.

CINDY

Who are these two?

OLLIE

One's a doctor from Texas. She's staying with us. Other's a creep.

BURNER

And a public dick, hittin' my buddy Sammy like that.

RUFA

He was protecting my honor. Samuel had a hand on my shoulder...

CINDY

No law against that, but assault's a different matter.

BURNER

See.

CINDY

You too, Jake. Big trouble now. You're on probation.

Rufa turns to Burner.

RUFA

There's no need for violence, ever!

CINDY

Listen to that lady.

Mohammed dusts himself off, takes Rufa's hand, and tries to force her to leave with him. Cindy takes another bite of her glazed donut, then stops Mohammed.

CINDY (CONT'D)

(to Rufa)

Did Sam assault you or anyone else?

RUFA

No.

CINDY  
Did you see this man assault Sam?

RUFA  
Yes, but...

CINDY  
Did you see Jake assault this man?

Cindy points to Mohammed with the remains of her donut.

RUFA  
Yes, but...

CINDY  
You three are coming with me!

RUFA  
Samuel needs stitches.

CINDY  
Olivia can take him to the clinic.

OLLIE  
Doc Stevens has the flu. Burner  
took him to get an I-V in  
Silverthorne, and fed his dog.

SOCCER  
(yells)  
Don't nobody hurt themselves on the  
slopes today.

CINDY  
Bring him with us. Maybe this Doc  
here can patch him up.

Cindy leads Burner, Mohammed, Sammy, and Rufa through the  
donut shop. Burner flips a \$20 bill to Pete.

BURNER  
For me and my favorite copper.

PETE  
Thanks, man.

CINDY  
Bribing a policewoman won't help.

Ollie yells from the back table.

OLLIE  
I think Burner needs a strip  
search, Cindy.

Everyone laughs.

RUFA  
Samuel, how are you feeling?

SAMMY  
Like Burner's in a whole heap of  
trouble this time.

They all look worried as they leave.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Christmas decorations abound. Cindy finishes filling out a report on Mohammed.

Rufa ties off the three stitches above Sammy's right eye on a chair next to them.

Burner is napping quietly.

CINDY  
Mr. Bayani, you may go.

MOHAMMED  
Not without Doctor Kalkhan.

CINDY  
She is free to come and go as she  
pleases. You are free to go now,  
unless you want resisting arrest  
tied to your disturbing the peace  
citation.

Mohammed grunts. He threatens Rufa as he exits.

MOHAMMED  
Your parents will be here soon.  
Then you'll get it!

Rufa's eyes open wide in shock.

CINDY  
(loudly)  
Jacob Bruner, you're next.

Rufa turns when she hears the name "Jacob Bruner," tugging on Sammy's new stitches.

SAMMY  
Ow!

RUFA  
Sorry. Jacob Bruner? You're Jewish?

SAMMY  
His folks are, but Burner sort of  
quit. Now, he's nothin'.

Burner struggles to the chair next to Cindy.

CINDY  
Except for those monthly checks.  
Isn't that right, Jake?

BURNER  
Can't you call me Burner like  
everyone else?

CINDY  
Not into your childish nicknames,  
Jake. You know that!

Rufa senses a history between them, and Burner turns angry.

BURNER  
Just do your report.

CINDY  
If I do, you'll be locked up for  
six months over at the County Jail.  
Is that what you want?

BURNER  
You judge and jury now too, Cindy?

CINDY  
It's automatic! Violation of  
probation on your last fight! Just  
can't stop drinking and fighting,  
can you, Jake?

BURNER  
Nobody said I was drinking.

CINDY  
I smell it! Want me to demand a  
blood test to confirm it? You might  
do a year then!

Burner looks away.

SAMMY  
Burner was just defending Doc.



CINDY  
Shut up, Sam. You're what we call  
an enabler!

SAMMY  
Enabler, I was...

BURNER  
Shut up, Sammy.

CINDY  
I'm giving you a break, Jake.

BURNER  
How?

CINDY  
I'm filling out the report, but I  
will only submit it if...

Burner gets up to leave.

CINDY (CONT'D)  
You fail either of the two new  
conditions added to your probation.

BURNER  
You can't do...

CINDY  
One, you'll submit to a  
Breathalyzer or urine test here at  
the station daily at noon for the  
entire week. Miss one day, or test  
positive, and I turn in my report.

BURNER  
Noon? Every day?

CINDY  
And two: You'll report for  
community service daily from eight  
A.M. to noon, at this address.

Cindy writes a name and address on a slip of paper.

BURNER  
What's this about?

CINDY  
Not sharing your gift of drinking  
and fighting, that's for sure.

Burner grabs the paper, crumples it up, and shoves it in his pocket. He grunts at Cindy first, then at Rufa.

BURNER

(to Rufa)

That's what I get for helping you out.

RUFA

I didn't ask for your help, and I sure didn't ask for your violence!

SAMMY

Let's get out of here.

Burner stomps out, followed by Sammy and Rufa. Ollie and Soccer are waiting in Burner's car.

EXT./INT. CAR - DAY

Sammy, Burner, and Rufa squeeze into the backseat of Burner's car, with Ollie at the controls, and Soccer riding shotgun.

SOCCER

Who was that private dick?

RUFA

Mohammed Bayani! Maybe hired for my safety.

SAMMY

That's all?

RUFA

Maybe my parents want to make sure I honor our religious traditions.

SOCCER

Worse than your folks, Burner.

Burner is silent.

SAMMY

Ya, tell her about your parents, Burner.

Burner takes the small piece of paper from his pocket.

OLLIE

Cough it up, Burner. Or I will.

BURNER

Parents were Jewish-lite. Semi-practicing but very political.

OLLIE

Then...

BURNER

Then I got tired of arguing, and quit being a Jew altogether. That didn't go over well.

RUFA

You can't just quit being Jewish! Nothing the matter with preserving historic and cultural identities.

Burner turns away.

BURNER

I didn't fit in anymore, okay?

SAMMY

They like, orphaned him.

SOCCER

Or he orphaned them!

OLLIE

Either way, it sucks, dude.

RUFA

Do you communicate with them?

BURNER

They send checks. I rip most of 'em up. Except when I'm really short.

(angry)

Now, leave me alone.

RUFA

I wish I could help.

BURNER

Tell me how to cheat a Breathalyzer tomorrow at noon.

RUFA

Cheat your body from the dangerous effects of alcohol!

Ollie, Soccer, and Sammy laugh. Burner looks worried.

SAMMY  
Drop us at work, will ya, Ollie?

OLLIE  
Yeah, we're late.

Ollie drives to the big high-end resort, and she and Sammy hop out. It's snowy, windy, and cold.

SAMMY  
Stopped bleeding?

Rufa checks the stitches.

RUFA  
May want to ice it.

SAMMY  
Thanks, Doc.

Burner sits in the back of the car staring at the little note Cindy gave him.

OLLIE  
I'll get you snow pants from our lost and found. Shit! I gotta walk Doc Stevens' mutt later when Burner's working the deli.

RUFA  
Can I do this for you, Ollie?

SOCCER  
I can show her the place. I gotta get to the bar early for the inventory.

Sammy and Ollie head off to work. No one offers to drive.

SOCCER (CONT'D)  
Old D-U-I's, man. I can't drive.

BURNER  
I can't drive. Still lit from last night. Cindy's probably waiting to bust my ass.

RUFA  
I do not drive.

BURNER  
What?

RUFA  
Never learned. No license.

SOCCKER  
Some kinda religious thing?

RUFA  
I choose not to drive.

BURNER  
We ain't walkin, Doc. Drive!

Rufa stares at Burner meanly. She takes the keys, opens the trunk, and grabs her suitcase and medical bag.

RUFA  
I'm walking. If you two can't drive, I suggest you walk with me. Come back for the car when you sober up, Jacob!

Soccer laughs. They exit the car and start walking home. Burner snarls at Rufa.

BURNER  
Who ever heard of modern women not driving cars?

Soccer rolls her eyes in disgust at Burner.

SOCCKER  
Not up on your Saudi culture, Burner?

Rufa looks depressed and cold.

RUFA  
You all think you have problems. My parents are coming to take me home! My life is over!

EXT. DENVER INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

YUSUF KALKHAN (54), a successful divorce lawyer in a blue business suit, and his wife, SHATHA (47), traditionally dressed in a niqab that exposes only her eyes, and loose-fitting cloak of the finest silk, freeze as they wait for their limousine driver. Shatha does not lift her gown to avoid the dirty puddles of snowmelt. Yusuf sees that his patent-leather shoes are disgustingly muddy. It is snowy, windy, and cold. Both people are upset.

YUSUF  
Why does she put us through this?

SHATHA  
She has thrown her life away. For what? Alaska?

YUSUF  
It's Colorado!

SHATHA  
Same difference! The road into the mountains is closed. Limo can't drive us there 'til tomorrow.

YUSUF  
I've left our daughter several messages. So have you. This is what they mean about Hell freezing over!

EXT./INT. OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT STORE - DAY

Rufa, Soccer, and Burner trudge through the snow and wind on a barely passable sidewalk. They enter an outdoor equipment store. Christmas decorations abound.

BURNER  
Doc, you need boots. Frostbite isn't pretty.

SOCCER  
"You're no good to anyone if you're dead," my mom used to tell me.

Rufa sees her shoes are frosted over.

RUFA  
You're right. Snow boots!

Rufa is immediately paralyzed by the warmth.

SOCCER  
Look! Snow boots with pink fur.

RUFA  
Nothing showy.

Burner finds a pair of extra warm Sorel's and brings them to Rufa. He smiles.

BURNER  
Try these, Doc.

Rufa snatches them as if it were an emergency. She sits down and begins to try them on, but decency does not allow it.

RUFA  
You must turn away, please.

BURNER  
Wow, you are strict.

Rufa laughs.

RUFA  
You haven't met my mother.

Burner and Soccer turn their backs.

RUFA (CONT'D)  
My mother wears the niqab, a veil where only her eyes are uncovered. Very conservative Muslims, my parents. They think I am an Islamic hippie for wearing only the hijab.

Rufa SIGHS in the warm comfort of insulated, waterproof boots. She walks to the counter to pay.

BURNER  
(snickers)  
I feel your pain. My dad called me a hot-headed, devil-worshiping pagan once when he was mad at me.

RUFA  
What did you say?

BURNER  
I said I wouldn't invite him and mom to our next human sacrifice.

A female CLERK #1 (21) in a revealing blouse pops up from behind the counter.

CLERK #1  
Hi, Burner. You haven't called.

Rufa produces a credit card.

RUFA  
I'll take these.

Clerk #1 runs the card, and the system rejects it. She snarls at Rufa.

CLERK #1  
Card's been reported stolen.

RUFA  
Not stolen. It's right here.  
(beat)  
My dad! He hasn't paid the bill for  
three years!

CLERK #1  
(rude)  
Sorry, Ma'am. Cash or check?

Before Rufa can answer, Burner slams two one-hundred-dollar bills on the counter.

BURNER  
I got this. See you guys at home!

Burner angrily storms out of the store.

SOCCER  
Boy needs anger management classes  
for sure.

Rufa is removing her shoes.

RUFA  
I can't take these.

SOCCER  
She'll take 'em. He's got the  
money. Wouldn't pay if he didn't  
want to.

RUFA  
I'll pay him back.

Soccer collects the change from Clerk #1, before turning to Rufa.

SOCCER  
Spoon with that man one cold night,  
he'll forget all about it.

Rufa looks at Soccer with a seriously frightened look. Soccer laughs.

SOCCER (CONT'D)  
Just messin' wicha, girl!



RUFA

I need a job! Fast! How can I get a hold of Doc Stevens, the doctor with the flu?

SOCCER

You take care of his mutt. He takes care of you. How things are done on the mountain. Ask Burner!

Soccer and Rufa join Burner outside the door. Mohammed Bayani steps out of the dressing room with an oversized jacket and skull cap on. He heard it all.

EXT./INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

The sign out front reads "Dr. Abraham Steven's M.D." Inside, Rufa is playing with a small, black and white, fluffy mutt, whose yaps ring of happiness. Rufa speaks on the phone to DOC STEVENS (75), a grumpy Jewish man, who is in the hospital.

DOC STEVENS (O.S.)

Sounds like Killer loves you.

RUFA

We're getting along like old friends.

DOC STEVENS (O.S.)

And you're an M.D.?

RUFA

I need a job that pays cash, daily.

DOC STEVENS (O.S.)

Drug habit?

RUFA

No. Eating habit.

DOC STEVENS (O.S.)

My e-mail is on the computer. Send me your resume and license. I'll read up after my sponge bath.

Rufa is stunned.

DOC STEVENS (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You still there?

Rufa peeks out the door into the waiting room.

RUFA

You have two patients waiting,  
Doctor Stevens.

DOC STEVENS (O.S.)

Nothing but first aid, EMT-stuff,  
until I see your resume and  
license.

Doc Stevens hangs up.

EXT. BUNNY HILL - DAY

Burner, in heavy winter clothing covering all but his eyes, watches intently from a safe distance as three disabled Children (two boys and a girl, ages 7-10) are pulled around on sleds. Despite the bitterly cold weather, Burner hears them laughing and joking with two Instructors (20s, male and female). He can barely see the children in the storm.

Burner reaches in his pocket for a flask, but he doesn't open the top. He studies the disabled children.

INT. RESORT - DAY

Christmas decorations abound. Ollie, in a maid's uniform, pushes a cleaning cart wildly down a long corridor, with Sammy racing behind her with a room-service tray in his hands.

SAMMY

I'm telling you, that's what I  
heard from Philippe at the front  
desk.

OLLIE

They'd never toss someone out to  
make room for somebody who can't  
even get here in this blizzard.

SAMMY

They did. Twice. That private dick,  
Mohammed, is in room 2557, and they  
set up the top corner penthouse for  
Rufa's folks.

OLLIE

But they're stuck in Denver?

SAMMY

Storm's supposed to break tomorrow.  
Her folks gonna get here tomorrow  
night for sure. Gotta warn Doc.

OLLIE

Nothin' she can do. It's a family  
problem. Let them handle it!

Sammy stops, and Ollie races ahead.

SAMMY

Ollie, this isn't like you. What's  
the matter?

Ollie stops with tears in her eyes. She pulls a letter out of  
her pocket. She tries to hand it to Sammy, but his hands are  
full with room-service trays. Sammy dumps them in Ollie's  
garbage bag on her cart. He reads the letter.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Shit. First, no winter Olympics for  
you, and now, no X-Games.

OLLIE

Too old. Washed up at thirty-four!

She hugs Sammy.

SAMMY

That isn't right. What you gonna  
do?

Ollie gains her composure, and pushes the cart down the  
hallway, while Sammy looks on sadly. Ollie sounds like a  
dejected newscaster.

OLLIE

You heard it here first, ladies and  
gentlemen. Olivia Lee sentenced to  
life as a cleaning woman at the  
tender age of thirty-four.

Ollie loses her composure and drops to the floor, sobbing.  
Sammy rushes to comfort her.

OLLIE (CONT'D)

I'm not a doctor. I'm not even a  
college graduate like you.

SAMMY

History major. Look where it got  
me. Daddy's farm hand!

OLLIE

What have I got? My folks are  
grammar school teachers! I'm  
screwed!

Sammy hugs her.

INT./EXT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Christmas decorations abound. A few patients remain in the waiting room: a Truck Driver (50), a male SNOWBOARDER (17) in snowboard pants and two knit skull caps, and a MOM (35) with her daughter, ANNA (4) who is sniffing and scared. Rufa guides an ELDERLY MAN (70) out of the office and through the waiting room. He walks slowly.

RUFA

Be with you all shortly.

TRUCK DRIVER

Where's Doc Stevens?

RUFA

The doctor is out sick with the  
flu. He's getting an IV in  
Silverthorne. He asked me to take  
any emergency patients.

The Truck Driver takes one look at Rufa and stomps out.

RUFA (CONT'D)

(to the elderly man)

Your wife is outside with the car.  
Tell her you are to pick up two  
bottles of prune juice before the  
market closes in twenty minutes.  
You'll be fine by tomorrow.

ELDERLY MAN

Thanks, Doc.

The Elderly Man smiles at Rufa, and exits.

RUFA

Who's next?

SNOWBOARDER

Take the kid with the earache.

MOM

(to the snowboarder)

Thank you, very kind.

(to Rufa)

(MORE)

MOM (CONT'D)

I'm Mary. This is my daughter,  
Anna, who has a painful earache.

Rufa squats down and speaks in a gentle voice directly to  
Anna.

RUFA

Thank you for coming to see me  
tonight, Anna. Would you and your  
mother like to come into my office?

Anna shakes her head, 'No.'

RUFA (CONT'D)

(speaks softly)

You would not be the first to say  
that. We'll have a look right here,  
and your mom can hug you.

MOM

(whispers)

Thank you, Doctor.

RUFA

Call me Rufa. Let me get my  
grandfather's medical bag.

Rufa fetches the bag and returns. Anna is quite curious.

RUFA (CONT'D)

This was my grandfather's medical  
bag. When I was a little girl, I  
had an earache too, so my mother  
took me to see my grandfather, a  
kind and gentle doctor.

Rufa slowly opens the bag. Anna's eyes light up at the  
perfectly organized shelves with shiny tools, cotton balls,  
gauzes, and ointments of all types.

RUFA (CONT'D)

Tell me what is wrong, Anna.

Anna points to her left ear.

RUFA (CONT'D)

How long has it been bothering you?

MOM

Since lunch, but we knew Doc  
Stevens was out. And I thought it  
would get better.

Rufa pulls out a small flashlight from her bag.

RUFA

Let's have a look, if that's okay, Anna. This is my flashlight made for ears and noses. See! Let's look in your mommy's nose and see if we can see boogers.

Rufa looks in Mary's nose and Anna giggles. Then Rufa looks in Anna's ear. Anna is mesmerized by Rufa's soothing voice.

RUFA (CONT'D)

My grandfather asked my parents to name me Rufaida, Rufa for short, because his hero was Rufaida Al-Aslamia, the first female medical provider in Medina, Saudi Arabia, over thirteen hundred years ago. My grandfather wanted my father and me to be doctors.

(beat)

Your ear is red, Anna, and I see what might be bothering you.

MOM

That's good, right?

Rufa takes a small set of tweezers from the medical bag, and she gently tilts Anna's head to the side in her mother's lap.

RUFA

And after my grandfather fixed my earache, I wanted to be a doctor too, so that I could help little girls like you.

Rufa removes a small clear-plastic LEGO-like piece from Anna's ear.

MOM

What?

RUFA

You have a brother or sister who builds things all the time?

Anna nods 'yes.'

MOM

Oh my. Older brother. I'm so sorry.

RUFA

No problem at all. I often wish I had an older brother. Let me put in one tiny eardrop. It may tingle.

Anna immediately feels much better.

MOM

Oh, thank you, Rufa. How much do we owe you?

Anna stands, happy and healed.

RUFA

Hmmm. I would say, two hugs.

Mary and Anna hug Rufa, and exit smiling. Only the Snowboarder remains.

SNOWBOARDER

You were amazing with that kid!

RUFA

Thank you. And how may I help you?

SNOWBOARDER

It's my knee.

RUFA

Can you walk?

SNOWBOARDER

Yep, but dancing's out.

Rufa points to the office door.

RUFA

In there. Take off your boots, socks, and pants. There's a paper gown to put on. Call when you're ready.

SNOWBOARDER

Okay, Doc.

She watches the snowboarder limps into the back office. He seems to favor his right leg.

A minute later.

SNOWBOARDER (CONT'D)

Ready, Doc.

Rufa enters, and the teenager did as he was told.

RUFA

What is your name?

SNOWBOARDER

James Newton, but everybody calls me...

RUFA

(interrupting)

James is a strong name. Is your major complaint concerning the right knee, James?

SNOWBOARDER

How'd ya guess?

RUFA

You favored it slightly, but you are able to walk without crutches. That's a good sign. May I touch around your knee?

SNOWBOARDER

Sure, Doc.

Rufa feels around James's right knee. Only at one small spot is there discomfort.

SNOWBOARDER (CONT'D)

That hurts a little.

RUFA

I would need an MRI to confirm it, but I'd say you have a slightly torn meniscus.

SNOWBOARDER

Huh?

RUFA

It's a small piece of cartilage in your knee. It stabilizes and cushions the joint, and protects it from wear and tear. Easily torn.

SNOWBOARDER

What do I do?

RUFA

After the MRI, rest. They may recommend mild physical therapy. Very slowly. Don't do things that hurt!

SNOWBOARDER

Like snowboarding over Christmas break?



RUFA  
Exactly. Get the MRI, and no dancing.

SNOWBOARDER  
Can I at least get a prescription for medical marijuana?

Rufa's expression says it all, but she adds:

RUFA  
What do kids say, 'Not only no, but hell no?'

James laughs as he starts to get dressed. Rufa exits the office to the waiting room. Soon, James exits the room.

SNOWBOARDER  
What do I owe you, Doc?

RUFA  
No charge.

SNOWBOARDER  
Wait, no hug?

RUFA  
Modesty prohibits me.

SNOWBOARDER  
Aren't all patients equal?!

Rufa thinks about what James said. James doesn't leave. He puts out his arms, winks, and smiles.

SNOWBOARDER (CONT'D)  
Come on! Bring it in!

Rufa hugs him quickly, and James smiles. Then, Rufa smiles.

SNOWBOARDER (CONT'D)  
Thanks, Doc!

He leaves. Rufa gathers her medical bag, turns off the lights, and locks the door. She smiles as she heads out of the office. Snow is falling. She sees Sammy waiting for her in Burner's car. She yells at Sammy through the open window.

RUFA  
You'll freeze to death, Samuel. My ears have been outside for thirty seconds, and I can't feel them.

SAMMY

(laughs)

Those hijabs weren't made for snow?

RUFA

Not this one.

Sammy tosses her a knit skull cap, which she puts on over her hijab.

RUFA (CONT'D)

Snowboarders and skiers are on to something here. My ears are warm already.

SAMMY

How was your first day at work, Doc?

RUFA

When you are doing what you love, it is never work.

SAMMY

Come on. The crew is waitin' for us.

RUFA

I should get home and get my rest.

SAMMY

No one goes home after work here. Besides, they need you!

RUFA

Is anyone hurt?

SAMMY

On the inside, Doc.

Rufa gets in the car, and Sammy spins a donut in the snow before racing away.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Ten snowboarders and skiers fill the bar. Christmas decorations abound. Rufa walks in the bar with a jacket and the skull cap on, and no one bats an eye. She fits in. Sammy enters in a loud way.

SAMMY

Howdy, everybody. Soccer, I'll have the cheapest beer on tap.

SOCCKER

Comin' up, Sammy. But don't wave it  
in front of Burner.

Burner, sitting sadly next to Ollie, turns to scowl at  
Soccer, as Rufa sits down. Rufa sees their sad faces.

RUFA

(yells)

Soccer, three Irish Coffees, hold  
the Irish, start a tab. Put  
Samuel's beer on it too.

OLLIE

Hey, Doc, I can still drink.

RUFA

One should never drink alcohol when  
they are too sad or too happy.

OLLIE

Why?

RUFA

We have a saying that sorrow and  
joy teach us too much to be easily  
forgotten.

BURNER

Got sayings for everything?

RUFA

Not for self-pity. Imagine that,  
five thousand years of  
civilization, and not one good  
saying for self-pity!

SOCCKER

(yells)

That's a pity.

Everyone laughs, even Burner.

BURNER

Okay, screw you. Soccer, I'd like a  
god-damn Shirley Temple, please.

RUFA

Whiskey? Rum? Gin? What is this  
Shirley Temple?

BURNER

Seven-Up and grenadine. No alcohol,  
Doc. I gotta urine test tomorrow  
after community service.

Everyone pats Burner on the back.

Soccer delivers a Shirley Temple to Burner, a shot of tequila to Ollie, a draft beer to Sammy, and non-Irish Coffees to Rufa and herself. They toast.

RUFA

Olivia, Samuel told me about the  
letter you received. I'm sorry.

OLLIE

Making the best of it. Grabbed a  
sandwich from Burner this afternoon  
for a cheer-up.

BURNER

My name tag at the Deli said I was  
the Deli Lama. Maybe tomorrow I'll  
be the Baby Cheeses.

RUFA

I love that you all make the best  
of this short-lived experience,  
while you're young. Won't last  
forever!

Everyone turns gloomy.

RUFA (CONT'D)

What did I say?

SAMMY

Like the news, current events,  
politics, and health, we generally  
do not discuss the future. Could  
get depressing.

RUFA

I see.

Too late. The mood dampens. Sammy's phone rings.

SAMMY

Damn it. See? It's my mom calling  
about my dad!

Sammy answers as he steps outside.

RUFA

What's the matter with Samuel's  
father?

BURNER

We don't talk about it!

EXT. BUNNY HILL - DAY

A perky, ritzy woman, NANCY (40) wears a white ski suit with a "Staff" patch as an employee of the ski area. She waves over Burner from the bus stop nearby.

NANCY

Mr. Bruner, Mr. Bruner. Over here!

Burner walks over in his snowboard boots, flannel shirt, and slick sunglasses. He carries his snowboard.

BURNER

How'd ya know it was me?

NANCY

Your favorite policewoman, Cindy,  
said you were gorgeous for a man. I  
took a chance. And it's exactly  
eight A.M.

BURNER

Where are the students?

NANCY

Getting suited up. Takes time with  
some of 'em.

BURNER

What do I do for four hours a day?

NANCY

Keep them safe. Keep them happy.  
And you help them find success  
despite their different abilities.

BURNER

Got it!

NANCY

Do you?

BURNER

Keep them safe. Keep them happy.  
And you help them find success  
despite their different abilities.

Nancy gets in his face.

NANCY

Tougher than you think! And one word from me to my friend, Cindy, and you serve six months in the cross-bar hotel in Silverthorne.

She storms away, and returns with three students, AMANDA (10) with a prosthesis on her right lower leg, LARRY (12) born blind, and CRYSTAL (9) who is mentally challenged and very shy. Larry wears thick old-fashioned sunglasses.

NANCY (CONT'D)

These are your snowboarding students this week. Say hello to Mr. Bruner, your coach.

AMANDA AND LARRY

Hello, Mr. Bruner.

Larry and Amanda hold out their arms for a shake. Crystal turns away. Bruner shakes the two hands.

BURNER

My friends call me, Burner.

AMANDA AND LARRY

Hello, Burner.

NANCY

Hot chocolate in two hours, children. Includes you, Mr. Bruner.

Nancy exits promptly, without turning around. Burner tries to remember their names. He points at each of them in turn.

BURNER

Amanda, like Amanda Seyfried, what a babe. Got it.

Amanda blushes.

BURNER (CONT'D)

Larry, like Larry the Cable Guy, funny as hell, got it.

LARRY

I'm not funny! Some people are hard of hearing. I'm just a little hard of seeing.

BURNER

Nice sunglasses, Larry. Not as cool as mine, but still pretty chill. And Crystal, like a fine crystal bowl of snow. Got it.

Crystal glances over at Burner, but doesn't speak.

BURNER (CONT'D)

The basics. Let's go!

Burner struggles to get their boots strapped into their snowboard bindings. The kids fall often.

Amanda falls and Burner grabs her thin prosthesis. Amanda looks horrified but recovers quickly. Larry's jacket sleeves keep flailing around. Crystal never makes eye contact with anyone. Everyone is frustrated. No one looks safe or happy.

AMANDA

This is too hard!

LARRY

Impossible!

Burner looks over at shivering Crystal, who looks away.

BURNER

What do you say we call it a day?

Nancy pokes her head out the cafeteria door.

NANCY

Who'd like some hot chocolate?

Burner trudges into the cafeteria with Amanda, Larry, and Crystal dragging their snowboards. Nancy scolds Burner.

NANCY (CONT'D)

This is not going well. Are you incapable of holding a conversation with anyone who isn't exactly like you, an irresponsible teenager who never grew up?! I'm calling Cindy!

Nancy storms away. Burner looks around. Right behind him are Amanda, Larry, and Crystal. Burner tries to smile.

BURNER

Come on, team, the hot chocolate is on me.

LARRY

You got a load of whoop-ass on you  
from that lady, that's for sure.

BURNER

(laughs)

Who says you're not funny, Larry?  
This fight ain't over yet!

Burner gets them hot chocolates. He puts ice cubes in  
Crystal's cup. She notices and snarls at Burner.

CRYSTAL

I like my hot chocolate hot.

BURNER

Didn't want you to burn yourself.

AMANDA

I want ice cubes too!

Crystal looks away, then looks back.

LARRY

Me too, please.

BURNER

You shredders are awfully  
demanding. But, okay.

Burner smiles and fetches more ice cubes and straws. He gets  
the same setup for himself. Larry hears Burner dropping ice  
cubes into his cup. It surprises him.

AMANDA

When did you start snowboarding,  
Burner?

BURNER

Age four. By the time I was eight,  
I was ripping down the slopes. I  
had great balance.

(laughs)

But I was horrible at reading! I  
needed a bookmark for *The Cat in  
the Hat!*

The kids laugh. Burner smiles.

LARRY

I can read *The Cat in the Hat* with  
my fingers. But I trip down the  
easiest stairs. How come you wanted  
to teach us snowboarding?



Burner's smile disappears.

BURNER  
Truth is, it's community service.

AMANDA  
A punishment?

Crystal looks away. Burner sees her.

BURNER  
Look, I could have lied to you, but  
I didn't.

Silence.

LARRY  
(sadly)  
Are you really an irresponsible  
teenager who never grew up?

Burner looks to the left and right before whispering to  
Larry, Amanda, and Crystal.

BURNER  
Nobody's perfect. I'm new at this  
adult stuff. Go easy on me, okay?

The kids are silent.

INT. RESORT - DAY

Yusuf and Shatha Kalkhan and Mohammed Bayani hurry into the  
high-end resort that Ollie and Sammy work in. Christmas  
decorations abound. Clerk #2 (25, blonde woman) is  
registering them with curious glances.

YUSUF  
Mr. and Mrs. Yusuf Kalkhan. The  
snow kept us from getting here.  
We're looking for our daughter.

CLERK #2  
Shouldn't be too hard to find.

Sammy passes by carrying room-service meals. He sees Yusuf  
and Shatha, and races away wildly balancing the trays.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Rufa meets with a redneck Patient (50) with the flu. The Patient wears overalls and a "rifle" T-shirt, under a leather coat. Rufa wears a surgical mask.

RUFA

You'll have to excuse me. I don't want what you have!

PATIENT

Long as you fix me.

RUFA

Commonly, you're going to feel like elephant poop for four to seven days until this passes.

PATIENT

What can I do?

RUFA

Isolate yourself. Drink plenty of fluids. Don't pass it on.

The Patient looks at Rufa.

PATIENT

Okay, Doc. But what about sex?

RUFA

Alone, you're okay. With others, you will make enemies.

The Patient laughs as he exits. Rufa shakes her head, smiling, confident, and enjoying life.

INT. RESORT - DAY

Sammy hunts down Ollie in a hallway of the resort.

SAMMY

They're here! Doc's parents!

OLLIE

What do we do?

SAMMY

I don't know, but that jerk of a private investigator is with 'em.

OLLIE

We could tell 'em that Doc's happy here and to leave her alone.

SAMMY

They gotta see it for themselves.

OLLIE

They'll be starving if they just drove up. Let's let them overhear us at the restaurant!

SAMMY

Dressed like this?

They look at each other and sigh.

OLLIE

I know where we could borrow some nice threads.

Ollie pulls Sammy by the hand, and they race down the hall.

EXT./INT. HOUSE - DAY

Mohammed Bayani prowls around the dilapidated house rented by Burner, Soccer, Ollie, and Sammy, expecting that everyone is at work. Soccer is in the shower, but the water pressure is so low, Mohammed can't hear the shower run.

Mohammed peeks through two windows, snapping a few photos on his phone. He checks the front door handle to see the door is unlocked. He walks in just as Soccer shuts off the water.

MOHAMMED

Filthy infidels! Slum-dog hundred-aires!

Mohammed takes photos of the clean home, turns, and snaps a photo of Soccer, naked, and holding a baseball bat.

Soccer swings for the stomach and doesn't miss.

INT. RESORT RESTAURANT - DAY

Yusuf and Shatha are already seated when Sammy and Ollie show up. Ollie is dressed in a fur-lined snowsuit. Sammy is in an oversized knee-length down jacket. Ollie whispers to the Maitre d', a cute friend named SUZI (30), in a black pantsuit and white blouse. Ollie points to the Kalkhan's table.

SUZI  
That them in the prom outfits?

SAMMY  
Traditional Middle Eastern wear.

OLLIE  
Sit us next to them. Coffee for  
Sammy. Tea for me.

Suzi giggles and whispers as she leads Ollie and Sammy to the table. Sammy plays up his Texas accent.

SUZI  
Where'd you get the threads? Mug a  
European couple?  
(loudly)  
Mr. and Ms. Gates, right this way.

Sammy slips her a one-dollar bill.

SAMMY  
Thank you, Ma'am.

Suzi palms the tip perfectly. The Kalkhans only see a flash of the green bill.

SUZI  
Oh, Mr. Gates, how generous of you  
once again. I'll have your regular  
morning beverages right out.

Ollie and Sammy act rich and stuffy. They speak loudly.

SAMMY  
How y'all feeling this morning,  
darlin'?

OLLIE  
Just fine, dear. Thanks to that  
fabulous new doctor in town.

Yusuf and Shatha glance over.

SAMMY  
Fixed me right up to! Everybody  
loves her. What's her name?

OLLIE  
Dr. Rufa Kalkhan. Nothing she Kal-  
can't cure.

Yusuf glares at Ollie, but he is polite.

YUSUF  
That's our daughter.

SHATHA  
She established a practice?

OLLIE  
She's subbing for Doc Stevens who's  
out with the flu, but everybody I  
know wants her to stay on.

SAMMY  
Magnificent healer.

YUSUF  
Where can we find her?

Sammy and Ollie freeze.

SAMMY  
Might see her tonight. She's a  
guest at the resort, of course.

OLLIE  
Top floor, of course.

SHATHA  
They love her here?

OLLIE  
Pillar of the community.

Suzi brings coffee and tea to the table, as Yusuf stands.

YUSUF  
We must find Dr. Steven's office!

Yusuf and Shatha hurry out.

OLLIE  
Didn't quite go as planned.

SAMMY  
And, we gotta return these clothes.

They jump up and race out.

OLLIE  
Better call Doc, too!

INT. HOUSE - DAY

Cindy stares at the photos on Mohammed's phone as he holds a plastic bag of ice to his gut. Soccer comes out of her bedroom dressed for work, in a tight red top and blue jeans. She snarls at Mohammed, then at Cindy. Cindy ignores her.

CINDY

On the bus ride from Austin to Denver, a passenger really thought Rufa was a terrorist?

Mohammed nods 'yes.' Soccer is in a rare, angry mood.

SOCCER

That's messed up.

CINDY

She was crying in the next photo?

Mohammed nods 'yes.'

SOCCER

That's more messed up.

CINDY

Then we got breaking and entering, invasion of privacy, and attempted sexual assault.

Mohammed's chin drops.

SOCCER

Good for ten years?

CINDY

And a registered sex offender if you get out at all. Shall I call your employer? Mr. Yusuf Kalkhan if the recent call list is any indication.

Mohammed nods 'no.'

SOCCER

That Doc is a straight shooter. We all love her already!

MOHAMMED

I have photos of Rufa drinking Irish coffee!

SOCCKER

Non-Irish coffee, man! No alcohol.  
She doesn't drink! Me either, now.

MOHAMMED

I got photos of her wearing a ski  
cap! No hijab!

SOCCKER

The hijab was under her knit ski  
cap. If she gets sick, there's no  
other doctor in town now!

CINDY

I'll download these photos to my  
office computer. Evidence!

SOCCKER

Suppose you'll need a formal  
statement from me as well?

CINDY

(whispers to Soccer)  
Yes, my friend.

Cindy winks at Soccer. Mohammed GLARES at the two women.  
Soccer turns furious.

SOCCKER

Don't you call me your friend! You  
won't hold hands with me and walk  
down the street!

CINDY

That's another matter!

SOCCKER

Like hell it is!

Soccer kicks Mohammed in the ankle, and storms out.

INT./EXT. SKI HILL CAFETERIA - DAY

Burner is in a huddle with Amanda, Larry, and Crystal. They  
are suited up and ready to go outside.

BURNER

Look, we got a little time left  
today before my breathalyzer test.

AMANDA

That's too much information!

LARRY

I'm betting against ya, big guy!

Burner laughs! Crystal looks the other way.

BURNER

Let's stay positive, stay warm, and stay alive. Tomorrow will be better, I promise!

The four snowboarders trudge to the bottom of the Bunny Hill. Burner has them sit on a snow bank, and put on their own bindings.

BURNER (CONT'D)

Snap in. You got this!

The kids do it. He puts on his bindings and stares across at them.

BURNER (CONT'D)

Arms out a little. For balance.

The three kids comply, though Crystal is a little late.

BURNER (CONT'D)

Think balance and edges. Balance and edges. Ready? I'm gonna take you the first five feet. Then you go five feet, bend your knees, and fall on your butts. Got it?

ALL

Got it.

He demonstrates, then unbuckles from his bindings, holds the back of Amanda's jacket and guides her five feet down the slope. She glides a few more feet and falls, laughing.

Burner grabs the back of Larry's jacket and guides him five feet, and he falls, laughing.

Burner grabs Crystal's jacket in the back, and she SCREAMS. Onlookers (a few skiers and snowboarders; various ages), turn to look at Burner and Crystal, who is shaking in fear.

Burner's hands shake (like the DT's). He's scared, too.

Nancy leans her head out of the door to the cafeteria.

NANCY

Okay, Mr. Bruner. That's all the time you have for today. Tell the kids goodbye, and send them in.



Amanda and Larry unbuckle their boots. Larry stands first, and holds out a hand for Amanda. She lets him pull her up, and she guides Larry and Crystal to the cafeteria. Crystal is still shaking. So is Burner.

BURNER

See ya, kids. Tomorrow will be better, I promise.

Burner is depressed as he trudges to a nearby bus.

INT. RESORT - DAY

Sammy and Ollie race out of a guest's room. Sammy flips out his phone to call Doc.

SAMMY

Damn. Voice message.

OLLIE

Tell her everything.

SAMMY

Sammy and Ollie here. We were having coffee next to your folks at the resort. Told 'em you were taking over for Doc Stevens, and staying at the resort here.

OLLIE

Tell her about Soccer.

SAMMY

Oh, and Soccer was accosted at home by your creepy private investigator dude, so Cindy hauled his ass down to the station.

OLLIE

Tell her we hope she's having a nice day!

SAMMY

And I think I love you.

Sammy ends the call. Ollie's eyes are huge! She drags him down the hall. Ollie sounds like a TV news reporter.

OLLIE

Here we are at the Dumbest Man In America Contest in Breckenridge, Colorado. The crowd, anxious in anticipation. Wait! Wait!

(MORE)

OLLIE (CONT'D)

Here's a young man who told a girl  
he loves her for the first time --  
with a voicemail message!

SAMMY

I was nervous!

OLLIE

Bottom of the ninth inning. Will he  
use a sky-writing airplane or a  
yellow sticky note to say I love  
you for the first time? He chooses  
the seldom-used voicemail.

SAMMY

I said I was nervous.

OLLIE

Dumb-shit!

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Mohammed is sitting in the chair next to Cindy's desk. Soccer  
is behind Cindy glaring at the two of them. Burner trudges in  
the door and sees them.

BURNER

(sarcastic)

Why are you two so happy?

CINDY

Love drug-testing days in my town.

SOCCER

She loves busting pervs, too.

BURNER

The private dick is a perv?

SOCCER

Tried to photograph my ta-tas after  
he broke into your house.

Burner glares at Mohammed, then Cindy.

BURNER

Okay, give me my cup to pee in.  
Let's get this over with.

CINDY

I'll let you use the Breathalyzer  
today. I'm busy.

BURNER  
But those things always read low.

CINDY  
I trust ya.

Soccer hugs Burner.

SOCCER  
Me, too. And Nancy told us all  
about your first day of community  
service.

BURNER  
Probably my last day.

SOCCER  
Not what those kids told Nancy.

CINDY  
They can't wait 'til tomorrow.

SOCCER  
And their parents will be there for  
videos at eleven-thirty.

BURNER  
Videos of what? Me making a fool  
out of myself and the kids?

CINDY  
You got three-and-a-half hours  
before the show, man.

BURNER  
I'd need three and a half weeks!  
Those kids are nothing like me!

Soccer stands and gets in Burner's face.

SOCCER  
They are exactly like you! They are  
scared to grow up! They got issues,  
and they got scars. Like you!

Burner's eyes open up.

CINDY  
Tell him, girl.

Soccer raises her finger and keeps talking into his face.

SOCCKER

Don't you go crying to a bar with  
your tiny-ass problems. Look what  
real people have to face every day!

CINDY

Without a flask!

Cindy hands a Breathalyzer to Burner, who uses it.

CINDY (CONT'D)

Zero.

SOCCKER

Which is where you'll stay until  
you get your life on track!

Burner turns without saying a word and starts to leave.

CINDY

(yells)

Don't miss community service or the  
urine test tomorrow at noon!

Burner storms out.

EXT./INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Yusuf and Shatha sit freezing in the back of a cab outside  
the doctor's office. The Cabbie (25), a long-haired  
snowboarder, grows impatient.

CABBIE

That will be seven-fifty. I'd like  
to finish early and hit the slopes.

YUSUF

This is a very small doctor's  
office, yes?

CABBIE

Yep. Doc Stevens does it all  
though. I was born here.

SHATHA

Born here?

CABBIE

Happens all the time, Ma'am. Or at  
home. Too far to Silverthorne or  
Denver. Don't got all day.

YUSUF

No place for our daughter.

CABBIE

She saved my grandpa's life  
yesterday.

(beat)

Prune juice!

Shatha laughs. Yusuf tips a ten-dollar bill and helps Shatha out of the cab. The cabbie speeds away.

YUSUF

I hope we can talk sense into that  
girl.

SHATHA

If you upset her, you could lose  
her forever! Stubborn. Like you!

YUSUF

I can handle this calmly!

They slip and slide in city shoes on the way into the office.

The waiting room is packed. Mother #2 (35) is with her Son (12) who is holding his shoulder and arm. An Elderly Woman (70) wearing one shoe and one slipper reads a magazine. A middle-aged couple (50) sits holding their stomachs. The grumpy Truck Driver, who walked out the night before is back. When he sees Yusuf and Shatha stumble in, he is less happy.

There are groans, but everyone except the Truck Driver, Yusuf, and Shatha are talkative.

MOTHER #2

I hear very good things about the  
new Doc. Talk of the town.

ELDERLY WOMAN

(laughs)

Long as she can turn my toes white.  
What's the matter with your boy?

MOTHER #2

Followed his older brother on a  
rail at the school. Almost made it!

SON

Did make it. Fell at the end. We'll  
clip it from the video.

MOTHER #2

You'll have something to watch for  
the next eight weeks is my guess.

She pats his head, then hugs him. He grimaces in pain.

Rufa exits her office, wearing the hijab, to see her parents  
in the waiting room.

MOTHER #2 (CONT'D)

Collar bone, I think. Wanta be  
sure.

Silence. Rufa and her parents stare at each other.

RUFA

I have patients to see.

YUSUF

(softly)

You have a family, too. One with a  
rich cultural history.

RUFA

Maybe I would rather be poor,  
happy, and independent, Baba.

The patients look back and forth at Rufa and her parents.

YUSUF

Abandoning your parents and a well-  
matched man who wants to marry  
you...

SHATHA

(interrupting)

We just wanted to see that you are  
safe and happy.

RUFA

I am safe and happy here. I'm  
making friends. Real friends. For  
the first time in my life.

YUSUF

Who needs friends, when you have  
family?

Shatha steps up to hug her daughter.

RUFA

(sadly)

I think I do, Baba.

YUSUF

(still calm)

We hope you return to New Orleans  
with us tomorrow afternoon. You can  
be married and practice medicine  
there. You'll be home!

Shatha looks to her daughter with sadness, and her husband  
with disdain.

SHATHA

(sadly to Rufa)

If you think you need to abandon us  
to find joy, we hope you are wrong.

Shatha hugs her daughter one last time, as Yusuf's chin drops  
to his chest. Shatha turns and exits the doctor's office.  
Yusuf silently follows. Rufa has tears in her eyes.

RUFA

I sort of ran away from home.  
Silly, right? Twenty-nine, alone,  
afraid, and I'd never seen snow.

Rufa composes herself as the patients look on with pity.

RUFA (CONT'D)

Okay. Who's next? You, with the  
slipper.

Rufa guides the elderly lady up into the office.

RUFA (CONT'D)

I'm Doctor Rufa Kalkhan. Call me  
Rufa. What is bothering you today?

Rufa checks her phone for messages as she walks the elderly  
lady to the office. She sees a voicemail message from Sammy.

INT./EXT. RESORT - DAY

Ollie leads Sammy out of the resort.

OLLIE

Bad idea. It's getting late.

SAMMY

One run before the mountain closes.

OLLIE

Gettin' kinda dark.

SAMMY

Burner's up there! What could go wrong?

EXT. SKI SLOPES - DAY

Burner shreds a double-black "expert" slope perfectly. Ollie is right behind him on her skis.

Sammy, wearing snowboard gear and a cowboy hat, takes a run on a blue "intermediate slope," but he can't make a turn, and ends up on the double-black run. He cusses and swerves out of control until he hits a tree. BAM!

INT./EXT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Rufa finishes listening to Sammy's voicemail as she sits alone in the empty waiting room. She stands and paces. She straightens her hijab. She pulls out her phone and types a text message to her parents.

The text reads: "I'm very sorry. I'll be ready to go home tomorrow afternoon."

EXT./INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Two Ambulance EMTs (30s; male and female Mexicans with heavy accents) wheel Sammy on a gurney into Rufa, as she waves goodbye to the 17-year-old snowboarder she met yesterday.

RUFA

The answer is still no.

She sends him on his way, and races to meet the ambulance. Rufa calmly meets Burner and Ollie guiding the gurney.

RUFA (CONT'D)

What happened here?

OLLIE

Sammy hit a tree!

EMT #1

We got 0-2 on him to calm him down.

EMT #2

He was cussing up a storm!

BURNER

Found him screaming, holding his right knee, and calling for you.



RUFA  
Where's his helmet?

OLLIE  
Wore his proud State of Texas  
helmet tonight!

RUFA  
Not his cowboy hat?

BURNER  
Afraid so. His older brother did  
the same!

RUFA  
Bring him into the office.

The EMTs wheel Sammy in, while Rufa scolds him.

RUFA (CONT'D)  
Still want to build a wall Samuel,  
so these fine Mexican Emergency  
Medical Technicians won't be there  
to save your butt next time?

Sammy shakes his head, "No." The EMTs chuckle.

RUFA (CONT'D)  
Maybe they should have left the  
great white patriot to die, and  
gone to pick your father's crops!

Sammy shakes his head, "No." The EMTs chuckle, again.

Rufa rips the oxygen mask off Sammy.

RUFA (CONT'D)  
This is what we call a "teachable  
moment." Now thank these well-  
trained, underpaid health workers  
for their service!

SAMMY  
Thank you very much.

The EMTs transfer Sammy to a chair and start to exit.

EMT #1  
No problem, dude.

EMT #2  
Never heard so much screaming.

Rufa takes Sammy's blood pressure and pulse, and looks into his eyes.

RUFA

Thank you for your sweet voicemail.

Sammy is silent.

SAMMY

Don't matter. Going back to Texas.  
Don't belong here. Never did.

RUFA

Where do you feel pain?

SAMMY

Head, knee, 'n heart.  
(smiles)  
Sounds like a country-western song,  
don't it?

Ollie and Burner poke around the doctor's office, playing with things. Rufa continues examining Sammy.

RUFA

Samuel, you didn't tell me you had  
an older brother.

Burner and Ollie race to Sammy.

SAMMY

Died last year.

RUFA

I'm so sorry.

SAMMY

Fighting nobody's war. Martin loved  
to shred with Burner over  
Christmas.

OLLIE

It's one reason none of us talk  
politics or health.

BURNER

Understand, Doc?

Rufa nods 'yes,' and tries to change the subject.

RUFA

Your eyes look fine, Samuel, but  
we'll treat for concussion. Ice on  
and off for twenty minutes.

(MORE)

RUFA (CONT'D)

You'll need to try to stay awake  
and make sure your brain works.

BURNER AND OLLIE

Poker night?

They high-five each other.

RUFA

No alcohol. Now, let's look at the  
knee. We'll need those pants off.

Sammy pops up and starts to strip.

OLLIE

We'll go pick up some pizzas.

Ollie and Burner begin to leave.

RUFA

Veggie for me.

(yells)

Wait! I almost forgot. My parents  
got me a room at the resort. I'm  
going home tomorrow.

Ollie and Burner stop dead in their tracks.

RUFA (CONT'D)

(sadly)

I'm to be married next week.

Ollie and Burner race to hug Rufa. She allows it.

OLLIE

What about your practice here?

BURNER

I don't know what to say.

Meanwhile, Sammy is stripped to nothing but a cowboy hat, and  
joins in the group-hug. Rufa realizes Sammy is naked, and she  
breaks off the hug.

RUFA

Samuel, put on that hospital gown  
immediately.

Sammy complies, while Ollie and Burner burst out laughing.

RUFA (CONT'D)

Catherine and Cindy will be by to  
say goodbye and take me to the  
resort.

BURNER

Maybe it will be a wild night, and you'll have to stay, Doc.

RUFA

Get lost, you two. We'll be done soon.

Burner and Ollie race out laughing, as Sammy hobbles to the examining table in pain.

RUFA (CONT'D)

Right knee is swollen. We'll need an MRI when the swelling is down.

SAMMY

What's that mean, Doc?

RUFA

You probably tore your meniscus. No more snowboarding this season.

Sammy smiles. He looks relieved.

RUFA (CONT'D)

This makes you happy?

SAMMY

More reason to go home. Truth is, I've never been any good shredding. I love farming. Plowing actually. And my parents kinda need me now that...

RUFA

Your brother is gone. I understand. It's good, honest work, Samuel.

SAMMY

But I love the way I'm treated by my crew.

RUFA

They love you very much.

SAMMY

Even if I can't shred. They accepted me as is.

RUFA

Me, too.

SAMMY

Exactly. They didn't care.

RUFA

They did care. So did you.

Rufa turns away.

SAMMY

What?

RUFA

That night on the bus ride was the closest thing I ever had to a date.

SAMMY

You never dated?

RUFA

The way we talked back and forth all night was the sweetest night of my life. There is nothing wrong with dating.

SAMMY

I liked it, too. Fact, I think I fell for ya.

RUFA

Forbidden fruit sometimes appears the sweetest.

(beat)

I'm no psychologist, Samuel, but I think you may have been over-compensating for your brother's death, which I had nothing to do with. I dislike war as much as you. All violence for that matter.

Rufa turns back to see Sammy tearing up.

SAMMY

I miss my farm and my folks.

They HEAR Burner's horn honk outside.

RUFA

Let's go have some pizza. It will be our little goodbye party.

INT. RESORT - NIGHT

Yusuf paces as Shatha tips the Room-Service Delivery Woman (20). Two trays sit on the elegant table in their suite.

YUSUF  
Where can she be?

SHATHA  
Working late? Patients? You heard  
the ambulance.

YUSUF  
Call her. Text her. Do something.

SHATHA  
I will not push her away again by  
pulling her too close.

Yusuf looks out the window. He is nervous again.

YUSUF  
It's snowing again!

SHATHA  
Romantic, isn't it? Come enjoy a  
cup of hot tea with me.

Yusuf turns with a little smile, then a bigger smile.

YUSUF  
You are the best, Shatha. The best!

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Rufa, Ollie, Sammy, and Burner talk quietly at the kitchen table. Sammy has a knee brace on and ice on the back of his head. Three pizza boxes sit in the middle of the table with a deck of cards and poker chips stacked before each player. Ollie has cans of cheap beer next to her plate of pizza, while Sammy, Rufa, and Burner have hot tea.

Cindy and Soccer burst in the front door with another pizza, a bottle of fake champagne, and beaming smiles.

SOCCER  
Fake champagne, poker, and pizza!  
Burner sober as a judge! Life is  
good, yah man?!

Everyone cheers.

CINDY  
Proud of you, Jake.

Everyone laughs and cheers.

OLLIE  
Gather around the poker table.  
There are a few other things to  
celebrate tonight.

SOCCER  
Like what?

BURNER  
Sammy wiped out into a tree, tore  
up his knee, and is going home to  
be a farmer tomorrow.

The mood turns sullen.

SAMMY  
It's true. I'll be back to visit  
though.

They smile! Cindy and Soccer hug Sammy.

BURNER  
And Doc's leaving us to get married  
in New Orleans.

Cindy is stunned, and everyone is speechless.

CINDY  
Wow. Didn't know you were engaged.

OLLIE  
Arranged by her folks.

Silence.

RUFA  
Quite common in our culture. I'll  
miss you all very much.

SAMMY  
They never dated.

Rufa looks away.

RUFA  
We do things differently. Different  
is okay, is it not?

CINDY  
What? Never dated? Even I dated.  
Just about everyone. Isn't that  
right, Jake?

BURNER

(laughs)

See! Whenever I'm in trouble, they call me Jake or Jacob.

Everyone, except Rufa, laughs.

RUFA

I just stopped by to get my things. My parents paid off the people next to them in the resort, so I could sleep there tonight in luxury, safety, and under their watchful eyes.

OLLIE

Mustn't let anything happen to their precious daughter before her big day.

RUFA

(laughs)

Or their big day, as the case may be.

Sammy transfers the ice pack to his sore knee.

SAMMY

Plum crazy if you ask me. Especially after our date.

SOCCER

You two dated?

RUFA

We stayed up most of the night talking on the bus ride from Texas.

OLLIE

And that was the date?

RUFA

I never had a traditional date. We have conservative approaches to these things. Arranged dinners.

Everyone is stunned. Cindy pours champagne into paper cups in the kitchen. They're about to toast. Rufa lifts her teacup.

BURNER

(laughing)

Seriously, Doc.

(MORE)



BURNER (CONT'D)

This is Sammy's and your goodbye party, and probably the only bachelorette party you'll ever see!

RUFA

I'm fine with tea.

They cheer and toast.

BURNER

Sparkling apple cider?! Yuck!  
That's it for me. Big urine test tomorrow!

Everyone laughs. Burner and Soccer join Rufa with tea. Everyone gathers around for a fun game of poker.

SAMMY

Is this strip poker?

Everyone hits Sammy.

We see the passage of time, as the clock spins around until almost midnight.

RUFA

Oh my! I've got to get my things and get to the resort.

CINDY

I have to get going, too. Work night!

OLLIE

I'm crashing. Day off tomorrow. No room cleaning! Yeah!

Burner goes to hug Ollie.

BURNER

This woman is the toughest competitor I know, and she wasn't invited to the Olympics or the X-Games this year!

SOCCER

Girl? You didn't say anything.

OLLIE

(sadly)  
Just found out.

There is a group-hug around Ollie.

RUFA  
Olivia, I'm so sorry.

OLLIE  
I'm thirty-four. Had a good run!

CINDY  
That's bullshit. What are ya gonna do?

Ollie forces a smile.

OLLIE  
Don't know.  
(beat)  
But I'll think of something.

SAMMY  
You could come be a farmer with me?

OLLIE  
Sweet, Sammy. I'll think about it.

RUFA  
I bet neither of you has ever stayed at the elegant resort you work at. You could both enjoy my suite tonight. Two bedrooms, a full mini-bar, and charge all the room service you can order.

OLLIE  
Sounds kinda fun.

SAMMY  
We could wear those white bathrobes and limp up and down the hall.

BURNER  
Hey, what happens in Breck, stays in Breck.

Everyone smiles.

CINDY  
I could drop Sammy and Ollie off on my way home.

RUFA  
I better go and clear it with the registration desk.

BURNER

I'll drive.

(to Rufa)

Wait. Where will you sleep?

OLLIE

Take my room. A fair trade for the luxury of the resort.

SOCCER

(pointing at Burner)

We'll lock the door, Doc.

CINDY

What happens in Breck...

They all laugh.

RUFA

Stop it, you guys!

They all exit laughing.

EXT. RESORT - NIGHT

Rufa steps out of the resort with a smile. She gets to the car to see Burner in the passenger seat.

RUFA

Come on, Jacob. It's late. Stop fooling around.

BURNER

You're driving!

RUFA

I don't drive.

BURNER

You have to drive. I had one sip of fake champagne, and you had zero.

RUFA

No. I don't know how!

BURNER

It's easy. I'll teach you.

Rufa looks up to the penthouse.

RUFA

This is crazy. You wanted me by the broken window.

BURNER

I want to give you the confidence  
to face any situation in the  
future! This is your last night in  
the free world! Take a risk!

She gets in the driver's-side door. She is furious!

RUFA

How do you drive this thing?

BURNER

It's in "P" for park, so you can  
turn on the ignition.

The car starts. Rufa's eyes light up. Burner moves over to be  
closer to Rufa. Her hands grip the steering wheel tightly.

BURNER (CONT'D)

Use only your right foot between  
the gas and the brake. Winter, so  
use the brake as a last resort. Let  
the car slow down. Don't grip the  
wheel too tight.

She loosens her grip. Her eyes light up again.

RUFA

Let's do this!

Burner sees her enthusiasm.

BURNER

Put it in "D" for drive and ease on  
the gas pedal.

Rufa guns it by accident, and the car speeds out of the  
resort driveway.

BURNER (CONT'D)

Foot off the gas! No brake!

The car slows down and stops. Rufa is elated!

RUFA

So exciting! So exciting!

BURNER

Not so much gas this time. And you  
haven't mastered turning yet, so  
pull into the big parking lot below  
Peak Seven.

From above and at a distance, Soccer and Cindy see Rufa pull into a big empty parking lot. Snow is falling. Rufa drives around in figure-eights, learning to handle the car.

SOCCKER

Doc ain't got no license. You gonna bust her?

CINDY

I don't see anything.

Cindy and Soccer laugh.

SOCCKER

So glad we followed them! Now, let's go to your place!

LATER

Rufa is making giant square turns, using turn signals and arm signals through the broken window, and going in reverse.

Rufa practices parallel parking. We HEAR Burner laughing, then they both laugh.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Rufa is smiling from ear to ear.

BURNER

Ready for your test?

RUFA

Test?

BURNER

Late-night convenient store run for munchies. Let's go. Edge of town!

RUFA

(excited)  
Edge of town!

They drive off.

EXT./INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT

Rufa parks well, and they hop out. Clerk #3 (25), a male with a baby face, looks nervous as Burner and Rufa enter.

CLERK #3

I don't keep cash.

BURNER  
Don't need any.

RUFA  
I have a little cash.

Rufa and Burner look around the store and whisper.

BURNER  
Breakfast burrito or ice cream.  
Always a tough choice.

RUFA  
Your choice. It's on me since you  
taught me how to drive.

BURNER  
Just trying to impress a girl on  
our first and last date.

Rufa stops and stares at Burner. Burner looks over at Clerk #3 who won't take his eyes off of Rufa.

BURNER (CONT'D)  
He's been staring at you since we  
got here.

RUFA  
Thinks I'm a terrorist. I'm used to  
it.

Rufa sees that Burner's hand forms a fist. She looks into his eyes and Burner's fist unclenches. He fakes a smile and waves at Clerk #3.

BURNER  
Idiot! Come on, Doc. I've got  
pancake mix at home!

Burner storms out pulling Rufa by the hand.

BURNER (CONT'D)  
Gimme the keys.

RUFA  
They're in the ignition.

BURNER  
That asshole!

RUFA  
A fistfight is the same as a war.  
Violence breeds violence.

(MORE)

RUFA (CONT'D)

Idiots like that are everywhere.  
Happens every day!

Rufa gets in the car. Then Burner does.

BURNER

How do you stand it?

RUFA

I pray for them.

BURNER

Lotta good that does!

Burner slams the door on the car, and speeds away.

INT. RESORT - NIGHT

Sammy and Ollie are in white bathrobes, enjoying ice cream sundaes from room service, and little bottles of booze from the mini-bar. The TV has a raunchy comedy on, playing a bit too loudly.

Next door, Yusuf and Shatha lay in bed with their eyes wide open. Yusuf is about to get up when Shatha holds out her arm for him to lay still.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

Burner is in the kitchen frying pancakes. A jar of maple syrup heats in a small pan of boiling water. Rufa is in the family room kneeling toward the east for a short prayer. Burner glances over, bewildered.

BURNER

Breakfast is ready.

Rufa stands. She has a look of peace when she gets to the kitchen table. Burner notices.

BURNER (CONT'D)

Amazing. Maybe it works.

RUFA

Works for me.

BURNER

I suppose meditating would do the same.

RUFA

Hmmm. Maybe. You should try it.

BURNER

Try my pancakes. Mom's recipe. Just add water!

RUFA

My kinda woman.

BURNER

She'd like you. So would Dad. Long as you don't mention me not going to a synagogue.

RUFA

He does not approve.

BURNER

I always thought religion should be personal. On the inside.

RUFA

It is on the inside. Is there something wrong with a proud culture showing it on the outside?

Burner pauses.

BURNER

You've been kind and helpful. You became a doctor to heal all people. Your actions make everyone stronger. But many people wear their beliefs outside, with flags, uniforms, rifles, and hats.

Rufa reaches up and feels her hijab. She pauses.

BURNER (CONT'D)

Us versus them. I just don't get it! I got in fights in public school when I wore the yarmulke. What's inside is enough for me.

RUFA

I will wear what pleases me. My parents, and my religion, teach peace and non-violence. Your parents didn't teach you to punch people. Stop punching people.

BURNER

I will. Humans are slow learners!



RUFA  
 You can't afford to live in  
 Breckenridge on the wages from the  
 deli. Your parents bought you this  
 house, didn't they, Jacob?

Burner pauses.

BURNER  
 I guess so.

RUFA  
 Then thank them.

Burner looks away.

RUFA (CONT'D)  
 They brought you into this world  
 and made you strong and caring,  
 didn't they, Jacob?

Burner turns slowly, with his head down.

BURNER  
 Yes.

RUFA  
 Then thank them.  
 (beat, angry)  
 Now!

Burner pauses.

BURNER  
 They're asleep.

RUFA  
 Just as you taught me to drive the  
 car, I will teach you how to drive  
 your heart.  
 (beat)  
 Call them now, please!

Burner struggles to take out his phone.

BURNER  
 It's been a while.

RUFA  
 So, it's long overdue. Then, we  
 will celebrate with pancakes.  
 (beat)  
 And thank your mother for the  
 recipe!

Burner makes a phone call.

LATER

Burner and Rufa stare into each other's eyes across the table, as they eat pancakes. They smile.

INT. RESORT - DAY

We see a beautiful blue sky and sunrise in Breckenridge. Yusuf and Shatha are dressed and sitting on the edge of the bed, staring at the phone.

YUSUF

You call.

SHATHA

No, you call.

YUSUF

No, you call.

SHATHA

This is silly.

Shatha picks up the phone and dials her daughter's room. Sammy answers the phone, shocking Shatha.

SAMMY (O.S.)

Howdy!

Shatha hears Ollie giggling quietly in the background.

SHATHA

(appalled)

You may both join us for breakfast  
at the restaurant!

Shatha hangs up quickly. Yusuf is anxious.

YUSUF

What was that? What do you mean,  
'you may both join us for  
breakfast?'

Shatha grabs Yusuf's hand and begins to lead him out of the room when the resort bill is slipped under the door. Yusuf bends down to pick up the bill. He struggles to comprehend the bill as Shatha pulls him down the hall.

YUSUF (CONT'D)

What's this? Room Service for  
eighty-two dollars?

(MORE)

YUSUF (CONT'D)

Mini-bar restocked at two in the morning, for sixty-seven dollars?

SHATHA

Just come with me!

She drags him faster to the elevators.

INT. RESORT RESTAURANT - DAY

Moments after they sit down in the restaurant, Sammy and Ollie poke their heads in, immediately recognizing each other. Sammy, wearing his cowboy hat, is limping.

SAMMY

Remember us? I'm Sammy. This is Ollie.

OLLIE

Doc let us stay in her room last night. Sweet!

YUSUF

She's not here?

SHATHA

Allah be praised!

SAMMY

It's her last morning at the doctor's office.

OLLIE

Doc Steven's recovered from the flu and wanted to meet her.

SAMMY

Whole town loves her! That's true!

OLLIE

Gonna hate to see her go.

YUSUF

I'm Yusuf. This is Shatha Kalkhan. All the noises in the room were yours last night?

OLLIE

(giggles)  
And this morning.

SHATHA

Allah is good.

Sammy and Ollie sit right down.

SAMMY

Sure the hell is! Steak and eggs  
for me, Yusuf.

YUSUF

There is a small matter of the room  
service and mini-bar bill.

OLLIE

Nothing but the very best for the  
only two people who talked your  
daughter into going back to New  
Orleans, huh?

Yusuf and Shatha stare at each other, bewildered.

INT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Rufa is surprised to see Doc Stevens at the door with a  
bouquet and a large envelope.

DOC STEVENS

Well, it's an honor to meet the  
great mountain physician I've heard  
so much about.

Doc Stevens throws his arms around her, surprising her.

RUFA

Oh, Doctor.

DOC STEVENS

I'm sorry, I should have asked  
about handshakes and hugging.

RUFA

(laughs)  
I'm getting used to them up here.

DOC STEVENS

I've never had so many patients  
call me to tell me how wonderful  
you are. Then, when my grandson,  
Jacob called this morning, I knew  
you must be someone very special.

RUFA

Jacob? Jacob Bruner?

(beat)

That's why he takes care of your  
dog.

DOC STEVENS

And drove me to the hospital in  
Silverthorne. My grandson has the  
biggest heart on the mountain.

(shakes his head)

Missing out on the games because of  
some community service gig!

RUFA

Yes, he had a rough day...

DOC STEVENS

You run along to Peak Nine and see  
how he does teaching those  
youngsters. I'll look after our  
store.

Doc Stevens pushes her out of the office. He shoves the  
envelope into her hand.

RUFA

What's this?

DOC STEVENS

Read it later.

Doc shuts the door. Rufa sees the bus coming and races to  
catch it.

EXT./INT. BUS - DAY

Rufa hops on the front of the bus and finds Ollie racing up  
to her from the back of the bus.

OLLIE

Sammy and I just had breakfast with  
your folks at the resort.

RUFA

You are kidding, yes?

OLLIE

No. We told them you let us stay  
there instead of you, and they  
seemed rather happy about it for  
some reason.

RUFA

Probably because I'm leaving with  
them this afternoon.

OLLIE

Sammy is getting them snow jackets from the lost and found, so they can see Peak Nine before they go.

RUFA

They want to see the snow?

OLLIE

Sammy insisted he give them a tour to repay their generosity. They'll be on the next bus.

RUFA

What are you doing on the hill today?

Ollie shows Rufa her GoPro camera and fake microphone.

OLLIE

I'm gonna pretend to be an ESPN X-Game reporter for the hell of it. Why are you going to the hill?

RUFA

To say goodbye to everyone. They're all coming to see Jacob perform his community service with children. Cindy, Catherine, Samuel, you, and Jacob will all be there.

OLLIE

You're saying goodbye to all of us, including Burner?

(beat)

I gotta film this!

INT. SKI HILL CAFETERIA - DAY

Burner has Amanda, Larry, and even Crystal laughing. They are in their snowboard boots standing on couches in the corner of the hectic cafeteria. The kids try to imitate the moves of Burner on the floor in his snowboard boots. Ten Onlookers (various ages and types) are cheering them on. It's all captured by Ollie with a GoPro camera and "fake" microphone, acting as a sports announcer. Rufa, Soccer, and Cindy look on from the back of the room.

OLLIE

Here we are, folks. It's a beautiful day for the Y-Games here in Breckenridge, Colorado.

(MORE)

OLLIE (CONT'D)

I've got my *GoPro* camera with a live feed to every computer and smartphone in the world. I'm your host, Olivia Lee, and it looks like Jake "the Burner" Bruner is racing down the hill with three excellent young shredders: Amanda, Larry, and Crystal.

BURNER

There I was, with a big tree in front of me. I gotta turn left!

OLLIE

They've gotta do something quickly or they'll hit that tree!

BURNER

(yells)  
Heels!

The kids lean back on their heels without tipping over on the couch. The crowd goes wild with CHEERING. Sammy limps over and finds Rufa in the back of the room. He has Yusuf and Shatha in tow, wearing ugly, bright, torn snow jackets. Yusuf and Shatha force smiles as they look on. The smiles on the faces of everyone else are genuine.

OLLIE

They just missed that tree, but there's another tree in front of them. They'd better turn right!

BURNER

(yells)  
Toes.

The kids lean forward on their toes without tipping over on the couch. The Crowd goes wild with CHEERING.

OLLIE

They're in the open! Balanced. They're about to have some fun!

BURNER

(yells)  
Switch!

The three students switch feet with a clumsy hop on the couch, but they don't fall. The crowd ROARS.

OLLIE

They did it, folks! They are amazing!

BURNER

Best snowboarding the cafeteria has  
ever seen!

(beat)

Just do the same thing out there!

The students gather around Burner and hug him.

OLLIE

That's Jake "the Burner" Bruner,  
Instructor of the year!

Nancy and Cindy see it all from the back of the cafeteria.  
Also enjoying the live feed is the PRODUCER (50; high-class  
winter outfit) of the main X-Games.

BURNER

And medium-hot hot chocolate and  
marshmallows before we go!

The kids yell, "Yeah'!

BURNER (CONT'D)

Did you know that marshmallows make  
me invincible on the slopes?

OLLIE

Be sure to tune in ten minutes from  
now for the Y-games Grand Finale on  
the sketchy Black-Diamond Bunny  
Hill! This is your host, Olivia  
Lee, signing off for now!

The crowd CHEERS as the three students head to the cups of  
chocolate waiting for them at the table.

From a distance, in the other corner of the room Nancy and  
Cindy SMILE. Soccer and Rufa are nearby, cheering.

SOCCER

Never seen Burner so happy.

RUFA

He can be charming.

Soccer and Rufa move in closer to Burner, who is smiling at  
his students.



EXT. BUNNY HILL - DAY

Burner leads Amanda, Larry, and Crystal to the bunny hill. The Crowd grows from the ten people in the cafeteria to thirty people outside, as the audience from the X-Games sees that it's Ollie and Burner. Many are watching the live streaming re-postings from the cafeteria on their *Samsung* smartphones. Crystal grows more nervous.

Yusuf and Shatha whisper as they follow the limping Sammy to the front of the crowd. Rufa stays closer to Burner.

YUSUF

Rufa should be here with us. We're all leaving soon.

SHATHA

Let her say her goodbyes in her own way. She's never been this happy.

Sammy shows his phone to Yusuf and Shatha, where they see Rufa's smile.

SAMMY

Oh my God! These kids are gonna be famous!

Amanda, Larry, and Crystal are joined by their Parents (Three couples in their late-30s to match the kids) to hug them before their big exhibition. They pat Burner on his back, as he leads the kids a little way up the slope. Ollie continues her role as ESPN X-Games commentator.

OLLIE

Welcome back, folks. I'm Olivia Lee reporting live for what could well be the greatest single snowboarding event in history.

The Crowd CHEERS and grows.

OLLIE (CONT'D)

We see instructor Jacob "the Burner" Bruner, the most fearless shredder on the mountain, leading his three protégés, dare I say prodigies, up the perilous Black Diamond Bunny Hill. His students are Amanda, age ten; Larry, age twelve; and Crystal, age nine.

Again, the Crowd CHEERS and grows.

OLLIE (CONT'D)

Amazingly enough, folks, none of these kids snowboarded before this week! It was up to their courage and fortitude to brave this difficult winter sport with the help of their encouraging and compassionate coach.

Stomping over from the X-Games, is the PRODUCER (50), who looks angry at the competition. He wears an ear-phone.

PRODUCER

(whispers to Burner)

What the hell is going on over here, Burner? Some kind of pity party for washed-up ex-athletes?

BURNER

(laughs, whispers back)

Just playing in the snow. Stick around if you want to see athletes with real courage!

OLLIE

(announcing)

We're still streaming live, folks. And the biggest producer in winter sports came to enjoy the show!

The Crowd cheers for the Producer, who now waves and smiles. The Producer makes a quick call on his ear-phone.

PRODUCER

Get me a camera over here at the bunny hill! Now!

Burner checks the kids' bindings, then does his own. He moves down the line of kids at eye level: Amanda, Larry, then Crystal.

BURNER

Amanda, you're the leader here. You're a born leader, destined for greatness. Show 'em what you're made of!

AMANDA

I got this, Coach Burner!

Burner slides a little to Larry. He looks at his funky dark sunglasses. Burner pulls a new pair of *Polarlens G7 Multisport Sunglasses* out of his jacket pocket.

BURNER

Larry, I got you a new pair of sunglasses. All the hot-shot shredders are wearing these.

Larry smiles as he switches the sunglasses. He looks up toward Burner's face.

LARRY

Hey, Coach Burner, I think I can see you smiling.

Burner pats him on his helmet and slides down to Crystal, who is frightened.

He squats down, leans in, and whispers.

BURNER

Crystal, let me give you three great pieces of advice that a philosopher named Soccer taught me.

CRYSTAL

(meekly)  
Okay, Coach Burner.

Amanda and Larry turn to listen in.

BURNER

One: Treat every day of your life like a toy. Two: Anything worth doing is worth overdoing. And three, when they take your photos afterward, no matter how you do, remember everything worth posing for, is worth over-posing for! Got it?

CRYSTAL

Got it, Coach Burner!

Suddenly, Crystal faints. Burner yells down to Rufa.

BURNER

Doc, come quick!

The crowd gasps. Rufa races up the hill. Her parents and Sammy gasp. Rufa reaches Crystal and takes her in her arms.

RUFA

She's fainted. Wait. She's coming back.

Crystal sees Burner and smiles. Then, Rufa yells.

RUFA (CONT'D)  
She's okay. Just fainted.

And the crowd CHEERS wildly.

BURNER  
She smiled!

RUFA  
Crystal, I can walk you down if you don't want to do this.

CRYSTAL  
I gotta learn to treat every day like a toy sometime in my life. May as well be now.

Burner smiles.

BURNER  
Okay, everybody, follow me down the slope, one at a time. Amanda, sing on the way down, so Larry can follow you. Let's go.

Ollie is positioned near the bottom to capture it all.

OLLIE  
They're buckled in, and ready to challenge the sketchy Black-Diamond Bunny Hill! Here comes Coach Burner, showing them how it's done.

Modest applause from the crowd.

OLLIE (CONT'D)  
Now, it's Amanda's turn!

Amanda is slightly unsteady at the start, but she starts singing, "Let's Get This Party Started," and the Crowd goes nuts as she makes her way down to Burner for a big hug. Amanda, smiles, and waves to the Crowd. The Crowd eats it up.

Larry is right behind, a little more unsteady, but the Crowd cheers like crazy. Larry's smile says it all as he hugs Burner, and hams it up for the Crowd, who cheers even more wildly.

We have anxious moments as Crystal hesitates. Crystal begins her run and falls after two feet. The Crowd gasps.

BURNER  
You got this Crystal!

RUFA  
You can do this!

AMANDA AND LARRY  
Come on, Crystal!

The Crowd starts chanting for Crystal. She gets up and snowboards very slowly down the bunny hill. The Crowd CHEERS. Then Crystal jumps and rides switch, and the Crowd erupts as she reaches Burner's hug. Rufa joins the hug.

OLLIE  
Wow, that was the most exciting and rewarding exhibition of amateur sports I've ever seen!

CRYSTAL  
(to Ollie)  
Anything with doing is worth overdoing.

OLLIE  
Why don't you all take a bow?

The Crowd goes wild as the kids overpose for photos. The ESPN X-Game Camerawoman (40) shows up late. The Producer pulls Ollie aside for a little chat.

Sammy limps over and guides Yusuf and Shatha to Rufa, Burner, and the kids and their parents. Mohammed is with them.

SAMMY  
Wait! I want a photo with my crew before I go back to Texas.

Sammy hands Mohammed his phone. Burner, Ollie, Sammy, Soccer, and Cindy pose. Rufa stands by her parents.

BURNER, OLLIE, SAMMY, SOCCER, & CINDY  
Rufa! Come on! Bring it in!

Rufa joins them, smiling big. They all over-pose.

YUSUF  
Rufa, say your goodbyes. We must be going.

SHATHA  
That was quite an exhibition, but yes, we must go, dear.

MOHAMMED  
Someone is waiting in New Orleans.

RUFA

Still?

MOHAMMED

I told him you stayed alone in the resort, saw only a few emergency patients, and never went out at night. And, he will still marry you and pay me well.

RUFA

Baba, you didn't hire this private investigator?

MOHAMMED

Don't be silly. Your fiancé did. He will take you back if you beg for his forgiveness, and dress more conservatively in the future.

Rufa turns angry.

RUFA

Tell him this for me.

Rufa raises her hand to slap Mohammed across the face, but she doesn't! Still, her parents gasp.

Soccer races up to Rufa.

SOCCER

May I write your story, Doc?

(beat)

As a novel.

RUFA

It would an honor, Soccer! I'm so proud of you! But I have to tell my folks something first. Please excuse me.

Rufa turns to her parents.

RUFA (CONT'D)

Soccer is right! All my life, three things have been important: our religion came first, our culture came a close second, and our personal relationships with others came a distant third. I will continue to honor them all, but in a different order.

YUSUF  
Who is this Soccer?

Burner joins Rufa's side.

BURNER  
Soccer says personal relationships  
come first. Making people happy and  
healthy. All people. Becoming we.

Rufa links her arm with Burner's. The crowd cheers.

RUFA  
We'll be cultural integration  
pioneers!  
(laughs)  
Ha! I love it!

BURNER  
Soccer says there would be no  
fighting or war if there was more  
intermarriage, reproducing, and  
outliving our more conservative,  
orthodox parents.  
(beat)  
Teaching everyone something about  
tolerance, two people at a time.

YUSUF  
You both think it's that easy?  
What's gonna happen when your  
parents meet Jacob's parents?

RUFA  
(laughs)  
We'll find out next week!

Burner and Rufa kiss softly, respectfully.

The crowd CHEERS louder than ever. Even Mohammed smiles.

Rufa hugs her parents, who smile for their daughter, and all  
leave arm-in-arm, chatting and waving to a cheering crowd.

INT. BRECKENRIDGE LIBRARY - DAY

Soccer begins to type a novel into her laptop. We see the  
title, "Becoming We" by Catherine "Soccer" Ford.

RUFA  
I remember what Sammy told me on  
the bus the night I met him.  
(MORE)

## RUFA (CONT'D)

Christmas to us isn't about  
decorations, presents, or church.  
(motions with her hands)  
It's about coming together.  
(beat)  
Becoming we!

ROLL END CREDITS (with montage)

BEGIN MONTAGE

EXT. DOCTOR'S OFFICE - DAY The sign outside the Doctor's office now reads: "Dr. Rufaida Kalkhan, M.D."

EXT. RESORT - DAY Burner introduces Rufa to his mom and dad (50s, dressed in typical winter wear). Rufa wears the hijab. They all smile and hug.

EXT. SKI SLOPES - DAY Ollie is a TV announcer for ESPN X-Games competition somewhere on a ski slope.

EXT. BUNNY HILL - DAY Burner is in a "staff" jacket, coaching three more developmentally challenged Kids (9-12).

EXT. DONUT SHOP - DAY Soccer and Cindy (in her Cindy uniform) are seen walking down Main Street together, holding hands.

Across the street from Soccer and Cindy, Burner and Rufa walk down the street holding hands. Rufa wears her hijab, but holds a bright pink knit cap in her hand.

EXT. FARM - DAY Sammy drives a tractor. There is the group photo of "the crew," and a single photo of Ollie taped to the rearview mirror. We zoom out to see a snowboard rack and snowboard atop the tractor. As he drives away, we see a bumper sticker: "I 'heart' Mexicans."

END MONTAGE

FADE OUT.

**THE END**