

BAKLAVA AND BISCUITS

**IMPROBABLE CONNECTION**

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**Character Wound**

- Yasser's wound is feeling like an outsider, not accepted.
- Randy's wound involves the death of his parents and fear of the "other" (someone very different).

**Character Flaw**

- Yasser's flaw is being overly defensive and a fear of failing.
- Randy's flaw is being prejudice.

**Plot Problem - Both Randy and Yasser have prejudice against each other.**

Randy does not want to live with Yasser or interact with him.  
Yasser is jealous that Randy does not worry (or have to) as much as he does about his grades for getting into medical school.

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INT. DORM ROOM - AFTERNOON

Randy, twenty year old white student, dressed in shorts and a T-shirt, with John 3:16 on the front. He stops at a dorm room. Looking at a paper, he takes a deep breath and knocks.

YASSER  
(An Arab accent)  
It's unlocked.

Randy steps into the room. He sees Yasser, a 20 year old Arab, studying and smoking.

RANDY  
(A slight southern accent)  
Are you Yasser?

YASSER  
So charged.

RANDY  
I'm Randy, your new roommate.

YASSER  
Welcome to paradise my American friend!

Randy looks at the bleak room - a bunk bed, small closets and two desks. Decorating the wall is a picture of Yasser Arafat, a poster of Pele' and a poster of a drummer.

RANDY  
This place is -

YASSER  
- A dump!

RANDY  
...Yeah

Randy drops his bag down.

RANDY (CONT'D)  
Looks like I have the top bunk and this closet.

Yasser nods. Randy puts a few things away.

RANDY (CONT'D)  
Hey...I'm allergic to smoke.

YASSER  
(hard stare)  
You should have asked for a non-smoker.

RANDY  
Actually I did...that's what you had on your profile.

YASSER  
Yeah, ok ok. I'll smoke outside.

Randy continues to put items away, but then checks his watch.

RANDY  
Hey, I need to run.

Yasser nods. Randy leaves. Yasser blows one last puff of smoke and then grinds his cigarette into his ashtray.

YASSER  
Nice shirt asshole.

INT. UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE - LATER

DEAN ADAMS, 50+ black man, looks over papers, while Randy leans over his desk to see.

ADAMS  
Randy, I'm afraid there are no other options for dorms presently.

Randy slumps in his seat.

ADAMS (CONT'D)  
What exactly is the problem?

RANDY  
...Uh sir, he is Muslim and I'm a Christian.

ADAMS  
(Raising an eyebrow)  
All the more reason to make it work. Son, you don't always get choices in life - but you do need to learn how to deal with differences and people.

RANDY  
-But sir...

ADAMS

I think we're done here Randy. Go  
make the best of it.

Dean Adams stands, walks over, opens the door for Randy.  
Randy mopes out of the office.

INT. BIOLOGY CLASS - MONTH LATER

PROFESSOR

(Greek accent)

Class, check your scores on your  
way out.

Students exit the room. Randy strides out of the room to the  
test score board outside. Yasser follows behind Randy.

Randy finds his name on the board - 89. Yasser walks to the  
board. He follows his name and slams his hand on the board.

RANDY

Can't be that bad.

YASSER

Yeah, but not good enough - 87.

RANDY

Not good enough for what?

YASSER

I'm a foreigner, my grades must be  
impeccable to get into med school.  
You wouldn't understand!

Randy shakes his head and slips out the door. Yasser sees  
Randy's score, and punches the board again.

INT. RANDY'S GRANDMA'S HOUSE - EVENING

A fireplace is burning. Randy sits with his Grandma,  
MILDRED, a 70 year old round white woman with a pleasant  
smile. She knits as he reads a text book.

MILDRED

Randy, how's school going?

RANDY

(Puts down his book)

Good. Grades are excellent. My  
roommate is...strange.

MILDRED  
The Arab boy?

RANDY  
Yeah...Yasser.

MILDRED  
What's strange about him?

RANDY  
Just different - looks different,  
smells different, acts different.

MILDRED  
I thought I raised you to  
understand differences.

Randy squirms on the couch.

RANDY  
Yeah, but - he's an Arab...He  
doesn't believe like we do.

Mildred sets her knitting down, rises from her chair and  
walks to the door. She points at a sign.

MILDRED  
You see this boy? What's this say?

Randy looks at the floor, shuffles his feet and looks up.

RANDY  
Welcome the stranger.

MILDRED  
That's right. That's what we  
believe... In fact, to teach you  
this - you invite Yasser here over  
Christmas break.

RANDY  
But Grandma, I don't really think -

MILDRED  
-Yeah, that's right, not thinking.  
You heard me...It's settled.

INT. RANDY'S TRUCK - AFTERNOON

Randy drives on a country road. Randy switches the radio to  
a country station. Yasser rolls his eyes.

YASSER  
How much further?

RANDY  
We'll be there in an hour.

YASSER  
Any other radio stations.

RANDY  
Nope, just country

Yasser turns away from Randy, looking out the window again.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Inside the old white painted wood home, Mildred shows Yasser his room. The floors creak as they walk on the oak wood floor.

MILDRED  
I think you'll be comfortable here.  
The bathroom is just down the hall.

Yasser nods. He sees a picture of a young couple and boy on the dresser.

YASSER  
Who's this?

MILDRED  
That was my son and his wife -  
Randy's parents...They were killed  
in an auto accident when he was 5.

YASSER  
I did not know. I'm sorry.

MILDRED  
It was rough on Randy and me..If  
you need anything, just holler.

INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Mildred cooks. Yasser sits, drinking coffee. The window over the sink filters in sunlight, while delicious aromas fragrant the house. Randy walks in the kitchen, pats Mildred and pours some coffee.

RANDY  
Good morning Granny.

GRANNY

Good morning Pumpkin. Go join that  
other handsome boy at the table.  
Breakfast will be out shortly.

Yasser hands Randy part of the local paper. They both read  
the paper until Mildred sets the biscuits on the table.

MILDRED

I'd like to say a blessing boys.

Yasser keeps one eye open.

MILDRED (CONT'D)

God, thanks for this day and for  
the food we are about to eat.  
Thanks for our guest. Amen.

The boys grab biscuits. Yasser watches Randy cut, butter and  
jelly his biscuit. He does the same. Yasser takes a bite.

YASSER

Oh my god! Sorry...this is the  
best bread I've ever had.

MILDRED

Thank you Yasser. It's an old  
family recipe.

RANDY

Don't you eat biscuits?

YASSER

No, but we have baklava.

MILDRED

(Mispronouncing)  
Baki - lava, that's a mouthful.

Yasser bursts into laughter. Mildred and Randy laugh also.

INT. DORM ROOM - MORNING

A spring rain falls against the window. Yasser and Randy  
study at their desks.

RANDY

Yasser, how much CO<sub>2</sub> is liberated  
from the anaerobic Krebs cycle?

Yasser leans back and closes his eyes.

YASSER

2.

RANDY

Correct! Nice job.

YASSER

Ok, how much ATP is generated from the aerobic Krebs cycle?

RANDY

...also 2.

YASSER

Correct!

Knock on the door. Yasser answers. He grabs a package.

RANDY

What's that?

YASSER

It's from my mom.

Yasser opens the package. Randy leans over to look. There is a tray covered by foil. Yasser peels back the foil.

RANDY

What is it?

YASSER

My mom made Baklava.

RANDY

And that is?

YASSER

A Mediterranean dessert.

Yasser hands a piece to Randy. Randy takes a bite.

RANDY

Wow...that's great!

YASSER

My mom thought you might like it.

RANDY

Mmm. As Granny would say - that's some tasty Baki - lava!

They both laugh loudly.

FADE OUT.