

WONDERFUL UNTOUCHABLES

Original Story and Screenplay

by

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1st 22 pages

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TITLE CARD: 1931: The hard fought struggle against British Rule in India is starting to show signs of success. Yet the future of India and Cricket is still far from certain...

EXT. WHITEHALL - DAY

The classic Georgian lines of Whitehall, London 1931.

Though, far from white. Rather, a smokey gray - matching the dirty air and the mood of the people.

A few of them are walking along the side walk while a handful of vintage cars trundle past.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM:
"Whitehall"

From a distance we spot one individual in particular. He is darting in and out of the others.

INT. OFFICE

TITLE CARD: LONDON 1931

Inside, we see the same individual (CECIL PARKER) (30's) as he RUNS FRANTICALLY through the office, clutching a single piece of paper -- and startling secretaries and managers alike.

Cecil Parker hurries past a secretary opening a door and pushes through, causing a DRAFT to lift some papers off her desk onto the floor.

INT. NEXT OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Cecil is now in the next office where he almost WIPES OUT two people standing next to a row of desks.

MORE PAPERS are PUSHED into the air as he BUMPS past without apology and through the next door.

INT. FURTHER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The last door opens Cecil into an ornate reception hall dotted with stiff looking people milling about.

He composes himself and adjusts his hair and tie before SKIMMING PAST at a slower speed.

At the end of the ornate hall, Cecil opens a door marked PRIVATE - DO NOT ENTER and scampers inside.

INT. PRIVATE SECRETARY OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

An older intimidating looking secretary (ROSE ROSENBERG) sitting at a desk is at first startled as Cecil BURSTS THROUGH the door.

Rose Rosenberg composes herself quickly once she sees it is Cecil Parker.

Without a word, she lowers her head back to a letter, before PRESSING a buzzer under the desk.

Soon after, a door from the office half opens, through which Parker slithers.

INT. PRIME MINISTERS OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Seated behind a classic old desk is the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and Ireland, RAMSAY MACDONALD with his Principal Private Secretary ROBERT VANSITTART and the Lord Chancellor LORD (JOHN) SANKEY sitting opposite.

As soon as Cecil Parker enters, Ramsay MacDonald ceases eye contact with the other two men and tracks Parker as he approaches.

CECIL PARKER

He's done it! Irwin's done it Prime Minister.

RAMSAY MACDONALD

Slow down Parker. Deep breaths.

As the camera focuses on the face of Ramsay MacDonald, the scene FREEZES FOR A SECOND ON HIS FACE.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM:

"Ramsay MacDonald Leader of Labor Party and Prime Minister of UK National Government"

ROBERT VANSITTART

For goodness sake man. This is not a race.

As the camera focuses on the face of Robert Vansittart, the scene FREEZES FOR A SECOND ON HIS FACE.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM:
 "Robert Vansittart Principal Private
 Secretary to Prime Minister"

LORD (JOHN) SANKEY
 R.G. Don't you know, Parker here has
 the current land speed record for
 Whitehall.

As the camera focuses on the face of Lord (John) Sankey, the
 scene FREEZES FOR A SECOND ON HIS FACE.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM:
 "Lord John Sankey Lord Chancellor"

RAMSAY MACDONALD
 Spit it out Parker.

Parker hands the scrunched up piece of paper to Ramsay
 MacDonald.

The Prime Minister takes it from Cecil Parker as if at first
 he has been handed a soiled nappy.

He looks at Parker and then the piece of paper, before
 shaking his head while starting to smooth the paper out on
 his desk with broad strokes of his arm.

CECIL PARKER
 Prime Minister, An Official telegram
 from The Foreign Office and India.
 Lord Irwin has just successfully
 negotiated an end to the national
 strikes with Mr Gandhi.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
 Thank God.

LORD (JOHN) SANKEY
 Hallelujah.

ROBERT VANSITTART
 Well it is about damn time.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
 That's one less headache. Now, if I
 can only stop the banks from
 collapsing in the next few days, this
 might be a better week.

(beat)
 So what do we do now R.G.? We can't
 keep stalling the Indians forever.

ROBERT VANSITTART

I am not so sure.

LORD (JOHN) SANKEY

How about a Knighthood for the little fellow?

Both Ramsay MacDonald and Vansittart stare at Lord Sankey.

ROBERT VANSITTART

He's trying to get rid of us, not become one of us John.

Vansittart looks at Ramsay MacDonald and then over to Parker who is still standing there, listening in.

RAMSAY MACDONALD

(To Parker)

Thank you Parker. A little less drama next time.

CECIL PARKER

Yes Prime Minister.

Parker swivels on his heels and dawdles out of the office.

ROBERT VANSITTART

How about a Round Table Conference?

RAMSAY MACDONALD

You're not seriously suggesting we start negotiating self rule for India?

Vansittart laughs.

ROBERT VANSITTART

No. Nothing like that. But a Conference here in London gives us a chance to stretch it out a bit. Appeal to good will and all of that. Get some nice photographs and make everyone feel like they have had a good go of it.

MacDonald gets up from his chair and turns around to stare out the window.

LORD (JOHN) SANKEY

But why would they come in the first place?

ROBERT VANSITTART

Oh, I'm no so sure they won't come.
 Make a big song and dance of it. Get
 the King to open the conference.
 People always like to meet Kings,
 even if they hate the King's men.
 Make them feel important and equal.
 Get some senior representatives of
 the government to greet them as they
 get off the boat.

LORD (JOHN) SANKEY

Like who?

ROBERT VANSITTART

Like you John.

LORD (JOHN) SANKEY

Hold your horses R.G. If you think I
 am going to stand on some podium,
 shaking hands and nodding heads for
 every colonialist that wants my guts
 for garters, then -

MacDonald turns back around from looking out the window,
 revealing a cheeky grin on his face.

RAMSAY MACDONALD

It's not such a bad idea R.G.

LORD (JOHN) SANKEY

Baldwin, Chamberlain, Churchill and
 the others will hate it.

ROBERT VANSITTART

Exactly. Hate it. Indeed.

RAMSAY MACDONALD

Excellent idea.

EXT. PASSENGER WHARF - DAY

OLD NEWS REEL footage announces the arrival of the Indian
 delegation to England for the historic Round Table
 Conference on the future of British India, met by government
 officials led by Lord Chancellor LORD (JOHN) SANKEY.

NEWS ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

A historic day for friendly relations between Great Britain and India as representatives of the Prime Minister and His Majesty King George the Fifth welcome the Indian delegation to England.

We see pictures of Indian delegates arriving and shaking hands with dignitaries, including one unmistakable figure.

It is MAHATMA GANDHI in his dhoti and shawl shaking the hands of the line of dignitaries.

NEWS ANNOUNCER (V.O)

The Round Table talks follow the historic pact between His Majesty's Government and the Indian National Congress led by Mr Gandhi who agreed to end the strikes and boycotts of British made goods that have crippled India and cause tens of thousands of hard working decent men and women to lose their jobs in places as diverse as Manchester and Liverpool.

The old style news footage dissolves into the present scene of Lord Sankey shaking the hands of a long line of Indian dignitaries as the unmistakable form of Mahatma Gandhi, with his back to the camera, is escorted away to a waiting car.

Lord Sankey looks to his left at his private secretary MARTIN COGLAN.

LORD SANKEY

(whispering to Coglán)

How many members of the Indian National Congress did we invite again?

MARTIN COGLAN

All of them.

Lord Sankey nods and keeps faintly smiling for the cameras as Indian dignitaries, one after the other, shake his hand and shuffle away.

INT. ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

A classic British hall.

We see only the BACK and OUTLINE of the King speaking at a podium -- his figure eclipsing the lights shining down upon him.

KING GEORGE (V.O.)
 Our Empire has always been forged
 upon common interests and common
 goods, not on those issues that
 divide us.

INT. ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

Now we see the King from the FRONT as he addresses the delegates at the conference.

KING GEORGE
 And so upon this historic occasion
 and meeting of delegates of my
 government of the United Kingdom and
 Ireland to my right...

KING GEORGE
 (signals with his hand to his right)

POV: The camera swings to the right of the King and we see a jam packed bunch of gray haired men led by Prime Minister Ramsay MacDonald sitting somberly.

The camera returns to the image of the King.

KING GEORGE (cont'd)
 and those representing the interests
 of the Dominions of India to my left.
 (signals with his hand to the left)

POV: The camera swings to the left of the King and we see just a handful of Indian delegates spread evenly throughout the myriad of vacant spaces, outnumbered 30 to 1.

The camera returns to the image of the King.

KING GEORGE (cont'd)
 Let me conclude that We wish all
 representative parties engage in good
 faith, without prejudice and for the
 common good of our Sovereign and
 Commonwealth. So help me God.

UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVES
 (Collectively)
 So help us God.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
(whispering)
Where the hell is Gandhi?

EXT. MANCHESTER WORKING STREETS - DAY

OLD NEWS REEL: footage begins with the headline DISASTER FOR GOVERNMENT. GANDHI BOYCOTTS TALKS.

We see images of Mahatma Gandhi meeting and greeting workers and families, while other images shows a clearly annoyed King being led from an official hall and followed by a steady stream of British delegates -- looking like they are attending a funeral.

NEWS ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Shocking news for the Government today after Mr Gandhi and most of the Indian delegations boycotted the Round Table Conference after the Government refused to include in the discussions the plight and future of the millions of poor and disenfranchised people in India, Mr Gandhi calls the "Children of God" or more commonly known as the "Untouchables".

We now see images of Mahatma Gandhi and Indian delegates being shown textile mills, followed by tea and biscuits and then watching children playing a game of cricket.

NEWS ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Instead, Mr Gandhi chose to meet representatives of the workers and unions of Manchester and Liverpool badly affected by the recent protests and bans on purchasing English textiles and goods by Indians as part of their push for self rule. Mr Gandhi even had the chance to watch a local cricket match between workers.

The old style news reel footage dissolves to a distant figure of Mahatma Gandhi, again his back to the camera, being mobbed by workers and English supporters while press continue to take pictures.

To the side of the throng is personal secretary to Mahatma Gandhi, VENKATA KALYANAM speaking with the Lord Mayor of Manchester MAYOR GEORGE TITT and Coal Mining Union Boss DAVID CALDWELL.

MAYOR GEORGE TITT

They love him. If I could get even a third of these people out with this kind of enthusiasm, I would be a sure thing to stay Mayor.

DAVID CALDWELL

George, we all know you'd sell your own kidney if you thought there was a quid in it.

VENKATA KALYANAM

M. K. Gandhi did not do this to promote politics, but as a gesture of his solidarity with the ordinary working people who have been so badly affected in the structure for basic human rights for all.

As the camera focuses on the face of Venkata Kalyanam, the scene FREEZES FOR A SECOND ON HIS FACE.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM:

"Venkata Kalyanam Private Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi"

MAYOR GEORGE TITT

See! That's what I mean. Beautiful. Powerful, Big Picture stuff. Nothing about boring rates, roads, pubs and shelters.

VENKATA KALYANAM

Everyone has a part to play Mr Lord Mayor.

DAVID CALDWELL

What about a cricket match?

VENKATA KALYANAM

M. K. Gandhi very much enjoyed watching your local workers cricket team.

DAVID CALDWELL

What I meant was that the Mahatma mentioned the oppressed and downtrodden workers.

(pause)

You know the "untouchables".

VENKATA KALYANAM

We prefer the term Harijan or "Children of God".

DAVID CALDWELL

Right the Children of God.

(pause)

What if a team of them came across and play our team? It would be a great story and symbol of unity between working people.

MAYOR GEORGE TITT

That's a cracker of an idea Caldwell! I can see it now, The Workers Test. Brilliant!

VENKATA KALYANAM

I am not so sure. The Harijan are very hard workers and it may not be possible to find a suitable team. But I will pass your suggestion onto M.K. Gandhi and we will endeavour to accept the kind invitation.

MAYOR GEORGE TITT

As soon as you do, we will be here. Maybe not George, but the Textile Workers and Coalminer Unions will back the idea. Let's give the little guys a chance to stand in the sun for a change.

VENKATA KALYANAM

On this observation Mr Mayor, we are all in agreement.

EXT. BUCKINGHAM PALACE - DAY

The enormous and opulent image of Buckingham Palace at the changing of the guard.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM:

"Buckingham Palace"

INT. KINGS CHAMBERS, BUCKINGHAM PALACE

King George V in his full regalia BOUNDS like a rhinosorus into a beautiful gold encrusted room, followed by his attendant ROBERT MALLORY.

The king stops in front of a sofa and screen and starts to unbutton his jacket and try to pull it off.

KING GEORGE

(To Mallory)

Get this rubbish off me. It will be
the death of me.

Mallory starts helping the King take off his jacket as the
ROYAL BUTLER steps forward and also helps.

ROBERT MALLORY

But your majesty -

The jacket off, King George swings around and gives Mallory
a deadly stare.

KING GEORGE

What a bloody shambles that was. I
have never been more embarrassed in
my entire bloody life.

The King undoes his belt and lets belt and the sword fall to
the floor.

ROBERT MALLORY

Your Majesty -

KING GEORGE

What lunatic or bunch of idiots
arranges a Peace Conference and
forgets to invited the other side?

ROBERT MALLORY

Your Majesty, the Prime Minister is
waiting to see you as requested.

KING GEORGE

Ah, yes, speak of the Devil -

ROBERT MALLORY

But Your Majesty is not fully
dressed.

KING GEORGE

Dressed or naked, I am still the
bloody King.

Mallory and the Butler nod sheepishly.

KING GEORGE

Then show him in.

Mallory hurries away, while the butler retrieves the belt
and sword from the floor and disappears.

The King sits down on the sofa with his shirt out, suspenders exposed and jacket off, as the Prime Minister now enters.

RAMSAY MACDONALD

Your Majesty, on behalf of your government, I express my heartfelt regret at-.

KING GEORGE

Yes, Yes, spare me all that dribble Prime Minister. Get to it man. Spit it out. You screwed it up.

RAMSAY MACDONALD

Yes, Your Majesty.

KING GEORGE

You stuffed its gizzards man. You blew it.

Ramsay MacDonald is still looking blankly at the King.

KING GEORGE

The Conference thing over India. Where in the hell was that Gandhi fellow?

RAMSAY MACDONALD

In Manchester your Majesty.

KING GEORGE

Bloody Manchester. Whose head shall I have for this? Yours? Baldwin? Bloody Churchill?

RAMSAY MACDONALD

I am the Prime Minister of the National Government your Majesty. If anyone is to resign, then I offer my resignation to you forthwith.

King George waves his hand negatively as he moves over to the window and looks out.

KING GEORGE

That's the problem with you MacDonald. If Baldwin was standing there, he'd throw a whole convent of nuns under a train before he'd offer his own head.

KING GEORGE

(beat)

No. Better you stay where you are.
There's enough problems without
people speculating on another general
bloody election.

RAMSAY MACDONALD

Thank you, your Majesty.

KING GEORGE

But one more bloody disaster. One
more cock up and I will be personally
stuffing you as the Christmas Turkey
for Balmoral, you hear?

RAMSAY MACDONALD

Yes Your Majesty. No more cock ups. I
assure you.

EXT. WESTMINSTER - DAY

The magnificent backdrop of Westminster Palace.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM:

"Westminster Parliament"

INT. WESTMINSTER

LORD (STANLEY) BALDWIN, the leader of the Conservative Party
and temporary "ally" in the national government is speaking
with fellow conservative NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN under one of
the main arches of Westminster.

LORD BALDWIN

Never underestimate the public desire
for status quo Neville. Peace in our
time, as they say.

As the camera focuses on the face of Lord (Stanley) Baldwin,
the scene FREEZES FOR A SECOND ON HIS FACE.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM:

"Lord Stanley Baldwin Leader of
Conservatives and Lord President of
the Council of UK National
Government"

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN

Right, Right you are Stanley. I'll
remember to use that sometime.

(MORE)

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN (cont'd)
Whatever keeps the great unwashed at
bay.

As the camera focuses on the face of Neville Chamberlain,
the scene FREEZES FOR A SECOND ON HIS FACE.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM:
"Neville Chamberlain Chancellor of
the Exchequer"

A younger man RONALD WATERHOUSE comes scurrying up to both
men, interrupting them.

RONALD WATERHOUSE
My Lord.

LORD BALDWIN
What is it Waterhouse? Your more
excited than usual. Let me guess.
(pause)
The Prime Minister wants to
nationalize the banks or start
handing out welfare to poor people.

Both Lord Baldwin and Neville Chamberlain start laughing
among themselves.

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN
Stanley, your priceless.

Lord Baldwin stops laughing and stares at Waterhouse who
looks at Lord Baldwin, then at Neville Chamberlain and then
back at Lord Baldwin.

LORD BALDWIN
For goodness sake man, he may be
Chancellor of the Exchequer, but he
is also a conservative.

Waterhouse nods.

RONALD WATERHOUSE
I have it on the highest authority my
Lords that the Prime Minister was
given a right royal bollocking by the
King. One more mistake and King
George has threatened to force an
immediate election.

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN
Not too soon I hope. I'm praying to
wash my hands of all this recession
mess and get away for a few weeks.

LORD BALDWIN
Now, Now Neville.

Baldwin waves Waterhouse off and he scampers away across the polished floors.

LORD BALDWIN
In time, all good things come to
those who wait.

EXT. 10 DOWNING ST - DAY

The image of the famous door of 10 Downing Street, protected outside by a solitary police officer.

INT. 10 DOWNING ST

Ramsay MacDonald is pacing up and down near the closest window to his desk.

Opposite him is his secretary Rose Rosenberg, sitting ready with a stenographers pad.

Next to her in the other chair is Lord John Sankey.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
As a matter of urgency, stop. I hope
and trust Mr President that you are
in agreement with the urgency of this
proposed currency conference and -

Suddenly Robert Vansittart pokes his head into the room and MacDonald waves him away.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
(To Vansittart)
Not now Robert.

Robert Vansittart withdraws and closes the door.

RAMSAY MACDONALD (cont'd)
(To Rose)
Rose, where was I?

ROSE ROSENBERG
The future of Europe and the global
financial system requires we act as a
matter of urgency, stop. I hope and
trust Mr President that you are in
agreement with the urgency of this
proposed currency conference and -

LORD SANKEY
Surrender to us your Wall St
pirates -

RAMSAY MACDONALD
(To Lord Sankay)
Enough. I already have a headache.
(To Rose)
No, No. And await you earliest reply,
stop. You know the rest Rose. Bla,
bla etc..

Rose gets up from her chair and walks to the door to her
office.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
(To Rose)
And see that the Ambassador to the
United States also gets a copy as
soon as it is ready.

ROSE ROSENBERG
Yes Prime Minister.

Rose closes the door behind her.

LORD SANKEY
I have an idea about India.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
John, Please tell me it doesn't
involve the King.

LORD SANKEY
Well, no. Not really. But kind of.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
Now you are starting to sound like
Baldwin speaking to a constituent.

LORD SANKEY
Sorry Prime Minister. What I meant
was, the plan.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
And the plan is?

LORD SANKEY
Invite the Indians to play at Lords
as a Test Match.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
That's it? That's your plan to save
the British Empire from collapse?
(MORE)

RAMSAY MACDONALD (cont'd)
To invite the Indians to play at the
sacred home of cricket?

LORD SANKEY
After the next Round Table
Conference.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
Now I am really confused.

LORD SANKEY
The Indians love cricket. Their mad
for it. They play it in the slums and
in the palace gardens of the most
powerful of maharajas. Maybe one day,
they might even be the most important
home for cricket.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
I doubt it, but go on.

LORD SANKEY
Anyway, why not host a test between
India and England at the conclusion
of the next proposed Round Table
Conference? The Indians and the
Indian National Congress Party and Mr
Gandhi will be forced to participate,
otherwise they will be offending
their own people.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
And where does the King fit into
this?

LORD SANKEY
We invite him to the Test, to meet
both teams and of course all the
Indian delegation will have to come
as well.

Ramsay rubs his chin, looking out the window.

RAMSAY MACDONALD
It might just work. But John, if this
one goes up in smoke like
Vansittart's first conference, we are
all finished.

EXT. BOMBAY - DAY

A boy holding a letter, darts between old trucks and cars,
midst the sea and cacophony of street life.

TITLE CARD: BOMBAY (MUMBAI) BRITISH INDIA 1931

EXT. ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

We follow the boy down an alley that opens to a road.

EXT. CRICKET STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

We follow the boy to the end of the road and in front of a Cricket stadium.

The boy continues up to a guard who looks at the letter and the boy and opens a side gate.

INT. CRICKET STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

The boy darts along concrete corridors and up some stairs until he gets to a dark glass door with the writing "BCCI"

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM:
"Board of Control for Cricket in
India (BCCI)"

We follow the boy through the door into a spacious office.

INT. BCCI OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Inside the office, the boy hands the envelope to a well dressed man ANTHONY DE MELLO, who begins to open it as the boy scampers away towards the door.

DE MELLO
Boy! Boy! You forgot your coins.

As the camera focuses on the face of Anthony De Mello, the scene FREEZES FOR A SECOND ON HIS FACE.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM:
"Anthony De Mello Secretary to the
Board of Control for Cricket in India
(BCCI)"

The boy stops and returns to De Mello who hands him several coins, before the boy smiles before leaving.

De Mello returns to scanning the letter.

An older man R.E. GRANT GOVAN appears from an adjoining office door and walks over to De Mello.

GRANT GOVAN

What is it?

As the camera focuses on the face of Grant Govan, the scene FREEZES FOR A SECOND ON HIS FACE.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM:

"Grant Govan President of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)"

DE MELLO

R.E., we have received a letter from Lords.

GRANT GOVAN

The House of Lords, or The Lords.

DE MELLO

The big one.

GRANT GOVAN

Well, read it out.

DE MELLO

The Cricket Club of India and the Board of Control for Cricket in India are cordially invited to field a team of its finest, to attend a test match upon Lords against England.

GRANT GOVAN

It can't be. Here, give me the letter.

De Mello hands Govan the letter as he re-reads it whispering to himself.

GRANT GOVAN

In all my life, I never dreamed of the day that the British would invite me, would invite us, India to play a game of Test Cricket against them.

DE MELLO

They must be desperate.

GRANT GOVAN

What makes you say that? We have some fine cricketers. Some of our best have already played over in England.

DE MELLO

R.E. The British don't send such an invitation in the middle of talks over the future of the government of India for no reason. They must want something.

GRANT GOVAN

Well, whatever it is, I am all ears. Lords De Mello! Lords! Imagine that.

De Mello reaches into his pocket and pulls out a separate envelope and hands it to Grant Govan.

GRANT GOVAN

A second envelope?

DE MELLO

That reminds me. You have a meeting with M.K. Gandhi today.

GRANT GOVAN

Today? What about?

(pause)

Maybe it is about this test.

De Mello shrugs his shoulders.

GRANT GOVAN

No matter. Yes. Tell his office I will be there.

EXT. GANDHI COMPOUND - DAY

Grant Govan walks across through beautifully kept gardens along a path towards a pair of guards and a large doorway.

SUBTITLE AT SCREEN BOTTOM:

"Gandhi Compound"

INT. GANDHI COMPOUND - DAY

Grant Govan enters the doorway, and is greeted by M.K. Gandhi's Private Secretary Venkata Kalyanam.

We see Gandhi himself way off in the distance, sitting on the floor using his thread spinning wheel.

VENKATA KALYANAM

Welcome Mr Govan. Please have a seat.

Venkata Kalyanam directs Grant Govan to a set of sofas overlooking a smaller internal courtyard.

VENKATA KALYANAM

Mr Govan, M.K. Gandhi wishes to express and relay a message to you from his most recent voyage to England. The English are most keen to see that we accept their invitation to field a side of our finest cricketers.

GRANT GOVAN

Bapu is right, we just received a letter on the very matter yesterday.

VENKATA KALYANAM

Good. You are clear as to the significance and importance of this gesture.

GRANT GOVAN

Absolutely clear. Could not be clearer. Crystal clear. Got it clear -

VENKATA KALYANAM

The Indian National Congress sees this as a gesture of our strength of self determination. Our ability to resolve our own differences without British interference.

GRANT GOVAN

Certainly, yes. That is why I am convening a meeting of a board to select the finest team from our most elite and illustrious cricketers to represent an All Indian team.

VENKATA KALYANAM

Of Harijans.

GRANT GOVAN

Excuse me? What did you say?

VENKATA KALYANAM

Children of God. A Team of the Finest Harijans to play against the finest team from the factories and workhouses of Manchester and Liverpool in England.

GRANT GOVAN
Untouchables?

Venkata stares at Grant Govan who quickly changes his disposition.

GRANT GOVAN
Sorry, Children of God. I was referring to the invitation by Lords for India to field a team for a historic test against England.

VENKATA KALYANAM
Yes, yes, that is all well and good. Bapu however assured the authorities in those cities that a team would be sent in the coming year across to England as a symbol of friendship and solidarity between working people.

GRANT GOVAN
Yes, yes, working people. Got it. Untouchables, yes -

Venkata stares at him again.

GRANT GOVAN
Sorry, Harijans. Sorry old habit.

VENKATA KALYANAM
One that M.K. and the Party hopes and prays you will help break for the sake of all of India and the world in doing your duty.

Venkata stands up and extends his hand.

GRANT GOVAN
Yes, yes. I will do what I can. I must. Please assure Bapu that the whole of cricket in India are 100% behind him.

VENKATA KALYANAM
It is now in your capable hands Mr Govan.

EXT. CRICKET STADIUM - DAY

The main New Dehli Cricket Stadium and home to the BCCI offices.