THE REFUGEES

Ву

QAZI FABIA HOQ

FADE IN

INT. CANADA-US INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY- MIDNIGHT
(FLASHFORWARD)

A hand is taking the pen from the pen holder, it shakes a little as the hand moves to the paper, it's a form. We see: Applicant Signature.

The woman we see is a border guard officer of Canada-US border. She smiles at us.

We look from border guard woman to two kids: a 5 year old boy and a 3 year old girl. They are smiling at us.

> BORDER GUARD OFFICER WOMAN (o.s) No, don't sign, sir.

we turn back towards the border guard woman.

Suddenly she grabs and takes the paper from us as we see another border guard, a man, whispering something to her. They are both staring at us.

INT. ROOM- MORNING

It's a small room, there is one bed, one wardrobe and one mirror on the wall. we also see a picture of Kabah on the wall. It's a room for lower middle class people. A cieling fan moves slowly. A man is sleeping on the bed, snoring.

This is ISMAIL HUSSAIN, mid 40s, lives in Syria, doesn't like to work, ignorant, doesn't care about future, risk taker.

His wife, KHADIJA HUSSAIN, early 40s, enters wearing a long flowy dress with a jug full of water. She is caring and unlike him thinks about the future.

Without warning she pours the water on his face angrily. He coughs, chokes and sits upright with a jerk and shakes his head vigorously. He stares at her angrily.

## KHADIJA

There is a war going on out there and you are definitely the only person in Syria who is not thinking about your family.

## ISMAIL

What makes you think that?

### KHADIJA

If you really did you would have atleast get your ass out there and look for a job. I am requesting you, please, try to be a good father if not a good husband, Ismail!

#### ISMAIL

I am equally good as a father and a husband or I wouldn't have bought this beautiful dress you are wearing, I wouldn't have bought all those toys for our three kids.

### KHADIJA

Yes, You wouldn't have bought those if you didn't have received your elder brother's money who lives in USA. I am warning you Ismail, very soon we would be forced to flee out of this nasty, bloody and war-torn country. It will be soon ruled by those extremists!

#### ISMAIL

Oh come on, Khadija. The Syrian government won't let that day come. It will protect the general people.

## KHADIJA

### (sadly)

Have you seen the news lately? They are literally bombing every damn place in the world, taking innocent lives! ISMAIL You are stressing out unnecessarily.

## HAMID

(0.s)

Mom!

KHADIJA (responding) I will be right there.

She kisses Ismail who looks like he is deep in his thought. She walks away from him.

INT. LIVING ROOM- MORNING

We see pictures on the wall. Picture of a happy family of five. Mother, father, two boys of age 7 and 5 and girl of age 3.

They smile at us, they are in the park.

INT. PARK- DAY (FLASHBACK)

### A MAN

(o.s) Say cheese!

Tha family of five stands near beautiful garden. They smile and they all say...

#### 5 OF THEM

Cheese!

The photo clicks! The five of them smiles happily.

INT. LIVING ROOM- BACK TO PRESENT TIME

Khadija walks away from the picture and looks at another picture.

A TV can be heard in the background.

The picture is taken in their dining room. All of them look happy. The family of 5 smiles, all are wearing Birthday hats, a 7 years old boy in the middle.

INT. DINING ROOM- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

EVERYBODY (0.s) Happy Birthday to you, Happy Birthday to you happy birthday dear, Hamid.... happy birthday to you.

We hear cheers and laughter. Hamid, 7 years old cuts the cake. Khadija kisses him on the cheek. Ismail looks at his son happily.

SOMEONE (o.s) Say cheese!

5 OF THEM

Cheese!

INT. LIVING ROOM- BACK TO PRESENT TIME

Khadija walks away from the photo and turns around. She looks at the TV, now her expression dreaded.

She sits on the sofa and turns the volume up. The news shows crisis in Syria and ISIS.

Khadija watches the TV, looking tense.

NEWS REPORTER (o.s) Another bomb exploded in the busy street of Allepo, 15 are reported dead and 47 are gravely injured-

The TV is turned off.

Ismail has the remote in his hand. He puts it on the coffee table. Khadija looks shocked.

KHADIJA Why the hell did you turn off the TV? ISMAIL That's because I don't want any more discussion about the war.

Ismail walks away from her.

INT. DINING ROOM- MORNING

The whole family is sitting around the six seater dining table. We see Ismail and Khadija.

Then we see eldest son of Ismail, HAMID, 7 years.

The middle child is FAHAD, he is 5. Then in between Ismail and Khadija is their youngest child, GOHAR and she is 3 years.

A man enters from the kitchen, with plate full of chicken and Mediterranean bread.

This is JALAL, Ismail's younger brother, he is good looking just like his brother but is mysterious.

JALAL The food is amazing, Khadija. (re: Ismail) I told you before your wedding that she is definitely a catch. Allah has blessed her with gifts.

#### KHADIJA

Thanks for the compliment, Jalal but your brother doesn't agree that I am a good cook. He always seems to criticize what I am good at.

#### ISMAIL

You always misunderstand me dear. On the contrary I find your gifts and talents remarkable.

Jalal stares between the two, smiling.

FAHAD (0.S) Pass the cheese, Hamid. KHADIJA (re: Ismail) Is that so? Then you definately like my talent of giving you correct advice in crucial situations. Jalal smiles mockingly at Ismail. ISMAIL Yes, I surely do. KHADIJA Jalal, tell your brother that he needs to understand the fact that he needs to leave Aleppo soon ... maybe this country if he really wants to live and protect his family. JALAL

JALAL I disagree, with you Khadija!

ISMAIL That's my brother!

## JALAL

He doesn't need to leave. If he, you and this family can abide by the rules of those amazing people who are preeching about Islam, showing us the right guidance and making our city and this country a better and peaceful place; then they will not touch you let alone harm you.

## KHADIJA

Jalal! Do you even hear yourself? They are killing innocent people in the name of Allah! They are not only just taking innocent lives but (MORE)

#### KHADIJA (CONT'D)

also making the people around the world question our peaceful religion.

(beat) A wrong perception has been build in people's mind around the world!

## JALAL

(standing up) They are doing something which should have been done a long time ago. They are driving away bad people from the country, getting rid of the non-believers and helping people to convert to Islam in every corners of the world.

We hear the three children talking and giggling. We see Jalal didn't even eat a single morsel.

## KHADIJA

Oh-no, no. They are not helping people to convert to Islam. They are either forcing them or killing them.

#### ISMAIL

Can't we all just calm down for a second and have breakfast?

## JALAL

(looking deadly)
I am warning you, Khadija. If you
don't abide by the shariah law, if
you don't follow them and if you (pointing at her jeans and
 loose fitting top)
don't stop wearing those manly
clothes they will cut your head
off.

## KHADIJA

I am not changing myself or my lifestyle.

### JALAL

Don't tell me I didn't warn you.

He walks out of the dining room. We hear a bang of the front door. Khadija looks at her husband, who looks disappointingly at her then shifts his gaze to Jalal's plate which is full of tasty food.

### ISMAIL

Why did you have to bring this topic when we were having a good family time?

### KHADIJA

I did the right thing. Anyways, I feel your brother is up to no good.

#### ISMAIL

What do you mean?

## KHADIJA

I saw him going outside in the middle of the night and let me inform you he was not sleepwalking. I know how he looks when he sleep walks.

Ismail shrugs. He takes food from his brother's plate.

KHADIJA Stop eating from Jalal's plate. (desperately) Aren't you interested where he goes?

#### ISMAIL

I am sure he found a new girl.

Khadija shakes her head in response.

(urgently) Mom, we have to go to school.

Khadija nods and walks with her three children while Ismail pulls Jamal's plate towards him and starts to eat happily. Khadija's back is towards Ismail but suddenly Khadija turns her head to check on Ismail.

> KHADIJA I said don't eat from his plate.

Frustratingly Ismail drops the food back on the plate.

EXT. SCHOOL- MORNING

Khadija walks with her three kids, Gohar in her arms. Some woman who came to drop off their kids stares at her way. They are wearing black burka and they are looking at Khadija from top to bottom. Khadija who is wearing a jeans and long ill fitting tunic top, wraps her shawl tightly around her and covers her head quickly. Khadija and her kids are outside the school gate.

## HAMID/FAHAD

Bye mom!

KHADIJA

Bye kids! Be good boys and don't forget to have your lunch. Okay?

Kids walk away from her and enters the gate. Khadija ignores the woman who are whispering behind her back and walks away.

### WOMAN 1

You shouldn't wear these clothes in public. If they find you wearing these skimpy clothes they will kill you.

KHADIJA Oh dear, they won't spare anyone let alone me. WOMAN 2

But don't you think you should abide by the sharia law and follow the path of Allah?

#### KHADIJA

What makes you believe I don't follow Allah's path? You do not have the right to judge me. If you have followed Islam you surely know that judging is not right thing to do in Islam.

Khadija walks away.

A bomb blasts in the distance.

Two more blasts fills the air following by the first one and Khadija goes rigid in her spot, tears trickling down her eyes as she hears kids from school shouting. She rushes towards the school, passes the school gate.

> SCHOOL GUARD Miss, you are not allowed, we have informed the police.

Khadija doesn't pay any heed.

INT. SCHOOL CORRIDOR- MORNING

Khadija is running down the school corridor with Gohar in her arm, dodging teachers, students, staffs and even parents who are crying for their children.

She frantically peeks through the window of every class room. She runs up the stairs and now she is in the second floor corridor. There are few students and teachers on the second floor compared to the first floor. She pants as she stops near a classroom.

KHADIJA'S POV: Blood is on the floor.

She looks away, covers Gohar's eyes and walks past two more classroom. We see blood on the floor as she passes another classroom. She finally stops near a classroom and stares at the blood. She hears another bomb blasting but this time earth shattering and scary than the first three. She hears two kids screaming at the top of their voice.

### KHADIJA

### Hamid? Fahad?

She enters the classroom.

INT. CLASSROOM- MORNING

KHADIJA POV: Blood on the floor.

Her eyes quickly moves to the corner of the room. One of the table moves. Khadija's eyes are scanning the bench! Khadija bends down a little.

Two kids are cowering under the table. Gohar points at the table as she sees her brother.

KHADIJA Come on let's get out of here.

EXT. CORRIDOR- MORNING

They are running down the corridor, somewhere in the distance two men are shouting. Khadija looks at one of the classroom and sees two men. They are covering their face with houndstooth print scarf.

They have made one woman kneel down on the floor. One of the man presses a sharp knife against her neck. She cries as she sees Khadija who is covering Gohar's eyes.

Khadija backs away as the two men slaughter her. She is about to turn away from the classroom but the man who just slaughtered the woman stares at her.

Khadija looks at his eyes and her expression looks dreadful.

INT. BLOODY CLASSROOM- MORNING

He removes his scarf and throws it on the bloody floor revealing himself: Jamal.

She hugs Gohar tightly and runs away.

INT. DINING ROOM- MORNING

Khadija bursts through the front door, puts Gohar down and locks the front door. She quickly walks towards dining room, opens the fridge, gets milk bottle out of the fridge, grabs the bread, jam, she takes out a huge container from the fridge and puts all of them on the dining room.

> ISMAIL The school! I saw it in the news! (staring at Khadija who is still taking out more food.) What tha hell are you doing?

Khadija shakes, talks something to herself and walks away, enters bedroom without answering Ismail.

INT. BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Ismail enters and sees their small suitcase is lying on the bed. There are pile of clothes, even shoes inside. There is a backpack just beside a suitcase. Khadija moves towards the backpack with a stack of money and puts it inside.

> KHADIJA (talking to herself) Passport! Money! (re: Jamal) Grab that cellphone and the charger. (scared) We are leaving this country.

ISMAIL I understand you guys were attacked in school but-.

KHADIJA
 (she is done packing
 suitcase, she closes the lid)
No, you don't. It's Jalal who has
attacked those innocent people.

ISMAIL

(looks at Khadija as she gets
 out of the room with one
 suitcase and backpack)
You need to stop suspecting my
brother.

INT. DINING ROOM- CONTINUOUS

Ismail enters the dining room. Khadija is filling another backpack with food and hands one milk bottle to Gohar who is standing right next to the living room door.

We hear the front door bang.

Khadija grabs Gohar's hand and takes her in her arm. The door flows open revealing Jalal with a knife. Blood drops falls on the floor from knife.

> ISMAIL (whispering and looking a little shocked) It's a joke, right? Right, Jalal?

> > JALAL

I have warned you many times to be in the right path Of Allah. But you have tested my patience.

Jalal grabs Hamid's arm and pulls him closer to him. His arm presses against Hamid's neck. He pulls Hamid closer to him tightly and Hamid cries in pain.

> JALAL When was the last time you prayed, son?

> > HAMID

Last night.

JALAL Why not today? Allah- huh- Akbar.

We see Jalal smiling viciously as Hamid tightly shut his eyes. Without warning Jalal slaughters him.

## JALAL (continuous) Allah-huh-Akbar

The family backs away and we hear both Khadija and Ismail cry.

ISMAIL (crying in agony.) Hamid! No!

Jalal walks towards them very slowly. They back away quickly and stands on the threshold of the bedroom door. Ismail gestures his family to hide in the bedroom and literally pushes and forces Khadija to hide inside.

> ISMAIL (closing the bedroom door and locking it.) Don't get out until I ask you to.

Jalal lurches towards him with the knife. It cuts his skin on his left arm. Ismail pushes him away fights to take the knife out of his hand and strikes it right into Jalal's chest. Jalal falls on the floor beside Hamid.

INT. DINING ROOM- DAY

The family looks at the bloody floor, then at their son.

Khadija is sitting beside Hamid. She holds him tightly and cries. Ismail drops on the floor beside her and cries in agony. Fahad closes Gohar's eyes with his hand.

EXT. STREET OF ALEPPO- DAY

The family walks together and looks around at the people. Ismail sees another family with a suitcase and backpack just like them.

ISMAIL'S POV: There are people on the street who looks happy. One man going inside a convenience store. Another man has opened up a street food business. He is frying some kind of fritters. Two women in burka are buying from him. There is another family in the streets, they look happy as they enter a clothes shop.

#### ISMAIL

None of these people have any idea what's going to happen next. They are unaware about the war that's going to destroy the country. They are just as blind as I was before.

### KHADIJA

Forget it. Bygone is bygone. All we need to focus now is how to get to the other side of the border.

## ISMAIL

Turkish government is not welcoming us with open arms, you know.

#### KHADIJA

Atleast we can try. We can enter the border as refugees.

#### ISMAIL

I heard they are driving refugees back to Syria, that's what Jalal said.

His name makes Khadija winch. He stares at Khadija. She looks away in to distance as they all walk. They walk towards a truck. Ismail handles the truck driver some money.

They all get at the back of the truck which has no roof.

EXT. TRUCK- DAY

Khadija and the kids are sleeping inside the truck. One of the backpack is on Khadija's lap, she has her head rested on it.

Ismail is looking at the road and the vast landscape on both the sides.

Ismail stares in to the distance. His hair ruffles in the wind.

It's a vast landscape where he can see nothing but the cattles in the distance.

He looks at Khadija and at the kids who are facing towards him, they are sleeping. Khadija's face is covered with a scarf. Ismail has another backpack on his lap. He opens it and gets a small container out of the bag. He opens the lid and looks at it.

ISMAIL'S POV: A shawarma.

He grabs it with his right hand and puts the container back to the bag. He takes a bite, the food makes him satisfied as he closes his eyes.

EXT. STREET- DAY

The truck goes through bumpy road and is almost near a speed breaker. It bounces a little and moves jerkily on a badly constructed road.

EXT. TRUCK- DAY

The truck moves jerkily and Ismail drops his shawarma on the floor. We see the two kids bumping in to each other and waking up with a jerk.

Ismail is cursing under his breath while looking at Swarma on the floor.

KHADIJA (o.s) You should be careful!

ISMAIL Sorry for dropping the shawarma!

KHADIJA

We will run out of food if you keep dropping food! Do you want your children to starve?

ISMAIL

Keep dropping food? This is the first time I touched the food after leaving home!

There is continuous noise of car horn as they are traveling through busy highways road. It's a horrible sound pollution.

### KHADIJA

Your wife and kids didn't even see food after fleeing from their home.

Ismail sighs and hands her the container. She takes it, opens the lid and gives two shawarma to her kids.

For a second she looks like she is looking for Hamid.

She looks around holding one Sharwama. She stares at Ismail who is observing her. She puts down the shawarma back in to the container.

## ISMAIL Aren't you going to eat that?

She shakes her head in response

KHADIJA
 (voice caught in her throats
 as she struggles to form
 words.)
I feel him around me.

ISMAIL

Me too.

Ismail looks in the verge of tears as stream of tears broke free from Khadija.

EXT. TURKEY-SYRIA BORDER- EVENING

The truck goes through the narrow road. Then the truck stops. Khadija and Ismail looks at each other. Ismail quickly gets out of truck with his two backpacks.

ISMAIL What's wrong?

## SYRIAN DRIVER

(0.s) You need to get off. There is a Turkish army on the other side of the road. ISMAIL Yes, so what? I thought they are welcoming refugees.

# SYRIAN DRIVER Not anymore. They are building a gigantic wall to stop us from entering. You see construction over there? A 200 kilometre stretch has been completed this year.

His wife and kids joins him, a suitcase in Khadija's hand.

EXT. TURKEY-SYRIA- NIGHT

The family is sitting with a group of people. They are sitting behind a pile of rock. Ismail peeks out and then looks at the Turkish army.

We pull away to reveal there are group of people who are sitting making a long line. They rest their back and head on the large rocks.

They are Syrian refugees who are seeking shelter just like Ismail's family. A young man is sitting with his young wife, they look pissed off. An old woman is sitting beside them.

#### THE YOUNG MAN

I have been hiding behind this rock since one day with no supply of food. If I fucking sit here one more hour I might die.

## ISMAIL

(handling him bread)

Here.

Khadija stares at the food Ismail is handling the man and then stares angrily at Ismail.

ISMAIL

(continuous) What we can do is request them to talk to us. They don't need to let us in to their country but they can (MORE)

#### ISMAIL (CONT'D)

atleast have a conversation with us.

## THE YOUNG MAN They will shoot the moment they see you. And it's not the border guard we should be scared of.

#### ISMAIL

What do you mean?

## THE YOUNG MAN

The terrorist in Allepo are not only conquering the whole country and killing Syrian residents. They want to invade Turkey too. They have attacked the border guards day before yesterday for the first time.

ISMAIL But that doesn't mean they will attack today.

THE YOUNG MAN We don't know, do we?

## ISMAIL

I can't just sit here the whole day, I don't want to spend the rest of my life on this border.

Ismail stands. We see one of the army guard strolling. The construction has stopped at night. There are 2 armies now.

#### ISMAIL

(continuous) We can take the two, come on.

The young man and his wife stands too. Khadija looks like she is about to protest.

We hear two gun shots.

The young man and his wife let's out groan, a tiny groan escape through the Young man's wife. The young man falls on top of Ismail and he quickly sits down holding the young man's dead body. The young woman's body is on top of an old woman. She screams loudly.

Khadija gestures her to stop screaming by shushing her. The old woman cries, this time silently.

THE OLD WOMAN We are doomed, only Allah can help us.

Suddenly we hear a gun shot atleast 50 feet from where they are.

The terrorists in Syria has attacked the border guard. We hear couple of bullets as Fahad holds his mother's hand tightly. Ismail peeks to look at the border guard. He doesn't take his eyes off the guards as he talks.

ISMAIL

I have an idea.

KHADIJA Your ideas always sucks.

ISMAIL It will work this time.

EXT. SYRIA BORDER- NIGHT

The five man shoots mercilessly in the air. we do not see them properly in the dark but we can see that their face is covered with houndstooth scarf, the same kind Jalal was seen wearing in the school.

EXT. TURKEY BORDER- NIGHT

The guards are joined by couple other guards. There could be 10 but it's too dark to make out of their figures. They shoot back at them. But we see 4 of them collapse on the ground as the opponent shoots them. EXT. TURKEY-SYRIA BORDER- NIGHT

The group of 15 to 17 suddenly refugees run towards the gate. Protecting their face and body with their belongings. We hear deadly and ghastly screams either from the terrorist group or the police patrolling the border.

We see Khadija hugging Gohar tightly, she is running with the backpack in her back. We see Ismail carrying the suitcase as if it weighs nothing and we see him holding Fahad who had his arms and legs wrapped around him. He cries seeing the deadly scene before him.

FAHAD POV: one border guard lies on the ground, blood all around him.

The family and the refugee are staring at the border wall. They climb over it with difficulty and pain. Khadija bears an unbearable pain as she cuts her hand while holding on to Gohar. The shooting doesn't stop on the border as Ismail and Fahad and most refugees successfully climbs the wall and is on the other side.

EXT. TURKEY BORDER- NIGHT

More guards have joined them outnumbering the terrorist group, angry grunts can be heard from the other side as the guards shoot them down, one by one.

EXT. TURKEY-SYRIA BORDER- NIGHT

The refugees run and so does the family but we see one guard coming towards the family from behind. He runs after them as fast as he could, shooting couple of times, two bullets miss Khadija and hits the old woman.

The old woman falls with a menacing thud. She cries on the ground, her face covered in sand, blood is spreading all over the ground.

Fahad stares at the old woman while he is on his father's lap. FAHAD'S POV: blood covering the old woman.

His eyes are watery and he looks away quickly.

THE SYRIAN BORDER GUARD (shouting angrily) Where do you think you are going?

KHADIJA (shouting back and turning her head) Please let us enter.

The guard is now less than five feet away. He points the gun straight at Khadija.

He shoots but it misses again hitting someone else. He finally grabs her by her hair and drags her. She holds Gohar as tightly as she could. The guard drags her, forces her to kneel down and points his gun at her.

Ismail who was ahead in the group, comes out of nowhere, he kicks the border guard. Border guard falls backward. The gun falls on the ground. But When the border guard stands up he finds himself targeted....Ismail is pointing straight at him. We see Ismail shaking. He has tears on his eyes and cheek. He shoots him amidst the loud gun shot filling the air.

Footsteps are heard from every direction.

Army guards are coming down from the dark light house which is on Ismail's right.

Couple of gun shots fills the the air as Ismail and his family is running.

Ismail turns around and shoots at two of the army man.

They drop dead on the ground. Blood is everywhere!

They pass rocks, trees, then finally enters a narrow road.

EXT. NARROW ROAD IN KILIS- NIGHT

Ismail drops his gun on the ground as he walks on the narrow road. Ismail has tears on his eyes as he stands on the road, he stares at Khadija who is crying and looking back at him.

The guilt of taking a life is killing him from inside as he breaks in to tears. He puts Fahad down and hugs Khadija

tightly. They both weep and break apart when they see Gohar walking on the empty road.

## KHADIJA Hey! Come back.

Ismail runs and Khadija holds Gohar's hand. Suddenly Ismail noticea a board on the street.

ISMAIL'S POV: Kilis 30 kilometres!

They walk through the road and finally see street lights.

The family and the others are panting heavily.

They are running out of breath as they walk, they look like they are about to faint any moment. Sweat forms on Ismail's forehead. Khadija's face glistened with sweat and she looks at the road with agony.

There are few people in the road. Two bus are parked on the narrow, poorly constructed road. They are loading suitcase in the bus. Finally people start entering the bus.

## ISMAIL Wait.. here, let me see where this is going.

Ismail walks towards the bus and he sees a bus driver. They both smile at each other and they hug. They look like friends. Ismail motions Khadija to get inside.

INT. BUS- DAWN

We see the vast landscape passing quickly as the bus moves. Khadija is sitting with Gohar and Fahad. Ismail sits behind them staring outside the window.

INT. AHMED'S DINING ROOM- MORNING

ISMAIL (0.s) We are lucky to find you, my friend.

They are sitting around Ahmed's dining table. Ahmed is a bus driver, a Syrian citizen.

#### AHMED

It took you so long to understand our Aleppo is not safe. I was lucky to move here before they started banning refugees entering Turkey.

### KHADIJA

We are forever grateful to you, Ahmed.

#### AHMED

So, what is your plan? Are you going to find work here in Kilis?

Khadija and Ismail stare at each other as Ismail finds it hard to answer Ahmed.

INT. DINING ROOM- DAY

## AHMED (o.s- he means 'good bye') Khoda Hafiz!

#### ISMAIL

Khoda Hafiz

The front door closes, Khadija gets out of the kitchen.

#### KHADIJA

How long are you going to stay here in his house without looking for a job?

Ismail ignores her as he loads his plate with Turkish Kebab.

## KHADIJA

#### (continuous)

You need to do something. Tell the immigration that you came here as refugee before they put up the ban. Make a false document, ask Ahmed for help. You really need to man up and protect your family. ISMAIL Do you think I didn't man up and protected you guys back in the Turkish border?

## KHADIJA

(sighing) What I mean is you should find a job and lead a better life here in Turkey.

INT. OFFICE WHERE ILLEGAL DOCUMENTS ARE MADE- DAY

TURKISH MIDDLE AGED MAN I don't want to boast but I do have people working inside the embassy. I will get them to make your documents as fast as they can. But I need something in exchange for your work.

A woman's hand dropping a pouch on the table. The hand opens the pouch and empties the content. It's a lot of gold jewelry. The hand belongs to Khadija.

Ahmed, Khadija and Ismail are sitting and facing a middle aged man.

KHADIJA These are equal to 17000 Turkish Lira.

ISMAIL (whispering so only Khadija could hear) How can you bribe like that?

## KHADIJA

(whispering) In case you didn't notice I am doing this for you and my kids.

TURKISH MIDDLE AGED MAN If you want I can get you a US visa and also a Schengen visa! KHADIJA (she takes of her gold bracelet) Here you go.

ISMAIL That was a gift from my mother in our wedding.

EXT. TURKISH SCHOOL- MORNING

Title: ONE MONTH LATER

KHADIJA'S POV: Gohar smiles at her, we see she is carrying a tiny backpack.

KHADIJA This is your very first day of your school (she turns towards Fahad) And your first day of school here in Kilis. Be a good boy and finish your lunch and take care of your little sis.

She walks away. She turns back but they are already inside. She grabs fistful of her long scarf, looking nervous. Tears falls from her eyes. She walks towards the gate and enters.

INT. AHMED'S DINING ROOM- MORNING

Khadija has just entered the dining room, Gohar is in her arms, Fahad is standing next to her.

The TV is blaring loudly.

She takes the backpack from Gohar and takes her on her arms and sets her in the chair.

She walks towards the kitchen and the tingling sounds of utensils can be heard.

Fahad sits on the chair beside Gohar.

Fahad delves his hand inside his bag and takes out his tiny little car, placing it on the table. On the table surface Fahad forcefully pushes it backwards. The car zooms out of the table and falls on the floor, just near a pair of female feet.

It's Khadija. She stops herself in the right time and balances the two plates and dish perfectly. She puts those on the table and bends down to pick up the tiny car.

> KHADIJA Fahad, I was about to fall. Go to your room and play.

> > FAHAD

Sorry, mom.

Ismail walks out of the bedroom. He is dressed for the day.

## ISMAIL

(looking at his two children dressed in school clothes) Why aren't they in the school?

KHADIJA

I brought them back here.

ISMAIL I don't understand. What do you mean?

KHADIJA

I didn't want them to do their class!

ISMAIL And why is that?

KHADIJA

Because I got scared after what happened back home.

ISMAIL

(shaking his head) I don't believe you didn't let them go to class. I want them to be educated and well off unlike me. KHADIJA I am sorry that I got scared. I am sorry for being a coward! I am sorry that I am nervous about what the future might hold for us! (beat) But I don't want to lose them as well. (loudly) The memory of Hamid dying haunts me!

ISMAIL (hugging Khadija) We are safe here!

NEWS REPORTER ON TURKISH TV Last month the army guard at the Turkey- Syrian border were found dead. A CCTV footage near the lighthouse at the border shows that a group of 15 to 20 people have illegally entered Kilis and killed the guards. It is also informed that none of the faces in the CCTV are identifiable or recognizable in the dark. Police are looking for the suspect-

#### ISMAIL

Don't pay any heed to this. They have been reporting this since a month. They won't be able to catch us, they couldn't make out our face in the CCTV.

They both stare at the TV, Khadija looking worried.

EXT. STREET OF KALIS- NEXT MORNING

We see Khadija is walking with her two kids. She is on the street where there are grocery vendors selling various fruits and vegetables.

## KHADIJA

## How much is this one? 3 lira?

We see her buying cauliflower, she moves towards broccoli and points towards them. We see her talking to a street vendor.

Khadija finally walks away from the street vendor and spots her husband in the crowd.

Ismail is sitting with a group of his new friends in Kilis. He is sitting on a chair. He drops a card on the table. He is playing card game. He is laughing and smoking.

Khadija walks towards him angrily. She stares at him and slaps him hard across his face.

Ismail's friend stares at him.

KHADIJA

I thought you are outside looking for a job. (beat) And here you are having the day of your life! I was right about you. You never cared for us.

ISMAIL (begging) Khadija! We will talk about this later. Please go home.

Khadija storms away, leaving Ismail with his friends.

INT. AHMED'S DINING ROOM- NIGHT

Khadija is having dinner with her kids. Ismail enters. She quickly finishes her dinner and walks away.

Ismail sits down to eat. There is very less food for him to eat.

We see him eating.

INT. AHMED'S DINING ROOM- AFTER SOME TIME

Ismail is done eating.

KHADIJA (o.s) I made kebab for you. Do you want?

She appears from behind with a dish. Her face pulls in to concern. She looks guilty.

ISMAIL (quietly) No, I am done.

KHADIJA You didn't eat much.

ISMAIL I don't feel like.

KHADIJA (whispering) I am sorry.

He doesn't answer, he takes his plate and walks towards the kitchen, leaving Khadija behind.

INT. AHMED'S KITCHEN- NIGHT

KHADIJA

(0.s)
I am sorry.
 (beat)
I am sorry for insulting you
infront of your friends.

Ismail turns to look at her. He walks towards her. Tears falls from his eyes. He walks away from her.

INT. TURKISH CONVENIENCE STORE- DAY

Ismail is standing infront of a shelf. He looks like he is out of place. He fidgets, stretches his hands.

Cookies, chocolates and Turkish sweet are aligned on a shelf behind him. It's a small shop.

A customer just payed Ismail and walked out with a bag. Ismail looks outside through the glass window. To his horror he sees two police man showing a photograph to a man on the street. Ismail is closer to the glass door as the man on the street examines the photo.

EXT. TURKISH CONVENIENCE STORE- DAY

The man points towards the convenience shop. The police walks towards the shop. With their gun in hand they burst through the door.

INT. TURKISH CONVENIENCE STORE- DAY

TWO POLICE'S POV: There is no one around.

EXT. STREET- DAY

Ismail dials a number as he runs. There is money in his hand, he stacks it deep inside his pocket. Cell phone pressed against his ear.

> ISMAIL (panting, on the phone) Get out of the house and do what I say.

KHADIJA (o.s) But what happened?

EXT. STREET- DAY

He runs towards the street, people staring after him as he dodges people. A mini bus stands blocking the intersection, we hear car horns continuously. Ismail is running towards the mini van. He turns around to look back.

ISMAIL'S POV: The two police are still running towards him.

Ismail looks sweaty and exhausted as he runs towards the mini van, he sees the door is already open for him. The door slides closed the moment he gets inside. The mini van screeches as it drives away.

ISMAIL Go, go go, go.

AHMED (o.s- calling out) So, where are we going?

Khadija and her kids are already sitting beside Ismail. Ismail breathes heavily, Khadija holds his arm tightly and rests her head on his shoulder. He takes the water bottle from the seat pocket and drinks.

#### ISMAIL

Istanbul airport!

EXT. ISTANBUL AIRPORT- NIGHT

Title: 13 HOURS LATER

Ismail is standing near the mini van, Ahmed approaches him.

ISMAIL We owe you so much! I don't know how to repay you.

Ahmed hands 4 tickets to Ismail.

AHMED

(hugging Ismail) You don't have to. Just promise me to stay out of trouble and take care of yourself and your family, okay?

We see Khadija is inside the mini van, the mini van door is opened, she hands a milk bottle to Gohar.

INT. MINI VAN- NIGHT

Khadija smiles at Gohar who looks at her mother and wipes away tears with her tiny hand.

#### KHADIJA

I am sorry mommy couldn't take care of you properly.

She kisses on Gohar's cheek.

She hands a packet of cookies to Fahad who sits beside her. Suddenly Ismail peeks in.

> ISMAIL Let's go. We are all set.

INT. ISTANBUL AIRPORT- CHECK IN- NIGHT

Ismail is pushing a trolley, Khadija is walking beside him. Fahad walks happily and tightly grabbing his mother's long shawl. Gohar is fast asleep with her head resting on her mother's shoulder. Together they walk towards the check-in counter.

## KHADIJA

Oh no, not this way. We are on the wrong way. This line is for Turkish airlines. We are supposed to go to Air France check in.

ISMAIL I don't know what I would do without you.

He turns the trolley and walks towards the air France check in. Now we see they are in line. They stare at people around them. Most of them are well dressed unlike them.

INT. ISTANBUL AIRPORT- CHECK IN- AFTER SOME TIME

The family are already at the check in desk.

MAN BEHIND THE AIR FRANCE CHECK IN COUNTER May I see the ticket please!

#### ISMAIL

Here you go.

Ismail hands the ticket to him.

MAN BEHIND THE AIR FRANCE CHECK IN COUNTER And what's the purpose of your visit?, sir?

ISMAIL (hesitating) It's- well you see we are re-

KHADIJA We are tourist. We want to see and visit France.

They see their suitcase move through the moving belt and is out of sight.

FAHAD (staring at the moving belt) Wow!

INT. ISTANBUL AIRPORT- IMMIGRATION- NIGHT

The family is standing in line They look extremely nervous as they stand in the immigration line. Ismail is behind a man in suits.

## KHADIJA

(whispering from behind)
I was wondering what if the
securities here are already
informed about the refugees, I mean
about us?

ISMAIL What do you expect them to know about us?

KHADIJA That we have killed the border guard at Turkey-Syria border?

## ISMAIL

(whispering)
You very well know the fact that he
would have killed both of us if I
hadn't killed them. I- I had no
 (MORE)

ISMAIL (CONT'D) choice as we needed to flee from Aleppo. (Khadija looks like she is about to say something) Now, stop talking. I don't want us to draw attention.

Khadija turns looking at the line behind her. She looks at the man in suit.

KHADIJA POV: The man in suits turn to look at Ismail and her. There is a serious look on his face. His gloomy look changes in to smile.

> KHADIJA Why do you think he is smiling at us?

Ismail turns around to look at Khadija, aghast.

ISMAIL You got to be kidding me. He is just trying to be polite.

KHADIJA Do you think he is a police?

# ISMAIL

Stop overthinking!

The family is at the immigration desk, facing the immigration officer.

TURKISH IMMIGRATION OFFICER Look at the camera.

KHADIJA

(looking up at the wall) Camera?

TURKISH IMMIGRATION OFFICER (he points towards a long wire- like thing that is facing towards Khadija) No, no here.

She stares at it, still unsure where to look.

INT. SECURITY CHECK- AFTER SOME TIME

people are going through a scanner, one by one they enter. Khadija stares at the woman who spreads her arms and stands with her leg slightly apart.

Ismail and Khadija are looking concerned as the security man opens their backpacks. The security looks at them for a second and then he starts taking out food: jam, chocolate, icecream, breads, 3 containers.

The security sighs as he finally takes out Nutella.

FAHAD That was my favourite!

ISMAIL It's alright buddy. I will buy this for you soon.

Fahad looks unhappily at his father, then looks back at Nutella. Fahad follows his father who has already walked away.

INT. PLANE- NIGHT

Khadija is grabbing the arm of the seat as tightly as she could as the plane flies. She looks like she is praying silently, Gohar and Fahad are sitting in between their parents. Gohar tilts her head to look at her mother.

> ISMAIL Are you flying for the first time?

> > KHADIJA

Yes.

ISMAIL I thought you finished your high school in Turkey?

KHADIJA I travelled by a bus. INT. PLANE- NIGHT

We see Khadija staring at her food. Fahad is already eating, he looks extremely excited. Khadija bows down and smells it.

## KHADIJA

Did we get the right food?

Ismail is too busy taking off the cover of the food. He doesn't answer her.

An air hostess pushes the cabin trolley. Khadija stares at the beautiful airhostess.

KHADIJA (continuous) Excuse me? Could you please tell me-

AIR FRANCE AIR HOSTESS Miss, I am sorry I am serving this gentleman. I will come in a moment.

# KHADIJA

Sure.

Now the seat belt sign is on.

KHADIJA (continuous- pointing at the seat belt sign) What's that?

ISMAIL It means you should fasten your seat belt.

KHADIJA And why do we do that?

ISMAIL It means the plane has hit the turbulence.

Khadija looks worried but Ismail smiles at her. The air hostess is taking away Ismail's half eaten food.

ISMAIL

(re: airhostess)
I was wondering, what is this sauce
on the mutton?

AIR FRANCE AIR HOSTESS That's oyster sauce.

#### ISMAIL

Oh ok.

AIR FRANCE AIR HOSTESS And that's not mutton, that's pork.

Khadija stares at her blankly. Ismail looks like he is about to puke. He quickly gets up, pressing his hand on his mouth, looking nauseating.

He is out of scene.

KHADIJA Fahad! Fahad! Don't eat that! That's pork! It's haram, dear! It's a sin to eat pork in Islam.

Khadija takes the food away from him, he shouts in protest, making angry groan. The airhostess is suppressing a smile.

Khadija hands the food box to the air hostess.

AIR FRANCE AIR HOSTESS Well, we do have other options like vegetable pasta.

KHADIJA (looking delightful and relieved) That would be great. Thank you so much.

INT. PLANE- SOMETIMES LATER

Khadija walks towards the loo. She doesn't know how to open it, she stares at the door.

She tries to pull it, no success. We see the occupied sign.

An air hostess walks towards her to help. The air hostess pushes the door and she gets in.

INT. PARIS AIRPORT- CUSTOMS- MORNING

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL

passoort?

#### ISMAIL

Here you go.

Ismail hands the passport to him.

He examines it. Ismail looks impatient. He looks around and taps his foot.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL How long are you staying in Paris?

# ISMAIL

16 months.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL And are you here for a visit?

ISMAIL Yes. We are tourist.

The custom official looks from Ismail to Khadija to Fahad to Gohar, then back to Ismail.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL Where are you staying?

ISMAIL

A motel.

CUSTOMS OFFICIAL The address?

ISMAIL I didn't book the room yet.

The customs official looks up but surprisingly hands the passport back to Ismail.

Ismail walks away with his passport. Khadija and the kids follows him.

INT. MOTEL ROOM- NIGHT

ISMAIL (o.s, angrily) The room here costs 40 euro. We should have booked somewhere cheaper.

Ismail is pacing up and down the room, Fahad looks at his father.

They are in a motel room. Khadija is feeding Gohar. She hands a chicken wings in Gohar's hand.

KHADIJA Well, I know someone who is in Paris. We can stay over at her place for a month or two and then get a place for ourselves.

ISMAIL

A friend?

KHADIJA No, a classmate.

ISMAIL Do you know where she lives?

Ismail stops pacing.

#### KHADIJA

(0.s) No, but I can call my friends and get her phone number. EXT. STREET- DAY

Khadija enters a phone booth. Ismail is standing outside, drenched in rain.

It's raining cats and dogs. Ismail opens the umbrella and tries to cover both Fahad and Gohar who looks elated seeing the heavy rain. The kids are laughing.

Khadija has her ear presses against the phone, a dial tone can be heard.

# KHADIJA

Hello? Aliya? It's me Khadija.

INT. STAIRCASE- MORNING

ALIYA (o.s) My unit is at the top floor.

Ismail walks up the stairs with one suitcase and two backpack. He hangs one backpack on his shoulder and hugs the other one tightly. He pulls Fahad with him and stares at Khadija angrily. Khadija has Gohar in her arm and she is following Aliya. They all walk up through the spiral staircase until they reach a door.

INT. ALIYA'S LIVING ROOM- MORNING

We hear clicking of keys and sound of door creaking. They walk towards spacious living room. The room has modern yet minimal furniture. A vass is placed on the white stylish centre table. Gohar giggles as Khadija puts her down. Gohar walks towards the centre table. The suitcases are placed against the wall.

> ALIYA So, what can I get you guys?

We hear an earth shattering sound of glass.

ISMAIL'S POV: Gohar has broken the vass!

ISMAIL (wiping the sweat from his chin and upper lips) I am extremely sorry about that.

He pulls Gohar in his arm.

#### ALIYA

(looking a bit disappointed) I guess I should clean that up and mop the floor. I will be right back.

ISMAIL (calling after her) We are really... really sorry!

# ALIYA

(0.s) No problem!

Aliya is out of scene!

### ISMAIL

(whispering) How can you trust a complete stranger?

### KHADIJA

She is not a stranger, she is a classmate.

# ISMAIL

But is she your close friend? No! Right? How can we stay in a stranger's house?

# KHADIJA

We don't have any place to live!

They become quite the moment Aliya is back in the room with a mop.

# KHADIJA (continuous) Let me help you.

INT. ALIYA'S DINING ROOM- MORNING

An arrey of French food is on the table. They are all sitting. Khadija tears the French toast and hands half of it to Fahad. She takes a bite from the other half.

# ALIYA

So, What's your plan here?

ISMAIL We are going to stay here for a while and look for our own place. We are eventually going to move out of your place.

EXT. STALINGRAD METRO REFUGEE CAMP- DAY (FLASHFORWARD)

We see a glimpse of the future scene. We see hundreds of small tents lining up near a station. The streets around it is extremely dirty. Chips packets, bags and torn fabrics blow in the wind.

INT. ALIYA'S DINING ROOM- MORNING (BACK TO PRESENT TIME)

They are still eating.

KHADIJA For now Ismail is going to look for a job, Isn't it, Ismail?

Ismail nods slowly.

ISMAIL (coughing and trying to avoid the job topic) So, what it is that you do, Aliya?

ALIYA

I am a writer.

ISMAIL So, you write novels.

ALIYA (hesitantly) No, it's more like I am writing for a blog.

#### ISMAIL

Oh, ok.

EXT. STALINGRAD METRO STATION- DAY

Ismail walks on the pavement and what he sees on his left shocks him.

ISMAIL'S POV: There are atleast 50 refugee shelters made of tarpolin and old shower curtain, congregating on dirty mattresses. There are clapped out sofas and unfolded cardboard boxes.

He looks at the people, they all look middle eastern. He approaches a man with long curly hair who is standing beside his wife, she is wearing a burka. This is KHALIL and his wife FATIMA.

> ISMAIL Are you from Syria?

#### KHALIL

Yes!

ISMAIL So, are you a refugee?

KHALIL Yes. We all are refugees here from different parts of Syria.

### ISMAIL

I thought Refugees are making camps in Calais.

## KHALIL

Oh, Calais is a jungle now. I went to Calais first then I moved here. There is literally no room to breath in Calais. But this is far better.

# ISMAIL

(laughing a little and shaking his head at him) Far better, you say?

# KHALIL

Yes, atleast your family has privacy, you don't have to sleep in the open and let others interfere in your business. (beat) Well, this, my friend, is the new destination for refugees.

INT. ALIYA'S KITCHEN- DAY

Khadija is cooking soup and is stirring now and then. We see Fahad throwing a ping pong ball at the fridge it bounces back to him. She pours the hot soup from cooking pot to a glass bowl.

> KHADIJA (pointing at the shelf full of glasses)

Be careful. Don't hit the ball and break any of those glasses.

We hear the doorbell as she pours the content of the soup in to a bowl.

> KHADIJA (talking more to herself) Your dad must be home after his first day of job search. I hope he gets one.

She walks out of the kitchen.

INT. ALIYA'S LIVING ROOM- DAY

Aliya is already at the door. She opens it to reveal a young man Aliya is familiar with. They both hug each other tightly. He kisses her and runs his hand up and down her hands. Khadija stares at them as they kiss one more time, this time more passionately. We see Fahad has just entered and is staring at the kissing couple. Khadija turns her head to find Fahad staring at the couple. The man is already moving his lips down to her neck towards her cleavage. Khadija feels awkward.

# KHADIJA

(whispering) Go back to kitchen, Fahad.

Aliya turns and notices Khadija. They both drift apart a little.

ALIYA This is my friend, Vincent.

VINCENT

Hey!

#### KHADIJA

Hi.

Then suddenly sound of glass breaking from the kitchen is heard.

Khadija panicks and goes back to the kitchen. Aliya rolls her eyes as she stares after Khadija.

INT. ALIYA'S KITCHEN- DAY

Khadija enters.

KHADIJA I told you to stay away from glasses.

KHADIJA'S POV: none of the glasses are broken.

# It's not the glass, Mom.

KHADIJA'S POV: Soup bowl is broken in to pieces and are on the floor, the soup is spattered on the floor and the ping pong ball is slowly moving on the floor.

Gohar suddenly emerges in the scene bare footed and she steps on the slippery soup.

#### KHADIJA

No, no Gohar!

Gohar is crying as Khadija pulls her away. Gohar's toe is bleeding as she must have stepped on the floor.

INT. ALIYA'S GUEST ROOM- NIGHT

Ismail, Fahad and Khadija are already sleeping on the giant king size bed. Gohar is playing on the bed with a birbie. It's too dark to see Gohar and the others.

We hear thumping noise from the other room. Aliya is surely with a man. Gohar stops playing and she stares at the door.

INT. ALIYA'S BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

A middle age man looks exhausted and he smiles at Aliya. They are both exhausted after sex. They are both under the sheet.

INT. OUTSIDE ALIYA'S BEDROOM- SAME TIME

Gohar is walking towards the room, the door is closed.

INT. ALIYA'S BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

We see Aliya cuddling with the guy. Suddenly the sound of her bedroom door banging loudly againsy the wall startles the couple. INT. OUTSIDE ALIYA'S BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

We see the door is opened and Gohar enters. She is staring at Aliya and the man.

ALIYA (0.s) Oh... Go away. (whispering) Get the fuck out of here.

INT. ALIYA'S GUEST ROOM- NIGHT

Ismail wakes up with a jerk. We hear Aliya's faint voice.

# ALIYA (o.s) Go away.

He looks at Khadija, then Fahad and realizes Gohar is missing. His hand automatically touches the sheet as if looking for Gohar. He gets out of the bed quickly.

INT. ALIYA'S HALLWAY- CONTINUOUS

Ismail walks down the hallway and turns towards Aliya's room.

INT. OUTSIDE ALIYA'S BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Ismail finds Aliya's door open, the light is on.

# ALIYA

#### (0.S)

Now get the fuck outta here!

INT. ALIYA'S BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Ismail walks towards the bedroom to see Gohar is pulling the white sheet off them and Aliya is grabbing it up to her chin. She is staring at Gohar angrily. Then finally Aliya stares st Ismail who is dumbfounded seeing the situation.

### INT. LIVING ROOM- DAY

One suitcase and two backpacks lie on the floor. Khadija and Ismail are looking concerned as Aliya walks up to them and sets a huge duffle bag on the floor.

There are food and some other stuff packed inside. The zipper is wide open. There are juice container, chocolates, soup containers and apples. Aliya bends down and starts to zip it up. She then walks away from them.

Ismail picks up the duffle bag. It looks too heavy for him as his expression pulls in to pain. He makes grunting noise. Aliya quickly appears. She handles them cash, she is wearing a fanny pack.

## ALIYA

Here is your cash and I want all of you out. Now!

# ISMAIL

(panting heavily) Look, I am extremely sorry about last night but this won't happen again. We don't have any place to go.

### ALIYA

That is not my concern. You have been staying here for 2 months and you aren't able to find a job and move out.

### ISMAIL

(still panting)
I said I am still looking for a
job. Please! Please, I promise you,
you won't even know we are here.

# ALIYA

(staring at Gohar in Khadija's arm) Right! Look, here is more cash-(she takes out more cash from the fanny pack) But I really want my privacy back. I am sorry. Ismail shakes his head, refusing to take any more money. He drags the suitcase to the front door. Khadija is rooted to the spot.

KHADIJA'S POV: The money Aliya is holding.

Khadija walks towards Aliya and takes the money. Khadija smiles at her.

KHADIJA Thank you for letting us stay for 2 months. Good bye.

ISMAIL (o.s) Come on Khadija!

Khadija follows her husband and walks out of the door leaving Aliya alone in the room.

EXT. PARIS STREET- DAY

We hear cars honking loudly. The place looks busy with offices and business around. Khadija follows her husband. Tears break from her eyes and she weeps. Gohar is fast asleep and is resting her head on her mother's shoulder. Ismail looks devastated as he drags the suitcase. He turns back to stare at her watery eyes.

> KHADIJA (angrily) Have you thought where we are staying?

> > ISMAIL

Yes.

KHADIJA

Don't tell me you are taking us to Calais camp, I heard it's bad as a jungle.

ISMAIL Have patience, you will see.

## KHADIJA

I don't have any patience left and and- I have seen enough of what you can do.

ISMAIL You sound like everything is my fault. You sound like the war at Syria, the destruction of Aleppo is caused by me!

Khadija doesn't answer but she follows her husband through the narrow pavement.

EXT. STALINGRAD METRO STATION- DAY

KHADIJA'S face looks horror-struck. She stares at a yellow camp.

## KHADIJA

Oh my goodness! Oh-

There are atleast hundreds of camps. The road nearby the camp is dirty. There are torn clothes, a torn shoe, dirty clothes, plastic bag. Everywhere they look they see the whole place is in mess. This is the flashbacks we saw earlier.

### ISMAIL

Be grateful that you have a place to stay.

Khadija stares at him and they both look like they are in the verge of tears.

INT. YELLOW TENT- DAY

Khadija has just taken out a ready can of food from the duffel bag Aliya has given them. She goes out of her tent with the ready food can leaving Fahad and Gohar playing with a hand ball. EXT. YELLOW TENT- DAY

Khadija gets out of the tent with the ready food can and looks around. Khadija finds a middle aged Syrian woman cooking, she stirs something in a pot, fire woods lies underneath the pot. It smells amazing to khadija as she sniffs in the air and smiles while closing her eyes. She walks towards her. Khadija notices a flask full of warm water on the ground. Steam evaporates from the flask.

# KHADIJA

Can I use this water to make this?

Khadija points towards the ready can food. It seems like the middle aged woman doesn't understand English. She glances at Khadija then ignores. Khadija holds the flask with one hand and gestures towards the can she is holding.

## KHADIJA

(continuous) Can I use the- flask water-

The middle aged woman literally launches towards Khadija. She grabs the flask and pushes Khadija out of her way. She gestures Khadija to leave her alone with her hand. Khadija backs off a little looking scared and defeated. Khadija walks away from her.

#### FATIMA

(o.s) You can take water from me.

Khadija turns to see Fatima we have seen earlier when Ismail came to see Stalingrad stationed. Fatima walks towards her with the flask, pours little water in the can and closes the lid.

> KHADIJA Thank you. Thank you so much, I needed to feed my children and I didn't know whom to ask for help. I am Khadija.

#### FATIMA

I am Fatima, my husband, Khalil has already met your husband.

KHADIJA I don't see my husband around.

FATIMA Well, they both went to look for job. (pointing to a red tent) Well, that is my tent. Come inside.

INT. RED TENT- DAY

The red tent has more room than the yellow one. There are clothes everywhere, pots, frying pans and a tiny gas stove.

# FATIMA

I have been here in Stalingrad refugee camp since 6 months, I was in Calais camp before this.

## KHADIJA

What is the government doing to improve the situation. Are they thinking of arranging home for us?

## FATIMA

In TV you will see those politicians talking about how they have eliminated this situation and gave hundreds of refugees home. But that is not the whole truth. What they are hiding is the fact that there are thousands more who are suffering, who are dying in the streets of Paris.

# KHADIJA

I feel suffocated here.

## FATIMA

Thank the creator that this place is far different and I must say better than what the people in (MORE) FATIMA (CONT'D) Aleppo are facing. I heard the situation is getting worse.

KHADIJA That's what I heard too.

Khadija is lost in her thoughts!

FATIMA Are you alright?

KHADIJA Yes, I am. (beat) I hope Ismail gets a job today.

INT. YELLOW TENT- DAY

We see Gohar misses the ball Fahad throws at her. She gets out of the tent to get the ball.

FAHAD Don't go outside, mommy will be angry.

Fahad gets up and picks up his small toy car. He calls his sister as he plays with the car.

FAHAD

Come back, Gohar!

He plays with it and forgets that his sister went out for the ball.

EXT. YELLOW TENT- DAY

Gohar is outside the yellow tent. She starts walking, crossing the middle aged woman we saw earlier. She doesn't notice Gohar, she is too busy lighting the fire wood.

Gohar walks tents after tents.

INT. RED TENT- DAY

We see Khadija and Fatima are still talking.

FATIMA I think, I should leave and check on my children.

INT. RED TENT- DAY

Khadija enters the tent and zips it up. She stares at Fahad then she looks around.

# KHADIJA Where is Gohar?

Fahad's expression shows that he is guilty and that he knows he is in trouble. He looks like a mouse as he slowly stands and looks at his mother.

# KHADIJA

(continuous) Where is your sister?

FAHAD She- she went out, she is- I don't know.

#### KHADIJA

What the hell do you mean by you don't know?

khadija closes the distance between her and her son. She jerks him a little and cries. She is about to slap him hard but stops herself. Fahad starts to cry. Khadija hugs him.

## KHADIJA

(continuous- whispering)
It's all my fault, it my fault. I
shouldn't have left you guys all
alone in this tent.

She breaks away from him.

# KHADIJA (continuous) Come on let's go find her.

Khadija gets out of the tent followed by Fahad.

EXT. YELLOW TENT- DAY

Fahad follows Khadija. She walks towards the middle aged woman and she is asking something. Middle age woman stares at her but doesn't understand.

MIDDLE AGE WOMAN'S POV: Khadija is trying to say something, we see Khadija's mouth move.

KHADIJA (coughing to clear her throat) Okay, let me try again. Did you-

FATIMA

(0.s) Forget it, she is mute and deaf.

KHADIJA (hugging Khadija and crying loudly) I can't find my Gohar.

EXT. STALINGRAD METRO STATION- DAY

Khadija, Fatima and Fahad are passing tents after tents. They are bending their head and looking at every tent. Some refugees who are standing are staring at them. But most people are inside the tent and we cannot see them.

From the corner of the road Khalil and Ismail appears. We see in the distance they are talking.

ISMAIL

I don't know what I am going to tell my wife if she asks whether I got the job today. Atleast you don't have to face the wrath of your wife unlike me! your burden is lifted off.

## KHALIL

You will get it too, I was wondering you should check the convenience store and the two little shop near the station. As far as I know they are hiring.

Ismail is about to respond but something hits his leg. He looks down to find Gohar smiling up at him. Ismail picks her up on his arm.

## ISMAIL

How come you are here? Where is your mother?

Gohar beams at him. Ismail looks confused and starts walking on the road, he sees Khadija and Fatima are running towards them followed by Fahad. Khadija's eyes are full of tears as she takes Gohar from Ismail's arm and cries holding her.

# KHADIJA

(whispering) I am so sorry, baby. I am so sorry.

### ISMAIL

(0.s) How can you be so irresponsible?

Tears roll down Khadija'S cheek as we see Ismail takes Gohar from Khadija and then he walks away with Fahad leaving her alone with Fatima and Khalil.

INT. YELLOW TENT- NIGHT

Fahad is having noodle soup, while Gohar is playing with a doll. Two noodle soup is placed on the ground. The tent is too small to hold 4 people. Khadija sits at the corner looking at her husband, she looks guilty.

# KHADIJA

I am sorry, I am so sorry. You are right, you are absolutely right for calling me an irresponsible mother. (beat) I am a bad mother. She weeps. Ismail sits closer to her and takes the noodle soup in his hand.

KHADIJA (getting up and looking for fork inside the duffle bag) Here, wait, I will give you a disposable fork...I have it somewhere.

Khadija takes out a fork, hands him one and sits beside him. She stares down at her white knuckle as she makes a fist. Khadija is still crying. She looks towards Ismail who is holding the fork full of noodle towards her and gesturing her to eat.

ISMAIL

Come on eat.

She looks at him, confused.

ISMAIL (smiling) I will feed you. (tears rolling down his cheeks) Be careful it's hot.

Fahad looks up at his parents from his noodle.

KHADIJA You seem different. What has gotten in to you?

They both laugh slightly.

ISMAIL I have realized I have always been the worst husband and also the worst father ever. (beat) This is totally unfair to all of you. I have never looked for a job, never cared about the future. You had to run the household by borrowing money from your parents. (MORE)

ISMAIL (CONT'D) We would have been doomed if we hadn't got help from our closed ones. (beat) But I promise everything will change soon. Ismail looks relieved as he confesses his mistakes. KHADIJA Well, I have a confession to make too. (beat) I have also been unfair to you. I treated you horribly and complained often about how you are making our lives miserable. On the contrary I know very well in my heart that our life is meaningless without you. We wouldn't have been alive if you weren't there to protect us, to protect me.

We see a flash of scene when the border guard points the gun at Khadija and then we see flashes of Ismail shooting at him.

We see the couple hugging and then kissing. They break away the minute they see Fahad and Gohar staring at their parents. The couple laughs.

EXT. YELLOW TENT- DAY

Khalil stares at the yellow tent, he looks a bit drunk, as he slips but balances himself quickly.

Khadija is standing outside.

KHALIL Mrs Hussain? How are you?

KHADIJA Ismail is outside. He will be back at night. KHALIL

Okay.

Khalil walks away from her, drunk, he stops, turns and then he walks back to her and forces himself to look at her. He looks extremely tired.

> KHALIL (o.s) I was looking for you Mrs Hussain.

KHADIJA Are you alright?

KHALIL Better than ever.

Khalil looks at her from to bottom, he is checking her out, Khadija is wearing a jeans, long tunic and she has wrapped a shawl around her body.

KHADIJA

I think you should get some help. You are not feeling well.

KHALIL I said I am absolutely fine.

KHADIJA

No, you are not. It's better if I call your wife.

Khadija walks away from him.

KHADIJA

(continuous) Oh, there she is. I was about to call you.

We see Fatima walking towards them, Fatima looks concerned seeing Khalil drunk.

FATIMA He is not feeling well, I guess. KHALIL (whispering to Fatima so that Khadija doesn't hear him) I am drunk.

FATIMA (whispering back) Ok, okay, let's go.

Fatima smiles at Khadija and walks away.

EXT. CONVENIENCE STORE- MORNING

The shop attendant smiles happily at Ismail.

SHOP ATTENDANT Oui, oui, You will start today from-(he looks at his cellphone to check the time) 5.30 pm. Sounds good?

ISMAIL

Sounds great.

Ismail walks out happily and walks towards the Stalingrad station where there are hundreds of refugee camp.

EXT. SCHOOL IN PARIS

Fahad and Gohar has smile on their face. khadija is standing behind them.

## KHADIJA

I know it's not the best school in Paris, not that you will be getting the best education from this place, but this is what mommy and daddy can afford right now. Your school fee is close to nothing but I promise you...one day both of you will get in to the best school, one day you will be better off and forget all this struggle.

Khadija kisses both her kids.

## KHADIJA

# Did you understand?

Gohar smiles and nods which makes Khadija laugh.

The kids walk away from their mother. Khadija doesn't take her eyes away from her kids. They walk through the gate. Khadija looks tense as she turns. She turns towards the school again.

We see flash of the scene when the school was bombed and kids were running everywhere.

She shakes her head, sighs heavily and walks away from the school, finally she has mastered the courage to walk away and let the kids have their time in school.

INT. YELLOW TENT- DAY

Title: EIGHT MONTHS LATER

khadija and Ismail are both sitting inside the tent, facing each other, Fahad and Gohar are playing in the corner.

Ismail is staring at a phone.

ISMAIL

Khadija, can you believe they have thrift shop for electronics and gadgets?

KHADIJA

This was totally unnecessary. You don't have a home and you are buying a cellphone.

ISMAIL Well, there is a good news.

KHADIJA (surprised by the change of subject) What? ISMAIL We are going to USA!

KHADIJA And how did you afford the tickets?

ISMAIL My brother, Rahman paid for the tickets. (holding up the cellphone) Look, here are the electronic tickets.

KHADIJA

I don't understand- but what about the visa?

Her expression changes as she realizes she knows the answer. She nods slowly.

ISMAIL

(hesitating)
We are- we are Turkish citizens who
applied for US visit visa,
remember?

We see a FLASH OF SCENE: Khadija bribing the man to get her a Turkish passport.

KHADIJA

So, why visit now?

# ISMAIL

They will be able to help us financially and we would be away from this mess. We have repented for our sins, it's time for us to lead a normal life and the prospect of going to USA promises that.

KHADIJA So where in USA are we going? ISMAIL

Michigan.

EXT. YELLOW TENT- EVENING

ISMAIL (0.s) It's my last day of work in Paris.

KHADIJA (0.s) I hope they give you bonus for your hard work.

Khadija waves at her husband as he goes for his work.

Khadija smiles as she gets inside.

INT. YELLOW TENT- NIGHT

Fahad is standing, looking at his mother.

FAHAD Can I go play with my friend?

KHADIJA Now? Your father will be back soon.

FAHAD Please mommy? Please? Please?

KHADIJA

Alright, be back in half an hour.

Fahad happily walks out of the tent. Gohar is sound asleep. On the floor there are two backpacks, the small suitcase and duffle bag, all are packed.

Khadija is looking around the tent. But the food items are left behind. There are two bowls, couple of pots, forks, sharp knives and spoons. There are also bag of chips, couple of packets of cookies, soup container and tea leaves.

#### KHALIL

(0.s) Aren't you going to miss me sweet heart?

Khadija gasps, she looks terrified.

# KHADIJA

My husband is not here. I will let you know when he comes.

# KHALIL

I don't have any business with him.

KHADIJA What are you here for?

# KHALIL

I have a business that I need to finish with you.

Now he is walking towards her. khadija steps back immediately as she sees him walking towards her.

# KHADIJA

What business?

# KHALIL

You know what business I am talking about?

He takes a step forward.

#### KHADIJA

On the matter of fact I have no idea what business you are talking about.

# KHALIL You will know shortly.

He pulls her by her hand. She is in her knees. She tries to get up.

KHADIJA (shouting with pain) Get the fuck away from me, or it will be bad.

KHALIL (shouting angrily) You bitch!

He slaps her...once, twice, thrice. She weeps. He pushes her down, tries to tear her long tunic top. He has pinned her down and we see Khadija struggling beneath him. We see both Khalil's hands are grabbing Khadija's wrist tightly.

We see Khadija has noticed something. Her hand is now stretched out towards us as if she is trying to get hold of something.

Khalil has successfully torn the top. Gohar has just woken up but she is too young and too sleepy to understand what's going around....to understand that her mother is being molested by Khalil.

KHADIJA'S POV: sharp knife near orange.

Finally Khadija grabs the knife and strikes him once, then twice, then thrice. She cries as she stabs him.

He groans, he shouts.

He cries in agony.

Khalil cries in pain but Khadija puts her hand against his mouth to stop him from shouting.

Khadija strikes him one more time.

EXT. YELLOW TENT- CONTINUOUS

No one is hearing him. The deaf woman has just gotten out of her tent, she stares towards the yellow tent but then she looks away. Very faint muffled cries is coming from the tent. Ismail walks towards the tent, looking happy as he counts the money. He puts his stack of money inside his pocket.

#### FAHAD

(o.s) Daddy?

ISMAIL Hey, buddy, what are you doing outside!

FAHAD I was playing with my friends.

ISMAIL Okay, now let's get inside, your mommy must be waiting.

Together they walk towards the yellow tent 20 feet away from them.

INT. YELLOW TENT- NIGHT

Ismail and Fahad walks happily. They stare at the frightening scene before them. Khalil is lying on the ground, blood is coming out of his stomach.

ISMAIL'S POV: Khadija is sitting in the corner, holding a knife. She looks like she is in shock, her body shakes as tears falls from her eyes. His gaze shifts to the corner, Gohar looks sleepy, but she looks at Ismail.

Ismail picks Gohar in her arm and drags Fahad along with him outside the tent.

EXT. YELLOW TENT- CONTINUOUS

Ismail puts Gohar down. Then looks at Fahad.

ISMAIL (his voice shaking) Listen to me, You don't remember any of this, okay? Don't tell anyone about this, alright? (re: Fahad) Don't go anywhere, stay right here and take care of your sister. Make sure she doesn't go anywhere. I want your eyes on her at all times, you need to learn to protect your sister, understand?

He walks inside the tent leaving both Fahad and Gohar alone.

INT. YELLOW TENT- NIGHT

Ismail is back in the tent, scared to approach his wife. Khadija is looking at her bloody hand, she is still holding knife in her right hand.

Ismail walks over the body and sits beside Khadija who is scared to even look up at her husband. She is still staring down at her hands.

# ISMAIL (whispering) Look at me.

She closes her eyes and tears falls on her lap.

# ISMAIL

(continuous-whispering) Tell me how did this happen?

Khadija doesn't answer but tears falls from her eyes, her cheeks are glistening.

ISMAIL (continuous-whispering) Did he attack you?

She starts to weep. She doesn't make sound.

ISMAIL (continuous- whispering) Did he?

She nods.

She starts crying, this time louder and he wraps his arm around her. Khadija grabs handful of his shirt and the shirt is smeared with Khalil's blood.

## ISMAIL

Listen to me, we are going to the police, we have to report about how he attacked you.

#### KHADIJA

No, no I can't. I can't. What if they don't believe me? He was pinning me down, tore my top but I -

## ISMAIL

(hugging her) It's okay you don't have to explain me in details.

Khadija breaks in to tears.

## KHADIJA

(croaked voice)
But I pushed him back, he attempted
to rape me.
 (beat)
The police are not going to believe
even if we tell them the truth.

ISMAIL Then what do you suggest we do?

INT. YELLOW TENT- SOME TIME LATER

Khadija and Ismail has changed their clothes. Ismail is carrying the small suitcase and has backpack on his shoulder. Khadija has backpack on her shoulder and is carrying the duffel bag. Together they crouch out of the tent, making sure they don't touch the body.

EXT. YELLOW TENT- NIGHT

Ismail and Khadija walks out on the street. Ismail is grabbing Fahad's hand while Khadija is carrying Gohar in her arms. EXT. STREET PARIS- NIGHT

Ismail and Khadija look tense as they walk on the pavement, they stare at each other now and then.

Now we see the couple and the kids hailing a cab.

Four of them get in, Ismail in the front passenger seat.

INT. TAXI CAB OF PARIS- NIGHT

TAXI DRIVER

Where to?

ISMAIL Charles De Guelle Airport

INT. TAXI CAB OF PARIS- SOM TIMES LATER

The taxi driver looks at Khadija through the rear view mirror. Khadija is shaking, she looks tense, she is hugging Gohar tightly, tears falls from Khadija's eyes.

> TAXI DRIVER (looking through the rear view mirror) Are you alright miss?

ISMAIL (turning his head to look at Khadija) Yes, yes. She is alright, she is a bit ill. But that's none of your concern!

TAXI DRIVER (worried) If she is ill then we should take

her to the hospital not the airport, mister.

ISMAIL No, no, We can't go to the hospital. (urgently) I mean- we have a flight to catch. EXT. CHARLES DE GUELLLE AIRPORT- NIGHT

The taxi drives past other taxis and cars.

INT. CHARLES DE GUELLE AIRPORT- NIGHT

They are walking towards the checkin counter. Ismail is pushing the trolley.

INT. IMMIGRATION OF CHARLES DE GUELLE AIRPORT- NIGHT

We see the family is standing in line. Khadija looks worried.

The family is standing in front of the immigration officer.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER OF PARIS AIRPORT Mrs Hussein? Mrs Hussein? (beat) Are you alright?

Khadija nods.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER OF PARIS AIRPORT (continuous) I want you to look at this camera here.

The immigration officer handles Khadija the passport.

Since Khadija who looks sad drops the passport. Ismail picks it up.

Ismail wraps his hand around Khadija and walks away. The immigration officer stares at them.

INT. SECURITY CHECK AT CHARLES DE GUELLE AIRPORT- NIGHT

Ismail places the two backpacks on the moving belt. He takes the duffle bag from Khadija and places it on the moving belt, it goes through the machine that scans bags and belongings.

> SECURITY CHECK WOMAN Now, stand with your foots apart and your-(Pointing at a picture) hands stretched out like this.

(beat)
Miss, are you listening to me? Are
you alright?

Ismail appears from behind.

ISMAIL Yes, yes. She is alright, she is a bit ill.

SECURITY CHECK WOMAN Alright. Now do as I say. Stand like this.

INT. SECURITY CHECK AT CHARLES DE GUELLE AIRPORT- AFTER SOME TIME

They had their body scanned and now they are picking up their handbags.

The staffs at the airport are going through their bags.

STAFF AT CHARLES DE GUELLE AIRPORT (holding a knife that he got out of their bag) You can't have this in your bag. (now holding a fork) Nor this.

The staff takes out foods from their bag, he takes out jam, juice, shampoo, milk packet.

The family walks away from the security check. Khadija walks more like dead corpse. She is in deep shock.

STAFF AT CHARLES DE GUELLE AIRPORT Hey! (beat) Hey, excuse me.

Ismail turns around, so does Khadija.

STAFF AT CHARLES DE GUELLE AIRPORT (continuous) You left your bag.

He points towards the duffle bag. Ismail walks towards the staff and takes the bag.

INT. PLANE- MIDNIGHT

They are already up in the sky. The airhostess is pulling the trolly towards her. She serves food to passengers.

Air hostess is now talking to Ismail. He hands him food. He passes it on Fahad's table, then he puts the next one on Gohar's table. Then he takes one for himself. All the while Khadija remains quiet.

AIR HOSTESS And what do you like to have miss?

ISMAIL She would like to have the same thing. The mutton.

AIR HOSTESS (handing the tray of food) Sure. Here you go.

INT. PLANE- SOME TIME LATER

Ismail looks at devastated Khadija.

ISMAIL You need to eat somethings.

Ismail plants a kiss on her forehead.

She nods slowly and opens the food lid. She stares at the food.

ISMAIL (continuous) Its not pork! Don't worry, we didn't get the wrong food like the last time.

They both smile at each other.

EXT. YELLOW TENT- MIDNIGHT

Fatima is walking towards the deaf lady.

FATIMA Have you seen my husband around? (beat) Have you seen Khalil?

Fatima emphasizes each and every work.

FATIMA (continuous) Forget it.

She walks towards the yellow tent which was Ismail's.

FATIMA (continuous- calling out) Khadija? Khadija? Have you seen my husband? Is he with your husband?

She walks in.

FATIMA (continuous- o.s-shouting out loud) Ohh. no no no

She screams, she cries loudly.

Fatima gets out and runs on the street.

EXT. YELLOW TENT- MORNING

The police is retrieving the body from inside. Atleast 20 people around the area are observing what the police are doing.

Three police are talking to Fatima.

FRENCH POLICE 1 He must be still in the plane.

### FRENCH POLICE 2

He is about to reach JFK. We need to inform the airport security now or it would be too late.

## INT. IMMIGRATION AT JFK- DAY

Ismail and Khadija are on line, the line is pretty huge. They look tired. Khadija looks at Gohar who is sleeping on her shoulder.

ISMAIL

(0.s) Tell them you are a visitor from Turkey.

#### KHADIJA

(0.s) Ofcourse we cannot tell them we are refugees showing our fake Turkish passports. They will be suspicious.

Ismail is staring at his Turkish passport.

#### KHADIJA

(o.s- continuous) What if we tell them we are refugees?

ISMAIL

(holding his Turkish passport at her) Refugees from Turkey? Really? They will know I-well- they will know I killed the border police.

### KHADIJA

(whispering) That was an accident. You were bound to kill him to protect me.

They finally walk towards the immigration desk.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER OF JFK AIRPORT First time traveling to USA?

KHADIJA

Yes.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER OF JFK AIRPORT What's the purpose of your visit?

KHADIJA I am visiting my brother's husband.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER OF JFK AIRPORT How long are you planning to stay?

KHADIJA A month, then we will go back to Turkey.

IMMIGRATION OFFICER OF JFK AIRPORT Where in Turkey do you live?

KHADIJA

Kilis.

INT- ARIVALS AT JFK AIRPORT- DAY

Ismail is taking their small suitcase from the moving belt.

Khadija is sitting on one of the chair in the corner. Fahad is playing with a small toy gun. Fahad looks through the sight hole and aims at the white little boy sitting next to him. The white boy could be Fahad's age.

> FAHAD Dha dha da... boom boom boom.

A white woman suddenly looks worried. She whispers something in her kid's ear. The white kid's expression is hard to understand.

His mother drags him by his wrist. The white mother looks worriedly at Khadija and Fahad. She breaks in to sprint. She looks back at Khadija while muttering. Khadija shakes her head, feeling insulted.

Ismail puts the suitcase on the trolley and walks towards Khadija.

ISMAIL (o.s) Are you. Alright?

Khadija nods, but her eyes says something different.

INT. DUTY FREE STORE IN JFK AIRPORT- DAY

# KHADIJA

(0.s) I am fine. Did you hear about the travel ban?

Ismail looks at the chocolate placed in the shelf.

### ISMAIL

Travel ban?

He picks one and walks towards the cashier. Khadija and kids follows him.

## KHADIJA

The new government of United States Of America has imposed a travel ban from 7 countries. And what I have understood seeing the recent news is that it's going to reform the travel ban and add couple more countries in the list.

#### ISMAIL

Is Syria added in the list?

Khadija laughs hysterically.

# KHADIJA Is that even a question?

Ismail pays for the chocolates and hands the chocolate to Gohar and Fahad who looks extremely happy.

ISMAIL No ofcourse not. (sighing) I just hope we are accepted to stay here, I just hope the immigration security welcomes us despite the protest to let the Refugees in USA and despite the travel ban.

Ismail looks tired, maybe tired of moving from place to place. He fidgets as he talks, runs his hand through his hair.

KHADIJA (sadly) This is never going to happen.

ISMAIL (tired) Then what do you suggest we should do?

KHADIJA We leave USA.

They walk away from the duty free shop.

INT. OUTSIDE THE DUTY FREE SHOP OF JFK- DAY

Ismail looks at Khadija, confused.

They are making their way out.

ISMAIL

(0.S)

Where do you expect to go and live if not here in USA where my brother lives? KHADIJA

(0.s)
We are going to Canada.
 (beat)
The only country in the world who
is accepting refugees is Canada.

Khadija smiles at him. Finally, Khadija is getting stronger, her wound of losing her kid is healing, she wants a better future.

EXT. JFK- DAY

The couple and their two kids are standing outside the building.

The other passengers walk by them.

The couple looks around them worriedly as if someone would show up and ambush them.

# KHADIJA

I was wondering what if they come looking for us here in USA? What if they catch us here before we even get to cross the border and move to Canada?

ISMAIL We have to hide from them if that's the case. (beat) We need to protect this family. Don't we?

#### KHADIJA

(agreeing) Yes, we have to protect each other.

There are a lot of people outside, cluttered, waiting for their loved ones to get out of the airport.

EXT. JFK- AFTER SOME TIME

They walk and finally spot Rahman who is standing in the crowd waiting for the family to get out. Khadija and Ismail walks as if nothing horrible has happened to them. Ismail and even Khadija are smiling at him.

Meet RAHMAN HUSSAIN, Ismail's elder brother.

The brothers hug.

Meet SAIRA, Rahman's wife.

Khadija hugs Saira.

KHADIJA (greetings) Assalamualikum. It's so nice to meet you after ages, Saira.

EXT. RAHMAN'S JEEP- DAY

We see Khadija getting inside with Gohar followed by Saira.

INT. RAHMAN'S JEEP- DAY

RAHMAN I still don't believe Jalal could take away innocent lives.

ISMAIL I never imagined it myself.

SAIRA So, what actually happened that day?

ISMAIL Saira, can we not talk about that.

Ismail looks at Khadija who starts weeping.

SAIRA

I am sorry.

KHADIJA (croaked voice) He killed my son. He took away my happiness.

Saira has her hand around Khadija.

EXT. STREET- DAY

Rahman's jeep moved at an increasing speed, passing the other cars.

INT. NEW YORK POLICE- DAY

The FBI agent is talking on the phone, he has the receiver pressed against his ear.

FBI AGENT 1 (looking concerned) Yes, yes I checked..... I checked his profile. He is guilty of killing a border guard in Syria-Turkish border. He must have a fake passport as well. Uh huh. His wife? What about her? Okay I will check.

He hangs up the phone after listening for a while. He walks towards a desk, another FGI agent is sitting on the chair, looking at his computer.

> FBI AGENT 2 So, what information have you got?

FBI AGENT 1 Get your ass out of here and come with me. Let's hit the road.

FBI AGENT 2 I checked their profile, he has a brother in Michigan and.

FBI AGENT 1 I know, tell me something new. FBI AGENT 2 That they are going to their house.

FBI AGENT 1 I know that as well. Inform the Michigan State police department.

INT. RAHMAN'S JEEP- EVENING

Khadija wakes up with a jerk. She looks out on the window. The jeep is slowing down.

It's a toll area. The cars are moving slowly in front of them. Ismail sighs and rests his forehead on his arm.

ISMAIL How long is it going to take us to reach Michigan?

SAIRA

3 hours maximum.

Ismail sighs again.

#### RAHMAN

I was wondering how did you get in to Turkey after they banned the refugees secretly entering their country?

ISMAIL

(lying) We got inside before the refugee ban.

RAHMAN No, as far as I remember you called me from Turkey after the refugee ban.

Khadija rolls her eyes at him, Rahman is unaware of her getting annoyed.

#### RAHMAN

(continuous)

Well, do you know about the refugee ban in USA? The current Government doesn't want any more people coming in. Plus some of the countries are listed on the travel ban! Syria is on of them.

## KHADIJA

We are not here as immigrants. We are here as visitors. Besides we are from Turkey, remember?

Ismail slowly turns towards her and gestures her to keep mum.

#### RAHMAN

But you are also citizen of Syria and you arrived from a war-torn country.

#### KHADIJA

Well, luckily there is no record of us being a Syrian citizen anymore.

#### RAHMAN

What? What do you mean?

Ismail turns towards khadija angrily for blurting out the truth.

The car slows down as they reach nesr the toll booth.

# TOLL GUY

2 dollar.

# RAHMAN

Here you go.

The toll guy looks at the back of the car. He whispers something at his walkie talkie.

TOLL GUY Sir, I might have to ask you all to step out of the vehicle.

RAHMAN

Why?

Ismail looks scared.

TOLL GUY For security purpose. Sir, you can park your jeep in there and the police will check your vehicle.

Ismail glances at Khadija, who is wiping away her sweat.

EXT. TOLL AREA- EVENING

The jeep drives towards the side of the road and parks.

4 doors open and Gohar crying loudly.

KHADIJA (whispering) Are you hungry, baby?

Khadija turns around to see two police man standing in the distance. They are talking.

Khadija unzips the duffle bag and hands Gohar two cookies.

Ismail and Khadija are now staring at the police, who are walking towards them. He looks at Ismail.

POLICE 1 May I see your ID sir?

ISMAIL

Id?

POLICE 1 National identification card or passport. ISMAIL I don't have any national identification card.

POLICE 1 May I see your passport, sir?

He hands him the passport.

POLICE 1 (continuous) And yours too, Mam.

Khadija looks inside the duffel bag and finds the passport.

KHADIJA

Here you go.

She hands him the Turkish passport. He examines them.

The police hands the passport to them. The police walks away.

He gets a call and picks up.

POLICE 1 A Syrian refugee? (beat) What's his name?

The police looks horror struck.

There is loud screeching of car from behind. The family has took off leaving Rahman and Saira behind.

rahman and Saira stare at their jeep as it drives away.

The police runs after the jeep, but it's too late.

RAHMAN (shouting at the top of his voice) Hey! Hey....Ismail? Come back... Ismail? (he runs and shouts) Where do you think you are going, stealing my car like that? SAIRA I suspected something is going on with them.

The jeep is out of sight. Both police and Rahman has stopped running.

INT. FBI AGENT CAR- EVENING

The two FBI agent we saw previously are in the car, one is driving.

FBI AGENT 1 Where do you say they are going now? (beat) Uh huh. We are nearby. We will catch them.

He increases his speed...

We see: 120 km on the dashboard.

INT. RAHMAN'S JEEP- EVENING

Ismail is driving recklessly. Khadija bumps her head on the window and cries out.

### KHADIJA

Ouch.

ISMAIL Sorry...Hun, Now brace yourself. I have to increase the speed. I am driving slow.

KHADIJA slow? If this is slow, how do you define fast? (beat) This can't be any more fast.

ISMAIL Oh, it can be.

He increases the speed.

We see: 140 km on the dashboard.

KHADIJA When was the last time you drove a car?

# ISMAIL

Sorry?

Ismail looks too worried to hear his wife speaking.

KHADIJA (shouting) When was the last time you drove a car?

ISMAIL I never drove a car.

#### KHADIJA

Wow!

Bullets are fired at the car. Gun shot fills the air.

EXT- NEW YORK STATE STREET- EVENING

A jeep and a car is zooming through the street.

The car is less than a feet away from jeep.

INT. RAHMAN'S JEEP- CONTINUOUS

Khadija turns around to look behind. To her horror the car hits the jeep. The two kids look scared. They hear a gunshot and she ducks her head.

She pulls Gohar from the back seat and helps Fahad climb towards her. Both the kids are now with her in the front passenger seat.

We hear Fahad shouting at the top of his voice.

Both her hands are wrapped around her kids.

INT. FBI AGENT CAR- CONTINUOUS

FBI AGENT 2 This is not going to help. I say we overtake them.

FBI AGENT 1
 (response angrily)
Fine!

EXT. NEW YORK STATE STREET- CONTINUOUS

The car overtakes the jeep. The car makes a U-turn.

KHADIJA (o.s) What are they doing?

INT. RAHMAN'S JEEP- CONTINUOUS

Ismail pulls the reverse gear!

KHADIJA Ah..oh my..what the hell are you doing?

We hear more gun shots but Khadija ducks her head and pulls both her kids down. Gohar cries in agony.

EXT. NEW YORK STATE STREET- CONTINUOUS

The jeep goes backwards. It zigzags a little as it goes backwards.

Suddenly the Jeep drives backwards towards another road.

The car drives towards the jeep.

FBI agent is shooting at them.

The jeep successfully makes a u-turn and drives away.

FBI AGENT 1
 (0.s)
This is crazy.

FBI AGENT 2
 (o.s)
It's like what they show in movies!

The jeep is out of sight and the car looses its balance. It stops with a hard break.

INT. FBI AGENT CAR- CONTINUOUS

FBI AGENT 1 Where did it go?

FBI AGENT 2

Fuck!

EXT. FACTORY- EVENING

It's an empty road. There is no car in sight. This road is smaller.

It's windy as we see leaves blowing.

Rahman's jeep has hit a tree.

INT. RAHMAN'S JEEP- EVENING

There is no one inside. The bags are still inside.

Khadija has left her shawl in the back passenger seat.

EXT. FACTORY- EVENING

The family is facing towards the factory. They are standing and looking at the factory. There is no human other than them in sight.

Khadija has bruised hand and Ismail is limping a little.

Fahad and Gohar are alright. Fahad looks a little worried. He looks at his parents now and then.

> KHADIJA (re: Fahad) Are you okay hunny?

FAHAD

Yes, mommy.

He walks to hug her.

ISMAIL Come on, let's go.

KHADIJA What's your plan?

ISMAIL To survive....to find a peaceful place which you can call home.

KHADIJA Well, we do seem to have same goals.

Ismail shakes his head at her and hugs her, kissing her a little.

ISMAIL Come on. Let's walk towards the factory. Let's see if anyone can help us.

The family walks towards the open field.

EXT. FIELD- EVENING

Two huge trucks are on the field, both are almost loaded. Both have their back doors open. There are two people near one truck, the other one is unattended.

One black man and one white man are loading the truck with huge boxes. The truck is big enough to carry atleast 10 people inside. A shoe falls from the box. The black man looks down, bends his head: it a pink garden clog. It makes him laugh a little.

> BLACK MAN What the-? Look at this, and they call it fashion! So, people care about fashion while gardening these days!

WHITE MAN Yeah sadly, they do!

BLACK MAN We surely live in a strange world!

# EXT. FACTORY- EVENING

Ismail walks towards the two trucks. He sees the two men and then stops. He gestures Khadija to be quiet by putting a finger on over his lips.

> ISMAIL (whispering) Be quiet

Khadija nods. But just then Gohar giggles.

## KHADIJA

Shush!

EXT. FIELD- CONTINUOUS

Black man stops unloading the moment he hears Gohar's giggle.

BLACK MAN Did you hear that?

WHITE MAN What? What should I supposed to hear?

BLACK MAN I heard a kid giggling.

WHITE MAN Your ears are ringing, man.

BLACK MAN Fuck you, its- it's not. I am sure about it. I heard a little girl giggle.

He looks scared. He looks around.

WHITE MAN

What?

(beat) Please, no. Please, don't tell me this place is haunted, man. Coz I don't believe in any fucking ghost.

BLACK MAN Look, I don't know about you but I have always heard that this factory is haunted.

Ismail and his family are hiding behind another truck. They stare at the two man as if they are in a theatre play. Khadija puts her hand across Gohar's little mouth.

> KHADIJA (re: Fahad- whispering) Don't make any noise.

He nods.

The black man is still arguing with the white man. Khadija is smiling a little. Ismail holds his hand tightly against his mouth to stop himself from laughing. The whole situation is now funny to Khadija and Ismail.

# BLACK MAN

Superstitious, you say? Dude! Do you know how crazy the world is.

WHITE MAN I can see it myself, man. You don't need to elaborate on that.

The family is staring at the duo fighting.

Tear is running down Ismail's eyes. He is finding it hard to control his laughter.

BLACK MAN

Look. Abraham Lincon is seen strolling through the corridors of the White House recently. I wonder how our new president has reacted to that.

# WHITE MAN (aggressively) Now, don't you say anything wrong about our new president.

BLACK MAN I haven't said anything about him.

A loud thud, something has fallen.

Both Ismail and Khadija jerks a little and looks down.

A tiny car has fallen on the ground and Fahad is bending down to pick up. He stands again and mouths sorry at his parents.

Both black and white men goes rigid.

BLACK MAN Now, did you hear that?

WHITE MAN Yeah. It could be a rat.

BLACK MAN What do you suggest we should do?

WHITE MAN Check the back of that truck.

He points towards the other truck where the family is hiding.

BLACK MAN

Oh no!

WHITE MAN

What?

BLACK MAN I ain't going to check behind that truck! WHITE MAN So, what's next? Vampires inside the truck? You are such a coward!

BLACK MAN

You can call me whatever you want to but I am not checking the back of that goddamn truck!

WHITE MAN Fine! I will check.

The white man walks away from the black man.

The black man sighs heavily as the white man is offscreen.

The black man walks away from the truck he is currently loading.

The white man is back.

BLACK MAN Found anything interesting?

WHITE MAN (o.s- sarcastically) Yes! Giant monsters and aliens. There is no one here, man!

The family is hiding inside the truck the man were loading.

BLACK MAN Now, this one is loaded.

WHITE MAN Wait there is one more box left.

INT. TRUCK- EVENING

Ismail peeks a little. He can see Rahman's car in the distance. To his horror he sees the same FBI agent he saw earlier in a car.

EXT. TRUCK- EVENING

BLACK MAN (shouting) Did you get the box? Hey man, where are you?

WHITE MAN (o.s- continuous) Are you scared?

INT. TRUCK- CONTINUOUS

Ismail is nudging Khadija a little, she raises her eyebrows in response.

He gestures towards the fBI agent. She looks frightened and grabs Ismail's arm tightly.

EXT. TRUCK- CONTINUOUS

The FBI agent is walking towards the truck.

INT. TRUCK- CONTINUOUS

KHADIJA (whispering) Now, what do we do?

ISMAIL (whispering) I-I don't know. There is no way out.

WHITE MAN (o.s) Found it.

The FBI agents are now closer to the truck. Suddenly a box is placed just infront of Ismail, blocking his view.

The back door is closed with a bang and followed by a little creak.

ISMAIL/KHADIJA'S POV: its dark inside!

FBI AGENT 1 (0.s) Hey there! BLACK MAN (0.s) Hey! WHITE MAN (0.s) Hey! FBI AGENT 2 (0.s) FBI

EXT. TRUCK- EVENING

The FBI agent 2 is holding up his flashy badge. The black guy and the white guy looks at each other. The agent 2 stows his badge inside his pocket.

FBI AGENT 1
 (o.s)
Did you see any middle eastern
family around here?

BLACK MAN No. We have been working since afternoon, we didn't see anyone nearby.

FBI AGENT 2 Well, you must have seen that jeep?

He points at the jeep.

### WHITE MAN

Well, yes. We saw it but we didn't see it hitting the tree. The front of the Jeep is in bad condition, the headlights are broken. We went up to check, but there was no one inside. FBI AGENT 1 So, what's inside this van?

BLACK MAN Shoes! This is a shoe factory, you see.

FBI AGENT 2 Can you open the door?

WHITE MAN

Sure!

INT- TRUCK- CONTINUOUS

Ismail gestures Fahad to be quiet. Khadija has her hand around Gohar's mouth.

They are all hiding behind the hundreds of shoe boxes.

EXT. TRUCK- CONTINUES

The door opens and the FBI agent gestures them to take couple of shoe boxes out.

The white man takes out 4 of them and places on the ground.

FBI agent 1 peeks a little

INT. TRUCK- SAME TIME

Ismail is crouched, the FBI agent 1 is just above his head, but the FBI agent couldn't see him because of the shoe boxes.

If he removes two more boxes, he would see them.

FBI AGENT 2 (0.s) You may close the door.

The family hears the sound of creaking door of the truck. It closes with a bang.

FBI AGENT 1 (0.s) Where is this truck going?

EXT. TRUCK- CONTINUOUS

### WHITE MAN

Canada!

INT. TRUCK- CONTINUOUS

Ismail stares at Khadija who looks shocked just like him.

EXT. TRUCK- CONTINUOUS

The two FBI agent is walking away.

The black man and the white man is talking to the driver. Another man gets in the front passenger seat.

The driver gets in and slowly drives away.

INT. TRUCK- AFTER SOME TIME

# KHADIJA

Please don't tell me that you are thinking of moving to Canada?

#### ISMAIL

I don't know.
 (thinking hard)
But wait! I thought moving to
Canada was your idea?

#### KHADIJA

I am tired of running. Why should we run if we didn't do anything in the first place?

### ISMAIL

We don't have anything to prove our innocence and technically killing a border guard, having a fake passport of Turkey and killing another refugee man are considered crimes. KHADIJA We didn't have any choice. We needed to get away from Aleppo. (beat, sadly) We are simply the victims of misfortunate events!

# FAHAD

(interrupting) Mommy, I am hungry.

Khadija has nothing to say to her son. They are trapped as they don't know how to get off.

## FAHAD

(continuous) Mommy, How do we get out of here?

Khadija doesn't answer him. She doesn't have anything to say to her son anymore.

EXT. HIGHWAY- NIGHT

The truck is moving on the road smoothly.

It merges with other car and is now driving slow.

INT. TRUCK- CONTINUOUS

KHADIJA Why do you think it is driving slow?

ISMAIL I guess it's near the border.

EXT. CANADA-US CUSTOMS BORDER BOOTH- NIGHT

The truck stops. The driver shows his passport. There is a booth, an officer sits inside.

FIELD OPERATION FEDERAL OFFICER (CBP) Park near the gate no 5. Here is the tax amount-

The truck moves again.

The truck goes through the toll and parks near a building.

INT. TRUCK- AFTER SOME TIME

Ismail and Khadija are looking tense, they stare at each other.

EXT. TRUCK- NIGHT

CANADA BORDER INSPECTOR Open the back door.

We hear the door open with a creak.

CANADA BORDER INSPECTOR Well, may I see your duty receipts?

TRUCK DRIVER I haven't paid sir,

CANADA BORDER INSPECTOR Alright go ahead and pay.

The Canadian border inspector walks away from the truck. The driver has left the back door open.

> ISMAIL (o.s) Let's get out.

He jumps as quietly as he could and helps Fahad. He turns to see the truck driver moving towards the truck.

ISMAIL

Now, come on hurry up.

Ismail stares at the truck driver as Khadija jumps.

Ismail and Khadija walks away from the truck.

EXT. FIELD- NIGHT

They run and walk towards the open field adjacent to the highway.

A car zooms out of the Canada highway and moves towards them.

The family runs back towards the US border. They walk in between the slow moving cars. Fahad is now holding his

father's hand tightly where as Khadija is holding on to Gohar.

Ismail takes a deep breath and together with his family they run towards the Canada border.

There is a Canadian flag in the distance.

Now they are near the border toll booth.

One of the field operation federal officer runs towards them as the family moves towards Canada, shooting after them.

The family runs, they are out of highway and they move towards a huge field adjacent to the US-Canada customs border building.

The night sky above them is pitch dark, they run through long bushes.

They can hear a police behind them.

POLICE Now come out. You are surrounded by our man.

They run though the heavy bushes and suddenly Ismail hears his wife's scream. He turns.

He walks towards where her scream came from.

But it's too dark to see anything.

Ismail moves tentatively.

ISMAIL

Khadija?

# KHADIJA (o.s- loudly) I am right here.

He runs towards her direction.

He first sees Gohar who is sitting on the hard ground. Then he sees Khadija lying on the ground. He moves closer to Khadija and sees that she has been shot in her right leg. Ismail is crouched beside Khadija.

Ismail lifts her head slowly and stares at her eyes.

# ISMAIL (exhausted) Are you alright?

She nods.

#### KHADIJA

There is no point of running anymore.

They both hear police approaching towards them. They hear footsteps, flashes of light.

### POLICE

(announcing)
We got them.
 (beat)
If you have any weapon please drop
them on the floor.

INT. CANADA-US INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY- MIDNIGHT

The TV is on.

On the TV people are marching and protesting the act of letting refugees inside the United States of America.

Ismail is standing.

He has hand cuff and looks at atleast 6 people who are staring at him back.

Ismail's kids are sitting on a chair next to the officials. The kids smile at them, not knowing what's happening here!

### ISMAIL

So, this is my story.

The men look at each other.

The man in the middle is in his 50s, is black and looks like he has the most power and authority in the group.

After a long silence he answers.

AUTHORITY FIGURE This was hell of an adventure.

Ismail smiles.

AUTHORITY FIGURE (continuous) You say you want to live peacefully?

ISMAIL

Yes sir.

AUTHORITY FIGURE So, If I say you are only allowed to live here in Canada if you promise to live peacefully, abide by the rules and be a good citizen of Canada without creating any ruckus what will your reaction and answer be?

They both smile at each other.

INT. CANADA-US INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY- MIDNIGHT The TV is on here as well. This time we hear it.

## NEWS REPORTER

The question of whether to let refugees in the United States of America depends on what the general people wants. With marching going on to support the refugee ban it is becoming hard for refugees to enter the border. Moreover there are people out there who are protesting the refugee ban-

The TV cannot be heard anymore as Ismail talks to his son.

Fahad nods.

Ismail happily walks towards a small booth holding Fahad's hand and putting Gohar in his arms. He puts Gohar down and talks to border official woman.

BORDER GUARD OFFICER WOMAN You need to sign here!

Ismail smiles broadly at her.

We see the same scene we saw at the beginning of the script.

ISMAIL'S POV: He sees his hand taking the pen from the pen holder, it shakes a little as he moves his hand to the paper, it's a form.

We see: Applicant Signature.

ISMAIL POV: Border quard officer woman smiles at him.

ISMAIL'S POV: Fahad and Gohar are smiling.

BORDER GUARD OFFICER WOMAN (o.s) No, don't sign, sir.

Ismail turns to the border guard woman.

Suddenly she grabs and takes the paper from Ismail as he sees another border guard, a man, whispering something to her. They are both staring at Ismail.

ISMAIL What's wrong?

BORDER GUARD OFFICER WOMAN Oh, there is nothing wrong, sir. ISMAIL Then why shouldn't I sign? BORDER GUARD OFFICER WOMAN This is where your wife will sign and you will sign on the first page. (0.s) Welcome to Canada.

Ismail signs as Khadija suddenly appears from behind.

She is limping, she has her feet bandaged. Khadija joins her husband and hugs him tightly.

The two kids look happy and we move away from the happy refugee family who found a place they can call their home.

FADE OUT

THE END